

How the Light Gets In Study Guide

How the Light Gets In by Louise Penny

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Plot Summary

How the Light Gets In by Louise Penny is the ninth book in the Chief Inspector Armand Gamache series. The main characters in the series are Chief Inspector Armand Gamache and his sidekick, Jean-Guy Beauvoir. Gamache and Beauvoir have worked closely together for almost 15 years. However, at the beginning of this story, a rift now separates them. Jean-Guy is working under Chief Superintendent Francoeur, Gamache's number one rival. This makes for an interesting twist later in the book.

The author has interwoven three story threads. The main plot centers around Gamache as he searches for the person who leaked a video of a deadly raid. During the search, he accidentally stumbles upon a plot to destroy the peace of Quebec. Along with saving lives and avoiding a tragedy in his Canadian province, other subplots evolve as Gamache solves the mystery of the murder of the last of the Ouellet Quints and uncovers the secret the girls had been hiding for years. The book concludes with Gamache and his wife celebrating the second wedding of their daughter, Annie Gamache, to Jean-Guy Beauvoir.



Chapters 1 - 3

Summary

Chapter One follows Audrey Villeneuve as she drives home from work. She is fixated by a fear that the Ville-Marie Tunnel will collapse on her car as she drives through it. After she finally makes it through the tunnel, she takes the exit to the Champlain Bridge. It's not her usual route, but she drives that way without even knowing why.

In Chapter Two, Constance Pineault and Ruth sit together on a bench as children play hockey. Ruth tries to coach them. Constance thinks about how her attitude toward life has changed in the four days since she's been in Three Pines. She'd come to visit Myrna at her bookstore and has begun to feel comfortable there. Constance tells Ruth she had come to ask her to have a drink. Ruth accepts brusquely. The two walk to the bistro after Constance returns Ruth's duck, Rosa, who had chosen to sit in Constance's lap. On the way, they meet up with a gay couple, Gabri and Olivier. Before Three Pines, Constance had thought gays were deformed. Now, she would be pleased if someone mistook the two men for her sons.

Constance had met Ruth at a dinner party with Clara Marrow and Myrna. Clara had shown Constance her studio and talked too personally about her deceased husband. Constance feared briefly that Clara had recognized her when she asked the older woman to sit for a painting. Constance refused. She is, however, mesmerized by a painting that Clara has done of Ruth. Constance sees Ruth's madness and her bitterness. Constance also equates the portrait with her own image of the Virgin Mary. Surprisingly, she sees just a glimpse of hope in the picture.

Before she leaves Three Pines, Constance asks Myrna if she can come back for Christmas. Myrna agrees. Myrna walks Constance to her car. As she lets the car warm, Constance tells Myrna she remembers she and her sisters playing hockey. She mentions that it was Brother Andre's favorite game. She seems to believe the mention of the name will strike a memory in Myrna's mind, one that will cause Myrna to question her when she returns.

In Chapter Three, Isabelle Lacoste does not understand why the chief inspector of the homicide department does not ridicule and lash out at the lazy agents that have been transferred into his department. Though it was once the most successful department, lazy insolent agents have made her work unbearable. Isabelle is frustrated with her boss for not dealing with the bad agents more severely. Gamache takes one of the agents aside who has failed to interview a key witness in a case on which he is working. Although the others in the office expect him to tear the agent apart, Gamache only entreats the man to take his job seriously. The effect of Gamache's lecture begins to die as soon as the man rejoins the other agents. Gamache tries to explain to Lacoste that he didn't treat the man rudely because he wants to prove to himself that he hasn't fallen so far that he has joined the millions who believe the world runs on corruption and



brutality. Although she doesn't want to, Lacoste has to admit to herself that she is beginning to doubt that Gamache's intentions are working as he hoped.

Lacoste delivers a note to Gamache. He asks if she'd like to join him for a drive. During the drive, she asks him about Jean-Guy Beauvoir. He still will not tell her anything about the mysterious way the man who was second in command before her was transferred from Gamache's department to that of Francoeur. She notices an incident has caught his attention. Emergency workers are pulling a body, probably a suicide, Lacoste thinks, up an embankment from the river. The death is not in their jurisdiction; so they head on to Three Pines.

Analysis

Threads to what seem to be three different stories are introduced in these first three chapters. In the first, there is a woman who is fighting against the monsters in her own head. She's having visions of the tunnel, which she drives through daily, collapsing. The only thing helping her to hold herself together is the thought of her arrival at her office Christmas party in a new dress that she is making for herself.

The second story line revolves around a woman named Constance Pineault. While visiting her friend Myrna, who lives in the tiny village of Three Pines, Constance's faith in humanity has been restored. She makes plans for a second visit to Three Pines to spend the Christmas holidays. She leaves Myrna with a statement about her life that she hopes will spark questions when she returns. This statement and its connotations become key to Constance's story later in the novel. She tells Myrna that she and her family had a hockey team as the sport was Brother Andre's favorite.

While Constance seems to be an ordinary lady who has perhaps lived a very sheltered life, there is a hint she is hiding a secret. When Clara asks to paint Constance, Constance will not let her. She indicates she is afraid Clara has recognized her. Note also Constance's reaction to the portrait that Clara has painted of Ruth. In the painting of the embittered, seemingly mad poet, Constance sees a visual of what she thinks the Virgin Mary must look like. As others generally see this Biblical character as gentle and forgiving, one must have had a truly bad religious experience to have such a strange view of this person some consider a saint.

Discussion Question 1

How does the author of the novel build intrigue by introducing circumstances, such as Constance's identity and Jean-Guy, not even fully understood by the people involved?

Discussion Question 2

What is the significance of Lacoste and Gamache seeing the body pulled up the embankment as they drive to Three Pines?



Discussion Question 3

Do you agree with Gamache on his ideas that he should not belittle himself and resort to bullying to manage his department? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Sinews, inconceivable, hyper-vigilant, fissures, bistro, demented, alchemist, conjured, mullioned, insolent, censorious, indentured, cynical, trivial, lampooning, formidable.



Chapters 4 – 6

Summary

In Chapter Four, Gamache and Lacoste arrive in Three Pines at Myrna's bookstore. Myrna is surprised they've driven down to in response to her call, but she is glad to see Gamache. Myrna asks about Beauvoir. Gamache will tell her only that he is on another assignment. Myrna tells Gamache she is worried as her friend, Constance, was supposed to return to Three Pines for Christmas but has not done so. Myrna tells Gamache she has probably called Constance once an hour since four o'clock the day before but has not been able to get in touch with her.

Myrna pauses when Gamache asks for Constance's name, claiming it may embarrass her. She finally tells him the woman's name is Constance Pineault. Then, she seems confused when Lacoste asks if that is her married or maiden name. She asks if Lacoste can call Constance's home one more time. While she is on the phone, Myrna tells Gamache that Constance's last name is Ouellet. Gamache doesn't recognize the name immediately. However, he sees the image of a waving girl. At the same time, he remembers the suicide they'd seen on the way to Three Pines. He calls to confirm the identity. It was not Constance.

In Chapter Five, Gamache and Lacoste drive to Constance's home where they discover she has been murdered. Since the murder is not in their district, the two wait in the front room while the Montreal homicide squad searches for clues. When Marc Brault (Gamache's friend) arrives, he sends Lacoste away politely. Once she is gone, Brault questions Gamache, learning that the deceased woman was one of the famed Ouellet Quints. Meanwhile in Three Pines, Myrna has called Clara and shared with her that Constance was one of the Ouellet Quints.

Back at Constance's home, the investigating detectives are awed when they see Gamache as they admire him as a great leader. When they leave, Brault indicates to Gamache that few investigators are available on his team due to extra work and holiday leave. Gamache agrees to take over the investigation. They briefly discuss Gamache's position with Brault asking him if he plans to retire. Gamache indicates that as badly as his bosses want him out, he wonders why. Brault encourages him to retire after solving the murder case.

In Chapter Six, Lacoste and Gamache pick up Gamache's dog, Henri, then head back to the station. They get in the elevator with Jean-Guy even though Jean-Guy is pushing the button to make the doors close and Lacoste is hesitating. They say nothing to one another but before the three leave the elevator, Henri licks Jean-Guy's hand. Lacoste realizes that Gamache could have stopped Henri from reaching Jean-Guy, who was not only his former second in command but also his son-in-law, but that he did not keep the dog from reaching Jean-Guy.



Just after his encounter on the elevator, Jean-Guy learns he is being sent out on another raid by Chief Superintendent Francoeur. The chief superintendent has already told Jean-Guy he knows some drugs are missing from the last raid but doesn't plan to make an issue of it. Tessier tells Jean-Guy about the raid, suggesting he take a pill, a relaxant, from the bottle he's given him. Tessier sells Jean-Guy on the excuse that they all need some help every so often.

Analysis

In this section, it becomes clear that Gamache had worked side by side with a man named Jean-Gut Beauvoir for years. Jean-Guy was not only Gamache's second in command, but also his son-in-law. Hints are dropped that circumstances surrounding a factory raid ended with Jean-Guy being transferred out of Gamache's department. Apparently his relationship with Gamache has dissolved as well Jean-Guy appears to be no longer married to Gamache's daughter. Gamache allows his dog, Henri, to lick Jean-Guy on the hand in the elevator. Lacoste knows Gamache could have kept the dog from getting close to Jean-Guy, but allows the animal to show his affection, perhaps instead of Gamache showing his own affection for his former partner and family member. When Gamache is questioned about Jean-Guy, however, he makes excuses and will not talk about what might have happened between the two.

In these chapters it also appears the Jean-Guy is on a path of self-destruction as he seems to be falling apart. His senior officers are encouraging him to take drugs and looking the other way when he steals medications from raids. The officers in the department additionally seem to thrive on inciting problems in their district, then sending officers out on raids to quell the problems they've created.

