

# **Dead in the Water Study Guide**

## **Dead in the Water by Stuart Woods**

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# Plot Summary

*Dead in the Water* by Stuart Woods is another novel featuring cop turned lawyer, Stone Barrington. In this novel, Stone is in St. Marks to vacation on a chartered yacht with girlfriend, Arrington Carter. Unfortunately, Arrington is detained in New York. While alone, Stone sees a woman pull into the harbor alone and watches as she is arrested for unknown reasons. With nothing better to do, Stone becomes involved in the woman's case, eventually representing her against charges she murdered her husband. *Dead in the Water* is a thriller that has so many twists and turns that the reader will be on the edge of their seat until the final page.

Stone Barrington arrives in St. Marks alone on what was supposed to be a romantic winter vacation with his live-in girlfriend, Arrington Carter. In fact, Stone had planned to ask Arrington to marry him on this vacation. However, a snowstorm and an exclusive interview with Hollywood heartthrob, Vance Calder, leaves Stone alone. While still hoping Arrington will show up, Stone witnesses a woman pulling her yacht into the harbor alone. Within minutes, police are swarming the boat and the woman is taken into custody. Curious, Stone makes inquiries and learns that the woman's husband died at sea.

Stone attends the coroner's inquest just because he has nothing better to do. However, it immediately becomes clear to Stone that the local minister of justice has his eye on the Prime Minister's office and wants to use this case as a stepping stone. During the lunch break, Stone pulls the widow, Allison Manning, aside and offers to represent her in the matter. The woman agrees and Stone quickly gives her a few pointers to use during testimony. Back at the inquest, Stone asks permission to represent Allison and asks her a few questions that cast shadows on the minister of justice's case. Unfortunately, this was not enough for the jury to rule death by natural causes. Instead, the jury makes a ruling that allows the minister of justice the leeway he needs to bring charges of murder against Allison. Stone attempts to get Allison off the island, but she is arrested before she can board the plane.

Allison Manning claims her husband, famous novelist Paul Manning, died of a heart attack while hoisting her up the mast of their boat in the middle of the Atlantic. The minister of Justice, Sir Winston Sutherland, found a notebook that he claims is a diary that suggests Allison and her husband were not getting along and Allison had become homicidal. Allison claims this notebook represents only notes for a new novel that Paul was planning to write. As part of Allison's defense, Stone plans to find someone who can testify in such a way as to support Allison's version of things. Stone also plans to create a media blitz that will place enough pressure on Sir Winston that he will think twice before taking on Allison Manning.

The media blitz brings hundreds of reporters to the small island, putting Allison on the front page of dozens of newspapers and television news programs. However, Sir Winston is not quite as intimidated as Stone had hoped. Sir Winston has each and every reporter removed from the island. Only two remain, including a man who claims to



have known Paul Manning and who is willing to testify on Allison's behalf. At the same time, all this publicity has alerted friends and family members of Paul Manning, including his ex-wife, Elizabeth Manning, who comes hoping to get some money out of her ex-husband's estate. Stone bribes the ex-Mrs. Manning with a large sum of money, quickly getting her on a plane out of town. Unfortunately, that plane crashes on the way to Antigua.

When the trial begins, Stone feels he has a strong case. In fact, the case against Allison is highly circumstantial while Stone's case is strong. Stone is confident up to the last moment when the jury convicts Allison for the murder of her husband. Allison is sentenced to hang. Stone and Allison wait on pins and needles for the prime minister to rule on the appeal. Unfortunately, no word comes before the time set for the hanging. Allison is hung. Stone returns to Allison's boat, defeated, only to learn that Allison did not hang. In fact, Allison bribed the prime minister and has been allowed to escape from the island. As Stone euphorically makes his way home on the yacht Allison has given him to pay his legal fee, he realizes that Paul Manning was not dead at all. In fact, Stone is able to prove that his star witness, a journalist for the New Yorker magazine, is in fact Paul Manning. Stone has Paul Manning arrested and returned to St. Marks for causing the engine fire that ended the lives of three people on Libby Manning's flight to Antigua.



# Chapters 1-4

## Chapters 1-4 Summary

Stone Barrington is a character who has been featured in two other Stuart Woods novels, beginning with *New York Dead* and continuing with *Dirt* before this novel. In this novel, the cop turned lawyer is in St. Marks, a tropical island south of Antigua, for vacation.

In Chapter 1, Stone Barrington wakes on a charter boat moored in English Harbor on St. Marks, hoping his girlfriend, Arrington Carter, will join him that day. Arrington was supposed to fly out with Stone the day before, but she was delayed by a meeting with a publisher about an exclusive interview with the Hollywood heartthrob, Vance Calder. As Stone begins his day, he sees a large yacht come into the harbor with a single woman aboard. The harbor officials climb aboard the yacht and quickly call the police. As Stone watches, the woman is taken into custody.

In Chapter 2, Stone goes to a bar/restaurant near the harbor and meets Thomas, the owner who was once a New York City cop. Stone asks Thomas about the woman and the large yacht. Thomas tells Stone that the woman arrived in the harbor without her husband, who was aboard the yacht when it left the Canary Islands a month earlier.

In Chapter 3, Stone attends the coroner's inquest regarding the death of the yacht woman's husband. The woman, Allison Manning, is questioned by the minister of justice, Sir Winston Sutherland. Allison claims that after sailing through Europe and reaching their final stretch at the end of a year long journey, Allison and her husband stopped in the Canary Islands to make a few repairs. Ten days after leaving there, the sails separated, necessitating one of them to climb the mast to make repairs. Allison was elected to do it because she could not lift her large husband even with the help of a pulley system. While up on the mast, Allison saw her husband clutch his chest and fall over. When Allison was finally able to reach her husband, several hours had past and he was dead. Allison threw him overboard before sailing for Antigua alone.

Sir Winston brings out a diary that was found aboard the yacht. In this diary, Paul Manning wrote several passages that express a difficult relationship between husband and wife. Allison is surprised by these passages, but points out that they are written in the third person point of view. A few minutes later, a lunch recess is called. Immediately, Stone approaches Allison Manning and suggests that he offer her some legal advice.

In Chapter 4, Stone and Allison have lunch together her yacht, *Expansive*. Stone tells Allison that the jury has three options in her husband's case. They can find that he died of natural causes, that the cause of death is homicide, or they can offer an open verdict, meaning that cause of death could not be determined. Stone warns Allison that an open verdict or verdict of homicide could leave her vulnerable to prosecution by Sir Winston. Stone suggests that Allison allow him to represent her when they return to the inquest



and offers her a few pointers in her testimony under Sir Winston's testimony. Allison quickly agrees.

## Chapters 1-4 Analysis

The first chapter introduces fans of Stuart Woods to a recurring character named Stone Barrington. Stone was once a cop in New York City who retired after a bizarre case left him wounded. Stone is now a wealthy attorney who has come to St. Marks, just off of Antigua, to go on a chartered yacht with his girlfriend Arrington. Unfortunately, Arrington has not come along, suggesting to the reader some difficulty in this long-term and potentially committed relationship. While alone and bored, Stone quickly finds himself pulled into the case of a woman whose husband apparently died while they were sailing over the Atlantic, the conflict that will propel the plot of the novel.

