

# **The Final Detail Study Guide**

## **The Final Detail by Harlan Coben**

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# Contents

<a href="#">The Final Detail Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-23).....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 4-6 (pages 26-44).....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 7- 9 (pages 45-83).....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 10-12 (pages 84 - 109).....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 13- 15.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 16-18. (pages 150-183).....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 19-21 (pg 184-220).....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 22-24 (pages 222-248).....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 25- Chapter 27 (pages 250-277).....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 28- 30.....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 31-33 (pages 312-329).....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 34-36 (pages 330-340).....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 37-40 (pages 341-372).....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Objects/Places.....</a>	<a href="#">33</a>
<a href="#">Themes.....</a>	<a href="#">35</a>
<a href="#">Style.....</a>	<a href="#">37</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">39</a>
<a href="#">Topics for Discussion.....</a>	<a href="#">41</a>



# Plot Summary

The Final Detail by Harlan Coben is one book in the Myron Bolitar series. Myron is a powerful, high-priced sports agent who also moonlights as a detective of sorts. Whenever his clients or friends are in trouble, he always take it upon himself to investigate and find out the truth. This installment begins with Myron lounging on a beach with a beautiful CNN newscaster named Terese Collins. For reasons unknown to the reader, Myron feels as though he needs to escape from New York and his life. He has spent three weeks in the Caribbean with Terese attempting to forget what happened.

Out of nowhere, a yacht docks by the beach. Myron notices it as his friend Win's boat. Win gets off the boat and hastily approaches Myron. He announces that Myron's family is fine, but Esperanza, his business partner, is in trouble. Clu Haid, one of Myron's clients and friends has been murdered. Esperanza has been arrested for his murder. Myron is surprised, but ready to go into "detective mode" and help Esperanza. This may prove to be difficult because Esperanza does not want to see Myron.

Myron begins attempting to piece together what has happened by visiting Esperanza's lawyer, Hester Crimstein. Hester does not prove to be helpful because she does not want Myron's help with the case. Like Esperanza, she wants Myron to stay out of it.

Myron goes back to his office, to pick try to do some damage control for his company MB Sports Reps. He hears from Sophie Mayor, the owner of the New York Yankees. She is very angry with Myron, he promises to meet with her to placate her. As Myron continues to sort through his mail, he finds a brown envelope. Inside the envelope is a diskette, which Myron puts into his computer. The program runs itself. On the screen there is an image of a teenage girl. All of a sudden, the image begins to melt into blood. The red color begins to cover the screen and then the monitor switches off. Myron is shocked and disturbed. He does not know the girl on the screen and cannot understand why someone would send him such an awful picture.

Myron ventures up to Yankee Stadium to visit Sophie and Jared Mayor. As he tries to calm Sophie, he sees a picture on her desk. The picture is the same image as the one on the diskette! Although Myron is shocked, he finally brings himself to discuss the diskette to Sophie. The girl on the disk is Sophie's daughter, Lucy who has been missing for over twelve years. Sophie begs Myron to look for her daughter while he looks for Clu's real murderer. Myron agrees to help.

Myron finds out from that Clu may have been frequenting a bar named Take A Guess. Bonnie, Clu's wife, filed for divorce shortly before Clu's death. Myron is sure this is because Clu was cheating on Bonnie. When he visits the bar, he begins asking different people about Clu. When the bartender Pat, is questioned, he becomes hostile. Myron is suddenly ceased by two cross-dressing men who proceed to beat him senseless. Myron finally escapes. Pat, the bartender, has some misgivings about Myron, but decides to hear him out. The next night, he invites Clu to another bar called Leather and Lace. He



tells Myron that he will give him information on Clu if he goes with him to an undisclosed destination. After much deliberation, Myron agrees.

Myron is blindfolded, bound and taken to a deserted warehouse. He is greeted by an old friend, Bill Lee Palms, who has become a shell of the man he once was. Billy is clearly unbalanced and attempts to kill Myron with a shotgun. He accidentally shoots Pat instead. Just as he is about to end Myron's life, someone shoot Billy Lee from the shadows. Myron does not wait around.

After talking to one of Clu's ex teammates, Myron figures out that Clu was not having the affair, Bonnie was. When he confronts Bonnie, she admits that she and Esperanza were sleeping together. They have been keeping their affair and secrete and did not want Myron to find out and have to testify against Esperanza.

As Myron continues to delve deeper into the mystery of Clu's death, he receives a tip that Clu went to a hotel in Massachusetts three days before we dies. Myron remembers that Clu lived in Massachusetts over twelve years ago with Bonnie. Myron obtains the phone records from Myron's hotel room and traces the phone numbers. One belongs to a Ms. Barbara Cromwell. Myron visits her and discovers who has murdered Clu.

After returning to New York, Myron confronts Sophie Mayor. Sophie made Clu's life a living hell after he killed her daughter in a drunk driving accident twelve years ago. She had been a passenger in the car with Clu, Billy Lee, and Bonnie. Both Myron and Bonnie did not know that Lucy Mayor had been injured- Bonnie fell unconscious from the impact, while Myron arrived at the scene later. After the crash, Billy Lee and Clu hid Lucy's body. Myron bribed two policed officers to keep quiet about the accident and inadvertently buried all information about Lucy's whereabouts.

Sophie Mayor bought the Yankees so that she could hire Clu and then tamper with his drug test results. She built up his hopes and the broke them down. She also blackmailed Clu so that he lived in a constant state of hysteria. Sophie reveals that no one killed Clu, he killed himself. Myron is shocked. He demands that Clu's name be cleared but Sophie refuses. She will however, see that charges against Esperanza are dropped. The crime was never supposed to be blamed on her. Myron was supposed to take the fall.

Myron realizes it was wrong of him to bribe the officers. He must now live with what he has done. The book ends with Myron still coming to terms with his part in Lucy's death as he attempts to overcome his grief for Clu.



## Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-23)

### Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-23) Summary

The book begins with the novel's protagonist, Myron Bolitar, lounging on a beach in the Caribbean next to a beautiful CNN newscaster, Terese Collins. Myron is not sure how long the two of them have been on the island, but suspects it has been close to three weeks. This is also the length of time that Myron has known Terese. Neither of them has told their friends or family where they have gone. They are both trying to escape from something but refuse to discuss it with one another. For the most part, they spend their days in solitude and nights together.

As they stare out into the sunlight, a yacht pulls toward them and drops down anchor. At first, Terese is alarmed and asks Myron if he has told anyone where they are, Myron assures her he has not. A dingy is then thrown over the side of the ship. As it approached, Myron can tell that his friend Win, has found him. Win alerts Myron that his business partner, Esperanza needs his help. Myron is concerned. Win informs Myron that Clu Haid, a famous Yankee pitcher and one of Myron's clients, has been killed. Esperanza is being arrested for Clu's murder as they speak.

Myron is dumbfounded. He quickly although sadly bids Terese goodbye and hastily boards Win's private yacht. He can't believe what has happened to Clu Haid, a gifted, screw-up. He was also one of Myron's first clients. After a success college basketball career ended to due an injury, Myron graduated from Harvard Law and began his own Sports Agency, MB Sports Reps. Because Myron and Clu had been frat brother in college, Clu felt he could trust Clu to negotiate his contracts. Myron had done his best to get Clu out of trouble when he became involved with drugs, women, and debauchery.

Things had been going better for Clu. He had been put on the Yankee's team after many other teams would have nothing to do with him. He was pitching well again and required to take drug tests every week. Before Myron left, Clu had tested negative every time. Win informs Myron that two weeks ago, at a surprise testing, Clu had tested positive for Heroine. Win also informs him that his clients at MB Sports Reps are very upset with his disappearance. Esperanza and Big Cyndi have both done their best to keep the business afloat, but four days ago Clu charged into MB Sports Reps and punched Esperanza in the face. The police then found blood in the company's Ford Taurus and the nine millimeter gun that killed Clu in Myron's office. Clu's personal accounts were also missing \$200,000. Win also tells Myron that Esperanza wanted Win to contact him, but that she does not want to speak to him.

