

Dead Irish Study Guide

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Plot Summary

Dismas Hardy looks into the death of Eddie Cochran at the request of his brother in law. Eddie had been found dead in the parking lot of a business associate under suspicious circumstances. Hardy does not believe that Eddie was capable of suicide, and during his investigation turns up several suspects with what he believes are valid reasons to murder Eddie.

Cochran had been working for a distributing company before returning to school to better himself. While working for Sam Polk at Army Distributing, Eddie had come across evidence that Polk had been arranging a drug deal. Eddie knew that Polk's finances were not what they once were because of the withdrawal of one of their biggest clients, and Polk needed money in order to provide for his new, much younger wife. Eddie, who has a strong sense of right and wrong, feels that it is his duty to try and stop Polk from following through with the deal. Eddie asked the opinion of those who mattered to him most, including his father and Father James Cavanaugh, the family priest. Father Cavanaugh reveals to Hardy that he feels responsible for Eddie's death, for encouraging him to stand up for what is right.

The daughter of Sam Polk, Linda, becomes a victim inadvertently when she helps her father's employee, Alphonse Page. Linda is needy, suffering from her perceived loss of her father's love after he marries again. Linda is killed when Alphonse strikes out at her under the influence of drugs, and the young man leaves her dead in her father's office.

Dismas Hardy, who had withdrawn from life after the death of his infant son, becomes entangled in the investigation of Cochran's death, drawing his former partner, Detective Abe Glitsky into the affair. Glitsky is risking a promotion to lieutenant by helping Diz, but also feels that there is something wrong with the death of Cochran. During the investigation Hardy begins to realize that his withdrawal from life had been a mistake, and along the way Diz begins to care again, no longer afraid of feeling. Reuniting with his former wife, Hardy discovers that the life he had put on hold in order to avoid pain was still waiting for him, and that it was not as painful as he had believed.

The suspects are eliminated and facing a wall Dismas is almost at the point of giving up when small pieces of information click into place pointing to the truth. Acting on instinct, Hardy points the police in the right direction but they are no longer willing to put themselves on the line. Father Jim Cavanaugh kills again in order to protect himself, and is almost successful in killing the youngest son of his one true love, Erin Cochran. Hardy prevents disaster at the last minute, and the priest kills himself, knowing that he has destroyed what he had coveted, and would never have what remained.

Dismas Hardy begins his life once again, returning to life as the result of the death of another; a man who at the outset Hardy had believed a dreamer, but had turned out to be much like Hardy himself.

Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

Dismas Hardy looks into the death of a friend, Eddie Cochran, at the request of the deceased brother in law. Hardy finds it hard to believe that the man he knew had killed himself as the police seem to believe. Through investigation and instinct, Hardy is able to uncover the truth behind Eddie's death, bringing both peace and dismay to those involved.

In chapter one, Dismas Hardy, a 38-year-old bartender returns to San Francisco from a two week vacation in Baja. Hardy had hoped to do some soul searching and had traveled alone, afraid that if a friend had gone he might not be able to break away from the rut his life had become. At home, Dismas sits quietly, contemplating his life. At one time he had been a father, a husband, a police officer and an attorney. Though not unhappy with life, there does not seem to be much to it. Deciding on a Giant's game, Hardy considers inviting his friend, Pico, but reconsiders. Pico would want to discuss 'walking' great white sharks, his passion. At one time Hardy had often helped Pico but the hopelessness off the situation made the task seem pointless.

Chapter two finds Dismas at Candlestick Park, observing the game and a rowdy drunk causing problems in the upper deck. Hardy is considering stepping in when Jimmy Deecks, the off duty cop working security arrives. Hardy is in the background, keeping an eye on things, and decides to offer assistance as the man swings at Deecks. Deecks strikes back and the uncoordinated drunk tumbles over the railing to the lower deck.

Abe Glitsky, a homicide detective, gets the call to respond. Up for a promotion to lieutenant, Glitsky is not happy with the politics involved in the police department. Hardy meets up with Abe at the scene; the two had walked the beat together when Hardy had been a cop. Abe and Dismas discuss life, with Abe expressing his disgust with the politics that are required to survive in the department. Glitsky checks in the Carl Griffin, another detective up for promotion and discovers that another call had come in in his absence. Hardy hears the name of the victim and fears that he knows the deceased. The two travel to the scene and Hardy identifies the dead man as Eddie Cochran, the brother in law of his friend and boss. Griffin is not pleased at Glitsky's arrival at the scene, believing that it is a political move on Abe's part. Glitsky's discovery that the weapon found at Eddie's side had been fired twice doesn't make him any happier.

Afterward, Hardy sits quietly with Glitsky, discussing the possible suicide of Cochran. Hardy dismisses the possibility outright. Hardy tells Glitsky that after the death of his son Michael he had decided not to care about people anymore.

Hardy goes to The Little Shamrock, the bar where he works, to find his friend and boss, Moses. As gently as possible, Dismas breaks the news to Moses that his sister Frannie's husband is dead.



In chapter three, Linda Polk arrives at Army Distributing and speaks to Alphonse Page, an employee at her father's company. Linda's father is not at work again, in fact no one is. Eddie Cochran had not shown up for work, so no one had bothered to stay. The small amount of newspapers that the company still distributes sits bundled at the curb. Linda enters the office with Alphonse following, wondering if she should call her father. The police call, they will be there shortly to ask them about Eddie. Linda lights a cigarette consisting of marijuana and cocaine and wonders if she should call her father. Alphonse tells her that he needs to talk to her father as well.

Hardy returns home, having left Moses at his sister's apartment, unable to go in and see her. The pain that Hardy felt was almost physical as he remembers meeting first Frannie, then her now husband, Eddie Cochran. Frannie had one time told Dismas that if she ever met a man like he had been before withdrawing from life she would marry him. She had found that man in Cochran, and the two of them had lived happily, caring about life and the people in it to Hardy's amazement.

Father James Cavanaugh is informed by Father Dietrick of the death of Eddie Cochran. Cavanaugh is devastated, and leaves the church to think. Rose, the woman who takes care of the priests and the rectory is sure that Cavanaugh has gone to see Erin Cochran, Eddie's mother. The two were best friends and Rose knows that secretly the priest is in love with Mrs. Cochran. Alone, Father Jim reflects on his relationship with Erin and his love for her. The priest had tried to kiss her, to tell her how he felt a few days ago and she had rebuffed him. Jim wonders if she will be able to forgive him, even in her need at such a terrible time.

In chapter four, Dismas Hardy readies The Little Shamrock for opening and tosses darts, reflecting on the death of Eddie and trying to convince himself not to care. Moses McGuire arrives and discusses things with Hardy. The thought that Eddie might have killed himself seems untrue to both men, though Moses wonders about the note and the way Eddie had seemed down lately. The note, a torn slip of paper which said "I'm sorry I've got to...", could be nothing, and Hardy tells Moses that Glitsky thinks the same thing. Moses asks Hardy to check into things in order to protect Frannie's interests. If Eddie's death is ruled a suicide she will not be able to collect his life insurance. Moses offers Hardy a piece of the Shamrock as incentive.

In chapter five, Charles Ging argues with his son Peter at the funeral home. Peter is worried about burying Cochran in consecrated ground. The senior Ging tells Peter that there is nothing to worry about. Father Cavanaugh had sworn that there was no way Eddie had killed himself. Ging is aware that Eddie was like a son to Cavanaugh and takes him at his word.

Carl Griffin wonders why Abe Glitsky had shown up at his crime scene and who the man was that had identified Cochran. The politics in the department have Griffin wondering if he is being set up to look bad, giving Glitsky a better shot at the lieutenant's position. Discussing things with his partner Giometti, Griffin states that he thinks Cochran might have killed himself after all. Hardy talks to Abe Glitsky again asking him to set up a

meeting with Griffin to talk about the case. Glitsky is not happy about Hardy getting involved, and cautions him about talking to Griffin and making the detective defensive.

Chapters 1-5 Analysis

The reader is introduced to Dismas Hardy, the main character of the novel, *Dead Irish*. Hardy lives alone, a solitary life, and he seems to like it that way. Hardy had taken a vacation, trying to find himself, aware that he has been drifting along in life. Hardy has positioned himself in life to be able to live, but not care. The fact that he had given up walking the great white sharks because they never survived demonstrates this. Hardy had stopped helping Pico because caring about something, anything, could only bring disappointment and pain. Hardy believes himself to be better off on the fringe of life, on the outside looking in.

Several other characters that will play key roles in the novel are also introduced. Though Eddie Cochran is dead, the reader is given some insight into the man's character and life. Dismas Hardy had spent a drunken night telling Frannie McGuire about his life and dreams, after which she informs him that if she were to meet a man like him she would marry him. Frannie had found that man in Eddie Cochran, a dreamer who believed that life was to be lived and enjoyed, where nothing bad could happen if you lived honestly. The young couple's dreams were destroyed when Eddie was found dead in the parking lot of the Cruz Building, having apparently killed himself.

Father James Cavanaugh is also introduced. Father Jim is devastated when he learns of the death of Eddie, though more information is provided while he reflects on the news. Cavanaugh is in love with Erin Cochran, Eddie's mother. The two are best friends, but Cavanaugh had tried to tell Erin of his love, had tried to kiss her. The priest knows he is needed in light of the tragic news, and hopes that Erin can forgive his shortcomings. At the time, the reader is led to believe that the priest needs to be forgiven for overstepping his bounds, but more information will be revealed later in the novel.

