

# **A Drink Before the War Study Guide**

**A Drink Before the War by Dennis Lehane**

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## Plot Summary

"A Drink Before the War" opens with detective Patrick Kenzie meeting with three politicians. They are Senator Sterling Mulkern, Senator Brian Paulson, and Representative Jim Vurnan. They tell Patrick that a cleaning woman, Jenna Angeline, has stolen some important documents related to an upcoming street gang bill, and has disappeared along with the documents. They hire Patrick to find Jenna and the documents. Patrick and his partner, Angie Gennaro, begin working on the case. Almost immediately, Patrick notices that someone is watching his apartment. The man is later identified as gang member Curtis Moore.

Patrick and Angie soon find Jenna and they consider turning her over to Mulkern. Patrick, however, feels that there's something the politicians haven't told him. Jenna says she doesn't have documents, but doesn't reveal what she does have. Patrick convinces Angie to wait until they see what Jenna has before calling Mulkern. The next day, Patrick goes with Jenna to the bank where she retrieves a photograph of Senator Paulson, wearing only his underwear, in a motel room with a black man later identified as Marion Socia. Before Jenna can give Patrick any more information, including the location of the rest of the photos, Curtis Moore kills her. Patrick shoots Curtis. He's taken in for questioning but doesn't reveal the photo Jenna gave him.

Patrick and Angie soon learn that Marion Socia is Jenna's husband, either legally or common-law. Socia is the leader of the gang called the Raven Saints. Curtis Moore is one of Socia's trusted lieutenants. At the funeral, Socia stands on one side of the coffin. Roland, son of Socia and Jenna, stands on the other with his rival gang, the Avenging Angels. The two gangs had worked together until recently, but were now headed for an all-out war.

That war erupts with dead on both sides. Curtis Moore is in the hospital when someone kills him and carves Jenna's initials in his skin. Patrick and Angie continue to look for the rest of the photos and they eventually realize that Jenna had a car. They find a locker key in the car and begin trying to fit it into lockers all over the city.

They are at South Street, a busy train station, when they find the right locker. They are both surprised when the key turns and leave the locker corridor with bag clearly in sight. They are attacked in the open lobby but their friend, Bubba Rogowski, comes to their aid until he's hit. The police arrive and Patrick and Angie run with their package. Back at their office, they discover the photos are of Paulson raping a young black boy while Socia helps. Roland and members of his gang chase Patrick and Angie, and that's when Patrick gets a good look at Roland so that he realizes Roland is the rape victim in the photos. He doesn't want the photos made public because he'd lose his credibility with his gang.

Roland's gang gains momentum and Socia loses most of his followers. During a confrontation, Patrick and Angie shoot and kill Socia. They then meet with Mulkern and convince him to pay their bill as they hand over the photos. They keep one picture back,



having already given it to a reporter, Richie Colgan. The story soon hits the papers and police call for Paulson to turn himself in. Patrick and Angie meet briefly with Roland. He says he didn't ask for any favors but no longer has any interest in killing Angie and Patrick.



# Chapters 1-3

## Summary

The story opens with a 1-page prologue written in first person. This person is Patrick Kenzie but he isn't identified until the next chapter. He says he often watched late-night news with his father, a fireman, and sometimes saw coverage of local fires, sometimes with his father rushing past as he helped battle a blaze. Sometimes, he watched fires in distant places. The previous summer, he saw a lot of death. He says some of those who died were innocent and that he was among those who did the killing.

In Chapter 1, Patrick Kenzie arrives at the Ritz-Carlton where he's meeting with three politicians. They are Representative Jim Vurnan, Senator Sterling Mulkern and Senator Brian Paulson. They talk politely for a moment then Mulkern says they have a situation they would like "cleared up discreetly and forgotten." Mulkern says that "an important bill" will be voted on in the coming week. That bill is later identified as a street terrorism bill that will help address gang activities. Mulkern says a woman named Jenna Angeline was a cleaning woman in both Mulkern's and Paulson's offices. She took a document and disappeared nine days earlier. Mulkern says Jenna is the only "logical suspect" and that they want Patrick to find her and return the document she took. They provide him with Jenna's address and a photo of her.

In Chapter 2, Patrick arrives at his office in the bell tower of St Bartholomew's Church. The bell was missing and there was a great deal of speculation about where it was. Sister Helen says it was "miracled away" and Sister Joyce says it was "misplaced." The pastor, Father, Drummond, gave Patrick use of the bell tower and Patrick provides a level of security for the church against theft, which was rampant until Patrick's office was housed in the bell tower. The room is small with just enough space for desks for Patrick and his partner, Angela Gennaro, known as Angie.

Patrick fills Angie in with the brief details he has about the case. She asks what the documents are but Patrick says he doesn't know. He says they are dealing with politicians and that he doesn't expect to get the whole truth from them.

In Chapter 3, Jenna Angeline grew up in Dorchester. That's also where Patrick grew up but he notes that there's a strict line between the areas of Dorchester where the whites live and where the blacks live. The white area of town is filled with poor whites who stay because they have a strong sense of community. The black area is filled with poverty and people stay because they don't have a choice.

Patrick arrives at Jenna's address to find a group of nine young black people out front. They decide he's a cop and make jokes about his presence. Patrick goes to Jenna's apartment and finds the door has been busted in. One of the young men, Jerome, follows Patrick. He says Jenna hasn't been around in more than a week. They go back downstairs. Jerome says the entire situation has to be "about Roland." Patrick asks who



Roland is, which makes all the young people laugh again. They say he's "bad," but never say who he is.

## Analysis

The first look at Patrick Kenzie's character is seen in the opening paragraphs of Chapter 1. He talks about the Ritz-Carlton's requirement that guests wear a tie. He usually wears very casual clothes but says he's "behind on the laundry." He also says that his jeans are so dirty that they could walk around by themselves. However, he does have dress clothes and is reasonably comfortable wearing suits. He has a "double-breasted Armani" hanging in his closet, indicating that he is not poor, or that he's at least had an influx of cash sometime to buy such an expensive suit. This first look at Patrick sets the stage for how the reader views him throughout the rest of the story.

It's obvious from the first conversations between Patrick and Mulkern that they know each other, though not on a personal level and not since Patrick became an adult. Mulkern knew the family somehow when Patrick was young and mentions that Patrick's father died of a heart attack. Patrick silently notes that his father died of cancer but doesn't correct Mulkern. This is an important look at the relationship between Patrick and Mulkern. Mulkern is the politician who wants to play on Patrick's emotions to pretend they're closer than they really are. Patrick isn't one to be played.

Angie, Patrick, and Phil grew up together and were all friends until Phil turned into a drunk with a bad attitude. Phil's actions are an example of one of the book's themes, Dealing with Hardships. The relationship between Angie and Patrick is another of the book's themes. These early introductions are made very briefly and the reader learns more about the characters through their actions and interactions. The reader who has read other books about these characters will already know more about them than is revealed during these brief chapters.

Racism is an important theme in the book and is seen from the opening pages. Senator Mulkern uses a racial slur to describe Jenna, saying she's not bad, considering her race. Patrick and Angie immediately consider that Jenna's race might have something to do with the fact that Mulkern and Paulson believe she's responsible for the missing documents. The differences in the neighborhoods in Dorchester is yet another example of this theme. When Patrick discovers that Jenna's door has been broken, Jerome says that he can already promise that no one saw anything that will help Patrick. This is an indication that violence is common in this neighborhood and that people tend to avoid becoming involved.

## Discussion Question 1

Describe what you know about Patrick and Angie at this point.



## Discussion Question 2

Describe the differences between the area of Dorchester where whites live and the area where blacks live.

## Discussion Question 3

What is this current case and what information do you think the politicians are hiding?

## Vocabulary

appraised, quaint, flourish, opulence, conundrum, discreetly, parochial, chalices, rectory, pertaining, splendid, laconic



# Chapters 4-6

## Summary

In Chapter 4, Angie has begun working on following the paper trail while Patrick was at Jenna's apartment. She has learned that Jenna has only one credit card, a Visa, and a spotty credit history. Jenna has found Billy Hawkins, a former client that they kept out of prison by proving his alibi. Billy now works at a Check Cashing Express office and is looking for evidence that Jenna used their service anywhere in the city. Angie says they will hear from Billy the next day. They talk some more about their plans, including what they'll do when they find Jenna. Patrick says they'll "play it by ear" when the time comes.

Patrick suggests Angie come home with him instead of going home where Phil is, but she refuses. Their conversation is interrupted by Phil's arrival. He says he's been honking for her for 10 minutes and asks if she's ready to go. She says she didn't hear him because of the music playing in the office and she prepares to leave. Angie takes his hand as they are leaving the office. Phil turns at that moment and, for the first time since his arrival, looks at Patrick and smiles.

In Chapter 5, Patrick leaves the office and walks to his near-by apartment. He has messages on his machine. One is from Bubba Rogowski, who asks if Patrick wants to meet him for a beer and some pool. Patrick notes that Bubba sounds drunk already and dismisses the invitation. Another message is from Mulkern. He reminds Patrick of a planned meeting on Saturday but also says that Richie Colgan, a reporter for the "Trib," was "at my throat again." Patrick and Richie are friends and Mulkern asks if Patrick can speak to Richie.

Patrick notes that Richie's name sounds like the typical Irish name of the area and that people lauded his efforts to expose political corruption until the newspaper ran Richie's photo with his column. When people realized he was black, they decided that he was a troublemaker. Richie has spent a lot of time and energy focused on Mulkern.

Mulkern's comment makes Patrick think back to his father, Edgar. He was labeled a hero for saving two children from a burning building but at home he was violent, handing out slaps and punches to keep everything running as he wanted it to. Edgar is dead but Patrick knows that his memories are never far away.

Suddenly, Patrick realizes that something isn't right. There are no sounds coming from a nearby school yard where young people usually gather at this time of day. Patrick watches through a window and catches a brief second of movement. He continues to watch while he calls Richie. He asks Richie for the most important piece of legislation being considered this session. Richie says it's a street terrorism bill that will address gangs as street terrorists, giving law enforcement a new tool. Gangs would be considered "invading armies" and members wearing their colors could be jailed for





treason. Richie says it will likely pass through the legislature but will be struck down in court later as unconstitutional. Patrick can't imagine that either Mulkern or Paulson would be in favor of such a bill. Patrick asks if there's anything else coming up. Richie says the only other bill of interest calls for a mandatory 7-year sentence for anyone convicted of child molestation. Richie says he'll send Patrick some information on the two bills.

Patrick hangs up and feels that there's something still off in the area near his apartment. He places Harold, a huge panda bear, in a chair near the window in the hope that someone watching the apartment would assume Patrick is sitting there. He then heads outside. He encounters a man with an Uzi in the shadows outside and the man has the gun pointed at Patrick before he can react. Patrick is about to make some glib remark when something strikes him, knocking him out. The man is later identified as Curtis Moore, a member of the gang called the Raven Saints.

