

Darkest Fear Study Guide

Darkest Fear by Harlan Coben

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Plot Summary

Darkest Fear, written by Harlen Coben, details the search by Myron Bolitar for the missing bone marrow donor of his biological son, Jeremy Downing. Myron is drawn into the search for the mysterious donor when his first love, Emily Downing, arrives with the news that his son is dying and needs a bone marrow transplant. Myron is reluctant to become involved with Emily, as his past with her and her husband Greg had been life altering for him. Emily reveals that Myron is the biological father of Jeremy; that he was conceived the night before he wedding to Greg. Myron is still reluctant, and now also angry, but agrees to help Emily find the donor.

Myron enlists the help of his friends and locates the name of the missing donor. He and Greg Downing investigate the lead and find it to be a dead end. Esperanza Diaz, Myron's partner at MB SportsReps digs deeper and finds that the donor had changed his name recently. The true identity of the donor appears to be the missing son of an extremely private millionaire. Myron contacts the family and is refused any information; in fact, he is threatened should he ever attempt to contact them again. Undeterred and determined to help Jeremy, Myron continues to follow where the information leads.

A mysterious phone call in the middle of the night draws Myron to another path. The caller quotes a serial killer that had been interviewed in a series of articles by Stan Gibbs. Gibbs had been accused of plagiarism when the FBI discovered a decades old novel with passages that were duplicated in his article. Despite the testimony of his then mistress that she too had met the Sow the Seeds killer, Stan was disgraced and left public life. Myron tracks him down in an effort to find the bone marrow donor. In a seemingly bizarre twist, Gibbs has knowledge of the Lex family, presumably because he had planned to write an article about the family.

The FBI becomes involved after Myron's meeting with Stan, trying to track down leads to the killer. Agent Kimberly Green informs Myron that the Bureau believes that Stan Gibbs is the true killer. They seem to be basing this on the fact that his mistress was murdered when she planned to recant her testimony. Myron is not sure if the FBI is lying or telling the truth, so he continues his search along with his friends, determined only to find the marrow donor and save Jeremy.

Events rapidly occur, culminating in the kidnapping of Jeremy Downing. Myron is left with no choice but to find Dennis Lex, the missing younger brother of Susan Lex and the presumed bone marrow donor. Arranging a kidnapping of his own, Myron whisks Susan away from her security detail and she drives him to the hospital where her brother has lived for more than thirty years. Susan knew that her brother could not be listed in the bone marrow registry because she had shot him accidentally when they were children. At a seeming dead-end, Myron spots a statue in the courtyard of the hospital, the same statue that Stan Gibbs had posed in front of with his father, Edwin.

Myron connects the clues and returns to Stan Gibbs who admits that his father is the Sow the Seeds killer. In an effort to find Jeremy, Stan takes Myron to the location where



his father is hiding. Shots are fired but Stan bravely tackles his father so that he can still be a bone marrow donor. At the police station Edwin confessed his crimes to his attorney and makes a deal to reveal the location of Jeremy. While the main parties are searching for the boy, Edwin kills himself, seemingly ending all hope of the boy getting a transplant.

Events continue to escalate as Myron realizes that the facts do not add up. With a bit of help from the FBI Myron discovers that it is Stan Gibbs who had taken the identity of Dennis Lex, and registered to be a bone marrow donor. Myron makes a deal with Stan who donates his marrow secretly, and saves the boys life. Once Jeremy is safe, Myron returns to Stan with the FBI, able to prove the plagiarism charges that Stan had tried to vindicate himself from. Stan had arranged the entire affair so that he could turn his father in without looking like an ambitious, uncaring man. Along the way he had presumably killed his mistress when she discovered the book Stan's father had written in his apartment.

Myron moves on with life, beginning to pull things back together in professional life as well. Planning to reveal the fact that he is Jeremy's biological father, Myron is stunned when the boy tells him that he already knows. Reacting with the intelligence and feeling of a much older person, Jeremy tells Myron that he might be his father, but Greg is his dad. The boy would, however, like Myron to be a part of his life.



Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

In *Darkest Fear*, Myron Bolitar is faced with the most perplexing problem in his life. Contacted by his first love, Emily Downing, Myron is informed that the son he hadn't known existed is dying, and Myron needs to find the missing bone marrow donor.

Throughout the novel Myron uncovers a family tragedy that is now tied to the horrific secrets of another, all woven through the medical needs of his son.

In Chapter One, Myron speaks with his mother at his childhood home, which is now for sale. His mother is concerned that Myron and his father need to talk to each other about their changing roles. His father is getting older and has suffered a heart attack, something he has tried to keep from Myron.

Myron receives a call from Esperanza Diaz, his partner at MB SportsReps, telling him that his ex-girlfriend, Emily Downing, is looking for him. Myron tells Esperanza that he does not wish to speak with Emily. Myron and his mother take a walk and continue to discuss the changes in life. When they arrive back at the house, Myron's father is outside talking to Emily Downing.

In Chapter Two, Myron reluctantly has coffee with Emily. At Starbucks Emily tells Myron that her son Jeremy has Fanconi Anemia, which is fatal unless he receives a bone marrow transplant. A donor had been found, but had disappeared. Emily wants Myron to find the donor. Myron balks, unwilling to become involved with Emily again, but she pushes, finally revealing that Jeremy is Myron's son.

In Chapter Three Myron sits stunned for a moment and then asks Emily why she never told him. Emily tells Myron that she had not been 100% sure at the time, and was married to Greg. She and Myron had sex the night before the wedding, and she assumed that one time would not mean anything, as she was also sexually active with Greg. When Jeremy had gotten sick they had tested his sister Sara, but she was not even a close match because they are only half siblings.

Emily and Myron argue, as Myron is very angry that Emily had never told him the truth. Myron wonders why Emily had not told Greg the truth about his son's father during the custody fight several years ago and she replies that she does hate Greg, but she loves Jeremy and would not want to hurt him by taking his father away. Myron asks Emily how he can get in touch with Jeremy's doctor.

In Chapter Four, Myron returns to his office in time to say goodbye to Big Cyndi, his receptionist and former wrestler with FLOW, the Fabulous Ladies of Wrestling. Cyndi knows that business is not good and will take a leave, returning to the ring, until Myron is back on his feet.



Myron speaks to Esperanza but does not tell her what is going on. She guesses that it has something to do with Emily, but he will not go any further. Esperanza goes home for the day and Myron tries to get some enthusiasm for the business, but cannot seem to. Emily calls and tells Myron that Jeremy's doctor will meet with him in the morning. When Myron tells Emily that she wants to see Jeremy she asks him to wait but gives him a web address for pictures of her children. Myron looks at the pictures, studying Jeremy, and then goes home.

In Chapter Five, Myron arrives at Win's apartment at the Dakota. Myron is staying with Win since he has broken up with his longtime girlfriend, Jessica. Win is meditating as he always does, watching home movies of himself having sex with various women

Myron tells Win about his visit with Emily and Jeremy's illness. Win believes it will be easy to find the donor. Win senses that something else is bothering Myron and Bolitar tells his friend that Jeremy may be his son. Win wonders if Emily is telling the truth and Myron tells him he believes her. Win explains to Myron that in his opinion there is no need to tell Jeremy the truth as Myron is no more than a sperm donor; Greg Downing is Jeremy's father, regardless of who created him. Myron is not sure, but agrees that it is something to think about.

Chapters 1-5 Analysis

In Chapters One through Five, the reader is introduced to many of the main characters in the novel. Myron Bolitar is the protagonist, a sports agent and owner of MB SportsReps. Myron is at a crossroads in his life, and the author gives a bit of insight into his life.

Myron is 35 years old, and lives with his friend Win in New York City. Until the year before, Myron had lived at home in New Jersey with his parents. Though a successful businessman, Myron had chosen to live with his parents, simply because he enjoyed their company, and they his. An interesting analogy is made when Myron wonders if more children stayed in their parents' homes, if the world would be a better place. This is important because shortly after the novel begins, Myron learns that he may be the biological father of his first love's son. This is a difficult enough fact to deal with, compounded by the fact that Jeremy has been diagnosed with a fatal disease. In addition, Greg Downing, Emily's ex-husband, is the man responsible for the end of Myron's professional basketball career.

In addition to the situation that has developed with Emily and her son, Myron is also dealing with his business troubles. Several months ago a friend of Myron's had died, sending him into a tailspin. Myron had run away to a tropical island with Terese Collins, a TV anchorwoman, and stayed until his clients began to leave the company. His partner, Esperanza Diaz, had done whatever possible, but things are getting precarious at the agency. Myron and Esperanza are courting a high profile baseball player, hoping that signing him will revitalize things.



The reader learns of Myron's attitude toward life, meaning that Bolitar always tries to do what is right. This sometimes becomes a problem, as in the case with Jeremy. As Win explains to Myron, even if Emily is telling the truth, it does not make him a father. Greg Downing has raised the boy and even if he had not biologically created him, his relationship stands for something. The reader will learn that this is an unusual statement for Win to make, as he does not have any close relationships outside of Myron and Esperanza. It is possible that this statement, coming from whom it does, is the reason that Myron takes a step back and does not immediately reveal the entire truth to Jeremy Downing.

The need to find a donor for Jeremy outweighs all of the other problems that are facing Myron at the moment, and he will do what he can, with the help of his friends, to save the boy. Myron and Win have a history of working together to help those in need, and although Myron has repeatedly sworn off investigative work, he seems to be drawn back in fairly consistently.



Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In Chapter Six, Myron meets with Dr. Karen Singh at Babies and Children's Hospital. Dr. Singh walks Myron through the bone marrow transplant process and explains what happens when a donor is found. Singh explains that when a donor is found the local registry is responsible for collecting the bone marrow from the donor. In Jeremy's case, the national registry has notified her that the donor is no longer available. Myron wonders if the donor had backed out, but Singh suggests that the donor might be missing. As Myron readies to leave, Singh also suggest that if the birth parents were to have another child there is a 25% chance that the baby would be a match for Jeremy. Myron tells the doctor that he does not think that is a possibility. The doctor gives Myron a slip so that he can have his blood tested for paternity, and he prepares to leave. Greg Downing exits the elevator and confronts Myron.