Abe Glitsky is a homicide detective up for promotion, and Dismas Hardy's former partner when the two had walked a beat years ago. Glitsky is sympathetic to Hardy's need to help Moses McGuire when he asks that Hardy check into things for Frannie, but knows that the investigating officer, Carl Griffin is not going to be receptive to an outsider. Though Glitsky is willing to accept Hardy's opinion that Eddie would not have killed himself, Griffin is left to wonder if there is another factor involved. With the position for lieutenant opening, Griffin is also up for the promotion and he wonders if Abe Glitsky is setting him up to look bad and miss out on the job.

Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, Dismas Hardy heads to the scene of the crime after viewing Eddie's body at Ging's Mortuary. At the Cruz Building Hardy talks to Jeffrey, an employee, and then Arturo Cruz, the owner of the Cruz Publishing Company. Cruz believes Hardy to be a police officer continuing the investigation and Diz does nothing to dissuade him. Cruz answers Hardy's questions, but something about his answers does not ring true, and Hardy senses the man is lying. Afterward, Hardy meets with an antagonistic Carl Griffin who is not happy being questioned by a civilian, regardless of the reason. Hardy leaves, knowing that Griffin is not going to willingly help him or Frannie's interests.

Chapter seven finds Hardy visiting Frannie in her apartment. The two discuss Eddie and the way life has been recently. Diz learns that Frannie had told Eddie she was pregnant the night he was found dead. Frannie refuses to believe that the news had something to do with Eddie's death, and does not want Hardy to tell anyone until she makes a decision. Frannie also tells Hardy about problems Eddie had been having at work. La Hora, Army Distributing's major publication, had pulled out, leaving the business in trouble. La Hora was published by Cruz Publishing, the location where Eddie's body had been found.

At home that evening, Hardy goes over the information he had received. Removing his own gun from his safe, Diz considers the gunshot to Eddie's head. Eddie had been right-handed, but the wound was on the left side of his head. Hardy did not see anyway that Eddie could have shot himself.

In chapter eight, Dismas Hardy attends the funeral of Eddie Cochran, where he has the opportunity to talk to Erin, Eddie's mother. The woman is grief stricken, but shares with Diz her opinion that there is no way that Eddie had committed suicide. The two of them wonder over the gun and Erin states that there is no way that Eddie ever owned a gun.

As Father Cavanaugh begins the service, Frannie faints, and Diz catches her moments before she hits the ground.

Chapter nine finds Dismas at the Cochran house after the funeral. He has a drink with Father Jim, and the priest tells him that there is no way that Eddie killed himself. Hardy agrees, but is puzzled by Cavanaugh's conviction. Waiting for Frannie, Hardy wanders down the hall into the room of Steven, Eddie's youngest brother. The young man has a chip on his shoulder, but Hardy breaks it down a bit after telling Steven that he is trying to find out who killed Eddie. Steven is unsure of things, and comes across as a tough guy, but Hardy sees that the boy is really just hurting, trying to find his way in life and through the death of the brother he almost worshiped.



In chapter ten, Diz goes to Army Distributing to meet with Sam Polk, the owner, only to find that there is no one at the office except Linda Polk, Sam's daughter. Linda is high, having just smoked a joint in the ladies room. She reveals a bit of history, telling Hardy that the business troubles had started when La Hora had pulled their distribution. Eddie had been working at getting the business back together, but Sam Polk rarely came into the office, having remarried around the same time. Nika, his new and much younger wife had been taking much of the older man's time, and Linda was visibly jealous of the relationship. Hardy realized that he had seen Polk and his new wife at Eddie's funeral earlier that day. The only logical reason Hardy can see for the two being together is the money that Polk had. If the business was in trouble, then his wife might be considering finding a replacement. Hardy wondered if Nika had tried to seduce Eddie.

Chapters 6-10 Analysis

More information regarding several characters in the novel is revealed, and several more are introduced. While trying to gather more information into Eddie's death, Diz visits the funeral home that is preparing his friend's body. Hardy is reminded that Eddie was right-handed when he sees the callouses on his fingers. That coupled with the confirmation from Frannie confounds Hardy a bit. Eddie had died from a shot to the left side of his head. No matter how he tries, Hardy can not figure out a comfortable or reasonable explanation for Eddie to have shot himself with his left hand.

Hardy also discovers that Frannie is pregnant, and does not want anyone to know at this point. Frannie tells Hardy that she had told Eddie about the baby the night he was killed. Frannie is worried that Eddie was overwhelmed with the news of impending fatherhood, the problems and Army Distributing, and his upcoming school years. Frannie knows that Eddie had not killed himself, refuses to believe it, yet can't help wondering if he had been unsure of their future.

Hardy meets with Arturo Cruz for the first time. Cruz is the head of Cruz Publishing, and the producer of La Hora, the publication that had been distributed by Eddie's company. Eddie's body had been found in Cruz's parking lot, and one line of thought is that he had killed himself there as a protest to Cruz removing distribution from Army. Cruz speaks to Diz, but lies, and Hardy knows it. Unsure of why the man would deny knowing Cochran, Hardy lets it go for now.

Meeting Cochran's family and the priest, James Cavanaugh gives the reader more insight into Eddie Cochran and his life. Hardy also develops a deeper understanding for the character of his friend. The tight knit family pulls together to support each other. The relationship between Erin and Big Ed Cochran is strong, and the death of their son has only brought them closer. Frannie has been taken into the family as one of their own, and the fact that Eddie is dead will not change things. Steven Cochran is a bit of an unknown, not fitting into the picture of the family model that has been presented. Steven seems bitter, not just about his brother's death, but about something deeper, though he is intrigued by Hardy investigating the death, not simply believing the suicide theory. Steven will play an important roll in the novel.

Father Cavanaugh is an interesting character, Erin and Ed's friend and basically a part of their family. He tells Hardy that he had introduced Ed and Erin when they were younger, and had been a part of their family since then. Cavanaugh tells Hardy that he is positive that Eddie did not kill himself, that he could not have allowed Eddie to be buried in consecrated ground if his death had been a suicide. Hardy takes Cavanaugh's conviction at face value, a man that had known Eddie his entire life refusing to consider any other option. Facts will prove otherwise.

Another factor in the novel is revealed when Hardy meets with Linda Polk. The twenty year old woman is obviously upset about the fairly new marriage of her father to Nika, and jealous of their relationship. Hardy learns that Army Distributing had been struggling for months to keep afloat, and that the owner, Sam Polk had been basically missing since his marriage. After seeing a picture of the couple, Hardy surmises that Nika had married Polk for money, and now that the business was struggling she might have set her sights elsewhere, possibly on Eddie. The woman had been obviously flirting with Hardy at Eddie's funeral, and it seemed she was ready to move on to better things.

Chapters 11-15

Chapters 11-15 Summary

In chapter 11, Carl Griffin and his partner Vince Giometti meet with John Strout, the medical examiner. After a review of the case, Strout rules the death of Eddie Cochran suicide/equivocal. The case will remain open and if any more evidence turns up Griffin and Giometti will look into it. Elsewhere, Diz meets with Glitsky who tells Hardy that he isn't really happy with the inconsistencies in the case either. Griffin has left the case file with Glitsky, more or less leaving the issue with him. Glitsky invites Hardy to continue checking things out, hoping he will find out the truth.

In chapter 12, Arturo Cruz heads home, in a better mood. After a fight with Jeffrey the night before, the two had made up. Cruz knows that he needs to straighten out the lies he had told to Hardy about not knowing Eddie, but believes he can do so without a problem as long as Jeffrey tells the same story.

Elsewhere, Hardy enters Schroeder's, a bar he had frequented years before. Diz is surprised by the fact that he actually hopes to run into people he knows. Amazingly, his ex-wife Jane is there and the two greet each other warmly. Headed outside, Diz and Jane have quick passionate sex in the alley. Shocked yet happy, they return inside to meet up with Jane's father, Judge Andy Fowler. The Judge is happy to see Diz, even more pleased to see him with Jane. Discussing the present, Fowler tells Hardy that Arturo Cruz is being sued by a group of former distributors of La Hora. Hardy gets the name of the lawyer handling the case and bids goodnight to the judge. Unsure of what will happen with Jane now that they have reconnected; Diz arranges a date with his ex-wife during the week.

In chapter 13, the lives of those who love Eddie Cochran continue. Father Jim broods in the rectory under the watchful gaze of Rose, the housekeeper. Erin Cochran studies her calendar, trying to find the energy to do the things she has scheduled and caring for Frannie who has remained at the Cochran's house. Big Ed reflects on his last discussion with Eddie. Unable to go to work, Big Ed sits at the cemetery, remembering Eddie's odd questions about right and wrong, and when someone should step in and stop something. Steven Cochran returns home from school to an empty house. The young man is bitter, feeling that once again he has been forgotten. Taking Hardy's business card and the knife which had been a gift from Father Jim, Steven leaves, planning to run away.

