

From Hell: Being a Melodrama in Sixteen Parts Study Guide

From Hell: Being a Melodrama in Sixteen Parts by Alan Moore

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Plot Summary

In Autumn of 1888 a series of five brutal murders shocks London. The victims, all poor female prostitutes, are murdered and then mutilated. The murders are attributed to Jack the Ripper, and the real identity of Jack the Ripper is William Gull, the Royal physician and a high-ranking Freemason, working on explicit orders from Queen Victoria to murder specific women to cover up an illicit affair carried on by her grandson Prince Albert Victor.

Prince Albert Victor leads a life steeped in perverse pleasures and sexual liaisons. Guided by his chaperon, Walter Sickert, an incognito Albert meets Annie Crook, a shop-girl, develops a sexual relationship with her, and then marries her in an Anglican church. She delivers a baby and then Queen Victoria learns of the entire illicit situation. Victoria's reaction is strident and Albert is effectively kidnapped from his incognito life. The infant daughter is sent into anonymity and Crook is spirited away to an insane asylum. There, she is operated upon by William Gull, physician to Victoria, so that her cognitive faculties are destroyed.

The situation seems under control until Sickert receives a blackmail note from Mary Kelly, his one-time lover and the friend of Crook. Kelly, working as a prostitute with her acquaintances Polly, Annie, and Liz, has fallen on hard times and needs money to pay off a local gang rumored to kill prostitutes who fail to pay the requisite protection money. Sickert, already marginalized for his involvement in Albert's perversions, turns the matter over to Victoria. Victoria once again summons her loyal physician Gull, and gives him explicit orders to murder the four women. Gull enlists the assistance of the streetwise but moronic John Netley, a coach driver. Netley locates the women and gives them some gift that serves to establish their identity by visual cues. He then propositions them later in the evening, claiming that Gull—waiting in the coach—desires their company for sexual exploits. When the women comply, Gull instead murders them and then mutilates their bodies.

After killing three of the four women, Netley misidentifies Kate as Mary Kelly, the sole survivor, and Gull kills Kate, believing his task accomplished. Several weeks later Netley learns of his mistake and takes Gull out for one final murderous visit. Gull calls on Kelly's apartment, finds her alone, murders her and butchers her body. The abominable murders spark a frenzy of public fear. The Freemasonic order steps in and selects Montague Druitt as a scapegoat—the hapless man is murdered and framed for the crimes. The Freemasonic order then holds court on Gull and condemns him to finish his days in an insane asylum under the assumed name of Thomas Mason. Gull lives the remainder of his few years experiencing visions of glory and rapture, and believes his spirit moves through time inspiring others to acts of murder and violence.



Prologue and Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4

Prologue and Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 Summary

In Autumn of 1888 a series of five brutal murders shocks London. The victims, all poor female prostitutes, are murdered and then mutilated. The murders are attributed to Jack the Ripper, and the real identity of Jack the Ripper is William Gull, the Royal physician, working on explicit orders from Queen Victoria to murder specific women to cover up an illicit affair carried on by her grandson Prince Albert Victor.

The prologue is set at Bournemouth, September 1923. Retired inspector Frederick Abberline and one-time psychic Robert Lees walk along the beach and chat about events. It is between the world wars and the dialogue seems modern. Lees reveals to Abberline that his psychic visions were all hoaxes but, curiously, came true anyway. Both men agree that they knew of the conspiracy to hide the identity of Jack the Ripper—they allowed the identity to be suppressed and were rewarded for it. Abberline notes that had they refused to comply they would instead have been killed.

Chapter One is set in London, July 1884. Artist Walter Sickert and his friend Prince Albert Victor are on the town; Albert is traveling incognito as Albert Sickert, Sickert's younger brother. The two young men enter a sweet shop on Cleveland Street and Sickert introduces Albert to Annie Crook, the shop-girl. Albert finds Crook attractive and flirts with her. Within days, Albert and Crook are pursuing a sexual relationship; Chapter One, Page 3, Panes 1 through 7 illustrate the couple having sex, culminating in the Pane 7 explicit depiction of genital penetration. The months go by and Sickert often paints Mary Kelly, Crook's associate and his sometimes lover, sometimes doing nude portraits. Crook becomes pregnant. Albert and Crook then marry in St. Savior's Church—a legal union entered into over the protest of Sickert who realizes the potential implication; Crook delivers a daughter, Alice Margaret, on April 18, 1885—legal potential heir to the throne. Sometime later Sickert, Kelly, Crook, and Alice travel together to France, Crook saddened because Albert is putatively away on business and thus unable to join them. During 1888, Kelly tends Alice while Albert and Crook spend time together. Kelly meets Sickert just as several official looking men are seen forcible to haul Albert out of Crook's rooms, and Kelly overhears them refer to Albert as "your Highness."

Chapter Two begins at Limehouse Cut, July 1827. Several flash-forward items are presented as William Gull and his father travel through Limehouse Cut, a long tunnel waterway, on a barge. Gull hopes that he will have a difficult and special life but his father urges him to accept what God offers. Later, Gull's father dies and he grows up largely alone, cared for by his mother Elizabeth. He is obviously an unsentimental boy. As a young man he goes to medical school where he excels, and he joins the Freemasons. Gull marries Susan Anne Dacre Lacy in 1848. A few years later he runs a women's lunatic asylum where he becomes a peer of his one-time mentor Dr. James Hinton. The two men spend many years taking early morning walks through the back



streets of Whitechapel, on the way to work. Gull also becomes an expert on London architecture and demonstrates a particular fondness for the work of Nicholas Hawksmoor. On one occasion Hinton mentions his son's Howard's recent pamphlet about the so-called fourth dimension. Hinton explains that Howard believes seemingly unrelated events may in fact be a series of closely-related events projecting through time on an arc. Hinton explains that an event happening in 1788 could be followed by another event 50 years later, a third event 25 years later, a fourth event 12 years later, and so forth—seemingly independent events, they are all following the same time-trajectory-curve through the fourth dimension. By 1870 Gull has moved high in the ranks of Freemasonry and is therefore called to attend upon an ailing Prince Albert Victor.

During the course of treatment—apparently for syphilis—Gull meets with Queen Victoria, also a Freemason. Shortly thereafter Hinton dies. Gull continues his career and meets several people including Joseph Carey Merrick, more commonly known as the Elephant Man. Then, c. 1887, Gull suffers an apparent stroke—it is referred to as a heart-stroke—during which he experiences a vivid vision. He sees Hinton, his father, Hawksmoor, and then Jahbulon, the great Masonic deity. He recovers from his collapse and is then summoned again to confer with Queen Victoria. She explains that Albert has had an illicit affair and legal marriage culminating in a daughter. She tells Gull he must take care of Crook. Gull, ever the queen's man, meets and briefly confers with John Netley, Albert's coach driver. Gull then has Crook committed to his women's lunatic asylum and operates on her, removing her thyroid which causes her to become mentally deranged.

Chapter Three is set on Cleveland Street, London, August 1888. Kelly meets Sickert unannounced. They are obviously estranged and Kelly has been caring for Alice for four months. She suggests that she has reasoned out what has happened. She also says that she has married Joe Barrett. After leaving Alice with Sickert, Kelly returns to Whitechapel and works as a prostitute. She meets her friend Liz Stride at the Britannia. Stride reminisces about her childhood days in Sweden where she had lived on a farm. As a girl of about 17 to 20 years old she had been a live-in nanny and also sexual partner of the home's father. She has since been involved with a few men, including John Stride, but now works as a prostitute and lives with a man named Michael Kidney. The pair is joined by Annie Chapman, informally known as Dark Annie, and Mary Nicholls, informally known as Polly. They tell them that a local gang—the Nichol Mob—has demanded increased payment for so-called protection. The four women have been ordered to pay four pounds sterling. Polly then recounts a lengthy and persistent nightmare while the other women fret about how to raise so much money. Kelly then decides that they could blackmail Sickert for the money. The four leave the bar referring to themselves as "the four whores of the Apocalypse" (Chapter 3, Page 15, Pane 7). Meanwhile, Sickert takes Alice to her grandparent's home where her grandfather believes Crook's madness was caused by his sexual abuse of her as a young girl and concludes that Alice must be his incestuous granddaughter.

Chapter Four is set at Brook Street, London, August 1888. Sickert receives the blackmail letter and takes it to Alexandra; Alexandra conveys it to Queen Victoria. Queen Victoria summons Gull, tells him about the situation, and orders him to take care



of the four women. Gull, unacquainted with the poverty-stricken society of Whitechapel, enlists the aid of Netley. Gull then takes Netley on an enormous tour of greater London. They visit many famous places and Gull issues exact directions to follow a certain route. He maps the route they take on a London map and it creates a gigantic pentagram approximately centered upon Whitechapel. Gull delivers a lengthy and complex monologue about various subjects, including much architectural history of London. He also explains the history of an inferred societal power shift from rule by women to rule by men and states his intention of strengthening the rule by men. Much of this dialogue is couched in mystical terminology. The men break for lunch but the fine food makes Netley sick. As their drive continues, Gull explains the Royal commission to kill four women to protect the crown; Netley obviously has no problem with this even though he is none too bright. Gull expounds that his work of killing the women will be merely the tip of the iceberg of the great work of his life—he believes he is divinely inspired, sanctioned, and propelled. At the end of the huge journey the two men look at the map with the pentagram, and Gull reminisces about his mighty vision during his heart-stroke, about one year previous.

Prologue and Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 Analysis

The Prologue (8 pages) is entitled "The old men on the shore." Chapter 1 (14 pages, the shortest chapter in the graphic novel) is entitled "The affections of young Mr. S." Chapter 2 (34 pages) is entitled "A state of darkness." Chapter 3 (21 pages) is entitled "Blackmail or Mrs. Barrett." Chapter 4 (39 pages) is entitled "'What doth the Lord require of thee?'"

These introductory chapters establish the setting and introduce nearly all of the primary characters in the graphic novel. The prologue also introduces the concept of a grand conspiracy to hide the identity of Jack the Ripper. The action of the prologue is continued in the epilogue, and thus Abberline's and Lee's visits bracket the graphic novel's contents. The two men, from the vantage point of many years, reminisce about the murders. Note the chronology of the introductory chapters, because the material is not presented in chronological order. For example, Chapter Two occurs, primarily, before Chapter One.