Meanwhile, the mystery deepens about Constance's identity. Although she seems reluctant to do so, Myrna finally clarifies who the older lady was to Gamache. She was one of the Ouellet Quints. In fact, she was the last of this set of quintuplets to die. Even though the reader now knows Constance's identity, it has still not been clarified why she was famous and if her fame was positive or negative.

In Chapter Four Audrey Villeneuve's story seems to end as she is discovered at the base of the Champlain Bridge. Investigators believe she killed herself. It was her body Gamache and Lacoste saw being pulled up by emergency workers as they were on their way to Three Pines. Gamache had called his friend in Montreal to be sure the body did not belong to Constance, thus learning the lady's identity.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter One, it appeared that Audrey Villeneuve had survived her panic attack in the tunnel by reminding herself of the party dress into which she'd put so much work. Is it surprising to learn in Chapter Four that she's become a victim of suicide?



Discussion Question 2

What clues have been given so far about the relationship between Gamache and Jean-Guy?

Discussion Question 3

Do you think it is unusual for Brault to offer Gamache the Ouellet case even though it isn't in his district?

Vocabulary

Superfluous, dossier, clarified, oblige, notorious, genteel, relegated, oblivious, lithe, frenetic, fissures, sallow, haggard.



Chapters 7 – 9

Summary

In Chapter Seven, Gamache and Henri pay a visit to Therese and Jerome Brunel. Jerome tells Gamache he has hit some walls in finding the identity of the person who leaked the video of the factory raid. They believe it is someone in the top police office, but haven't been able to determine this for certain. Jerome, however, believes he is being tracked by a watcher. When Gamache leaves the building, he and Henri head for Three Pines.

In Chapter Eight, Myrna and Clara are washing dishes when Gamache pulls up in front of Myrna's store. They think for a second it is Constance, but it is Gamache who answers their calls. When Gamache questions Myrna further about her relationship with Constance, he learns Constance had been one of her clients. Myrna tells him Constance had come to visit Three Pines after her last sister died. She explains to Gamache that Constance had always kept a barrier between herself and other people. Myrna confirms she was the only resident of Three Pines who knew who Constance was.

In Chapter Nine, Gamache decides to spend the night at the B and B in Three Pines. Before he goes to bed, Gamache takes Henri for a walk. The dog runs off, stopping at the house where his first owner, a lady who had since passed away, lived. Also in this chapter is a snippet of Jean-Guy parked in front of Annie Gamache's house, wishing he could hear her tell him everything would be okay.

Back with Therese and Jerome, the couple is unable to sleep after their meeting with Gamache. Therese is worried that Jerome has been detected. Sensing her worry, Jerome tells her everything will be all right. About the same time in Three Pines, Gamache is warming Henri's cold paws in his hands, telling the dog it will be all right.

Analysis

A sense of impending danger begins to enter the storyline when Gamache visits Jerome Brunel, a man who he has elicited to help him find out who leaked a video of a factory raid that went bad. Jerome is afraid he has been detected and shares this fear with Gamache. He doesn't tell Gamache the identity of a person whom he found in the process of his searching.

The author enjoys playing with words, meanings and images as is seen in Chapter Eight when Gamache and Myrna are discussing Constance's disappearance. Myrna indicates Constance had always seemed pretty sane to which Gamache asks if sanity is really something that can be determined by appearances. It is at this moment that the two look at Clara, whose hair is standing on end in the traditional fashion of the insane,



as if to drive his point home. Clara is unaware how wild she looks and wonders why the sudden attention is upon her.

The importance of giving and receiving comfort is stressed at the end of these three chapters. As Jean-Guy's life is spinning out of control, he goes to his ex-wife's house, wishing he could hear her tell him everything would be all right. Meanwhile Jerome, sensing his wife's unease with what he is doing for Gamache, tells Therese that all will be okay. Even Gamache in the closing of Chapter Nine, rubs his dog's paws, telling him everything will be all right. Even with all the reassurances, however, there is a lingering suggestion that things may not turn out okay.

Discussion Question 1

How do you interpret the meaning of the ending of Chapter Nine? How do the repeated needs for assurances that all will be all right affect the tone of the story?

Discussion Question 2

What does Gamache learn about Constance from Myrna?

Discussion Question 3

What are the roles of Therese and Jerome in the novel thus far?

Vocabulary

Soignee, querulous, jovial, triage, cyphers, metamorphosis, convergence, inconceivably, compliant, mirage, contemptible.

Chapters 10 – 12

Summary

In Chapter Ten, Gamache talks privately with Olivier before breakfast. At breakfast, Gabri tells Gamache that while Constance hadn't seemed to like gays when she first arrived in Three Pines, she became very motherly to all of the residents of Three Pines including he and Olivier. At the bistro, Ruth invites Gamache to sit next to her. As the others come to talk, Gabri points out that Gamache has made a reference to who Constance really was. It is Ruth who breaks the news that Constance was one of the Ouellet Quints.

In Chapter Eleven, Ruth admits to others that Constance told her she was one of the quintes. She won't give away any information about what the two talked about or how the topic came up. Gamache calls Lacoste and the two arrange to meet at Constance's former home. At the house the two go over the forensics together. Three of the sisters, Constance, Marguerite and Josephine, had lived in the house until Josephine, and then Marguerite died. Neighbors say the sisters were friendly but very private.

Gamache and Lacoste search the house for personal items or things from Constance and the other girls' childhoods but are not able to find anything. In Constance's suitcase Gamache finds gifts intended for Gabri, Olivier and Clara. A small black and white photo of four of the adult quintes is hidden in a sweater in the suitcase. As they look at the photo Gamache and Lacoste remember that one of the quintes died young. Gamache additionally points out to Lacoste there are no pictures of the quintes' parents in the house. Lacoste voices a suggestion that Constance wasn't really the last of the quintes, maybe one was still alive.

In Chapter Twelve, as Martin Tessier gives instructions on the planned raid, all Beauvoir can hear is his own plea that he not die during the raid. Meanwhile, Gamache has a meeting with Therese Brunel. She tells him she and her husband have done all they can for him. Therese tries to convince him to give up his search for the person who leaked the video of the botched raid. She tells him that she and Jerome will be going to Vancouver to visit her daughter. Later in his office, Gamache talks to Olivier on the phone. He is brusque and almost rude when the man asks if he wants his room at the B and B.

Beauvoir struggles with nausea as the van carries agents to the location of the planned raid. Gamache knows about the raid. He watches as Lacoste tries to give orders to the men in their department. Some, including Lacoste, wonder if Gamache has given up. When she confronts him, Gamache tells Lacoste he isn't giving up, but that she needs to practice patience. After his talk with Lacoste, Gamache visits the Bibliotheque nationale. He talks the librarian there in letting him see, then keep, the file on the Ouellet quintes even though it is claimed these files are sealed.



Beauvoir takes more pills as he waits for the raid to begin. Meanwhile, Gamache arrives in Three Pines. Olivier takes him, along with Therese and Jerome Brunel, to Emilie Longpre's house.

Analysis

Although in previous chapters Ruth has been presented as a drunk and a demented, bitter old woman, it appears there may be more to the woman that one sees on the surface. Of all the seemingly "sane" people in Three Pines it is with Ruth that Constance chooses to willingly share her identity as one of the Ouellet Quints. Ruth listened without prying and without giving away any secrets that Constance might have shared with her. Note, however, the way Ruth answers when she is confronted in Chapter Eleven by Myrna who does not believe she did not ask questions of Constance when she learned she was a quint. Ruth says "It is the truth, alas." This reference will be significant later on in the novel. Also in this section of the novel a little bit is learned about the significance of the quints in Canada's history. The girls were a sign of hope in the time of the Depression.

Strange in this section of the novel is Gamache's meeting with Therese, where she is brusque and rude to him, breaking agreement that Jerome would continue to work on Gamache's project. Considering the Brunel's fear the night before it seems understandable they might want to distance themselves from Gamache, but Therese seems to go overboard in her determination to have nothing more to do with him. Similarly, Gamache responds strangely to his phone call from Olivier. He is brusque and almost rude to the man. This behavior seems unusual for a man who will not call down an agent for insubordination to be so hateful to a person he'd asked help of earlier in the day.

Discussion Question 1

At this point, what have Gamache and Lacoste learned about the Quints? What motives might someone have for killing Constance?

Discussion Question 2

What do Gamache and Lacoste believe is strange about Constance's home?

Discussion Question 3

What was the purpose of Gamache's meeting with Therese? What about his rude phone call to Olivier?

Vocabulary

Solstice, commiserating, querulous, cordial, censorious, enamored, reminisce, malevolent, fetid, unflappable, tenacious, officious, mandatory.



Chapters 13 – 15

Summary

In Chapter Thirteen, Gamache, Jerome and Therese settle into Emilie's house. They share the ways they finagled and tricked one another, and their enemies, to reach their safe place. Jerome, however, doesn't seem to feel safe after what he discovered on his last search of the Internet. He seems afraid his identity might have been discovered. Meanwhile, Beauvoir is just breathing a sigh of relief that the raid did not happen when Tessier tells him he's been put on the next planned raid. After Tessier leaves, Beauvoir cries.

In Chapter Fourteen, after dinner Gamache and Jerome take a walk. Jerome asks Gamache if he brought them to Three Pines because of the lack of satellite coverage. Over drinks, Jerome tells Gamache they although they are safe in the village, they are also stuck there. Gamache tells Jerome he has a plan to solve their problem, but needs to talk to Myrna first.

In Chapter Fifteen, Gamache shares with Myrna what he has learned about Constance so far in his investigation of her murder. As Myrna listens to the story of how the barren Marie-Harriette had visited Brother Andre to pray and beg for children, she sees how the people of that time period would have considered the girls' births a symbol of God's love and His ability to bless.