In Chapter 6, Patrick dreams about his father while he's knocked out. He comes to on the floor of the rectory with a paramedic checking his injuries. Angie arrives. Patrick says he didn't recognize his attacker and isn't certain he'd recognize the man if he saw him again. Angie helps him to his apartment.

## Analysis

The relationship between Patrick and Angie is not physical because Angie is married, but it seems obvious that Patrick loves her very much. He hates that she is allowing herself to be victimized and he doesn't understand it, but Angie remembers a time when she and Phil were very much in love, and she holds out hope that they'll return to that point someday. She seems to believe that will happen if she is just patient enough. This is typical of abuse victims. What's not typical is that Angie is a successful, confident woman outside her marriage. She isn't afraid to tackle tough situations and dangerous criminals, and she's confident enough to do her share in solving cases. Patrick doesn't understand how she can be so confident as a private investigator but so meek as a wife. Patrick has interfered in the relationship between Phil and Angie only once. He beat Phil after Phil beat Angie, putting Phil in the hospital. When Phil got out, he retaliated by beating Angie so badly that she missed work for a week. This is also typical of domestic violence cases.

There's another look at Mulkern's effort to get Patrick on his side when he leaves the message on Patrick's machine. Patrick's father, Edgar Kenzie, was a fireman, and was known as a hero for saving two children from a burning building. Mulkern says Richie would have accused Edgar of setting fires so that he could be a hero and put them out. Patrick immediately recognizes this statement for what it is. Mulkern is trying to get Patrick's attention by making an association to Edgar. Patrick actually hated his father and carries a serious scar inflicted by Edgar. Mulkern knew the family and probably knew of Edgar's tendency to violence, which makes the reference useless.



Patrick learns that there are two bills coming before the legislature and he initially believes that the anti-gang bill is the one that's important. There's no doubt that there are gangs involved and that it makes sense this would be the bill that's causing so much trouble. That is not the case. The second bill calls for a mandatory 7-year sentence for anyone convicted of child molestation. The “documents” Jenna stole are actually photos of Paulson raping a young boy, which would mean Paulson would fall under this new law requiring that he serve 7 years. That bit of misdirection is meant to make the reader think that the gang angle of this story is the most important piece of information.

## Discussion Question 1

Describe what you know about Senator Mulkern at this point.

## Discussion Question 2

What happens to Patrick when he leaves his apartment to check out the man outside?

## Discussion Question 3

What are the two bills coming before the legislature and why does Patrick think the anti-gang bill is the most important?

## Vocabulary

emanating, embodiment, monikers, mandatory, illicit, abrasions, grimaced, stable, impersonator



# Chapters 7-9

## Summary

In Chapter 7, Patrick and Angie are at the office the next day when Billy Hawkins arrives. He has a copy of information from Jenna Angeline when she cashed a check Tuesday with the company Billy works for. As references, she listed her sisters. Three live in Alabama but one, Simone Angeline, lives in Wickham, Massachusetts. Her address is listed. Patrick goes out of the church first, checking for the man who attacked him the previous night. Angie watches for signs of trouble before following Patrick. Patrick takes the 1979 Volare, nicknamed the Vobeast, toward Wickham. He drives to Beacon Hill, doubling back several times to make sure they aren't being followed.

Patrick eventually sees Curtis Moore and recognizes him as the man from the previous evening's attack. Patrick parks and loses him by going to the garage where his "toy," a 1959 Porsche Roadster convertible, is parked. Angie is double parked outside, still watching Curtis. Patrick drives away and Angie follows. Patrick notes that he quickly outruns her, maybe because the Roadster is so fast but maybe because he's so immature.

In Chapter 8, Patrick arrives in Wickham with Angie right behind him. He parks the car, worrying that it will be vandalized or stolen while he's gone, and hopes he'll find Jenna quickly. Patrick gets in the car with Angie and they locate Simone's house. They discuss options and decide they'll watch Simone and see if she leads them to Angie. At 7:15, Simone leaves. They follow her to a bar in Lansington. They follow her inside.

By the time they enter, Simone is nowhere to be seen but Patrick hears people moving about upstairs between songs on the jukebox. He pretends to be a building inspector, providing an identification card he stole from Lewis Prine. Patrick quizzes the bartender and makes him nervous, then pulls the fire alarm. Most of the patrons simply stay where they are, aware that there isn't really a fire, but those on the second floor weren't aware of that and people begin coming down. Patrick soon sees Simone and Jenna.

Jenna immediately recognizes Patrick as someone with some authority. Simone says they're leaving but Patrick intercepts them. Patrick points out that they could have killed her, if that was their goal, and Jenna says they'll go quietly.

In Chapter 9, they return to Simone's house. Patrick asks what Jenna did with the documents she took from Paulson's office. She scoffs at the word "documents" and says these are "things" Jenna says no one has ever needed her but people are now going to a lot of trouble to find her. She says the items in her possession are not for sale but will be used to get justice. Patrick says he was hired to find Jenna and then to turn her over to the men looking for her. Jenna compares that to a hound that searches out the fox, then moves out of the way for the hunters to kill it.



Jenna asks who hired Patrick. Patrick refuses to say and Jenna says it must have been either Senator Mulkern or Socia. Patrick hasn't heard the name Socia before and asks if Socia is related to Roland. Patrick calls Mulkern but Jenna removes the plug from the phone. She asks what Patrick believes she stole. He says the documents related to an upcoming bill. She says they have nothing to do with politics. Jenna says she believes Patrick wants to do what's right. She challenges him to wait until the next morning and go with her to her safety deposit box.

## Analysis

Patrick has a large scar that he says looks something like a jellyfish. It's on his stomach and it's very obvious. Patrick is very conscious of how it looks and he keeps it covered up. He says that every woman who has ever felt his bare stomach has asked about it. Angie once asked him about it as well. Patrick says he has never told anyone the truth about that scar. That bit of information teases the reader about the events leading to the scar. It's apparent that it has something to do with Patrick's father, Edgar, but the details aren't revealed until much later. Eventually, Patrick thinks about the night he got the scar. The entire story is told later in the book, culminating with Edgar applying a hot iron to Patrick's stomach, causing the wound.

It's obvious from the first glimpse of Jenna that she's street smart and that she knows she's in trouble. When she and Simone come downstairs and see Patrick for the first time, Jenna immediately recognizes him as someone in authority. She's seen people like him her entire life. They are people who have the power to change her life with a single stroke and she has always been powerless to do anything about it. This is one of many cases of class differences and how that affects people.

Patrick is surprised at the interior of Simone's house, which is not fancy but is very nice and indicates that Simone has the ability to make things attractive. Simone's financial situation is not described but it seems likely that she's not a wealthy woman. Most people in her situation live in dilapidated houses and their interiors match the outsides. In Simone's case, the outside of the house is poor but the inside is much nicer. She obviously has an eye for beauty and the ability to make her house into an attractive home without spending a fortune on designer décor.

## Discussion Question 1

What is your first impression of Jenna?

## Discussion Question 2

How does Patrick go about finding Jenna? Are his methods believable in real life?



## Discussion Question 3

Now that you know what caused Patrick's scar, what do you think about his relationship with his father?

## Vocabulary

squinted, cubicle, vanity, vices, arbitrarily, provincial, exorbitant, ascertain, paltry



# Chapters 10-13

## Summary

In Chapter 10, Angie argues that they were paid to find Jenna and that they should tell Mulkern they've done that, collect their pay, and walk away. Patrick says a few hours won't make any difference and urges Angie to wait until the next morning. Angie questions Patrick's motives for waiting but he says he doesn't see why they shouldn't learn everything they can before they turn Jenna over. Angie doesn't really believe him and points out that they need the money. Angie calls Phil to let him know she'll be out all night and it turns into an argument. Patrick tells her to go home and she does.

Jenna talks with Patrick for awhile. She says that Simone is angry at the world. Jenna says she is also angry at the world, but that she has more of a right to be angry than Simone. Patrick keeps watch but there's no trouble during the night. The next morning, he asks Jenna if Socia knows about Simone. She says he met her when Simone lived in Alabama, but doesn't know she now lives so near. She says if Socia had known where Simone lives now, he'd have killed them already.

When they return to Boston, Patrick parks his car in a loading zone and walks to the bank with Jenna. She says it will draw attention if he comes inside with her – a black woman accompanied by a white man. She goes inside and returns a short time later. She tells him this is only one small piece of what she has, and that she wants to be certain he'll help her before she hands over the rest. Patrick doesn't commit but says he'll "see." Jenna pulls a photo from the envelope. In the photo, Paulson is in his boxer shorts and is having a drink, obviously in a motel room, with a black man. Patrick asks who the black man is. Jenna hesitates and Patrick suddenly senses movement. He yells at Jenna to duck just before bullets rip into her body. Patrick recognizes the man shooting at them as Curtis Moore though he still doesn't know his name. Patrick shoots him, putting an end to the gunfight. Patrick rushes to Jenna and cradles her body as she dies without saying anything.

In Chapter 11, someone takes a photo of Patrick just after the gunfight and the photo winds up in both newspapers that evening. The headline calls Patrick a hero. He doesn't feel like a hero because he failed to protect Jenna. Police arrive quickly and begin questioning Patrick. They repeat the questions and take him to the police station where the questions continue. Patrick stuck the photo in his sock before police officers could see it, and he kept it hidden. He knows that, with just that photo, there would be nothing more than some rumors about Paulson's personal life. Patrick is now determined to get to the bottom of the situation and to get justice for Jenna.

Patrick's attorney, Cheswick Hartman, arrives. He's a successful attorney who represents Patrick for free because Patrick helped Cheswick's sister in a previous case. Cheswick is glib at first but then expresses true concern for Patrick. Patrick says he's covered in blood and tired, and that he's hungry and wants to go home. Cheswick has



already spoken to the District Attorney and Patrick is released. Cheswick takes Patrick out the back to avoid the press and drives him to the spot where he left the car. There's a ticket on the windshield but Patrick ignores it. Then he drives himself home.

In Chapter 12, Patrick calls the office and Angie answers. She's concerned and Patrick says he'll be over once he's changed clothes and eaten. When he gets out of the shower, Angie is at his house. She's very emotional. She's sorry that Jenna died and relieved that Patrick wasn't killed. Patrick eats the sandwich Angie made for him. She says they've had calls from Mulkern's office, Vernan's office, Richie Colgan, and 13 other reporters.

Angie wants to know what's really going on and Patrick says they might be involved in something they aren't equipped to handle. Angie examines the photo and, judging by Paulson's apparent age in the photo, says it must have been taken several years earlier. They agree that it doesn't put Paulson in a good light, it's "not worth killing over." Patrick agrees and believes it has something to do with the unidentified black man in the photo. They then begin to talk about how the man in the blue cap (later to be identified as Curtis Moore) knew where they were going to be. Only a few people knew the plan.