The motive force behind the Jack the Ripper crimes and cover-up conspiracy are established in these opening chapters. Prince Albert Victor, potential heir to the throne of England, pursues a life incognito, having sex with—and indeed marrying—shop-girls and pursuing other sexual perversions. He is enabled in this by his confidant Sickert, an artist who apparently enjoys the support of Albert's mother, Alexandra, but not that of Albert's grandmother, Queen Victoria. Albert's marriage to the shop-girl Annie Crook is conducted in an Anglican Church and is thus legally binding—the resultant child, Alice, is a legitimate heir to the throne. Victoria will not countenance such disregard for propriety, and has Albert seized and somewhat disciplined. As a sop to Albert's conscience, Victoria agrees that Crook will not be killed outright. Instead, she is sent to Gull's asylum and operated on in such a way as to destroy her mind. Gull demonstrates

himself to be a reliable man for such actions. The child survives only because it eludes capture by happenstance. Sickert then delivers it to Crook's parents' house.

However, Crook's friend Kelly overhears Albert being referred to by royal title and eventually deduces what must have occurred. At first she is merely disgusted but later, finding herself in need of money, she attempts to exchange her knowledge into cash via blackmail. Sickert informs Victoria who again turns to Gull. Thus, the murders are directly commissioned by Victoria to protect the throne of England. Gull's background is fully developed but his involvement in the murders seems to be based upon a mystical vision experienced during a heart-stroke, or stroke, about one year earlier. Always a devoted Mason, Gull seems to believe himself selected as an agent of God to carry out a grand scheme of violence that will presumably ensure that male-dominated societal norms will continue. After Gull's deep characterization, four of his five future victims are introduced and receive some characterization. The background of Netley is also mentioned—the one-time driver of Albert, Netley is enlisted by Gull to be his confidant and assistant. Gull then plans his overarching crime—he calls it a grand architecture—by, in effect, beginning a prolonged ritual on his drive around London. This merges, in Gull's mind, with the theory of an arc of time as initially suggested to him by his friend Hinton. Gull sees his upcoming actions as one event in a great arc of time; thus the current murders he considers to be only the tip of the iceberg. This conceptualization is returned to in later chapters of the graphic novel.



Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 Summary

Chapter Five begins in Braunau, Upper Austria, August 1888. Alois and Klara Hitler have sexual intercourse and as Alois ejaculates Klara has a terrible vision of blood flowing out of a chapel. It is the moment of Adolf Hitler's conception. Later, Gull wakes and readies for the day. Later, Netley tells Gull that he has identified four friends of Crook. Gull tells Netley to find the women and mark them in some way by making a gift of clothing or some other token to them; then Netley is to return and fetch Gull in the early evening. Gull then calls upon Sir Charles Warren, a fellow Mason and the chief of Scotland Yard, and informs him that some murders will take place in Whitechapel. Warren is shocked but Gull is clearly ascendant in the relationship.

That evening Liz, Annie, and Polly sit at the Britannia and drink. They talk about an unfortunate acquaintance, Martha Tabram, who was recently murdered—presumably for failing to pay protection money to the Nichol Mob. Liz and Annie then leave and work as prostitutes. Netley approaches Polly and gives her a gift of a new bonnet. Meanwhile Gull eats dinner, shaves, dresses, packs up an amputation kit complete with Lister knife, and then leaves home when Netley arrives with his coach. As they drive to Whitechapel, Gull paints grapes with laudanum. The men locate Polly in her new bonnet, and then pick her up in the coach. Gull offers her grapes which she greedily eats. Polly recounts her sad life story and then begins to succumb to the laudanum. Gull strangles her outside of the window of Merrick, entirely unaware, as a sort of offering of good luck. Gull then carries the body on his back to Buck's Row. He hands Netley the Lister knife and tells him to slash the throat of the body. Netley makes a tentative hack. Gull takes the knife and demonstrates the proper technique—left-to-right and very forceful. Gull then eviscerates the body and removes a portion of the uterus. Netley and Gull then drive away. Later some men pass and assume Polly is drunk and passed out. Later still the police arrive and determine she is dead. She is taken to the morgue and only then is it discovered that she has been gutted. Gull goes home and climbs into bed, tenderly kissing his wife after committing his first murder.

Chapter 6 begins in Great Scotland Yard, August 31, 1888. Sir William Chapman assigned Abberline to the Whitechapel murder. Abberline is distressed at being sent back to Whitechapel. He attends the inquest on September 1 and it is full of confusing and contradictory testimony. Unaware that a vicious serial murderer is on the loose, many attendees find the confused testimony humorous. Later in the day Abberline accompanies Polly's ex-husband, son, and father to the morgue for identification. The men are uninterested and sanctimonious. Over the next few days Abberline confers with Godley and Thick, his two assistants, about the murder. Thick believes the local talk about the murderer being someone known as Leather Apron while Abberline and Godley focus on other suspects. The crime scene becomes something of a minor attraction. Abberline and others attend Polly's funeral a few days later. A few days later still Abberline meets Kelly in a bar by happenstance—she introduces herself, oddly, as



Emma. They strike up a conversation; Abberline finds her working-class roots attractive and treats her like a lady instead of like a prostitute. Elsewhere, two newspaper men—Best and Gibbs—discuss yellow journalism and speculate on the best way to increase newspaper sales.

Meanwhile, Annie and her friend Liza meet a man named Harry for a drink and then get into a fight. Annie loses and her face suffers accordingly, plus she is very ill. Annie, Liz, and Kelly then meet, drink, and talk. They conclude the Nichol Mob murdered Polly and determine to redouble their efforts to get money. Later Annie goes to the house of a man and bathes him and manually brings him to orgasm. A still sick Annie staggers around Whitechapel looking for customers. She is met by Netley who gives her a new kerchief. Later, Gull and Netley pick Annie up, feed her grapes, and take her to Hanbury Street. Gull and Annie walk down an alley and Gull looks through a window to see a disturbing vision. Gull then strangles Annie and butchers her. She is found in the morning and Abberline views the crime scene. Thick tracks down and arrests Jack Pizer, claiming he is Leather Apron. Abberline later attends Annie's inquest and the mood is very serious. Then, Best and Gibbs write and deliver a letter claiming to be from Jack the Ripper—it begins "Dear Boss" and ends "Jack the Ripper," giving Gull his infamous pseudonym and starting a craze of fear that grips Whitechapel.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 Analysis

Chapter 5 (42 pages) is entitled "The Nemesis of neglect." Chapter 6 (27 pages) is entitled "September," and Chapter 7 (41 pages) is entitled "A torn envelope."

Note the artwork of Gull leaving and entering his house before and after the first murder. The artwork is presented stylistically akin to a watercolor, inferring a very tranquil—perhaps dreamlike or trance-like—for Gull. This contrasts markedly with the black ink on white drawing style used elsewhere in the chapter and graphic novel. It also mirrors Gull's state of mind of apparently going about a daily routine interrupted by a brutal act of murder. After slaughtering and eviscerating one woman, he returns home and gently kisses his sleeping wife. Note also how the two murders in this section—Polly and Annie—are similar but escalating. Gull's first murder shows a fairly tentative butchery; he first tries to have Netley do it and only when Netley fails does Gull slash Polly's throat. He then quickly removes a portion of her body. He is much more forceful in his murder of Annie and leaves her corpse mutilated and arranged in a bizarre and ritual order. The strange fugue suffered by Gull in the alley is explained in Appendix I—in modern times a man living in the same alley reported seeing a woman and a man, presumably ghosts, walking down the alley. The author has chosen to include that urban legend as reality, and to have Gull look forward through time while the tenant looks backward through time. This is an example of the "fourth dimension" time arc that Hinton suggests to Gull early in the graphic novel. Such events will repeat with increasing frequency. A similar event involves the conception of Adolf Hitler, here fictionally linked to the murders of Jack the Ripper by the same arc of time.



Polly and Annie both have occasion to relate their early life story just prior to being murdered—Annie to her murderer. Both of the women share a similar story of poverty, early childbirth, and early abandonment. Both have been seriously mistreated by intimate partners and both have become homeless and penniless, resorting to street prostitution as the only means of survival. Annie has a repetitive engagement with a man that she calls a pensioner, indicating he lives on a routine income, or pension. She bathes him and then sexually services him in exchange for some small amount. This pensioner is the only routine customer any of the women have, apparently—the rest of their customers are occasional and happenstance. It is quite evident that Whitechapel is a focus of prostitution and petty crime. The other major development of this section of the graphic novel consists of the yellow journalism surrounding the murder, here epitomized by Best and Gibbs—instead of reporting the news, they decide to create it.



Chapters 8 and 9

Chapters 8 and 9 Summary

Chapter 8 begins at Miller's Court, September 22, 1888. It has been some few days since the second murder and Kelly and Liz talk and drink at the Britannia. They exchange news—Liz and her partner, Kidney, have had a fight and Liz has been kicked out onto the street. Later, Abberline again meets Kelly in a bar and the two talk, both using an assumed identity. Abberline gives Kelly some money as a loan. He then returns to work and reviews the entire case. Kelly takes the money to the Nichol Mob and makes her protection payment—but is dismayed when they avow that they are not involved with the murder of her two friends. Several other events transpire simultaneously. Sickert and Albert travel in the country and talk. Albert feels responsible for recent events and Sickert tries to assuage the guilt by kissing him on the mouth. Sometime later Sir Charles Warren tells Gull that the murders must stop—Gull declines and Warren realizes the murders have been ordered by Victoria. Another prostitute named Kate Eddows and her boyfriend John Kelly have sex and then travel to the countryside to pick hops and earn a little money. After a refreshing break they return to the city and Eddows works as a prostitute, becoming very intoxicated one night, making a public display. She is arrested and gives her name as Jane Kelly. A policeman at the jail is a member of the Masons and mistakenly believes Kate is Kelly—the woman Gull is looking for. He looks for Gull to convey the information.

