

Graven Images Study Guide

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Contents

Graven Images Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
The Binnacle Boy, Chapters 1-4.....	3
Saint Crispin's Follower - Chapters 1-3.....	8
The Man of Influence - chapters 1 - 3.....	12
Characters.....	17
Objects/Places.....	20
Themes.....	23
Style.....	25
Quotes.....	27
Topics for Discussion.....	29



The Binnacle Boy, Chapters 1-4

The Binnacle Boy, Chapters 1-4 Summary

Ch. 1:

The brig Orion has left Cuba and is approaching the coast of Maine. Miss Evangeline Frye, a resident of New Bethany, opens her curtains as she thinks about the things that the day will bring. There is plenty of activity aboard the ship. Meanwhile, Miss Frye is at home waiting for her maid to arrive.

Miss Frye returns home and standing in her parlor, looks out the window. Miss Frye expects to see Sarah Peel as she gazes down Bartholomew Street. Miss Frye checks the town clock and sees that it is 8:15. Miss Peel is late. There is a great deal of cleaning, spinning and scrubbing to do. Miss Frye looks out over her garden. It is almost the 4th of July and the garden is thriving, blooming with tansy and marigolds. The flower seeds purchased from a street vendor had not bloomed and probably never would.

Miss Frye recalls what her mother had said: "Girls take after their mother, Evangeline. Men take after the Devil." (Chap. 1, p. 4)

Someone comes to the door. Miss Frye expects it be to Sarah, but it is Sarah's ten year old sister, Tekoa. Tekoa tells Miss Frye that she has come to do the work for the day because Sarah had fallen ill about the time she'd heard about the Orion. Miss Frye asks what the Orion has to do with Sarah's illness. Tekoa says when the boat came ashore, every one was found dead. Miss Frye's adopted son, Ethan, was aboard.

Chapter 2:

Bells toll to mark the passing of the crew of the Orion. The trunks are emptied and people don their mourning clothes. The crew is buried and yet the mystery remains. There is no evidence to be found.

"There was no sign of scurvy, no shortage of food. When the ship was boarded the crew was discovered to be lying about the decks as if hexed, with no witness to bear the tale to the living. None, that is, except the binnacle boy." (The Binnacle Boy, Chap. 2, p. 5)

The Binnacle Boy is a wooden statue created to hold the iron binnacle, which houses the ship's compass. The Binnacle Boy is described as being "Straight backed, sober lipped, in his jacket and cap, he stood resolutely before the helm, his lacquered eyes shining chicory blue." (The Binnacle Boy, chap. 2, p. 6)

After the seventeen sailors have been removed from the ship, the Binnacle Boy is removed, put onto a wagon and erected in front of the town hall, where he will hold the ship's compass and serve as a monument to those who have died.



The Binnacle Boy becomes a graven image. Families, particularly those that lost a family member on the Orion, stare at the statue for hours, as if it would give up the secret. Months later, the curiosity gives way to confession as the people begin to tell the Binnacle Boy all of their secrets, knowing he will never repeat them. The children of New Bethany start the practice first. Soon, everyone is going to the Binnacle Boy with their problems. The statue becomes a place to store those secrets that must never be spoken aloud.

Miss Frye takes delight in watching people go to the Binnacle Boy to tell their deepest darkest secrets. One afternoon as Miss Frye watches a farmer talk to the statue, she sees three women approach her house. Miss Frye tells Tekoa that they have company. Tekoa opens the door to find three women, complete with parasols: Miss Mayhew, Miss Bunch, and Mrs. Stiggins. The women say that they felt it was time to pay a visit to Miss Frye and to extend their condolences about Ethan. Miss Frye is not particularly pleased at the visit. Like Miss Frye, Mrs. Stiggins is dressed in a black mourning dress. Mrs. Stiggins says her son, Jeroboam, and Miss Frye's son, Ethan, were dear friends.

Miss Bunch asks Tekoa about Sarah's health. Tekoa says that Sarah is able to open her mouth and eat but she is still weak and refuses to speak. Miss Bunch tells Tekoa to sit down with them. Miss Frye agrees as long as Tekoa's work is caught up. Right away Miss Bunch notices Tekoa staring out the window. Miss Bunch wants to know what Tekoa sees. Miss Bunch does not believe that Tekoa sees nothing and comments that she would be reading the lips of the confessors if she knew how. Miss Mayhew smiles as if there is some secret between them. Miss Bunch asks Tekoa to tell them what is being said to the Binnacle Boy. Miss Frye protests. Miss Bunch says it will help to pass the time and to ease their grieving hearts if only for a little while. Miss Frye reluctantly agrees after it is decided that no one but Tekoa will know who is speaking to the statue.

Shortly after eleven o'clock, as signaled by the church bells, Tekoa sees someone approach the statue. After some coaxing, Tekoa reveals that she knows what killed the crew of the Orion.

Chapter 3:

Miss Frye's visitors leave and Tekoa returns to her chores. For the first time in weeks, Miss Frye goes into Ethan's room. Miss Frye thinks about her natural sons as well as Ethan. Miss Frye's two natural sons had turned wild and followed in their father's footsteps by going out to sea. Just like their father, the boys had developed a fondness for rum. Father and sons were aboard a schooner that went down in a storm just off the Georgia coast. Miss Frye was not sad or surprised. Miss Frye returned to using her maiden name. Miss Frye's mother, who had also been abandoned by her husband, says that the shipwreck was a fitting judgment.

"Men," she'd summed up, "are a stench in God's nostrils." (The Binnacle Boy, chap. 3, p. 11)



Miss Frye recalls the day she found Ethan. It was an October day. Miss Frye had been picking mushrooms and found a baby abandoned at a crossroads. Miss Frye picked up the baby and took him home. From that day forward Miss Frye had dedicated her life to educating Ethan. Miss Frye had refused to let Ethan be subjected to the church or public schools and had been determined to have Ethan turn out as a cultured and refined gentleman.

The next morning, Miss Frye takes Tekoa from her work to spy on the Binnacle Boy. Miss Frye feels the need to win over Tekoa and hopefully the girl will tell her who she sees at the statue. After an hour of looking out the window, Tekoa rises to admit the three women who have returned to Miss Frye's home. The women say they thought it was time to pay another visit to their friend. Miss Bunch says that while they are at the house it might be interesting for Tekoa to tell them what she sees at the statue. Mrs. Stiggins says it is important so that they might find out the truth about the Orion. After a few moments Tekoa tells the group that she has news. Tekoa tells the ladies that Miss Pike didn't put any money in the collection plate at church. Miss Frye sends Tekoa back to the window. The women chat until Tekoa gives another unimportant report. Just as the women are prepared to leave, Tekoa returns with a startling bit of news. Miss Frye has to pry the information from Tekoa. Tekoa finally says that the tea aboard the Orion had been poisoned. Mrs. Stiggins tells Tekoa that she must reveal the identity of the speaker. Tekoa will not tell. Miss Bunch says that the agreement must be kept.