### Chapters 1-3 (pages 1-23) Analysis

In the first three chapters of the book, the reader is introduced to Myron Boliatr, the novel's protagonist and his best friend Win. Interestingly, The murder of Clu and framing



of Esperanza are also explained. This fast pace quickly captures the reader's attention and focuses in on Myron going into rescue mode. The easy language helps reader to pick up the fast paced actions of Myron and Win.

Also in this section, the reader first notices Myron's struggle with morality in his life. Myron is introduced and almost immediately after, his foil and best friend Win is also introduced. The two characters work to show the differences in one another. Myron the protagonist and his dark friend that instructs him to do dangerous things, Win.



## Chapters 4-6 (pages 26-44)

### Chapters 4-6 (pages 26-44) Summary

Myron and Win decide to go to the courthouse where Esperanza was being charged. Outside, he sees Big Cyndi, an ex-wrestler who works for him and Esperanza. She is huddled in the rain. She sees Myron and begins to cry. She tells him that he abandoned her and Esperanza. Myron tries to calm her down, but cannot hide that he is worried about Esperanza. Myron attempts to prod Big Cyndi for details, but Esperanza made her promise not to say anything. Win then pulls up in his car. Myron gets in and Win tells him that Esperanza's lawyer is Hester Crimstein. They decide to go and see Hester.

They go to Hester's apartment building the San Remo and wait for her to return. Once she arrives, they introduces themselves, but Hester has no interest on them staying long. Myron attempts to get information from Hester about Esperanza's case, but she quickly turns the questioning on Myron. She asks him for his whereabouts for the past three weeks, and if there was anyone who can verify it. Hester points out that Myron is the most likely suspect because the weapon was found in his office and Clu's blood was in his company's car.

Myron doesn't like her questioning and insists that she cannot be the best lawyer for Esperanza. He thinks that someone at the DA's office must have it out for Hester because Esperanza is not being treated fairly by the police and detectives. Hester shoots back saying that maybe people don't like his employer. She then tells Myron that he simply needs to back off. She wants him to stay away from Esperanza so that she can do her job to the best of ability.

Myron spent the night at Win's apartment. The next morning he gets ready for Esperanza's hearing. On his way to the court house, Myron is assaulted by Frank Junior, also known as FJ. The last time the two met, FJ had threatened to kill Myron. Myron has history with FJ's father and uncle, Frank and Herman Ache, two of New York's most legendary leg breakers. Through their misdemeanors and crimes they built an empire and elevated themselves from low life scum to high income scum. The Aches started TruPro, a very large sports rep agency, that ran on very little scruples. They often blackmailed athletes into joining their agency.

At this encounter with FJ, FJ pressures Myron into selling MB Sports Reps. He insists that because Myron abandoned so many of his clients, they felt betrayed and decided to go over to TruPro. FJ tried to persuade Myron that its only a small amount of time until the rest of his clients leave MB Sports. Myron refuses to sell and begins to make his way to the courthouse.



## Chapters 4-6 (pages 26-44) Analysis

Hester is an example of a strong, smart, and powerful woman. She knows how to speak her mind and is not afraid to, even when to powerful, wealthy, and intimidating men push her for details about her client. She stands her ground and refuses to let them shake her. She is a welcome difference from Myron and Win and counters the male dominance of the book up until this point. It is interesting to note Myron's surprise of finding out that Esperanza's ex-girl friend. This foreshadows Myron's later confusion with sexuality and gender in future chapters.





## Chapters 7- 9 (pages 45-83)

### Chapters 7- 9 (pages 45-83) Summary

The court house is complete chaos. Outside are reporters, news cameras, and press all clamoring to hear the latest details of the case. Win and Myron take a seat in the courtroom and await for Esperanza's case to be called. When it is finally announced, the press inside goes wild. The prosecution asks that Esperanza be remanded without bail. Hester Crimstein is outraged by this request and insists that Esperanza does not have the means to escape. She is also a well known partner at a well-known sports agency and that people will recognize her. The prosecutor then points out Win and Myron. He says that her friendship with the two men will give her many resources to flee the jurisdiction. He insists that the men have too much money and that there is \$200,000 missing that had been withdrawn by Clu before he died. He thinks that there is too much money floating around. The judge agrees with the prosecutor.

Hester Crimstein follows the two men into the hall, all the while yelling at them. She is infuriated that they came to the hearing. She feels they paraded themselves in front of the judge. Myron tells her that the judge does not like fact that she is a celebrity. He insists that Esperanza needs a new lawyer. Hester disagrees and insists that they have played right into the DA's hands. They want to prove that there was some kind of money laundering going on between Win, Esperanza, and Myron. She tells Myron that Esperanza wants to see him in five minutes.

Myron is shocked about the money and confronts Win, as Win was Clu's financial adviser. Win did withdraw the money for Clu. Myron does not understand why and Win insists that it is not his job to babysit Clu. If he wanted his money, he could have it. MB Sports Reps always receives copies of its client's bank statements to help keep them on trap. A copy of the withdrawal would have been sent to Esperanza, so she would have known about the \$200,000.

Myron is relieved the see Esperanza. He presses her for details and pledges to help her. Esperanza refuses to tell him anything. She wants his promise that he will will get the company back in order. She is his partner and half owner and does not want to come back to a crumbling business. Myron agrees and continues to ask her questions. She says nothing. Even when Myron asks if she killed Clu, she refuses to answer him.

Myron arrives back at the office and decides to do some damage control. He begins calling clients and assuring them that everything at MB will be OK. As he continues to contact clients and sort through his affairs, Myron gets a call from Jared and Sophie Mayor. Sophie is the owner of the Yankees and Jared, her son, is the general manager. He promises her that they will meet to talk after the Yankees v Mets game. Myron ends the call early as police officers enter his office and begin to raid it for files. After they have completed, Myron gets a visit from Bonnie Haide, Clu's wife.



Myron welcomes Bonnie. She asks him if he thinks that Esperanza actually killed Clu. Myron says he does not. He begins to question Bonnie about why she asked for a divorce. Bonnie is taken aback by all of Myron's questions. He tells her that he wants to investigate the murder and find out who actually killed Clu. Bonnie becomes very worried. She asks Myron not to dig too deep. She wants him to clear Esperanza, but then to let the rest go. Myron is confused by her requests.

## **Chapters 7- 9 (pages 45-83) Analysis**

The nature of Myron and Esperanza's relationship is not clear. It is evident that Myron wishes he was more than friends with Esperanza. He and Win make several comments as to how it is completely shocking that Esperanza is bisexual. Myron is especially saddened that Esperanza will not confide in him. As her friend and partner, he expected to be let in on what has happened. He knows that she is hiding something from her and is extremely hurt because she will not confide in him. This leads Myron to suspect that Esperanza might have possibly killed Clu.



## Chapters 10-12 (pages 84 - 109)

### Chapters 10-12 (pages 84 - 109) Summary

Myron decides to go see Win at his office, Locke-Horne Securities and Investments. He and Win begin to hash out possible explanations for what has happened to Clu. Win, always the pessimist questions Esperanza's innocence. Perhaps Clu's attacking Esperanza outraged her and she felt she must kill him. Myron does not think this is true. Maybe instead, the killer knew of Esperanza and Clu's fight and figured they would set her up. This also seemed like a plausible plan. They also figure that the murderer wants to do a lot of harm to Myron and MB. By framing Esperanza, MB looks weak and lacking scruples. They both settle on FJ as a possible suspect.

Myron decides to go back to the office. As he is sorting through his mail from the past three weeks, he spots a brown envelope. The address has been typed on the package. He opens it and discovers it has a diskette inside. When Myron pops it into his computer, his computer screen goes blank. At first he thinks he has a virus but suddenly an image comes on the screen. It is a young girl. Maybe sixteen or seven teen. She has an awkward, shy smile. Suddenly, the picture begins to melt. What looks like blood begins to flow from her eye sockets, mouth, and ears. There is suddenly screeching laughter coming from the speakers. Then the screen goes back. Myron is shocked and disturbed.