One night Netley locates Liz and gives her a flower. He then gives her grapes and she eats a few but spits them out, noting that they taste bad. Accompanied by Gull into an alleyway, Liz becomes frightened and tries to run away. Netley tackles her and drags her back into the alley where Gull murders her by slashing her throat. Gull then experiences a minor fugue, seemingly "remembering" that Liz is the victim that he did not mutilate, as if he is remembering the events from some time in the future. The Masonic cop then arrives and tells Gull that Kate—believed to be Kelly—is being released from prison shortly. Netley and Gull go to the prison and Netley picks up Kate in the coach, telling her Gull is interested in securing her services as a prostitute. Gull and Kate proceed to an alleyway and Gull viciously attacks her, hacking her down in cold blood. He then mutilates her body, cuts off her nose, and guts her. Believing his work is finished, Gull then appears very confused and wonders why there are only four victims while there should be five. Gull then writes a cryptic message on another wall and drops a blood-soaked cloth by it. When it is discovered the next day, Warren insists that it immediately be erased. In the early morning Kelly returns home and is told of Liz's and Kate's murder by her boyfriend.

Chapter 9 begins at Mitre Square on Sunday, September 30, 1888. Mass hysteria grips Whitechapel as a result of the so-called "double event," or double murder. Abberline visits the crime scene and—humorously—bumps into a young Aleister Crowley. Abberline then goes to the morgue for the autopsies and then to the inquests. Later, Victoria summons Gull, expresses appreciation for the murders but disapproves of the



violence involved. Gull claims to have been sending a message to revolutionary elements that their activities will not be tolerated in England, which seems to somewhat soothe Victoria. Leaving the meeting, Gull runs into Robert Lees, Victoria's psychic, and snubs him. Meanwhile Albert's conscience continues to bother him and he seeks solace in receiving homosexual oral sex delivered by his good friend and school chum Jem. Sometime later he even meets Kelly and warns her that she'll be killed within a few days; at least he offers her some money to ease the pain, though she declines. Sometime later Gull again treats Albert for syphilis.

Several days later Netley calls upon Gull and tells him that the last murder was a case of mistaken identity—Kate had given a false name. Mary Kelly, the fourth blackmailer, is still alive. Gull has Netley write a letter, stating that it is "from Hell," and delivers it to local law enforcement along with half of a human kidney. Meanwhile Kelly has surmised her days are limited and has gone on a prolonged drunken binge. During that time she sobers up enough to again meet Abberline who suggests that sometime in the near future they should have sex. Kelly agrees. Later, an inquest of Pizer, known as Leather Apron, is held and the man is released with the clear belief that he is not involved in the murders. Lees calls on Abberline and claims to have visionary knowledge about the murders, but Abberline is not very interested. Faced with mounting criticism, Warren resigns his position.

A drunken Kelly continues hard-drinking and riotous living. Seeking comfort, she turns to a series of ephemeral lesbian relationships—she tries to bring home girls to share with Joe, but he declines to engage in the various threesomes so Kelly kicks him out of the apartment. She then has sex with various women and continues to drink heavily, waiting for her turn to be murdered. Finally, Gull enters her apartment and strangles her just as she wakes up.

Chapters 8 and 9 Analysis

Chapter 8 (50 pages) is entitled "Love is enough" and Chapter 9 (60 pages, the longest chapter in the graphic novel) is entitled "From Hell." This section of the graphic novel presents the final three murders and explains why Kate was murdered even though she was uninvolved with the blackmail attempt. Kate's involvement is basically one of mistaken identity. Arrested for public intoxication in a humorous scene of drunken singing, Kate gives her name as Jane Kelly, using her significant other's surname. A policeman overhears this as Mary Kelly and conveys the news to Gull who therefore picks her upon her release from jail and murders her. This also explains why Liz's body is not mutilated—Gull's confused fugue is interrupted by the arriving policeman. This, coupled with Netley's desire to be away from the crime scene where there were possible witnesses, explains Gull's failure to mutilate the corpse. He makes up for it, though, by thoroughly hacking up Kate's body, even removing her nose and mutilating her face. This progression shows a clear escalation in violence as the murders continue.



Abberline's involvement with Kelly begins by chance as they meet in a bar. They meet a few times more over several weeks. Abberline presents himself as a saddle-maker and for unexplained reasons, Kelly introduces herself as Emma—perhaps a working name. Abberline explains he is married to a middle-class woman and finds her prudishness and lack of conversation troubling; he finds Kelly's lower class attitudes and talkative nature appealing. The relationship begins innocently but by their final meeting Abberline suggests the next time they meet it should be somewhere private—little does he know that their next meeting will in fact be in Kelly's bedroom. Note that Abberline does not realize that Kelly's mutilated body is that of "Emma" until c. July 1889.

Gull's message—"The Juwes are the men who will not be blamed for nothing" (Chapter 8, Page 46, Pane 4)—is cryptic to say the least. It is usually interpreted to indicate that the "Juwes" are responsible for the crime. To Gull, Juwes would be a Masonic term indicating the Masonic deities collectively—the Juwes being Jubelo, Jubela, and Jubelum. Warren apparently interprets the note as a Masonic confession and orders it destroyed immediately. Another common interpretation of the message has been that "Juwes" is a misspelling of "Jews," and that the message implicates the murderer was a Jew. Within the graphic novel, both meanings are held by various characters. In any event, Gull attempts to mislead with both the message and the later "From Hell" letter, delivered in Netley's handwriting. The letter claims to be sent from Hell, informing the title of the graphic novel.

During Chapter Nine, Albert is presented as a whiny and ineffectual bum. He knows that his actions have caused the disappearance of Crook and the violent murder of three women, and he responds by cavorting around with his homosexual friends, reminiscing about their homosexual adventures during college, and picking up the occasional sexual favor in the process. His one brave act is to tell Kelly that she'll be killed in the next day or two, confirming what she already knows. However, he doesn't try to do anything about it—in the graphic novel he is presented as an entirely despicable and regrettable human being. Note that Lees' initial attempt to deliver 'psychic evidence' to Abberline is here rejected, as is an early suggestion that fingerprinting could be used to gather evidence: Abberline humorously dismisses the fingerprinting idea as fantastic. The discussion about the differing coroners and inquest locales derives from the various locations of murder—in close proximity to each other but across a legal line of jurisdiction.

Note the depiction of a semi-nude and recumbent Mary Kelly on Chapter 9, Page 17, Pane 1. This pose is exactly as described at the later murder scene, sans the booze bottle. Here she is presented as a highly sexualized woman, gripped by sexual frenzy and alcohol, and attempting to seduce her mate into bed. The pose resembles the crime scene photograph of her mutilated body; compare the image here with that of Chapter 10, Page 18, Pane 4 and—especially—with that of Appendix II, Page 6, Pane 5. Kelly's vigorous pursuit of lesbian relationships in the days leading up to her death are an apparent attempt to find something pleasurable; as a working prostitute she does not turn to men for solace. Joe, invited to participate, reacts negatively when he sees Kelly deriving sexual pleasure from Julia rather than himself.



Chapters 10, 11, and 12

Chapters 10, 11, and 12 Summary

Chapter Ten continues the concluding action of Chapter Nine, and is set at 13 Miller's Court, November 9, 1888. Gull murders Kelly by strangling her; her cries for help are heard but ignored by an upstairs neighbor and they are cut short by Gull. After the murder Gull sits and rests and then begins to mutilate the corpse. He has a series of fugues, or visions, beginning with a conversation with the recent Hinton, reminiscent of their earlier conversation during the illicit operation on Crook. Gull continues to butcher the corpse and then believes he is in an operating theater with various onlookers. Gull's next vision places him in a modern office building where women with short hair styles and miniskirts walk around—Gull is horrified by their flagrant display of sexuality. He has various other minor visions as he butchers Kelly, burns various clothes left by Julia, and then burns Kelly's heart. He collects the ashes from her heart into a handkerchief. The slaughter lasts for hours and completely ruins Kelly's body, but Gull finds her an object of love and devotion, at one point hugging her bloody corpse in a passionate embrace. Gull then leaves the room, scatters Kelly's heart's ashes to the winds, and returns home.

Chapter Eleven presents two simultaneous series of events. In the first, Kelly's corpse is discovered and the police are summoned. Abberline, dressed up in finery to meet "Emma" for their sexual union, enters the room but fails to recognize the corpse as Emma, even as he concludes their agreed upon meeting in a private place—her room. Even so, Abberline feels that something evil and monstrously bad has occurred. After investigating the crime scene, Abberline goes to the Britannia and waits for Emma. When she does not arrive he checks with the barkeep and discovers a letter has been left for him—it says she must go away and cannot return, it expresses sorrow that their meeting was missed, and it says goodbye. Meanwhile James Monro replaces Warren. Monro and his Masonic friends decide the murders have elicited such a frenzy of public attention that a scapegoat must be identified. They select one Montague John Druitt. On November 12 Abberline attends the final inquest and listens to various conflicting testimonies. He subsequently re-interviews several witnesses, a few of whom insist that they met Kelly hours after her murder.

Simultaneously, events surrounding Druitt are presented in interleaved panes. Druitt is a barrister and school teacher, and lives alone in an apartment above a relative of Gull. Druitt is extremely introverted and has no apparent friends or connections. His mother is an invalid. Druitt is a closet homosexual, perhaps unaware of the full measure of his own orientation. He is an ardent fan of the game of cricket and coaches the boys of his school. He becomes infatuated with one of the boys and on one occasion kisses him on the mouth. Ostensibly for this action, but really because of Masonic influence, he is discharged from his job. Later, also because of Masonic influence, he is invited to a homosexual party at a Cleveland Street brothel where he meets numerous famous homosexual people. He feels ill at ease, however, and quickly departs. His meager life



destroyed by his scandalous discharge, Druitt meets an acquaintance who is also a Mason. The acquaintance gets Druitt drunk and then has him write down his life's problems in a format that resembles a suicide note. The acquaintance then drugs him and turns him over to the two policemen who are also Masons. They carry the passed out Druitt the scapegoat to a river, put bricks into his pockets, and throw him in. Days later, Druitt's body is pulled out of the river and he is positively identified, based on falsified data, as Jack the Ripper, a suicide over remorse of his heinous crimes.