Analysis

The first part of Chapter Thirteen explains Gamache's odd behavior at the end of Chapter Twelve. When Gamache had walked with Olivier in Three Pines he had asked him to see about the availability of Emilie Longpre's house. Gamache's seemingly brusque conversation with Olivier about his room at the B and B was actually a coded conversation about Emilie's house. Gamache wanted to secure the house for Therese and Jerome's use, but not give anyone who might be spying on his phone conversations information about where the couple was going. Similarly, Therese speaks roughly to Gamache but has written her real intentions on a note she hands to Gamache during their conversation.

Additionally during this section of the novel, Gamache learns more about the background of the Ouellet Quints. Because the Ouellets had been unable to have children, the Ouellets' delivery of five healthy babies was seen as a gift from God. The girls' story sparked a renewal of the belief that God was still good and that he did answer prayers.



Discussion Question 1

What is the significance of Three Pines being a dead zone as far as Internet and telecommunications?

Discussion Question 2

What does the reader learn about Gamache's opinion of fear in these chapters of the novel?

Discussion Question 3

Describe the means by which the quintz were conceived. Why is it so remarkable?

Vocabulary

Eclectic, credulity, lolling, impenetrable, mullioned, banal, procreate, ostracized.



Chapters 16 – 18

Summary

In Chapter Sixteen, Gamache shows Myrna three pictures of the girls as newborns. One picture is taken with their father, who looks horrified. The second is with a midwife. In both of these photos the girls are on a rough kitchen table wrapped in dishcloths and rags. Myrna recognizes the third picture which shows the girls with Dr. Bernard, who was said to have delivered them. In a fourth picture that Gamache pulls from his pocket, there are only four girls. They appear to have altered their appearances so they look different from one another. Myrna asks about the fifth quint. Gamache reminds her one of the girls, Virginie, died young after a fall down some stairs.

The conversation turns to Constance's time with Myrna as a psychiatrist. Myrna says it was nearly a year before she knew Constance was one of the quints. Instead of suffering depression, like her sister, Constance came to Myrna because she was unhappy. Myrna felt she had discovered Constance's problem was loneliness. Later, in her bookstore, Myrna is unable to find a book she thought she had about Dr. Bernard, the doctor who supposedly delivered the quints. Since Myrna knows no one has bought the book, she suspects Ruth has taken it.

When Gamache asks, Myrna tells him Constance stopped seeing her because they hit an impasse. Constance believed she could not open up and let people into her life. Myrna, however, knew that if she didn't let anyone into her life, she'd always be lonely. Gamache shares with Myrna that he believes Constance had intended to open up to her at her next visit to Three Pines.

In Chapter Seventeen, Gamache meets Ruth by the hockey pond and asks her why she took the book about Dr. Bernard from Myrna's bookstore. She tells him Constance never told her much about herself, so she thought she might learn something from the book. She indicates the book treated the parents as if they were poor and dumb, but also described them as being greedy. Gamache recalls the letters he'd read from the quints' parents indicating they wanted their daughters back, believing they'd been tricked into giving them up to the government.

Back at Emilie's house, Gamache questions Jerome about multiple births. Jerome tells Gamache that the babies would have developed with two per sac with the exception of one who would have been alone. At Gamache's prodding, Jerome says the girl who developed in the sac alone might have been more independent than the others.

Talk turns to the problem Jerome, Therese and Gamache are facing with no high-speed Internet service. Gamache suggests they might be able to rig a satellite on one of the trees. Jerome mentions that even if that idea did work, they'd need a way to get onto the Internet that would keep them from being discovered quickly. Gamache shows them an access code he's gotten from the national archives of Quebec that they can use.



In Chapter Eighteen, Gamache visits Ruth, asking her to tell him what she knows about the quintes. Ruth admits that she had fanaticized as a young child that she had been one of the quintes. Meanwhile, Clara tells Therese satellite dishes won't work in Three Pines when Therese questions her about finding someone who could put up a dish. Back at Ruth's house, Ruth tells Gamache it was during Constance's second visit to Ruth that she tells Ruth that the poem "Alas" was right. Ruth tells Gamache she'd always dreamed she'd been adopted out and that one day the Ouellets would come and find her. Then, one day, Constance did come and find her.

Analysis

Gamache and Myrna continue to piece together information about the quintes, their birth and their upbringing. They learn that instead of being delivered by Dr. Bernard as everyone had thought, the girls were actually delivered by a midwife and their father. As a poor couple, the Ouellets would not have been able to afford to pay a doctor for prenatal care. In the time of the depression, women did not have medical care during a pregnancy unless something was wrong. Other women experienced in helping with labor and delivery would come to assist when the woman was ready to give birth.

As Gamache and Myrna discuss the girls, they remember that one of them, Virginie, died young. It had been reported that she fell down a set of stairs in the house the government built for the girls but there has always been suspicion about the way she died. Some suspect she was depressed and actually committed suicide. Because it is believed that Virginie might have committed suicide, a parallel is drawn between her death and the death of Audrey Villeneuve.

Myrna tells Gamache some details of her time as Myrna's counselor. She says it was a significant amount of time before Constance told her she was one of the Ouellet Quintes. Looking back, she now realizes that Constance has given her multiple hints about her identity. One hint, which will become important later in the novel, is that the girls were told not to talk about Brother Andre.

Myrna shares with Gamache an allegory of Constance's unwillingness to let people in her house being similar to her unwillingness to let people in her life. In response to this allegory, Gamache indicates that Constance must have known someone really well to have let them into her bedroom. He is thinking of the circumstances of her death where she was killed in her bedroom with no sign of forced entry to the house. Gamache believes Constance let her killer in the door. That's unusual because the neighbors say that she never invited anyone into her home.

Discussion Question 1

Why were the Ouellet Quintes considered a miracle in the time they were born?



Discussion Question 2

What is Ruth's connection with the Ouellet Quints?

Discussion Question 3

How do Jerome and Therese come to be in Three Pines?

Vocabulary

Iconic, competence, qualifier, prescient, impasse, morph, expropriation, banal, rotund, dementia.



Chapters 19 – 21

Summary

In Chapter Nineteen, in his office, Gamache is angry when he reads a report sent to him by Francoeur indicating that Jean-Guy is being sent out on another raid. Gamache walks to Dr. Fleury's office. Gamache admits to Fleury he believes information about himself and his officers were leaked from the psychiatrist's office. He tells the psychiatrist about Therese calling him paranoid. He explains his belief there is corruption in the Surete with a chief officer behind that corruption. Gamache tells his doctor his fear that Jean-Guy is being manipulated and turned against him. He asks to see Jean-Guy's files. Fleury suggests that Gamache is responsible for his own problems, not that he is being prosecuted by someone. Gamache lets Fleury see the gun on his hip. He leaves when Fleury asks him why he's carrying a gun. He says he knew it was a mistake to come. In the street, Gamache hums happily, knowing he has achieved what he intended to in the office. Back at Surete headquarters, Gamache sneaks into the basement. He has weighed his risks of visiting the one agent that works in the physical plant of the headquarters. The young, female agent is surprised when Gamache knocks on the door, telling her he needs her help.

In Chapter Twenty, back in Three Pines, Gamache joins his friends at the bistro for drinks. Gilles, a man who used to be a lumberjack and now works installing satellites when he can, joins them. Meanwhile, Jean-Guy, so tired and depressed he can't even work up the energy to take a shower, parks outside Annie's apartment, hoping for a glimpse of her. Annie feels the pain of their separation as well. She sits outside his apartment, hoping to see a light, a ritual she does every night.

At Clara's house, Gilles tells Gamache even if he could attach a satellite to a tree, it wouldn't be able to keep a signal because it would blow around so much. After the disappointment, Gamache asks to use Clara's DVD player. He intends to watch a film about the quints in private, but quickly gets company when Gabri, Olivier, Myrna and Ruth join him.

In Chapter Twenty-One, a DVD, which is a copy of the introduction to the quints, plays. Jerome pulls Therese aside. He asks her about Arnot. Back in the living room, Dr. Bernard talks about his experiences delivering the quints. He is an easy person to like, Gamache notes. Meanwhile, Therese tells Jerome everything there was to know about the Arnot case was in the papers. She seems resistant to talking about Arnot but Jerome tells her the man's name came up in his search. Therese relents, telling Jerome that Arnot had been the Chief Superintendent of the Surete when she began her job. She'd first seen Arnot during a lecture. With Arnot and Gamache in the lecture hall together, she recognized Gamache as the more powerful man. At this admission, Jerome asks if Arnot tried to kill Gamache or if it was the other way around.



Meanwhile in the living room, the film has become raw footage of the cottage where the quintes lived. They watch as a woman pushes the girls out the front door where they cling together, some of them crying, trying to get back in the house. The girls are taken back into the house to try again. This happens several times before the girls come out of the house happily as the cameraman wants. Gamache looks at the others in the room, even Ruth is crying. Back with Jerome and Therese, Therese tells Jerome how Arnot had made a name for himself in a Cree reserve in the James Bay area. After the Cree sold their ancestral land, they thought things could not get worse for them but then Arnot arrived, Therese said. Meanwhile in the living room, the group watches footage of the quintes, now eight or nine, going to their father for his blessing. They are in the old farmhouse. The quintes' mother is in the shot and Gamache realizes it was she who pushed the girls out the door of the cottage in earlier footage. Gamache notices when the girls go out to play, their mother gives them each their own hat, each hat is decorated with a different pattern. She has one hat too many and Gamache watches as she throws it off camera. Gamache interprets the action as showing her irritation. He sees her as being stressed, at the end of her rope.

Therese continues to talk to Jerome about Arnot and the Cree. She tells him that Arnot gained the trust of the Cree then used that trust to destroy them by accepting a new hydraulic dam that would destroy the remainder of their property. Those who doubted Arnot or questioned his motives disappeared, Therese says. Armand got involved when an elderly Cree woman was sent to Quebec City to ask for help in discovering the cause of the deaths of so many Cree men. Gamache had met the woman sitting on a bench outside the hotel in which he was staying. When he finds out what is wrong, Gamache asks the woman why she didn't go to the Surete. She tells him she believes the Surete are responsible for the deaths and disappearances. Gamache believed her story, Therese says.