Stone attends the coroner's inquest and learns about Allison Manning's case, discovering that the case appears to open and shut, but the minister of justice is taking a special interest in the case for unknown reasons. Stone learns from a local man he has befriended at a local restaurant/bar that the minister of Justice, Sir Winston, is hoping to become the next prime minister. A case such as this could win that position for Sir Winston. This makes it appear that Allison is an unwitting victim of a politically charged case. Stone immediately becomes involved, the kind of man who cannot help but come to the assistance of a woman in need.

The reader learns about the circumstances of Paul Manning's death in these chapters. The reader feels sympathy for Allison Manning. However, there are a few things that stand out about the case, such as Allison's delay in helping her husband and her decision to throw his body overboard rather than return it home for burial. Also in question is the diary that Paul Manning appears to have left behind that records difficulties in Paul's marriage to Allison. Finally, the reader is left with one unaddressed question at this point. Why Allison did not call for help?



# Chapters 5-8

## Chapters 5-8 Summary

In Chapter 5, Stone and Allison return to the inquest. Sir Winston continues his questioning by asking Allison about her husband's money and then Sir Winston suggests that Allison could have killed her rather large husband by pushing him overboard as he was urinating. At this point, Stone interrupts, asking the coroner if he can ask Allison a few questions as her legal counsel. Stone brings up Paul Manning's medical report, done just before they began their trip, that suggests Paul Manning was a heart attack waiting to happen due to his high cholesterol and weight. The inquest ends after Stone's questioning of Allison. Stone and Allison go to Thomas' bar/restaurant, the Shipwright's Arms, to wait for the verdict.

In Chapter 6, the coroner hand delivers a death certificate to Allison at the Shipwright's Arms. The certificate reflects an open verdict, so Stone suggests that Allison get off the island immediately. Allison insists on packing a few things, so it takes longer than necessary to get to the islands tiny airport and single commuter service. As Allison is about to board the plane, the police arrive to arrest her.

In Chapter 7, Stone returns to the Shipwright's Arms where Thomas gives him a list of barristers on the island who might represent Allison. None of the first three are willing to go up against Sir Winston. The third name, Thomas explains, is an elderly man who is not always coherent, but he has a private ax to grind with Sir Winston. Thomas takes Stone to meet the barrister, Sir Leslie Hewitt. Stone and Thomas explain to the barrister that they need him to represent Allison at the initial hearing until they can bring in a barrister from London. Sir Leslie agrees and then explains to Stone how the legal system on St. Marks works. Sir Leslie informs him that St. Marks does not have a prison system per se, so anyone convicted of a crime that includes murder is often put to death by hanging within days of the conviction. In fact, there is only one avenue of appeal, an appeal made to the prime minister that is always answered within twenty-four hours. Therefore, Allison could be hanged in less than a week in St. Marks' judicial system.

Stone and Thomas return to the Shipwright's Arms where a fax is waiting for Stone. The fax is a short note from Arrington informing him that although the blizzard that kept her from traveling the day before has resolved, she has decided to remain in New York for the rest of the week to continue her interviews with Vance Calder.

In Chapter 8, Stone spends a restless night alone before using a phone in a rented room at the Shipwright's Arms to call a business associate to discuss bringing an English barrister to St. Marks to help Allison. When this associate, Bill Eggers calls back, Stone learns that the barrister will cost Allison a quarter of a million for the retainer and more than three hundred dollars an hour. Stone goes to the hearing with Thomas and Sir Leslie. They visit with Allison for a moment before going into the courtroom.



Stone has to wear a black robe that is much too small and is given a wig, but is instructed not to put it on.

## Chapters 5-8 Analysis

Allison learns that her husband's death has been left with an open verdict, giving the minister of justice the opening he needs to prosecute her. If not for her desire to take certain items from her yacht, Allison might have escaped the island before her arrest, but she insisted on getting certain personal items that include a briefcase and cosmetic case. This suggests to the reader either one of two things, Allison is hiding something from everyone or she is extremely vain, worried even in these desperate circumstances about her appearance. The reader tends more toward the idea that Allison is hiding something since she is about to be on trial for murder.

Stone, appearing to be the kind of man who needs to help a woman in need, immediately begins planning her defense. Stone cannot defend Allison himself because he is not an English barrister and is not familiar with the English legal system. However, Thomas takes him to the home of Sir Leslie, an elderly gentleman who has reason to want to go up against Sir Winston, unlike all the other barristers Stone and Thomas have approached. Sir Leslie has a personal ax to grind, suggesting to the reader that this will be more than a case to Sir Leslie. This also gives the reader reason to hope that Allison might be exonerated of the charges against her.





# Chapter 9-13

## Chapter 9-13 Summary

In Chapter 9, Stone and Sir Leslie enter the courtroom where Sir Leslie immediately asks the judge if Stone can be admitted to the St. Marks bar for the duration of the trial, something that is immediately agreed upon. The judge then has each set of lawyers placed into the record, making it impossible for Stone to bring in another barrister. The subject of bail is broached. Allison is allowed to leave jail as long as she makes no attempt to leave St. Marks. However, if Allison should leave, her yacht will be confiscated and she will be considered guilty of her crime and hung immediately.

In Chapter 10, Stone calls Bill Eggers and cancels the barrister. Stone then calls an investigator, Bob Cantor, and asks him to fly to the Canary Islands and find anyone who remembers the Mannings. Stone then calls his secretary to make financial arrangements for the investigation. Finally, Stone returns to the bar and learns that Allison has been talking to an insurance investigator about her husband's policy but failed to tell him that she is being charged with her husband's murder.

In Chapter 11, Stone sits down and tells Allison how quickly St. Marks could hang her if she is found guilty. Stone then tells her that her best chance of surviving this situation is to create a media frenzy that will encourage Sir Winston to back off for the same political reasons that he began this fight with. Allison hesitates at first, but then agrees. Stone calls Bill Eggers and has him hire a PR firm and contact several politicians who might be able to help.

In Chapter 12, Stone goes to Allison's yacht for dinner. They have a nice dinner and discuss their pasts briefly. Then Allison seduces Stone.

In Chapter 13, Stone and Allison wake to a reporter knocking on the boat's hull. Stone sneaks off the boat while Allison dresses. When Stone arrives at the Shipwright's Arms, he introduces himself to the reporter, Hilary Kramer. It turns out Kramer was on vacation on Antigua and her paper sent her to St. Marks when word broke about Allison's trial. Kramer interviews Allison briefly over coffee and decides to stick around in order to write an in depth piece on her situation.

## Chapter 9-13 Analysis

Allison is released on bail and Stone puts his defense into action by calling down a media storm on St. Marks and everyone involved. Stone believes that Sir Winston can be swayed by bad press, thinking that a politician in America would shun bad press in order to get the political office of their choice. However, Stone could possibly be underestimating Sir Winston because he is not a citizen of this island country and he does not fully understand how politics work there. However, it appears that Stone's call



to the media has worked when Hilary Kramer shows up immediately and appears sympathetic to Allison's plight.

Allison seduces Stone. This is an unusual situation that confuses the reader somewhat. Allison has just lost her husband. Even though it has been more than two weeks since Paul's death, it does appear that Allison is not acting like a grieving widow. In fact, this act takes the reader back to the fact that Allison threw her husband's body overboard like trash. It seems to lend credence to Sir Winston's idea that Allison and her husband had begun to hate one another while locked alone together on a boat for such a long time.