In Chapter 13, they arrive at Simone's house. Simone immediately accuses Patrick of killing Jenna. He agrees that he failed to protect her but says Simone put the assassin in place to kill her. Patrick pushes. Simone says she was afraid that Patrick would kill Jenna once he had the photos, because he was working for the politicians. She admits she called Socia who said he'd take care of the situation. She identifies the black man in the photo as Socia. She says she doesn't know where Jenna hid the rest of the photos.

## Analysis

The scar on Patrick's stomach is a constant reminder that his father brutalized him, even though fathers are supposed to love their sons. This scar becomes a symbol of his father's cruelty and of Patrick's struggle to deal with the violence that was a routine part of his life.

Jenna seems to believe in Patrick just before she dies. She says that she believes they can find justice together. Patrick is that kind of person and it seems possible that Jenna has recognized that in the short time she's known Patrick, but it also seems likely that Jenna is just grasping at straws and wants to find someone who will help her. The reader should remember that Jenna is a very poor person and she doesn't have friends in positions of power who might help her use the documents to get the justice she deserves. She could have turned the photos over to a newspaper but she doesn't know for certain that they wouldn't take Paulson's side and simply cover up the crime.

There are more pieces of information now coming into play, but the reader won't really understand the full situation until the remainder of the photos are found and all the people identified. This still looks like a typical sex scandal of some sort and the reader who doesn't know how the story ends will wonder why there's so much killing over



something that would likely blow over with a little time. The introduction of Socia is only one part of the puzzle and it's all designed to keep the reader in the dark until Patrick figures out what's happening.

Cheswick Hartman is a successful attorney. Patrick says he's handsome and plays the part of a high-powered attorney well. When Cheswick arrives, he orders the officers out of the room and Patrick expects it's because Cheswick has something confidential to tell him. Cheswick says that he just likes being able to order the officers around like that. Cheswick is such a successful attorney that Patrick would never be able to afford him under normal circumstances but Cheswick always represents Patrick for free because of a previous case involving Cheswick's sister and her drug addiction.

## Discussion Question 1

Who is Cheswick Hartman?

## Discussion Question 2

Why do you think Jenna says she believes Patrick will help her get justice?

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Simone call Socia and what's the result of that call?

## Vocabulary

component, capacity, grotesque, obliterated, ordeal, audible, capacity, saturated, nifty, elocution, consummate





# Chapters 14-16

## Summary

In Chapter 14, Patrick and Angie learn that the man who killed Jenna was named Curtis Moore and that he was a member of the gang called the Raven Saints. Curtis's mother publicly says that Curtis was a good person who wasn't involved in gangs. She claims there were racial motivations for Patrick shooting Curtis, even though Curtis was shooting at Patrick first. Patrick and Angie talk more about the racial angle, hating that Patrick is being accused of having a racial motivation. Patrick knows that Angie is angry and still overly emotional. He thinks about racial attitudes and touts many examples of racism, ranging from the judge who forces desegregation then sends his children to a private school, to the sociologists who blame gang violence on white oppression. Patrick drops Angie at home and goes to the office, feeling he can protect himself better there than at home.

Richie is waiting for Patrick. Richie says the Raven Saints have about 75 "hardcore" members and another 60 on the edge of the group. They discuss the racial aspects of the world in general. Richie argues one side but Patrick turns the situation around. He cites a black death that's called a racial crime and a very similar white death that's just ruled homicide. He says whites get angry about that just as blacks get angry about some other specific things. Patrick says a white man who loses his job to affirmative action gets angry just as a black man gets angry about discrimination. Richie says some whites think he got to his current job because of affirmative action and that some of those can't even read well, let alone write for a newspaper. He says some blacks accuse him of "sneaking into the middle class." They talk some more and agree they don't have an ideal answer to the racial issues. They talk then about Jenna. Patrick says Jenna was a good person and Richie asks if Patrick plans to get revenge for Jenna's death. Patrick says he will.

In Chapter 15, Patrick goes over what he now knows. Socia was Jenna's husband, either legally or common-law. Curtis Moore was a member of the Raven Saints. Socia and Paulson are pictured in the photograph together in a questionable situation.

The next day, Angie and Patrick dress up and go to the Copley Plaza Hotel to meet Jim Vurnan and Sterling Mulkern. Angie asks if Jenna's death means their job is over. Mulkern says he still wants them to find the documents. The conversation becomes rude when Mulkern tries to act as if he owns Angie and Patrick. He says that he expects Patrick to do what he's told without argument. He says Angie could have more to worry about than an abusive husband. He then says he could ruin their detective agency. Patrick has had enough and says that he won't tolerate threats. He places a photocopy of the photo on the table. Patrick and Angie leave the table and head to the door but Mulkern stops them. Mulkern says that he's sometimes grouchy so early in the day and asks Patrick to take his seat.



Mulkern says that Paulson was involved in a “foolish indiscretion” that wouldn't amount to much except for Paulson's political career. Mulkern says that Paulson's association with Socia would damage his credibility with regard to the street terrorism bill. Mulkern says that Socia must have sent photos to Paulson in an attempt at blackmail and that Jenna must have found them. Patrick asks why Socia would have Jenna killed over the photos and Mulkern, predictably, says there's no way to guess what motivates “these people.”

In Chapter 16, Patrick and Angie return to their offices. Patrick contacts Bubba Rogowski and asks for some untraceable guns because the police still have Patrick's gun. Then Patrick calls Devin Amronklin, a member of the Anti-Gang Task Force. They agree to meet the following day at Jenna's funeral. There's an emotional conversation between Angie and Patrick. Patrick realizes there's something deeply wrong with her, more than usual. She says she's tired of spending all her time fending off Patrick's sexual comments and advances and that she knows he never treats a romantic relationship seriously. She hates that her husband beats her and feels trapped in her life.

## Analysis

Racism is an important theme in the book and it's seen from several angles. Curtis Moore is the young man who carried an Uzi, who beat up Patrick, and who killed Jenna. He is a member of the gang called the Raven Saints. After his death, his mother goes public, saying that her son had never done anything wrong and had never been involved with a gang. She claims that Patrick's involvement in shooting Curtis was “racially motivated.” Patrick is angry over the situation but, as is typical of this story and this author, the conversation between Patrick and Angie is glib. Angie says that Patrick should be ashamed of himself for forcing Curtis to use an Uzi and Patrick responds similarly. Angie suggests Patrick could have reasoned with Curtis instead of shooting him, and could have expressed compassion for the life that “put that gun in his hand.” They go on to talk more about race and say they hate the people who claim they aren't racist but go on to express racist views. Individual readers will understand different aspects of the racial issue, depending on their own experiences and their own prejudices. It's left to the reader to decide how much of the characters' actions and attitudes are racially motivated.

There's a similar conversation between Patrick and Richie. Richie is black so he has a different perspective. He hates that white people feel he's cheated somehow to get to his current position on the newspaper and that black people feel he's “sneaking” away from his black neighborhood and into a middle class lifestyle. Patrick sees that Richie has some valid points but says whites also feel a level of discrimination and lists some specific events as examples. The level of racism in the story may be disturbing to some readers.

The relationship between Angie and Patrick remains an important theme of the story and their relationship undergoes some changes as Angie deals with her fears and



emotions at this point. Patrick routinely calls Angie “gorgeous” and makes suggestive remarks. It seems to be something of a habit for him but it's also obvious that he's attracted to her. She seems determined to remain true to her marriage vows despite the attraction she feels toward him but this new level of emotion makes it more difficult for her to stay on an even keel.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Describe some of the racial aspects of this story up to this point.

## **Discussion Question 2**

Why does Angie feel so much on edge after Patrick is involved in the gunfight?

## **Discussion Question 3**

How does Mulkern describe Paulson's situation? Do you believe he's telling the truth?

## **Vocabulary**

deprivation, heinous, peripheral, reverberating, caprice, locale, drab



# Chapters 17-20

## Summary

In Chapter 17, Bubba arrives with guns and other weapons, including some grenades. Bubba also offers Patrick the use of some missiles, but Patrick points out that they'd take out an entire neighborhood instead of just the bad guys. Patrick and Angie attend Jenna's funeral. They're surprised to find lots of cars, ranging from Maseratis to "beat-up street sleds." Police officers are there in force. Marion Socia is on one side of the coffin with members of his gang, the Raven Saints. There's a younger black man surrounded by his gang on the other side of the coffin. Police officers stand nearby, alert for problems.

Patrick and Devin talk about the current situation. Devin says Curtis Moore is Socia's "favorite lieutenant" and that Socia is furious that Patrick's shot caused the amputation of Curtis's foot. Devin says Socia is mad enough to kill Patrick Devin then reveals that the young black man beside Jenna's coffin is her son, Roland, who is head of the gang called the Angel Avengers. At Angie's question, Devin reveals that Socia is Roland's father.

In Chapter 18, Patrick, Devin, and Angie continue talking at the Dunkin' Donuts. Devin says the Angel Avengers and the Raven Saints were connected as gangs until a few months earlier, when Roland set his group against Socia's. Socia got his start in crime as a pimp and made a lot of money when crack became popular. Devin predicts that the two gangs will soon be involved in a serious battle but predicts Socia will win. He says there's a bar nearby and offers to buy Patrick and Angie "a drink before the war."

At the bar, some men are loudly arguing the racial makeup of football teams. When the racial slurs become too much, Devin hits one of them, saying he's delivering a message from a black friend of his.

In Chapter 19, Patrick and Angie return to the office. The phone is ringing as they arrive. Patrick realizes the caller is Marion Socia. Socia asks if Patrick is sitting "in that chair by the boom box" and Patrick knows that Socia has been in the room. Socia suggests that Patrick shouldn't get up unless he wants to hear an explosion, then hangs up. Patrick tells Angie to stay seated but she immediately stands up and he's relieved that her chair doesn't explode. He tells her that there might be a bomb under his chair. Angie looks carefully under the chair and says there isn't a bomb. Patrick finally works up the nerve to stand up and the chair doesn't explode. Patrick and Angie passionately kiss.

Socia calls again. He says he wants to meet with Patrick. Patrick refuses and Socia rattles off Angie's home address. Patrick agrees to meet at the Downtown Crossing in 2 hours. When he hangs up, Angie says the kiss was "nice" but that there won't ever be a repeat.



In Chapter 20, Patrick and Angie arrive at the designated meeting place. Patrick notes several black people nearby and imagines that most or all of them are members of Socia's gang. One young man was holding a gun in his hand and had a lollipop in his mouth. Patrick was surprised when Socia called the young man Lollipop. Patrick then points out Bubba on a rooftop with a large scope clearly visible. The situation almost becomes violent at one point with Patrick forcibly taking Lollipop's gun. Socia says that Jenna must have given Patrick some information. He demands to know what that was but Patrick says that Jenna didn't tell him. Socia says he's going to give Patrick a day to find it and hand it over, and promises that Patrick will die if he doesn't.

## Analysis

The funeral scene is more powerful once the reader realizes that Roland is Jenna's son and Socia is Jenna's former lover and Roland's father. Roland and his gang are standing on one side of Jenna's coffin while Socia and his gang are standing on the other. When the funeral is over, the two men take a flower and place it on the grave, and their animosity is very apparent. The gang members then follow suit but their actions don't demonstrate any love for Jenna. They are just exhibiting hostility for each other. This makes it clear that there's going to be a war between the rival gangs but the full reasons are not seen until coming chapters.