Chapter Twelve begins in Buckingham Palace, November 29, 1888. Lees has visions for Victoria and tells them of them. He then leaves the palace and remembers Gull's social snub. Lees again goes to Abberline and fakes a fainting spell and psychic vision in the police office. At wit's end, Abberline agrees to follow-up on the vision. Lees leads Abberline to Gull's house, pretending to be ignorant of the resident. Abberline and Lees enter the house and state their reason for coming—Mrs. Gull is angry and horrified but also strangely compliant. Gull then enters the room and listens to their charges. He then confirms that he is, indeed, responsible for the murders. He escorts the men to the front door and denounces Lees as a fake. The two men immediately proceed to their police superiors—also Masons—who order them never again to divulge the information. A Masonic trial is quickly convened to hear Gull's testimony. An insulted Gull informs the assembled Masonic masters that they are beneath him—that no man is capable of judging the mighty work which he has performed. During the trial itself Gull has another series of fugues or visions. The assembled Masons decide that he must be silenced; they announce his untimely death and bury a coffin full of rocks. Gull is then forcibly incarcerated in a madhouse as Thomas Mason. He spends the next many months having extended visions of his greatness and power.

Chapters 10, 11, and 12 Analysis

Chapter 10 (36 pages) is entitled "The best of all tailors." Chapter 11 (48 pages) is entitled "The unfortunate Mr. Druitt," and Chapter 12 (28 pages) is entitled "The apprehensions of Mr. Lees." Gull's various fugues during Kelly's evisceration are often related to other episodes in the graphic novel. For example, his operating theater fugue is comparable to William Hogarth's *The Reward of Cruelty*, a painting featured in Chapter Nine, Page 16, Pane 7. His imaginary discussion with Hinton is reminiscent of their earlier discussion during the mutilation of Crook. His vision of the modern world is reminiscent of another vision of the modern world at a previous murder. Gull's butchery of Kelly is very symbolic and ritualized, and his scattering of her heart's ashes is a Masonic tradition. Note that Chapter 12 contains very little dialogue, and what is present consists of Gull's imaginary conversations with people he sees in visions. The majority of the action consists of explicit images of Gull's butchering Kelly's corpse. He arranges her organs and body parts in a symbolic way about the body, using one of her severed breasts as a pillow for her nearly denuded head. The chapter presents a subtle and perverse sexuality as Gull embraces the bloody and flensed corpse of Kelly. As he releases the ashes of her cremated heart, Gull obviously believes he has concluded some ritual or spell that will guarantee male ascendancy in the future, subjugate female



power, and repudiate the supposed threat of Illuminism to Masonic organization. Then again, he is obviously just a nutty old man performing murders for the Queen.

Note the symbolism of Kelly being Gull's fifth victim—the ritual spell he has been constructing is based on a pentagram; poignantly not a six-pointed Jewish star. Even though he was told by Netley before any of the murders that there were four women, Gull seemed confused when he believed there were only four victims. Thus, Kate's mistaken identity seems to fuel Gull's vision by providing a fifth victim. Kelly becomes the final victim and completes the ritual. Abberline is mystically drawn to the melted teapot in which Kelly's heart was partially cremated; note that the melted teapot is visually very similar to the face of Merrick whom Gull interpreted as a sort of minor symbol of good fortune.



Chapters 13 and 14, Epilogue, Maps, and Appendices 1 and 2

Chapters 13 and 14, Epilogue, Maps, and Appendices 1 and 2 Summary

Chapter thirteen begins at Cleveland Street, July 1889. Months have passed and the gruesome crimes have faded into recent history. Abberline and others are staking out the homosexual brothel on Cleveland Street. Because various royals and aristocrats have visited the brothel, Gull surmises that nothing official will ever happen—he is experienced in the ways of royal cover-ups. On a whim, he talks with the shop-boy of the sweet shop where Annie Crook had worked years earlier. The shop-boy relates the whole conspiracy theory regarding the royal baby; Abberline dismisses it as so much innuendo. However, in an epiphany he then asks if the name of the royal child's temporary caregiver was Mary Kelly—Abberline has suddenly figured out the entire conspiracy. He confronts his superiors in the police force, and his suspicions are confirmed. He is told that if he makes the information public he will be killed; if he and Lees keep the information secret they will be rewarded. Abberline resigns from the force and accepts a handsome pension. He goes home and packs his things to move.

Chapter Fourteen begins at St. Mary's Asylum at Islington, 1896. It has been several years since the murders, and Thomas Mason's health is failing and his death is approaching. While he dies the nurse and the orderly awaiting his last breath pass the time by having sex in his room, a few feet away from him—a bizarrely fitting scenario. As Gull's spirit departs his body he experiences a prolonged and mighty vision, believing himself to travel through vast distances of time and space to inspire many others to acts of murder and violence. He first experiences in vision a trip through the Limehouse Cut with his father on a barge. Next he causes a rain of blood in the Mediterranean and a rain of ink at the Cape of Good Hope, both in 1888—blood and ink being a fitting metaphor for his actions. Next he visits various obelisks, bridges, and structures around Greater London, culminating in a tour through a modern office building where the women's hairstyles and miniskirts outrage and frighten him. He views his great London pentagram from high in the sky; he calls upon William Blake and that poet sees him as a scaly monster, a vision that inspires his later artwork *The Ghost of a Flea*. He is then seen as a ghost near the Tower of London in 1954, and next is seen as a blue rectangle of light near the Tower of London in 1817. Gull then relives the experience of discussing the fourth dimension with his friend Hinton, many years previously. Gull then embarks on a great parabolic trajectory, traveling through time inspiring acts of violence and murder. He appears in 1788 and inspires a man known as "The Monster;" he appears in 1888 as Jack the Ripper; he appears in 1938 and inspires a man known as "The Halifax Slasher;" he appears in 1963 and inspires the murders committed by Ian Brady and Myra Hindley; and finally, he appears in 1975 and inspires Peter Sutcliffe, also known as the "Yorkshire Ripper." Gull then travels through time and



infects the dreams of Robert Louis Stevenson, inspiring his book *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; he appears again to Blake; he appears as a floating, disembodied head to Ian Brady, also known as the "Moors Murderer." He again visits Sutcliffe, then appears to Netley, startling him while driving the coach, causing him to fall from the seat and dash his brains out upon the corner of an obelisk. Gull then makes a final visit to a woman in 1904 or 1905 in Ireland—she scolds him off as a devil and gathers in her four daughters—Anne, Katey, Lizzie, and Pol—for safety; the woman is perhaps Alice, the daughter of Albert and Crook. Gull then dies.

The Epilogue once again sees Abberline and Lees as old men walking on a beach and poking at the decomposing bodies of dead gulls. They travel to the Wimborne Cemetery near Bournemouth during September 1923 and visit the grave of Druitt, deceased since December 4, 1888. They sit on a bench to rest, argue politics, and rehash previous events. Abberline states that the three of them—himself, Lees, and Druitt—are additional victims of Jack the Ripper. Lees ends the graphic novel's body by picking up the body of a dead gull, examining it, and dropping it again on the beach. The graphic novel includes two maps—one of London and its environs, and one of the sites of the five murders and some architectural locations. The maps are not detailed enough to be useful in any except the most general way.

Appendix I presents a great deal of page-by-page textual commentary about the construction and rationale of the graphic novel. It also lists many sources of inspiration and makes it clear that the graphic novel is derived from four primary sources: Stephen Knight's *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*; Theodore Dyke Acland's "William Withey Gull, A Biographical Sketch;" and Paul Begg's *Jack the Ripper: The Uncensored Facts and Jack the Ripper A-Z*. Secondary sources include Knight's *The Brotherhood*; C. Howard Hinton's 1884 pamphlet "What is the Fourth Dimension?"; Donald Rumbelow's *The Complete Jack the Ripper*; Jean Overton Fuller's *Sickert and the Ripper Crimes*; Kerry Downes' *Hawksmoor*; and Melvin Harris' *The Ripper File*. Many other minor sources are noted. Appendix II establishes a basic timeline of the major theories surrounding the identity and motive of Jack the Ripper. It is presented in graphic format and includes some risible material such as the portrayal of Jack the Ripper investigators as people trying to catch gulls with nets.

Chapters 13 and 14, Epilogue, Maps, and Appendices 1 and 2 Analysis

Chapter Thirteen (18 pages) is entitled "A return to Cleveland Street." Chapter 14 (27 pages) is entitled "Gull, ascending." The epilogue (11 pages) is entitled "The old men on the shore." The maps show the sites of the murders. Appendix I (42 pages) includes textual annotations for preceding chapters and Appendix II (24 pages) is entitled "Dance of the gull catchers." This segment of the novel effectively concludes the various narrative threads; the Cleveland Street male brothel is shut down, Abberline finally surmises the entire horrible truth, and Abberline and Lees are offered a carrot or a stick—they both select the carrot, setting up their later relationship portrayed in the prologue and epilogue.



Chapter Fourteen presents Gull's trajectory through the fourth dimension—the conceptualization of time initially proposed by Hinton's son and discussed in Chapter Two. The idea is that seemingly random events are connected by a sublime chord, or arc, that traverses time in such a way that it becomes obfuscated from traditional means of investigation. Hinton suggests that the arc must become increasingly compressed, such that an initial event would link to a second event about 100 years away, a third event a further 50 years away, a fourth event a further 25 years away, a fifth event a further 12 years away, and so forth. Gull believes himself to be a mighty spirit, perhaps akin to a god, that traverses this arc such that his existence as William Gull is the second event on the arc—thus, his trajectory through time is anchored at 1788 ("The Monster"), 1888 ("Jack the Ripper"); 1938 ("The Halifax Slasher"); 1963 (Ian Brady); and 1975 ("The Yorkshire Ripper"). Along the way he makes various other minor stops to horrify or inspire other acts of violence or murder. Fortunately for Gull, his act of great architecture of mayhem happens to coincide with Victoria's need to have four girls murdered.

The two appendices provide invaluable insight into the graphic novel and some of the more particular events included. The relevant information has been presented previously in the appropriate segment of this review. Appendix II chronologically enumerates major events in the history of the investigation of Jack the Ripper, including: Walter Sickert's 1890s tales and artwork; Aliester Crowley's c. 1929 claims of secret knowledge and related objects; Leonard Matters' 1929 book *The Mysteries of Jack the Ripper* and subsequent hypothesis that the perpetrator must have been a physician; Colin Wilson and others' theories; Jean Dorsenne's 1935 book *Jack L'Eventreur*; William Stewart's 1939 book *Jack the Ripper*; William Tufnell LeQuex's 1923 book *Things I know about Kings, Celebrities, and Crooks*; Donald McCormick's c. 1945 book *The Identity of Jack the Ripper*; Tom Cullen's 1965 book *Autumn of Terror*; Robin Odell's 1965 book *Jack the Ripper: In Fact and Fiction*; Thomas Stowell's 1970 book *Jack the Ripper - A Solution?*, which first suggests Prince Albert Victor's involvement and causes an outcry resulting in a retraction; Daniel Farson's 1972 book *Jack the Ripper*; a 1973 BBC documentary that first suggests the involvement of Freemasonry; and Stephen Knight's 1976 book *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*.