# Chapters 14-18

## Chapters 14-18 Summary

In Chapter 14, Stone talks to Bob Cantor after breakfast and learns that Paul Manning was deeply in debt when he began his year long trip on the yacht. Cantor also informs Stone that Paul Manning was married once before, to a woman in Florida, but the marriage was dissolved before Paul married Allison. After finishing with Cantor, Stone asks Thomas to arrange security on the dock. Thomas, it turns out, has many brothers on the police force and will be able to ask their help.

In Chapter 15, Stone talks with a producer from 60 Minutes about doing a story on Allison. Stone tells the man he can have an exclusive if he promises the segment will air that weekend. As the producer arranges this, Stone talks to another reporter, Jim Forrester, who is writing a piece for New Yorker magazine. Forrester tells Stone that he knew Paul Manning and that he had dinner with him and his wife in the Canary Islands. Forrester is willing to testify to this in court.

In Chapter 16, Stone meets with the 60 Minutes reporter and discusses the interview she will conduct. The reporter, Chris Wheaton is intelligent and quick, but Stone is convinced her interview will help Allison. In fact, Wheaton insists, despite her producer's reluctance, on staying on St. Marks until the conclusion of the trial to do a follow-up segment on it.

In Chapter 17, Stone returns to Allison's yacht where Stone tells her about the 60 Minutes interview. The following morning, the crew arrives early, catching Stone and Allison in bed. Once again, Stone is forced to sneak off the yacht to prevent anyone learning about his sexual affair with Allison Manning.

In Chapter 18, Chris Wheaton interviews Allison Manning for several hours with both Stone Barrington and Jim Forrester present. Allison handles herself well, answering all the questions clearly and honestly. As Chris Wheaton leaves, she tells Stone that she believes Allison is guilty. However, Chris Wheaton plans to showcase Allison Manning as an innocent woman in her segment on 60 Minutes.

## Chapters 14-18 Analysis

Stone's plan to put Allison in the forefront of the American press is coming together quickly. Allison is interviewed by 60 Minutes. The reporter believes Allison is guilty, but she promises to show a sympathetic bent on the show. The reader finds this interesting. Allison has not been acting like a woman whose husband is dead, so it is interesting that a reporter might feel the same way even without being aware of all the same things the reader knows. It is also interesting that Jim Forrester feels the need to be present during this interview. Forrester has come out of right field with apparent information on Allison and her husband that even Allison has not revealed to anyone. Forrester is an



interesting character who appears to be peripheral, but the reader suspects he may become a little more important as the plot continues to develop.

At the same time, Stone has an investigator checking out Paul Manning. This investigator finds little in the Canary Islands to help Stone, but does learn that Paul Manning was in financial difficulties at the time he chose to travel on his yacht. In fact, Paul was mortgaged deeply by both his house and the boat and he was barely surviving from royalty check to royalty check. This suggests to the reader that Paul Manning might have felt he was better off dead, perhaps leading to his death.



# Chapters 19-23

## Chapters 19-23 Summary

In Chapter 19, Stone speaks briefly to Cantor and learns that few people on the Canary Islands remember the Mannings, but one couple does remember them fighting about navigational plans the night before they left for Puerto Rico. Cantor has also learned that the Mannings' rubber dinghy was stolen and Paul Manning made a big deal about ordering a new one from Barcelona. When Stone gets off the phone, he asks Forrester if he remembers any of this and Forrester backs up everything Cantor learned. Stone is a little concerned that Forrester did not offer this information in the beginning. A few minutes later, Allison comes into the bar and is interviewed by Hilary Kramer. Afterward, Stone asks her opinion. Kramer says that she believes Allison is truly innocent.

In Chapter 20, the media rush begins. Stone hides Allison on the yacht until a press conference can be arranged the following morning. The following morning at the press conference, Stone makes a statement and takes questions, followed by a brief statement by Allison. Afterward, the press is invited to take photographs of the Expansive.

In Chapter 21, Allison is taken to Stone's rented room in the Shipwright's Arms. Downstairs, Stone watches as the police arrive and escort the press onto a bus, claiming they are taking them to a press conference by the minister of justice. However, instead of driving downtown, they are taken toward the airport. Stone and Thomas follow. The press, minus one television crew, is escorted onto large government planes and flown off the island. Stone believes this is a good sign because it will make the press angry with Sir Winston but Thomas warns that Sir Winston might not be affected by adverse press in a foreign country. Later that afternoon, Stone goes to the Expansive and checks the lockers for the dinghy Paul Manning had replaced in the Canary Islands. Stone finds it still in its original packaging.

In Chapter 22, Stone and Allison go to have lunch with Sir Leslie. Sir Leslie sends Stone to get some milk for tea when they arrive, leaving him alone with Allison. When Stone returns, he discovers the milk was not necessary as Sir Leslie had some. During their meeting, Sir Leslie outlines how the trial will proceed, telling Stone that Sir Leslie would present the opening and closing arguments and Stone would do the questioning of witnesses. The meeting then ends, leaving Stone frustrated by the lack of strategy planning.

In Chapter 23, Stone speaks with Cantor again and learns more about Paul Manning's financial difficulties. Manning was borrowing money to cover his bills, the highest bill being a twelve million dollar life insurance policy. Cantor asks if Allison might have killed her husband for the insurance, something Sir Winston is sure to ask at trial. Then Cantor suggests Manning might have faked his death but Stone assures him he has ruled that out by checking on the whereabouts of the dinghy.



## Chapters 19-23 Analysis

Bob Cantor, Stone's investigator, learns a great deal about Paul Manning's financial situation, proving that Manning was deep in debt and that he was paying for a large amount of life insurance. This suggests a motive or murder or for Paul Manning to fake his death. Both seem to be likely possibilities to the reader based on Allison Manning's odd behavior since arriving in St. Marks. However, Stone feels he has successfully ruled out a faked death and deeply believes Allison is innocent, therefore he will not consider either scenario.

The press arrives and the press conferences goes as well as Stone had hoped. It seems most of the press is sympathetic to Allison's cause. Stone hopes this will mean pressure on Sir Winston that will lead to either an acquittal or a flat out refusal to prosecute the case. Instead, Sir Winston throws the press off the island. This gives Stone hope, but the reader listens to Thomas' caution and begins to wonder if Stone really understands all he is up against. This doubt is underscored by Stone's conversation with Sir Leslie that leads to questions about Sir Leslie's readiness for trial.



# Chapters 24-29

## Chapters 24-29 Summary

In Chapter 24, Stone goes over testimony with Jim Forrester. Forrester sticks to his story, but adds detail he did give Stone before. Forrester asks about Allison's chances and Stone tells him she might hang if found guilty. Together they wonder what might have happened had Allison docked in an American held port.

In Chapter 25, a woman arrives at the Shipwright's Arms who claims to be Allison Manning. Stone speaks to her and learns she is Elizabeth 'Libby' Manning, Paul Manning's first wife. Libby claims that she and Paul were never divorced. This would entitle Libby to Paul's estate. When Stone tries to discourage her, she threatens to go to the prosecutors in Allison's murder case.

In Chapter 26, Stone goes to the Expansive and talks to Allison about the first Mrs. Manning. Allison swears that Paul and Libby were legally divorced and that Paul made alimony payments to Libby every month in the amount of three thousand dollars. However, Paul does not mention Libby in his will. Stone is concerned about having Libby around and wants her gone as soon as possible. To this end, Stone has Allison give him a blank check and two blank pieces of paper signed by Allison at the bottom.