Chapter 4:

Miss Frye has a restless night. Tekoa arrives at eight o'clock and begins to mix bread dough. Miss Frye steps onto the garden to admire her flowers. Miss Frye recalls how Ethan had loved her flowers. Miss Frye also recalls how Ethan had become involved with Mrs. Gump's son and the other boys in the town. Miss Frye had confronted Ethan about his behavior and had been mocked in return.

Miss Frye goes in to the house and tells Tekoa that she may rest in front of the window while watching the Binnacle Boy. Tekoa sits down just seconds before Miss Mayhew, Miss Bunch and Mrs. Stiggins return to the house. Once again the women ask Tekoa to look out the window. Miss Bunch asks Tekoa about Sarah's health. Miss Bunch believes that Sarah's problems are because of the death of her sweetheart Simeon Sprigg, who was one of the sailors aboard the Orion. Tekoa returns to the women with a shocked expression on her face. As agreed, Tekoa will not reveal the identity of the speaker at the statue. Mrs. Stiggins throws open the curtains and sees Sarah Peel standing by the statue. Mrs. Stiggins says Tekoa was protecting her sister. Sarah runs away. The women follow closely behind only to discover that Sarah has fallen off a cliff and drowned.

On the way home, Miss Frye thinks about the news and reflects that what Sarah said is true. It is the truth except that the death of the crew had not been due to Simeon's presence but because Ethan had chosen to go to sea. Miss Frye says that Ethan's abandonment is what caused her to poison the crew of the Orion. Miss Frye talks out loud as she stares at the tansy and the garden. The tansy has deadly leaves that were



used to poison the crew. Miss Frye does not notice that Tekoa is out the window and, through reading her lips, knows the truth.

The Binnacle Boy, Chapters 1-4 Analysis

Miss Frye seems to be fairly cold in the beginning of the story, even when she learns that Ethan is dead. There are no outward signs of grief. Miss Frye is a strange character altogether. She rarely goes out, does not go to church, and almost never receives visitors. The arrival of Tekoa is the first turning point in the story. Tekoa seems to have no real problems with being deaf as it relates to her job. Miss Frye seems to like Tekoa, as much as she can, considering the woman's limited capacity to tolerate and endure personal relationships. Tekoa is a pleasant and obedient child.

The time period, although not specifically stated, seems to be in the late 1700s due to the conduct of the people and the amount of respect and etiquette exhibited by the characters.

Miss Frye sees Ethan as a sort of redemption, a second chance that will allow her to correct the mistakes she made with her sons. As a result, Ethan was practically a prisoner, being kept from school, church, and other activities that might be enjoyed by other children. Miss Frye cannot see that her actions were a part of the reason Ethan (and perhaps her other sons) rebelled.

The three visitors, Miss Mayhew, Miss Bunch and Mrs. Stiggins, obviously have little if any interest in Miss Frye. Their main purpose in visiting is to gossip. They might have had good intentions the first time but the other visits were clearly devised to satisfy their own curiosity and to use Tekoa's skill to learn about the sordid secrets of the people in the town.

Tekoa is shocked at first by Miss Frye's request to spy on the people as they revealed their secrets to the Binnacle Boy. The women encourage Tekoa to spy on the confessors. Tekoa does not feel right about doing so but is marginally appeased when it is agreed that she will not reveal the identity of the confessor.

Some of the information relayed by Tekoa is meaningless. The big news comes when Tekoa learns about the cause of death for the sailors aboard the Orion. The women are stunned. They claim to want to know for the good of the town but in truth, the women just want more gossip; to know the answer to the mystery that has eluded everyone.

Tekoa becomes little more than a news outlet and it is clear that she is no longer needed once she reveals the news about Sarah. The women had already been considering Sarah as the killer since she did not want to lose Simeon. Of course, the theory does not make sense since Simeon was returning home.

Tekoa battles with many emotions, including those brought up by betraying the loyalty of her sister and disobeying direct orders from Miss Frye. Once the women find out about



Sarah, they give into mob mentality and go after the girl. Because Sarah is mute, the girl cannot defend herself and so she runs away.

One part of the story seems to not fit quite right. The women are close on Sarah's heels and when they speak to the man, he says Sarah has fallen off the cliff and drowned. It does not seem possible that those events, especially the drowning, could take place so quickly without the women witnessing the event.

Miss Frye knows that Sarah was mute because of the horrible secret she carried. Miss Frye feels safe now since the only person who knew about the murder is dead. Miss Frye is foolish, however, when she talks out loud about the murder and it is ironic that Tekoa would be the one to learn Miss Frye's secret by reading her lips.



Saint Crispin's Follower - Chapters 1-3

Saint Crispin's Follower - Chapters 1-3 Summary

Chapter 1:

The reader is introduced to Mr. Solomon Quince, a master shoemaker. Working along with Mr. Quince in the workshop is his fledgling apprentice Nicholas. Mr. Quince stands in the doorway and looks out over the city of Charleston, South Carolina. The night is filled with stars. However Mr. Quince, who is in love with his craft of shoemaking, does not see the stars or the constellations. Instead he sees shapes of many different kinds of shoes including jackboots and brocade slippers. Quince also sees the tools of his trade, gluepots, pliers, mallets, and lasts. Quince tells Nicholas that shoemaking is a noble calling and that if the boy could only stop daydreaming the craft would serve him well. Quince says that Nicholas will have to be alert and focused, as alert as a hare as it is being chased by dogs. Quince says that the trade is a worthy one, and exalted trade. According to Quince, kings and sultans could not survive without their shoes and they would come crawling to the shoemaker. Atop the roof is a hollow copper weathervane in the form of Saint Crispin, the patron saint of shoemakers. The weathervane is nearly as big as Nicholas, who is really quite small and thin.

Nicholas studies Saint Crispin. The weathervane is broken. Quince says that Saint Crispin will watch over Nicholas so they have nothing to fear, but he needs to concentrate on something other than his work. Quince looks away from the stars quickly as he envisions the face of his lady love, Miss Catchfly. Like Quince, Nicholas also stares out at the stars and in place of the constellations sees the face of the lovely Juliana.