There's a racial scene in Chapter 18 when Devin, Patrick, and Angie go to a neighborhood bar where some men are debating the makeup of football teams. The men are throwing around racial slurs and are extremely vocal in their racial attitudes. Devin says that the only option with people like that is to ignore them, because they won't ever change their minds. But there comes a point where Devin stands up and hits one of the men, saying it's a message from a black friend of Devin's. Devin's partner is black and they are very close, which may account for the fact that Devin said one thing but then acted as if he hadn't just talked about ignoring that kind of talk. As is the case with all the racial aspects of this book, it's left to the reader to interpret.

With more of the information now falling into place, the reader knows that Socia is Roland's father, and that they had worked together with their respective gangs until recently. The reader will soon learn what caused the falling out. The fact that Socia and Roland are father and son makes the situation all the more volatile.

Devin predicts that there's going to be a gang war erupting soon and he predicts that Socia will win. He doesn't believe that Roland has enough people following him or that Roland's gang has enough experience to defeat Socia. That turns out to not be the case and Devin has underestimated Roland's ability to attract his father's gang members to his side.

## Discussion Question 1

Why do you believe Devin hits the man in the bar?



## Discussion Question 2

Describe the meeting between Socia and Patrick.

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Devin think Socia will win the gang war that's about to erupt?

## Vocabulary

disassociated, anachronism, expletive, aggravates, insomnia, induce, ponderous, pauper, empathy, deluded, superficial, minions, paternal, echelon, retaliate



# Chapters 21-23

## Summary

In Chapter 21, Patrick and Angie drop Bubba off near the abandoned warehouse where he lives. Patrick and Angie then return to the office and begin brainstorming, trying to figure out where Jenna might have hidden the rest of the photos. They rule out the safety deposit box, knowing that the police would have searched that as soon as they began investigating Jenna's death. They consider that she might have sent them to one of her sisters in Alabama but Patrick doesn't believe it's likely that she let the photos get too far out of her reach or that she trusted them to the mail. They recall hearing that Jenna had a lot of parking tickets and know that means she must have a car somewhere.

In Chapter 22, Patrick and Jenna track down a man named George Higby who works for the Registry of Motor Vehicles. It's Sunday so the office is closed but Angie finds George's home number and Patrick calls him. George says he can find the license plate number for Jenna's car and says he'll call them back shortly.

Patrick and Angie have a brief argument with Angie questioning Patrick's motivations. She wants to be certain that he's doing what he thinks is right and isn't trying to beat Mulkern because he is identifying Mulkern with Edgar Kenzie. Patrick denies that his father has anything to do with this but Angie doesn't believe him. They are interrupted by George's return phone call. He says Jenna has a blue Chevy Malibu and that it has a "Denver boot" on it. This is a yellow wheel cover that forces the driver to leave the car parked until some fine is paid. In Jenna's case, it's outstanding parking tickets. Patrick immediately remembers seeing Jerome and the others sitting on the Malibu at Jenna's apartment. When Patrick hangs up, he and Angie continue their conversation and Angie agrees that she'll follow whatever course Patrick chooses because he was the one who had to watch Jenna die.

Angie opens the car with a slim jim and they go through the car. They find a locker key in the ashtray under cigarette butts. The key is to locker 506 but they have no idea where the locker is. They agree they'll have to start going through lockers all over the area and that they'll begin the following morning.

In Chapter 23, the gang war begins. Curtis Moore is the first casualty. There's a small fire at the nurse's desk at the hospital and the officers guarding Curtis run to look. They return to the room to find Curtis is dead and the initials J.A., for Jenna Angeline, carved into his forehead. Members from both gang are killed over the next hours. The next morning, Devin demands that Patrick come to the police station. He cites the meeting with Socia and says he thinks Patrick knows more than he's telling. Patrick calls Richie who says the legislators were supposed to vote on the street terrorism bill today but they've called a recess and the State House is empty.



Angie picks up Patrick and they arrive at the police station where they are questioned by Devin and his partner, a black man named Oscar Lee. They play part of a tape for Patrick in which an informant wearing a wire is tortured and killed. Socia's voice is clearly on the tape. Devin says they never mentioned names on the tape and that it's almost impossible to get a conviction based only on a voice. Devin demands the rest of the photos and the original of the one Patrick has. Patrick says he is safer if he has the original. Oscar says Socia has too many other things to worry about at the moment but Patrick says he'll get all those things caught up and then he'll remember Patrick. He refuses to turn over the original.

It's evident that Devin and Oscar believe Patrick is serious and that they believe him when he says he doesn't know all the details of what's going on. Devin asks him what he thinks is going on. Patrick says the street terrorism bill that was supposed to come to a vote today might have something to do with it, but that the legislators have taken a day's recess, postponing the vote. Devin makes a phone call and discovers that Paulson was the one who called for the recess. He asks if Paulson has anything to do with it. Patrick answers that he "can't reveal the names of my client," which tells Devin and Oscar that Paulson is one of his clients.

Oscar and Devin walk Patrick and Angie to the door. They discuss the seriousness of the situation and Devin predicts there's going to be a storm. They urge Patrick and Angie to be careful. Devin suggests Patrick turn over what he has to Richie but Patrick says he isn't yet ready to do that.

## Analysis

There is a lengthy discussion between Angie and Patrick in Chapter 22 about their responsibilities and the ethics of how they're handling the investigation. They have basically asked George to misuse government property to find out about Jenna's car. Angie says they should call the police and give Devin the information, and should be treating their current case as a "dual investigation." Patrick points out that they were hired by Mulkern to find the document and that he could have gone to the police if he wanted the police involved. Angie says she knows that Patrick is afraid the police will find the information – whatever it is – and that they won't follow through with punishment for whatever crimes were committed. She doesn't seem to disagree but she wants Patrick to be honest with her about his motivations.

Another concern Angie expresses is that Patrick is trying to "get back at your father through Mulkern." While Angie doesn't know the depths of Patrick's hatred for his father, she undoubtedly knows some of it and realizes that Patrick might see this as an opportunity to do something to Mulkern. Angie says that if Patrick does take a move like that, she will end their partnership.

Devin is white and Oscar is black, and the two have been partners for years. They are very close. Patrick notes that they got divorced on the same day and each stopped paying alimony on the same day. They work very well together because of their devotion





to each other. It's evident that race doesn't matter to either of them and this explains Devin's reaction in the bar when he hit the man who was making racial comments.

When Devin and Oscar learn that Senator Paulson is one of Patrick's clients, they become even more serious than they already were. They now realize that this isn't just a gang war and that there's something deeper going on. As Patrick and Angie are leaving the police station, Oscar says he and Devin could wind up losing their badges. The reader will probably wonder why Oscar would think that, but then he and Devin go on to say that it's not always safe to battle against the government. They cite the adage about "bucking city hall" and say fighting the State House is "something else entirely." They cite the case of a cop who'd done that and someone planted drugs in his locker. The cop then "ate his gun," which probably means he was murdered in a way meant to make it look like suicide.

## Discussion Question 1

Describe the information Patrick and Angie have at this point and what the reader might think is happening.

## Discussion Question 2

Do you think Patrick and Angie are doing the right thing in their effort to get the justice Jenna sought or should they follow their clients' instructions and turn over what they find to Mulkern?

## Discussion Question 3

Describe Devin and Oscar.

## Vocabulary

cherubic, behemoth, mortification, trove, sensibilities, vengeance, coffer, graft, introspection, pristine, excruciating, horrified



# Chapters 24-26

## Summary

In Chapter 24, Patrick and Angie begin checking lockers. They note that there's a bald man tailing them and figure that he's only one of several. They also know that Bubba is somewhere close, watching their backs. They check several lockers before arriving at South Station, a historic train station. Both Patrick and Angie are surprised when Jenna's key opens locker 506. There is a gap bag inside and Patrick carries it in his hand as they head down the corridor.

The bald man is coming toward them when Patrick realizes he's made a mistake by having the bag visible. The bald man gets nearer to Patrick and Angie until Bubba shoots him. People run and some more young men begin shooting at Patrick and Angie. Bubba continues to be involved until one of the shoots Bubba "high in the chest." Police arrive and Patrick and Angie slip away in the crowd. They are upset about Bubba but know they can't help him right now and that they'll be detained if they stay. They catch a cab.

In Chapter 25, Patrick and Angie arrive at St. Bartholomew's and Angie lights a candle for Bubba. Angie predicts the police will figure out that Patrick and Angie were involved in the shootout at the train station, and that they'll arrive soon. She urges Patrick to open the bag.

There are 21 photos. All of them were taken in the same room from the same angle as the first. Paulson is naked in most and he's raping a "skinny black boy" who was no older than 10 or 11. The boy looks like he's in pain. Most of the photos are of the rape. Socia appears in a few of the photos. In one, he's holding the boy's head toward Paulson's chest. In the final photos, Paulson and Socia are having a drink together with the bed, tangled sheets, and the boy's leg visible. Patrick and Angie are horrified. Angie says that they will get justice for the little boy.

Patrick and Angie put the photos and their guns under a loose marble square in a confessional and go outside where Devin and Oscar are waiting. They are eating a burger on the hood of their car. They don't even stop chewing as they begin to read Patrick and Angie their rights, saying both of them are under arrest. Devin and Oscar keep Patrick and Angie waiting for hours without a phone call. Patrick isn't surprised. He says the interrogators will pretend the lines were all busy when they were brought in and that someone must have forgotten about it later.

Angie wants to know about Bubba but Patrick says the police won't offer any information because that would indicate they know Patrick and Angie were at the train station during the shootout. Devin and Oscar arrive and take Patrick and Angie to an interrogation room. Devin says he hasn't done anything with the photograph Patrick gave him. He says they can't locate Socia and that the photo will be one more thing to use against



him when he's finally caught. Oscar says Socia knows Patrick has the photos, which means he and Angie are in danger on the streets. Patrick refuses to remain at the police station.

In Chapter 26, Oscar and Devin take Patrick and Angie to the Lenox Hotel. As they are letting them out of the car, Devin says that Bubba has a broken collar bone and lost a lot of blood, but that he's going to be okay. Patrick and Angie get a room, shower, and go to sleep. Patrick has dreams about the boy in the photo and wakes to fireworks. Angie says it's 8 p.m. on the Fourth of July. They decide that they need their guns before they do anything else.

Patrick and Angie take a cab back to a spot within a few blocks of the church. They find some neighborhood boys hanging around and Patrick offers 100 dollars and some liquor for the use of two of their guns. In addition, the boys are to grab Patrick's car from its parking spot near his house. The boys agree. Patrick buys the liquor and hands it and the money over just before the boys return with the car. They say they are being chased and Patrick and Angie hurriedly get in and rush off just as two cars arrive. The men in the two cars begin shooting at Angie and Patrick, and Angie returns fire and one of the cars wrecks.