In Chapter 27, Stone goes to the Shipwright's Arms and calls Cantor, leaving a message for him to get a copy of Manning's divorce decree as soon as possible. Stone then goes downstairs to have dinner with Libby. Stone tells Libby that Allison is willing to pay her over three hundred thousand dollars if she will sign a contract promising not to make any more claims against Paul's estate. Libby holds out for four hundred thousand, but agrees to the deal, signing the contract Stone wrote out over Allison's signature on the blank pieces of paper. Libby then agrees to leave the island first thing the following morning.

In Chapter 28, Stone and Allison have dinner alone on the Expansive. Stone explains the contract he made Libby sign, causing Allison both annoyance at the necessity of the payment and relief at Libby's inability to come after more.

In Chapter 29, Stone wakes early to accompany Libby to the airport. Stone spent part of the night before writing a letter to Arrington. Stone gives this letter to Libby in a FedEx envelope and asks her to mail it from the airport in Antigua. As the plane takes off, Stone and Thomas notice fire in one of the engines. Chester, the pilot, attempts to ditch the plane in the water, but it stalls and breaks up. Thomas and Stone rush to a fishing boat to check for survivors, but they are only able to recover Chester's body and a portion of a wing.



## Chapters 24-29 Analysis

Jim Forrester, the reporter who met Paul and Allison Manning in the Canary Islands, keeps changing his story. The story does not change much and most of the changes are to Allison's benefit, but the fact that it changes at all suggests to the reader that Forrester is lying for some unknown reason.

Mrs. Elizabeth Allison Manning shows up at St. Marks. Stone is immediately concerned about this change in circumstances because he does not want Sir Winston to use Libby Manning in the case against Allison. Stone offers her money to make her leave, which Libby quickly accepts. However, before she leaves the island, Libby is killed in a plane crash. This crash is tragic and appears to be mechanical error on first glance, but the reader wonders who might benefit from Libby's death and if this crash could have been manufactured to protect someone. The first suspect would be Allison Manning, but Libby took the money and was willing to disappear, so this takes Allison's motive away. The reader is puzzled at this point, as is Stone Barrington.





# Chapters 30-34

## Chapters 30-34 Summary

In Chapter 30, Stone has breakfast with Hilary Kramer and tells her about the plane crash. As they talk, Stone receives a fax of Libby and Paul's divorce decree. The decree shows that Paul was supposed to make alimony payments to Libby for ten years, an arrangement that expire three weeks previously.

In Chapter 31, Stone tells Allison about the plane crash and they enter into a debate over whether or not Allison will be legally obligated to fulfill her contract with Libby for the four hundred thousand dollars with Libby's heirs. Allison leans toward not telling the heirs about the contract while Stone urges her to fulfill her obligations to the heirs through Libby.

In Chapter 32, Stone is in his rented room at the Shipwright's Arms when Thomas knocks on the door and tells him two cops have come for him. Stone finds himself forced to go with the two men, who quickly take him to Government House where he is greeted by Sir Winston. Sir Winston claims he only wants to have a pretrial meeting with Stone and begins by asking about Elizabeth Allison Manning.

In Chapter 33, Stone is honest with Sir Winston about Libby Manning, only leaving out the bribe he paid her on Allison's behalf. Then Sir Winston accuses Stone of sleeping with Allison, an accusation that causes Stone to lose his temper and walk out of the meeting.

In Chapter 34, Stone goes to the home of Sir Leslie and finds him having lunch with Allison. Stone orders Allison out to the waiting cab and then he tells Sir Leslie about the meeting with Sir Winston. When Allison and Stone return to the Expansive, Stone asks Allison what she spoke with Sir Leslie about, insisting on details even though she claimed that it was an innocent meeting. Stone then insists that Allison not meet with Sir Leslie alone again.

## Chapters 30-34 Analysis

Stone is dragged unwillingly to a meeting with Sir Winston, the minister of justice. During this meeting, it becomes clear to both the reader and Stone that Sir Winston is searching for more information to use against Allison at trial. Sir Winston is out of luck, however, because there is nothing new that Stone could tell him that he could use against Allison.

Stone finds Sir Leslie and Allison having a meal alone together. This suggests to the reader that Allison and Sir Leslie might be in cahoots with each other against Stone. The reader has no clue as to why they would do this, but it all begins to feel like some

sort of scam to the reader. Stone also seems concerned, but he cannot put his finger on what this scam should be and he is quickly distracted by Allison's tears.



# Chapters 35-40

## Chapters 35-40 Summary

In Chapter 35, Stone speaks to Cantor and learns that Libby Manning had an elderly mother with multiple sclerosis who is barely surviving on social security and what she makes in tips playing a piano in a hotel. After speaking to Cantor, Stone takes a call from a lawyer named Harley Potter who represents Libby and her mother. Stone tells Potter about Libby's death and answers questions about Paul's estate, but avoids telling him about the four hundred thousand Allison paid Libby.

In Chapter 36, Stone attends the coroner's inquest into the plane crash. The mechanic testifies that there was nothing wrong with the engine and suggests that the crash could have been caused by a leaking fuel line, but that he checked all the lines a few weeks before the crash and they were good. The jury gives a verdict of death by misadventure. Stone gets a copy of the death certificate for Libby Manning on behalf of Harley Potter. Back at the Shipwright's Arms, Stone receives a faxed letter from Arrington telling him that she continues to stay in California with Vance Calder.

In Chapter 37, Stone returns to the Expansive to find Allison packing. When Stone questions her, Allison claims she is only preparing for the end of the trial next week. Stone tells her about Libby's mother, but Allison refuses to help her. Instead, Stone returns to the Shipwright's Arms and calls his secretary, instructing her to send twenty-five thousand dollars of his own money to Libby's mother.

In Chapter 38, Stone goes back downstairs and notices that a new yacht, one built for speed, has come into the harbor. Stone speaks with the captain who is sitting at the bar and learns all about the boat, even wrangling a tour of the boat.

In Chapter 39, Stone forces Allison to admit that she chartered the Race, the new yacht in the harbor, to take her out of St. Marks. Stone reminds her what it will mean if she tries to escape. Before Stone can convince Allison not to attempt escape, a colonel with the police department comes to the Expansive. Stone hides Allison's luggage in the engine room. Together, Allison and Stone are able to convince the cop that Allison is not planning to run, but the colonel confines her to the Expansive or the Shipwright's Arms until trial.

In Chapter 40, Stone learns that Allison has a satellite phone on the Expansive. Stone instructs Allison to call the yacht broker and have him instruct Race to move to Guadeloupe at exactly nine o'clock that night. Stone then uses the phone to call the airport and request permission to land a plane that night, knowing it will be refused. Stone then takes Allison to dinner at the Shipwright's Arms where she is clearly seen by both the colonel and Sir Winston as the Race pulls away from the dock.



## Chapters 35-40 Analysis

Stone again shows his big heart when he learns that Libby Manning has an ailing mother for whom she cared. Although Stone cannot convince Allison to help this poor woman, Stone sends her money himself to help in her long term care. Stone also attends the inquest into the plane crash and hears testimony that there was nothing wrong with the plane before it flew that day. This information seems routine at this point, but Stone will come back to it as the plot continues to develop.