In chapter 14, Diz speaks briefly with Glitsky again. The homicide detective is still not happy with the inconsistencies in the case and wants Hardy to keep investigating. Hardy agrees to check on Cruz again and heads to The Shamrock. There, he receives a call from Father Jim, who'd like to meet with him. Cavanaugh is looking to reverse roles; the priest is looking to confess. Intrigued, Hardy meets with him. Cavanaugh believes that he is the reason that Eddie is dead. The priest explains that Eddie was concerned



about the way business was headed at Army, and that Cochran believed that Nika had married Sam Polk for his money. When money became tight, Polk had made some strange business decisions; including laying off some men and keeping others that were questionable. One of these men had thought that Eddie was working along side Polk, and let slip that a drug deal was going to take place. Father Cavanaugh believes that his pride had killed Eddie. By encouraging the young man to confront the situation, Eddie had been killed. Cavanaugh did not consider Eddie's future, Frannie, or their unborn child; he had simply sent him out to do the right thing.

In chapter 15, Sam Polk is at home, uncomfortable with the way things are going. His beautiful wife waits for him in the hot tub, but all he can think about is the money that waits in the safe at work. Polk had planned a drug deal, hoping to wind up with enough money to keep his wife satisfied.

Polk heads to the hot tub and finds his daughter in the house with Alphonse Page. Page had been the middle man in the drug deal. Alphonse was going to supply the drugs to distributors, getting them out of Polk's hands quickly for a fast turn over and profit. Sam sends Linda to Nika and meets with Page. Alphonse is angry that Sam has not provided the money and kept the plan in motion. The men that are waiting for the drugs are getting angry, demanding action. Polk is angry himself. The plan had seemed foolproof until Eddie Cochran had interfered.

Chapters 11-15 Analysis

The medical examiner meets with Griffin and Giometti to discuss Eddie's case. Even with a possible suicide note, Strout is not willing to declare the death an outright suicide. Griffin would rather the case be closed, but for now this is the best he can do. Dropping the case file in Glitsky's office, Griffin more or less washes his hands of it, unless Glitsky's friend, Dismas Hardy, comes up with something that would point in a different direction. The infighting in the department over the upcoming promotion is keeping Griffin and Glitsky from putting much effort into things, as neither wants to look bad and miss out on an opportunity.

Hardy's life appears to be opening up for him again. After so many years of not caring what goes on around him, Diz actually looks forward to running into someone at Schroeder's. The fact that the person he runs into is his ex-wife is surprising. The reader is given a closer glimpse of the main character. There is no animosity between Diz and Jane; to the contrary, there is still an obvious attraction. One is left wondering if by investigating the death of Eddie Cochran, Hardy is once again finding joy in life.

The strange confession of Father Jim to Hardy is important in many ways. The priest does not act priestly in any way during their conversation, cursing frequently, rambling occasionally. Eventually Cavanaugh reveals that he had met with Eddie about Cochran's problems at work. Father Jim tells Hardy that he believes himself to be responsible for Eddie's death because he had encouraged him to confront Sam Polk

about the supposed drug deal that would take place. Cavanaugh tells Hardy that he had not given any thought to Eddie's future child, a very key factor in the novel.

The reader is introduced to Alphonse Page, a small time drug dealer that had worked at Army with Eddie. Page had been the middle man for Sam Polk, and the contacts he had arranged to distribute the drugs are wondering when they will see the merchandise. Polk is angry, at himself for getting involved with Page, and at Eddie Cochran for getting involved. At this point it is unclear exactly how Cochran had interfered, but the reader is led to believe that he had confronted Polk.

Chapters 16-20

Chapters 16-20 Summary

In chapter 16, Dismas Hardy is summoned to Gonzalez, a small town. Steven Cochran is in a clinic there. Found on the side of the road beaten, the boy is in bad shape. Hardy identifies him and Erin and Big Ed are called. Munoz, the local sheriff tells Diz that Steven had been sexually molested, and then most likely thrown from a moving vehicle. After calling Steven's distraught parents, Diz gives Big Ed and Steven a ride home. Along the way the two men discuss things while Steven sleeps. Ed tells Diz about Cavanaugh's relationship with Erin, as well as his difficulties as a young priest. At the Cochran home, Diz speaks briefly to Frannie, verifying the time Eddie left on the night of his death.

At home, Diz waits for his car to be dropped off, and speaks to Abe, wondering if the attack on Steven might have some connection to the trouble that Eddie had become involved in. Hardy suddenly realizes that he has forgotten his date with Jane. He heads to the restaurant, but Jane is already gone.

In chapter 17, Arturo Cruz discusses the Cochran case with his lover Jeffrey. Though Jeffrey does not understand why Cruz lied to the police and told them he didn't know Eddie, the younger man agrees to tell the same story. It is agreed that they will not tell the police that Eddie had come to the house hoping to keep the distribution of La Hora at Army Distributing for another year. Cruz set up a private meeting with Eddie for Monday night at 9:30, but Cochran was already dead when Arturo arrived at the parking lot.

In chapter 18, Alphonse goes to Linda Polk's apartment, trying to talk the girl into getting her hands on the money her father was holding for the drug deal. The people that Alphonse was dealing with were anxious for the product. Alphonse and Linda have sex, and afterward Alphonse tells Linda about the possibility of making a bit of money with drugs. On drugs herself, Linda is easily led by the young man, and the two go to her father's office to check the safe and see if there is any money that Sam might 'lend' them.

At the office Linda is stunned by the amount of money in the safe, and cries, thinking her father was saving the money for his young wife. When it appears that Linda is reconsidering, Alphonse strikes her, forgetting the knife in his hand. Linda dies, her throat slit. Alphonse packs the money and walks home, leaving the knife beside the body, his mind confused from the drugs the two had done that evening.

Sam Polk is at home, worried himself about the money in the safe. Unable to relax, Sam leaves Nika sleeping peacefully, and heads to the office to reassure himself. Arriving he sees his daughter's car in the parking lot, and thinks that she is there working, trying to keep the business afloat.



Chapter 19 finds Diz 'walking' a shark at the aquarium for his friend Pico. Though the hopelessness of such a task had stopped Hardy from helping for a while, he once again feels able to contribute. Later at The Shamrock he thinks about the Cochran case and finally calls Jane to apologize. The two meet for dinner and Jane brings up their split, and the death of their son. Diz still blames himself. Michael had stood for the first time, toppling over the lowered crib rail and landing on his head. Jane had never held Hardy accountable, but he had convicted himself.

After dinner, Diz arrives home to find a message from Abe Glitsky. Returning his call, Hardy is informed that someone else involving Army Distributing is dead, and it definitely wasn't a suicide.

In chapter 20, Sam Polk is in an empty house after leaving the scene of his daughter's murder. After identifying the knife at her side as Alphonse's, Polk had lied to the police about money being missing from the safe. Now he is left to come up with a reasonable explanation for the omission. Nika has left, unable to deal with a second funeral in a week. Polk drinks copiously, and settles into the hot tub to consider his options, and mourn his daughter's death.

Erin Cochran worries about Steven and wanders the house as she sleeps. It occurs to Erin that the family had been neglectful of Steven without meaning to. Family life and their lives outside the home had left him with little of their time, and they had assumed that he was happy. Erin sits by Steven's bed, vowing to be there for him as he sleeps.

Chapters 16-20 Analysis

Dismas is summoned when Steven Cochran is found on the side of the road because his business card was in Steven's pocket. The boy has been beaten and molested, but is alive. When Big Ed arrives to find his youngest son bandaged and still on the gurney his composure breaks. He had come very close to losing another child.

On the ride home, Ed and Diz discuss Eddie and his death, Hardy explaining his relationship to Eddie and Frannie. This leads to a discussion of Father Jim and his relationship with the Cochran family. Ed tells Diz that Father Jim has never been conventional, getting into trouble in the seminary in his youth. At one point Jim had stolen the dean's car and disappeared for three days. The priest had never discussed with anyone what he had done while he was missing. To Hardy's surprise, Ed is very candid about Cavanaugh's love for Erin, but the man is secure in his relationship with his wife, and is willing to allow that the friendship between the three of them is more important than any discomfort.

In the rapid turn of events, Hardy had forgotten his plans with Jane that evening. Stunned he rushes to the restaurant, but Jane is already gone. It takes Diz a bit of time to gather the nerve to call and apologize, but he does. This is key, as the 'old' Dismas would have let it go, given up, rather than try and fix things and move forward. Another example of this is Hardy helping Pico 'walk' a great white shark. Rather than assume

the fish would die, even though baring a miracle it will, Hardy is once again willing to make an effort.

During a rescheduled dinner with Jane, the reader learns that Hardy has continued to blame himself for the death of his infant son. Though his wife had never hinted that Michael's death was because of Diz, Hardy had never forgiven himself. It seems that with the death of Eddied Cochran, Hardy had begun to realize that sometimes bad things happen to good people, and that they can not be controlled.

Alphonse Page proves himself to be a petty criminal when he decides to use Linda Polk to get at her father's money. It does not appear that Page intends to cut Sam out of the deal, he just wants to move things along as he is losing credibility with his contacts. The naïve Linda is the easiest way for Alphonse to regain his contact's trust. Unfortunately the drugs that the young man and woman had done throughout the day have them both emotional and shaky. When Linda has second thoughts about taking the money from her father even though Alphonse has assured her it is a loan, the man strikes out at her. Page does not even realize that Linda is seriously injured, and even when she is dead still does not truly fathom the situation. Drugs have addled his thinking, causing Alphonse to leave the knife that killed Linda at the scene.