Chapter 2:

The next morning Quince sends Nicholas on a round of errands. Nicholas takes a basket and walks down the sidewalk enjoying the spring day. Nicholas passes Mr. Flinders' bookshop, a place he often likes to stop when he has free time. Nicholas observes the activity on the street as people prepare to celebrate King George's birthday the next day. It would be a grand affair, ships would fly colors while docked in the harbor, bells would ring, and gallows would be held. The Charleston militia would participate in the parade and the night would glow with the lights from candles and lamps that would be hung from the balconies.

Nicholas pays a visit to several different shops including the baker, the cutler, and the beekeeper, Mr. McPhee. One of the last stops Nicholas has to make on his rounds is to Miss Catchfly's grocery store where he sees Juliana through the window. Nicholas gathers his courage and walks into the shop practically knocking Miss Catchfly off a ladder. Miss Catchfly yells at Nicholas, who then gives his order to Juliana. Juliana is preoccupied and tired since she had been awake most of the night devising ways to



torture her cheating and unsavory ex-boyfriend. Because Juliana is not paying attention, she accidentally gives Nicholas one too many nutmegs.

Nicholas walks down the street and realizes that Juliana has given him one too many nutmegs. Nicholas wonders if Juliana has miscounted or if it is in some way a sign that she loves him.

"Words did not come easily to her, so she spoke instead and the language at hand - the language of nutmegs and cornmeal and cloves." (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 2, p. 34)

Nicholas thinks about the flowers Juliana is wearing on her dress. He remembers seeing a book at Mr. Flinders' bookshop which included the meanings of flowers. Nicholas flies in to the store desperate to find the book. While he is searching for the meaning of honeysuckle, Mr. Flinders tells Nicholas about all of the books that have come into the store. Nicholas finds the book and learns that honeysuckle expresses a boundless and devoted affection. Nicholas thinks that he should give Juliana flowers, ones that express his feelings while not being too emphatic. He decides on verbena.

Nicholas returns to the shop. Quince is talking with his journeyman, Zeph. Quince and Zeph tease Nicholas. Nicholas goes back to work while Quince goes out in to the street with the hopes of procuring meat from the butcher's wagon. Quince returns saying that the meat is good for nothing except for making shoes.

While Quince is gone Zeph tells Nicholas about Quince's crush on Miss Catchfly. Nicholas gapes in amazement.

"Why, that sulphur-tongued spinster would snatch up a suitor quick as a frog would a fly. And yet our master is still accumulating the courage to speak his heart to her, and has been ever since he first took her size - and beheld her delicate pair of feet!" (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 2, p. 39)

Nicholas works throughout the rest of the day while thinking about the verbena he intends to present to Juliana. Suddenly he realizes that verbena may not grow in Charleston. While walking down the street, Nicholas remembers what Quince said about Saint Crispin. Nicholas decides to trust Saint Crispin, follows the direction in which his feet are pointed, and finds the verbena. What Nicholas has failed to notice is that it is getting late. Because the next day is the holiday, Miss Catchfly most likely has closed the store early. Nicholas has no idea where to find Juliana's house.

Chap. 3:

Nicholas wakes up in the morning and thinks he is late. He prepares to face Quince and then realizes it is a holiday. Juliana's shoe has just been repaired by Quince, so Nicholas is hopeful that Juliana will pick it up, since Quince promised that it would be ready for the holiday.



Nicholas goes outside and has a brief chat with Quince. Once again Nicholas turns to Saint Crispin and notices that Saint Crispin had turned in the night and is now facing south. He follows Saint Crispin's gaze and finds another patch of verbena located under a rose bush in front of the church. Before he can pick any more flowers, Nicholas is scared off. He continues to follow Saint Crispin's path until he can go no more and is frustrated because he has not yet seen Juliana. Turning left onto a path, he spies Juliana sitting by the water. Nicholas approaches her and startles the girl. Suddenly he loses all of the words he was going to say and instead thrusts the bouquet at Juliana. Meanwhile, Juliana spots her boyfriend behind Nicholas and calls him a scoundrel. Juliana excuses herself and quickly walks away. Nicholas is horrified and thinks that he must've done something wrong. Nicholas realizes that many petals had fallen off the verbena and perhaps Juliana thought it was another plant. He rushes back to Mr. Flinders' bookshop where he finds that a similar looking plant name means "vicious accusation."

Nicholas collapses onto a chair and is approached by Zeph. Zeph is in fine spirits talking about being a master of courting. Nicholas is still beside himself because he doesn't know what to do about Juliana. Suddenly Nicholas remembers Juliana's shoe and hurries back to the shop.

Nicholas recalls some of the phrases Zeph had given to Quince with the hope of wooing Miss Catchfly. Nicholas writes a note to Juliana but does not sign it. Suddenly Miss Catchfly bursts into the shop. Miss Catchfly is angry and tells Nicholas that the tacks in her shoes are driving into her heel. Once again Miss Catchfly insults Nicholas. Miss Catchfly insists that Nicholas repair her shoes immediately. Quince makes Nicholas stay in the shop. Nicholas realizes that he is going to miss the militia parade where he had hoped to see Juliana. Nicholas does as he is told and vows to forget about meeting Juliana.

After the work is done Nicholas wanders around aimlessly. Suddenly, Nicholas decides to follow Saint Crispin's gaze once more and again Nicholas finds Juliana. Immediately, he apologizes for not appearing at the militia. Juliana has no idea what Nicholas is talking about and asks about the note that she had never received. Juliana tells Nicholas that the shoe does not belong to her, it belongs to Miss Catchfly. Apparently Miss Catchfly read the note and was charmed by the words that supposedly had come from Quince. The entire story comes out and the misunderstandings are cleared up. Juliana realizes that Nicholas is nothing like Winthrop Whistlewood. There is some flirting and the couple arranges to meet at the public ball that evening. Nicholas is thrilled and looks up at Saint Crispin, realizing that his patron saint had been right all along.

Saint Crispin's Follower - Chapters 1-3 Analysis

Comparisons can be made between "Saint Crispin's Follower" and the legendary "Pinocchio." Both involve young boys working in a craftsman's shop under the direction of a master craftsman and surrogate father figure. Both boys, confused, seek the advice



of an unusual entity. In Nicholas' case, it is the copper weather vane of Saint Crispin. In Pinocchio, the doll turned boy seeks the advice of Jiminy Cricket.

Nicholas is of indeterminate age yet it can be guessed that he is in his early to mid teens. He is shy and awkward and is prone to daydreaming, which often gets him into trouble with Mr. Quince. Mr. Quince sees something in Nicholas and wants to foster it, turning the boy into a master craftsman.

Zeph serves as a nice middle ground for Nicholas. Zeph is older and wiser, yet does not maintain the same sense of authority as Mr. Quince. Nicholas admires Zeph who represents the next stage of Nicholas' life.