In Chapter Seven, the two men confront each other. Greg realizes that Emily has called Myron to help locate the donor. Downing tells Myron that he does not need his help; he will be holding a press conference. Myron moves to leave, but Downing stops him and asks if he thinks he can help his son. Myron does not answer and leaves.

In Chapter Eight, Myron and Win pick up Terese Collins at the airport. Terese and Myron ran away together to the Caribbean when both of their lives had taken bad turns, though they have never really talked about what had happened to them. At Win's apartment, the two make love and discuss things. Both realize that their relationship is not going anywhere. Myron asks Terese for help in finding the missing donor.

In Chapter Nine, Myron and Terese go to the Bergen County Blood Center to meet with the director, Billy Englehardt. Terese tells Billy she wants an interview, but once there tells the director that she is there investigating the Jeremy Downing situation. Collins explains that a donor has come forward, but they do not believe the man is telling the truth. The supposed donor states that the reason he has backed out is because the staff at Englehardt's center is rude. The director is floored and wishes to clear his center's name. Collins gives him the name of the purported donor, and Englehardt quickly checks the computer, relieved that the person is a fake. Myron has videotaped the entire episode with a hidden camera, and they watch the tape once they leave the office.

In Chapter Ten, Myron calls Greg and asks him to postpone the press conference while he follows up on the donor. Greg insists on going with him and the two men drive to Waterbury, CT to find Davis Taylor. At the address listed, they find a confused old man, Nathan Mostoni, who appears to think that Myron and Greg are alternately friends of his son Daniel, or military spokesman coming to tell him that his son has been killed in Vietnam. Having gotten nowhere, Myron wants to leave but Greg stays behind to watch Mostoni, as both think there is something odd about the man.



Chapters 6-10 Analysis

Myron meets with Jeremy's doctor, Karen Singh, and gets more history on the disease that is killing his supposed son, as well as how the bone marrow transplant procedure works. Dr. Singh is as perplexed as anyone as to why the donor is unavailable, but suggests that the donor has disappeared, rather than backed out of the process. This idea is key, and is the path that Myron will follow.

Singh hits a nerve when she suggests that if Jeremy's parents were to have another child, there would be another chance at finding a donor. The thought had obviously not crossed Myron's mind. The fact that it is mentioned at all makes one wonder if Emily is aware of this possibility as well.

Greg Downing is introduced to the reader, a former rival of Myron's in college and professional basketball, as well as for Emily. The two had grown up playing ball against each other, something Myron had taken as a normal contest, until Emily had left him for Greg. Things got even more personal when Emily had returned to Myron one last time on the night before her wedding to Greg, the night that Jeremy was supposedly conceived. Myron had found out only recently that Greg had caused the end of his career by paying another player to injure him, effectively finishing his professional basketball career before it had begun. The two men obviously have a great deal of animosity toward each other.

Myron's relationship with Terese Collins is introduced as well. When Myron's life had crumbled around him, he had fled to the Caribbean with Collins, something completely out of character for Myron. Forced to return to save his business, Myron had assumed that the relationship would end. The two continue to see each other, but it is clear that this time there will be no happy ending. Myron and Terese enjoy each other, but there is no foundation to build a relationship on.

Terese does help Myron gain the information he needs to start finding the marrow donor but that information appears to lead nowhere. The odd note is that Myron wonders why the man at the door seems not to recognize the name Davis Taylor, when he assumes that the blood center would have tried to contact the donor at this address. As Greg looks for Davis Taylor, the two men revisit their past again, and Greg reminds Myron that Emily will do anything to save her son. The reader is left to wonder if Emily would tell Myron that he is Jeremy's father in order to convince him to help her.



Chapters 11-15

Chapters 11-15 Summary

Myron had breakfast with Terese after a shower, and she suggests that they run away together again. Myron tells Terese that he can't. Terese is resigned.

Myron heads to the office where Esperanza tells him that she has gotten some information on Davis Taylor. There are no financial records for Taylor anywhere with the exception of a new credit card opened a few months ago. With no tax returns ever filed, Esperanza explains that Taylor most likely had a name change, but can't figure out how there is no record anywhere of the social security number. Myron wonders why someone who had gone through so much to hide their identity would sign up to be a bone marrow donor. Diaz is confused, and Myron explains why he is looking for Taylor, as well as the possibility that he is Jeremy's father. Esperanza does not agree with Win about keeping the boy's paternity a secret. She feels that Jeremy does not deserve to live a lie. Diaz tells Myron they will discuss the paternity matter when he is finished blocking things.

In Chapter Twelve, Myron receives a call from Ronnie Angle, from Rack Enterprises. Ronnie wants to sign Suzze Tamirino, a tennis playing client of Myron's, to an appearance deal. Rack is opening topless coffee shops called La La Latte, and wants Suzze to appear topless for \$200,000. Myron is not interested but promises to pass the offer along. Another call arrives; Lamar Richardson wants to meet with Myron later in the week.

Myron goes home, and Win tells him that Terese has left a note; she had to go back early and will call. The two men head to work out at Master Kwon's and Esperanza calls and says she will meet them there. Win and Myron work out until Diaz arrives and asks if they are familiar with Raymond Lex. Win explains that Lex had written a bestseller and then invested wisely, building an enormous fortune. After his death, the family had fought bitterly over the estate. Esperanza tells them that Davis Taylor is actually Dennis Lex, the son of Raymond. He had legally changed his name eight months earlier. Win is surprised, as Dennis Lex seems to be an unknown member of the family. The three friends wonder if Lex is hiding, and from what. And if Lex is in hiding, why had he put himself on the bone marrow donor list.

In Chapter Thirteen, Myron is awakened in the middle of the night by a man telling him to 'sow the seeds'. Myron begs the man to meet with him or a boy will die. The man is about to hang up when Myron mentions the name Dennis Lex. The mysterious caller tells Myron to say goodbye to the boy.

In Chapter Fourteen, Myron talks to Esperanza about the phone call the night before. Bolitar asks Esperanza to check the schools that the Lex children attended, wondering if Dennis might have a record somewhere. He then calls Susan Lex, the daughter of



Raymond Lex. Her secretary refuses and appointment at first, but Myron threatens to go to the press regarding her brother Dennis unless she agrees to meet him that afternoon. He also arranges to meet with Suzze T at The Morning Mosh regarding her offer from Rack Enterprises.

Myron checks the Internet for references to 'sow the seeds', and finds information regarding a reporter, named Stan Gibbs. Gibbs had written a series of articles detailing the acts of a serial killer, interviewing both the unknown killer, and the families of the victims. Refusing to reveal his sources, law enforcement officials had investigated and found that Gibbs has plagiarized the entire episode. His career was ruined. Myron calls Bruce Taylor, a friend and reporter, and arranges to meet him later to see what he can find out about Gibbs.

In chapter 15, Myron arrives at the Lex Building and after many different security checks is able to meet with a very angry Susan Lex. Lex tells Myron that any information he has tying her brother Dennis to a bone marrow donor is wrong. Myron tells Lex that a child will die if he is unable to find the donor. Lex does not believe his story and leaves. Granite Man, so dubbed by Myron, seems to be the lead security official. Granite man does not believe Myron's story about needing a bone marrow donor, and tells him that if the marrow center gave him the name of Dennis Lex they are lying to him. Myron mentions that he could still go to the press, but the security man tells him that that would be a mistake.

Chapters 11-15 Analysis

The relationship between Myron and Terese seems to be running down, as he is unable to leave with her again. Terese still will not share with Myron whatever it is she is running from, and Myron needs to stay, to rebuild his life and to save Jeremy.

After Myron tells Esperanza the reason for his search for Davis Taylor, Diaz lets her feeling be known regarding keeping the truth about his paternity from Jeremy. Myron is torn between the advice that Win had given him, and Esperanza's valid argument that Jeremy has been lied to all his life. Myron and Esperanza had been raised in very close, loving families, Win had not. The alternate views of the three present an insight for the reader into the character's mindset.

The truth behind the missing blood donor is even more mysterious than Myron had originally thought. Though it was strange that Davis Taylor would sign up to be a donor and then disappear, the fact that he is Dennis Lex, a previously unknown son of Raymond Lex is even more startling. Some background on the Lex family is provided by Win, who had dealt with them briefly. Raymond Lex had written one novel, a block-busting best seller, then dropped out of sight, amassing a large fortune over time. The Lex family has always been extremely private. After the death of Raymond, a battle for the estate has been going on between the remaining family members.



The mysterious phone call that Myron receives seems inconsequential, other than the reference to 'sow the seeds', which leads Myron the reference on the web to Stan Gibbs and the articles he had written about the unknown serial killer. Law enforcement had traced several passages in Gibbs articles to a novel written by FK Armstrong, A Whisper to a Scream. Myron appeals to the man on the phone, mentioning that a boy will die if the bone marrow is not found. This is an important point in the novel. The caller tells Myron to say goodbye to the boy. Because of this, Myron decides to be more circumspect when dealing with his search in the future. When speaking to Susan Lex about her brother Dennis, Myron tells her that a child will die if her brother is not found. This fact will be visited again later in the novel when the truth about several things are revealed.

Myron also deals with the business of the agency in between the search for the donor. An offer arrives for one client, Suzze T, and a call comes in from Lamar Richardson, who wants to meet with Myron later in the week. Bolitar's life is in turmoil, but his business is starting to pick up.

The odd reaction of Susan Lex to Myron's queries about her brother Dennis lead the reader to believe that there is something odd about the family, something beyond the norm. The amount of security and the threats are out of proportion to the requests of Myron. The almost psychotic need for privacy and secrecy is odd, and will be explained in greater depths later.



Chapters 16-20

Chapters 16-20 Summary

Myron meets with Bruce Taylor at The Rusty Umbrella for some background on Stan Gibbs. Taylor tells Myron that Gibbs had indeed been caught plagiarizing a novel that had been printed about 20 years ago. Bruce goes on to explain that Gibbs has remained silent on the subject, unwilling to make matters worse by discussing them. Added to his trouble is the fact that his mistress, Melina Garston, had been murdered three months earlier, after she had sworn to meeting the Sow the Seeds killer with Stan. Myron asks Bruce if he can get in touch with Gibbs, and Bruce gives Myron his address, making him promise that if anything comes of his investigation, he will tell him.