Myron decides to call Dr. Kristin Czerski and then meets her at her office. She immediately asks for the disk and begins to search its content. Myron then gets a call. It is Jessica, his ex-girlfriend. Myron does not really want to speak with her, but they try to be civil with one another. Jessica lets him know that Clu had called him several times while he was gone. He seemed urgent to find him. He insisted that Myron was in danger. Myron thanks Jessica for letting him know and hangs up. Dr. Czerski then tells him that there is nothing on the disk. The disk was formatting with a self running, self deleting program.

Myron is baffled. Who would send him the disk? He decides to go back to the office. When he arrives, Big Cyndi has some news for him. She has pulled all the phone records for Clu Haide. One of the phone numbers matches a club called Take A Guess. At first Myron does not know why this may be interesting, but it is because the type of club that Take A Guess is. Big Cyndi explains that it is a place where people go to dress ambiguously and take on different genders. Men go as women or as men and vice versa. There is a chance you might go home with a woman, but in fact it is a man.

Myron thinks this might be the reason Bonnie threw Clu out. Maybe he met a woman or man at the bar and Bonnie found out. The two decide to visit the club later on that evening. Big Cyndi also has another number that should interest Myron. It is that of an old school friend's parents' phone number. Billy Lee was very close with Clu. Myron decides to make a visit to Billy Lee's parents.



## Chapters 10-12 (pages 84 - 109) Analysis

The diskette that Myron receives is very perplexing. He has no idea who would send him such a horrible packet, let alone that it is connected to Clu. The diskette proves to be a mystery and somewhat misleading for Myron.

As Myron delves further into Clu's life and actions, the theme of self destruction is seen. Clu had a charmed life. He was blessed because he had a natural gift. Because of this gift excuses were made for him and he lead himself into a life of debauchery, women, drugs, alcohol, and trouble. By having Clu murdered, the reader sees the that a life like Clu's leads to self destruction. Clu lead himself down a wrong path and as a result, was killed for the life he lead.



# Chapters 13- 15

## Chapters 13- 15 Summary

In college, Billy Lee Palms had been a huge partier. He was the closet friends with Clu, but Myron and Win tolerated him because they all hung out in the same circle. When Myron arrives in Westchester, NY he goes straight to Billy Lee's parents' home. Billy Lee's mother welcomes Myron in. She informs him that Billy Lee is currently not at home. He lives at home on and off. She also tells him that he has been in and out of rehab clinics. Billy's mom begins to break down. She asks Myron why he couldn't have helped Billy Lee the way he had always helped Clu. She didn't understand why Billy Lee could not put his failure behind him and move on with his life. Myron feels sorry for her and leaves her to her memories.

As Myron drives back to NYC, Win calls him and instructs him to turn on the radio. The newscaster announces that "short hairs" of Esperanza's was found at Clu's apartment. Myron and Win conclude that these must be pubic hairs and that Esperanza and Clu had been having an affair. Myron is shocked and denies that this can be true. Win further presses that Esperanza probably killed Clu. As Myron attempts to defend her, Win hangs up the phone.

Myron makes his way to Take A Guess where he is supposed to meet Big Cyndi. The two enter the bar and Big Cyndi says she will go to find Pat the bar owner. While waiting for Big Cyndi, Myron is approached by a beautiful woman - well at least Myron thinks she is a woman. The enigma introduces herself as Thrill. Thrill is confident, straightforward, and heavily hitting on Myron. While Myron is excited, he feels that he cannot relax until he knows if Thrill is a man or woman. She refuses to tell him. Thrill and Myron continue to flirt until he is approached by Big Cyndi. She wants to introduce him to Pat.

Myron follows her. Myron attempts to ask Pat questions about Clu, but Pat refuses to acknowledge that he knew Clu. Myron threatens to expose Pat's clientele at Take A Guess, but Pat refuses to cooperate. He gets angry with Myron and tells Big Cyndi to go outside for a couple of minutes. Big Cyndi does not think it is a good idea to leave Myron alone, but he insists that it is fine. As Myron continues to attempt to question Pat, two sets of large hands grab him.

Myron is roughly taken into a private back room. Before Myron knows it, he is on his back. He looks up to find that two women (no cross-dressers) have taken him captive. They begin to beat him repeatedly. One of the cross dressers is particularly brutal. He/she actually has a knife in his boot and continues to slash Myron with it. The other cross-dresser uses a cattle prob to zap Myron in the back of the knees. Myron tries to stand up and defend himself but is constantly beat down. Finally he decides to throw himself at the two way mirror that is in the room. He shatters the mirror with the weight of his body. Myron makes his way to the door to find Big Cyndi.



## Chapters 13- 15 Analysis

Again, the theme of sexuality and gender is discussed. Myron is very uncomfortable by the idea of Take A Guess. He also judges other people for frequenting the bar. Myron is unwilling to see that people are simply experimenting with their own sexuality and being free to be attracted to the person. Big Cyndi criticizes Myron because he is not understanding. Although Big Cyndi may not be the most articulate person, she correctly calls Myron a conservative.

Myron is quite shaken by Thrill. Before entering the club, Myron viewed the visit strictly as business. Once Thrill shows interest, he is confused and overwhelmed. He obviously likes Thrill and enjoys her company but he cannot let it go that she might actually be a he. Myron is not comfortable with himself or his sexuality. He is very set in his ways and cannot bring himself to change. It is interesting that Coben does not choose to develop Myron's understanding of other's sexuality or sexual preferences. It seems as though Coben is attempting to show Myron's conservatism against the backdrop of the sexual unknown.



## Chapters 16-18, (pages 150-183)

### Chapters 16-18, (pages 150-183) Summary

Back at Win's apartment, Myron explains what happened to him. Win had called a private doctor to see to Myron's wounds. As the doctor patches Myron up, Win laughs that a couple of "women" beat up Myron. Myron is too exhausted to bicker with Win and passes out on his friend's couch. When he awakens he decides to call Hester and demands to speak with Esperanza. To his surprise, she agrees to let him see her.

The first words out of Myron's mouth with he sees Esperanza are, "I killed someone." Myron does not elaborate but Esperanza figures out this is why he ran away to the Caribbean. It also has something to do with the woman named Brenda. Esperanza can see through Myron's plan and quickly sets him straight. She is still not going to tell him anything about Clu or the murder. Myron tries to confide in her that he does not feel sorry for killing, but that a month ago it was a necessary thing he had to do. Esperanza is taken aback by this admission because it does not sound like the Myron she knows. She thinks that Win, who most people see as a cold-hearted semi-psychopath, and Myron are becoming too much alike. She does not like that Myron is bending laws and rules and justifying wrong actions.

Esperanza explains that she has had to keep Myron in the dark so that if subpoenaed, he will not lie for her. Myron continues to push her for answers but she refuses to answer and calls for the guard. As Myron leaves the courthouse, he is subpoenaed. At least her won't have to lie because he knows nothing.

Myron makes his way to Yankee stadium to meet with Sophie and Jared Mayor. As soon as Myron enters Sophie's office she bombards him with questions. Why was he in the Caribbean? Why didn't he tell anyone where he was? Sophie insists that she relied on Myron to keep Clu in check. Calmly, Myron tells Sophie that there was always a chance that Clu could relapse because most recovering drug abusers do. They both shared the risks in representing and supporting Clu. Sophie insisted that Myron promised he would watch out for Clu and up until 3 weeks ago, Myron had. With his sudden departure to the Caribbean, Clu's life seemed to fall a part.

Myron acknowledges to Sophie that he did not fulfill his promise in this regard, but he also wants to investigate Clu's drug test. Clu had claimed he was staying clean. Never before had Clu said that a drug test was wrong. When he usually failed them, he begged everyone's forgiveness. This change in behavior has caused Myron to think that something was amiss with the test. He questions Sophie for exactly how they were administered.

Sophie becomes angered with Myron's prodding. As far as she is concerned, she is the wronged party. She took a chance on Clu and he failed miserably. Myron begins to tell her that it is essential for him to know whether or not Clu's test was wrong. If it was



wrong, his contract with the Yankees would be valid and Sophie Mayor would owe Clu's family the remainder of his contract. Upon hearing Myron's thoughts, Sophie becomes outraged. She cannot believe he is trying to squeeze another penny out of her.