Sam Polk had worried about the money as well as the drug deal, knowing that he had become a man obsessed to keep his young wife happy. When he can no longer lie in bed considering the issue Polk drives to the office to check the money, only to find his daughter dead beside Page's knife. Ironically, the situation had been created when Sam had tried to find a way to keep Nika. Now, with the death of Eddie and Linda, Polk had lost everything.

Arturo Cruz's reasons for lying to the police are revealed. A gay Latino, Cruz is unwilling to have his lifestyle discovered. The prejudice in the Latin community toward gays is enough to be a threat to the business he has built from the ground up. Eddie had gone to Cruz's house to discuss alternatives to taking distribution from Army, and Cruz was afraid that Eddie might unknowingly share the information that Arturo and Jeffrey were lovers. Arturo admits to Jeffrey that he had seen the body of Eddie the night he was killed, but swears Cochran was dead when he arrived at the scene. The reader is left unsure at this point, though eventually Cruz will provide the true story.

Chapters 21-25

Chapters 21-25 Summary

In chapter 21, Diz meets with Abe Glitsky, who informs him of Linda's murder and the suspect Alphonse Page, who Hardy had not heard mentioned to this point. Glitsky relates Sam's reaction and invites him to the interview that afternoon. When Hardy tells Glitsky that Father Cavanaugh believed that Sam Polk had something to do with Eddie's death, the detective asks to meet the priest.

At the rectory, Abe is surprised to realize he knows Father Jim. The two had worked together during the Berkeley riots. At that time Cavanaugh had worked to get unregistered guns off the streets in cooperation with the police. The discussion turns to Eddie's death and Cavanaugh relates the information Eddie had given him, including the name of Alphonse Page. Glitsky asks the priest when the last time he met with Eddie was and Father Jim tells them it was Sunday night. Rose, the housekeeper is dusting, and something catches her attention, but her faith is always in Father Jim and his memory.

In chapter 22, Diz meets with Matthew R. Brody III, the lawyer handling the lawsuit against Cruz Publishing and its distributors. Hardy asks Brody point blank if the lawsuit could have in any way resulted in the murders of Eddie Cochran and Linda Polk. Brody is surprised to hear of the murders, but does not see any way they might be related. Brody then tells Hardy that they are at the end of the suit, and have fallen to legal blackmail. Rumor has it that Cruz is gay, and it could damage his credibility in the Latino market. If the former distributors get proof, they might be able to use the information to influence Cruz to keep their contracts. Hardy is left to wonder if Eddie had that information and had planned on acting on it, resulting in his death. Dismas is a bit worried, as planning something like blackmail is completely out of character for Eddie.

In chapter 23, Abe Glitsky is waiting to meet with Sam Polk and going over information he had researched. The drug deal angle that Diz had presented had resulted in Glitsky following Polk's finances and uncovering quite a bit of money being withdrawn. That information could persuade Polk to talk. Hardy arrives and they wait for Polk, who fails to show up. They discuss the case and the likelihood that Alphonse had killed both Eddie and Linda as the result of a failed drug deal. Glitsky receives a call informing him that Sam Polk is dead, found in his hot tub. There is no foul play involved, Polk had simply had too much to drink and more or less poached himself in the hot water.

Hardy heads to the courtroom of his former father in law and discusses the case with him. Diz is still worried that he might have misjudged Eddie's character; that Cochran might have been involved in blackmail. Andy Fowler advises Hardy to follow his thoughts and find out the truth.

In chapter 24, Frannie has returned to work, trying to get on with her life. She is stunned to find that Linda Polk has been murdered and is not sure how to process the information. The thought that Eddie might have indeed killed himself is bothering her and she wonders if it is possible that he had; that he had not loved her or the baby she carried at all.

Frannie meets with Hardy at her apartment, and Diz tells her about the possibility that Eddie had not killed himself. Frannie remembers that Eddie had an appointment with Cruz that night, but that he had not left the house to meet the publisher, he had gone out to think and never returned. Later at home, Diz reflects on the meeting that was to have happened the night Eddie was killed and again wonders if Eddie had meant to blackmail Cruz. Hardy listens to a copy of the 911 tape reporting the body at Cruz Publishing. Nothing about the tape struck a cord with Hardy. Disgusted with his lack of ability to simply find the answers, Hardy calls Jane and tells her he needs to see her.

Chapter 25 finds Alphonse Page waiting for a plane to Hawaii with his cousin Odis. Odis had been impressed with the amount of money that Page had turned up with, explaining the death of Linda Polk as an accident. The two have decided that Hawaii is a great place to hide. While Alphonse checks the departure time of the plane, Odis flirts with the waitress at the bar and is asked for ID when he orders drinks. Alphonse returns and when a man asks to see their ID Alphonse runs.

Hardy arrives at Jane's house, his former house. On the way to the bedroom they pass their infant son Michael's room. Hardy explains as best he can that he had been like Eddie, that he had thought he could make a difference in the world. When Michael had died he had just dropped out of everything. Jane understands, had understood all along, and just wants to move forward.

At the rectory, Rose the housekeeper is awake waiting for Father Jim. The woman had realized that Cavanaugh might have been mistaken about his last meeting with Eddie. When the priest arrives from the Cochran's house Rose makes him some food and mentions it to him. Cavanaugh agrees that it might be important and thanks her for the information.

Chapters 21-25 Analysis

The murder of Linda Polk is yet another tie to Army Distributing, and Diz is even more convinced that Eddie's murder has something to do with the company. Alphonse Page as a suspect is new to Hardy, but he believes in his heart that there must be some connection with the drug deal that Father Jim had mentioned and Alphonse. Glitsky wants to meet Father Jim to hear his tale first hand, as the murder investigation of Linda Polk is his case. When meeting with the priest, Glitsky is not only surprised that he knows Cavanaugh, but that Father Jim remembers him. While Rose cleans around the men they reminisce about the riots and the things they had tried to accomplish, such as getting guns off the streets. This is an important fact that will tie into the novel later, when the murderer of Eddie is revealed.

A second important fact is hinted at when Rose believes Father Jim may be mistaken about his meeting with Eddie on Sunday. Though the housekeeper clearly worships the priest and his memory, she clearly remembers that Father Jim had met with Eddie on Monday, the night of Cochran's death. Unable to keep the thought to herself should it be important, Rose waits up to tell Cavanaugh, who thanks her and states that he must tell the police.

Attorney Matthew Brody provides Hardy with food for thought when he suggests that his clients might be willing to blackmail Cruz into letting them continue to distribute La Hora. Diz is a bit dismayed to think that Eddie might not have been the clean cut, honest person he had believed. The thought eats at him, and he takes it to his ex father in law. Fowler knows Hardy well, and knows that believing he had misjudged Eddie is almost as troublesome as Cochran's being murdered. Judge Fowler urges Diz to get to the bottom of things if only to put his mind at ease.

Frannie is beginning to feel anger at Eddie for being murdered, though she knows rationally that he did not do so on purpose. The thoughts that bother her most are that Eddie might have killed himself, unable to deal with their marriage and a child. Hardy arrives and tells her that there may be a suspect, lifting her spirits a bit, relieving her guilt for doubting her husband.

Hardy continues to rebuild his relationship with his ex-wife, Jane, calling her when the case begins to overwhelm him. Returning to the house they had shared eight years ago I also hard for Diz. Hardy is finally able to enter the room where his infant son had fallen from his crib so many years ago. Diz tries to explain to Jane the process he went through, and why he is trying so hard to find the truth for Eddie and Frannie. Hardy believes that he too had been like Eddie once, and the death of their son had more or less dried him out. Unable to find a reason for anything, Hardy had decided that there was no reason for anything, and had walked out, not just on Jane, but on life. Now he thinks that he may have been wrong, and seems to be awakening from a type of hibernation. Jane is patient, and it is clear that the former Mrs. Hardy has known this about Diz all along, and had been waiting for him to realize it as well.

Chapters 26-30

Chapters 26-30 Summary

In chapter 26, Glitsky receives a call that Alphonse has been captured and heads downtown to question him. At first Page is reluctant to say anything, but when Glitsky mentions that Sam Polk is also dead, Alphonse starts to panic a bit. The young man slips and admits to killing Linda, but swears it was an accident. Abe decides to threaten Page with Eddie's murder as well, but is shocked to learn that the night of Eddie's death; Alphonse had been playing in a basketball tournament, against a San Francisco police department team.

In chapter 27, Hardy decides to get to the bottom of things with Arturo Cruz and arrives at his building before him. Cruz is resigned and invites Hardy inside to talk things over. Cruz reveals that he had been at his building the night Eddie had died, but had arrived afterward. Cochran's body was in the parking lot when he had gotten there. Afraid, Cruz had returned home, and had not revealed his discovery. He claimed that his fear kept him from doing so. Though Diz tries to break his story, it seems that after finally telling the truth, Cruz can not be shaken and provides corroborating witnesses proving that he could not have killed Eddie.