In Chapter Seventeen, Myron meets with Suzze T regarding Rack Enterprises. Despite Myron thinking that appearing nude would not be a good idea for Suzze, she tells him to talk the people at Rack into more money and to accept the offer. Suzze tells Myron that she will not be able to play tennis forever, and she will need endorsement deals in her future.

In Chapter Eighteen, Myron meets with Stan Gibbs and gives him some background on his search for a bone marrow donor. Gibbs lives in a shabby apartment, where the only thing of a personal nature is a family picture of Gibbs with his father and brother in front of a statue of Diane the Huntress. Myron explains that a child will die if the donor is not found. Gibbs is confused as to what he has to do with it until Myron tells him about the phone call he had received for the man telling him to 'sow the seeds'. Gibbs appears floored. The only thing he can think of is that Myron had been contacted by the killer or a copycat. Stan tells Myron that he needs to make some calls and check into things. Myron is not happy but Stan tells him that he will have to trust him.

In Chapter Nineteen, Myron leaves Stan and arranges to meet Emily for dinner at her house. He notices that he is being followed and calls Win with the plate number on the car. Killing time at the mall, Myron gets a call from Win telling him that the car belongs to the Feds. There is no reason to avoid them or follow. Two men approach Myron and ask him to go with them, and he does.

In the basement of a Newark apartment building, Myron meets with Special Agents Kimberly Green and Rick Peck. Peck tells Myron that they would like his help. The FBI knows that Myron had met with Stan Gibbs and that Gibbs is part of an ongoing investigation. When Myron is not forthcoming Agent Green becomes agitated and angry, demanding that Myron cooperate. He refuses, as he has no idea what they are looking for and refuse to tell him. The group is at a stalemate, though the FBI tried in many different ways to find out why Myron had met with Stan. In the end Myron leaves, having given them no information, but having gained nothing either.



In Chapter Twenty, Myron finally arrives at Emily's and is met at the door by Jeremy. Myron is speechless. The boy leaves to go to a friend's, and Emily shows Myron Jeremy's bedroom. Myron is angry at Emily's manipulation but she tells him that she needs him to be involved and passionate. Meeting Jeremy and seeing his things, looking at pictures of him growing up will make Myron more passionate. The two sit together for hours, and Emily tells Myron stories of Jeremy growing up which he absorbs like a sponge. As Myron leaves, Emily tells him that she knows Dr. Singh talked to him about conceiving a sibling, and that she will be ovulating soon. Another child might be Jeremy's only chance.

Chapters 16-20 Analysis

Myron meets with Bruce Taylor and discovers that even though Taylor and Stan Gibbs were friends, Taylor still believes that Gibbs is guilty of copying text from an old book for his stories. Taylor believes that Stan might have been tired of trying to make a name for himself, and had decided to create one instead. According to Taylor plagiarizing is not uncommon in journalism, but Gibbs had been caught because his was such a high profile case. The fact that Melina Garston is murdered after she had testified for Gibbs confuses Myron. Even if Garston was going to retract her statement, it wouldn't have made a difference, the plagiarism had already been discovered. Despite this, Taylor tells Myron that the police still feel that Stan had something to do with Garston's murder.

The meeting with Stan Gibbs is strange. Myron explains that a child could die if he does not find the marrow donor. Myron notes that Gibbs reacts strongly to the name Dennis Lex, though not to the name Davis Taylor. This is significant, though the reason for it will not be revealed until later in the novel. Also important is the seemingly innocent family photo on Stan's table. Myron will recall the photo at a later time, pushing things forward quickly.

Gibbs appears willing to help Myron in his effort to find the bone marrow donor, even if only to help clear his own name. If the killer can be caught, Gibbs believes that the truth will come out; that the killer was a copycat, mirroring the novel that he is accused of plagiarizing.

The introduction of the FBI into the novel is important. Until this point, Myron had thought that he was chasing down leads to help Jeremy. The fact that the FBI is so intent on his meeting with Stan Gibbs tells Myron that there is something very important going on outside, or in addition to, the search for the donor.

Meeting Jeremy triggers something in Myron. He already felt a connection to the boy with the possibility of being his father, but had no other idea of his identity. Seeing him at the door and touring his bedroom creates a more concrete picture for Myron, one that he will not be able to undo. Myron knows that Emily had arranged things like that on purpose, but she is honest about it and admits this to Myron. Though Myron is aware that Emily will do anything for her son, her manipulation and the suggestion that a pregnancy might save Jeremy puts things in a different light.



Chapters 21-25

Chapters 21-25 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-One, Myron tells Win of his encounters with Stan Gibbs, and the FBI. Win tells Myron he will try and discover what the FBI is up to. As to Stan Gibbs, neither man can understand why Gibbs would not reveal who the killer is, and prove that the killer had plagiarized the novel, which would prove his innocence. Esperanza arrives and has some breakfast. She tells Myron that she has found Dennis Lex's preschool and that his former teacher not only remembers him, but will meet with Myron this morning.

In Chapter Twenty-Two, Myron meets with Peggy Joyce, the preschool teacher of Dennis Lex. Ms. Joyce explains her views on children and asks Myron what he wants. Myron asks about Dennis, and Joyce tells him that she has been wondering about Dennis for thirty years. According to Ms. Joyce, Dennis and his brother had not come to school one day. Raymond Lex had called and said the family was going on an unplanned vacation. Two weeks later, Bronwyn, Dennis's older brother had returned to school without Dennis. Raymond Lex mentioned home schooling to Peggy Joyce, but made it clear to her that Dennis was not her concern. Ms. Joyce had believed Dennis dead all these years. The teacher gives Myron an old picture of Dennis and Myron leaves.

In Chapter Twenty-Three, Win calls Myron and tells him the Feds are in his office. Myron arrives to find agents Green and Peck, along with deputy director Eric Ford. Myron is floored to discover that Stan Gibbs is under surveillance, because the FBI is trying to find the Sow the Seeds killer. Gibbs had been telling Myron the truth.

Eric Ford tells Myron that the FBI believes that Stan Gibbs is the Sow the Seeds killer. The thrill of being involved in the story was an added bonus to being a killer. Myron has trouble believing it, but can see the reasoning behind it. Bolitar tells the agents about his involvement and what led him to Stan Gibbs. Eric Ford tells Myron that they will keep him informed and help him find the bone marrow donor.

In Chapter Twenty-Four, Myron goes to his parents and talks to his father. Al Bolitar knows that his wife has spoken to Myron and tells his son that he is fine. Al says that Ellen is worried about Al not being willing to grow old. Myron's father tells him that no one wants to get old. Ellen wants Al to take part in all the activities his retired friends do and, because he does not want to, she thinks he is in denial. Al tells Myron that he enjoys being who he is and does not wish to reverse rolls with his son. The two men talk for a few minutes about what Al would do if he found out that Myron was not his son. Al is straightforward, telling Myron that no one can say what they would do unless put in the situation.



Ellen returns and the family settles down to eat, and Al tells her that he will call his friends and join some of their activities. When Myron leaves he hugs his father, realizing that even if Al does not want to grow old, he is.

In Chapter Twenty-Five, Myron sees Susan Lex's security men outside the building and calls Win. Granite Man tells Myron that Susan wants to see him. Myron goes with the men and meets Susan and her brother Bronwyn in her office. Susan tells Myron that they have been watching him and know he is working for Stan Gibbs. Granite Man, or Grover, as Susan calls him, shows Myron pictures of himself with Gibbs. Susan tells Myron that if he does not stop his investigation, they will ruin him as they had Gibbs. Myron asks Bronwyn about Dennis, and again explains the bone marrow donor search. Bronwyn denies it is possible that Dennis is the donor Myron searches for. Grover punches Myron in the stomach, and he doubles over onto the floor. Susan Lex tells Myron that Stan Gibbs is a liar like his father and leave. Grover tells Myron that he is going to break his leg, and that Myron will tell Gibbs to leave the Lex family alone. Myron hurls a bowl through the window and sniper fire comes in the window. Myron tells the men to stay down if they wish to live, knowing that Win will kill them without hesitation, and leaves.

Chapters 21-25 Analysis

Both Myron and Win believe that the FBI being involved with Stan Gibbs is unusual and means that there is something big hidden behind the threats and queries by Kimberly Green and the other agents. Myron had sensed fear in them and is unsure why. Things become a bit clearer when agents Green and Peck arrive at Myron's office along with the deputy director, Eric Ford. The fact that Ford is there reveals that things are even more serious than Myron had believed.

Stan Gibbs had pointed out that there was a possibility that the killer had read the book Gibbs was accused of plagiarizing. Now with the FBI telling Myron that they have had Gibbs under surveillance, the story makes even more sense. When Eric Ford tells Myron that the FBI believes that Gibbs might be the actual killer, Myron does not know what to think. Another odd piece of information is revealed when Green tells Myron that Stan Gibbs has refused to see or speak to anyone, until his conversation with Myron. Bolitar is unsure why Gibbs would only see him, but it leads the reader to believe that there must be some hidden reason that Gibbs would speak to Myron and no one else.

The FBI promises to help Myron with the search for the bone marrow donor as long as he cooperates with them in their investigation. Green points out that the Sow the Seeds killer had disappeared when Gibbs had, and now that Gibbs is back, the killer appears to be as well.

The situation with the Lex family becomes more intriguing when Myron meets with Dennis's old teacher and discovers that the boy had disappeared while in preschool. The family had always been very private and, despite trying to discover where Dennis had gone, Peggy Joyce had gotten nowhere.



Susan Lex's accusation that Myron is working with Stan Gibbs investigating the Lex family is a shock to Myron. It is also curious to him that Susan Lex not only has knowledge of Gibbs, but also appears to hate him. Lex also seems to know Gibbs' father, and calls him a liar. It is clear that the Lex family is not above violence, as Grover has no issue with striking Myron or threatening to break his leg. The fact that Susan Lex has no issue with witnessing or ordering the violence is an additional note of interest.