As Sophie yells at Myron, something catches his eye behind her. It is the picture of the girl from the diskette. Suddenly, Myron feels sick to his stomach. Why was he sent a picture of Sophie Mayor's daughter? Myron is uncomfortable and confused. Sophie continues to yell at him. Myron abruptly tells her he must leave. Sophie refuses him access to the doctor that administered the test, but Myron feels he cannot argue with Sophie. He quickly says his goodbyes and leave her office.

When Myron returns to his office he is greeted by Big Cyndi. Curious about the connection between Sophie Mayor's daughter and the girl on the diskette he decides to call an old press connection named Bruce Taylor. Taylor is shocked to hear from Myron and immediately begins bothering him about Esperanza's case. Myron promises to give Bruce and exclusive if he can answer a few questions on another subject. Bruce agrees and Myron tells him that his official statement is that he fully stands behind Esperanza's innocence. Bruce is unsatisfied, but Myron refuses to give more details.

Myron then asks Bruce to tell him about Sophie Mayor. Bruce is curious about Myron's interest but proceeds to give him Sophie's past information. Sophie is from the Midwest. She became a professor and taught at Tufts University. With her husband, Sophie created financial software and sold it to a major corporation, thus making them millionaires and then billionaires. The Mayors then decided to buy a sports franchise. Shortly after, Sophie's husband, Gary, died. Sophie remained the owner of the team, but mostly took a hands off approach. The only thing she had wanted was the trade for Clu. Many critics had panned her decision, but Clu had turned out to be a success.

Myron listened carefully as Bruce told him about Sophie's past. Finally, he prodded Bruce for more information about Sophie's daughter. Bruce remembered that fifteen years ago, Lucy Mayor had taken off with her then boyfriend. The Mayors were worried about her disappearance and headed a public media search to find their daughter. They never found her.

## **Chapters 16-18, (pages 150-183) Analysis**

Again, Myron is seen grappling with his inner struggle over his moral obligations to himself and other people. Esperanza comments that he is becoming more and more like Win, which frightens Myron. He and Win are very close, but that does not mean that Myron wants to be Win. This seems to really make him nervous and concerned. Myron also seems somewhat relieved because Esperanza has revealed the reason why she will not tell Myron what has happened. She still trusts him. She simply wants to protect him. Esperanza is concerned that Myron will lie for her under oath.

Myron's admittance to wanting to lie for Esperanza makes her extremely nervous. She knows Myron is a good man who is getting pulled into a dark underworld of lies and





deceit. She does not want him to turn into Win, who is again, Myron's foil and complete opposite. Myron realizes this and again questions his recent actions and decisions he has made, both without Win and under his influence.

This section is also important because Myron discovers who is on the diskette he receives. It is Lucy Mayor, Sophie Mayor's daughter. Myron does not at all understand the connection. Why would someone send this to him? Who is Lucy Mayor? There must be some connection between Clu and Lucy, but what is it?



## Chapters 19-21 (pg 184-220)

### Chapters 19-21 (pg 184-220) Summary

Myron makes his way to his car and decides to visit Sophie Mayor. When he arrives at her Long Island mansion, Sophie is surprisingly more cordial with Myron. Myron waists no time with Sophie. He asks her if she has had any contact with her daughter. Sophie sadly assures Myron that she has heard nothing from Lucy in over fifteen years. She has no idea whether she is dead or alive.

Not knowing exactly what to say, Myron begins to describe the diskette he received in the mail. Sophie wonders why he did not tell her about the diskette this morning. Myron admits that he was not exactly sure what to say. Sophie offers to have the disk examined but Myron explains that it was a self deleting disk. Sophie is clearly sadden with the memory of her daughter. She says that the police did everything they could to find her, but Lucy never turned up. "The not knowing. It gnaws at you."

Desperate, Sophie begins to ask Myron for his help. Clearly someone is trying to reach out to him about Lucy. Myron does not know if he will be any help in finding Lucy, but he promises that he will keep it on his radar while he searches for Clu's murderer.

Back at the office, Myron continues to call old clients and persuade them to come back to MB Sports Reps. He then gets a call from Big Cyndi telling him that Thrill, the "woman" he met at Take A Guess is here to see him. Myron is excited about the reunion. To his surprise a cute brunette with classes, smaller breasts, and a business suit enters his office. He is very thankful she is indeed a woman. "Thrill" introduces herself as Nancy Sinclair. Nancy is a reporter doing a story on the Take A Guess club. Myron is dumbfounded. Nancy dresses the part of Thrill and flirts with people to gauge their reactions to her.

Nancy informs Myron that Pat has asked her to invite him to another club tonight. Pat would like to talk to Myron. Myron is skeptical, especially because he was viciously beaten by two cross-dressers. Nancy says that Zorra promised to contain herself tonight. Myron assumes this is the cross-dresser with a boot knife who slashed a 'Z' into his chest. The two agree to meet tonight to see Pat.

Upon leaving the office and meeting Win, Myron is confronted by FJ and two of his lackeys. Myron and Win go to talk to FJ, who is angry with Myron for visiting Sophie Mayor. Win does not like the lip that the two lackeys are giving him and proceeds to strike one in the throat and kick another in the jaw. FJ is annoyed and frightened. He tells him he has no business going to see the Yankees when he no longer has a client with them. Evidently, Clu had left MB Sports during Myron's absence. FJ threatens Myron to stay away from all of his clients. Myron is too shocked to respond.



## Chapters 19-21 (pg 184-220) Analysis

A bit of foreshadowing takes place in this section. Sophie is insistent that Myron and Lucy have some kind of connection to each other. Myron is very doubtful about this. How can they be connected? Myron does not recall ever meeting Lucy. How could someone think he knew of her whereabouts? Later on in the novel, the reader learns the true connection between Myron and Lucy. Sophie's pushing Myron to find out who sent the diskette actually leads him to discover who what happened to Lucy.

Myron is devastated when he learns that Clu left MB Sports without his knowledge. He must discover why Clu felt so desperate that he needed to leave Myron's company.



## Chapters 22-24 (pages 222-248)

### Chapters 22-24 (pages 222-248) Summary

As Win and Myron head up to the Bronx to visit Yankee stadium again, Myron is angry that Win beat the two men up. While the two are unlikely friends, it is only rarely that Win's violent nature makes Myron upset. The two argue until they have reached the stadium. Before the game starts, Myron wants to speak with Enos Cabral, Clu's roommate during away games.

Enos is happy to see Myron, but sad to talk about Clu. Apparently Clu was really trying to stay clean and stay away from women. Myron presses him as to whether there was anyone that Clu might have been seeing on the side. If he was doing so well, why had Bonnie thrown him out? Enos is puzzled. Bonnie was not divorcing Clu because he had had another affair. She was divorcing him because she was having an affair. Myron, shocked and confused, says goodbye to Enos and leaves the stadium.

Myron decides to head straight to Bonnie's house and confront her. He has figured out that she was having an affair with Esperanza! This is why Esperanza's pubic hairs were found at Clu's apartment. Bonnie and Clu had an apartment in NYC where neither frequently stayed. This had become Esperanza and Bonnie's meeting place. Bonnie, clearly annoyed and scared that Myron knows about the affair tells him that she did not kill Clu. But now he should understand why Hester, Esperanza and herself have been trying to keep details under wraps. Bonnie is not sure how Clu found out about the affair, but a jury and press would have a field day if they knew Bonnie and Esperanza had been lovers.

Later that night, Thrill, not Nancy Sinclair, meets Myron at a bar called Biker Wannabe. The two sit at a table and order drinks while they wait for Pat and Zorra. Myron decides that although Thrill is a knockout, he prefers Nancy Sinclair. As the two talk, Pat and Zorra, the cross-dresser, approach Myron. They tell him that if he wants answers he needs to come with Pat. Zorra will not be violent tonight. They also inform him that Win needs to reveal himself. Out of no where Win appears and tells Myron that it is not a good idea if Win cannot come with him. Myron thinks that he can manage by himself and that it is the only way he can get answers. Win insists that Myron's mobile remain on so that he can hear everything that is going on. Pat agrees. Zorra also agrees to stay with Win. She says that if anything happens to Myron Win can kill her. Win accepts but says that if anything happens to Myron he may choose to hurt Zorra but will definitely hunt Pat down and make him pay.