Allison has arranged an escape from St. Marks. Allison is not convinced she will be acquitted and so she secretly hired a fast yacht to take her away. However, if Allison is caught escaping before trial, she will be assumed guilty and hung. Stone manages to get her out of the situation but now the reader questions Allison's innocence along with everyone else.



# Chapters 41-47

## Chapters 41-47 Summary

In Chapter 41, Stone and Allison have a relaxing dinner at the Shipwright's Arms. Then they spend the night on the Expansive. The following morning, Allison asks Stone to get one of her bags from the engine room. It is then that Stone notices the spear gun on the wall and a missing spear.

In Chapter 42, Stone asks Allison why she did not use the satellite phone to call for help when Paul died. Allison claims she could not get it to work. Later, Stone goes to see Sir Leslie in order to ask him to read his opening and closing statements for possible help in Sir Leslie's own statements. Sir Leslie promises to read them. From there, Stone goes to the airport and interviews the mechanic. The mechanic reveals that anyone could have had access to the plane and tools on the night before the crash.

In Chapter 43, Stone goes over Forrester's testimony with him and discovers it has once again changed in small, subtle ways. However, each change is beneficial to Allison.

In Chapter 44, Stone reads a fax from Arrington that tells him she has fallen in love with and married Vance Calder.

In Chapter 45, Stone goes over testimony with Allison. Stone continuously tries to trip her up by asking hostile and difficult questions but Allison stays true to her original story. However, Allison fakes a tearful breakdown, causing Stone more doubts.

In Chapter 46, Stone goes to the Shipwright's Arms to find a new man at the bar. This man's name is Frank Stendahl and he looks a lot like Stone imagines Paul Manning must have looked. Thomas says the man acted like a cop, but he appears too wealthy to be a cop.

In Chapter 47, Stone has a drink with Kramer and tells her about Arrington. At the same time, Forrester speaks with Stendahl at Stone's request, establishing that Stendahl sells insurance. However, when Stone suggests that Stendahl might be Paul, Forrester quickly quashes the idea, causing he, Kramer, and Stone to have a good laugh at the idea.

## Chapters 41-47 Analysis

Stone believes he has found evidence that Allison might have killed Paul when he finds the spear gun has been moved and a spear is missing. Stone does nothing to investigate this hunch except to question Allison about it while they are attempting to go over her testimony. Allison hold up under examination, but then confesses to faking a tearful breakdown. This worries Stone, who has come to believe that Allison might be lying about everything.



At the same time, a large man shows up in the Shipwright's Arms whom Stone believes resembles Paul Manning. However, Stone has never seen Paul so he has Forrester speak with him. Forrester, who claims to know Paul, claims that this new man looks nothing like him. The reader, however, remains concerned that Paul is still alive and hiding out somewhere, waiting to get the twelve million in insurance money.



# Chapters 48-52

## Chapters 48-52 Summary

In Chapter 48, it is the night before the trial is to begin, so Allison cooks for Stone. They spend the night, not making any attempts to hide their relationship this time.

In Chapter 49, Stone and Allison drive to the courthouse with Thomas where they meet Sir Leslie. The proceedings begin with the judge choosing the jury which consists of six men. When the jury is seated, the bailiff reads out the charges and Sir Winston is instructed to begin his opening statement.

In Chapter 50, Sir Winston makes an impassioned speech marking all the motives Allison potentially had for killing her husband. Sir Leslie then makes his opening remarks, pointing out that there is no proof Paul Manning is dead. The testimony begins with a surprise witness. This witness is Frank Stendahl, the large man staying at the Shipwright's Arms that Stone thought might be Paul Manning. Instead, it turns out that Frank Stendahl is an investigator for Paul Manning's insurance company. Stendahl testifies that Allison did not tell the truth to the previous investigator about her potential role in Paul's death. Stendahl also testifies that the insurance money was deposited in Allison's accounts and was quickly moved to an account on the Cayman Islands.

In Chapter 51, Stone rises unprepared to cross-examine Stendahl. Stone manages to establish that Paul Manning's health could have changed since his examine for the insurance policy and that he could have died of a heart attack based on his most recent exam. Stone also establishes that Stendahl has a motive in wanting to see Allison convicted of murder because then his company would be able to recover their money.

In Chapter 52, Sir Winston called Captain Beane, the Constabulary who was first on board the Expansive after the custom official reported Paul's death. Beane discusses the diary that Sir Winston used in the coroner's inquest to cast doubt on Allison's story. Beane also discusses the multiple weapons found on board, including multiple knives and the spear gun. As part of their evidence, Sir Winston presents a spear from the Expansive and has Beane demonstrate how a spear gun fires. When Stone cross-examines Beane, he establishes that the diary was written in the third-person point of view and that most fishing boats have a spear gun on board. The court then breaks for lunch.

## Chapters 48-52 Analysis

The trial begins. Sir Winston springs a surprise witness, an investigator from the insurance company who paid out on Paul's life. This surprise sends Stone into a tailspin, but he is able to pull himself out of the fire by cross examining the witness well. This shows the reader how intelligent Stone is and how quickly he can think on his feet. However, this witness opens up more questions for the reader, leaving the reader

wondering why Paul Manning had so much insurance on his own life and what happened to the money once it was deposited into Allison's accounts. The reader cannot help but wonder if Allison moved the money or if someone else did.

The introduction of the spear gun in the testimony reveals what happened to the missing spear and also gives a possible explanation for the way the spear is hung in the engine room. This suggests to the reader that Allison did not use a spear to kill her husband as Stone once thought. However, there is still the notebook with Paul's written conflicts between husband and life that has not yet been adequately explained away.





# Chapters 53-58

## Chapters 53-58 Summary

In Chapter 53, Stone goes to lunch with Sir Leslie. Sir Leslie discusses the prime minister and the three men who hope to take his job when he finally retires. However, Sir Leslie makes it clear that Sir Winston will succeed the prime minister at any cost, including hanging Allison.

In Chapter 54, court reconvenes and the prosecution rests. Stone calls Jim Forrester to the stand. Once again Forrester adds to his testimony, but his embellishments help Allison. In fact, Forrester paints the Mannings as a deeply happy couple whose marriage was perfect. Sir Winston tries to put holes in Forrester's testimony, but Forrester comes off believable.

In Chapter 55, Allison takes the stand. Allison tells the story of her marriage to Paul, including the early, lean years. Allison then talks about her year long voyage with her husband and the events that led to his death. Allison is calm and confident in her testimony. When Sir Winston stands to cross examine her, he berates her, demanding she explain how and why she killed her husband. Allison becomes angry, but she sticks to her story.

In Chapter 56, Sir Winston makes his closing argument. Sir Winston outlines again why Allison would want to kill her husband. Sir Leslie makes an impassioned speech that outlines all the reasons Allison would not kill her husband, underscoring the fact that no one knows for sure that Paul Manning is even dead. Finally, the judge gives brief instructions to the jury and they are dismissed to debate their verdict.

In Chapter 57, no one leaves the courtroom because St. Marks' juries often return quickly. Stone speaks briefly with Kramer and Forrester. Then the jury returns. The jury announces a verdict of guilty. Sir Leslie immediately requests an appeal be sent to the prime minister. While the judge allows the appeal to be transported, he pronounces sentence of Allison at that time. Allison is to die by hanging the following day at sunset. Allison passes out when she hears this sentence.