Also included is a summation of various denials, retractions, counter-denials, and withdrawn retractions. The author and artists then begin to work on the graphic novel in 1988 and the whirlwind continues. Jean Overton Fuller publishes her 1990 *Sickert and the Ripper Crimes*; Jack the Ripper's putative diary is published and denounced as fraudulent; and so forth—the conclusion is that the grounds are so muddied it is impossible to ever know anything much about the case with any kind of certainty.



Characters

Dr. William Gull - Jack the Ripper

William Gull is the principle character and antagonist of the graphic novel; he is today remembered by his nom de plume of Jack the Ripper. Gull was born 1816 and died 1890. As a child he helped his father work on a river barge, the family business. After his father's death Gull demonstrated a keen interest in natural sciences, received early schooling and medical instruction, and quickly became a minor celebrity in the medical field. Simultaneously, Gull is admitted to the secret society of the Freemasons and enjoys a meteoric rise to the highest ranks. Gull's life is thus marked by success, wealth, and access to power. His reputation is sealed when he is selected as Queen Victoria's royal physician and entrusted with the treatment of Prince Albert Victor's syphilis—primarily because of his Masonic ties.

This atypical but successful existence ends c. 1887 when Gull suffer a stroke—the event is referred to as a heart-stroke in the graphic novel. Gull collapses and has a great vision of several personages, culminating in a vision of Jahbulon, the great Masonic deity. Gull interprets the vision to signify the beginning of his life's great work. He is subsequently entrusted by Victoria to operate on a woman to destroy her mind in order to keep a royal secret. Gull's lack of ethics is appreciated by Victoria who subsequently calls on Gull to perform several murders—again to hide royal secrets. Gull accepts the commission with delight, noting that the murders happen to coincide with a great, vast Masonic ritual he must complete. Gull performs the murders with gusto and incorporates them into a great magical ritual intended to ensconce male ascendancy for the foreseeable future. Gull interprets his life as a great arc that proceeds beyond the limits of time and experiences numerous visions that corroborate his belief.

After performing the grisly murders Gull angers his Masonic superiors by denigrating them; they forcibly commit him to a mental asylum where he languishes for a few years before his death. During this period he continues to experience a series of visions and believes that his spirit travels through time, inspiring acts of murder and violence. Gull is a fictionalized version of a historic person that some have suggested as the real Jack the Ripper. He is a fascinating and complex, but utterly abominable, character.

Inspector Frederick Abberline

Inspector Frederick Abberline is the law enforcement investigator assigned to work the Whitechapel murders. He is assisted by policemen Godley and Thick, two ironically named investigators. Abberline is the main protagonist in the graphic novel but forms a very unequal counterbalance to the malignant evil of William Gull. Prior to the novel Abberline has been promoted a few times and is happy to have escaped the Whitechapel beat. He is sent back with much trepidation and subsequently executes his duty with determination but a muted desperation. Abberline recounts his history on a



few occasions: he married early to a sick woman who died; he remarried a middle class woman and lives in a somewhat unsatisfying relationship. He has little thought outside his job and enjoys an easy camaraderie with nearly everyone he meets. Abberline investigates all of the murders and gradually decides that there must be some conspiracy to cover up relevant facts. Prior to her death, Mary Kelly happens to meet Abberline and the two characters strike up an unlikely friendship. At their final meeting Abberline proposes advancing the relationship to a sexual stage and Kelly agrees, but the wish is never expressed. The next time Abberline sees Kelly she is murdered and butchered. He does not recognize her, however, and never learns that the prostitute he knew as Emma was one and the same as Mary Kelly. Abberline finally meets Robert Lees, a psychic, who claims to have psychic information about the murders. Lees leads Abberline to the house of William Gull and Gull confesses his guilt. Abberline is subsequently ordered to cover up the information and complies. Years later, Abberline learns additional facts that lead him to realize the murders were carried out by royal decree; he thereupon quits the police force. Late in life Abberline continues a friendship with Lees and the two men frequently meet to rehash the events of the Whitechapel murders. Within the graphic novel Abberline functions primarily as an observer—he is ineffectual as a detective.

John Charles Netley

John Charles Netley is a coach driver and was probably born c. 1860. During c. 1884 he works as Prince Albert Victor's coachman while Albert is adventuring incognito with Walter Sickert. It is unclear whether Netley knows Albert's real identity, but in any event he learns of it and remains entirely discreet. He is portrayed as nearly illiterate, completely uneducated, and fairly stupid—all traits that make him an excellent accomplice in nefarious undertakings. When Queen Victoria commissions William Gull to commit several murders, she suggests he obtain an accomplice familiar with the seedy life of Whitechapel: Gull selects Netley. Netley subsequently seeks out the victims and then solicits them for Gull. When they accompany Netley he leads them to Gull who then murders them. On a few occasions, Netley assists directly in the murdering but for the most part he is a spectator only. Gull has Netley pen the famous "From Hell" letter so that it appears to have been written by a near-illiterate, as indeed it was. Although Netley does not like being involved in the brutal murders, he does no more than complain about his involvement to Gull. After the murders, Netley returns to the life of a typical coachman. He dies when Gull's ghost startles him; he falls from his coach and smashes his head against the corner of an obelisk.

Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence

Prince Albert Victor is a fictionalized representation of a historic person. In the graphic novel he is portrayed as a pervert, seeking all types of sexual liaisons and suffering from frequent infection with venereal diseases including syphilis. Albert prefers to travel incognito in the company of his chaperone Walter Sickert. When the two men are not having sex with each other they pursue male prostitutes, female prostitutes, old college



friends, or the occasional shop-girl. It is during one such foray that Albert meets Annie Crook and apparently falls in love with her—sort of. They get married in an Anglican Church, against Sickert's halfhearted resistance, and then settle down to an intermittent life of marital bliss. Crook remains entirely unaware of Albert's real identity, even after delivering his daughter Alice, a legitimate heir to the throne of England. Eventually Queen Victoria learns of Albert's diversions and has him removed from the married domicile, sending Crook to a mind-destroying operation and Alice into anonymity. Albert frets about the wrongs he has caused and seeks comfort in various homosexual relationships. When he learns that Jack the Ripper is murdering his wife's friends he does at least manage to contact Kelly and let her know that within a few days she, too, will be dead. Although the causative agent of the graphic novel's plot, Albert remains essentially a minor character.

Annie Crook

Annie Crook is a shop-girl born c. 1867. She is of fair intelligence and motivation and earns an apparently independent living. She is good looking and, according to Prince Albert Victor, is well endowed. She meets an incognito Albert and the two pursue a love affair culminating in a wedding in an Anglican Church and a subsequent daughter—Alice. Crook therefore unknowingly gives birth to a legitimate heir to the throne of England. After a few years of marital bliss, Queen Victoria learns of Albert's subterfuge and has him removed from the situation. Alice is sent to live in anonymity and Crook is forcibly transported to an insane asylum where Gull operates on her, removing her thyroid. The subsequent chemical imbalance in her body drives her insane, or in the parlance of Gull renders her a cretin. Crook spends her remaining days as an invalid—she is a minor character in the graphic novel.

Polly Nichols

Polly Nichols is also known as Mary Ann Nichols, née Walker, born 1845 and murdered August 31, 1888. She is the first victim of William Gull. Turned away from lodging because she lacks overnight rent, Nichols wanders Whitechapel trying to earn money by prostitution, until being identified by Netley as one of the victims. Gull then feeds her grapes coated in laudanum and Nichols enters a drug-induced stupor whereupon Gull strangles her in the coach. Gull then transports Nichols' body to Buck's Row where he slashes her throat and then partially eviscerates her, taking a portion of her uterus as a trophy. Nichols is found shortly thereafter, though at first she is assumed to be merely passed out drunk. Even when it is realized she is dead, there is not a general alarm because of the lack of blood at the murder scene. It is not until Nichols is at the morgue is it realized that her body has been horribly mutilated; she remains a minor character in the graphic novel.



Annie Chapman

Annie Chapman is also known as Dark Annie, nee Smith, born 1842 and murdered September 8, 1888. She is the second victim of William Gull. On the night of her murder Chapman wanders Whitechapel trying to earn money by prostitution, until being identified by Netley as one of the victims. Prior to her murder she receives a fair amount of characterization but her banal life story is not compelling and consists of extended lamentations about a prior, better life. Annie is apparently not a desirable street prostitute, or at least has trouble making money that way. She is fortunate in having a long-term relationship with a man who lives in the neighborhood—she bathes him and provides sexual services on an apparent schedule. Prior to her murder Chapman is very ill, a condition that has been worsening for some time. Her corpse is extensively mutilated in a ritual fashion. Annie remains a minor but somewhat memorable character in the graphic novel.

Elizabeth Stride

Elizabeth Stride, nee Gustafsdotter, nicknamed Long Liz, born 1843 and murdered September 30, 1888. She is the third victim of William Gull and the only victim that is not mutilated after death. Stride was born in Sweden and most of her characterization hinges on this fact. Nearly all of her reminiscing is about the life of a young Swedish farm-girl and she speaks English with a stilted grammar. Stride's body is not mutilated because her murder was indirectly witnessed by passersby, alarming Netley; because a policeman delivers a message to Gull immediately after the murder; and mostly because Gull suffers a fugue during and after the murder. Stride remains a minor character in the graphic novel.