At home Diz has a message from Glitsky about Alphonse being arrested and is filled with relief. He does not call Moses or Frannie immediately, wanting to be sure that they have the information needed to prove Eddie's death was not a suicide, but Hardy is quite sure things will be wrapped up shortly.

Chapter 28 finds Steven recovering slowly and struggling to come to terms with his place in his family. Steven had always believed that he was accepted because Eddie loved him and now with Eddie dead, he feels alone. His mother is trying, the young man knows this, but he does not think that she is trying for him; it is more of a sense of duty.

Hardy arrives and talks to Erin Cochran regarding the case. Erin is amazed that there are possibly two people who would have wanted to kill Eddie. Along with caring for Steven, Erin has spent her days in a stupor, trying to understand the tragedy her family had suffered; angry at times and not sure how to deal with it. Talk turns to Steven and Hardy visits him, discussing the evidence while Erin makes lunch.

Afterward waiting to meet Pico for lunch, Hardy goes over things in his mind. Despite the fact that there are now two suspects, he can't help the feeling that he is missing something, that the death of Eddie is not tied to Army Distributing or a drug deal that went bad at all.

In chapter 29, Abe Glitsky meets with the district attorney and a member of the drug enforcement agency, trying to find some information that would tie into Eddie's death. The DEA does not even consider the drug deal that never took place valuable enough



to look into. Dick Willis, DEA agent, simply can not find enough to make what essentially is a small case for them into a murder for Glitsky. DA Bargaen, 'Plea' to his colleagues tells Abe that Cruz could not have killed Eddie, and Alphonse obviously had not. Bargaen points out that even Sam Polk could not have killed him, as he was at a party. The case has unraveled, and Glitsky is no closer to finding a killer than he ever had. His lieutenant tells him to back away, it is Griffin's case.

In chapter 30, Steven has a heart to heart with his father when Big Ed is helping him settle in for the night. Ed explains that Erin is suffering and as much as everyone in the family is caring for him now, he also needs to remember others. Steven begins to understand what his mother might be feeling. The young man suggests that Frannie's baby might make his mother feel better, and Ed is shocked. Steven had thought his parents were aware of the baby, and can not remember who had told him about it. The painkillers Steven is on make him sleepy, but he is sure the information is true. The boy can not remember if it was Hardy, Father Jim or possibly Frannie herself that had supplied the information.

Hardy meets with Jim Cavanaugh and the two drink and discuss life. As the night wears on and the talk gets heavier, the two men compare the lives of police and priests. Cavanaugh insists that the life of a priest is more difficult and uses his relationship with the Cochran's as an example. The man admits his love of Erin, and the pain of watching her perfect family, a family that could have been his had life been different. Shockingly, Father Jim admits that he had almost been happy that Eddie had died, that the Cochran's had suffered. The priest believed, even if only for a minute, that they had too much happiness, that no one should have that right.

Hardy returns home, thinking things through, reviewing the night. Diz likes Father Jim, amazed to find that the priest is a regular guy with regular feelings. The two had seemed to be on the way to becoming good friends. Hardy listens to his answering machine again, wanting to hear Jane's voice, and is confronted with the end of Father Jim's message. Hardy is stunned to realize that the priest's voice is also the caller from the 911 tape. It was Cavanaugh who had reported Eddie's body in Cruz's parking lot.

Chapters 26-30 Analysis

The suspects that had seems so plausible throughout the novel are falling by the wayside. Alphonse Page had most certainly killed Linda Polk, but could not have killed Eddie Cochran. Though the reader has been led toward Arturo Cruz, he too seems to be innocent. Abe Glitsky has been working with Hardy to find the truth behind Eddie's death, but it seems that doing so may have detrimental to his career. Glitsky's lieutenant has told him to back off, leaving Griffin to work on his own case.

Steven is recovering and becoming more aware of those around him. The relationship between the young man and his mother is still strained. Erin is truly unaware that her son feels as unworthy as he does, though she knows that he is unhappy. Steven believes that his mother could not love him as much as she had Eddie; in fact, he

believes that the only reason she had loved him at all is because of Eddie. Now that Eddie is dead, there isn't any reason for Erin to feel anything. When speaking with Big Ed, Steven realizes that everyone in the family is feeling horrible loss, but expressing it differently. The fact that Frannie is pregnant is news to Big Ed, and Steven at first doubts his memory. The young man is left to wonder who told him the news. Though Steven believes it might have been Hardy, Dismas had promised Frannie not to tell anyone, and he hadn't.

Meeting with Father Cavanaugh, Diz is pleasantly surprised by the down to earth attitude of the priest, and also by the connection they seem to make. Hardy had not thought that a priest could be fun to just hang around with. The discussion the two men have is telling as Cavanaugh relates the difficulties of being a priest. Father Jim bluntly confesses that he had been happy that Eddie had died, believing it unfair that the Cochran family should have such a blessed life, with no visible struggle. Diz thinks he understands what Jim is talking about, unaware that the priest is actually revealing his motive for murder.

The mystery of who had called 911 is solved when Hardy arrives home and listens to his machine again. Waiting to hear Jane, Diz is confronted with the voice of Cavanaugh and realizes it is the same voice that had called 911. Hardy is left to wonder why the priest had been there, and what really happened.

Chapters 31-37

Chapters 31-37 Summary

In chapter 31, Father Jim Cavanaugh performs the morning mass thinking about the murder of Eddie Cochran. Eddie had gone to the rectory on Monday evening to tell Father Jim about Frannie having a baby. Cavanaugh could not take it any more. Cavanaugh has loved Erin Cochran his whole life, had watched the Cochran family live a blessed life. Now Eddie, the son that Jim believed should have been his was going to continue the cycle, perpetuating the happiness and luck that Cavanaugh coveted. Father Jim believes that God has forgiven him for the murder of Eddie, but now must kill again, as Rose knows that Eddie had been to the rectory on the night of his death.

Cavanaugh lays the groundwork with Father Dietrick, convincing the young priest that Rose has been depressed and that they should talk to her that evening. Dietrick is worried and agrees to talk to Rose when she returns from picking up a visiting priest. Cavanaugh convinces Rose to go on a picnic with him and after the housekeeper packs a basket Father Jim dictates a note for Rose to leave. In the garage Cavanaugh leaves Rose in the running car, pretending the door to the garage is stuck. The woman does not panic because Father has told her not to. Cavanaugh wastes time, making sure he is seen in the school so that he can not be blamed for Rose's death. Returning to the garage, Jim finds Rose dead and heads inside to call 911.

In chapter 32, Steven talks to Erin who questions him about Frannie's pregnancy. Steven had realized it had been Hardy that told him. Hardy had related the story Cavanaugh had told him, about not considering Eddie and Frannie's baby when sending Cochran out to slay the dragon. Erin calls Hardy to confirm this and he also tells her that Alphonse Page and Alberto Cruz are not to blame for Eddie's death. Erin thinks that maybe Eddie did kill himself after all, but Steven does not believe it, and the young man decides to find the truth, believing that doing so will make his mother love him as much as she had Eddie.

Hardy realizes after talking to Erin that Cavanaugh had been lying to him all along. The only way the priest could have known about Frannie being pregnant is Eddie telling him on Monday. Father Jim had seen Eddie on the night of his death and lied. Hardy also realizes that Cavanaugh had gotten the murder weapon years ago, while working the Berkeley riots with Abe Glitsky. The priest had simply kept one or more of the guns that were turned in at the time.

On a hunch Hardy checks the newspaper archives for the time frame that the Cochran's had gotten married. Big Ed had told him about Father Jim disappearing for three days and never talking about that time. Within minutes Diz discovers an article about a call girl found murdered. Hardy believes that Cavanaugh had run away after the Cochran's married, and had killed the woman in his rage.



Taking the information and the two tapes to Abe Glitsky, Hardy is met with a stone wall. Carl Griffin is also there, taunting Glitsky about the many suspects that he had paraded through. Glitsky is not open to anymore discussion on the case and tells Hardy so.

Chapter 33 finds Steven Cochran reviewing the case in his head. Steven believes that Father Jim might have gone with Eddie to the meeting he had on Monday night to support and protect him. It is even possible that Cavanaugh had taken his gun just in case the person they were meeting had one. Steven does not believe that Father Jim could have killed Eddie on purpose, but that an accident had occurred and the priest had been scared. Steven just has to convince the priest to tell Erin the truth so that she can begin to heal. Hardy is leaving the police station when the call comes in that there is a death at the St. Elizabeth's Rectory. Hardy tells Griffin he is going with them and the detective doesn't argue.

Father Jim calls Erin to tell her about Rose committing suicide. It is only natural for a man to call his best friend in a time of tragedy. Steven picks up the phone and tells Erin that he needs to talk to the priest, tells Father Cavanaugh that he knows what happened to Eddie and they need to talk. The priest is in a panic, knowing that if he were to kill another of Erin's sons there could be no going back, but if he did not the truth would come out and he would never see Erin again. Father Cavanaugh asks Erin to come over, and she agrees.

In chapter 34, Hardy arrives at the rectory and reviews the scene with the police. Diz questions why Rose is sitting in the passenger seat instead of behind the wheel. Hardy suggests that they might want to check the keys for fingerprints, predicting that Rose's will not be found, and heads into the rectory to find Father Jim.