It is also interesting to note that while Susan Lex seems to have no reaction to the bone marrow issue or her brother Dennis' connection to it, Bronwyn denies the allegation with stunned surprise. This leads the reader to believe that there is more to the Lex family than meets the eye, and that they are somehow involved, though at this point it is hard to say how or why.



Chapters 26-30

Chapters 26-30 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-Six, Myron meets with Stan Gibbs again. Gibbs assumes that the FBI has contacted him, as he knows they are following him. Myron asks Gibbs why the Lexes have warned him away from him. Gibbs tells Myron that he was going to do a story on them but Grover had warned him off. Still investigating, Gibbs had discovered that Dennis had existed. Myron wonders if Susan had sent the book to the FBI. Stan wonders the same thing, and reminds Myron about Melina Garston. Myron asks Stan if he thinks Garston was killed by the Lexes as a warning. Gibbs thinks her death was a warning, but is not sure from whom, maybe it was the Sow the Seeds killer. Myron asks about Stan's father and his connection to the Lex family. Stan tells him that his father had been a student of Raymond Lex, and that he accused Lex of stealing his novel, *Midnight Confessions*. No one, including Stan had believed him, as his father was a bit crazy. Stan goes on to tell Myron that his father had disappeared eight years ago and no one had heard from him since.

Stan asks Myron if his interest in all of this has to do with the boy that needs the marrow transplant. Myron tells him it is his only interest. Stan tells Myron that he will check into things, but might be out of touch for a few days.

In Chapter Twenty-Seven, Myron reluctantly agrees to meet Greg Downing later in the day after Greg calls with news that Nathan Mostoni has left town. Bolitar then goes to meet Melina Garston's father George. Mr. Garston has no knowledge of Stan Gibbs. He knew his daughter was dating but she had not told him that her boyfriend was married. Garston tells Myron that his daughter had called him and told him she'd lied. Myron assumes that Melina was talking about testifying for Stan Gibbs. Garston wants Myron to tell him if he finds out who killed his daughter, but Myron can't promise this. Sandra, Melina's sister-in-law, takes Myron to Melina's apartment to look at her things. He finds all of Stan's articles in Melina's address book and a piece of paper torn from a book that says 'with love, Dad.' Myron looks around the apartment and grows angry at the idea of a young life taken.

In Chapter Twenty-Eight, Myron meets with Greg, and they play basketball. Greg tells Myron that he saw Myron and Emily having sex the night before his wedding. Greg tries to explain to Myron that he did not mean to end his career; he only wanted to hurt him. Greg apologizes, but Myron does not accept. A phone rings, and Myron answers. The mysterious caller asks if Myron did as instructed, saying goodbye to the boy.

In Chapter Twenty-Nine, Myron asks Greg where Jeremy is. Greg does not know, as he does not get to visit until noon. They call Emily and get no answer. After discussing the options they decide to call the FBI and Myron contacts Agent Green. News that the Sow the Seeds killer might have Jeremy has the FBI racing to Emily's home. Greg and Myron do the same, arriving at the same time as Emily, who says Jeremy is with a



friend. The phone rings in the house, and Myron is able to hear the scream of Jeremy when Emily answers.

In Chapter Thirty, the kidnapper informs Emily that he will call back and hangs up with no further instruction. Myron speaks with Kimberly Green who informs him that Dennis Lex is not involved despite Myron's belief that he is the marrow donor. Davis Taylor had worked for the Lex family, and had given blood when a colleague's son had needed a bone marrow transplant. Not to do so would have seemed odd to the rest of the employees. Eric Ford had spoken to the Lex family, and had informed Green that Dennis was not involved and to leave it at that. Green pointedly tells Myron that there is nothing she can do about this. Green asks Myron what he and Stan Gibbs had talked about, as Gibbs is now missing. Myron tells her that they talked about Dennis Lex and Stan's father. Green tells Myron that the FBI believes that Stan is the Sow the Seeds killer, and that Edwin Green was his first victim.

Myron calls Win and arranges to meet him, Esperanza, Big Cyndi and Zorra. Myron had noticed Green stating that she could do nothing about the Dennis Lex connection. He intends to follow through.

Chapters 26-30 Analysis

The novel begins to move at a much faster pace. Meeting with Stan Gibbs provided more information to Myron about his ties to the Lex family as well as Gibbs family. Gibbs tells Myron that he had reacted to the name Dennis Lex because he had been planning on doing a story on the family until Grover had warned him off. Myron can believe this, because he has dealt with the security man first hand. The fact that the Lex family thinks that Myron is working with Stan begins to make sense, as well.

According to Stan, the Lex family thinks that he is trying to vindicate his father, Edwin Gibbs. Edwin had accused Raymond Lex of stealing his novel, the novel that had created the fortune that the Lex family continues to fight over. Gibbs tells Myron that even he had not believed his father, that his father was a sick man. This is a key fact, one that will play in important part in the novel. Another important factor is that Stan Gibbs had asked Myron if he was really only interested in saving the boy. Myron will look back on this conversation and realize that Stan Gibbs is not at all the innocent man he claims.

Meeting with George Garston is a turning point for Myron. Though Bolitar has often vowed to stay out of investigating, there are times when he cannot let go of helping others, no matter what the cost. Esperanza refers to this as his "Batman' complex. Seeing Garston, a broken man, and visiting Melina's empty apartment causes a deep anger in Myron, so much so that he makes a silent vow to himself. At this point, the reader does not know what this promise is, but can assume that it has something to do with George Garston wanting revenge on his daughter's killer.



A key piece of evidence is uncovered in Melina's apartment, though it is not clearly evidence at the time. Stan's articles are in her address book as well as a seemingly innocent note. The note says 'with love, Dad.' One can assume that note is from George Garston, but this is not the case. While talking to Sandra Garston, the widow of George's son, she refers to George as Papa. It is safe for the reader to assume that Melina would have done the same.

The kidnapping of Jeremy brings things to a head. Myron calls the FBI after receiving the call, and he and Greg rush to Emily's house. The FBI is there as well and they wait for more news. Despite the animosity between the Downing's and Myron, all focus is not on Jeremy and his safety.

Though Agent Green has been hostile toward Myron from the outset, she gives him several key pieces of information in order to help him. Green cannot step outside her role in the investigation, but she can turn a blind eye to Myron investigating on his own. By doing so, Green redeems her previous behavior a bit, proving that the safety of Jeremy is most important.



Chapters 31-36

Chapters 31-36 Summary

In Chapter Thirty-One, Myron and Win meet with Esperanza, Big Cyndi and Zorra, a cross-dressing former Mossad agent. Esperanza is not happy about the situation, but knows that Myron needs her.

The group arrives at Stokes, Layton and Grace, the law firm of the Lex family. Myron and Win meet with Chase Layton. Win offers Layton the Lock-Horne business if he will call Susan Lex and have her come to the office so that they can meet with her. Layton refuses and Myron is forced to strike him several times. Myron knows that he has forever changed Layton, but at this point, Jeremy is more important. Chase Layton makes the call and arranges for Lex to come to the office.

In Chapter Thirty-Two, Myron's friends split up and stake out the building. Myron feels like a hypocrite, but Win calms him. Esperanza calls them and says that Susan Lex is getting on the elevator with Grover and a third man. When the elevator arrives, Win and Myron enter with guns drawn and quickly disarm the men. Grover makes a comment about Myron needing revenge and tells Win that he has heard he is 'not bad'. Win takes offense and strikes Grover, then knocks him unconscious. Myron tells Susan that she is taking him to see Dennis. He promises her that he will not say anything about her brother, but he needs her help. Lex tells Myron that her brother is not involved, and Myron tells her to prove it.

In Chapter Thirty-Three, Susan and Myron are driving, and Lex asks Myron for the truth. He tells her that he has been telling the truth all along. Susan wonders how Myron plans to get away with kidnapping, and he reminds her that he does not care. He simply needs to save the child in need of the bone marrow.

The pair arrives at a large estate that turns out to be a hospital. The staff greets Susan and she leads him to a room. In the room, which has been decorated like a bedroom in a mansion, lies Dennis Lex. Susan explains that when Dennis was a child she and her brother Bronwyn had been playing with a loaded gun, and she had shot her youngest brother. Myron is stunned. Raymond Lex had taken care of the unpleasantness, arranging for his son's care. Susan knows that Myron will not reveal her family secret, and Myron knows that Susan will not prosecute him. Neither party has anything to gain from going after the other. Myron looks around, thinking about what all of this could mean and sees a statue outside the window. With an exclamation, he races from the room.

In Chapter Thirty-Four, Susan's private helicopter arrives to take Myron back to the city. Myron receives a call from Kimberly Green telling him that the FBI has Stan Gibbs but Jeremy was not with him.



Myron arrives to find Stan in a holding cell with his attorney. "Aunt' Clara Steinburg is a close family friend of the Bolitar's. Clara does not trust the FBI and tells Myron and Stan to go outside and talk. Agent Green is not happy but there is nothing she can do about it. On a bench across the street, Myron tells Stan that he knows Edwin Gibbs is the Sow the Seeds killer. Stan explains to Myron that Edwin had called him after eight years and wanted to meet with him, as a reporter. Thrilled to hear from his father, he had agreed. His father had told him his story, and Stan quickly became horrified, but could not turn his father in. As a reporter he was bound to keep his sources safe, and as a son he knew his father needed help. Myron argues and Stan wonders if Myron could turn his father in. Myron says he could. Stan agrees to take Myron to his father, but only if they go alone. Agent Green refuses, but Clara reminds her that Stan is not in custody. Greg arrives and says that he is going to. Greg wants to be sure that Edwin is not hurt, because Jeremy needs his bone marrow. He also wants to be there if Jeremy is hurt.