Analysis

The first issue addressed in this section of the novel is Gamache's anger at the email that Francoeur has sent out. The email tells him that Jean-Guy is being sent out on another raid. He knows Francoeur has sent him the message in order to upset him. Gamache seems agitated as he walks to his therapist's office. He asks for Jean-Guy's personal files and tells his therapist he believes he is being paranoid and that he believes Gamache is responsible for his own problems. It seems that Gamache may be trying to get his therapist to spread word to Francoeur that Gamache is mentally and emotionally unstable, which seems to be Francoeur's goal.

Through the raw footage of the quintes introduction to the world, Gamache and the others learn how much pain was behind the seemingly happy scene. Most of them remember the film of the girls walking around in the yard of the house the government had built for them. In the film that is aired, the girls are smiling and waving. In previous takes, however, the girls were crying and scared as someone pushes them out the door of the house, and then closes the door. Even Ruth is crying after seeing this example of how traumatic the quintes' lives were.



While the others are distracted by the films about the quints, Jerome pulls Therese aside and asks her about Arnot. Even saying his name seems to change the tone in the room from one of comfort to one of discord. Therese seems hesitant to talk about Arnot and any background information she might have about the case. Although Arnot acted immorally in his dealings with the Cree reservation, it is noted at the end of the chapter that it was not Arnot's name Jerome saw in his Internet search that scared him so badly.

This section explains how Gamache got involved in the murders on the Cree reservation and ultimately stopped what Arnot had planned. A Cree woman had gone to Montreal to talk to government leaders about what was happening to the young men in her area. Instead of going to the correct government building, she went to a hotel where Gamache was staying. He had seen her sitting on a bench, looking upset. He asked her what was wrong. She told her story, and he believed her.

Discussion Question 1

How does Gamache's anger at reading Francoeur's report differ from his former responses to the man's activities?

Discussion Question 2

After Gamache leaves Dr. Fluery's office, he is humming, believing he has achieved what he came for. What do you think he intended to achieve?

Discussion Question 3

Why is the raw footage of the Quints being pushed out of a house in front of a camera significant? How does it change the viewers' opinions of the way the Quints lived?

Vocabulary

Impotent, narcissist, patronizing, linear, parody, conjure, vortex, plaintively, melodramatic, sonorous, outlier, rancid, whimsical, antithesis, provincial, analytical, benign, expelled, conjured, retrospectives, lethal, repose, insatiable, mercantile, tuques, rearguard, prevail, seminal, morose, supplication, quagmire.



Chapters 22 – 24

Summary

In Chapter Twenty-two, Myrna and Clara discuss what the type of treatment the quints received as children must have done to them. Ruth says she knows what that type of treatment does to a person, that it turns a young girl into an ancient mariner. Gamache is the only one who seems to be familiar with *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. He sits next to Ruth and questions her about her theory of Constance. Just as the mariner had to tell someone his secret in order to unburden himself, Ruth leads Gamache to believe that Constance also had a burden she needed to unload. Gamache believes that it was to Myrna that Constance intended to share her secret. He believes she was killed to keep her from telling her secret. He wonders if she told anyone else first. Before he leaves Clara's house, Gamache is approached by Gilles who tells him he has figured out a way to make a satellite work. He suggests they could attach it to a deer blind high up in a tree.

Meanwhile, Francoeur and Tessier talk about Jean-Guy. Although Francoeur wants to send him on another raid, Tessier thinks the man is finished. Tessier also tries to make Francoeur understand that Gamache is falling fast as he reads the report Dr. Fleury has written about Gamache being paranoid and delusional. Francoeur backs Tessier against a bookcase and reminds him what is at stake if they don't succeed in their plan. Tessier asks Francoeur if he needs to take care of Gamache. Francoeur tells him only to distract Gamache if he gets too close as his death might look suspicious.

In Chapter Twenty-three, as Jerome and Therese walk Henri, they continue to talk about Arnot. Therese says Gamache took his case to the council. At first, the council won't hear the proof but Gamache threatens to go public. Arnot and the others agree to resign but Gamache wants them charged with murder. Therese tells Jerome what she is about to say next didn't make the papers. Meanwhile, Gamache talks to Ruth. She asks him about Jean-Guy. He tells her what he can about the man. Back with the Brunels, Therese tells Jerome the Surete gave Arnot and his men a few days to get their affairs in order instead of arresting them immediately. Armand is against the delay, knowing the Surete intends the men to kill themselves. Gamache disobeys orders and has the men arrested, resulting in the trials that Jerome remembers. Arnot said nothing to defend himself in the trials. Therese tells Jerome Arnot is housed in the SHU, the special handling unit at a maximum-security prison.

Before they are able to talk anymore, Jerome and Therese are interrupted by Gamache walking up behind them. Gamache asks why they are talking about Arnot. Jerome finally admits to Gamache that he came across Arnot's name in his research. Jerome can't tell him any specifics as he didn't dig that far. As they talk, a truck drives into the village. Henri growls when he hears the woman's voice. Both the Brunels are surprised the woman is there and warn Gamache they believe she is working with Francoeur.



In Chapter Twenty-four, Gamache, Agent Nichol and the others begin setting up the computer equipment she has brought in the old schoolhouse at Three Pines. Therese voices her anger at Gamache for involving Nichol as they try to get a fire going in the schoolhouse stove. She believes Nichol is working for Francoeur. Gamache argues that Francoeur wouldn't work with someone he couldn't control. Therese believes it was Nichol who released the video of the factory raid that went bad as a way to spite Gamache. Therese leaves the schoolhouse, angry because Gamache didn't consult with her and Jerome before including Nichol. Gamache points out he isn't the only one who has been holding back information as Jerome had not shared with him that Arnot's name had come up in his search. Meanwhile, Gilles has found the old hunting blind. Gamache blanches at the mention that he help them put the satellite dish up. He kids Therese as the two of them are sent away while the wiring is being done.

Analysis

Interesting in this section of the novel is Ruth's uncanny understanding of the life of the quints. Although the others continue to dismiss her as crazy, Gamache makes it a point to try to discuss Constance and her ideas about Constance's planned trip to Three Pines with Ruth. Ruth compares Constance to the old man in *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner* who was forced to wear an actual dead bird around his neck as punishment for accidentally killing an innocent animal. Ruth compares Constance with this old man seeming to imply that Constance was carrying some dark secret with her. Gamache is familiar with the story and wonders if Constance had intended to tell Myrna about her "albatross" just as the old man in the story had shared the story of his guilt with a guest at a wedding.

Note also in this section that Ruth asks again about Jean-Guy. It has been mentioned that Ruth and Jean-Guy had developed a sort of friendship so it is understandable she would ask. What sticks out is that Ruth is the only person with whom he chooses to share the story about how he and Jean-Guy came to part ways. While Ruth is characterized as the mad woman of Three Pines, it seems she is additionally the one to whom people go to share their stories. Constance went to Ruth and willingly shared her identity as a quint, now Gamache has gone to Ruth and willingly shared his story about Jean-Guy.

Arnot continues to be a person of interest in this part of the novel. As Gamache remembers what went on with the man he can't help but feel that the main person behind Arnot's killings was still at large. He wonders if Arnot's imprisonment was like the sacrifice of a pawn, Arnot was allowed to take the brunt of the blame and punishment so the larger players could stay out of prison to concoct another plan.

Also in this section Gamache and Therese have their first falling out when Agent Nichol arrives in Three Pines. It is apparent Nichol is not pleasant as even Henri growls when Nichol's truck pulls up. Therese believes the woman is the one responsible for leaking the video of Gamache's botched factory raid. Instead of helping them in their research, Therese argues Nichol will turn them in to Francoeur, for whom Therese believes Nichol



is actually working. While Gamache is torn by his decision to bring the untrustworthy agent into their safe place, he believes the help she can give them is worth the chance she might lead Francoeur to their hiding spot.

Discussion Question 1

What is it about Nichol that makes Therese so angry that Gamache has involved her in what they are doing?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss Gamache's background with Arnot. Why is he upset that Jerome did not mention to him sooner than Arnot's name had come up in his research?

Discussion Question 3

In these three chapters of the novel, Gamache suspects that there may be another person, besides Arnot and Francoeur, behind the past wrongdoings in the Surete. In his dealings with Francoeur, Tessier believes there is a person whom Francoeur answers to and is afraid of, might this be the same person? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Albatross, cutlery, transvestite, joul, placid, delusional, credibility, euphemism, conjured, petulant, decommissioned, unilaterally, hubris, candor, insubordinate, insinuation, irrefutable.



Chapters 25 – 27

Summary

In Chapter Twenty-five, as they wait for the equipment to be installed, Gamache and Therese study. Then, they talk about the Ouellet girls. One of the most bothersome aspects seems to be the insinuation that the Ouellet farmhouse was sold to the government. However, in the videos, the Ouellets still live there. Gamache tells Therese the documents about the sale are a lie. They are only meant to make the Ouellets look bad if they ever decided to publicly dispute the government for taking away their daughters. He thinks of the way that the quint's mother had knitted each girl her own unique hat as shown by the video. He is still confused by the way she angrily throws one off screen.

Gamache goes to the B and B to call Lacoste. She reads from written notes that a hand knitted hat with a tag reading MM had been found in Marguerite's room. Josephine had a hat with snowflakes with the tag MJ in her room while Constance had a similarly hand knitted hat with the tag MC in her room. Similar hats for the other two members of the quint's were found in a hall closet. Before hanging up, Lacoste tells Gamache that Jean-Guy has been sent on another raid. As he listens, Gamache learns there has been gunfire, with an officer down. At that moment, he sees Nichol standing in the door to his room. He slams the door in her face. Lacoste tells him she's lost communication. He asks her to continue to monitor and let him know the outcome. Later, Myrna and Gamache watch the film of the quint's again. This time they can identify them by their hats. As they talk about Myrna's reference to Constance as the goddess Hera, Lacoste calls for Gamache. When he turns to them he tells them the call was good news though it was not about the case.