Patrick hits an unfamiliar neighborhood and winds up on a dead-end street with nowhere to go. They jump out of the car and begin running. They run through dilapidated tenement buildings, dodging bullets and returning fire. Angie fires into the car that's still chasing them and causes the car to crash. Patrick and Angie kill two of the men. A third is alive but injured. Patrick recognizes Roland. He says he will kill them. Patrick says Socia is the problem. Roland says members of Socia's gang, the Raven Saints, are moving over to the Avenging Angels.

Patrick looks closely at Roland and realizes that Roland is the child in the photographs. He begins to say so but Roland cuts him off, screaming threats. Angie says that they have to kill Roland or he'll eventually kill them, but neither Patrick nor Angie can bring themselves to pull the trigger. They walk away.

## Analysis

There's another example of the racism theme seen in Chapter 24 when Patrick and Angie are arrested after the shootout at the train station. There have been gang shootings and several deaths over the past few days and the police are working on them, but the investigation steps up with the shooting takes place at the train station. Patrick says it's because the police are more interested in putting a stop to the violence when it causes the average citizen to "stumble over their Louis Vuitton luggage to duck out of the way of gunfire."

In Chapter 26, Patrick finally realizes that Roland is the child in the photos. It's easy to see why Paulson and Socia don't want the pictures to come to light. Both of them are guilty of a crime. Roland is a victim but he's also the leader of a gang. If that gang knew



that he'd been victimized in this manner, they would lose respect for him. While victims of violent crimes are not to blame for the situations, Roland's gang wouldn't have any level of understanding. That's why Roland is trying to make sure the photos don't come to light.

When Patrick realizes that Roland is the child in the photos, Jenna's role in the situation becomes clearer. She learns that her son was raped and that her son's father helped the rapist. Jenna may realize at this point that Roland has become an angry leader of a gang at least partly because he was the victim of this brutal crime.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Describe the shootout at the train station. How does this affect the police interest in the gang war?

## **Discussion Question 2**

What is the reaction of Devin and Oscar when they learn the case may lead back to politicians? Are they right to be worried?

## **Discussion Question 3**

How does Patrick learn that Roland was the child in the photos?

## **Vocabulary**

ambiance, paltry, innocuous, impotent, wanton, oblivious, hypocrite, pious, dank, enshrouded, careened



# Chapters 27-29

## Summary

In Chapter 27, Patrick and Angie catch a bus back to their neighborhood. Both of them are bloody, injured, and ragged, and they get some cautious looks from others on the bus. Patrick then walks Angie home. He leaves her at her doorstep and picks up beer on his way to his house.

Patrick thinks about violence and the many things that drive men to become violent. He thinks about Roland and his anger toward his father. Patrick knows that Roland thinks his life will be better once he gets revenge on his father, but Patrick knows that won't really help him. Patrick looks at the scar on his stomach and remembers the night his father inflicted it.

Patrick's father was a firefighter and he was very aware of the power of fires in the house. He had baking soda near every point of possible ignition. He routinely inspected every cord and outlet and serviced every appliance to cut down on the possibility of an accidental fire. Patrick and his sister were home alone every evening while their parents worked. One evening, the children decided to cook fish. The pan began to smoke and then caught on fire. Patrick knew that he was supposed to douse the pan with baking soda but he panicked and poured the first liquid he could find, vodka. The kitchen was destroyed by the time the two children got the fire put out with fire extinguishers. Patrick's mother arrived home first. Not knowing what to do to curb her husband's anger, she went about her evening chores as usual. She was ironing when Edgar got home. He was enraged. He grabbed the hot iron and burned Patrick with it.

Patrick is still thinking about all this when the phone rings. It's Angie and she's obviously panicked. She wants Patrick to hurry over and says she thinks "I just got divorced."

In Chapter 28, Patrick arrives at Angie's house to find Devin, Oscar, and another police officer already present. Devin and Oscar had left word they were to be notified if police were called to either Angie's or Patrick's house or office. Devin is obviously happy about something and tells Patrick that Angie used a Taser on Phil. Oscar is also happy about the situation and says that Angie used the Taser twice, then "laid a beating" on Phil.

Phil is on the porch and is obviously hurt. He says he wants to press charges. Oscar and Devin begin talking to him and remind him that he'll have to go to court and tell everyone that Angie, a woman who is much smaller than Phil, beat him up. They suggest it will be talked about in the local bars. By the time they get done, Phil says he doesn't want to press charges and just wants Angie to leave. An officer brings Angie some of her clothes. Before they leave, Oscar says that Phil will be blamed if anything happens to Angie. Patrick says that "Bubba really misses you" and Phil is obviously shaken by that threat. Devin laughingly makes a comment about payback just as Phil throws up again. Then they all leave Phil alone.



In Chapter 29, Devin tells Patrick that most of Socia's men have moved their support to Roland. They drop Patrick and Angie off at Patrick's apartment with a promise that units will be patrolling all night in case of trouble.

Angie reveals what happened at home. She'd arrived, bloody and injured, and Phil immediately began accusing her of having an affair with Patrick, expressing no concern over her injuries. When he grabbed her, Angie retaliated. She says she's no longer willing to let him abuse her.

Socia calls and begs Patrick for the photos. He says Roland's men will kill him unless he has the photos as a bargaining chip. He pledges to take Patrick down before he dies, unless Patrick helps him. Patrick agrees to meet him. When Patrick and Angie arrive at the designated place, they find Socia is there with a very young boy named Eugene, apparently the only member of his gang who is still standing by his side. Socia tries to explain his action regarding Roland by saying Jenna took Roland away from him and refused to let him see his son. He says Jenna was trying to make Roland look at religion for answers. Angie and Patrick are disgusted. Socia pledges to leave Patrick alone if Patrick hands over the pictures. Patrick has copies with him and Socia looks at them, saying Roland "could have been a movie star." He doesn't mind that they're copies, saying Roland will leave him alone as long as Socia can threaten to make the photos public.

Eugene makes a move and Patrick tries to stop him, but Eugene gets off shots before Patrick can take the gun. Socia falls to the ground. He is alive, holding his stomach. He asks Eugene how much Roland payed him to turn. He then stands and pledges to kill Eugene. He begins gathering up the photos and asks Patrick how many there were.

Patrick struggles to contain his emotions. He's tired of the hate and the violence, and of the people willing to turn to violence without a second thought. He knows that Socia won't change and is sickened by his attitude. He stares at Socia and Angie, reading his thoughts, says that he should "do it." Patrick shoots Socia in the chest then he and Angie both shoot him at the same time, killing him. Patrick chooses a specific photo and puts it in Socia's pocket. He tells Eugene to go home and Eugene leaves.

## Analysis

When Angie is headed home after the encounter with Roland's gang, she and Patrick talk about her current situation. She's a victim of domestic abuse but she doesn't fight back. She remembers how her life was when Phil was still a reasonable person, before the difficulties of life turned him into an abusive drunk. Patrick can understand her thoughts. He was the victim of abuse at the hands of his father. That abuse was often violent and went on for years. Patrick wanted to do something about it but he never fought back, even when he was nearing adulthood.

Phil's abusive behavior is common knowledge and that's why Devin and Oscar find it so funny that Angie finally stood up for herself with such dramatic results. It seems likely



that Phil will file charges but Devin and Oscar talk to him about the ramifications. They seem to be talking him into filing the charges, saying that's "one way to handle it." In fact, they know Phil very well. They know that he's a tough guy and that his reputation is very important to him. He won't like the idea that people will be talking about the fact that Angie beat him up. It's a statement of his character that he doesn't mind people knowing he beats on Angie but doesn't want anyone to know when the situation changes.

When Angie and Patrick reach Patrick's apartment, they talk about the events of the evening and Angie reveals details about the fight she had with Phil. She says that she's done with Phil and that he has effectively killed the love she had for him. Patrick knows that she's angry and hurt at the moment, and that she'll find moments in the future where she remembers the love she had for Phil. He knows she'll struggle with that for a long time. Patrick has more sympathy for Angie than most men would because he was a victim of his father's abuse.

The scene between Patrick, Angie, Socia, and Eugene is chaotic and conflicting. Eugene seems to be one of the last members of Socia's gang who is loyal to Socia, but it turns out that he's just waiting for the opportunity to kill Socia himself. It may be that he's acting on Roland's orders but it seems more likely that he's acting on his own because he believes that Roland wants Socia dead. If Patrick hadn't interrupted, Eugene would probably have killed Socia. Socia's main mistake was thinking that Patrick and Angie wouldn't kill him. Both Patrick and Angie know that Socia is a psychopath who won't change, and that there will probably come a time when he's ready to kill them as well. It's left to the reader to decide whether Patrick and Angie acted reasonably.

## Discussion Question 1

Describe the fight between Angie and Phil. Why doesn't Phil press charges?

## Discussion Question 2

Do you think Patrick and Angie were justified in killing Socia? Compare their actions in this scene with their actions when they could have killed Roland but chose not to.

## Discussion Question 3

What do you see as the most important theme of the book? Give examples of that theme.

## Vocabulary

cynically, expectations, depravity, burgeoned, contusions, lesions, withering, scorn, tactician





# Chapters 30-33

## Summary

In Chapter 30, Patrick remembers the final week of his father's life. The cancer caused him to lose down to 112 pounds. He asked if Patrick loved him and Patrick didn't respond. Edgar asked about forgiveness but Patrick said Edgar "used it all up." Patrick then realized that he'd been hoping for some explanation about the abuse and that it wasn't going to happen.

In Chapter 31, Patrick and Angie meet Mulkern and Jim Vurnan at the Hyatt Regency at 1:30 a.m. on July 5. Patrick hands Mulkern the bill for his services, then says that Curtis Moore began watching Patrick's apartment almost immediately after Mulkern hired him. He asks if it was Mulkern who told him to, or if it was Paulson. Patrick asks if Mulkern knew about the rape. Patrick hands over the photos, all originals, and demands that Mulkern sign the check, paying for the services. Patrick says one photograph is missing. He says Paulson can probably tell him which one. He says he'll tell Mulkern where it is if Mulkern pays the bill.

Mulkern signs the check and hands it over, then demands the photo. Patrick says he promised to say where it is, not hand it over. Angie points to Richie, who is standing nearby. Patrick says the good news is that Mulkern doesn't have to pay Richie. Mulkern threatens to "ruin" Patrick's business. Patrick says he can walk over to Richie and show him the check that Mulkern paid in an effort to keep Patrick quiet about Mulkern's involvement.

In Chapter 32, Patrick and Angie try to talk to Richie but he's distracted, making notes on a small tape recorder for his upcoming article. They part knowing that Richie was going to break the story.

At Patrick's apartment, Angie says that they killed Socia. Patrick agrees. They evaluate the act and Patrick says Socia "morally repulsed" them." Angie counters, saying lots of people fit that bill. They talk more, about the fact that Socia was black while Paulson is white, and that Socia's death will be chalked up to the gang war but that they'd go to jail if they tried to kill Paulson.