In Chapter Thirty-Five, the three men drive to an old farmhouse in Bernardsville. On the way Greg and Stan have the same argument that Stan had earlier with Myron. Stan tells the two men that his father stays at the farmhouse sometimes. It was his grandmother's home. Other times he stays in Waterbury, as Nathan Mostoni. Myron and Greg are stunned. Stan explains that his father had learned the names of the patients at Pine Hills, the hospital where he had been a patient on and off for years. He had taken the identities of several and used them throughout the years.

Arriving at the house, shots are fired, and Greg is hit. Myron tries to stop the blood flow while Stan begs his father to stop shooting. The FBI arrives and orders Edwin to drop his weapon. Stan charges his father and is able to tackle him, and Myron screams for the agents not to shoot the killer. Greg is unconscious but breathing with a weak pulse. Myron calls out for Jeremy, but there is no answer.

Chapters 31-36 Analysis

Myron is forced to step outside himself if Jeremy is to be saved. The FBI is unable to pursue the lead of Dennis Lex, but Myron will not give up until he knows that there is no way Lex is not the bone marrow donor. Myron is often disturbed by Win's willingness to resort to violence, but in this case there seems to be no other way. However, when meeting with Chase Layton, Myron refuses to allow Win to strike the lawyer. Myron feels that if something needs to be done he must do it himself. When hitting Layton Myron knows that he has forever changed the life of the man. Layton knew there was violence in the world, but it had never touched him. From now on every person in his life will be questioned. Myron is sorry, but sees no other way around it. The same applies for kidnapping Susan Lex. Myron feels he has no choice as telling the truth and simply asking for confirmation has not worked.

The information gained is valuable for two reasons. Myron learns that Dennis Lex cannot be the Sow the Seeds killer because he has been in the hospital for thirty years. More important is the statue that Myron sees outside the window. Diane the Huntress, the same statue was in the photo of Stan Gibbs and his father is on the grounds of the



hospital. Myron believes he now knows the truth about the ties between Gibbs and the Lex family.

Stan seemingly confirms Myron's theory, explaining that he was unable to turn his father in. Not just because his father was ill and needed help, but also because of his duties as a reporter. Myron is disgusted that Stan would protect a killer but Stan wonders if Myron wouldn't do the same. Myron knows that he would do the right thing, despite the love he has for his father.

Stan Gibbs risks his own life to stop his father from killing others and himself, seemingly in an effort to prevent further death and to save the marrow that will keep Jeremy alive. Myron does his best to save Greg, despite the animosity between them and the question of paternity. Jeremy is nowhere to be seen and Myron is devastated, wondering if they are too late.



Chapters 36-40

Chapters 36-40 Summary

In Chapter Thirty-Six, no one is able to find Jeremy. Emily arrives and wonders if she is still being punished for the one night with Myron before the wedding. Myron tells her he doesn't think so, but that maybe there is a price to pay for something as good as Jeremy. Greg is rushed to the hospital in critical condition. No one can say if he will survive.

In Chapter Thirty-Seven, Myron and Win watch as Clara meets with Stan and Edwin Gibbs. Win wants time alone with the Gibbs' but Eric Ford refuses. Clara meets with them and says that Edwin wants a deal. In exchange for no death penalty he will take them to Jeremy and donate his marrow. Ford balks but Myron pushes him to agree. Clara points out that the deal stands whether the boy is dead or alive. Myron is horrified but still pushes Ford to take the deal. Stan agrees to lead them to the location that Edwin tells them to check.

In Chapter Thirty-Eight, Stan takes Myron and the FBI to a farmhouse the family has owned for years. Stan explains that his mother had died of cancer, and it was then that his father had really lost his mind. Edwin believed that if his mother had believed in the power of the mind she would have survived. Edwin had buried his wife in the woods of the property.

Arriving Myron rushes into the farmhouse and finds Jeremy alive, chained to a wall. Myron comforts him and tells him that it is all over. Leaving, Myron meets Agent Green who tells him that Edwin Gibbs has killed himself in his jail cell.

In Chapter Thirty-Nine, Dr. Singh tells them that there is no way to harvest marrow from a dead man. She also informs Myron that he is the father of Jeremy. Myron speaks to Emily and agrees to try and have another child in order to save Jeremy.

Myron goes to the office and tries to carry on with life. He is planning to meet with Lamar Richardson. Agent Green arrives and tells him that the case is closed. The bodies of Edwin Gibbs had been found buried in the woods around the farmhouse. None of them had been tortured. Gibbs had used the credit card of Davis Taylor to rent the van he had used to kidnap Jeremy. Using a disguise he had taken Jeremy, blindfolded him and gone to the farmhouse. After making Jeremy scream into the phone he had simply left him there. Green leave, but Myron still thinks something is missing from the puzzle.

Myron and Esperanza meet with Lamar, and it goes well. They know that if Lamar signs with them the agency is back on its feet. Myron tells Esperanza that he is Jeremy's father, and she once again tells him that Jeremy deserves the truth.



Myron visits Chase Layton at his health club and apologizes. Layton tells Myron that he had seen the news and knows that he had acted the way he did to save Jeremy. Myron does not want to be excused. Chase tells him he will not press charges; for him the worst part was knowing that he was not a man, or at least not the man he thought he was.

Myron visits the fertility clinic with Emily in hopes of conceiving another child. Terese Collins calls and asks Myron if she can see him. Her producer wants her to interview Myron, but he does not wish to talk about what happened. Terese says that she does not want to hear about it. Myron tells Terese that he would love to see her.

Time passes, and Myron gets a call telling him that Emily is not pregnant. He tells the doctor they will try again next month. Win invites Esperanza over and the three friends watch TV. The news is still filled with the story of Jeremy Downing and the bone marrow search. Stan is on the news as well, pushing people to become a donor so that Jeremy can be saved. Something clicks in Myron's head, and the events come together for him.

In Chapter Forty, Myron calls Agent Green for the last time and asks her about the novel that Stan has plagiarized. Myron tells Green that he knows that Edwin Green wrote the book, and that the FBI had known all along. Green denies this, telling Myron they were not sure if Edwin or Stan was the killer. Myron asks Green to call the bone marrow registry and get some information for her.

Win and Myron meet with Stan on the set of his new TV show 'Glib with Gibbs'. Myron tells Stan that they have finally figured out what had happened, going by Win's motto, that man is all about self-preservation, and above all, selfish. By following this train of thought, Myron leads Stan through the events. Stan had not turned his father in when Edwin told him about being the Sow the Seeds killer because the story would make him famous. When the FBI pushed for his source, he had stood up to them because by admitting his father was the killer he would have looked bad. Following through, Myron assumes that Stan wanted to do the right thing, but needed to make himself a hero. Stan had taken the identity of Dennis Lex and changed his name to Davis Taylor.

Stan argues but not very convincingly. Myron points out that Edwin had been very careful for years, and suddenly started leaving clues left and right. The final clue was the call Myron had received. The caller is the only person that Myron had told about a boy needing a bone marrow donation, yet when Stan asked him about it, he knew that the child in question was a boy. Stan had kidnapped Jeremy, and had used Myron to make himself out to be a hero.

Myron tells Stan that he has checked the marrow registry and that Stan is not registered. All of the work that Stan has done to get people to register when he is not registered himself proves to Myron that Stan is the person they have been looking for all along. Edwin was never the donor, Stan was.

Myron arranges for Stan to donate his marrow anonymously. Eighty-four days later Dr. Singh calls Myron and tells him that the transplant was a success and Jeremy is home.



Myron visits Greg in the hospital where he is recovering from his injuries. Greg thanks him for finding the donor and shocks Myron by telling him that he's always known that Myron was Jeremy's father. Greg tells Myron that his own father was a jerk, but they looked identical. Downing is tired and wants to rest, but agrees that he and Myron will have to talk about this situation sometime. Greg tells Myron that he never put much stock in blood meaning much. Esperanza tells Myron the same thing later in his office, also that no child would ever be harmed by having Myron in his life.

Myron and Win visit Stan Gibbs again, this time with Agent Green. Myron tells Stan that they know that Melina Garston sent the book to the FBI after she found it in his apartment. The note, 'with love, Dad' was an inscription to Stan, from his father. Stan denies it, but Myron points out that Stan could never have admitted reading the book or the plagiarism would have been proven. Garston called her father Papa, not Dad. The pieces fit together and Green had come to arrest Stan for his involvement.

Win and Myron leave. Myron confirms to Win that he had intended to turn Stan in from the beginning, but needed to make sure he donated his marrow to Jeremy first. Myron is sure that at the very least Stan will pay for the death of Melina Garston. Win asks Myron if everything is settled now. Myron tells him everything except for Jeremy.

Myron goes to watch Jeremy at basketball practice, amazed by how much the boy has grown in the months since he met him. Jeremy sees Myron and smiles, practicing harder in an effort to impress. After practice Jeremy joins Myron in the bleachers. Myron tries to find a way to broach the subject of the boy's paternity and is stunned when Jeremy tells Myron that Emily and Greg had told him two days ago. The boy goes on to explain that as far as he is concerned Myron may be his father, but is not his dad, mirroring the argument that Win had presented so long ago. Jeremy again shocks Myron with his easygoing attitude on the subject, telling his father that he would like it if Myron remains a part of his life. Myron happily agrees, amazed that the most difficult problem he has faced in the past few months has been resolved so easily. Jeremy leaves, headed home, and Myron watches him leave, reliving all the parts of Jeremy's life that he missed, not knowing he had a son.

Chapters 36-40 Analysis

Events begin to come to a head in the novel. Jeremy is still missing and everyone searches for him to no avail. Emily again wonders if she is being punished for her night with Myron by losing her son. Myron assures her that this is not the case, but that perhaps having something as wonderful as Jeremy requires payment of some kind. The reader may consider that Myron might be paying for his one night of indiscretion with Emily by gaining a son he did not know he had, only to lose him before he could have a relationship with him.

The issue of fathers and sons continues with Stan and Edwin Gibbs. Stan Gibbs has known from the first article he wrote that his father was the Sow the Seeds killer. Stan claims that his father had contacted him after being missing for eight years. Edwin had



supposedly contacted him as a reporter, not as a son. Stan was happy to hear from him regardless, and had met with him, only to be horrified by his father's confessions. However, rather than turn his father in, Stan decides to capitalize on the knowledge, knowing that it will make him famous.