Nicholas desperately seeks approval from Mr. Quince, Zeph, Mr. Flinder and, particularly, Juliana. As with most teens, Nicholas is uncertain of his actions and goals and often stands in his own way when it comes to getting what he wants. Following Saint Crispin turns out to be a wise choice for Nicholas, even though the decision is made out of desperation. This action brings with it an element of faith. Nicholas believes that he has nothing to lose and trusts in Mr. Quince's unconventional wisdom.

Juliana is completely oblivious to Nicholas and his feelings toward her. Juliana is still overwhelmed with grief and anger over the end of her relationship with Winthrop Whistlewood. Juliana's thinking completely changes when she realizes Nicholas' affections.

The relationship between Mr. Quince and Miss Catchfly is at the same time sad and humorous. Mr. Quince, knowledgeable and masterful in the shoemaking trade, is no more capable of courting Miss Catchfly than Nicholas is of wooing the fair Juliana. The happy accident with the note in the shoe proves to be as helpful as Saint Crispin, giving both men a chance at happiness.



The Man of Influence - chapters 1 - 3

The Man of Influence - chapters 1 - 3 Summary

Chapter 1: The reader is introduced to Zorelli, a stone carver. It is a rainy night and Zorelli is unable to sleep. Zorelli looks at his wife, Marta, who is sound asleep. Zorelli has never been able to sleep during the rain.

"Rain, after all, was the enemy of stone, pounding it finally into dust. And Zorelli was a stone carver by trade, a maker of monuments." (The Man of Influence, chap. 1, p. 63)

While Zorelli stands at the door looking at the rain, his cat Angelina rubs up against his legs. Marta wakes up and asks Zorelli if lurking about in the doorway is any way to attract patrons, particularly since Zorelli is unshaven and wearing filthy clothes. Soldiers ride by and a fruit seller passes pushing his cart while Zorelli watches. He feeds Angelina the last piece of cheese. Marta says that Angelina never goes without food like they do. Even the mice have fled the house. Martha tells Zorelli that perhaps he should carve a roasted goose out of granite.

Zorelli returns to the studio trying to figure out what he will do. Business is slow. Zorelli knows that it is important for him to find a rich patron but commerce in Genoa is slow and no one has spare money to spend on statues.

"In disgust, he gazed at his idle tools. If no commission came his way today he'd be forced to return to work at the quarry, toiling once again beside his loudish father and foul-smelling brothers." (chap. 1, p. 64)

Zorelli reminds himself that he is an intimate friend of the high-born. Zorelli has walked down the halls of the homes of the rich and cultured, arranged them in poses, and engaged them in conversations.

After deciding to take a walk through the town, Zorelli strolls through the streets enjoying the autumn air. He spies a statue he had created of Lorenzo Ferrante, the governor of Genoa. Zorelli continues to walk into the marketplace where someone bumps in to him making him angry. How can people mistake him for a commoner?

"His wares were no melons or stinking fish, but immortality itself!" (Chap. 1, p. 65)

Zorelli continues to walk through the marketplace noting the vendors, squealing pigs, thieves and beggars. He spots Lorenzo in the crowd and is excited to be in the presence of greatness once again. Lorenzo surveys the crowd. Zorelli notices that Lorenzo is dressed in mourning black, prepared to pay a visit to the grave of his nephew, Alessandro, whose tombstone Zorelli recalls carving. Alessandro would have been the head of the house of Ferrante and the governor of Genoa if he had not taken a chill and died. Zorelli tries to get Lorenzo's attention as he passes by, but Lorenzo



leaves the marketplace without seeing Zorelli. He continues to walk through the marketplace and becomes more and more disgusted with the people.

Later that night Zorelli paces his studio. He grows restless whenever he isn't working. Zorelli decides to take a walk and heads toward the harbor, Angelina in tow. He speaks to Angelina about the darkness of the night but says the blackness will not keep them from their rounds because they know the way. After winding through streets of the town, Zorelli and Angelina reach the docks. They wander to the end of the wharf. By this time the stars have come out in full force. Zorelli is talking to Angelina about the brightness of the stars when suddenly a voice responds from behind. Angelina hisses and runs away. Zorelli turns around and finds himself faced with what might have been, at one time, a man. The figure says that the stars are much too bright for his liking. Zorelli stares at the thing in front of him, not sure if it is an actual man.

"Zorelli studied the speaker in wonder. He was short legged and burly and missing in ear. Fitfully, he glowed and dimmed, as if he were made of starlight himself." (chap. 1, p. 67)

The speaker addresses Zorelli, saying that he knows Zorelli is a stone carver. Zorelli fights to overcome his speechlessness and manages to ask the speaker who or what he is since Zorelli cannot be sure. The apparition snorts and tells Zorelli that he is a ghost. Zorelli does not know what to say and wonders where Angelina has gone. If Zorelli had the opportunity, he would have fled as well.

Zorelli asks the ghost what he wants. The ghost tells Zorelli that he wants to hire the sculptor to create a statue. Zorelli gapes at the ghost. The ghost says he can pay 25 ducats upon ordering, 50 ducats when the job is finished. Zorelli is flabbergasted at the large amount of money but then becomes suspicious and asks if the money is real. Zorelli tests the coins and becomes convinced that they are real.

The ghost tells Zorelli that he wants a statue made in his likeness. Zorelli is shocked. The ghost is a horrible looking creature.

"With growing revulsion he took note of the spirit's missing ear, his crooked teeth, and the jagged rip down the front of his doublet. Had warm flesh belonged to him he might have been taken for a beggar, a rag merchant dressed in his wares, and suddenly Zorelli wondered if the man was worthy of salvation and stone - or deserved forgetting, like most of humanity." (Chapter 1, page 69)

Zorelli attempts to discover exactly what the man was in his former life and asks him if he was ever a man of influence. The ghost says that he once was a man of influence. Zorelli feels relieved and suddenly becomes embarrassed for asking the question. The ghost says he will understand if Zorelli does not have the time to carve the statue. Zorelli protests and says that he has a fine block of marble at home that would be perfect for the job. The ghost says he wants the statue to be life-size. Zorelli quickly begins to think of how he can alter the ghost's appearance to make him look less revolting but the ghost objects, saying he wants to be portrayed exactly as he was that



night. The ghost explains that he wants to be memorialized holding an infant in his arms, holding a cup to the baby's lips. At the ghost's feet will be a one-eared cat. The ghost talks about finding the cat and how they immediately developed a friendship. Zorelli tells the ghost that he will need to make sketches and they agree to meet the next night.