In Chapter Twenty-six, Gamache asks Nichol why she came to the B and B. She won't answer at first, turning the question around on him but when Gamache shows her his gun she tells him she isn't working for Francoeur and that she'd come to the B and B looking for him. Gamache continues to push her for an answer and she insists she came to the B and B to talk to him privately. She claims it was to tell him the satellite connection won't work without a security code. Gamache knows she's lying. He isn't sure if she will be the group's salvation or damnation. As they walk away, pulling the cable, Nichol sighs with relief that he doesn't know the truth.

In Chapter Twenty-seven, Jerome and Nichol work to attach the cable to the satellite. When Nichol tries to hook up the cable, Jerome stops her. Nichol argues the connection needs to be checked by Gamache agrees with Jerome they should wait. Before Gilles leaves Emilee's house, he notes to those gathered there is a reason why thieves steal at night. Once Gilles is gone, the others begin to set a plan for how their research will go. Nichol describes the clunky encryption she's made to throw the Surete off their trail. She says they will have less than 12 hours from the time they connect to the Internet until they are discovered. In an effort to get Gamache to delay their connection to the



Internet in order to let Jerome rest, Therese accuses Gamache of trying to push Jerome too hard. She believes he is endangering them to save Jean-Guy. Gamache says that isn't the case and insists they need to get the search over with. At 2 a.m., they leave for the schoolhouse.

Analysis

Two items of importance in this section of chapters is the question of the extra tuque and Nichol's appearance at the B and B. When Gamache first watched the film in which the quint's mother put individual hats on the girls, then angrily throws one out of camera range, he thought the action was a sign of Marie-Harriette's exhaustion and frustration. Now that he's found the other hats seen in the video, Gamache wonders whose hat it was that was thrown. He is also struck by the mother's act of love in knitting each of her identical daughters a unique hat to wear.

In Nichol's appearance at the B and B, Gamache was already suspicious of the woman when she came to Three Pines, but her appearance at the exact time he's taking a phone call about Jean-Guy makes him even more suspicious. It is an impulse judgment that makes him slam the door in Nichol's face. Later, he confronts her, demanding to know why she was at the B and B. She will not tell him and makes up a lie to try to cover herself. Gamache knows she lying but can't get her to tell the truth. Nichol's action in helping with the cable, even though help was not requested of her, can be interpreted almost as an apology either for her behavior, or her unwillingness to tell the truth. Either way, it can be taken as a sign that Nichol has come to help, not as a spy.

Discussion Question 1

How does the author's comparison of Nichol and Constance color your opinion of Constance? Use examples to explain your answer.

Discussion Question 2

Do you think it would be more wise for Jerome and the others to wait a day to try to search the Internet for the information Gamache is looking? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

About what do you think Nichol is lying to Gamache? Do you think she is working for Francoeur?



Vocabulary

Metaphorically, insinuation, benevolent, deprivation, profanity, perpetual, diffuse, sadistic, rampant, penitent, crystalline, vehemently, pallid, wraith, encrypting, miffed, disheveled.



Chapters 28 – 30

Summary

In Chapter Twenty-eight, at the schoolhouse, Gamache lets Jerome get as far as typing in the code before he stops him. He has realized they are too tired to do the work that night. Even Nichol is too tired to argue. The next morning, Gamache is more well rested and knows he's made the right choice. Later, visiting with Myrna, Gamache asks her about any Christmas gift Constance might have given her. They find one under the tree. The card indicates the gift holds the key to Constance's home.

In Chapter Twenty-nine, Myrna finds a used, child-sized tuque inside the package. She and Gamache try to figure out the story behind the hat. Gamache decides to watch the film again. They realize the tuque that Myrna was given was the same one that the quints mother threw off camera in the film. Gamache calls Lacoste and they toss around ideas that one of the quints might still be alive and that Virginie's death was actually a murder. Gamache takes the tuque to the forensics lab before going to check in on his department. Lacoste is trying to lead a briefing but few agents have shown up. Gamache tells the others to go home. They believe it is a sign he is giving up. In private, he tells Lacoste he plans to retire. He asks her to circulate a letter of resignation he will email to her.

In Chapter Thirty, Tessier shares with Francoeur the news that Gamache has sent all of his agents home. Francoeur believes Gamache is up to something. As Gamache is looking over the birth and death records at a parish church, Francoeur is meeting with an unnamed companion who seems as suspicious of Gamache as Francoeur is. In the conversation it is mentioned that Francoeur and Tessier were responsible for Audrey Villeneuve's death. They talk about the destruction of a dam they had planned the year prior that Gamache had discovered and stopped. Although they seem to have another disaster planned, Francoeur's companion asks why he hasn't killed Gamache as well. Francoeur believes he has Gamache distracted with Jean-Guy's condition. They speak of the plan, which the companion says is ready to play out in one day.

Gamache finds records of both the births and deaths of all the Quints. Before going back to Three Pines Gamache stops at the SHU. He doesn't go in even though he wants to. Instead he goes back to the parish church where he learns that Isidore lived alone in the farmhouse until he died. He had help from a brother-in-law whom the priest identifies as Andre Pineault.

Analysis

The man to whom Francoeur answers to finally appears in this section of the novel. He is not named but appears to be a wealthy man, probably one who holds some type of governmental office. This man has apparently had a hand in the misdoings of Arnot as



well as the two discuss the fact that it was Gamache who discovered and stopped their plan to destroy the dam. This unidentified man is pushing Francoeur to take care of, or kill, Gamache in order to get him out of their way.

Meanwhile, while Gamache has allowed Jerome a day of rest, he is busy working on Constance's murder. He and Myrna have found the sixth hat. It was wrapped up as a gift for Myrna under her Christmas tree. Constance left another of her hints for Myrna indicating the hat held the key to her house. Gamache realizes the hat, and the person who wore that hat, must figure into the secret Constance and her sisters were hiding.

When Gamache returns to his department, he finds that few of his agents are working as they are supposed to be doing. Lacoste is struggling to hold a briefing. When Gamache sees what is going on, he tells the remaining agents to go home. The agents are happy, believing they have won. Tessier, as well, believes the clearing of Gamache's department is a sign that Gamache is giving up. Francoeur, who is more wise to Gamache's ways than Tessier, thinks Gamache might be up to something.

Discussion Question 1

Francoeur's meeting is obviously with the man who is his boss. Does the information in Chapter Thirty help to identify the man? Give specific answers that support your answer.

Discussion Question 2

What does Gamache learn while visiting the parish priest?

Discussion Question 3

What is the significance of the tuque that Constance gives Myrna as a Christmas gift?

Vocabulary

Abomination, eluded, conceded, telepathy, expropriated, brusquely, rhetorical, coup, eccentrics, transcription, chalices, protruding, mandate, frisson, discreet, glib, bungle, crucible, credibility, sentry.



Chapters 31 – 33

Summary

In Chapter Thirty-one, Gamache learns from the forensic report on the tuque that it belonged to a man. He wonders if there was some sort of abuse going on between the quintes and their father. Lacoste emails Gamache to let him know she's found the quintes uncle, Andre Pineault, to whom Gamache believes it is vital that he speak. Gamache looks out over the city for a minute then makes a split second decision to go to Jean-Guy's office. Gamache begs the man to let him get him help. Jean-Guy takes Gamache's gun but instead of shooting him, hits him across the face with it. He refuses to go with Gamache.

Gamache washes his face at Andre Pineault's home. Pineault tells Gamache he didn't know the girls that well, but he did sometimes play hockey with them. He says the girls hardly ever came back to see their father but that he and Isidore were all right together. Isidore hardly talked, Gamache said, but when he did talk, it was about the girls. When Gamache tells him Constance is dead, Pineault doesn't seem to care. He believes Marie-Harriette and Isidore's lives were ruined by the girls' births instead of being the miracle for which they'd hoped. He believes the girls didn't visit the farm once they were grown up because they knew they weren't welcome. When Gamache pulls out the tuque, Pineault smiles, recognizing it.

In Chapter Thirty-two, Gamache wonders if the elderly next-door neighbor to Constance might be Virginie. He wonders if the girl faked her death to try to have a normal life. Although Lacoste tries to get Gamache to let her reinterview the neighbor, Gamache insists he be allowed to do it. During the interview, the couple seems shocked to learn some members of the Ouellet Quintes lived next door to them. Meanwhile, Francoeur is keeping tabs on Gamache's location. Gamache is making him nervous but when Tessier tells him about the encounter with Jean-Guy, he relaxes, believing both men are losing their grip on reality. When Tessier mentions that Gamache went to the SHU, Francoeur gets nervous again, believing Gamache knows that Arnot is involved. Back in Three Pines, Gamache tells Therese what went on between him and Jean-Guy. After she and Jerome have gone to bed he writes out two letters which he drops in the town's mail slot. Gamache falls asleep writing a letter to his wife. Jerome and Therese wake him when they come downstairs.

In Chapter Thirty-three, the group encounters its first problem when they get no satellite connection. Jerome believes it is because of snow on the dish. Despite his fear of heights, Gamache climbs to the blind and cleans the dish. The system works. About four hours after they start their research, Jerome and Nichol trip an alarm.



Analysis

It has become apparent by this point in the novel that Gamache really cares about his former son-in-law even though his son-in-law believes Gamache has destroyed his life. In a split second decision, Gamache goes to Jean-Guy's office to try to get him to accept help. Jean-Guy refuses to do so. Instead of shooting Gamache, as he could have, Jean-Guy only hits him with the gun. All of the officers in Francoeur's department witness the confrontation between the two men and believe both of them are at their breaking points.