Small revelations that have been laid out within the novel begin to take shape. When Myron had talked to the supposed killer on the telephone he had mentioned that a boy would die without a bone marrow donor. The mysterious person on the phone is the only person that Myron mentioned the sex of the child to. Stan makes the mistake asking Myron about the boy he is concerned for. It takes Myron a while to process the information, but is key to him realizing that Stan was involved in more than writing an article. The same applies for the note that Myron had found in Melina Garston's apartment. The note was signed 'dad'. The police had been through and searched her belongings, and had assumed innocently that the note was from her father. Myron, seeing things from a different perspective realizes that Melina's father would not have signed a note that way.

Taking a closer look, Myron realizes that the note is actually the inside page of a book, the book that Edwin Gibbs had written under a pseudonym. Gibbs had sent the book to his son and Stan had taken the information for his article from the book. Melina had been upset about lying for Stan and had searched his things, finding the book. It was Melina that had sent the book to the police, causing the plagiarism charges against Stan.

By tying things together, Myron is able to save his son. The main purpose of becoming involved for Myron was to save the boy. Throughout the novel, Myron struggles with the news that he is a father and what to do about it. In the end, Myron is willing to gamble it all, knowing that any relationship is better than none at all. Surprisingly, it is Jeremy that solves his problems for him. Jeremy reveals that he knows the truth; his parents had told him the truth. Jeremy answers the questions that Myron has been asking himself all along. It does not matter who your biological father is. It matters who raises you and acts as your Dad.



Characters

Myron Bolitar

Myron Bolitar is a sports agent and owner of MB SportsReps. An easygoing man in his mid-thirties, Myron is loyal and faithful to his friends, always willing to help others. This can sometimes lead him along a path that is not in his best interest, however his friends are as loyal as he is, and are always there for him in times of trouble. Until recently Myron had lived in his parents basement in his family home in New Jersey. After a failed attempt at living together with his former girlfriend, Myron had turned to his friend Win, and now lives with him in his apartment in the Dakota.

Myron's life turns upside down when he is contacted by his first love, Emily Downing. Emily comes to Myron for help in finding help for her son Jeremy. Jeremy is in need of a bone marrow transplant and the matching donor has disappeared. Myron's reluctance to become involved with Emily again leads her to reveal that Myron is the boy's father, conceived the night before her wedding. Myron and Emily had made love the night before she married Greg Downing, Myron's rival in basketball and love. Greg Downing had witnessed them together and arranged for Myron to be injured while playing. The injury turned out to be career ending.

Myron and his friends begin the search for the donor, only to become involved in a hunt for a serial killer and the missing son of a wealthy family. Along the way Myron learns some inner truths about himself and his friends and family. These realizations help him deal with the changing relationship with his father, as well as the new relationship he hopes to build with his son.

Emily Downing

The first love of Myron Bolitar, Emily Downing had left him after three years and a marriage proposal from his rival, Greg Downing. The night before her wedding, Emily had made love to Myron, claiming that she was afraid of the step she was taking and unsure if she was marrying the right man. Emily had gone forward with marriage, and it had ended badly several years and two children later. Myron had had brief contact with Emily during that time while trying to find her estranged husband, Greg Downing.

Emily returns to Myron's life when her son is in need of a bone marrow transplant. The matching donor is missing and Emily wants Myron to find him or her. Myron is reluctant which spurs Emily to inform him that he is Jeremy's son. Unsure if Emily is telling the truth and angry at having been denied a relationship with his son, Myron agrees to help.

Emily is a very protective mother, willing to do anything for her son. Surprisingly strong and fierce, Emily never falls apart in a crisis, from the diagnosis of her son, to the location and loss of a donor, through Jeremy's kidnapping and recovery. Myron questions whether Emily has told him that he is Jeremy's father in order to gain his



assistance, but this turns out not to be the case. As Emily had told Myron at the outset, regardless how she felt about anyone, she loved Jeremy more.

Stan Gibbs

Stan Gibbs is a disgraced journalist, accused of plagiarism. Stan becomes involved with Myron after Bolitar receives a mysterious phone call telling him to 'sow the seeds' while trying to contact the missing bone marrow donor. Tracing the phrase on the internet, Myron is led to Gibbs. Gibbs had written a series of articles detailing the deeds of a serial killer. Gibbs had purportedly interviewed the families of the victims as well as the killer himself. After, a twenty-year-old novel turns up with passages that appear to have been copied word for word. Stan is disgraced and disappears from public view.

Windsor Horne Lockwood III

Windsor Horne Lockwood III or Win to his friends is an extremely wealthy man who runs his family's investment firm. Win had been friends with Myron since they both attended Duke University and had been roommates. Win seems to be a reserved, upper-class gentleman, but though he can play this role when necessary there is much more to him. A black belt in martial arts and willing to do anything for his friends, Win is not only able but willing to respond to any problem with violence. He actually seems to prefer it. This seems to be the only thing that Win and Myron do not agree upon, as Myron tries to stay away from violence whenever necessary, and Win seems to court it.

Win helps Myron in his search for the missing bone marrow donor, providing access to sources that Myron would not be able to access on his own. Through the investigation Win also provides his insight into the relationship or lack thereof between Myron and Jeremy. Regardless of what decision that Myron makes regarding the boy, he knows that he can count on Win to be there, always.

Esperanza Diaz

Myron's partner at MB SportsReps and one of his best friends, Esperanza is a bisexual former womens' wrestling star. Esperanza put herself through law school, working hard in order to achieve success and become a partner of Myron's. Esperanza believes that Myron should tell Jeremy the truth regarding his paternity, in direct opposition to Win's opinion. Despite this, Myron knows that Esperanza will stand by him whichever decision he makes.

Esperanza does not always agree with the actions Myron takes, whether it is dating, or becoming involved in an investigation for a friend or acquaintance. Regardless, Esperanza is always there for Myron, standing by him and supporting him through whatever trouble or pain he finds himself in.



Greg Downing

The ex-husband of Emily Downing, Greg and Myron have been rivals since they were much younger, playing basketball against each other through high school and college. Along the way from scholastic to professional basketball, their lives crossed often on the court but rarely off. Myron had dated Emily for three years, proposed marriage and been turned down. In the end, Emily had wound up with Greg and the two were married, not before one last night of passion between Emily and Myron. Greg had stumbled upon them that night and in anger had paid another player to injure Myron. Unfortunately the injury was more severe than Greg had planned, and Myron's career as a basketball player was over before it began.

Myron and Greg have crossed paths recently when Myron was hired to find the missing basketball player. They have not seen each other since but Jeremy's missing marrow donor bring the two together once again. Adversarial at first, the two men quickly move on in order to do what is best for Jeremy. In the end, Greg is shot and almost killed by the Sow the Seeds serial killer, but the two are able to save Jeremy. While recovering in the hospital from his gunshot wound, Greg stuns Myron by revealing that he had known from the beginning that Jeremy was not his son.

Jeremy Downing

The oldest child of Emily and Greg Downing, Jeremy is diagnosed with Fanconi Anemia, a fatal illness. A bone marrow donor is found that can save his life, but the donor disappears under mysterious circumstances. Emily Downing then contacts Myron Bolitar to help her find the missing donor. At that time Emily reveals to Myron that he is Jeremy's biological father.

Jeremy has been receiving treatment for the disease and has been doing well, but needs a bone marrow transplant to survive. A fun-loving boy, Jeremy seems well rounded and a generally good kid. Those who love him fight to find the missing donor and keep him alive.

Jeremy is kidnapped by the supposed Sow the Seeds killer, but in reality it is Stan Gibbs who takes the boy. Stan assumed the persona of his father, the actual killer, in order to find a way to turn his father in and become a hero, clearing his name.

Jeremy reveals to Myron at the end of the novel that Emily and Greg have told him the truth about Myron being his father. Jeremy shows himself to be wise beyond his years, accepting Myron into his life, but telling Bolitar that Greg Downing, the man who raised him, is his dad.



Karen Singh

Jeremy's doctor, Karen Singh proves that the patient is the priority when she suggests to Myron that the disappearance of the bone marrow donor might not be just someone getting cold feet. A true patient's advocate, available day or night, Singh also suggests to Myron that if he and Emily were to conceive another child, that child might match Jeremy's marrow.

Singh is trustworthy and honest, willing to do what it takes to save Jeremy. When Stan Gibbs is found to be the actual marrow match, Singh performs the transplant in complete secrecy so as not to reveal Gibbs lies and falsifications.

Big Cyndi

Esperanza's former wrestling partner, Big Cyndi is an extremely large woman and the receptionist at MB SportsReps. Cyndi is not very articulate, but is always willing to do what it takes to assist her friends. Myron is a bit afraid of Cyndi, but never hesitates to call on her when needed.

Terese Collins

Terese Collins is a Television new reporter and the love interest of Myron Bolitar. Terese seems to be running from something in her past. She and Myron met at a support group of some sort and had run away together for an extended vacation. Now back in the real world, the two are trying to decide whether their relationship is worth pursuing.

Terese helps Myron find the name of the missing bone marrow donor by setting up a fake interview at the local marrow registry in New Jersey. It is unclear whether the two will continue to see each other, as Myron is trying to move past the pain in his life and Terese seems unable to.

Agent Kimberly Green

An FBI agent, Kimberly Green is investigating the Sow the Seeds killer. At various points in the novel, Green expresses her belief that Stan Gibbs is the serial killer that he has written about in his articles. Green is adversarial, challenging Myron and his own investigation, at one time suggesting that he is an accessory to the killer. In reality, it appears that Green is simply afraid that they will be unable to find the killer.

At the end of the novel, Kimberly Green shows herself to be a caring person, hiding behind her law enforcement status. When push comes to shove, she provides Myron with the help he needs to save Jeremy from the killer and to obtain his bone marrow transplant.



Eric Ford

The deputy director of the FBI, Eric Ford becomes directly involved in the investigation of the Sow the Seeds killer when he meets with Myron in his office. Ford attempts to keep the Lex family out of Myron's path, but by doing so makes them a larger focus.