The priest waits down the street from the Cochran house for Erin to leave for the rectory. Once she leaves he goes to the house, but finds the door locked. Walking around the house he calls out to Steven who is on medication for pain and drifting in and out of consciousness. The young man hears Cavanaugh and tells him to come in.

At the rectory Hardy sees Erin who tells him that Cavanaugh had called her and asked her to come over. Hardy is confused, as the priest is not there. Erin tells Hardy that Steven had been talking to Father Jim about Eddie's death just a few minutes ago, and Hardy realizes Steven is in trouble. Diz yells for Erin to give him her car keys and the two rush back to the Cochran house.

In chapter 35, Glitsky arrives at the scene of Rose's murder, which Griffin and Giometti are convinced is a suicide. Cavanaugh meanwhile is at Steven's house, and has found an open window, and prepares to climb in.

In chapter 36, Cavanaugh climbs through Steven's window, the young man confused by the medication he is on. Even with the confusion, Steven is aware that there is danger present, and tries to escape. Cavanaugh convinces him that he is confused by the drugs and helps him back to bed. The priest is standing at the boy's bedside with a pillow when Hardy and Erin rush in, Erin telling the priest that he might as well kill her if

he killed her baby. Diz takes Cavanaugh into the kitchen and the priest explains that there is no way Hardy can know what it is like having to see the life you should have had every day and not be able to possess it. The priest also confesses to killing the call girl so many years ago when Erin had gotten married. Asking Hardy what will happen now, Diz tells the priest that he is the expert on suicide, and that there is a gun in his car back at the rectory.

At the rectory, Glitsky finds the note in Rose's handwriting and speaks to Father Dietrick and the visiting priest. Dietrick realizes his car is missing, and then sees it drive up with Father Cavanaugh behind the wheel. Glitsky meets Cavanaugh and speaks with him and Griffin while the visiting priest watches. No one can hear the exchange between the police and Cavanaugh, however the police seem shocked and Cavanaugh asks to sit down, heading for Hardy's car. The police still talk in a group when they hear Father Dietrick call out for Cavanaugh followed by a gunshot. Father Jim had killed himself.

In chapter 37, another detective is promoted to lieutenant of the homicide department. The exiting lieutenant, Frazelli tells Frank Batiste that though Griffin and Glitsky had been so concerned with infighting that a murderer had killed himself while a group of policemen had been surrounding him.

Hardy and Jane are at The Little Shamrock when Moses walks in with the paperwork giving Hardy part ownership in the bar. McGuire had been pleased that Frannie would get the insurance, but then had begun acting funny, realizing he owed Hardy part of the bar. Rather than deal with the attitude he'd witnessed already, Hardy tells McGuire he quits, and to send the profits to his house.

The following day Moses arrives at Hardy's house, apologizes and asks Hardy if he wants his share. Hardy tells McGuire he only wants it if he wants to give it. McGuire does, and they make arrangements to sign the papers when Diz opens the next day. Moses leaves and Hardy turns down the hall, returning to Jane.

Chapters 31-37 Analysis

The truth of Eddie Cochran's death is finally revealed. Father Jim Cavanaugh had killed the young man he considered the son he would never have out of jealousy. Cavanaugh had been unable to deal with the happiness that the Cochran family had relished for so many years. Cavanaugh had coveted Erin since their youth, and had watched the family he believed should have been his live a blessed life for many years. The news that a second generation was beginning and would likely experience the same joys was too much for the priest to deal with and he had snapped. Taking a gun he had gotten during the Berkeley riots, Cavanaugh had challenged Eddie to fire at something in the canal behind the Cruz building, and then had simply shot him, leaving his body in the parking lot. On the way back to the rectory, Cavanaugh had made the emotionless 911 call informing the police of Eddie's death.

Hardy had realized that Cavanaugh had lied, and telling Steven of Frannie's pregnancy was the last piece in the puzzle for him. Diz had not picked up on the fact that Father Jim was aware of Frannie's pregnancy until he had relayed the information to Steven. The only way Cavanaugh could have known about Frannie having a baby is if Eddie told him on the night of his murder. Frannie had told no one, and Hardy had not either. That left Eddie, proving that the priest was lying.

Cavanaugh arranges Rose's death to look like a suicide because the woman knows that Eddie and the priest had been together on Monday. The suicide note that Cavanaugh dictates to Rose is similar to the note that had been found in Eddie's car, leaving the reader to wonder if Father Jim had done the same while with Eddie. This fact is never explored fully, but the connection is there.

Cavanaugh feels that he needs to kill Steven to protect his secret as well. Though Steven has figured out that Father Jim must have killed Eddie, the young man believes that it had been an accident. Steven is more concerned for his mother than himself when he asks the priest to tell her the truth. Erin has been withdrawn, suffering because of Eddie's death, and Steven had caused his share of grief, running away and being gravely injured. Solving Eddie's death and proving his worth seem to be a way for him to get through to his mother. Steven believes that Erin can forgive Cavanaugh for the accidental death of Eddie if the priest is honest, and that his mother can stop wondering if Eddie had in fact killed himself as the police seem to believe.

Arriving at the Cochran house in time to stop the murder of Steven, Erin reveals her love for Steven in a way that the boy can understand, relieving him of the doubt he had been feeling throughout the novel. Hardy takes Cavanaugh aside and is shocked and disgusted by the self-righteous attitude the priest possesses. Disgusted, Hardy reminds the priest that he knows all about suicide, and tells him about his gun in his car.

The actual confession of Cavanaugh to the police is not presented in detail, but Hardy is proved right after all. Though the initial suspects had not been involved, the facts as they had been presented were feasible. When the pieces fall into place regarding Cavanaugh, Hardy is doubted by the investigating officers until the priest confesses. Diz is vindicated, and Glitsky and Griffin wind up losing the promotion that they had been waiting for, after becoming caught up in the battle.

Hardy is beginning to not just live life again, but enjoy it. After existing for many years making an effort not to become involved with anyone he might be forced to care about, Dismas is confronted with the fact that life continues, and living it can bring as much joy as sorrow. The novel closes with Hardy together with Jane, part owner of The Little Shamrock, and happy, for perhaps the first time in years.

Characters

Dismas Hardy

A thirty-eight year old bartender, Dismas Hardy has withdrawn from the day to day rat race that most people accept as life. Divorced, a former police officer and attorney, Dismas had decided caring was too painful after the death of his infant son, Michael. Working at The Little Shamrock for his friend, Moses McGuire, and tossing darts was enough to keep Hardy if not happy, at least content. The death of McGuire's brother in law, Eddie Cochran, changed things for Hardy. Eddie and his young wife Frannie had plans and dreams that would no longer be realized. They had believed that life would treat them well if they lived it well and did the right thing, instead, they had been destroyed by it.

Hardy checks into Eddie's death at the request of McGuire who is concerned that Eddie's death will be ruled a suicide. No one who knew Eddie could believe he would kill himself, but the police had found a gun near his body and a note in his car. Hardy reaches out to his former partner, Abe Glitsky, and asks the homicide detective to assist him with information. During the investigation Hardy uncovers several suspicious characters, all of which seem to have a connection to Eddie Cochran, though proof that they were involved in his death is not easy to find.

Dismas Hardy reconnects with his ex-wife June while trying to solve the murder, and with her help and understanding realizes that the death of their son had caused him to shut down. Hardy realizes that working for Moses and Frannie has awakened his spirit, and given him something to live for again. Discovering the true identity of the killer causes Dismas to rethink some things, but rather than turning away from life again, he seems to be willing to embrace it.

Abe Glitsky

A homicide detective, Abe Glitsky is up for promotion to lieutenant of the division. Glitsky had been Dismas Hardy's partner when they had both walked the beat years ago, and they still exchanges Christmas cards. Glitsky is married with children, half black and half Jewish. Up for promotion, Glitsky is unwilling to use affirmative action to increase his chances for the lieutenant's position, preferring to earn it instead. Abe is aware that it will not be easy, as he is one of only two detective in the homicide department that prefers to work alone. Glitsky does not make things any easier for himself when he helps Hardy investigate the death of Eddie Cochran, a case which is in the hands of another detective, Carl Griffin.

Glitsky helps Hardy investigate, unsure if anything will come of it. Abe fluctuates between believing Hardy when he vows that Eddie had not committed suicide, and trying to keep the peace in the department and not make too many waves. The



evidence that is presented to him is convincing, and Glitsky acts on it, only to discover that the connections Hardy had drawn were incorrect. When presented with further evidence, Abe is leery of backing up his friend again, afraid that he has already damaged his chance for promotion. When the truth is discovered, Glitsky regrets not believing his friend.

Abe Glitsky is passed over for the promotion to lieutenant because of his involvement in the Cochran case, along with Carl Griffin.

Eddie Cochran

The murder victim, Eddie has always been a dreamer. In his mid-twenties, Eddie Cochran is married to Frannie McGuire Cochran, and one of four children of Erin and Big Ed Cochran. Eddie has always lived his life believing that doing the right thing was important, even required. Working as the manager of Army Distributing, Eddie is disturbed by the direction the business is taking and tries to negotiate with Arturo Cruz, the publisher of La Hora, a large Latin publication that had been the cornerstone of Army Distributing. The night Eddie was to meet Cruz, his body was discovered in the parking lot of Cruz's building.