In Chapter 58, Allison is taken by stretcher to her cell and is given something to eat. Stone leaves to collect some clothing for Allison. While on the *Expansive*, Stone uses the satellite phone to call Bill Eggers and have him arrange a quick media blitz and a writing campaign to encourage the prime minister to overturn the conviction. Stone returns to the jail to see Allison but he is refused admittance.

## Chapters 53-58 Analysis

The prosecution rests and Stone presents his case. To the reader, Stone's case seems much stronger even though he only presents two witnesses. One of these witnesses is



Jim Forrester. Once again Forrester's testimony has changed, but it has become better for Allison, not worse. This suggests not only that Forrester is lying, but that he has some affection for Allison and wants to see her acquitted. The reader has no idea why this might be, but suspect that perhaps Forrester once had a sexual relationship with Allison.

Stone and Kramer are optimistic when the jury leaves the courtroom but Sir Leslie is cautious. It turns out that Stone should have listened more to Sir Leslie because Allison is convicted despite the lack of evidence. It is clear that the jury has convicted based on a personal fear of Sir Winston on the part of the members of the jury. Allison is sentenced to hang the following day despite an appeal that is immediately sent to the prime minister. Now the reader wonders how Stone will get Allison out of this one.



# Chapters 59-63 and Epilogue

## Chapters 59-63 and Epilogue Summary

In Chapter 59, Stone wakes from a fitful night of sleep to learn that Bill Eggers has begun a campaign of outrage against the prime minister, including an interview on the Today show. Stone then goes to the jail to visit Allison. Allison appears calm. Stone and Sir Leslie are told to leave the jail until four. Stone calls Bill Eggers again and learns everything that can be done has been done.

In Chapter 60, Stone and Sir Leslie meet at the jail. Stone learns that the prime minister is not taking any calls. Sir Leslie assures Stone that this is not unusual. They visit with Allison for an hour or more before a priest comes and asks for some time alone with Allison. Stone speaks with Kramer and Forrester who have been hanging out at the jail. Forrester looks physically ill. The priest returns and tells them that Allison would like to speak to Kramer and Forrester. Forrester refuses to go. Kramer does and is thanked for her kindness. A few minute later, the guards come for Allison. Allison is instructed to say her final goodbyes. Allison is taken out into the courtyard where she is unceremoniously hung. Forrester is physically sick upon hearing the news.

In Chapter 61, Stone and Sir Leslie leave the jail. Sir Leslie gives Stone a letter from Allison and asks him to keep an open mind. Stone returns to the Expansive where he instructs Eggers to release a notice about the execution. Stone then goes to bed and weeps.

In Chapter 62, Stone wakes from an erotic dream of Allison to find the real Allison lying beside him. Allison explains that she and Sir Leslie bribed the prime minister. Allison was taken from the courtyard to the yacht, Race, secretly so that no one would know about the prime minister's actions. When Allison has gone again, Stone reads the letter she left for him. The letter explains that Allison has give Stone the Expansive for his legal fees and is leaving Libby's mother to his conscience.

In Chapter 63, Stone wakes a few hours later to Thomas and Sir Leslie's hurried warnings. Sir Winston has filed paperwork to take the Expansive as payment for the cost of Allison's trial and execution. Thomas helps Stone quickly release the yacht from its moorings and escape ahead of Sir Winston and his court order.

In the Epilogue, it is two months later. Stone has had a broker sell the Expansive. With the profit of the sale, Stone pays Libby's mother the remainder of her four hundred thousand, pays taxes, and sends two hundred thousand to his broker to be invested. The rest Stone considers using to buy a plane.

Stone goes into his garage and opens the door only to find Jim Forrester standing there. Stone asks him to sit and they talk for a few minutes. Forrester wants to know where Allison is. Stone reveals that he knows that Jim Forrester is actually Paul Manning, that



he lost weight in the beginning of his year long journey on the Expansive. Stone then accuses Forrester of having killed Libby and the other people on the plane. In fact, Stone's ex-partner shows up to arrest Manning and send him back to St. Marks to face trial for the murder.

Over dinner with his ex-partner, Stone receives a call from Vance Calder informing him that Arrington is missing. Stone rushes off to help search for her when he learns she is also pregnant.

## Chapters 59-63 and Epilogue Analysis

Allison's life hangs in the balance and Stone does all he can to help her. However, Stone's actions do not work in St. Marks as they might have in the United States. Allison is hung. Stone believes she has been, anyway. It turns out, though, that this whole thing has been manipulated by Sir Leslie to allow the world to see what has become of the justice system in St. Marks and perhaps stop Sir Winston from taking the prime minister's job. Allison is alive and well, and has twelve million dollars to live on.

Stone returns to his life without Arrington, but with plenty of money to keep his law practice afloat for a long time to come. At the same time, Stone has put together a few loose ends that bothered him about Allison's case. Stone has discovered that Jim Forrester is really Paul Manning. This revelation is not a huge one for the reader as it has been hinted at throughout the novel. In fact, the reader might have suspected it based on Forrester's constantly changing testimony, his emotional reaction to Allison's death, and the fuss about the dinghy on the Expansive. In the end, everyone gets what they deserve.



# Characters

## Stone Barrington

Stone Barrington is an ex-cop who has become a lawyer. Stone is in St. Marks in order to take a chartered yacht on a cruise with his girlfriend, Arrington. In fact, Stone hopes to propose to Arrington on this trip. However, while Stone waits impatiently for Arrington to arrive, he witnesses the arrest of a woman in another yacht docked beside his. Stone, bored without Arrington, goes to the coroner's inquest, and offers to represent Allison. Within hours, Stone finds himself representing Allison against a charge of murder.

Stone is a kind and caring man who cannot allow a woman in need to go without aid. Stone throws all he can into helping Allison despite the fact that they never talk about a fee. In fact, all Stone takes for his troubles is a sexual relationship with Allison. Stone is quickly falling in love with Allison and therefore he does not see the many holes in her story. In fact, Stone does not see a lot about the case until the last minute, leaving Allison vulnerable to the events that eventually lead to the climax of the novel.

## Allison Manning

Allison Manning is married to Paul Manning, a popular novelist. The couple have been on a year-long yachting trip around the world. However, the trip has ended in St. Marks without Paul Manning. Allison Manning is immediately questioned by the police and charged with murder. Allison claims that Paul died of a heart attack ten days out of the Canary Islands and she threw his body overboard. However, the police have found a diary that seems to suggest that Paul and Allison were not getting along, leading to Allison's desire to kill her husband.

Allison's story appears to be full of holes to the reader. Allison could have called for help, she could have preserved the body until she reached port, and she could have returned to the Canary Islands. However, Allison sailed the boat alone despite an insistence that she did not know how to sail the boat. Then Allison begins a sexual affair with her lawyer. This situation is deeply confusing, making the reader doubt her innocence.

## Sir Leslie Hewitt

Sir Leslie Hewitt is the barrister that Stone hires to help represent Allison in the St. Marks court. Stone cannot represent Allison directly because he is not a member of the St. Marks bar. However, Sir Leslie was only supposed to represent Allison long enough for them to bring in a barrister from England. Sir Leslie supposedly has senility problems and forgets to stipulate this part in court. In this way, Sir Leslie becomes Allison's lead defense attorney.