Edwin Gibbs

The father of Stan Gibbs, Edwin is the true Sow the Seeds killer. Edwin has always been unstable, but had apparently lost his mind after his wife died of cancer. At the time his wife was dying or immediately after, Gibbs had become a killer, writing his thoughts and actions in a novel. Edwin had sent a copy to his son Stan, and Stan had used the novel and his father's own words to write a series of articles detailing the killings of several people, and the subsequent torture of their families.

Gibbs is captured after Jeremy Downing is kidnapped and finally reveals the truth of his murderous spree. Edwin then kills himself in his jail cell with a cyanide pill supplied by his son, Stan.

Susan Lex

The oldest child of Raymond Lex, Susan is the matriach of the Lex family. Fiercely determined to maintain privacy at all times, Susan is not above ordering her employees to use violence. Though Lex seems a callous, indeed heartless woman, she does wind up helping Myron when his search for the bone marrow donor leads him to her brother Dennis. Susan had shot Dennis when they were children, and he has been in a hospital since that time.

When Stan Gibbs stole the identity of Dennis in order to set up a situation where he could turn his father in, Myron stumbles upon the Lex family, hoping that they can help. Susan's reluctance to provide Myron with an answer about Dennis' whereabouts leads to Myron having to kidnap Susan to get to the truth. Despite this, Susan winds up helping Myron when events come to a head and the life of Jeremy is in danger.

Bronwyn Lex

The middle child of Raymond Lex, Bronwyn is not a prominent character, but had been with Susan and Dennis when Dennis was shot thirty years ago.

Dennis Lex

The youngest child of Raymond Lex, Dennis has been hospitalized for thirty years as the result of a gunshot wound. Stan Gibbs steals the identity of Dennis when he tries to



find a way to arrange turning his father in as the Sow the Seeds killer. Though Stan again changed his identity, Esperanza was able to tie the alias Davis Taylor to Dennis Lexes social security number. The connection to the Gibbs and Lex families is revealed when Myron discovers that Edwin Gibbs had been hospitalized at the same place where Dennis had been for so long.

Grover

The large security guard in charge of protecting the Lex family. Myron refers to him as Granite Man.

Lamar Richardson

The all-star short stop that Myron hopes to sign to the agency, bringing it back from the brink of closing.

Suzze T

A tennis player that Myron represents, who is offered an endorsement deal with a chain of topless coffee shops.

Chase Layton

The lawyer who represents the Lex family. Myron assaults Chase, punching him repeatedly in order to convince Chase to arrange a meeting between Susan Lex and himself.

Al Bolitar

Myron's father, Al is retiring and selling the family home. Ellen, his wife, is worried that Al is depressed because he is getting older and cannot accept change.

Ellen Bolitar

Myron's mother and a lawyer, Ellen Bolitar is a feminist and an extremely smart woman. This does not stop her from slipping into the role of a smothering Jewish mother when her son is around. Ellen is determined that her son and her husband have a discussion about life and their importance to each other.



Clara Steinburg

Myron's 'aunt', in the way that family friends become relatives, Clara represents first Stan Gibbs, then his father, Edwin. During negotiations, Clara stuns Myron by putting her client first, despite the fact that Jeremy's life is in danger.



Objects/Places

MB SportsReps

The sports agency owned by Myron Bolitar. Esperanza Diaz is Myron's partner in the business.

Lock-Horne Securities

The investment company owned by Win's family.

Babies and Children's Hospital

The hospital in New York where Jeremy is being treated by Dr. Karen Singh.

The Morning Mosh

The bar where Myron meets Suzze T. to discuss the offer from La, La, Latte.

The Rusty Umbrella

The bar where Myron meets with his source, Bruce Taylor, regarding Stan Gibbs.

The Lex Building

The corporate offices of the Lex Family.

From A Whisper To A Scream

The novel that Edwin Gibbs wrote under the name F.K. Armstrong, detailing his serial killing spree.

Stokes, Layton and Grace

The law firm where Chase Layton works for the Lex family. The location of the sting where Myron kidnaps Susan Lex.



Bernardsville

The location in New Jersey where Edwin Gibbs is captured.

Master Kwon's

The fitness facility owned by Master Kwon where Myron and Win work out, practicing martial arts.



Themes

Fathers and Sons

The theme of fathers and sons is recurrent throughout the novel *Darkest Fear*, but Harlan Coben. The first example of father and son is Myron Bolitar and his father Al Bolitar. Myron and his father have always had a close relationship, but they are going through a change in their relationship. Al is getting older and retiring, and he and his wife are selling the home where Myron grew up and had lived until recently. Myron's mother is concerned that Al is fading, and needs to change roles with Myron, with Myron being the stronger in the relationship moving forward. After speaking with his father, Myron discovers that his father does not wish to change roles, that he in fact cherishes the role of mentor and father to his only son.

Another father son relationship is that between Greg Downing and his son Jeremy. Though it is discovered that Jeremy is in fact Myron's biological son and that Greg is aware of this, he has raised and loved Jeremy as his own from the beginning. Willing to do whatever is best for his son, Greg reveals the truth to Jeremy about Myron's being his biological father, knowing that his relationship with his son can survive the truth.

A third father and son relationship is that between Stan Gibbs and his father Edwin. Despite the fact that Edwin is a serial killer, Stan is loyal to him, protecting him from the FBI. Throughout the novel Stan orchestrates events so that he can safely turn his father in and get him the help he needs, and still maintain his status as a hero. Despite the negative results of the actions of Edwin and Stan, it still appears to be love that bound them.

Win comments on the relationship of fathers and sons, an opinion that seems to be completely out of character for him. It is Win's opinion that it is not biology that creates a father and son relationship, but the life that they lead outside of biology. The essence of the relationship is not the biology, but the people involved.

Deception

Deception begins early in the novel *Darkest Fear*. The first case of deception is that of Jeremy's biological parents. Myron and Emily Downing had sex the night before her wedding to Greg Downing. That night, Jeremy Downing was conceived. Emily had kept the secret of Jeremy's father until it became necessary to reveal it, when the bone marrow donor had disappeared. By revealing the truth to Myron, Emily knows that Myron will dedicate all of his time and energy in saving his son.

Another example of deception is the seeming disappearance of Dennis Lex. Though it appears that Dennis had vanished while a child, the truth is that he has been hospitalized his entire life as a result of a gunshot wound. Susan Lex had shot her brother while they were playing with a loaded gun when they were young. As Lex tells



Myron, the rich do not like unpleasantness, so Dennis was sequestered in an expensive hospital for the remainder of his life. While this seems to be a seemingly innocent way for a family to deal with tragedy, Dennis' presence at Pine Hills allows Stan Gibbs to steal his identity, and create the circumstances of turning his father in for murder.

Deception also figures largely into the life of Stan Gibbs and his father Edwin. Edwin is mentally ill, and is the Sow the Seeds killer. Stan discovers this when his father confesses to him, however rather than reveal the source for his article, Stan instead decides to follow the path to fame, destroying the victim's families in the process. The deception continues when Stan plagiarizes his father's novel in order to continue building his fame. That plagiarism leads to Gibb's downfall when the FBI uncovers the novel, delivered to them by Gibb's mistress.

Gibbs continues his deception, stealing the identity of Dennis Lex in order to find a way to reveal his father's crimes and once again become famous, in fact, a hero, by saving the life of Jeremy Downing. It is only because Stan tried too hard to project himself into the role of the supposed serial killer that Myron was able to uncover his lies and find the truth.

Love

Love is a complex emotion defining a strong sense of affection. In *Darkest Fear* there are several examples of Love, ranging from the deep affection of friends, such as Myron, Win and Esperanza, to the deep love of family, such as that between Myron and his parents.

Love is used as an excuse at times, such as when Emily informs Myron that he is the biological father of Jeremy. Though Emily understands Myron's argument that he should have been informed that he had a son, Emily uses her love for her son as the reason that she did not. Loving Jeremy prevented Emily from revealing the truth, as she did not want to cause him pain. The same love for her son causes her to reveal her secret when his life is in jeopardy. Whether Myron is able to find the missing donor, or donate sperm so that she can conceive a child that might be a match for Jeremy, as a mother, Emily feels justified in doing whatever it takes to save her boy.

The love that Stan Gibbs claims to have for his father is a bit less clear. Though it appears that the reporter honestly cares for his father, Stan clearly loves himself more. Rather than turning his father in immediately and getting him the help he needed, Stan took the opportunity to make a name for himself. Using his father's confessions and excerpts from his novel, Stan ignored his duty as a responsible person first, and as a son second, in order to gain the fame he cherished. When his father became a liability to him he provided the means to an ends with a cyanide pill. Stan claims that all of his acts were done out of the love of a son for a father, but it is clear that self-love was the motivating factor for him.



Myron's relationship with Jeremy is also based on love. Though Myron has no immediate personal knowledge of Jeremy of what type of child he is, Bolitar bases his feelings on those he has for his own father and their relationship. Myron regrets the love that he was not able to share with his son, as well as the events in their lives that they were never able to share. Because Myron was raised with love, he hopes that he will be able to develop that type of relationship with his son. The fact that he loves Jeremy is evident because Myron is willing to make the choice Jeremy's, rather than force himself into his life.

Style

Point of View

Darkest Fear by Harlan Coben is written in the third person omniscient. This is a great deal of help to the reader, as it gives one insight into the thoughts and actions of Myron Bolitar, the main character in the novel. Myron's thoughts and feeling while searching for the bone marrow donor that will save the life of his biological son are the main focus of the novel. The deep emotions and feelings of Myron are clearly portrayed to the reader, so that the fast paced action of the novel and the urgency of the search for the donor come across clearly.

Then novel is written in equal parts of dialogue and descriptive passages, allowing the reader to easily follow the story and become emotionally involved with the characters. The descriptive areas provide more details of events as well as background of the characters, providing insight into their relationships with each other. The dialogue keeps the novel moving quickly, providing the reader with a look at the personalities of the characters and how they interact with each other.