In Chapter 33, Patrick recounts the one photo he'd given to Richie. Paulson and Socia are clearly visible. Paulson is involved in the sexual act and it's obvious the victim is a male child, but his face is out of the frame, meaning no one will know Roland was the child. Angie and Patrick watch some of the news coverage. Police have given Paulson a deadline to turn himself in. Angie and Patrick visit Bubba in the hospital. He's recovering well.

Angie and Patrick encounter Roland. He knows that Patrick and Angie killed Socia and asks if they did in the hope that Roland wouldn't come looking for them. Patrick answers



honestly, that he hadn't thought about anything at that moment except how much he hated Socia. Roland says he realizes that Patrick went out of his way to keep Roland's photo out of the public eye. He says he didn't ask for that and doesn't owe Patrick anything for it. He then says that he no longer really has any interest in killing Patrick. He walks away, leaving Angie and Patrick alone. They hold hands as they head back toward their own part of town.

## Analysis

During their brief time together, Jenna talked to Patrick about being needed. She said that was an important part of life and the person who is needed should take special care of the person who needs them. One aspect of this is that Jenna's son, Roland, needed his mother to protect him. It's easy to say that Jenna fell down on that front and that she failed the person who needed her most. But Patrick says at the end of the book that no one needed Jenna and Roland agrees. That makes it seem that Jenna was talking about a different kind of need, with a person demonstrating need and appreciating another person. In that regard, Roland didn't need his mother but that's probably because his father did so much damage to him at such a young age.

Jenna was, at least to some degree, a victim of circumstances. She was Roland's mother and, for a time, was an important influence in his life. She apparently took him to church and tried to help him see that religion could be an answer to the trials of life. Her good intentions weren't sufficient to keep Roland safe and the abuse turned him into a gang leader willing to kill. Some readers may think Jenna should have done something different but the full story isn't revealed. Jenna may have been unable to fight Socia and she may simply have been incapable of protecting herself or Roland from Socia's abuse and influence.

Roland believes that he'll get over some of his hurt and anger if he kills Socia. That makes it seem unlikely that Roland convinced Eugene to try to kill Socia. Patrick lived through years of abuse and also believed that he'd find some solace in his father's death, even though he didn't cause it. Patrick learned the hard way that Edgar's death didn't bring him any peace and he knows that Roland wouldn't have found peace simply by killing Roland.

## Discussion Question 1

Did Jenna fail as Roland's mother or do you think she was a victim too? Support your answer.

## Discussion Question 2

Why does Roland want to be the one to kill Socia? Do you think he's right?



## Discussion Question 3

What does Patrick know about Roland's pain?

## Vocabulary

mussed, encroach, staid, quaint, insinuated, castigation, maim, utilitarian, extortion, suppositions



# Characters

## Patrick Kenzie

Patrick Kenzie is a private investigator who believes in doing the right thing. He has solved cases before this and is moderately successful in his business. He is single and lives alone but is obviously in love with his married partner, Angie Gennaro. Patrick is glib but can be serious when need be.

When Patrick meets with Senator Mulkern and Senator Paulson for the first time, he agrees to find a missing cleaning woman, Jenna Angeline. They tell him that she stole some sensitive documents and that they just want their property back. Patrick successfully locates Jenna but has an inclination that there's more to the story than Mulkern and Paulson revealed. He agrees to take a look at Jenna's evidence before alerting Mulkern and Paulson that he's found her. This is an important look at Patrick's character because he ultimately wants to do what's right, even when that means he might not get paid for his work up to this point. He also has a sense about things and people, and he senses that there's more to this story than he's been told.

Patrick is skilled and resourceful as well. He manages to evade a half dozen gang members who are chasing him through a section of old tenements. He and Angie also get away at a train station when they are involved in a shoot out. His past cases have put him in a position of knowing a lot of valuable people and many of these are devoted to him, helping whenever possible.

Another important aspect of his character is seen when he kills Marion Socia. He shoots Marion and later agrees with Angie that they'd literally murdered him in cold blood. Patrick is convinced that Marion was a scourge on society and that he wouldn't change. While he felt that he'd done wrong on one level, he also felt he'd done the right thing.

## Angela Gennaro

Angie is a partner in Patrick's private investigation service. She and Patrick have been friends for years and she is married to Phil, a man who was friends with both Angie and Patrick when they were young but who has turned into an abusive drunk. Angie is tough and can handle herself in dangerous situations, but she remembers Phil when he was kind and loving, and she can't bring herself to stand up to him until he jumps on her the night after she and Patrick are almost killed by Roland's gang. She is bleeding when she arrives home and Phil expresses no concern before accusing her of sleeping with Patrick. She uses a taser on him and then beats him brutally, then packs up and goes home with Patrick.

Angie is initially upset when Patrick wants to wait before turning Jenna Angeline over to Senator Mulkern but she is willing to listen to his logic. She accepts that he generally has good instincts and she often follows him, but she also thinks for herself and isn't



afraid to object if she disagrees. When Angie and Patrick are facing Marion Socia and it becomes clear that he's never going to change his predatory ways, she nods her agreement that they should kill him. She participates in the killing, which could be termed murder. Later, she points out that they killed Marion in cold blood. She also points out that Marion and Paulson were equally guilty in the rape of Roland when he was just a child. She seems to struggle with the fact that they doled out that kind of justice to the black man while the white man would likely escape relatively unscathed.

Angie is obviously as attracted to Patrick as he is to her, but she tries to keep their relationship in check because she's married to Phil. When she leaves Phil, she goes to Patrick's house but the recent events makes it impossible for them to think about anything but the case. The book ends with their relationship unresolved but it seems likely they will become romantically involved now that Angie is free.

## Senator Sterling Mulkern

Senator Mulkern is the driving force that hires Patrick to find the “documents” that Jenna Angeline apparently stole from Senator Paulson's office. He is an older man who knew Patrick's family when Patrick was young. When it becomes clear that Patrick knows that Paulson raped Roland, Senator Mulkern tries to convince Patrick that Paulson is really a “good politician” and that the rape is “old news.” He reluctantly pays Patrick's bill then is furious when he discovers that Patrick has given the story to reporter Richie Colgan.

## Senator Brian Paulson

Paulson is a friend of Senator Sterling Mulkern and is in the first meeting that takes place with Patrick. Paulson calls for a break on the day the Senate is supposed to vote on a street terrorism bill that would give law enforcement a new tool to fight gang violence. The photos prove that Paulson raped Roland Socia when Roland was a young child. As the story comes to an end, he is still hiding from police but detectives have given him a deadline to turn himself in.

## Jenna Angeline

Jenna is Roland's mother and Marion's wife, and she worked as a cleaning lady in political offices until she found the photos in Senator Paulson's office. She hid the photos and then hid out until Patrick finds her. She tells Patrick that she has some important information but won't tell him what. She agrees to give him one piece of the information, apparently to test his willingness to follow through with the right course of action. When she hands Patrick the piece of paper, she's shot down by a gang member. She dies before she can tell Patrick what else exists and where to find it.



## Bubba Rogowski

Bubba is something of a redneck but he is devoted to Patrick and Angie. He has lots of guns and other weapons and lives in an abandoned warehouse that he's booby trapped against intruders. He guards Patrick and Angie after they become caught up in the case. He steps out of the crowd and shoots at least two gang members who are trying to kill Patrick and Angie at the train station. Bubba is shot but survives.

## Richie Colgan

Richie is a black man who is a reporter for one of Boston's top newspapers. He is an honest man and anxious to report what he considers to be important news. He is especially focused on politics and is excited when he gets the story Paulson raping Roland.

## Marion Socia

Marion Socia is the father of Roland Socia and leader of the Raven Saints. He is a brutal man with no conscience. He forced his son to have sex with a politician when Roland was very young. Marion's gang began a war with Roland's gang, ending in more than a dozen dead and several wounded. Marion realizes he is going to die at Roland's hands and begs Patrick to hand over the photos of Roland's rape, planning to use them as leverage to force Roland to back off. Patrick and Angie kill Marion.

## Phil

Phil is Angie's husband. He is an abusive man and routinely beats Angie until she has finally had enough and fights back. When that happens, she hits him twice with a taser and then beats him, leaving multiple bruises and other injuries. When officers point out that everyone is going to know that Angie beat him up if he presses charges, he decides to let the matter drop.

## Roland

Roland is the son of Marion Socia and Jenna Angeline. He is leader of the Savage Saints, a gang that rivals Marion's gang, the Raven Saints. Roland is brutally raped when he is a very young boy and he harbors a great deal of rage after that event. His father arranged for the rape and Senator Paulson was the rapist. Roland wants to kill Marion to get revenge but he doesn't get the change. Roland is willing to kill in order to keep the photos secret because he doesn't want others to know that he was a rape victim. He sets out to kill Patrick and Angie because they have the photos. After Patrick and Angie release a photo that doesn't include Roland's face, he announces that he



really doesn't have any desire to kill them anymore and suggests they all forget each other.

## **Devin Amronklin**

Devin is a detective assigned to the anti-gang unit. He knows Patrick well and becomes involved in the case when it becomes obvious that Jenna's discovery and her death have sparked a gang war. It's Devin who offers to buy Patrick and Angie "a drink before the war" begins. Devin shows up at Angie's house when she has the fight with Phil and is obviously happy to see that she's finally stopped taking Phil's abuse. He is a tough detective but a good guy who believes in doing what's right, even if it isn't exactly by the books.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## The First Photo

The first piece of information Jenna provides to Patrick is a photograph of Brian Paulson, probably before he was elected to the Senate, and a black man Patrick later identifies as Socia. Paulson is wearing boxer shorts and is apparently in a hotel.

## The Missing Documents

Senator Mulken hires Patrick and Angie to find documents that he claims Jenna stole from Senator Paulson's office. These “documents” turn out to be photographs of Senator Paulson raping Roland while Roland's father, Marion, looks on, sometimes forcing Roland into a different position.

## The Raven Saints

This is the gang Curtis Moore belongs to and that is run by Marion Socia.

## The Angel Avengers

This is the gang run by Roland that's a direct threat to the Raven Saints.

## The Hero

Patrick refers to his father as “the Hero” because of a story that ran about him saving two children from a burning building. His name is Edgar Kenzie and he was a firefighter. Despite the public fame, he was brutal to Patrick as a child. Patrick's relationship with his father gives him a strong understanding of Roland's hatred of Marion Socia.

## Harold

Harold is a giant stuffed panda bear that Patrick intended as a gift for Angie. Patrick places the bear by the window in his apartment and hopes that it will look like he is sitting there while he attempts to sneak up on the man watching his apartment.

## The 1959 Porsche Roadster

This is Patrick's car that he uses only occasionally. He's driving it the night he finds Jenna and worries that someone will damage it or try to steal it while it's parked out in the open on the street in front of Jenna's sister's house.





## **The Ashtray in Jenna's Car**

This is where Patrick and Angie find the key to the locker where Jenna hid the photographs. A series of clues bring Patrick to this spot, indicating his skill as a detective.