Chapter 2:

The next morning Zorelli wakes up and wonders if the events from the night before were nothing more than a dream. Remembering the coin purse, Zorelli fetches it and examines its contents. The money is real. Immediately Zorelli takes the money and goes to the baker to buy a loaf of bread. When Zorelli returns home, Marta questions him about the money. Zorelli tells Marta that he has been hired by a new client, a man of some note. Marta is surprised but is thrilled with the bread.

That day Zorelli stays in his studio staring at the block of marble. Zorelli tries to see a figure inside of it as he does when inspired. Zorelli cleans his tools and thinks extensively about the statue. He then waits for darkness.

Zorelli returns to the wharf to meet the ghost. The ghost arrives with the same complaint as the night before, that the stars are too bright, and if he could the ghost would put all of them out with a candle snuffer. Zorelli is still astounded by the man's presence.

"Zorelli stared at him, awed afresh to find himself in the employ of what was nothing more than the residue of a life, a cloud of ash, a burnt wick of a man." (chap. 2, p. 73)

The ghost is impatient to begin. Zorelli studies the ghost and begins to sketch. Zorelli is still repulsed by the man's crooked and missing teeth, scars, filth, and broken nose. As he is finishing, Zorelli says that he can camouflage the missing ear with a hat or a tilt of the head. Once again the ghost balks and says there will be no changes. He must appear exactly as he is - or was - that night. The ghost says it has been seventeen years since he lost his ear, about the first time he met the Boccas. At the mention of the name, Zorelli perks up and immediately shows interest in the man's story. The ghost says he used to work for the Boccas. When Zorelli asks what the man did for the prestigious family, the ghost says that he served in "commerce." The ghost does not elaborate, but goes on to say that his work with the Boccas came after he had met and worked for Vito Tarentino. Zorelli is even more impressed with this relationship. When Zorelli asks what the ghost did for the Tarentinos, the ghost says he worked in "matters of state," in a manner of speaking.

Zorelli continues to study the ghost, altering his appearance just slightly to give him a more dignified stance. Zorelli finishes the sketch and tells the ghost that the statue will take one month to carve out of marble. The ghost says he will meet Zorelli along the road and pay him the balance of the money.

Chapter 3:



Zorelli becomes enthralled with the process of carving the statue. He works day and night, picturing the figure as it emerges from the stone. After working for a while, Zorelli seeks Angelina's opinion. Angelina remains asleep but Marta responds, saying that there cannot be a patron that dresses like a beggar. Marta accuses Zorelli of stealing the money to buy food. Marta also says that Zorelli has ruined a perfectly good piece of marble for amusement's sake. Days and weeks pass as Zorelli refines the statue's appearance. While sculpting, Zorelli tries to convince himself that his patron is worthwhile and that perhaps all ghosts look like his client.

At long last the statue is done. Although it is hideous, Zorelli is proud of his work and the fine detail. Zorelli loads the statue on a wagon and travels to the spot where he had agreed to meet the ghost. When the ghost sees the statue, he is thrilled at his likeness.

Zorelli chats with the ghost as they drive to the statue's final resting place. Zorelli asks the ghost about his work with the Boccas. The ghost had said he had worked in the spice trade in a matter of speaking. What the ghost alluded to was that he was an enforcer for the Boccas, making sure that the harbors were free of competition and that the Boccas' shipments were safe. Zorelli goes on to ask about the ghost's relationship with the Tarentinos. The ghost says that he had the job of "finding out" for Vito Tarentino. When questioned, the ghost says that his job was to spy and gain information regarding anything of importance to the Tarentinos. Zorelli is shocked that either family could have acted in such an unscrupulous manner.

At last, Zorelli stops at the place designated by the ghost. The ghost explains that he is buried at that spot. Zorelli asks why he chose that place. The ghost snaps and says it was not his choice. Zorelli asks about the infant and learns that the child was not the ghost's child, nor was the ghost feeding the child. The baby was Alessandro Ferrante, the heir to the house of Ferrante. The ghost says that Lorenzo Ferrante paid him to kill the baby. Zorelli recoils in horror and flees the scene. Later that night, Zorelli throws the money into the harbor.

The story ends:

"And that night, Zorelli the stone carver fervently prayed for rain." (chap. 3, p. 83)

The Man of Influence - chapters 1 - 3 Analysis

Like the other stories, "The Man of Influence" takes place during an unidentified time. Zorelli is a stone carver in Genoa, Italy. Times are lean and Zorelli struggles with the fact that no one has any money to purchase a custom-made statue, except for a man of influence. Zorelli has worked for people of note before and feels that those people are the only ones worth his considerable skill and talent. Zorelli knows that he has to get a client within the next day or he will have to return to working in the quarry, which seems like a fate worse than death. Zorelli is above such manual labor, especially now that he has been commissioned by people of noble birth. Zorelli believes that those loose associations make him an important man.



Marta, on the other hand, is much more practical. Marta supports her husband's work but knows that they have no food and unless Zorelli gets a client or a job, they will most likely starve. Zorelli often becomes annoyed with Marta and at times it seems that Zorelli confides in his cat more than his wife.

Zorelli likes to walk through the town in the quiet since he does not have a fondness for people. Part of that dislike is due to Zorelli's pride and intolerance of people he considers to be beneath him. Zorelli prefers the empty streets and the company of Angelina. The appearance of the ghost shocks Zorelli for a number of reasons. First of all, the man does not look like a man. He has an eerie glow about him that made Zorelli suspect he might be something other than human. On top of that, the man looks like a cutthroat beggar. The ghost's appearance repulses Zorelli.

"Zorelli studied the speaker in wonder. He was short legged and burly and missing an ear. Fitfully, he glowed and dimmed, as if he were made of starlight himself." (chap. 1, p. 67)

Zorelli wishes he could flee from the wharf like Angelina had when the ghost appeared. As the ghost talks, Zorelli's greed and ambition cause him to become interested in what the ghost has to say. The deal is sealed when the ghost talks about working for two very prestigious Italian families, the Boccas and Tarentinos. Zorelli has worked for and greatly admires the families. Suddenly, Zorelli feels as if he has another chance to elevate himself as a man and a sculptor.

Zorelli's attempts to try and improve the ghost's looks fail miserably.

"With growing revulsion he took note of the spirit's missing ear, his crooked teeth, and the jagged rip down the front of his doublet. Had warm flesh belonged to him he might have been taken for a beggar, a rag merchant dressed in his wares, and suddenly Zorelli wondered if the man was worthy of salvation and stone - or deserved forgetting, like most of humanity." (Chapter 1, page 69)

The ghost has given Zorelli clues to his real identity but Zorelli is so excited by the prospect, no matter how gruesome, that he misses the hints entirely.