Sir Leslie has a beef against Sir Winston that encourages him to take a case that could make him look incompetent. Stone is aware of this fact when he first interviews Sir Leslie, but does not realize how deep this desire goes. In fact, Stone does not know that Sir Leslie is faking his senility and that he plans to use this case to bring down Sir Winston, or at least the prime minister, which he appears to have done at the end of the novel.

## Sir Winston Sutherland

Sir Winston Sutherland is the minister of justice in St. Marks. Sir Winston wants to become prime minister of St. Marks. It is widely believed that Sir Winston decides to charge Allison in order to further his desire to be prime minister. Stone does all he can to embarrass Sir Winston in the press, but it is the American press and Sir Winston does not worry excessively about that. Sir Winston charges and tries Allison with little to no evidence, but still gets a conviction because of the power he yields on the island and the fear he has over the members of the jury.

## Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy is the owner of the Shipwright's Arms. Thomas is a big help to Stone throughout his time on the island. It is Thomas who plays secretary for Stone during his time there as well as Thomas who found Sir Leslie for Stone. In fact, at the end of the novel, the reader must stop and wonder if Thomas knew what Sir Leslie was up to throughout the trial and if he set Stone up.

## Paul Manning

Paul Manning is a writer of thriller and mystery novels. Paul Manning is rich. However, Manning spends as much money as he makes, so he lives from check to check taking out loans from banks. Manning also has a very large life insurance policy. This policy is the largest his company has ever written on a single individual and the payments are the largest payments Manning makes on a monthly basis. Allison explains this by saying that her husband loved her and wanted her well cared for upon his death. In the end, however, the reader learns Manning did this so he could fake his death and live on the money.

## Jim Forrester

Jim Forrester is a magazine writer who claims he was in the Canary Islands to do a travel piece for the New Yorker magazine and was asked to go to St. Marks to write a piece on Allison Manning. It also turns out that Forrester met the Mannings in the Canary Islands. In fact, Forrester quickly agrees to testify in Allison's trial. Forrester's story changes every time Stone questions him, but it is always in Allison's favor. In the end, however, these questions cause Stone to check into Forrester's story. Stone



eventually establishes that Forrester is really Paul Manning, disguising himself by having lost a large amount of weight.

## **Arrington Carter**

Arrington Carter is a magazine writer with whom Stone Barrington has had a live-in relationship. Arrington is supposed to have come on this trip with Stone but instead she becomes involved in an interview with Hollywood heartthrob Vance Calder. This interview turns into a relationship. In fact, Arrington marries Calder while Stone continues to believe they still have a relationship. Stone is heartbroken by this news but he too has moved on to a new relationship. In fact, Stone is having a sexual relationship with Allison while still hoping to be with Arrington.

## **Hilary Kramer**

Hilary Kramer is a reporter for the New York Times. Kramer is one of only a few reporters who remains on the island after Sir Winston has all the reporters thrown off the island. Kramer becomes friends with Stone and often has meals with him during Allison's ordeal. Kramer also manages to have published several stories about Allison that help her case in the American public eye.

## **Bob Cantor**

Bob Cantor is an ex-cop that has often helped Stone on cases in the past. Stone calls Cantor when he becomes involved in Allison's case. Cantor is the one who learns about Manning's financial situation and about his divorce from Libby Manning. Cantor proves to be invaluable in the end when Stone begins to suspect that Forrester is not who he says he is, leading to Forrester's arrest and extradition to St. Marks.



## Objects/Places

### Paul Manning's Diary

Paul Manning has a diary on board the *Expansive* in which he wrote scenes for a new novel. Sir Winston takes this diary and tries to suggest that it proves that Allison had shown malice against her husband.

### Letter from Arrington

Stone learns that Arrington has married Vance Calder in a letter she faxes to the Shipwright's Arms.

### Divorce Decree

Stone has a copy of the Manning divorce decree sent to him in St. Marks and learns that Paul Manning was supposed to pay alimony to Libby Manning for only ten years.

### Allison-Libby Contract

Stone makes a contract between Allison and Libby that gives Libby four hundred thousand dollars with the understanding that she will not try to get more money from Paul's estate. When Libby dies, Allison refuses to honor the contract with Libby's heirs so Stone pays it out of his own money.

### Gallows

Allison is supposedly hung at the gallows in an inner courtyard at Government House.

### Rubber Dinghy

Paul Manning claims that his rubber dinghy was stolen off the *Expansive* and then he sent off to Barcelona to get another one. Stone is curious when he finds out the dinghy can still sail. Stone thinks Manning could have used the dinghy to fake his death but discounts it when he finds the dinghy still on board the yacht.

### Airplane

There is one small, two-engine plane that flies between St. Marks and Antigua. This plane crashes when one engine catches fire and the pilot tries to ditch in the water. Libby Manning is killed and Paul Manning is later indicted in the crime.





## **Insurance Policy**

Paul Manning has an insurance policy on his own life in the amount of twelve million dollars. This money is deposited into Allison Manning's bank account within days of her arriving in St. Marks and just as quickly disappears.

## **Government House**

Government House is the municipal building in St. Marks that holds the minister of justice's office, the jail, and the courthouse.

## **Shipwright's Arms**

Shipwright's Arms is Thomas Hardy's restaurant and bar.

## **Expansive**

Expansive is the name of the large and expensive yacht Paul and Allison Manning sail around the world.

## **St. Marks**

St. Marks is the small, island country where Allison is charged and tried for murder.



# Themes

## Injustice

From the moment Stone Barrington hears about Allison Manning's case, he believes that she is being unjustly accused of murder. Stone believes that if Allison's case were to come in front of an American court, the case would quickly be thrown out of court. In fact, as Stone attends the coroner's inquest, even the reader begins to wonder what Sir Winston could possibly have to prove Allison killed Paul Manning.

Allison Manning claims her husband was dangerously overweight and he had a heart attack after lifting her up the mast of their boat. Allison claims that she then buried him at sea out of respect for him and because he was too large for her to move his body out of the cockpit. This story is backed up by the medical exam that Paul Manning had before embarking on this trip. In fact, the medical record states that Paul was a heart attack waiting to happen.

Stone does all he can do to help Allison but his strategy backfires and Allison is convicted. Allison is sentenced to hang the following day. This is a punishment that is executed right on time. Despondent, Stone tells the reporter waiting for word that a great miscarriage of justice has just taken place. For this reason, injustice is a theme of the novel.

## Insurance Fraud

Paul Manning has a large amount of insurance on his life. Upon Allison Manning's arrival in St. Marks and her report of her husband's death, an insurance inspector comes to the island to discuss this death with her. Based on the fact that the death certificate has been issued, the insurance investigator releases the money to Allison. The amount is twelve million dollars. Allison moves it to an account on the Cayman Islands immediately.

Allison is hung and the money is to revert to heirs but no one knows where it is. Then two months later, Jim Forrester visits Stone looking for Allison. Forrester believes Allison is still alive. In fact, Forrester is Paul Manning. Manning faked his death for the insurance money but Allison is also still alive and has disappeared with the money. Stone threatens to have Manning arrested for insurance fraud but has also established that Manning rigged the airplane in St. Marks to crash with his ex-wife on board.

## Relationships

Stone Barrington has come to St. Marks to solidify his relationship with Arrington Carter. In fact, Stone thinks he might like to ask Arrington to marry him. However, Arrington



finds excuse after excuse not to go to the island. In the end, Stone learns that Arrington has felt the relationship was dying for a long time and she has run off with another man.