### Chapters 22-24 (pages 222-248) Analysis

The revelation of Bonnie and Esperanza's affair startles Myron, but also makes perfect sense. Esperanza would have not been interested in Clu, but she would be interested in

his beautiful lonely wife. Esperanza wanted to keep the affair a secret because the DA would have an even bigger reason to suspect that she did kill Clu. Bonnie is horrified at Myron's discovery. She does not think that his investigation has helped Esperanza's case. Myron cannot believe that Bonnie would start a relationship with a woman after being with Clu for so long. She explains that she fell in love with the person Esperanza is, not whether she is a woman or a man. Myron seems to understand this part of the relationship, but still cannot wrap his mind around the entire situation.

Again, Myron's conservative and unyielding view to sexuality and gender is examined with the arrival of Thrill aka Nancy Sinclair at his office. Once he knows that Thrill is definitely a woman, he can be interested in her.



## Chapters 25- Chapter 27 (pages 250-277)

### Chapters 25- Chapter 27 (pages 250-277) Summary

As Myron and Pat reach Pat's car, Pat frisks Myron and instructs him to put a hood over his head. Myron cannot believe he is actually being blindfolded but goes along with it so that he can find out more concerning Clu and Take A Guess. Once at their destination, Pat led Myron to a warehouse where he sits him down on a chair. He can hear whispering in the distance. Suddenly someone says "Hello, Myron." It does not take Myron long to realize that it is Billy Lee Palms.

Myron takes off the hood and sees Billy Lee. He is shocked to find that Billy Lee is dressed as a woman. He is actually one of the cross-dressers that assaulted him last night. Myron is also staring down the barrel of a shot gun. For Win's benefit, he speaks loudly into the mobile phone to let everyone know. Billy Lee laughs at this, grabs the phone, hangs up on Win and throws it to the ground. He and Pat then bound Myron's arms. Now Myron is scared. Billy Lee looks unstable. Pat is asking Billy Lee to calm down, but Billy is screaming at Pat instructing him to finish tying Myron up.

Billy Lee then accuses Myron of trying to kill him. He thinks that Myron killed Clu. Myron insists that he did not, but Billy Lee is positive that Myron has been trying to kill him. Billy Lee will not let Myron talk, he continues to point the barrel of the gun. Myron realizes that there is nothing to stop Billy Lee from shooting. Before the gun goes off, he throws himself to the floor. Myron manages to tell Billy Lee that he will help him. Billy Lee laughs at this. After all this time, Myron has done nothing for him. It was always all about Clu. Even though Clu messed up, because he was such a remarkable athlete, many of his transgressions could be forgiven.

Billy Lee lowers the gun again. Pat begs him to stop, that Win will find them and kill them. Billy Lee ignores Pat. Pat decides to lung at Billy Lee, who quickly turns and shoots Pat in the chest. Billy begins to wail and cry. Myron tries to break free but Billy Lee sees him and turns the gun on him again. Before he can shoot, a shot rings out. Billy Lee slumps down. The first shot had hit his hand, the second his knee, and the third is head.

Myron still on the floor, finally breaks free of his restraints. He grabs his mobile and runs out of the warehouse. He throws up and then calls Win. Win clams him down and tells him not to call the police. He sends for a car to pick Myron up.

Once back at Win's place, they call a doctor to stitch Myron back up. They then discuss that night's events. Myron is perplexed he does not understand how Billy Lee fits into any of this. He decides to sleep. As he awakens in the night, something finally clicks. Myron decides to call FJ's office in the morning, but his secretary claims he is out. He tells her that it is imperative that he speak with FJ and to have him contact Myron as soon as possible.



He then gets a call from Sandy Li, a medical examiner from Bergen county, who owed Myron a favor. She informs him that Clu's body was moved after she was killed. He was also completely clean from heroine. He had not been taking drugs! Myron decides that it is imperative for him and Win to track down Sawyer Wells and question him because Sophie Mayor had said he was present at Clu's failed drug test.

## **Chapters 25- Chapter 27 (pages 250-277) Analysis**

Billy Lee Palms is a prime example of the theme of self destruction. Billy Lee attempted the same type of life the Clu had, but ended up almost as bad. After being used up by all the girls, booze, and drugs Billy Lee is a shell of a man that he once was. He fell into depression and anger. After attempting to go to rehab and come clean, Billy Lee continues to fail. Finally he ends up as a cross-dressing bouncer with a mental imbalance. His paranoia and unstable mental state are all because of the crazy, unsafe life he has lead. This is also what leads him to be murdered. Eventually, everything catches up to him.



# Chapters 28- 30

## Chapters 28- 30 Summary and Analysis

As an inspirational speaker, Sawyer had been counseling Clu, as well as the rest of the Yankees. Win and Myron decide to confront Sawyer about the drug test. At first Sawyer attempts to be very friendly with Myron and Win. He sees them both as potential clients who may enlist his services for their companies. Win and Myron don't believe any of the crap that Sawyer spews.

Sawyer tells Myron and Win that he worked with Clu to keep him off drugs. He was present at every drug test Clu had. Myron immediately accuses Sawyer of fixing the test. He says that Sawyer is quitting the Yankees to work for Riverton Press, which is owned by Vincent Riverton, Riverton was the old owner of the Yankees. Sophie Mayor's arch enemy. Sawyer vehemently denies fixing the tests. He says that he thinks Clu was on drugs, if not then the test was faulty. Sawyer has had it with Win and Myron's teasing and stalks off. Myron and Win decided that they should follow up with FJ.

Myron calls Sophie and lets her know that he thinks someone is trying to harm her. Sawyer must have tampered with Clu's test on Riverton's orders. This would make Sophie look like an incompetent owner. Sophie does not understand what this has to do with Lucy and begs Myron to keep looking. She says she will have Jared look into the test, but she wants Myron to find Lucy.

Finally FJ calls back. He says that he will meet with Myron, but Win cannot be there.





## Chapters 31-33 (pages 312-329)

### Chapters 31-33 (pages 312-329) Summary

FJ and Myron meet at Starbucks with Win waiting outside for Myron. Myron cuts to the chase and accuses FJ of telling Clu about the affair between Bonnie and Esperanza. Slyly, FJ admits that he did follow Esperanza and Bonnie to their meeting places. He also claims that he did it because he had to find a way for Clu to switch representation to TruPro. He could promise Clu safety and an agency that would protect him, not betray him.

Myron understands that Clu felt alone and betrayed. He pushes FJ for more, but FJ insists he stopped following the lovers because he became bored. He never saw who killed Clu. He did however, leave an intriguing message on Clu's answering machine, telling him he knew who his wife was sleeping with. FJ promises to tell Myron where the call was coming from, as long as Myron promises not to call his clients that have switched to TruPro. After some debate, Myron agrees. FJ gives Myron the number.

The number turns out to be for the Hamlet Motel in Massachusetts. Myron knows this is where Bonnie and Clu lived for a time but does not know why Clu might have gone there three days before he died. He calls Win. The two meet up and head out of town.

Once in Massachusetts, Win and Myron go to the hotel. They bribe the clerk for Clu's phone records from the night he stayed there. Myron spots one local number and decides to call Big Cyndi and have her track the number. Cyndi lets Myron know that the phone number belongs to Barbara Cromwell. The two men decide to go pay Ms. Cromwell a visit.

### Chapters 31-33 (pages 312-329) Analysis

FJ's slimy and back handed character is conveyed in this section. He clearly does not care about the harm he has caused Clu Haid and the his family. All he cared about was gaining another client. After telling Clu about the affair FJ offered no council or help, he simply allowed Clu to go off of the deep end. Myron feel guilty for not being available to help Clu. As his agent and friend, he should have been there to offer support and possibly guidance. Myron again feels guilty for his actions and second guesses himself.