The police's initial assessment is suicide, with a gun near the body and a possible suicide note in his car, however Dismas Hardy investigates at the request of Cochran's brother in law and soon discovers this might not be the case.

Eddie had been distressed in the last days before his death, and had received news of pending fatherhood from his wife Frannie the night he died. Dismas Hardy investigates the last days of Eddie's life and discovers inconsistencies in the tales woven by Jim Cavanaugh, the family priest. Upon further investigation, Hardy realizes that Cavanaugh is Eddie's killer, his death the result of nothing more than jealousy.

Father James Cavanaugh

Father James Cavanaugh is the family priest and life long friend of the Cochran family. A priest at St. Elizabeth's parish, Cavanaugh is a gregarious man, loved by all. At times Father Jim seems holier than any other, preaching the word of God, at other times, the priest is just like any other man, feeling regret and loss, failing to understand God's wishes for the human race.

Dismas Hardy respects Cavanaugh, and the two men seem to connect over several conversations they have regarding the death of Eddie Cochran and the ways of the world. It is during one such conversation when Father Jim comes close to confessing his guilt in the murder of Eddie. There are times throughout the novel when the priest actually says that he is the responsible for Eddie's death, but taken in the context of the conversation, these revealing moments are not quite a confession.



Father Cavanaugh murdered Eddie Cochran out of simple jealousy. The priest believed that Erin Cochran was his one true love, and the Cochran family had enjoyed years of wonderful life that Father Jim felt he had been denied. Eddie's news of impending fatherhood had been too much for the priest to take, and Father Jim had killed the young man he looked on as a son, unwilling to stand by and watch the Cochran's experience the happiness he felt should be his.

Linda Polk

The daughter of Sam Polk, owner of Army Distributing. Linda is a light drug user, and a naive young woman who is suffering after her father's marriage to a much younger woman. Searching for any sense of belonging, Linda becomes a victim of Alphonse Page, a young man willing to use her to gain the drug money that Sam Polk had gathered for a deal.

Linda is killed by Alphonse Page accidentally while the two are high on drugs when Linda has second thoughts about taking the money stashed in her father's office safe.

Alphonse Page

A young man employed by Sam Polk, Page is the go between for Sam Polk in a drug deal he puts together to make money. Alphonse knows people that will be able to distribute the drugs that Polk had arranged to buy.

When Sam Polk puts off the deal due to the death of Eddie Cochran, Alphonse takes matters into his own hands and enlists Linda Polk's help to take Sam's money. When the girl has second thoughts, Alphonse moves to strike her, forgetting the knife he holds in his hand. Linda Polk dies of a slit throat, and Alphonse takes the money and runs.

Alphonse is a suspect in Eddie Cochran's murder until he provides an alibi. Page had been playing basketball in a tournament with the police department.

Frannie Cochran

Eddie Cochran's wife, Frannie is the sister of Dismas Hardy's friend, Moses McGuire. Frannie is pregnant, and had told Eddie the night of his death. Frannie is worried that Eddie had killed himself when he had heard the news of the pregnancy, that he had felt overwhelmed by everything going on in his life.

Erin Cochran

Eddie Cochran's mother, Erin is the best friend of James Cavanaugh the parish priest at St. Elizabeth's. Erin is distraught first over her son's death, and later over the beating of her younger son, Steven, after he runs away. Withdrawing into herself after the events



in her life, Erin is unable to provide the reassurance that Steven needs after the death of his brother. When Cavanaugh tries to kill Steven, Erin's love is evident, and Steven finally realizes that his mother has always loved him.

Erin is the love of James Cavanaugh, though the love is not returned. It is the love that Cavanaugh feels for Erin that drives him to kill, as he knows that he will never have the one thing he wants: Erin Cochran.

Carl Griffin

A homicide detective, Griffin is up for promotion to lieutenant of the division. This fact, coupled with the friendship of Abe Glitsky and Dismas Hardy leads Griffin to believe that there is an ulterior motive to Hardy asking him to look further into the death of Eddie Cochran. Griffin is not willing to risk his promotion, thinking that Glitsky is up to something to make him look bad. Ironically, Griffin is denied the promotion anyway, after Cavanaugh kills himself surrounded by police officers.

Pico

Hardy's friend, Pico is a confidante. Hardy had often helped Pico 'walk' great white sharks at the Steinhart Aquarium, in the hopes that the sharks would one day be able to be kept there.

Rose

The housekeeper at St Elizabeth's, Rose inadvertently reveals herself to be a witness in Eddie's death when she tells Father Cavanaugh he had been mistaken about the last time he had seen Eddie. Cavanaugh kills Rose to protect his secret.

Nika Polk

The new much younger wife of Sam Polk, owner of Army Distributing.

Steven Cochran

The younger brother of Eddie Cochran, Steven is unable to deal with the death of his brother and runs away, feeling that without Eddie there is no one left that loves him in the family. Steven is found injured at the side of the road and returns home, struggling with his injuries and his belief that his mother does not love him much.

Steven realizes that James Cavanaugh is involved in Eddie's death and tries to arrange things so that his mother can forgive the priest and hoping that she will then find him



worthy. Steven is almost the second victim in the Cochran family of Cavanaugh, who will kill again if it means that he will be able to stay near Erin.

John Strout

The medical examiner in San Francisco, Strout rules Eddie's death a suicide, baring any more evidence.

Sam Polk

The owner of Army Distributing, Sam Polk arranges drug deal in order to keep his young wife. The business is suffering and Polk needs money to keep Nika in the manner she has grown to know. When Eddie dies, followed by the murder of his daughter Linda, Sam is left alone, as his wife does not want to deal with such tragedy. Polk drinks until he passes out, dying in his hot tub.

Moses McGuire

Dismas Hardy's friend and boss, Moses asks Hardy to look into Eddie's death so that Frannie can collect the life insurance money. McGuire offers Hardy part ownership in his bar as payment.

Big Ed Cochran

Eddie's father, Ed had worked for the city in the Parks Department for many years. A kind man, Ed knows that Father Jim loves his wife, but accepts that regardless of this, Erin had chosen him long ago, and is comfortable in their relationship.

Jane Fowler

Dismas Hardy's ex-wife, Jane was more than willing to rekindle the relationship with her ex. Jane is aware that Hardy had withdrawn from life after the death of their son, and had never stopped loving him.

Andy Fowler

Hardy's ex-father in law, and a judge in San Francisco.

Matthew Brody

An attorney, Brody provides information to Hardy regarding Arturo Cruz.



Objects/Places

Army Distributing

The company owned by Sam Polk that Eddie had managed before his death.

Cruz Publishing

The publishing company owned by Arturo Cruz.

La Hora

The Latino publication produced by Cruz Publishing. La Hora was the cornerstone of Army Distributing's business. When Cruz decided to distribute the publication himself, Army's business was affected dramatically.

The Little Shamrock

The bar owned by Moses McGuire where Dismas Hardy has been tending bar for eight years. McGuire offers Hardy part ownership if he will look into the death of Eddie Cochran.

The Steinhart Aquarium

The Steinhart Aquarium is where Hardy's friend Pico works. Here, the two men often spend time 'walking' great white sharks caught by fisherman. The sharks need to swim to breathe, and the two men try and encourage the sharks to live.

Candlestick Park

The home field of the San Francisco Giants. Hardy runs into his old partner, Abe Glitsky at Candlestick, and the two are drawn into the mystery of Eddie Cochran's death.

St Elizabeth's

The parish where Father James Cavanaugh served as priest.

Schroeder's

A German Restaurant, Dismas Hardy meets up with his ex-wife Jane after six years and rekindles their relationship.

Gonzalez

A small town near San Francisco, where Steven Cochran is found injured after he runs away from home.

The San Francisco Chronicle

The newspaper where Hardy had found the article tying James Cavanaugh to the murder of a young woman the year the Cochran's had married.

Themes

Jealousy

Jealousy plays a large role in the novel *Dead Irish* by John Lescroart. Father James Cavanaugh, trusted friend and family priest of the Cochran family, kills the oldest son, Eddie, when he learns that the good fortunes of the Cochran family will continue for another generation.

For years, Cavanaugh had coveted the life led by the Cochran family. Friends with Erin and big Ed in their youth, James had been in love with Erin from the start. When the Cochran's had married, Father Jim had run away and been missing for days, only to return and reveal nothing of his whereabouts. It is not until many years later that Dismas Hardy discovered an unsolved murder of a call girl tied to Cavanaugh. When Eddie tells his priest and friend that he is going to be a father, jealousy shows itself once again. Cavanaugh is unable to bear the thought of so much happiness in one family, happiness he was allowed to experience, but only as an outsider. The thought that once again life had passed him by is overwhelming and Father Jim kills Eddie Cochran. The priest's jealousy creates a situation that he is unable to recover from. Forced to comfort his love Erin in the terrible time, Cavanaugh must keep his secret and play the role of friend and confessor, all the while the cause of the families grief.

Another instance of jealousy is how Dismas Hardy feels while observing other people live. Hardy had withdrawn from life after the death of his infant son, and sometimes has difficulty seeing other people happy. The difference between the two men is that Hardy had not begrudged others their happiness, he had simply removed himself from the situation. Cavanaugh had acted on his jealousy, and then wallowed in the misery he had created, feeling needed by his love, Erin Cochran.