Catherine Eddowes

Catherine, or Kate, Eddowes, born 1842 and murdered September 30, 1888. She is the fourth victim of William Gull and the second victim on the date of her murder. Eddowes is a victim of mistaken identity as during a police arrest the night of her murder she had given the false name of Mary Kelly. She was the only victim murdered in London, proper, though in close proximity to Whitechapel. Eddowes is mutilated by having a kidney and part of her uterus removed—her nose is also hacked off. Eddowes is older than some of the other victims, a fact alluded to by her lover's statement that she is getting on in years but still good a pleasant sexual partner. The graphic novel presents a miniature biography of Eddowes in the pages preceding her murder. Her drunken binge on her final night is humorous, with her funky dance and comical lyrics of "...fucking fire-engine! Ding-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! D'you 'ear? I'm..." (Chapter 8, Page 23, Pane 8), and then she passes out. Eddowes remains a minor character in the graphic novel.



Marie Jeanette Kelly

Marie Jeanette Kelly is also known as Mary Jane Kelly or simply Mary Kelly, born 1863 and murdered November 9, 1888. She is the fifth and final victim of William Gull. Kelly meets Sickert before the opening of the graphic novel, perhaps in 1883, and the two become sometimes lovers with Kelly posing for Sickert as a nude model. At the same time, Kelly knows Annie Crook. Kelly, ignorant of Prince Albert Victor's true identity, cares for Alice, Albert's and Crook's child, from time to time. When Albert and Crook vanish, Kelly cares for Alice for about four months and then turns the child over to Sickert. By this time she is estranged from Sickert and has married Joe Barrett, though their marriage appears to be informal. Kelly works as a prostitute in the Whitechapel district until 1888 during which time she pieces together what must have happened with Albert's involvement with Crook. Kelly finds herself in need of money and decides to blackmail Sickert—the attempt is conveyed to Queen Victoria who orders Kelly's murder. By happenstance, Kelly is the final victim. She spends her last few weeks in a drunken stupor soliciting sexual encounters with young women. Her behavior angers Joe who leaves their common residence, leaving Kelly alone on the night she is murdered by Gull. Of all the victims of Gull, Kelly is easily the most-developed and yet even still she remains a secondary character in the graphic novel.



Objects/Places

Lister Knife and Amputation Kit

William Gull, a physician, uses an amputation kit and a Lister knife to perform the ritual serial murders attributed to Jack the Ripper. The amputation kit is illustrated in several panes, as is the knife. A Lister knife is a medical instrument designed to perform limb amputation as rapidly as possible. A formidable blade, it would make an excellent murder weapon. In addition to the Lister knife, the amputation kit includes various other knives, saws, clippers, and clamps.

Netley's Carriage

William Gull rides about London and Whitechapel in a traditional carriage drawn by two horses and driven by John Netley. The carriage is square in shape and fully enclosed, with Netley sitting in the front and outside of the carriage box. Gull performs a few murders within the privacy of the carriage box, strangling the women who are later placed on a public street and mutilated with a Lister knife. The enclosed carriage at least partially explains how Gull could murder women in relatively public places without being seen.

Grapes and Laudanum

Grapes were a very costly but desirable fruit during the period considered in the graphic novel. Gull often eats grapes, an indication of his wealth. He offers grapes to several of the women that he later murders—the gift gains trust and makes Gull seem important and wealthy. Before giving the women grapes, Gull carefully coats them with laudanum, which contains opium. Thus, the women eat the grapes and fall into a drugged stupor, allowing Gull to murder them with little resistance.

Fake Letters

Some early newspaper writers seize upon the series of ghastly murders as a way to sell more newspapers—an early example of yellow journalism. In order to drum up public interest at least a few newspaper men write letters claiming to be written by Jack the Ripper—indeed, the very name Jack the Ripper is derived from the signature on an early fake letter. The fake letters are published in the newspapers and do cause a public frenzy and result in increased newspaper sales. Later, many individuals write fake letters, claiming to be Jack the Ripper.



From Hell Letter

William Gull—the real Jack the Ripper—dictates a relatively simple letter to John Netley. Gull has Netley write the letter so that the penmanship and spelling will be very crude. The letter taunts the police and indicates that it has been written 'from Hell.' To prove that the letter is from the real Jack the Ripper, it is accompanied by a piece of human liver, taken from one of the murdered women.

Writing on the Wall

After William Gull murders Catherine Eddowes, mistakenly believing her to be Marie Kelly, he uses a piece of chalk to write a message on a wall near the murder scene. To link the message to the murder, he drops a bloodied cloth next to the message. The message is intended simultaneously to send a message and cause confusion—it reads "The Juwes are the men who will not be blamed for nothing" (Chapter 8, Page 46). Sir Charles orders the message be destroyed before it can be photographed, ostensible to prevent a wave of anti-Semitic violence.

Whitechapel

Whitechapel was, at the time of the graphic novel, an urban area adjacent to London, proper. It was afflicted with massive poverty and crime and most of the residents are characterized as prostitutes, petty criminals, or unscrupulous landlords. Whitechapel is the predominant setting of much of the graphic novel and is the location where Jack the Ripper performed his most-notorious crimes.

Freemasons

The Freemasons are a fraternal organization with an obscure origin. The graphic novel proposes that Freemasonry was more akin to a centralized power circle with deep ties in government and the monarchy, and in essence the power behind the British Empire. William Gull, a respected Freemason, commits the murders of Jack the Ripper after being commissioned by the monarch to cover up illicit royal behavior. Gull enlists the assistance of other Freemasons to carry out his grand scheme. Much of the graphic novel is given over to a consideration of the history, organization, practices, and goals of the Freemasons.

Gull's Pentagram

Prior to beginning his ritual murders, Gull drives around the greater London area and visits numerous significant locations. He instructs Netley, his driver, to take precise routes to the destinations. The end result is that Gull traverses a gigantic pentagram route such that the points of the pentagram are anchored by significant public structures

—usually churches or obelisks. The pentagram's center is the Whitechapel district. The pentagram is, in effect, the beginning of Gull's mystic ritual.

Leather Apron

Before the perpetrator of the grisly murders was known colloquially as Jack the Ripper, he was known in the press as Leather Apron, presumably because he wore a leather apron, like a butcher, while perpetrating his crimes. Policeman Thick even goes so far as to arrest a suspect and announce that he has caught Leather Apron. In the event, the leather apron is simply a red herring that diverts attention from the real killer.



Themes

Murder

Any way you slice it, the graphic novel's predominant theme is graphic murder. The basic plot relates the story of Jack the Ripper with several presumptive additions—during a period of several weeks five women are murdered and their bodies mutilated in a grisly fashion. They are left in public or semi-public places, their bodies sprawled in the gore of their evisceration and dismemberment. The police later conclude that some of the victims were probably strangled before having their throats slashed open, and that at least some of them were probably murdered and then transported to the location of their dissection. The murders form a basic element of William Gull's mystical expression of destructive power which begins with a bizarre trip around greater London and ends in a madhouse. Gull's murdering spirit, however, wanders through time, the years passing by in a sort of parabolic arc, and as his spirit surfaces it influences other evil men to perpetrate other ghastly murders. The graphic novel even suggests that Gull's murderous invocation causes the conception of Adolf Hitler, one of the world's worst mass murderers.

Much of the graphic novel's artwork is given over to depictions of violent murder and evisceration, and nearly all of the plot is directly connected to murder—either the rationale behind the murder, the process of murder itself, or the aftermath of the murders. Even those not directly involved, such as common citizens and newspapermen, are caught up in the frenzy of fear surrounding the murders. Thus, murder is the predominant theme of the graphic novel.

Perversion, Deception, and Crime

The novel's secondary theme is perversion in various guises. Prince Albert Victor and his confidant Walter Sickert pursue sexual perversions with prostitutes of both genders, and perpetrate a grand hoax on the unsuspecting Annie Crook—Prince Albert Victor marries her in an Anglican Church and sires on her an heir to the English throne. He uses a cover story to explain his necessary and prolonged absences from the marital home and Sickert is complicit in the deception. When Queen Victoria discovers Prince Albert Victor's incredible actions, she causes him to be taken from the home and enlists William Gull to seize the hapless Annie Crook and perform an operation on her such that she becomes mentally unstable. The plot then changes to a small group of prostitutes and petty criminals who practice various perversions and crimes upon each other until deciding to blackmail Sickert for protection money to avoid being sexually mutilated by a local gang. Alerted of the blackmail, Queen Victoria sets William Gull in motion again and over the next weeks he performs five grisly murders of the blackmailers. The ensuing Jack the Ripper frenzy grips London and ultimately leads to Gull's incarceration in a mental asylum. The graphic novel concludes with Prince Albert Victor's association with a male brothel, Sickert's fascination with murder as an



expression of art, and Robert Lees' confession that his psychic powers were all a grand deception. Indeed, it is difficult to find an aspect of the graphic novel that is not firmly rooted in perversion, deception, and crime.

Conspiracy

The graphic novel presents an adaptation of a conspiracy theory, originally proposed by Stephen Knight in his book *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution*. The graphic novel proposes that Prince Albert Victor led a double life—publicly he was a respectable member of the British monarchy, but privately he was a bisexual libertine who enjoyed various perversions and subterfuge. This minor conspiracy was known to his mother Alexandra, who tacitly consented, and was also known to Queen Victoria who disagreed with it but permitted it, given that it did not become public knowledge. Prince Albert Victor was assisted in his hedonistic pursuit of sexual encounters by Walter Sickert, a friend and confidant of Alexandra. This is the first minor conspiracy proposed in the graphic novel.

Prince Albert Victor sires a son with Annie Crook, an erstwhile prostitute, after they are legally married in an Anglican Church—hence, the child is a legitimate heir to the English throne. This is too much for Queen Victoria who has Prince Albert Victor forcibly removed from his alternative life. She also has William Gull perform a damaging operation on Annie Crook that ruins her mind. The child is secreted away and never heard from again. This is the second minor conspiracy proposed in the graphic novel. Meanwhile, four friends of Annie Crook are in desperate need of money. Unable to earn sufficient money through prostitution, and cognizant of some of the details of Annie Crook's pathetic situation, they determine to blackmail Walter Sickert for the funds. This is the third minor conspiracy proposed in the graphic novel.

Sickert goes to Alexandra for help; Alexandra goes to Queen Victoria. The graphic novel then proposes the grand conspiracy—Queen Victoria enlists the assistance of William Gull and the Freemasons in a conspiracy of murder, and Gull—as Jack the Ripper—murders the four women and one hapless woman to cover up Prince Albert Victor's indiscretion, to eliminate the source of blackmail, and to complete a mystic ritual that Gull describes as a great act of magical architecture. All these conspiracies seek to explain the murders of Jack the Ripper and provide the framework from which the graphic novel's plot derives.