## Chapters 34-36 (pages 330-340)

### Chapters 34-36 (pages 330-340) Summary

Win and Myron arrive at Barbara Cromwell's house. Win waits in the car while Myron knocks on the door. A woman walks to the door but does not open it. She rudely asks what Myron wants. Myron tells her that he just wants to speak with her. Barbara refuses. She tells him that he should leave immediately. In the background, Myron can hear a little boy whispering to her. Myron continues to ask Barbara to let him in. Finally, she threatens to call the police. Myron gives up and joins Win in the car.

Myron decides to go to the police station in town. Back when Clu got into some trouble there, he bribed a couple of officers to keep quiet about the situation. He asks the cop at the desk if two officers, Kolber and Sheriff Lemmon are still on the force. He is told that Lemmon died two years ago while Kolber is no longer with the force. The officer wants to know who Myron is. Myron explains that he is a sports agent who is trying to keep his clients out of harm's way from women seeking money. Myron presses the officer for information on Barbara Cromwell. The officer laughs at this statement. He exclaims that Barbara Cromwell is Lemmon's daughter, not a woman looking for some athlete's money.

Myron feels as though he needs time to think. As he walks around town, he attempts to piece together how Barbara Cromwell, the Hamlet Motel, Lucy Mayor, Billy Lee, and himself all fit into Clu's murder. He decides to go back to Barbara's house. After explaining who he is, she finally lets him in. They talk for a while. Myron then calls Hester and Bonnie telling them they must meet him as soon as possible. Last, he calls Sophie Mayor and informs her he has found Lucy.

### Chapters 34-36 (pages 330-340) Analysis

This section is very essential to the book because Myron has finally figured out who killed Clu and why. Surprisingly, Coben is very vague in his description of what is occurring in the book. Different scenes are not tied together well. It feels as though he is jumping from section to section. This may be because he is attempting to confuse the reader so that he can keep them guessing up until the last paragraphs of the book. Even if this is the reason, Coben should still make sure that the reader does not become too confused with the book.



## Chapters 37-40 (pages 341-372)

### Chapters 37-40 (pages 341-372) Summary

Myron meets Bonnie and Hester at Hester's office and begins to fill them in on what he knows. He has figured out the Esperanza has kept them in the dark so that Myron would be safe. Back when Clu had been signed to his first professional team, he, Billy Lee, and Bonnie had gone drinking to celebrate. Clu decided to drive home. There was an accident and Bonnie was knocked out from the tree slamming into a tree. Clu and Billy Lee had called Myron to help them. Myron, realizing that Clu could lose his contract, bribe two officers, Sheriff Lemmon and Kolber to keep quiet about the incident.

At the time, Myron was surprised that Billy Lee had been acting like the third wheel to Bonnie and Clu. Wouldn't Billy Lee have brought his own date? Myron had stopped worrying at the time, but now, he realizes that there had to have been a fourth person in the car. Hester and Myron look at Bonnie. Bonnie admits that Lucy Mayor was in the car with them before the accident. Bonnie did not know what happened to her because she had been unconscious. Bonnie did not realize it was the Mayor's missing daughter because Billy Lee was always with a different girl.

Hester does not follow, what is Myron getting at? Myron tells her that no one was trying to frame Esperanza for Clu's murder, they were trying to frame him.

Myron meets Sophie and Jared Mayor at Yankee stadium. The two Mayors act as though they are anticipating Myron's news about Lucy. Myron quickly confronts them by saying that he knows Lucy is dead. She was killed in a car accident. Myron has concluded that Sophie knew this. Sophie does not disagree. She waits for Myron to continue.

After the car crashed, Billy Lee and Clu panicked. Sure they could get out of the drunk driving charges, but the press would have a field day if they knew someone had died in the crash. Stupidly, Clu and Billy Lee drag Lucy's body from the car and hid it. They then called Myron. Myron bribed the police officers to forget the accident and call an ambulance to take Bonnie to the hospital. After the scene was cleared, Billy Lee and Clu most have gone back and buried Lucy's body.

Clu and Billy Lee did not learn their lesson. They went on drinking and taking drugs recklessly. This landed Billy Lee in a rehab center where Sawyer Wells worked. Sawyer helps Billy Lee with his addictions. Billy Lee in turn confessed what he and Clu had done. Sawyer, knowing of Lucy's case, went to Sophie with the information. Sophie must have realized that after this many years, evidence (Lucy's body) would have not held up. Thus, Sophie decided to take justice into her own hands. She and her husbands decide to buy the Yankees just so that they can hire Clu. Once Clu seems to be doing better, they decide to take everything away from him- his family, career, and money. She also sent Clu the same diskette that Myron had been sent. This makes Clu



feel guilty. Bonnie then files for divorce. Sophie then begins blackmailing Clu for money. She had him living in complete fear. When he thought it could not get any worse, Sophie tampered with Clu's drug test.

Clu had thought that maybe Barbara Cromwell had told someone about the crime. She and her father had been blackmailing Clu for years. Clu had gone to Massachusetts to make Barbara stop.

Sophie does not deny anything. She asks Myron instead to admit his part in everything. Myron admits that it was wrong to bribe the officers, but he promises he knew nothing of Lucy's murder. Sophie claims this did not matter. If he had not bribed them, the case wouldn't have been closed. They could have still found Sophie. This is why she wanted to frame him for Clu's murder. To her dismay, Myron left town suddenly, leaving Esperanza to be the most likely suspect.

Myron understands all this, but cannot understand why Sophie killed Clu. Didn't she want him to suffer. Sophie reveals that she did not kill Clu. He killed himself. It was the best revenge she could ask for. She had wanted Billy Lee to suffer too, but when she saw him about to kill Myron she decided to intervene. Clu however suffered the most. He drove himself to take his own life. Myron is horrified. He had never thought that Clu killed himself because of the crime scene. Sophie explains that she and Jared moved the body and planted the evidence to frame Myron. Sophie tells Myron that she will not let Esperanza rot in jail. She will also not clear Clu's memory. Myron will also have to live with what he has done. The two part ways, Myron very contemplative and confused.

## **Chapters 37-40 (pages 341-372) Analysis**

The foreshadowed connection between Myron and Lucy Mayor is finally discovered in this chapter. It is interesting that although Sophie knew Myron did not know that Lucy was a passenger in the car, she still feels like he should pay for his involvement in the entire situation.

Clu drives himself to take his life. His reckless living leads him on a path of desperation and destruction. On the other hand, It is almost symbolic that Myron was not framed for Clu's murder. Myron was a talented athlete that lost his ability to play basketball after a horrible knee injury. Instead of deciding to lead the kinds of lives that Clu and Billy Lee led, Myron bounced back. He attended law school, started his own company, and has fun, but is not reckless and dangerous to others. Myron is the example of the all around good guy who fights within himself to do the right thing. In this case, the good guy came out on top because Myron was not framed for Clu's murder.



# Characters

## Myron Bolitar

Myron is the novel's main character. After a serious knee injury sidelined Myron from playing professional basketball. He attends Harvard Law School and becomes a lawyer. He then decides to start his own sports representation agency called MB Sports Reps. Myron's company has been extremely prosperous in the years it has been open. While Myron manages his company, he also tends to get involved of the lives of his clients. When they get into trouble, Myron often takes it upon himself to solve their problems as well as mysteries that come up along the way.

Throughout this book, Myron is trying to escape something that has happened three weeks ago. The reader never learns exactly what it is, but Myron is desperately trying to come to terms with the events of the prior month. Myron has decided to run away to the Caribbean to figure out his thoughts. In doing this, he completely ignores his business, but also saves himself from being framed for Clu's murder.

To the reader, Myron is perceived as the all around good guy. He cares about his family, his friends, and innocent people. He is constantly grappling with being a good honest person while trying to survive in New York City as a cut-throat sports agent. He also has to get violent and rough to find the truth in what is going on around him. It is interesting that Win is his best friend because he is his foil. Win never thinks twice about his harsh actions, but there is a constant fight within Myron to do good.