Setting

Darkest Fear takes place in and around New York City and areas of New Jersey. Myron Bolitar had been born and raised in New Jersey and visits his family home on several occasions throughout the novel. In addition, Emily Downing lives in a suburb in New Jersey, where Myron visits her home at first for dinner, and then when Jeremy is kidnapped by the presumed serial killer. Bernardsville, a small town in New Jersey is the location of the home where Edwin Gibbs is located after Stan Gibbs reveals the truth about his father to Myron.

Myron lives currently in the Dakota, an exclusive apartment building in New York City. Myron is staying with his friend Win, as he has recently broken up with his live in girlfriend and his parents are selling their house. Myron's office is also located in New York City, as are several bars that he visits while searching for the bone marrow donor.

Waterbury, Connecticut it visited briefly by Myron and Greg Dwoning when they trace the false identity of the marrow donor. They actually arrive at the home of Edwin Gibbs, living under an assumed identity of a patient at Pine Hills, the hospital where he has spent many years. When Myron uncovers the name of the bone marrow donor, he uncovers the address in Waterbury.

Language and Meaning

The language in Darkest Fear is fast paced and entertaining, allowing the reader to get a better feel for the characters, as well as to express the characters personality traits



more clearly. The characters are all represented well, allowing the reader to experience the action as it happens, and allowing for a sense of emotional connection.

The novel is written with quite a bit of fast paced dialogue, with descriptive passages interspersed that give the reader a better idea of what the main character is thinking or what direction his thoughts are moving in. The beginning of the novel takes place over a relative short period of time, while the final two chapters encompass a period of a few months.

Structure

Darkest Fear by Harlan Coben is a fictional novel broken down into 40 chapters of varying lengths. The chapters are numbered, not titled, but each chapter is for the most part, self contained, following the action of the novel from one point to another. The reader is led along the same thought path as the main character, Myron Bolitar, and the chapters are written in a way to make this easier. The final two chapters are longer than the others, wrapping up various points that were not covered previously.

The main plot of *Darkest Fear* is the search by Myron Bolitar for the missing bone marrow donor that will save his son's life. Though Myron had not been aware of his son's existence, he none the less throws himself into the case, perhaps to drown out the uncertainty and pain he is experiencing after Emily's revelation. Several subplots are interwoven throughout the novel, including the relationship between Stan Gibbs and his father, Edwin Gibbs, the *Sow the Seeds* killer. Stan Gibbs is a reporter accused of plagiarizing a novel which turns out to have been written by his father under an assumed name. The novel details Edwin Gibbs' crimes as a killer. Stan writes the articles based on his father's recollections as well as drawing details from the novel. After being vilified for plagiarizing the novel and refusing to reveal the identity of the killer, Stan develops a plan to vindicate himself and become a hero by saving the life of Jeremy Downing.

Darkest Fear is an entertaining novel and enjoyable to read. The novel is well written, detailing the ongoing trials and tribulations of Myron Bolitar and his friends. Bolitar is a recurring character for Harlan Coben and once again provides readers with an exciting and detailed journey into the lives of the sports agent and his friends.



Quotes

"Jeremy's birthday is July eighteenth," she said. "Do the math."

"What math?"

"One more time: He's thirteen years old. He was born on July the eighteenth. I was married on October tenth."

Nothing. For several seconds, he heard the mothers chatting over one another, one baby cry, on barista call out an order to another, and then it happened. A cold gust blew across Myron's heart. Steel bands wrapped around his chest, making it almost impossible to breathe. He opened his mouth but nothing came out. It was like someone had whacked his solar plexus with a baseball bat. Emily watched him and nodded.

"That's right," she said. "He's your son."

Chapter two, page 20

"Several month ago, a friend's death had sent Myron into a tail-spin, causing him to—and we're using complex psychiatric jargon here—wig out. Nothing overly drastic, no nervous breakdown or institutional commitment. He had instead fled to a deserted Caribbean island with Terese Collins, a beautiful TV anchorwoman he didn't know. He had told no one—not Win, not Esperanza, not even Mom and Dad—where he was going or when he'd be back.

As Win put it, when he wiggled out, he wiggled out in style. "

Chapter 4, pg. 32

"Win breathed in for a twenty count, held it, breathed out for a twenty count. He was meditating, of course, but with a Win-like twist. He did not, for example, listen to soothing nature sounds or chimes; no, he preferred meditating to the sound tracks of, uh, skin flicks from the seventies, which basically sounded like a bad Jimi Hendrix impersonator making wah-wah-wah noises on an electric kazoo. Just listening to it was enough to make you rush out for a shot of antibiotics.

Win did not close his eyes either. He did not visualize a deer sipping water by a lapping stream or a gentle waterfall against green foliage or any of that. His gaze remained fixed on the television screen; more specifically, on homemade videotapes of himself and a potpourri of females in the throes of passion.'

Chapter 5, pg. 36

"A freak accident. Or so everyone thought. Including Myron. For more than ten years, he'd believed that the injury was merely a fluke, the fickle work of the Fates. But now he knew better. Now he knew the man who stood in front of him had been the cause. Now he knew that their seemingly innocent childhood rivalry had grown monstrous, had feasted upon his dream, had slaughtered Greg and Emily's marriage, and had in all probability led to the birth of Jeremy Downing."

Chapter 7, pg 58

"Terese kept looking. "Win is an interesting fellow," she said.

"Oh yeah," Myron agreed.

"On the outside, he's all cold and detached," she said. "But underneath that-way down



deep inside-he's all cold and detached."

"You read people well, Terese."

Chapter 8, pg 62

"Master Kwon was in his mid-seventies but could easily pass for two decades younger. Win had met him during his Asian travels when he was fifteen. As near as Myron could tell, Master Kwon had been a high priest or some such thing at a small Buddhist monastery straight out of a Hong Kong revenge flick. When Master Kwon had emigrated to the United States, he spoke very little English. Now, some twenty years later, he spoke almost none. As soon as the wise master hit out shores, he opened up a chain of state-of-the-art tai kwon do schools—withh Win's financial backing, of course. Once he saw the Karate Kid movies, Master Kwon started playing the old wise man to the hilt. His English disappeared. He started dressing like the Dalai Lama and began every sentence with the words 'Confucius say,' ignoring the small fact that he was Korean and Confucius was Chinese."

Chapter 12, pg. 97

"At eleven. If I'm not let in, I go immediately to the press."

"You're being extremely rude, Mr. Bolitar."

"To the press," Myron repeated. "Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Will you be there?"

"What possible difference could that make?"

"All this sexual tension is driving me batty. Maybe afterward we could get together for a nice cool latte."

He heard the phone go click and smiled. The charm, he thought. It's baaaack."

Chapter 14, pg. 107

"He is guilty, Myron. Stan could only get himself in more trouble by talking. And if he hung around and tried to defend himself, someone would dig into his past too. Mainly his old columns. All of them. Every fact, every quote, everything. And if you've plagiarized one story, you've plagiarized others. You don't do it for the first time when you're Stan's age."

Chapter 16, pg 129

"Kimberly Green came in and out and kept shaking her head at him. Myron wanted to cooperate, but here's the pertinent cliché': Once the genie is out of the bottle, you can't put it back in. He didn't know what they were investigating. He didn't know if it would benefit Jeremy to talk or hurt him. But once he spoke, once his words were in the public domain, he couldn't take them back. Any leverage he might later be able to apply would be gone. So, for now, even if he might want to help, he wouldn't. Not until he learned more. He had the contacts. He could find out quickly enough, make an informed decision."

Chapter 19, pg. 152

"Zorra wore a yellow monogrammed sweater (the monogram being one letter: Z), large white pearls a' la Wilma Flintstone, a plaid skirt, and white bobby socks. Her—or if you



want to anatomically correct, his—wig looked like early Bette Midler or maybe Little Orphan Annie on methadone. Shiny red high-heel shoes like something stolen from a trampy Dorothy in Oz adorned the men's-size-twelve feet."

Chapter 31, pg. 230

"Why is he here?" Myron asked.

"I shot him," she said.

Myron opened his mouth, closed it, did the math.

"But you were only a child when he disappeared."

"Fourteen years old," she said. "Bronwyn was six."

She stopped stroking the cheek. "It's an old story, Mr. Bolitar. You've probably heard it a thousand times. We were playing with a loaded gun. Bronwyn wanted to hold it, I said no, he reached for it, it went off." She said it all in one breath, staring down at her brother, still stroking the cheek. "This is the end result."

Chapter 33, pg. 247

"Would you want your son to turn you in one day?"

"Don't hand me that. If I'm a raving psychopathic maniac, yeah, my son can turn me in. Or better, he can put a bullet in my head. You knew your old man was sick, right? The least you could have done was get him help."

"We tried," Stan said. "He was in institutions most of his adult life. It didn't do any good. Then he ran off. When he finally called me, I hadn't seen him in eight years. Imagine that. Eight years. He calls me and tells me he needs to talk to me as a reporter. He made that clear. As a reporter. No matter what he told me, I couldn't reveal the source. He made me promise. I was confused as hell. But I agreed. And then he told me his story. What he'd been doing. I could barely breathe. I wanted to die. I wanted to just dry up and die."

Chapter 35, pg 260

"I've been thinking about it," Jeremy said. "You want to hear what I've come up with?"

Myron swallowed. He looked into the boy's eyes—serenity, yes, but not through innocence. "Very much," he said.

"You're not my dad," he said simply. "I mean, you might be my father. But you're not my dad. You know what I mean?"

Myron managed a nod.

"But" —Jeremy stopped, looked up, shrugged the shrug of a thirteen-year-old—"but maybe you can still be around."

Chapter 40, pg. 317

Topics for Discussion

What relationship did Myron have with Emily Downing?

What does Emily tell Myron to convince him to help her look for the missing bone marrow donor?

What is Win's opinion of what Myron should do regarding Jeremy? Esperanza's?

Who is Dennis Lex? What happened to him?

How does Myron discover the connection between the Lex family and Edwin Gibbs?

What is Stan's motivation for assuming the identity of Dennis Lex?

What is Jeremy's reaction to the truth about his biological father? How does this mirror the argument of Win?