Style

Point of View

The graphic novel is related from the third-person, omniscient point of view. All characters are observed from an external perspective typical to graphic novels—the reader becomes, in effect, a voyeur in absentia to transpiring events. The novel is presented almost entirely in the 'present tense' but some scenes show flash-backs and some difficult scenes show apparent flash-forwards or, perhaps, out-of-body experiences. For example, in one scene the putative Jack the Ripper looks through a tenement window in an alley and is shocked to see an equally-shocked 1990s tenant looking back at him, a blaring television in the background. While these scenes are quite discordant in the graphic novel they are explained at some length in the subsequent textual appendix. The interior thoughts of some characters are revealed, especially the mental workings of the putative Jack the Ripper. The graphic novel's chronology is fairly complex.

The point of view selected for the graphic novel is appropriate—indeed nearly mandatory—and leads to an easy and familiar accessibility to the text. It allows simultaneous events separated by great distances to be read and easily compounded. It allows multiple characters to be introduced, and the graphic element of the novel allows much detail to be presented visually.

Setting

The novel's predominant setting is the poor area of Whitechapel, an urban area bordering on the city of London, proper. The graphic novel features additional minor settings around London. The bulk of the narrative transpires between c. August, 1888 and c. November 1888—the period of time generally attributed to the crimes of Jack the Ripper. Reference is made to earlier similar murders at about the same time and various elements of the novel—notably the beach sequence featuring Abberline and Lees—occur much later c. 1930s. A few visionary sequences occur in far-flung settings or in imaginary or fantastic settings. For example, a brief plot divergence occurs in the Austrian bedroom of Alois and Klara Hitler—at the very moment when Adolf Hitler was conceived, theorized to be c. September 1888.

The setting of Whitechapel is the most developed and it gains texture from textual commentary as well as graphic depiction. The author's notes mention that nearly all buildings, streets, and other structures are based on photographs of the actual objects themselves. However, the generally simple line drawing makes most streets and buildings appear fairly like one another. Whitechapel is an obviously lower-class area, filled with prostitutes, criminals, and homeless beggars. Most of the secondary characters earn their living by prostitution or petty crime, and most of them are homeless alcoholics, living in overnight rooms and occasionally sleeping in the streets.



Various groups of two or three minor characters frequently combine resources to obtain a room for the night which is shared. Food is usually passed by so that money can be spent on alcohol or shelter.

Language and Meaning

The language of the graphic novel is straightforward and easily accessed. Meaning generally is derived from fairly conventional methods of narrative construction. The graphic novel's larger meaning is derived from its position in the context of history and culture, and is deliberately manipulated by meta-fictional techniques. These techniques include an introductory scene where a psychic explains that all his past visions were faked; a lengthy textual appendix which offers authorial comment and interpretation; a concluding graphic appendix which offers additional authorial comment and interpretation; and the ability of the graphic novel to portray the state of mind of the putative Jack the Ripper including hallucinatory—or perhaps religious—visions of gods. These elements combine to offer a rich texture of meaning and the possibility for a wide interpretation of the work. Indeed, the open-ended and speculative construction of meaning forms a basic element of the graphic novel's wide appeal.

It is worth noting that the graphic novel deals with themes not often encountered in traditional 'comic books,' such as ritual serial murder, sexualized corpse mutilation, sexual perversion, and government-sponsored conspiracy to murder. Many characters use explicit language (e.g., swear words) with frequency, and the illustrations depict explicit sex scenes, deviant sexual practices, and explicit and graphic murder and sexualized ritual mutilation of corpses. If the text were rated as a motion picture, probably it would receive at least an NC-17 rating.

Structure

The graphic novel was written by Alan Moore and illustrated by Eddie Campbell, with artistic contributions from Michael Evans. The graphic novel's structure is largely derived from its complex publication history where it was published serially as a series of segments roughly analogous to a 'comic book.' It was originally published in ten volumes and an appendix, between 1991 and 1998. The collected volumes first were published as a single unit in 1999 and have been republished several times. Later editions usually include a lengthy text appendix and a graphic authorial statement—both being confined largely to the opinion of the writer. The text appendix is largely explanatory and lists numerous sources in an informal manner. The graphic novel was the basic source for a major motion picture release of the same name—the movie's plot bears only superficial resemblance to that of the novel. The 574-page graphic novel is divided into fourteen named and enumerated chapters, a prologue, an epilogue, two maps, a lengthy textual appendix, and twenty-four page graphic appendix. Chapter length is variable; the prologue is eight pages, the epilogue is eleven pages, and Chapter One is fourteen pages—while Chapter Nine is sixty pages in length.



The graphic novel features a familiar layout with each page, aside from the textual appendix, divided into various illustrated panes that read generally from left to right and top to bottom. Pane division varies from page to page but panes are generally rectangular and well delineated, leading to easy accessibility. The artwork throughout is usually presented as black ink on white background and most of the art is fairly basic and is not particularly inspiring. For example, it is sometimes difficult to establish the identity of a character based on the visual presentation alone. Typically, renderings of architectural details are done with more attention than renderings of characters. Occasional panes feature art that is more gray-scale in nature and some panes present renditions of well-known art or architecture. Most text throughout the graphic novel is delivered in typical speech bubbles or narrative squares. Lettering is acceptable but occasionally difficult to make out. The graphic novel's narrative chronology is quite complex but for the most part is accessible.



Quotes

Harrison: Who have you there?

Mason: Dr. William Gull, a poor candidate in a state of darkness... ..who comes of his own free will and accord, properly prepared, humbly soliciting to be admitted to the mysteries and privileges of Freemasonry.

Harrison: Do you feel anything?

Disembodied voice: Do you feel anything?

Gull: Yes

Harrison: Dr. Gull... in all cases of difficulty and danger, in who do you put your trust?

Gull: In God

Mason: Then kneel upon your left knee, your right foot formed into a square. Take in your right hand the volume of Sacred Law and in you left these compasses, one point pressed to your naked breast.

Gull: I, William Withey Gull, in the presence of the Great Architect of the Universe, do solemnly swear to always hele, conceal, and never reveal the mysteries of Free and Accepted Mason... ..under no less a penalty than that my throat be cut across, my tongue torn out by the root, and that I be buried in sand a cable's length from the shore... ..where the tide regularly ebbs and flows... twice in twenty four hours. (Chapter 2, pp. 8-9)

Gull: Ah, whores: their lot's diminished, like Diana's, whom they served as Temple Prostitutes; priestesses; "Heiros Gamos" or "Joy Maidens"... which recalls "Daughters of Joy", our current euphemism. One such, Mary Kelly, who's the object of our task, frequents yon tavern, with accomplices whom you must name, and then locate...

Netley: They UWP they SHALL be done away with, then? How's this Dark Business you've been tellin' me required to 'elp with such a triflin' thing?

Gull: Oh Netley! Weren't you LISTENING? "Dark Business" shall assist our labours not the slightest but... ..though THEY may prove invaluable to IT. Averting Royal embarrassment is but the fraction of my work that's visible above the waterline. The greater part's an iceberg of significance that lurks below. Great works have MANY purposes. To aid her majesty's but ONE... the rest are mine alone. You realize I only share these private thoughts in recognition of your lack of cognizance?

Netley: Why... thank you, sir. I can't say what that means to me.

Gull: Ha ha ha! Of COURSE you can't. That is precisely why I trust you. Come, along Commercial Street, down Bishopsgate, Cornhill and Cheapside to St. Paul's. I'll note our previous stops upon the map as we ride. (Chapter 4, p. 33)

Mary: I'll sing you nine songs, green grow the rushes-o! Where are your nine songs? Nine for the nine bright shiners... Eight for the April rainers... Seven for the seven stars in the sky... And six for the six proud walkers! Five for the symbols at your door and four for the gospel makers! Three-ee three-ee the ri-i-i-i-vals! Two, two the lily-white boys, dressed up all in gree-een-oh! One is one and all alone... ..and ever more shall be so.

Gull: Good morning to you, child. Why, three o'clock's no time for a young lady such as



yourself to be out unescorted. Might I offer transport?

Mary: Why... why, thank you, sir. You're very kind. I'd surely feel safer with you than out 'ere in the street. You 'ears so many stories...

Gull: Splendid! Then let me just climb down, that we may ride together, both inside. Tell me, what is your name?

Mary: It's Mary, though they calls me Polly. Oh, do let me 'elp you with that bag. It looks so 'eavy.

Gull: Oh, thank you. Set it by the door.

Mary: There. That's better. Now, let us be introduced all proper, like. I'm Polly, sir, and you, you're...?

Gull: William. My name's William. Tell me, child... do you like grapes? (Chapter 5, pp. 24-25)

Abberline: All fields and gardens this was once, Godley, outside the city walls. Now look at it. Whitechapel on Friday night. Just look at it. D'ye know, there's less than two hundred and fifty lodging houses in Whitechapel? Housing eight and a half thousand people? That's, what, thirty five, forty people per house.

Godley: Bloody hell.

Abberline: Hell's about right. I've seen it all 'ere lad. Alligators waddling through the shit in the gutters; albinos being led about on chains... I've stepped over kids, no more than nine, having it off in broad daylight, probably with their sisters.

Godley: Well, they're married by twelve, most of 'em.

Abberline: S'right. Nd when the separate, she'll start whorin'. Twelve hundred tarts in Whitechapel. Officially. My arse. ANYBODY in Whitechapel's yours for under a shilling. I mean, how are you supposed to manage it, eh? How do you maintain law and order in a fucking bedlam like this?

Godley: Mm. That's probably why Assistant Commissioner Anderson left for Switzerland today...

Abberline: THAT cunt! D'you hear what 'e said? Announced the Whitechapel murder could be "successfully grappled with". Said he could probably solve it himself in a few days, "provided he could spare the time". Easy saying that halfway up a fucking alp.

Godley: Dunno, sir. Sergeant Thick'll probably beat 'im to it. Reckons he's found Leather Apron. Some bloke named Jack Pizer...

Abberline: Huh. We'll see, Godley, we'll see.

Godley: Suppose so. Anyway, I turn off here.