Zorelli's horror at the real identity of the ghost is deep and cuts to the depth of his soul. How could people of such nobility, such influence, have done so many terrible things, including murder? Zorelli had respected these people and revered their tenuous relationships only to find out that those people were not at all noble and certainly not anything like the people they portrayed themselves to be.

Zorelli goes home and is so repulsed by the ghost and the men of influence that he tries to disassociate himself from the statue by throwing away the money.



Characters

Miss Evangeline Frye appears in The Binnacle Boy

Miss Evangeline Frye is the main character in "The Binnacle Boy." Miss Frye is a widow who lives in New Bethany. She is the mother of one of the boys murdered aboard the brig Orion. Miss Frye is an imposing woman, tall with a straight spine and long, coarse, gray hair who is more likely to be seen frowning or sneering than smiling. Her behavior is very proper and every rule of etiquette must be observed or it meets with Miss Frye's withering disapproval.

Miss Frye keeps to herself to the degree that she is practically a hermit. She blames society for many of her problems, including the corruption of her sons. Miss Frye is selfish which can be seen throughout the story, even when she rescues Ethan. Miss Frye treats Ethan like a doll that she is unwilling to share. The possession of the child was more about Miss Frye's need to possess and redeem herself than it was about caring for an abandoned child. Miss Frye also shows her extreme need for control.

It seems that Miss Frye does not like any of the three women but she tolerates them out of politeness. Miss Frye does seem to have some affection for Tekoa, albeit self-serving.

Miss Frye manages to maintain her composure when Sarah is accused of poisoning the sailors. Like many murderers, Miss Frye makes the mistake of confessing her sins at the eleventh hour. Tekoa knows Miss Frye's secret although it is not clear what the girl will do with the information.

Nicholas appears in Saint Crispin's Follower

Nicholas is a boy of indeterminate age, yet it can be guessed that he is in his early to mid teens. Nicholas is shy and awkward and is prone to daydreaming, which often gets him into trouble with Mr. Quince. Mr. Quince sees something in Nicholas and wants to foster it, turning the boy into a master craftsman.

Nicholas desperately seeks approval from Mr. Quince, Zeph, Mr. Flinder and, particularly, Juliana. As with most teens, Nicholas is uncertain of his actions and goals and often stands in his own way when it comes to getting what he wants. Following Saint Crispin turns out to be a wise choice for Nicholas, even though the decision is made out of desperation. This action brings with it an element of faith. Nicholas believes that he has nothing to lose and trusts in Mr. Quince's unconventional wisdom.

The end of the story is open, leaving the reader to surmise what will happen to Nicholas. There is a promising beginning between Nicholas and Juliana. Nicholas' actions and reactions show that he is open to learning and that he is on the brink of some major life lessons which will help him to mature, grow his self-esteem and trust in his own abilities.



Tekoa Peel appears in The Binnacle Boy

Tekoa Peel is a ten year old deaf girl. The girl is small with straw-blond hair. Tekoa works for Miss Frye as a maid and eventually becomes a lip reader for a group of gossipy women. Tekoa exhibits good morals and social etiquette, much more so than the adult women in the story.

Ethan appears in The Binnacle Boy

Ethan is the adopted son of Miss Frye. His surname is not given. Miss Frye found Ethan abandoned at a crossroads when he was an infant. While Ethan was growing up, Miss Frye refused to let Ethan be subjected to the church or public schools. Miss Frye was determined to have Ethan turn out as a cultured and refined gentleman. Ethan eventually rebelled and went off to sea.

Juliana appears in Saint Crispin's Follower

Juliana is the young girl who has captured Nicholas' heart. She is a pretty teenager involved in her own thoughts of revenge against her boyfriend until Nicholas opens her eyes.

Mr. Quince appears in Saint Crispin's Follower

Mr. Quince is the master craftsman who owns the shoemaking shop in Charleston. Mr. Quince is an excellent craftsman and father figure to Nicholas.

Miss Catchfly appears in Saint Crispin's Follower

Miss Catchfly owns the local grocery store where the townspeople shop for their wares. Juliana also works there. Miss Catchfly is a venomous woman with nothing but unkind words for everyone. Shockingly, she is the object of Mr. Quince's affections.

Zorelli appears in The Man of Influence

Zorelli is a master sculptor and the main character in "The Man of Influence." Zorelli believes he is meant to serve the high-born, the rich patrons of Genoa. Zorelli learns that a person's appearance is not necessarily telling of his true character.



Ghost appears in The Man of Influence

The ghost hires Zorelli to carve a sculpture. Zorelli is at first horrified by the ghost's appearance but then comes to believe that he is a Man of Influence. The ghost turns out to be a cutthroat murderer who killed the heir to the house of Ferrante.

Lorenzo Ferrante appears in The Man of Influence

Lorenzo Ferrante is the much revered head of the house of Ferrante and the governor of Genoa. Lorenzo pays yearly visits to the grave of his dead nephew, the one he had killed in order to gain a position of power. Ferrante is greatly admired by Zorelli.



Objects/Places

The Binnacle Boy appears in The Binnacle Boy

The Binnacle Boy is one of the graven images. The Binnacle Boy is a wooden statue created to hold the iron binnacle, which houses the ship's compass. The Binnacle Boy is described as being "Straight backed, sober lipped, in his jacket and cap, he stood resolutely before the helm, his lacquered eyes shining chicory blue." (The Binnacle Boy, chap. 2, p. 6)

The Binnacle Boy had been a fixture aboard the brig Orion while it was at sea. When the crew and their belongings were removed from the ship, the Binnacle Boy was also removed. The statue was placed in the center of town, in front of the town hall where it would stand as a monument to those that died.

The Binnacle Boy becomes a graven image. Families, particularly those that lost a family member on the Orion, stare at the statue for hours, as if it would give up the secret. The children of New Bethany started the practice first. Soon, everyone was going to confession as the people began to tell the Binnacle Boy all of their secrets, going to the Binnacle Boy with their problems. The statue became a place to store those secrets that must never be spoken aloud.

The Binnacle Boy continues to be the centerpiece in the story as it is at that location where the characters learn how the sailors died. What the people do not know is the other side of the story and, of course, the Binnacle Boy is unable to tell.

Graven Images appears in All

Fleischman addresses the concept of graven images in three distinct ways. The topic often has a negative connotation, especially when referred to in a religious aspect. The graven images in these stories aren't necessarily negative or positive but they do reveal the true nature of at least one character in each story.

In the Binnacle Boy, Fleischman creates a wooden statue that is used on a ship. Like a figurehead, the Binnacle Boy serves a purpose as well as being a token of good luck for the ship. However, when the Binnacle Boy is brought ashore, it takes on a completely different role, as secret keeper for the townspeople. Despite their connection to church and the community, the people feel the need to unburden themselves to the wooden boy, knowing that their secrets will be kept.