Central to this section of the novel is Gamache's visit to Andre Pineault. Although Pineault says he did not know the quintes personally, he has quite a jaded opinion of the girls. He talks about how the girls were spoiled with fancy dresses, candy and toys. He remembers playing hockey with them, and remembers the hat that Gamache shows him. He claims, however, he doesn't remember whose hat it was. Pineault, who claims to be Andre's brother-in-law, is additionally very angry about the book Dr. Bernard wrote about the Ouellets. He says the book was full of lies. He additionally tells Gamache if God was responsible for the quintes' birth, he must have hated Marie-Harriette because all the girls brought on the family was heartache and pain.

Discussion Question 1

Does anything strike you as unusual about Gamache's visit with Pineault? If yes, what?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Gamache confront Jean-Guy? Does he really think the man will listen to him?

Discussion Question 3

Do you think Constance's neighbors had anything to do with her murder? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Curry, emaciated, flummoxed, innuendo, confidant, seminal, periphery, cordial, mulling, contingencies, petulant, viral, symmetric, pinnacle.



Chapters 34 – 36

Summary

In Chapter Thirty-four, Francoeur is concerned when he learns someone has accessed a file about an autoroute construction because he knows what that file contains.

Meanwhile, Gamache asks to see the secure construction files that Jerome and Nichol have stumbled upon. About the same time, Charpentier calls Francoeur to tell him the alert was nothing. Francoeur has him put extra agents to monitor regardless.

Meanwhile, Jerome shows Gamache in the files where Arnot's name led him to files on an old company called Aqueduct. Meanwhile, although Tessier tries to reassure Francoeur, he insists that Chief Inspector Lambert, the head of Cyber Crimes. Back at the schoolhouse Gamache instructs Nichol to research Aqueduct. They learn it is an old company that has gone bankrupt. They are still discussing the company when Jerome realizes people are looking for them. They decide even if the Surete does know they are being looked at, they don't know what they are looking for or why. Just a few minutes later, they are found.

In Chapter Thirty-five, Francoeur and his people are erasing files, but still haven't figured out for sure that it is Gamache and his friends who are accessing them. Gamache and the others learn that Aqueduct morphed from a sewer company to one dealing with construction. When they try to return to the autoroute file, they find it has been erased. They get out just in time to avoid being discovered. Gamache makes Jerome and Nichol go out for a walk. After their break, they decide to go back in as they don't understand why the Surete is trying to cover up information about road construction. Gamache suggests the Surete has gotten involved in bid rigging and corruption in the construction business. Gamache has Jerome and Nichol search for repair contracts.

Meanwhile, Tessier calls Therese's daughter in an attempt to get in touch with Therese. The daughter plays along, saying her parents are there, but don't want to talk to him. Tessier, however, suspects something is not right. Back at the schoolhouse, Gamache suddenly asks Jerome for information about Audrey Villeneuve. The information about her job in transportation has been erased from the file. Instead of killing herself, Gamache suggests she might have been murdered because she found out about something wrong in that department. Gamache realizes none of the contracted roadwork was ever completed. Although they've been identified by the Surete, Gamache orders Jerome to dig into the files for more information.

Both Francoeur and Gamache and the others are in shock when the next name comes up on the screen. Gamache realizes that Jerome has known all the while that Georges Renard, the Premier of Qubec, has been involved in the misdeeds they've discovered. Francoeur calls Renard asking him to move forward with the plan but Renard tells him no changes can be made, for him to do away with Gamache. Meanwhile, Gamache instructs Jerome and Nichol to find everything they can on Audrey, then asks Nichol to



walk with him to his car. He is leaving Three Pines to visit the SHU again. He asks her again why she was in the B and B. She finally admits she wanted to tell him it was she who leaked the factory raid video. She hadn't meant to hurt him, but wanted others to know it wasn't his fault.

In Chapter Thirty-six, the head guard tries to stall Gamache when he asks to see Arnot at the SHU. The man they bring in is not Arnot. Gamache learns most of the guards have been there six months or less. Gamache believes Arnot is dead. Back in his car, Gamache has a message from Nichol. She has found out that Renard worked for the Aqueduct as his first job. He additionally worked on the hydroelectric dam in La Grande, where he met Arnot. They'd plotted to destroy that dam and had almost succeeded but Gamache stopped them. Now Gamache knows he must find their next plan of attack.

Francoeur learns from Tessier that Gamache has been to the SHU and knows Arnot is not there. Tessier also tells him the Brunels are not in Vancouver. They realize Jerome is one of the ones who has hacked them but that he has had help. Lambert identifies Nichol as the other agent. Francoeur orders Tessier to meet him in the sub-basement believing the hackers might be working from there. Once there, they discover the missing computer equipment. Meanwhile, Therese, Nichol and the others are clearing out of the schoolhouse and going to Emilee's house to wait as Gamache had texted them to do. They are waiting quietly when they hear footsteps on the porch and a knock.

Analysis

The plot of the novel begins to reach a climax as Gamache and the others begin to put the pieces together and realize how deeply dark a plot they've gotten themselves into. Jerome and Nichol's search leads them to Georges Renard, the leader of Quebec. It is the name of this man that Jerome had originally seen that scared him so badly. It now seems apparent that the meeting Francoeur had in a previous chapter was with Renard. It is Renard, the leader of the country, who has been pulling the strings, commanding Francoeur to lie and murder people who got in the way of his plan.

When Gamache learns that it is construction related files and records that the people at the Surete are trying to erase and protect, he realizes that Audrey Villeneuve, the lady who was believed to have committed suicide at the beginning of the novel, might actually have been killed because she knew something about what was planned. The tone of the novel becomes tense as Jerome and Nichol rush against time to get as much information as they can before they are located. Once they know they've been found, they go to Emilie Longpre's house to wait for Francoeur and his men to arrive. The tension reaches a climax as people walk across the home's porch and knock on the door just as the chapter closes.



Discussion Question 1

Discuss the method the author uses to present both Gamache and Francoeur's sides of the story in Chapters Thirty-four and Thirty-five. How is this style effective?

Discussion Question 2

This author creates some very vivid and unusual characters in this novel. Choose one and discuss his or her personality features. What makes them unique? How does the author develop the personality?

Discussion Question 3

What do Gamache and the others learn during this part of the novel? How does Audrey's reaction to driving through the tunnel, which seemed at the beginning of the novel a little psychotic, now make sense?

Vocabulary

Breach, analogy, specter, unpalatable, dismantle, benign, mandate, despondent, ransacking, gestation, monolithic, imminent, imbecile, imperative, conceit, defiantly.



Chapters 37 – 39

Summary

In Chapter Thirty-seven, it is Myrna and the other residents of Three Pines at Emilie's front door. She persuades them to hide at her house. Meanwhile, Gamache has gone to the Villeneuve home. Villeneuve will not let Gamache in until he learns Gamache is with homicide. He tells Gamache he thought someone had killed Audrey but didn't know who. He'd noticed she'd been upset but hadn't asked why. He added he thought it was unusual that detectives had taken everything, including Audrey's computer. When he mentions that Audrey was afraid to use the tunnel, Gamache suspects it is this structure that is the target of Francoeur and his people. Before he leaves, Gamache learns Audrey had seemed happier when she learned the premier would be attending the office Christmas party. Gamache believes Audrey planned to tell the premier about the neglect during the party. Before he heads back to Three Pines, Gamache calls Lacoste to have her close the Ville-Marie Tunnel. He additionally tells her he's handed in his resignation and asks her to keep an eye on Jean-Guy. Francoeur, meanwhile, has employed Jean-Guy to drive them to Three Pines.

As Myrna and the others wait for Francoeur and his men to arrive in Three Pines, Myrna tells them the story of the quintes, as Gamache has written in his letter to her. Meanwhile, Gamache asks Villeneuve permission to return to the house to look through Audrey's car. Myrna continues the story, telling how the quintes were taken from their parents because they were said to be slow, that the payment for the girls was a lie. Although they had a gilded life, one of the siblings turned on the others, Myrna says. At Audrey's house, Gamache finds nothing inside her purses, but there is a memory stick sewn into the hem of the dress she had made for herself.

In Chapter Thirty-eight, Myrna continues her story telling her audience that the tuque given to her by Constance belonged to her killer. Meanwhile, Gamache uses a neighbor's computer to look at the information on Audrey's memory stick. He calls Lacoste, telling her it is the Champlain Bridge, not the tunnel that will be destroyed. He sends her the information she'll need to make sure the bridge is closed. Before he hangs up the phone, Lacoste tells Gamache she can't find Jean-Guy. Meanwhile, Francoeur learns about the memory stick. He orders Gamache, Villeneuve, and the neighbors picked up and killed but Gamache has already warned them to go into hiding.

In her story, Myrna reveals the fact the Ouellets had another child after the quintes. This child was hidden because it would have taken away from the miracle of the quintes' birth. Gamache believes it was this sibling that killed Virginie, not an accidental fall down the stairs or even suicide. This secret had bound the sisters together. When she was the last sister, Constance felt she was free to tell her secret.

In the SUV, Jean-Guy tells the agents Gamache would have set up in the old railway station in Three Pines. Myrna, meanwhile, leads her audience through Gamache's



reasoning to conclude that Andre Pineault was actually the quint's brother, not their uncle. The group comes to the conclusion it was also Andre who killed Constance just before the black SUV pulls into the driveway.

In Chapter Thirty-nine, as he drives across the Champlain Bridge, Gamache thinks about the way Arnot and Renard have complimented one another in their evil plan. When the plan to destroy the dam had gone bad and Arnot was put in jail, Renard had teamed up with Francoeur, who had proved to be an even better companion than Arnot. They planned the destruction of the federal bridge because they knew it would cause a large loss of life and this loss would be blamed on the government. Renard is looking for political power, Gamache realizes. Renard seems to believe the rage felt after the destruction of the bridge would spur the people of Quebec to form their own country.