Abberline: Fair enough. I'm having a drink, then home. Hopefully, this week-end'll be quieter than last. See you on Monday, lad. (Chapter 6, pp. 22-23)

Gibb: Well, another day's scribbling over and done with, eh, Mr. Best?

Best: Don't be so sure, Mr. Gibbs. A good reporter's always on the job.

Gibb: We're goin' back to your digs, ain't we? You said you'd put me up.

Best: That's right. Nothin' wrong with workin' at 'ome, is there? 'Ere, 'ave some o' this.

Gibb: Ta. What's so important you've gotta work on it when we could be 'avin a drink, then?

Best: There's drink at 'ome, and I'm feelin' creative.



Gibb: Creative?

Best: Yes, probably not a term you're familiar with, Mr. Gibbs. Y'see, it's these murders, Nicholls and Chapman. I've 'ad an idea.

Gibb: An Idea?

Best: Ooh, fuck me, am I getting' too technical again? Y'see, it's like ol' Renwick Williams. "The Monster". We need a VILLAIN, Gibbs. And if we can't find one, well... We shall just have to conjure one up, shan't we? (Chapter 7, p. 37)

Kelly: W-would either of you gentleman be with the, ah, with what they call the gang, now? Th-the old Nichol gang?

Man: Aye.

Kelly: I-I'm Marie Kelly. I've got the money you said we owed you. Well, HALF of it, anyway... but then there's only half of us LEFT.

Man: Ta.

Kelly: WAIT. Does this mean we're ALRIGHT, me and Liz? Ye won't be doin' to us what ye did to Polly Nicholls and Annie Chapman?

Man: Nicholls and Chapman? Y'reckon we're daft enough to bring all these Rozzers down on us, interruptin' business? We never done 'em... not them two. G'night.

Kelly: Bu-but... (Chapter 8, pp. 25-26)

Julia: Whoops! Hahaha.

Kelly: Shh.

Julia: God, I'm pissed. We're real lushingtons. Are you sure your Joe won't mind?

Kelly: 'Course he won't... huc... He'll love it, you see. Hello, Joe, me love. I'm back. There, now, isn't he a lovely man?

Joe: Marie? I didn't know you'd be bringin' company...

Kelly: Oh, oh yes. This is Julia. Isn't she a pretty girl, now?

Julia: Hello, Joe. Marie's told me ever such a lot about you.

Joe: Aye, well, pleased to meet you, I'm sure.

Kelly: There, I said he'd be pleased. Y'see, Julia's got nowhere to stop. I knew ye wouldn't mind.

Joe: Stop? Ay, look, you know we've only got the one bad.

Kelly: Oh, Joe, that doesn't matter, me love. Does it Julia?

Julia: Oh no, not at all. That's how I like it, all cosy.

Kelly: There. Y'see, Joe? Julia doesn't mind. Mwuh.

Joe: But... Marie, look, I don't know about this...

Kelly: Oh, Joe, c'mon, don't be a spoilsport. We could... huh... we could all be dead tomorrow.

Joe: Aye b-but... oh, god.

Kelly: C'mon, Joe, I just want to have some fun. Just this once. Well? What are ye waitin' for?

Julia: Aye, c'mon, Joe.

Kelly: Ahh, there y'go. Now give it here t'me. Poor Julia, she's dyin' for it.

Julia: Oh yes. Oh yes, that's good.

Kelly: Now... like this?



Julia: Oh yes, oh, that's me favourite.

Kelly: Go on, Joe! Go on; give it to her. That's right, that's right go on.

Julia: Mm. Mmmm.

Kelly: Oh yes. Oh, Julia, that's lovely. Ooooh. Ooooh, God.

Julia: Mmm?

Kelly: Joe? J-Joe? What's the matter?

Joe: I don't like this. I'm not having this. (Chapter 9, pp. 37-39)

Kelly: Muh? Hello? Hello? Who? Oh no, MURDER! Help! MUR- Uhhh... nuh...

Gull: A pillow. ...pillow for you... Accompany me inspection if you wish.

Hinton: That would be most agreeable. I confess that unfortunate women hold a particular interest for me. Their miserable condition haunts me. Shall it NEVER be alleviated?

Gull: Haha! My dear Hinton, are all your outbursts so passionate? No, no. Come, do not look aggrieved. Such passion's admirable in a fellow. ...though concerning the objects of your pity, I fear there's little hope.

Hinton: There MUST be... even for such unfortunates. Is not all base matter gradually ascending; refining itself into pure spirit?

Gull: Assuredly; but some wretches have a downward momentum in their lives almost impossible to reverse. Consider it: water will of necessity flow downhill, thwarting all our best efforts that it should do otherwise. In order that water might rise despite itself, it must first be transmuted into steam. It must be touched by the purifying spirit of fire. This way. Huh. Uhhh... I'm, uhh... I'm sorry... I'm sorry, where was I? (Chapter 10, pp. 1 - 14)

Abberline: Look, I'm uh... I'm sorry about this, Sir William. It's just that, well, we had information about... w-well, about the MURDERS in Whitechapel. I mean, it's SILLY, I know, but... well, y'know we 'ave to check these things out, and... y'see, what it is, somebody thought you were the CULPRIT.

Gull: I am. That is, I think I MUST be. Up until the one in Miller's Court, events were all so VIVID, but since then... since then, things seem so VAGUE and GHOSTLY. I DO distinctly recollect awakening to find my shirt cuffs stiff with blood. And there were the most strange and wonderful of dreams...

Mrs. Gull: Oh, William. Oh, dear GOD. I knew, William, somehow I KNEW.

Gull: Yes, yes. I suppose you did. Dear Susan, you have been the best of wives to me. Would that I might have spared you this. Would that I might have told you something of my task. I could not. You would not have understood. Forgive me.

Abberline: Er... Uh, ook, this is obviously a matter for my SUPERIORS. P-perhaps Mr. Lees and meself should be on our way...

Gull: I quite understand. Let me show you out. The hall is through this way, inspector.

Oh, and Mr. LEES, of COURSE... our your CLAIRVOYANT. Tell me, Mr. Lees, have you ever TRULY had a VISION? A REAL vision?

Lees: I... I... uh...

Gull: NO? I didn't THINK so. ...but I HAVE. (Chapter 12, pp. 12-13)



Sladden: There's inside. Somebody's closing the upstairs curtains. I tell yer, Fred. They'll have to do summat about these filthy buggers, famous names or not. We've been watchin' 'em for weeks now.

Abberline: Yes, and my bet is we'll be watchin' 'em a few weeks more. There's Royalty involved in this, lad. Everybody's treadin' careful.

Sladden: What, you reckon they'll spirit P.A.V. away before arrestin' Hammond?

Abberline: I doubt the WILL arrest Hammond, even if he DOES own the brothel. 'E knows too much. 'E could name Prince Albert Victor, Lord Somerset, or any of the other pansies.

Policeman: There was furniture bein' moved out the other day, sir.

Abberline: Frankly, Sladden, I'm not at all surprised. They'll probably let him leave the country and we'll keep quiet about it. That's how it is with cases like these. (Chapter 13, p. 2)

Lees: Why did we come here? It's not as if we know him.

Abberline: Same reason we spend time together, I expect. He's one o' the club. You, me and 'im. We're the survivors.

Lees: Not the only ones. There's lots of people still around who know what went on.

Abberline: Not the way we know. The Queen's gone. Her grandson's gone. Anderson's gone.

Lees: Warren's alive. And the artist, Sickert. Then of course there's the little girl. I expect she's still about.

Abberline: She was, the last time that I was told. Caught the odd rumour now and then, the way you do. 'Eard she'd married. Then again, I 'eard that 'er and sickert 'ad a fling. Once she'd grown up. It's all just stories when all's said and done.

Lees: But that's just the thing. It isn't just stories. Those women really died. nd poor Druitt, caught up in something he could never understand. (Epilogue, pp. 4-5)

The phrase, Hairy-Ford-Shire, a rather dim pun upon the pronunciation of "Herefordshire", is one of an extensive array of Victorian slang expressions relating to the female genitalia. The expression, in this instance, was passed one to me by Mr. Neil Gaiman, who has a dirty mouth in at least seven centuries. The price for short-time prostitution in Victorian England was indeed approximately three pence. The exchange would be carried out most often against a wall or fence with both parties in a standing position, and was referred to colloquially as a 'thrupenny upright'. (Appendix I, p. 6)



Topics for Discussion

The text is divided into named and enumerated chapters. Chapter One is only fourteen pages long, while Chapter Nine is sixty pages long. Discuss how the chapter division functions within the graphic novel to create meaning and establish the narrative's internal chronology.

The narrative states that the Masonic deities are named Jubelo, Jubela, and Jubelum, and that they are collectively known as the "Juwes." Gull's handwritten message could thus be interpreted as an implication of Freemasonry. How else could Gull's handwritten message be interpreted?

The graphic novel presents one possible identity of Jack the Ripper. How closely is the graphic novel based upon the historical facts of the case? Does fiction that appears to be historical have a responsibility to remain largely true to historical fact?

The graphic novel postulates that Prince Albert Victor was entrusted into the care of Walter Sickert by his mother, Alexandra. In the novel, Albert subsequently engages in a series of homosexual and heterosexual encounters, and even marries Annie Crook in a church and fathers a child by her. Obviously, this child would be a legitimate heir to the throne. Discuss how the child's legitimate birth becomes the motive force behind the series of murders attributed to Jack the Ripper.

Abberline and the police receive many letters from people claiming to be Jack the Ripper. This dismiss them all as the work of various cranks, except for the letter that became known as the "From Hell" letter. What aspects of that letter, in particular, convinced Abberline that it truly was from Jack the Ripper?

During Chapter Three (Page 15, Pane 7), Kelly refers to herself and her three friends as "the four whores of the Apocalypse." Discuss the religious implications of this statement, both from a Christian viewpoint as well as from the Masonic viewpoint promoted by Gull.

Kelly is depicted semi-nude and reclining in Chapter Nine, Page 17, Pane 1. Compare this visual image to the post-mortem image of Kelly in e.g. Appendix II, Page 6, Pane 5. What elements of the two images are similar? What elements are different?

Gull claimed he was the "father of the twentieth century"—what do you think he meant by that claim?

After reading the graphic novel, do you think that Moore's theory about the identity and motive of Jack the Ripper are credible? Why or why not?