In Saint Crispin's Follower, the graven image is a copper weather vane fashioned after the patron saint of shoemakers, Saint Crispin. This graven image holds a more mysterious purpose, guiding Nicholas and other shoemakers to choose the right path to their destiny. The weather vane is supposedly broken yet moves to the necessary direction to guide Nicholas. Like the townspeople in The Binnacle Boy, Saint Crispin



becomes an important part in the lives of the characters, offering comfort and at times, guidance through one's own internal wisdom.

In *The Man of Influence*, the graven image is not one that a person relies on, rather it is a testament to the greed and crimes committed by others.

New Bethany, Maine appears in *The Binnacle Boy*

New Bethany, Maine is the home to Miss Frye. It is a small, seaside town and the main setting of *The Binnacle Boy*.

Tansy appears in *The Binnacle Boy*

Tansy is a plant with deadly leaves. It grows abundantly in Miss Frye's garden and is used to poison the sailors' tea.

Charleston, South Carolina appears in *Saint Crispin's Follower*

The main setting of *Saint Crispin's Follower* is the capital city of Charleston, South Carolina. At the time in which the story takes place, the United States are still colonized. The city reflects that time in size and scope.

Mr. Quince's Shoe Shop appears in *Saint Crispin's Follower*

Mr. Quince owns a shoemaker's shop in which Nicholas and Zeph work. Mr. Quince uses the shop as an educational facility and grounds for teaching Nicholas about craftsmanship and life.

Miss Catchfly's Grocery appears in *Saint Crispin's Follower*

Miss Catchfly's Grocery seems to be the only grocery store in town or at least the only one nearby. Nicholas goes there frequently to purchase items for Mr. Quince. Juliana also works in the store along with the venomous Miss Catchfly.

Genoa, Italy appears in *The Man of Influence*

The Man of Influence takes place in Genoa, Italy, a port city. Genoa is filled mainly with fisherman, sailors and people who have come to sell their wares to those groups. It is



the setting for *The Man of Influence*. Zorelli spends time in several different places in Genoa, including the marketplace and the docks.

Zorelli's Studio appears in *The Man of Influence*

Zorelli's studio is where he spends the majority of his time, particularly when creating a sculpture. The studio is either adjacent to or attached to Zorelli's house.

The Road to Rompoli appears in *The Man of Influence*

The road to Rompoli is the final resting place for the sculpture created for the murdered man/ghost by Zorelli.



Themes

Graven Images

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In Saint Crispin's Follower, the graven image is a copper weather vane fashioned after the patron saint of shoemakers, Saint Crispin. This graven image holds a more mysterious purpose, guiding Nicholas and other shoemakers to choose the right path to their destiny. The weather vane is supposedly broken yet moves to the necessary direction to guide Nicholas. Like the townspeople in The Binnacle Boy, Saint Crispin becomes an important part in the lives of the characters, offering comfort and at times, guidance through one's own internal wisdom.

In The Man of Influence, the graven image is not one that a person relies on, rather it is a testament to the greed and crimes committed by others.

Assumptions

There are many assumptions made in each of the stories. In The Binnacle Boy, the four women suspect that everyone visiting the statue has a secret worth knowing and therefore urge Tekoa to reveal those secrets. However, when it comes to Sarah Peel, the ladies make assumptions that are untrue. Reading only part of the story allows the women to conclude that Sarah poisoned the crew which is not true. Miss Frye is relieved at this misunderstanding as she will literally get away with murder unless Tekoa goes to the authorities.

In Saint Crispin's Follower, the majority of the assumptions and misunderstandings are caused by Nicholas' lack of information and esteem.

The biggest secrets are found in The Man of Influence. Everyone in Genoa has high regard for the Boccas, Ferrantes and Tarentinos. The families, wealthy and powerful, seem to be above reproach. When Zorelli learns about their secrets, he is stunned and revolted. Zorelli cannot understand how people of such stature could have committed such horrible crimes.



The ghost tells Zorelli about acting as a pirate and cutthroat for the Boccas, which explains their great success in the spice trade. The role of spy for the Tarentinos helps to explain their successes in business as well. However, Zorelli is especially affected by the actions of Lorenzo Ferrante, knowing that the man had a baby killed so that he might assume two very important roles in Genoa.

Secrets

There are secrets in each story. In *The Binnacle Boy*, the people in the town reveal their secrets to the wooden statue knowing that he will never tell. It is a way to unburden themselves without repercussions or judgment. Unfortunately for those people, Miss Frye has ordered Tekoa to "eavesdrop" by reading their lips and revealing their secrets while keeping their identities unknown. Tekoa does not feel right disclosing the secrets of others. The confession of Sarah Peel, Tekoa's older sister, is the most shocking. However, Sarah is not confessing to the murder, she is confessing to the fact that she knows the true identity of the murderer.

There are a few secrets in *Saint Crispin's Follower*, most of which revolve around unrequited love.

Perhaps the biggest secrets of all are discovered in *The Man of Influence*. Zorelli holds Ferrante, the Boccas and the Tarentinos in high esteem but has no idea what they are really like because of well kept secrets. The people who rule Genoa and surrounding areas are thought to be upstanding pillars of society, people worthy of admiration. Zorelli's opinion changes drastically when he learns about the true nature of the people.



Style

Point of View

The point of view used in *Graven Images* by Paul Fleischman is third person omniscient. This point of view works well in the stories as there are several components and underlying factors that would not be revealed otherwise. While the first person point of view might have been interesting when coming from the characters in their time of confusion, third person conveys the entire story and not just the subjective opinions of the characters. It also permits the reader to take part in the journey and development of each character in the story.

For example, Miss Frye's perceptions of the activities in *The Binnacle Boy* would be much different than those of Miss Mayhew, Miss Bunch, and Mrs. Stiggins simple because she already knows who killed the crew of the *Orion*. Fleischman allows the other characters to wonder and surmise about the identity of the murderer.

In *Saint Crispin's Follower*, third person works well in reference to the personalities of the characters, even when they are biased. For example, Miss Catchfly may not be as horrible as she seems to everyone in the town, yet that is how she is perceived.

In *The Man of Influence*, Zorelli's arrogance and sense of entitlement are clearly shown through the text while allowing for the personalities and characteristic of Marta and the ghost to come through in a definitive way.