In Three Pines, the line of black vehicles drives through the town, headed for the old railway station. Therese sends Olivier to the bistro to meet them if they happen to come in. Ruth goes as a customer and Myrna opens her bookstore with Clara as a customer. When the men come to the bistro, Olivier plays his part well. Billy Williams answers their questions with gibberish. The men, whom Olivier realizes are capable of killing him, leave and head for the B and B. Francoeur, meanwhile, pushes Jean-Guy for information about where people might hide in Three Pines. He also gets word his agents are closing in on Gamache. Beauvoir points out Emilie Longpre's house when Francoeur asks him if there is an Emilie in town. Jerome and the others watch as Beauvoir leads the men to Emilie's house. They find no one in Emilie's house and discuss going back to the bistro but Beauvoir says he knows where the people are as he points.

Analysis

The identity of Constance's murderer and the secret held in her family are cleverly uncovered in this section of the novel. Constance's murder was mainly a way to get Gamache to Three Pines where he realizes it would be a good place for Jerome and Therese to hide, but it is nice that the author chose to give full attention to bring that story to an end. All this time, the sisters have apparently been covering up the fact their brother, whom no one even knew they had, had pushed Virginie down the stairs. This same brother, who is identified as Andre Pineault, apparently felt there was some danger Constance would tell about the murder, so he killed Constance as well. Andre Pineault has grown up in the shadow of the quint's and has always been known as their uncle. He is the one to whom the extra hat, which his mother threw out of the camera shot in a film of the girls, belongs. He is the sixth person on the Ouellet family hockey team.

Despite the way Jean-Guy treated Gamache when he tries to offer him assistance, Gamache is still concerned about the man. Even though he and his friends are in imminent danger, Gamache still calls Lacoste to find out what Francoeur has Jean-Guy doing, to be sure he's safe. Interesting in this section is the way that the people of Three Pines react to the new Jean-Guy. They had met him when he and Gamache were still



partners. They cannot believe the 180-degree turn he has made in order to help Francoeur. Therese tells them Jean-Guy has become an addict. She explains drugs can have the effect of turning a person against his friends and making him believe lies. She forecasts that if Jean-Guy does not make a change, he will eventually lose his life to his addiction.

Discussion Question 1

Did you suspect Andre's relationship to the quints? Why or why not? Refer to clues given in the novel to identify Constance's secret and her killer.

Discussion Question 2

Why is it significant for Jean-Guy to be sent to Three Pines?

Discussion Question 3

What does this novel teach about drug use? Why is it significant that Jean-Guy's drug use began because of an injury?

Vocabulary

Pall, ironic, panoramic, barbaric, vagrant, congenitally, subsistence, permeable, blanched, gorgon, castrate, cynical, scrutiny, disenfranchised, girders, muse, complicity, kraken, charisma, carrion.



Chapters 40 – 42

Summary

In Chapter Forty, after Jean-Guy leads the men to the schoolhouse and they find the equipment, he walks to the village green. Ruth sits on the bench next to him and tries to talk. She asks him the question from her poem “Alas” and Jean-Guy finally responds, asking if he is really beyond repair. She puts Rosa in his lap. Jean-Guy tries to give the duck back but Ruth tells him to keep her. She gives Jean-Guy the keys to her car and asks him to take Rosa away from there. Ruth kisses the duck on the top of the head, tells her she loves her, then walks away.

Lacoste manages to get the supervisor to understand she is serious about closing the bridge by using both her gun and showing him the information from the memory stick. Gamache calls Francoeur and learns he’s already at Three Pines. They agree to meet near the satellite dish. Meanwhile, Tessier’s agents are ordered to find Beauvoir but they cannot locate him. They had seen him talking to Ruth, and then had seen Ruth walking to the church so they decide to go see if she knows where Jean-Guy is.

When Gamache meets the others at the tree, Tessier has a gun aimed at him. In the church, Myrna distracts the agent while the person the agent had thought was Ruth pulls a gun on him. Nichol places him under arrest. As Jean-Guy drives with Rosa, he thinks about what Ruth said to the duck. She’d used the same words as Gamache in the factory. He realizes he and the duck had not been abandoned by those they loved, they’d been saved.

In Chapter Forty-one, Francoeur tells Gamache they have gotten Lacoste, Villeneuve and the neighbors and that the bridge has been destroyed. Meanwhile, as the other agent begins to look for the one Nichol arrested, Therese leaves the bookstore and heads for the agent. Inside the church, Gabri starts singing and the agent follows the sound. He stops at the door of the church, feeling something is strange. Before he can react, Therese has pulled her gun on him.

Back with Gamache and Francoeur, Gamache has Francoeur try to call Renard, then Lambert, but gets no answer. Gamache repeats the texts Francoeur has received word for word, showing it was he who had the texts sent. The agents transferred around the city from his department had been working with him in secret. His resignation announcement was a sign to them to put their plan in action.

Jean-Guy goes back to Three Pines looking for Gamache. He suddenly realizes the agents were attaching explosives to the schoolhouse. Meanwhile, Gamache sees his opportunity to confront the surprised Francoeur and the two fight. Jean-Guy approaches Tessier as he is finishing taking down the satellite. He pulls his gun on Tessier and asks where Gamache is. He learns Gamache believes he’s inside the schoolhouse, which is wired to blow up when the door is opened. In reality, Gamache is still fighting with



Francoeur, grabbing a gun out of the snow just in time to shoot the man, dead. He runs for the schoolhouse. Tessier tells Jean-Guy the shots are Gamache being killed. Jean-Guy shoots Tessier, then runs. He gets to the body and discovers it is Francoeur. He hears Gamache running toward the schoolhouse and calls out for him to stop. Jean-Guy can't make Gamache hear him and knows he will be killed believing he is saving him. Jean-Guy shoots for Gamache's legs, trying to slow him down. Lacoste sees him as he tries to make one final shot to stop him. She asks him not to shoot, but also notices his old voice is back. Just after Gamache realizes he's been hit, he looks up to see it was Jean-Guy who shot him.

Chapter Forty-two opens with a solemn church service. Jean-Guy's head is bowed. Madame Gamache walks Annie down the aisle in her wedding dress. He cries with joy and relief. Gamache, his best man, hands him a handkerchief. After Gamache recovered from his bullet wound, he and his wife bought Emilie Longpre's house. He claims he is retiring for good, but Jean-Guy and Reine-Marie both know Gamache was made for polic work. Though he might retire, they seem to think there will be a time when he might want to rejoin the force.

Analysis

Ruth is the hero in this section of the novel as she quietly makes Jean-Guy realize that Gamache did not abandon him, but instead saved him. It can only be assumed that during one of his talks with Ruth that Gamache told her about what happened in the factory during the raid. Ruth repeats these same actions with her duck, hoping that Jean-Guy will understand the significance of what she is doing in comparison to what Gamache did for Jean-Guy. It is only a short time later when Jean-Guy realizes that Gamache actually saved him that he goes back to Three Pines to keep Gamache from being killed in his attempts to save Jean-Guy again.

The line from Ruth's poem "Alas" appears again in this part of the novel. Ruth asks Jean-Guy "who hurt you once, so far beyond repair?" This question seems to get Jean-Guy's attention as he responds by asking Ruth if she thinks he is really beyond repair. Although Jean-Guy may not realize it, he has probably reached his lowest point as he has just mentally computed how much medication he has on hand. He thinks to himself that he has enough to kill himself.

Also in this section of the novel, a thought by Gamache is proven wrong as the people of Three Pines come together to work against Francoeur and his people. In Chapter Twenty-Eight, Gamache had thought that if Francoeur and the others ever made it to Three Pines, there would be no way to save the people there. What is ironic is that he mentions there is not enough woodsmen, demented poets, etc. in Three Pines to guard against these cruel men. In reality, however, it is these townspeople, working together, that keep any of the innocent from being killed and, in fact, arrest two of Francoeur's officers.



Things change drastically in the concluding chapter of the novel as Annie remarries Jean-Guy. He has realized how Francoeur and Tessier lied to him about Gamache deserting him. Jean-Guy has additionally seen the flip side of the coin of his own experience, as he has had to injure Gamache in order to save Gamache's life. Jean-Guy did not want to shoot Gamache, just as Gamache did not want to leave Jean-Guy that day in the factory. Both, however, did what they had to do in order to save lives.

Discussion Question 1

How does Ruth show Jean-Guy what really happened between he and Gamache in the factory through her "abandonment" of her duck?

Discussion Question 2

In what ways do the people of Three Pines help Gamache take care of Francoeur and his people?

Discussion Question 3

Do you think Gamache will stay in retirement? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Incriminating, trepidation, rendezvous, infirm, menace, lament, mutiny, prone, colluded.



Characters

Armand Gamache

Armand Gamache is the Chief inspector for the homicide department of the Surete de Quebec. He is the hero of the novel. Gamache is first called by his friend, Myrna, in Three Pines to investigate the disappearance of her friend, Constance. Gamache discovers the woman, who was the last living sister of the Ouellet Quints, was murdered. Although the quint's conception and birth made up an important chapter in Quebec's history, Constance's death is soon overshadowed by Gamache's investigation of a personal matter.

Gamache has enlisted Jerome Brunel to help him discover who might have leaked a video of a factory raid that went bad. Although there was nothing Gamache could have done to keep the raid from going bad, many men were injured and killed that day. Since then, agents from Gamache's department have been being transferred out of his department. Insolent, lazy agents have been sent to his department in an attempt to force him to retire. Gamache is frustratingly patient with these bad agents. At the end of the novel, it is learned that Gamache had been using what Francoeur believed was a punishment as a perk as he was able to use his agent to keep eyes and ears on what was happening in the different departments to which they had been transferred.