## Winsdor Lockwood (Win)

Win is surprisingly Myron's best friend. They attended college together at Duke. He is often referred to as cold-hearted and psychotic because of his violent actions and meticulous, calculating thoughts. Win does not hesitate to beat up one of FJ's goons or to track someone down and kill them. He is extremely wealthy and owns a financial firm called Lock-Home Securities. Myron mandates that all of his clients use Lock-Home Securities to manage their investments so that they are not taken advantage of.

As stated before, Win seems to be Myron's foil. Myron cares for people and wants to help innocent people. Win on the other hand, will do whatever necessary to help his or Myron's personal gains. Win's cold logic does not leave room for much feeling. He is the one that constantly reminds Myron that Esperanza is probably guilty.

Although Win does not seem to care about anyone, he always has Myron's back. When Myron's life is in danger, he threatens everyone to get him back in safety.



## Clu Haid

Although the reader only hears of Clu through other characters, he is essential to the plot of the novel.

Clu is a famous New York Yankees baseball player and one of Myron's clients until he is driven to commit suicide because of his demons. Clu is believed to be murdered by Esperanza Diaz, his wife's lover. Clu's past is marred with drug and alcohol abuse, adultery, and violence. As his agent, Myron has had to bail him out of trouble many times. Clu was always forgiven because of his talent as a baseball player.

His role in the death of Lucy Mayor, along with the drugs and debauchery, are what finally do Clu in. He thinks his life has taken a turn for the better, he is attempting to stay clean and do better for himself, but Sophie Mayor ruins this. She brings him to such a state of panic and desperation that he cannot bare to live with himself. Clu cannot get in touch with Myron and his wife has cut him out of her life.

## Esperanza Diaz

Esperanza is a former wrestling star, who joined Myron's company working as a secretary. She worked her way up through MB Sports Reps to become his partner. Along the way, Esperanza also became Myron's friend. When Myron returns from the Caribbean, he is shocked to find that Esperanza has been framed for Clu's murder. It is later revealed that Esperanza is having an affair with Clu's wife, Bonnie Haid.

Esperanza refuses to involve Myron in her case because she knows that someone is trying to frame him. She wants to protect him, but also wants to protect her and Bonnie's relationship.

## Bonnie Haid

Bonnie is Clu's wife. They have been married for over 12 years and have two young boys together. Bonnie is having an affair with Esperanza. Because of the affair, and Clu's past she decides to divorce Clu. This is one of the reasons he decides to kill himself.

Bonnie is in the car when Clu crashes in Massachusetts twelve years ago, but she does not know that Clu and Billy Lee hid Lucy Mayor's body after the accident.

## Hester Crimestien

Hester is Esperanza's lawyer. She also had a relationship with Esperanza a couple of years ago. She demands that Myron mind his own business and stop investigating the case.



## **FJ or Frank Junior**

FJ is the owner of TruPro, a rival sports representation company. FJ comes from a prominent crime family in New York City. He uses financial intimidation and force to con athletes into joining their company. FJ followed Esperanza and Bonnie around until he learned about the affair between them. He then leaked the affair to Clu. FJ has aims to take over MB Sports Reps, but Myron will not sell.

## **Terese Collins**

Terese is the beautiful CNN news anchor that Myron escapes to the Caribbean with.

## **Sophie Mayor**

Sophie is the billionaire owner of the New York Yankees. Sophie is sad, bitter, and full of revenge. She and her husband bought the team so that they could hire Clu and then ruin his life because he killed their daughter Lucy in a drunk driving accident. Sophie also attempts to frame Myron for Clu's murder so that she can seek revenge on Myron for bribing the two police officers who arrived at the crime scene. Sophie pretends that she is really searching for Lucy, while Myron begins to delve deeper into what happened twelve years ago.

## **Jared Mayor**

Jared is Sophie's son. He helped Sophie carry out her plan to avenge Lucy's murder.

## **Billy Lee Palms**

Billy Lee attended college with Clu, Myron, and Win. He was also supposed to be a professional athlete, but fails his first season. He never recovers from his failure and sinks deeper into drugs, alcohol, and women. When Myron finds Billy Lee, he is a crazed cross-dresser. He thinks that Myron is trying to kill him. Billy Lee is killed by Sophie Mayor.

## **Pat**

Pat is one of the owners of Take A Chance. He dies when Billy Lee shoots him on accident.



## **Thrill/ Nancy Sinclair**

Nancy Sinclair, a journalist, goes to Take a Chance undercover as Thrill. She is doing a story on the bar.

## **Zorra**

A cross-dressing bouncer that beats Myron up.

## **Sawyer Wells**

An inspirational speaker who is hired by Sophie Mayor to council Yankee Baseball Players.

## **Big Cyndi**

Big Cyndi is an ex-wrestler who works as Myron's secretary. She is close friends with Esperanza.





## **Objects/Places**

### **New York City**

The city in which most of the book is set.

### **Take A Guess**

New York City club in which patrons visit the bar and "take a chance" to see who they go home with. Women can dress as women or men and vice versa.

### **Massachusetts**

This is where Clu crashes the car and buries Lucy Mayor's body.

### **Hamlet Motel**

This is this hotel where Clu and Bonnie lived.

### **The Wells Guide to Wellness; The Wells Rules for Wellness; K**

These are Sawyer Wells' books that are very popular among many New Yorkers.

### **MB Sports Reps**

Mryon's sports representation company.

### **TruPro**

FJ's corrupt sports representation company.

### **Yankee Stadium**

Myron visits Sophie Mayor and her office here several times.



## **Barbara Cromwell's Home**

Barbara Cromwell's house is located in Massachusetts. Myron confronts her about Clu's blackmail here.

## **Leather and Lace**

The club where Pat and Zorra meet Myron to discuss Clu. Thrill ( Nancy Sinclair is also present at this meeting).



# Themes

## Sexualtiy and gender

While not the entire focus of the book, Coben tries to explore what he calls the "sexual underworld" of New York City. This also sheds some light on Myron's own problems with sexuality and accepting people who are different from himself. This is personified by Take A Chance, a club in which a patron literally takes a chance on who they may become interested in or take home. At Take A Chance, women can dress as women or as men. The club is all about taking a risk with one's sexual orientation. As a straight-laced kind of guy, Myron does not understand why someone would want to go to a place like this.

When Myron meets Thrill, he is constantly hoping that she is actually a woman. While he admits he is having fun with Thrill and whatever Thrill is, he will not allow himself to form any further of an attachment until he knows for certain "what" Thrill is. After he finds out that Thrill is a woman, Nancy Sinclair, he feels as though he can have a "normal" attraction to her. Thrill bends conventions that Myron cannot understand.

Billy Lee and Zorra are another example of "gender benders." Billy Lee, once a handsome, muscular, and lady's man kind of man, is now a weak, sallow cross-dresser. While trying to look like a woman, he beats Myron to a pulp. Zorra an ex-bouncer, does this also. They are trying to dress as women, but impart the power of men on Myron. This thoroughly frightens Myron who cannot see beyond their choice to dress like women.

Myron is also very shocked by the relationship between Esperanza and Bonnie. Throughout the book, references to Esperanza's sexuality are made before the affair is uncovered. Myron always seems uncomfortable with the fact that Esperanza is bisexual. He always wishes she was heterosexual. Because of this, Bonnie and Esperanza's relationship seems surreal to Myron.

## Self Destruction

Most of the book is a chronicle of the life style that led both Clu and Billy Lee through their own individual paths of self destruction and death. Clu had everything. He was very talented, loved by his fans, had a beautiful wife and family, and wealth. Sadly, Clu relied on these things too much. He knew because he had all of this, not many people would let him loose it. Myron, Bonnie, team managers, and others would bend over backwards to make sure that if Clu was in trouble it was quickly cleared up.

All of the cover-ups did nothing to teach Clu a lesson. He still persisted in the drugs, alcohol, and endless women. He set himself up on this path with the help of friends like Myron who constantly bailed him out. Although Clu was trying to clean himself up, there



were so many past transgressions that he had never had to assume responsibility for. However, Sophie Mayor made him pay for the past with his life.