Setting

There are three different main settings in *Graven Images* by Paul Fleischman. The first story, *The Binnacle Boy*, is set in New Bethany, Maine. New Bethany, Maine is a small, seaside town that relies heavily on the fishing trade. Many of the men in New Bethany go out to sea to make a living. Some never return, as is the case of Miss Frye's husband and three sons. A large portion of the story takes place in Miss Frye's house. Tekoa is the girl who serves as Miss Frye's maid. There is a garden filled with beautiful and deadly plants and flowers. The window in the parlor faces the town hall and the *Binnacle Boy*.

Saint Crispin's Follower takes place in Charleston, South Carolina. The United States have not been formed, so South Carolina is still a colony. The time frame also ensures that Charleston is not a big city yet and still has the feel of a relatively small community. Also mentioned as in the story are Mr. Quince's shop, Miss Catchfly's grocery, and Mr. Flinders' bookshop.

The Man of Influence takes place in Genoa, Italy. Genoa is a well known and prosperous port city. Genoa is filled mainly with fisherman, sailors and people who have



come to sell their wares to those groups. Zorelli spends time in several different places in Genoa, including the marketplace and the docks.

Language and Meaning

The language and meaning used in *Graven Images* by Paul Fleischman reflects the times in which the stories are set. Fleischman does not give an exact time period for any of the stories but offers clues to the reader that might help to pinpoint a general era.

For example, in *Saint Crispin's Follower*, Fleischman states that South Carolina is still a colony, therefore, the story takes place in the 1700s, most likely mid-century. *The Binnacle Boy* has a feel of being slightly earlier, as does *The Man of Influence*. If the reader is curious enough, he could research to find out the time period in which ships were a mainstay in the port of New Bethany. The same can be said of Genoa, which had a certain time during which it was the trade capital of Italy.

The time periods dictate the language but not in such a way to make the language difficult for the reader. The language used is common but Fleischman uses it in such a way that the common language used reflects the times and proper behavior of the characters.

One difference in language is seen in *The Man of Influence*. The story is based in Genoa, Italy, yet it lacks any change in dialect or language.

Structure

Graven Images by Paul Fleischman is a work of fiction. It is comprised of three separate short stories. Each story is adorned with a somewhat gruesome and eerie illustration by Andrew Glass. The illustrations lend a sense of unease to the stories which may have been Fleischman's intent.

The Binnacle Boy is broken down into 4 chapters. The shortest chapter is 6 pages; the longest chapter is 7 pages; the average length of the chapters is 5 pages.

Saint Crispin's Follower contains 3 chapters. The shortest chapter is 4 pages; the longest chapter is 16 pages; the average length of the chapters is 11 pages.

The Man of Influence contains 3 chapters. The shortest chapter is 6 pages; the longest chapter is 10 pages; the average length of the chapters is 8 pages.

The stories are told in chronological order without flashbacks. There is some foreshadowing used as can be seen in *Saint Crispin's Follower* and *The Man of Influence*. The reader can easily surmise that Nicholas will trust and come to rely on Saint Crispin. It is also rather clear that the ghost in *The Man of Influence* is not what Zorelli wants him to be but instead reveals the ugly side of human nature.



Quotes

"Girls take after their mother, Evangeline. Men take after the Devil." (The Binnacle Boy, Chap. 1, p. 4)

"There was no sign of scurvy, no shortage of food. When the ship was boarded the crew was discovered to be lying about the decks as if hexed, with no witness to bear the tale to the living. None, that is, except the Binnacle Boy." (The Binnacle Boy, Chap. 2, p. 5)

"Men,' she'd summed up, 'are a stench in God's nostrils.'" (The Binnacle Boy, chap. 3, p. 11)

"Words did not come easily to her, so she spoke instead and the language at hand - the language of nutmegs and cornmeal and cloves." (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 2, p. 34)

"Why, that sulphur-tongued spinster would snatch up a suitor quick as a frog would a fly. And yet our master is still accumulating the courage to speak his heart her, and has been ever since he first took her size - and beheld her delicate pair of feet!" (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 2, p. 39)

"Disheartened, he turned a circle in the street, wondering which point of the compass to follow. Then something caught the apprentice's eye and he tilted his gaze to the copper image of Saint Crispin, whose hammer glinted in the sun - and at once he knew where to point his feet." (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 2, p. 42)

"'You are the pinnacle of loveliness,' the apprentice neatly wrote out. 'Your ethereal beauty fills my thoughts. I regard you as I would a goddess.'" (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 3, p. 51)

"His thoughts spinning dreamily, Nicholas turned, squinted his eyes, spied the copper image of Saint Crispin, and felt sure that this was what his patron Saint had been pointing toward all along." (Saint Crispin's Follower, chap. 3, p. 59)

"Rain, after all was the enemy of stone, pounding it finally into dust." (The Man of Influence, chap. 1, p. 63)

"In disgust, he gazed at his idle tools. If no commission came his way today he'd be forced to return to work at the quarry, toiling once again beside his loutish father and foul-smelling brothers." (The Man of Influence, chap. 1, p. 64)

"His wares were no melons or stinking fish, but immortality itself!" (The Man of Influence, Chap. 1, p. 65)



"Zorelli stared at him, awed afresh to find himself in the employ of what was nothing more than the residue of a life, a cloud of ash, a burnt wick of a man." (The Man of Influence, chap. 2, p. 73)

"And that night, Zorelli the stone carver fervently prayed for rain." (The Man of Influence chap. 3, p. 83)

Topics for Discussion

Do you think Saint Crispin actually helped to guide Nicholas? How is it that the weather vane, which was supposedly broken, is able to point Nicholas in the right direction? Is there some mysterious element to Saint Crispin? Does Nicholas believe that the weather vane helped him get to his destiny?

At the end of *The Binnacle Boy*, Tekoa learns Miss Frye's secret. What will Tekoa do? Will Tekoa tell someone? Is the secret the reason Sarah could no longer speak? Do you think Miss Frye will find out that Tekoa knows the truth? If so, how?

At the end of *The Man of Influence*, Zorelli prays for rain. Why? Do you think Zorelli will let the statue stand? What does the statue represent? How will Lorenzo Ferrante and the others react to the depiction of Alessandro's death? What might happen to the statue? Do you think Zorelli will ever see the ghost again?

Discuss in detail the lesson learned by Zorelli. Was it a lesson learned? How might Zorelli conduct himself differently in the future?

Compare and contrast the graven images used in each story. Use a bubble map to illustrate. Also examine the concept of graven images and having faith in inanimate objects.

Write a short story about the future of Miss Catchfly and Mr. Quince and their courtship.

Zorelli stares at the block of marble for a very long time before beginning to chisel away the stone. Zorelli has the ability to "see" the finished sculpture inside the stone and chips away the excess. Explain this method and skill.