Family

The Cochran Family is an important central theme in *Dead Irish*. The family is close knit, living for and with each other, trying their best to care for each other and always concerned that everyone is safe and happy. The family includes Father James Cavanaugh, though not in the way he would prefer. When Cavanaugh discovers that the Cochran family is going to be expanding, he is overwhelmed with jealousy and kills Eddie, the first born of Erin and Ed Cochran.

The internal struggles of what Cavanaugh believes to be a perfect family are revealed to the reader when Steven Cochran, the youngest son, runs away. Steven feels that he has no place in the home, that Eddie had been the piece of the family that he fit with best. Unsure of his mother's love, Steven leaves, feeling that he will not be missed. At the same time, Erin realizes that her youngest son had been left behind, that in the normal rush of day to day life, he had been forgotten, left to fend for himself. The act

was not intentional, and was not mean spirited in any way, but had happened nonetheless.

Ironically, the family that Cavanaugh coveted, that the priest had considered perfect in every way, was just a normal family with the normal struggles that many people face. The priest could only see what he was missing, and by killing Eddie, had destroyed the one thing he wanted most.

Renewal

Throughout *Dead Irish*, there is a sense of renewal regarding Dismas Hardy. At the outset of the novel, Hardy seems to be a lost soul, drifting through life trying to maintain a steady pace, but not allowing himself to experience joy. The reader is given the sense that Hardy is unwilling to take a chance and be hurt.

The death of Hardy's young son is revealed, as well as the guilt that Hardy feels. After Michael's death, Dismas had left his wife, left his job and moved on, working as a bartender and doing nothing more than going through the motions. Ironically it is the death of another son, Erin and Ed Cochran's son Eddie that begins to reawaken Hardy.

Dismas had seen in Eddie the type of person he himself used to be, and decides that someone needs to find the truth and help Eddie's young widow. The young couple had shown such promise, had planned their life with such joy, that the tragedy of Eddie's death brings Hardy out of himself at last.

Style

Point of View

The novel *Dead Irish* by John Lescroart is written in the third person. This is an advantage to the reader, as one is privy to the internal thoughts and feelings of the main character, Dismas Hardy, as well as others. Though the reader is privy to everything Hardy deals with, only certain thoughts and feelings of other characters are revealed at times. As the novel is centered around the mystery of Eddie Cochran's death, this helps maintain a sense of mystery and suspense until the final outcome is revealed.

Because the novel also centers around the emotional growth of Dismas Hardy, the third person narration allows the reader insight into his reasons and feelings during his internal struggles. The novel is told in an even mix of dialogue and descriptive passages. The dialogue gives the reader a sense of each character and their motivations, as well as their relationships. The descriptive passages help clarify certain facts to the reader, as well as move the story forward.

Setting

The novel *Dead Irish* is set in and around modern San Francisco. Dismas Hardy had been a police officer in San Francisco, then an attorney, before leaving his former life behind and becoming a bartender at The Little Shamrock. The Shamrock is visited often, as Hardy works there, his best friend is the owner, and Hardy tends to spend time there in off hours, thinking over the facts in the Cochran case.

Several other locations are visited throughout San Francisco including Army Distributing, the company that Eddie Cochran had worked for, and Cruz Publishing, the site of Eddie's murder.

The novel follows the steps of Dismas Hardy as he tries to find the truth behind Eddie's death, as he moves around San Francisco. Visiting several locations and people while trying to make sense of the tragedy, there is no one definitive central location that stands out. Rather, the entire city of San Francisco is the back drop to the novel.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is relaxed and modern, providing the reader with insight into the type of characters within the novel and giving one a better understanding of the motivations within *Dead Irish*. The novel takes place over a relatively short period of time and is written to carry the reader along. The underlying suspense and mystery in the novel is expressed subtly, drawing the reader in and moving the story line along in an easily followed series of events.

The novel is written in such a way that it is easily understood and the reader is not bogged down by needless details. The plot is straight forward, and any sub plots are neatly tied in, preventing confusion.

Structure

Dead Irish is a novel comprised of thirty seven numbered chapters of varying length. Each chapter provides a key factor of the storyline, or provides detail that the reader will find helpful when the novel concludes. The novel moves along in a fast paced manner, with the main plot and sub plots tied together easily.

The main plot of the novel is the murder of Eddie Cochran and Dismas Hardy's investigation at the request of Moses McGuire. While checking into the facts surrounding Eddie's death, the sub plot regarding Hardy's internal struggle to avoid feeling and his slow reawakening to life are introduced. The downfall of the family priest into jealousy while Hardy finally rises above the grief that had consumed him is an entertaining and fast paced novel that is enjoyable from start to finish.

Quotes

"Goddamn it." Hardy laid his arm up over his eyes, shielding the sun. "Goddamn it, Eddie."

The problem was, why was he feeling now like he had to do something, anything at all, to make some sense out of this? He shouldn't have let Eddie, or Eddie and Frannie, get inside him. He hadn't seen it coming, so hadn't been prepared for it. He'd thought he'd kept them outside enough-acquaintances, not friends. Eddie was gone, and nothing was going to change that.

Still something nudged him, hurting, almost like a cramp, or a screw turning in his heart."

Chapter 3, pg. 33

" He sat at the stool behind the bar, time weighing a ton and not getting lighter. He didn't want to have that time to think. About the unaccustomed restlessness inside him. About ambition, where love had gone. Especially, he didn't want to think about the ridiculous idealist Eddie Cochran and his wife, Frannie. He didn't want to think that it might be important to help her in some way-maybe keep her from losing what he'd lost."

Chapter 4, pg. 41

"Insurance policy doesn't pay on a suicide, though there's a double indemnity on violent or accidental death. The policy was for a hundred grand, Diz, and I don't want to see Frannie screwed. She's already been through enough."

"Well," Hardy said, 'then let's hope he didn't kill himself."

Chapter 4, pg 46

"If there was one thing that separated the good cops from the very good, it was instinct. You didn't want to overdo it, Griffin knew, and ignore evidence, but every once in a while a situation came up that seemed to point in an obvious direction and your instinct made you stop and reevaluate."

Chapter 5, page 51

"So official cooperation wasn't likely to be forthcoming, Hardy thought as he drove out to the Mission District. And also, which he didn't understand at all, it seemed to be getting to be a better bet that they'd come up with a suicide, which would be a further disaster for Frannie. The fact that there was no apparent motive obviously wasn't making Griffin, at least, lose and sleep. In the city with the Golden Gate Bridge, suicide must not seem like all that much of an aberration."

Chapter 6, page 68

"He leaned back in the chair, still holding the gun in his right hand. Hardy was left-handed. Eddie was right-handed. The bullet had entered the left side of his head. So unless he picked it up wrong-handed, or somehow...No, it was ludicrous. "No way," he said, 'absolutely no way."

Chapter 7, pg 79



"Father Jame Cavanaugh leaned down and glanced casually at his reflection in the car window. With his hair, still all black, flopping Kennedy-like over an unlined forehead and piercing gray-blue eyes, he was uncomfortably aware that he could be a walking advertisement for the glory of the priesthood. His body was trim, his movements graceful. The cleft in his chin was a constant temptation to vanity."

Chapter 8, pg 81

"Hardy nodded. This was a first-time, maybe one-time offer. A good sign. It undoubtedly nagged at Glitsky too. Hardy forced himself to look back at the pictures of Ed, the gun maybe a foot from his right hand. Under his head, a large pool had formed, looking black under the camera's lights. He stared at the picture a long time, the body lifeless, lying on its side, perhaps two feet from the building. "

Chapter 11, page 126

"Anybody believes in pure accidents in this life isn't paying close enough attention." He sipped a cognac. "Maybe meeting here was an accident, but sitting here with me two hours later has the ring of volition."

Chapter 12, pg 135

"But Eddie didn't have much of a sense of humor about his notion of right and wrong. He hadn't actually spoken harshly to his dad, but Big Ed could tell he'd said the wrong thing. "Sometime," Eddie said, "there are just things you've got to do, even if everything in your life is rosy, or it's inconvenient."

Chapter 13, pg 147

"It was just a favor for Moses and Frannie, he had told himself at first, but that wasn't washing very well anymore. It had gotten inside him, this feeling that he might be doing something worthwhile. It reminded him of why he'd decided to join the police force and then go to law school what seemed about four lifetimes ago."

Chapter 27, pgs. 305 & 306

"Could God Forgive him? He had to believe He could. Could he ever forgive himself? No. He know that now. Killing Eddie had been far, far beyond the worst peccadilloes he'd indulged in over the years to ease the terrible burden of living the holy life, the unending boredom of sinlessness. He thought he'd grown inured to the twinges of conscience that the occasional sin, the moments of temporary weakness, had driven him to. But killing Eddie had been, if there was such a thing, unforgivable."

Chapter 31, pg 355

Topics for Discussion

Why does Moses McGuire want Dismas Hardy to look into the death of Eddie Cochran?

Why does Steven Cochran run away?

How is Linda Polk killed? What is the result?

Why does James Cavanaugh kill Eddie Cochran?

Why had Dismas Hardy withdrawn from life? What caused him to return?

Why is Rose killed? How does Cavanaugh stage the killing?

What happens to James Cavanaugh? Why?