Billy Lee is also a lesson in a wasted life. After his injury, he could not get over that he was not going to be famous. He never recovered and fell deeper into booze and drugs. After a stint in rehab, Billy Lee emerged, but not healed. The drugs had damaged his brain and his life. In his demented stage, he kidnaps Myron after believing Myron is trying to kill him. Billy Lee is also brought down by Sophie Mayor for his involvement in Lucy's death.

## **Morality/Myron and Win Foil**

Morality is a recurring theme throughout the book. Myron is constantly struggling with his good side and bad side. This is especially seen in the incident that happens a month before Clu is murdered. Myron feels so guilty that he must escape from New York City. At first, Coben does not reveal what Myron has done. When he does reveal that Myron killed someone, the reader is left to wonder what exactly has happened. As Myron attempts to discover who murdered Clu, he is constantly faced with his own conscience. He questions his part in allowing Win to manhandle thugs and criminals, just as he wishes that he could clear innocent people like Esperanza. Myron notices that his self character is changing because he is beginning to justify violent and dishonest actions.

Unlike Win, Myron is haunted by the person he killed, violence he has enacted on others, and innocent people being hurt. It is extremely strange that Myron and Win are best friends. It seems that in this case, opposites definitely do attract. Win is cold-hearted, sharp, and and violent. He is often referred to as a psychopath by Esperanza. Win is exactly Myron's foil. Win feels no remorse for the crimes he commits.

The character foil of these two men allows for the theme of morality to surge throughout the novel. It is most likely present in Coben's other Myron Bolitar books because Myron seems as though he has not come to a final answer on his own morals.

# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person. This allows for the narrative to be omniscient. Instead of only getting the views and thoughts of Myron, an omniscient point of view gives the reader the ability to see what all characters are thinking and feeling. While Coben could have expanded on the views of others, he concentrates on Myron's. This helps the reader to understand Myron's constant struggle within himself to do the right, good thing rather than act cold and without consequence as Win does.

Because this is a mystery novel, it is interesting that Coben did choose a third person omniscient view. He is trying to conceal who committed the crime from the reader. It seems like this would have been done more effectively with a first person point of view. That way, the reader would only know Myron's feelings and feel just as lost as he does in solving the crime. The only draw back is that the reader would also be more involved in his discovery of the who did what leading up to Clu's death, so it might not have been as much of a surprise. The omniscient third person allows the reader some access to Myron's feelings, but can also keep information from the reader.

## Setting

The novel begins with Myron in the Caribbean with Terese Collins. The two are lounging on the beach as Win's yacht approaches the shore. The resort is described as being beautiful as well as tranquil, a needed escape after New York City life. After he arrives, Win tells Myron that Esperanza has been blamed for Clu Haid's murder. The two decide to travel back to the New York City.

New York City is where most of the story takes place. This is where Myron and Win live and own their businesses. It also seems to be a "rich kid" play ground. Win lives in a fancy apartment close to Central Park. Other residents include famous actors, actresses, and athletes.

The reader gets a lot of information as to where things are located on the island of Manhattan and the rest of New York City. Coben uses very specific locations to make the reader feel as though they traveling with Myron and Win. Researching the murder takes Myron and Win to such notable landmarks as Yankee Stadium and Penn Station. Also located in New York are Take A Chance and Leather and Lace, two clubs in which Myron visits Pat and Zorra to find out more information.

Although much of the action is in New York City, Win and Myron travel all over to find out what has happened to Clu. Myron goes to Massachusetts because he discovers that Clu stayed at the Hamlet Motel. It is in Massachusetts where the fatal car accident happens and Lucy Mayor's body is buried.



## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel tends to be comical and attempts to be witty, this is mostly carried out through bad and corny jokes that are told by Myron. At some points however, the book takes on a sad and serious tone. This happens when Myron makes discoveries concerning Clu's death. It also happens when Myron sympathizes over Clu's sordid and marred past. Coben enjoys mixing the two types of language in order to conceive this sort of bipolar tone.

The language allows for the reader to get to know Myron better. It is not at all formal, so the reader feels as though Myron's character is actually a friend. His corny jokes and non witty commentary make Myron easier to relate to. Many people do not have high powered, wealthy, famous, ex-pro athlete friends, so his character could have been harder to relate to. By making Myron more down to earth, Coben creates a character that allows ordinary people to be apart of extraordinary adventures.

## Structure

The novel is structured into forty short chapters. Most of the chapters are around four to ten pages each. This allows for the reader to quickly read the content and stay up to speed with what is going on during Myron's discovery of the mystery. Therefore the quick reading format of the story is perfect for a mystery novel.

Coben often uses subplots throughout the story. This is most likely because *A Final Detail* is one of many books about Myron Bolitar, his life, friends, and mysteries. When introducing a character that is not new to the series, Coben will have to give background information which can lead to talking about a subplot. This can be distracting to the reader because it takes away from the stream of conscience of the mystery



## Quotes

"That surprised Myron. Bonnie had never gone that far before. Their turmoil cycle had always been consistent: Clu does something stupid, a big fight ensues, Bonnie throws him out for a couple of nights, maybe a week, Clu begs forgiveness, Bonnie takes him back, Clu behaves for a little while, Clu does something stupid, the cycle starts anew." Chap. 7, pp 53

"There was nothing behind FJ's but rot and decay; it was like staring into broken windows of an abandoned building." Chap. 6 pp 41

"Thrill threw her head back and laughed. Myron looked for an Adam's apple. She had a black ribbon tied around the neck. Made it hard to tell. The laugh was a touch hoarse, but h, come on now." Chap. 15, pp 133

"Thanks for pointing that out. But my point is, we can just go and have dinner. Or go to a movie. We don't have to have any genital contact." Chap. 15, pp 137

"Myron tried to maintain a calm facade. Deep breathe in, deep breathe out. But he cold feel his pulse quicken. His mind fought through haze, searching for a temporary clearing." Chap 17, pp 166

"She was a good girl you know. Headstrong, sure. Too adventurous for her own good. But then again, I raised Lucy to be independent. " Chap. 19, pp 195

"My real name is Nancy Sinclair. I don't dress like Thrill for kicks. I'm a journalist and I am doing a story on Take A Guess.An insider's look at what goes on, what kind of people go there, what makes them tick." Chap. 20, pp 205

""I'm saying your reaction is human. I don't like it. I don't think its right. You may indeed be sinking into a quagmire. Bending the rules is getting easier and easier for you. Maybe the person you killed deserved it, but if you want to hear that, if you want absolution, go to Win." Chap. 16, pp 152

"You're right of course. I did learn about Esperanza and Bonnie. And I saw an opening. So I called Clu at the apartment in Forte Lee. But he was not there. I left rather an intriguing message on his machine. Something to the effect of, 'I know who your wife is sleeping with.' Chap. 30, pp 316

"Life is full of wants, Myron. But the DNA won't get in this case. He'll just have to live with that reality. And in the end, it's just a suicide anyway.High profile or not, it won't be high priority." Chap. 38, pp 358

"It might but more important, Esperanza was probably embarrassed. You have recently promoted her to partner. She was in charge of the entire operation. I know that you believe that Esperanza is too tough to care about such things, but I do not think that she would relish your disapproval. Chap. 14, pp 123



"Myron hesitated but not for long. The sunken eyes, once Myron could see them, were wet and unfocused and tinged with a dull red. Billy Lee's body was one tremor." Chap. 25, pp 253





## Topics for Discussion

Did you enjoy Coben's writing style throughout the book? Do you think it was effective in building the suspense of the plot?

Do you agree that Myron and Win are foils to one another? Why or Why not?

Was Esperanza right to keep Myron in the dark about her case? Do you think this made Myron's investigation unnecessarily tough?

Discuss the theme of sexuality and gender as it pertains to the characters of Thrill (Nancy Sinclair) and Zorra.

Do you think Win is perceived correctly by other characters in the book? Is he really as psychotic as everyone thinks or does his cold calculating logic simply frighten people?

Did you figure out the plots resolution before it is revealed by Coben? If so, what would you have changed to keep the reader guessing until the last minute?

If you did not figure out the ending, were you confused by Coben's reasoning once Myron explains what happened to Clu.

Explain the theme of morality. How does Coben use it to shape is story? Is Myron really a symbol of moral inner struggle?