## **The Street Terrorism Bill**

This is a bill that's proposed to the Legislature that will address aspects of gang activities. The bill is designed to give law enforcement a new tool to help fight gang violence. Paulson is a major supporter of the bill but it's Paulson who calls for a holiday recess that puts the vote off. It initially seems that this is the bill that's important to Paulson and Mulkern, but it becomes evident that the child molestation bill, which would call for a mandatory 7-year sentence for Paulson's crime, is more important.

## **Locker 506**

This is a locker at South Station, the train station where Patrick and Angie become involved in a gun fight. This is the locker where Jenna hid the photos of Roland, Socia, and Paulson.



# Settings

## Patrick's Office

Patrick's office is located in the bell tower of St. Bartholomew's Church. He serves as something like a security force for the church but there really isn't much need for his services in that capacity. The bell is missing, and that's become a joke among those who know about it. The office is small with just enough room for their two desks and the necessary office equipment.

## Dorchester

This is a neighborhood in Boston where Patrick lives, but there are two very distinct sections of the community, divided along racial lines. The white side of the neighborhood is populated by people who have lived there for a long time and who have a strong sense of community that makes them remain, sometimes even if they have the financial means to leave. The black side of Dorchester is populated by people who live there because they can't afford to get out. This is a typical poor neighborhood of Boston with stores, rundown houses, and violence.

## Boston

The majority of the action is set in Boston. The author notes at the beginning of the story that he has taken liberties in his descriptions so that not all the places actually exist or are accurately described. There are lots of specific settings within the city, including the Ritz-Carlton, Dorchester, St. Bartholomew's Church, the train station, and Patrick's home and office. The descriptions of places in the city seem realistic and are appropriate to the story.

## South Station

This is a train station where the shootout occurs. Patrick, Angie, and Bubba fight with several members of a gang after Patrick and Angie find the photos in Jenna's locker. The police become much more active in their efforts to stop the gang war after this incident and Patrick believes it's because the gangs have brought the fight to places where average citizens live.

## Patrick's Home

Patrick's apartment very near his office at St. Bartholomew's Church. The apartment overlooks a playground and that's where Curtis Moore was the first time Patrick saw him. The apartment is normal and typical for that time and place.



# Themes and Motifs

## Racism

Racism is an important theme seen throughout the book and that theme becomes more pronounced as the war between the rival gangs escalate. There are several shootouts during the early part of this war and they get news coverage, but that coverage is ramped up when the fight takes place in the train station. Everyone notices that the situation gains that increased attention because the war is no longer confined to the black neighborhoods and has now touched the lives of the white population of Boston.

These black and white neighborhoods are another example of this theme. There's a big difference between "Jenna Angeline's Dorchester" and the Dorchester where Patrick grew up. There's a clear line between the black part of the neighborhood and the white part, and there's no intermingling. Patrick notes that the people in the white Dorchester have a strong sense of community and they remain there because of that. Even if their financial situation changes, they are apt to stay. The people in the black Dorchester don't have that same loyalty to the community. They live there because they're poor. If their situation changes so they have more money, they don't think twice about leaving the neighborhood behind. They simply walk away and are glad they can.

Another example is seen when Patrick is being chased by Roland and members of his gangs. He considers himself open minded when it comes to race and he notices racism in others. He is disgusted when he sees the men at the bar counting the number of black players on football teams and using racial slurs. However, when he's being chased by the gang members, he finds himself using those same racial slurs. At that point, he really fears that he's going to be killed, but he is still surprised that his mind would go to that level of racism, even in that situation.

Bubba is another example of this theme. Bubba is a typical redneck with a huge attitude about race. When he sees the news coverage of Patrick after the shootout that ended in Jenna's death, Bubba telephones Patrick's house and leaves a message that he wants to go the next time Patrick is involved in a similar situation. He uses racial slurs to describe the situation. Though Patrick isn't prone to racism, he knows that Bubba will never change his attitude and he makes a joke about it. He says that "Hitler might have won the war with Bubba at his side."

The other side of this theme is seen in the attitudes of some of the black character of the book. Roland and Marion each tout the role of whites in keeping the blacks oppressed. Both are filled with violence and hate. Marion says that Jenna tried to teach Roland a different way of life and he is obviously angry about Jenna's attitude. This seems out of place for Marion because he forced his own son to submit to rape by a white man. It seems that if Marion had truly believed that race was a factor in his situation, he would have refused to let a white man touch his son.



## The Effects of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence plays an important role in the book with several of the characters as victims of domestic violence in their homes. Roland is arguably the most important example of this theme. Roland was raped by Brian Paulson when Roland was a pre-teen boy. Paulson was not a relative but Roland's father, Marion Socia, forced Roland into the role. Socia, as Roland's father, should be protecting Roland instead of putting him in a situation to be hurt. He fails in this duty and irrevocably harms Roland. Patrick talks to Roland just before the end of the story and says that Socia's actions made Roland into what he is at this point in his life – a 16-year-old killing machine. Roland says that's true and he seems proud of the fact, which is another indication of the long-term impact of that abuse.

Angie is another example of this theme. She is married to Phil, a man she has known for many years. She and Phil have a history together and it's that history that makes Angie remain with Phil through years of abuse. Patrick talks about seeing bruises that indicate Phil has been on yet another drunken rage. Angie says that she remembers their life together before Phil became an abuser. She loved Phil then and she holds on to the hope that Phil will change back into the loving man she knew then. She believes they'll be happy again if she can just hold on that long. That's seldom the case in abusive relationships but Angie can't bring herself to give up that hope.

Phil is, in the eyes of the law, a victim of domestic violence when Angie finally says she's had enough and uses a Taser on him. Angie has just returned home from a brutal evening, including being shot at and almost dying at the hands of Roland's gang. Phil starts a fight the moment she walks in the door and Angie retaliates. She uses the Taser and then beats him. In the eyes of the law, she could be arrested, even though everyone knows about Phil's abuse of Angie. However, Devin and Oscar talk to Phil, pointing out that people are going to know Angie beat him up, and Phil decides not to press charges.

Finally, Patrick is an example of this theme. Patrick lived with an abusive father for years and carries the emotional and physical scars of that abuse. The emotional scars are the most difficult for Patrick to deal with. He talks about the final days of his father's life, and of sitting by Edgar's bed in the hope that he would have some sort of explanation for the abuse. Patrick comes to realize that there isn't an explanation and that he won't ever have the answers that would help him deal with the memories.

Patrick's physical scars are more evident to the outsider. The most notable of these is a huge scar on his stomach. He let a fire get out of control and his father, a firefighter, was so angry that he held a hot iron on Patrick's stomach. Patrick never tells anyone the truth about the scar, which is an indication of how much the domestic abuse hurt him.



## Reactions to Hardships

Patrick notes that Jenna and Simone have a look about them that indicates they are trapped. He talks about their appearance, and says one of them looks like a cat that's pushed into a corner, demonstrating "the odd mixture of terror and resilient bravery."

They are typical of people in this situation. Later, Patrick says that the people who live in the poor neighborhoods "aren't born weary and beaten, they get that way." He's talking about the way their hard lives cause them to react.

Jenna has not had an easy life. The reader doesn't know many details about her life with Socia but, considering the kind of person Socia is, it seems likely that it was filled with brutality and cruelty. At some point during Roland's youth, Jenna tries to keep Roland away from Socia. She is undoubtedly trying to protect him from that lifestyle and from Socia's brutality. She takes Roland to church and Socia says that Jenna tried to make Roland into a different kind of person. Jenna fails, but at least she tries. She holds a job as a cleaning lady. It's not a luxurious life, but she earns her own money and apparently tries to make a life for herself. When she finds the photos, she could have demanded a payoff from Paulson. She might have survived and she might have justified her action in the hope that she could take Roland away from this life altogether. She doesn't. She wants justice, which indicates the kind of person she is, despite the hardships of her life.

Simone's life has probably not been easy, either, but she has carved out a place for herself to the best of her ability. Patrick is amazed when he walks into her house for the first time. He notes that the outside of the house doesn't look like much but that the inside is nice. Simone has an eye for making a house into a home and she's done that, probably without much money and certainly without any professional help. Patrick says the décor isn't expensive but that it's pleasing.

Phil Gennaro is another example of this theme. Phil, Patrick, and Angie grew up as friends. They were all from the same neighborhood with similar backgrounds, which means it's reasonable to expect that they would grow into adults with similar attitudes. That's not the case. Phil begins drinking to excess and he is jealous and angry most of the time. Angie often shows up at work with bruises Phil left on her during an argument that turned physical. He has no compunction against beating Angie, sometimes brutally. While it's likely that Phil was beaten as a child, it's not necessary that he would follow that pattern of abuse. Patrick talks about the brutality of his father but he has not turned into the kind of adult who would beat the person he loves.

## The Relationship between Patrick and Angie

Patrick and Angie grew up together and were friends long before they began their partnership. They were also friends with Phil, and that three-way friendship apparently only became awkward after Phil began abusing Angie. There isn't any information about when Patrick fell in love with Angie, but it's clear that the feeling is mutual. Angie may be



turning to Patrick at least partly because he is available and wants to protect her, something she's lacking in her marriage.

Angie doesn't like that she's attracted to Patrick while she's married to Phil. Patrick often calls her "gorgeous" and makes sexual innuendos. He doesn't explain his reasons for these remarks but it seems that he is demonstrating his feelings in the only way he feels is appropriate. He tries to make them sound teasing but it may be that he is using the only option available to express that he cares for her. At one point, Angie says that she wants him to stop. She says that she's dealing with a lot of men who are rude and uncaring, and that Patrick's remarks aren't welcome right then. Patrick admits that it's become second nature and says he isn't certain he can stop, but he promises to try. He doesn't do very well at that promise, but it seems that he does try to curb the impulses after learning that it makes her unhappy.

Another aspect of their relationship is seen in their ability to work as a unit. When Roland's men are chasing them, Patrick drives onto a dead-end street with no way out. They barely glance at each other and don't discuss their next move at all. As once, they jump out of the car and run for cover. They work together to get out of the situation and survive because of their combined efforts.

They are also both devoted to doing what's right and depend on each other for support. When Patrick begins to suspect that there's something deeper than stolen documents involved in Jenna's story, he pushes Angie to wait until the following day to decide what they'll do next. Angie forces Patrick to talk about his motives, but she then backs him. Later, when they first see the photos of Roland being raped, Angie agrees that they will get justice for Jenna and for Roland. They are united in this cause and work together to attain it.

Another example of this relationship is seen when they kill Socia. Socia is cruel and won't ever change. He is not at all ashamed of what he did to his son and is only interested in having the photos so that he can force Roland to stop trying to kill him. He continues to talk while Patrick and Angie have guns trained on him and says that Roland was so handsome that he could have become a movie star. It's not a compliment and both Angie and Patrick are sickened by his attitude and his words. Patrick is on the verge of shooting Socia and Angie tells him that they should. Later, they talk about the fact that they literally murdered Socia and about their feelings and motivations. They come to terms with the action, apparently accepting that Socia was a scourge on society and that they had the chance to do something about that.