Allison Manning has been married to Paul Manning for four years. Their relationship is reported to be a solid one. In fact, Jim Forrester testifies that they were highly affectionate with one another. However, Sir Winston claims that their relationship was a difficult one that led to murder. In fact, Sir Winston has a diary that he claims proves this. In the end, it seems that Allison knew the kind of man her husband was and lost affection for him a long time before.

Stone and Allison begin a sexual affair within hours of meeting one another. Allison's behavior seems odd to the reader but she explains it away by saying she had several weeks to grieve for her husband. Stone's decision to get involved with Allison is also suspect since he claims to be committed to Arrington. However, Stone has a history of sexual promiscuity and an aversion to committed relationships. Despite the questions surrounding this relationship, it is a strong one that creates a bond between these two that helps with Allison's defense.



# Style

## Point of View

This novel is written in the third-person point of view. The novel is told completely from the viewpoint of Stone Barrington. The reader cannot see any of the events in the plot from anyone else's viewpoint but knows only what Stone can see, hear, or otherwise learn. The point of view is omniscient however, allowing the reader to know Stone's thoughts and emotions as well as his actions in the plot.

The point of view in this novel works well because it keeps the reader focused on Stone Barrington, the main character. The point of view keeps the reader from learning anything the other character might know independent of Stone, allowing the reader to learn what is going on with Stone rather than knowing something ahead of Stone. This keeps the reader in suspense as the plot continues to develop.

## Setting

The novel is set in St. Marks. St. Marks is a small island in the Caribbean that was once a colony of Britain but gained its freedom in the sixties. This island still has a government and legal system that is similar to the British systems with some changes that the people of St. Marks feels that were unimportant. This has created a system in which a person can be charged and convicted of a crime with very little evidence against them.

The setting of this novel is important because it impacts the entire plot of the novel. The setting creates a situation in which a woman who would most likely not be charged with murder in an American court is facing the death penalty. The setting also creates a political atmosphere in which the minister of justice is allowed to get away with charging and prosecuting a woman on no evidence for a crime he cannot even prove took place. For these reasons, the setting of this novel is integral to the plot of the novel.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is simple English. The setting of the novel is an English-speaking island country. Therefore there are no foreign phrases in the novel. The novel's language is simple enough for the youngest readers to understand and complicated enough that it does not feel as though the author is speaking down to the reader.

The language of this novel is appropriate to the novel because it fits well with the characters and it is simple enough for the readers to comprehend. The novel's language does not contain any language that is difficult for the reader to comprehend. In fact, although this novel contains a legal trial, there is little use of words that are not common

in everyday speech. For this reason, the language is simple enough for any reader to understand. Therefore, the language of this novel works with the plot.

## Structure

The novel is divided into sixty-three short chapters and an epilogue. The novel is written in both exposition and dialogue with a few passages of inner monologue in which Stone Barrister finds himself attempting to work through some of the more difficult aspects of Allison Manning's case. The novel also includes sections that are written as though in letter form to Stone from his girlfriend, Arrington, the longest one explaining how she married another man.

There is one main plot in the novel and many subplots. The main plot follows the predicament of Allison Manning as she docks her yacht in St. Marks and is accused of killing her husband during her voyage. Stone Barrington comes to Allison's defense and attempts to protect her from sure execution. One subplot follows the arrival of Libby Manning and her attempt to extort money from Paul Manning's estate. Another subplot follows Sir Leslie's attempts to stop Sir Winston from becoming prime minister. All the subplots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



## Quotes

"He had seen many people in custody, and he had never envied any of them" (Chapter 1, pg. 5.)

"He reckoned the boat had cost between a million and a half and two million dollars." Chapter 4, pg. 22

"Poor Allison Manning, he thought. She's in for a rough time, and I suppose I'm going to have to help her" (Chapter 6, pg. 32.)

""BEAUTIFUL BLOND AMERICAN GIRL LOSES HUSBAND AT SEA! CONNIVING POLITICIAN CHARGES HER WITH MURDER IN BACKWATER ISLAND NATION!!" It's called marshaling public opinion; it might bring pressure to bear"" (Chapter 11, pg. 57.)

"I must be crazy, Stone thought as the interview began. I've let this girl go on TV, before an audience of millions and at the mercy of a reporter on her first assignment who would kill for a success, which she might not define as I would, and with no preparation whatever" (Chapter 18, pg. 89.)

"Then he got romantic—unusual for him—and by the time he had signed the letter, he began worrying about faxing something so personal to her L.A. hotel; he didn't want some clerk reading it" (Chapter 28, pg. 140.)

"He went back to work and tried not to think of the old lady at the piano in Palm Beach" (Chapter 36, pg. 175.)

"The third spear, he knew beyond a doubt, was still in what was left of Paul Manning's body, out there in the depths of the cold, cold ocean" (Chapter 41, pg. 204.)

""Vance and I were married yesterday in Needles, Arizona"" (Chapter 44, pg. 216.)

"Allison took hold of the Bible and swore to tell the truth" (Chapter 54, pg. 269.)

"Then, sooner than Stone had expected, he heard the sound of the trap flying open, followed by a thunk, then silence" (Chapter 60, pg. 302.)

"The cops put Manning into their car" (Epilogue, pg. 323.)



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Allison Manning? What happened to her husband? Why is she charged with his murder? Did she kill him? What does Allison claim happened to her husband? Why did Allison say she threw her husband overboard? What else could Allison have done? Discuss Allison's story and determine whether or not it seems true. Use examples from the novel.

Who is Stone Barrington? Why is he in St. Marks? What did he plan to do during his vacation? Where is Arrington? Why has Arrington not come? How does Stone feel about this? Was Stone really going to propose to Arrington? What evidence is there that Stone was sincere in his feelings for Arrington? What evidence is there against it? What conclusion does the reader come to about Stone's feelings for Arrington?

Who is Paul Manning? What does he do for a living? What exam did Manning have before leaving on a year-long voyage around the world? What did this exam say about Manning's health? How does this exam support Allison's claims about his death? Is Allison telling the truth based on this? What does Stone suspect Manning really did? Did Manning really die? Was he murdered? How does the reader come to learn the truth?

Who is Sir Winston? Why does he decide to charge Allison with murder? What evidence does he have? What evidence will he use against Allison? How will a conviction in Allison's case help Sir Winston politically? How does Stone try to undermine this? Does he? Does Sir Winston get what he wants in the end? How?

Who is Sir Leslie? Is Sir Leslie senile? How does the reader come to believe Sir Leslie is senile? How does Sir Leslie behave in court? How does he behave at home? What type of behavior proves to be Sir Leslie's true demeanor? Why does Sir Leslie take Allison's case? What might it mean for him in the end?

Who is Jim Forrester? Why has he come to St. Marks? What does he intend to do there? Does he do this? Why does Forrester repeatedly change his testimony? Is Forrester lying? Why would Forrester lie? What does Stone begin to suggest that Forrester is not what he says he is? Who does Stone eventually learn Forrester really is? What happens then?

Who is Libby Manning? Why does she come to St. Marks? Are Libby's intentions malicious? Why does Stone work out a bribe for Libby with Allison's money? Why does Stone end up paying this bribe in the end? What does this say about Allison? What does this say about Stone? Who is right? Who is wrong?