## **Distrust of the Government**

Patrick makes it clear from early in the book that he doesn't trust government or politicians. When Angie asks if he has all the details about the case, he says that they are working with politicians, which means they undoubtedly don't have all the information. He makes a joke about it, saying, "The day they tell the whole truth is the day hookers put out for free." He further exhibits this attitude when he finds Jenna. He



and Angie locate Jenna fairly quickly and, by the terms of their agreement with Mulkern, they should have notified Mulkern and turned Jenna over immediately. Patrick doesn't do that. He says that he believes there's more to Jenna's story than Mulkern admitted and he wants to find out what that is.

Patrick exemplifies this theme in another way. He talks to Angie about the fact that people set themselves up to be fooled by the government by allowing the government to take care of them without question. He compares it to the role of a child and a parent, with the father saying that "daddy" will take care of them. He says the government and the politicians don't respect the people because the people play the role of "molested children." The "children" accept that the government is doing wrong and let it go on as long as the politicians give lip service, claiming that they love their constituents.

Richie Colgan is another example of this theme. He is a reporter for one of the local newspapers. It's a major publication with a lot of influence in the Boston area. Richie has devoted himself to exposing corruption in government and he has focused a lot of time and attention on Mulkern. Richie has exposed this corruption through editorials and articles, and he continues to work at it though he has critics. He is so effective that Mulkern asks Patrick to speak to Richie in the hope that Richie will ease up. Patrick almost tells Richie about that conversation but knows that Richie would use it in an article to further rattle Mulkern. Richie is extremely focused on telling the stories of politicians and doesn't hesitate when Patrick brings him into the situation involving Paulson and Mulkern.

Devin and Oscar are also examples of this theme. When they learn that Paulson is one of Patrick's clients and that Paulson called for the delayed vote on the street gang bill, they realize that the situation could become dangerous for them. They say that it's one thing to fight city hall, but that fighting the state government is another thing entirely. They talk about the case of an officer who had something on a politician, but didn't reveal the details. Before the officer could make his case, someone found drugs in the officer's locker. A short time later, the officer committed suicide. They are hinting that the officer's death was only made to look like a suicide. It's important to note that most of these characters are willing to put themselves on the line to do what's right, even when it looks dangerous.

# Styles

## Point of View

The story is written in first person from the limited perspective of Patrick Kenzie. The limited perspective is necessary for the author to keep the reader guessing about the details of the mystery that unfolds in pieces throughout the book. For example, Jenna knows all the information. In the photos, Jenna's son is the rape victim and her son's father is helping hold the boy down during the rape. She is also the person who hid the photos, so she knows where the others are located. The reader doesn't see anything from her perspective other than the conversations she has with Patrick during their brief time together. That means the reader doesn't know anything other than the few pieces of information Jenna gives Patrick.

As a rule, the reader learns everything that Patrick knows, in the time he knows it. An exception to this is seen in the final scene between Patrick and Senator Mulkern. Patrick has already planned how he's going to address the situation with Mulkern in order to get paid for his work but the reader doesn't see that plan until the scene plays out in the story.

Patrick seems to be a reliable perspective though he sometimes covers up details with humor. For example, he talks about his choice of a gun very early in the story. He carries a large gun and says that it's only because he is such a poor shot that he needs something that will do a great deal of damage even with his erratic ability. The fact that he's willing to admit that he's a poor marksman indicates that he doesn't try to put himself in a better light.

## Language and Meaning

The book is written in modern English and the reader with an average vocabulary will find few unfamiliar words. The story is divided between dialogue and narrative. Some memories and historical information is presented as narrative. The dialogue and language seem appropriate to the story, the characters, and the setting.

The author uses several literary themes and analogies are the most common. These analogies are obviously meant to be witty and engaging. For the most part, the reader open to this kind of humor will find they hit the mark. For example, Patrick is jaded about elected officials. He says, "The day they tell the whole truth is the day hookers put out for free." Most of these analogies are meant to be funny. There are other pieces of humor spread throughout the story. In the early pages of the book, Senator Mulkern says that he has "a conundrum." Patrick notes that everyone sits in silence for a moment because they're all amazed that they know someone who throws a word like conundrum casually into a conversation. In another scene, Patrick notes that Angie is





rifling through her purse and he says that she's probably looking for “a misplaced microwave or an old car.”

There are some references to pop culture. The average reader will recognize these and will be able to understand the reference and the context. For example, Patrick talks about Bubba, who is a large man. He is a racist and doesn't like many people. However, he does like Patrick and Angie and is willing to go to great lengths to protect them. At one point, Angie makes a joke about the assault rifle Bubba is carrying under his coat. He laughs and Patrick says he looks “like the Cowardly Lion.” Patrick half expects Bubba to say, “Aww, g'won,” which is the famous line from that character in “The Wizard of Oz.”

## Structure

The book is divided into 33 chapters of varying length. The chapters are titled only by number, meaning there is no hint about the events that happen in that section. The first chapter offers introductions of some of the book's most important characters and begins laying the groundwork for the mystery Patrick and Angie will solve.

The book opens with a one-page monologue that isn't identified at all. There is no title and this page is not listed on the table of contents. The book is written from Patrick's point of view but he isn't yet identified in this section. He says that his “earliest memories involve fire” and he talks about the fact that his father, a fireman, would wake him up late to watch the news. Sometimes, there were stories about local fires and Patrick would see his father rushing by the scene of a burning building. Sometimes, the stories were about fires in distant places. The monologue abruptly turns to the previous year in Boston, when many people died. Patrick says that some of those who died were innocent and that he was among those who killed. He says he will always remember.

The story then drops back to the beginning of the events of this story, and the majority of the story from that point are in chronological order. The main exception to this is seen in Patrick's memories of his childhood and his relationship with his father. Patrick has an ugly scar on his stomach and Patrick's memories explain how he got that scar and gives some details about his relationship with his father.

The book stands alone but there are several references to other books in the series. Characters introduced in previous books are seen in various scenes and in various roles. The author reintroduces these characters adequately and the reader who hasn't read those previous books will have at least a basic understanding of these characters. There are several characters who are introduced as having a previous relationship with Patrick and some of these have appeared in other books. For example, Cheswick is a successful attorney who helps Patrick whenever he's needed. Patrick wouldn't be able to afford Cheswick's retainer under normal circumstances but he helped Patrick with a case and now Cheswick represents Patrick for free any time Patrick needs him.



## Quotes

When I drive through my neighborhood, I see poor, but I don't see poverty. Driving into Jenna's neighborhood, I saw a lot of poverty.”

-- Patrick (chapter 3 paragraph 7)

**Importance:** Patrick is making the distinction between the white neighborhood and the black neighborhood of this area of Boston. He talks about a clear line between the two and the differences between the people who live on each side of that line.

Everyone loved Richie Colgan – until they ran his picture over his byline.”

-- Patrick (chapter 5 paragraph 8)

**Importance:** Patrick says that people thought Richie was Irish because of his name until they saw his picture. Prior to that, most people applauded his efforts to expose political corruption and wrongdoing. After that, many of those same people called him a troublemaker.

Documents,' she said again. 'Well, OK, call them what you will.'”

-- Jenna (chapter 9 paragraph 7)

**Importance:** Patrick has told Jenna he's supposed to retrieve the documents she stole from Paulson's office and this is the first time Patrick learns that Jenna didn't steal some papers. She calls them “things” and it's not until she comes out of the bank that Patrick discovers they are actually photos.

I think we're going to turn out all right, Kenzie. Maybe the two of us got some justice while we're at it.”

-- Jenna (chapter 10 paragraph 102)

**Importance:** Jenna suddenly expresses trust in Patrick, which is difficult for someone like Jenna. She makes it clear that she wants to be certain she gets justice for those who did wrong in the photos. It's some time before Patrick realizes exactly why Jenna feels that way.

There's a bar around the corner. Lemme buy you a drink before the war.”

-- Devin (chapter 18 paragraph 50)

**Importance:** Devin has just told Patrick and Angie the background behind Roland and Socia, including that they are now seriously fighting and that a gang war is about to erupt. The book's title is taken from this comment.

My theory is this – people like that, you got two choices: you either kill 'em or you let 'em be, because you'll never change their minds. I figure the folks in this neighborhood are just too tired to kill 'em.”

-- Devin (chapter 18 paragraph 69)



**Importance:** There are two important points in this statement. Devin is talking about a man who is constantly making racial slurs and says that some people want to try to change the mind of a racist, but that person will never change. The other point is that the people who would stand up to the man are so overwhelmed by racism that they just don't fight it.

You don't want the police to get their hands on this, not because you're afraid of what they'll do with it. You're afraid of what they won't do.”

-- Angie (chapter 22 paragraph 65)

**Importance:** Angie is forcing Patrick to face his motivations regarding the information Jenna has in her possession. Angie agrees with Patrick once he admits that he wants to be certain the police don't simply push this information away without bringing guilty people to justice, even though he doesn't yet know what this information is. This distrust of government is one of the book's themes.

Bucking city hall's one thing, the State House is something else entirely.”

-- Devin (chapter 23 paragraph 136)

**Importance:** Devin, Oscar, Patrick, and Angie are beginning to put the pieces of the mystery together and have just come to the conclusion that at least one political figure is involved in this.

No matter what, we take them down.”

-- Angie (chapter 25 paragraph 21)

**Importance:** Angie is talking about Paulson and Socia. She has argued up to this point that Mulkern and Paulson hired them to do a job and that their responsibility was to their clients. At this point, she's just seen the photos of Roland being raped and makes an abrupt change, becoming determined to take down Socia and Paulson.

He managed to open both eyes then, for just a moment, and I knew why he wanted me dead. He was the kid in the photographs.”

-- Patrick (chapter 26 paragraph 97)

**Importance:** This is when Patrick realizes that Roland is the boy being raped by Paulson. This changes things because Roland's motivations are now clearer. He is head of a gang and can't afford to have his credibility questioned, as it would be if his men discovered he'd been victimized to this degree.

I knew then that whatever explanation I'd been waiting for my whole life was sealed in that wasted frame, in that rotted brain, and it was never coming out.”

-- Patrick (chapter 30 paragraph 18)

**Importance:** Patrick has waited at his father's bedside during the final days of his father's life, hoping that Edgar would give him some piece of information that would



make sense of all the years of abuse. He has to accept, after one particularly disheartening conversation, that it's never going to happen.

He crossed the lot as we watched him, shrinking slowly as he neared the tenements. A lone prince on his way to the throne, wondering why it didn't feel as sweet as it should.”  
-- Patrick (chapter 33 paragraph 85)

**Importance:** Roland has just talked to Patrick and Angie and made it clear that he doesn't owe them anything, but is no longer interested in killing them. He thought that killing Socia would make him feel better and he's a little angry that he wasn't the one to do it, but Patrick knows that Socia's death won't really help Roland deal with his own pain.