One of Gamache's main interests in discovering the source of the corruption in the Surete is his former son-in-law, Jean-Guy Beauvoir. Jean-Guy was injured during the factory raid and has since been addicted to painkillers. Gamache is concerned for Jean-Guy because he is afraid the leaders of the department are putting Jean-Guy into unnecessary danger. At the conclusion of the novel, Jean-Guy realizes the truth about his former father-in-law and partner. Jean-Guy shoots and wounds Gamache to keep him from going into a schoolhouse that has been wired with explosives. Gamache has recovered enough by the end of the novel to attend his daughter's second wedding to Jean-Guy. He and his wife have bought Emilie Longpre's house in Three Pines. He plans to retire from the Surete.

Jean-Guy Beauvoir

Jean-Guy Beauvoir is Gamache's former partner son-in-law and partner, and Annie's former husband. Beauvoir has been transferred to Francoeur's department after his injury in a factory raid led by Gamache. The raid goes bad and Beauvoir is injured in the gunfire. Beauvoir gets addicted to pain killers as he is recovering from his wound. Annie, Gamache's daughter, divorces him because of his refusal to get clean.

Francoeur and Tessier use Beauvoir as a pawn to distract and influence Gamache. They keep the man supplied with drugs and feed him lies about the way Gamache has abandoned him. Beauvoir is sent to multiple needless raids which increase his stress



and ensure his dependence on the pills. When Francoeur makes Beauvoir drive him and Tessier to Three Pines to find Gamache and the others, Beauvoir is so tired and numb that he doesn't care what is happening. Ruth, however, takes advantage of an opportunity to talk to Beauvoir alone. Using her pet duck, she makes Beauvoir realize that Gamache did not abandon him during the factory raid but in reality saved him. Beauvoir rallies enough to realize that Francoeur plans to kill Gamache. He knows explosives have been set up in the old school house and that Gamache will go there believing he is saving him. Beauvoir tries to catch up to Gamache as he runs toward the schoolhouse but is unable to do so. He shoots Gamache with his gun, knowing any injuries the man may get are worth the risk as he will certainly die if he tries to open the door to the schoolhouse. At the conclusion of the novel, Beauvoir successfully completes drug rehabilitation and remarries Annie.

Agent Yvette Nichol

Agent Yvette Nichol is brought to Three Pines to help Jerome search for information about corruption in the Surete. Nichol had once worked for Gamache but he fired her and she was banished to the Surete sub-basement where she worked with computers. Therese becomes angry with Gamache for involving Nichol because they are unsure if she is working for them, or for Francoeur, their enemy. Nichol finally confesses to Gamache that it was she who leaked the factory raid video but that she had done it not intending to hurt anyone but to let others know the truth about Gamache and what happened that day. On the day that the Surete agents come to Three Pines looking to kill those involved in hacking their computer system, Nichol is a crucial part of the team as she assists in tricking and arresting the agents. She is described as a strange woman who keeps to herself. At first, it appears she doesn't respect anyone but as the story progresses, her respect for Gamache becomes apparent. She enjoys working with computers and relates to these machines better than she does with people, even her own family members.

Chief Superintendent Francoeur

Chief Superintendent Francoeur is the man in charge of the Surete, Quebec's police force. He is also one of the leading figures in the Surete's involvement in the condition of Quebec's road infrastructure. Francoeur was second-in-command in the office during the time that Pierre Arnot was the leader of the department. After Arnot was arrested and jailed for his part in a plan to destroy a hydroelectric dam, Francoeur took over the top spot and continued Arnot's mission working with Renard to manufacture a revolt in Quebec against the Canadian government. Francoeur orders the murders of Arnot as well as Audrey Villeneuve. In an attempt to ruin Gamache, Francoeur has made it his mission to destroy what is left of Jean-Guy. Francoeur supplies him with drugs to feed Jean-Guy's addiction and tells him Gamache left him to die in the factory. He tries to have Gamache killed but is unsuccessful. When he and Gamache finally face off in the woods near Three Pines, Gamache shoots Francoeur, killing him.



Pierre Arnot

Pierre Arnot is never a character that appears actively in this novel, but much of what happens in the novel hinges on his past actions. Arnot was the former Chief Superintendent of the Surete. He started as a young man in the Surete as an officer policing a Cree reserve. He helped restore order in the reserve and gained the respect of the Indians before convincing them to accept plans to build a dam that would destroy their land. Those who did not cooperate were killed. Gamache uncovered what was happening when a Cree woman told him about the number of suspicious deaths and disappearances of young Cree men. Arnot is sentenced to the penitentiary's Special Handling Unit until he is killed at the command of Renard. When Gamache goes to see Arnot in jail, he discovers another prisoner has been put in his place. All guards who might have recognized Arnot have been transferred out of the jail.

Ruth Zardo

Ruth Zardo is Canada's Governor General's Award winning poet. One of her poems, *Alas*, is written about the death of *Virginie*, one of the *Ouellet Quints*. *Constance*, another of the *Quints*, befriends Ruth when she tells the seemingly demented woman that she got the poem right. Ruth, however, seems to feel guilty that she made her fortune off someone else's pain. Ruth is crass and difficult to get along with. She goes about with a duck, *Rosa*, who is her pet and best friend. In *Three Pines* she "coaches" the children's hockey games, drinks and steals books from *Myrna's* bookstore. Although Ruth seems unstable and uncaring, she is able to break through the lies that *Jean-Guy* has been told about *Gamache's* feelings for him and make him realize how much his father-in-law actually loved him.

Georges Renard

Georges Renard is the premier of Quebec. He concocts a plan, first with Arnot and then with *Francoeur*, to create a disaster that will allow him to turn the people against the Canadian government and create his own country. Before he became powerful, Renard worked as an engineer for the company *Aqueduct*, planning the building of a hydroelectric dam. Because Renard had helped build this dam, he was in a unique position to know its weak points. For this reason, he and Arnot originally planned to blow up the dam but their plan was discovered by *Gamache* and stopped. Renard next meets *Francoeur* when that man is put in charge of the *Surete*. The two concoct a plan to destroy the *Champlain Bridge*. At the conclusion of the novel, Renard is being held in the *Special Handling Unit* awaiting trial.

Isabelle Lacoste

Isabelle Lacoste is *Gamache's* second in command in the homicide department in Quebec. After *Gamache* retires, *Lacoste* takes over the top spot. Although *Lacoste*



admires her boss, she is often frustrated with him because he seems to take so much lip from the second rate agents that have been transferred into his department. It is not until the end of the novel it is learned that Gamache was brewing a plan even as he dealt unaggressively with the agents. Lacoste helps Gamache investigate Constance's death. She is also the agent who orders the Chaplain Bridge closed on Gamache's command. Unknowingly, she is the one who spreads the word to arrest those key in the plot to destroy the bridge when she circulates the text alerting the department of Gamache's plan to retire.

Isidore and Marie-Harriette Pineault Ouellet

Isidore and Marie-Harriette Pineault Ouellet are dead before the time period in which the book was set but they are important because they are the parents of the Ouellet Quints. Legend had it that Marie-Harriette visited Brother Andre to beg for children because she was barren. Eight months later she gave birth to five identical girls. The popular story about the girls said the Ouellet's sold their daughters to the government but in reality, the children were taken away so the government could use them as a moneymaking enterprise. After the Quints were taken away, Marie-Harriette had another child, Andre Pineault, who was passed off as the Quints' uncle. The boy was hidden because it was believed it would take away from the miracle of the Quints' birth if the public knew the Ouellet's had another child.

Audrey Villeneuve

When her character is first introduced, Audrey Villeneuve seems unstable as she envisions the Ville-Marie tunnel crashing in around her. Her only source of comfort is a dress she is making for herself. It is believed she commits suicide by jumping off a bridge. In reality, Audrey was scared of the tunnel because she knew needed repairs had not been completed on the structure. She has downloaded the proof of the lack of repairs to a memory stick that she has sewn into the hem of her dress. She intends to give the stick to the premier of Quebec, not realizing that he, too, is in on the plan. Audrey has gone to the Champlain Bridge to look for signs of explosives, the last bit of evidence she needs, when Tessier kills her, then arranges her death to look like a suicide.

Constance Pineault Ouellet

At seventy-seven years old, Constance Pineault Ouellet is the last living member of the famous Ouellet Quints. She visits in Three Pines with Myrna, who had once been her therapist, a few days, then asks to come back for Christmas. Before she leaves Myrna, she drops a large hint about the fact she had a brother. She believes Myrna will understand the hint and will ask questions when she returns. However, Myrna does not realize the significance of Constance's comment about the family hockey team. She also does not realize that the Brother Andre Constance referred to was not the priest but



instead Constance's brother. Before Constance is able to return to Three Pines to answer Myrna's questions, she is killed in her home by her brother.

Superintendent Therese Brunel

Therese Brunel is Jerome's wife. She is a superintendent in the Surete. Therese was one of Gamache's students who entered law enforcement as an older adult. She has since passed Gamache in rank. Therese is the one who tells Jerome the background and top-secret information about the Arnot case. She is also the one who is willing to battle with Gamache concerning her husband's best interests. Therese first gets angry with Gamache when he brings Agent Nichol in to help them wire up the computer system and conduct research. She again gets angry with Gamache when he tries to push Jerome too hard and make him research the Internet for the information Gamache is wanting when she knows her husband is too tired.

Andre Pineault

Andre Pineault is the unknown younger brother of the Ouellet Quints. He is believed to be the girls' uncle, their mother's brother. Gamache determines that the sixth tuque, the one Marie-Harriette throws off camera range in the film, and the same one that Constance gives to Myrna saying it is the key to her home, belonged to Andre Pineault. He reasons that in jealousy, Andre pushed Virginie down the stairs, killing her. The other sisters saw what happened and covered up what their brother had done. After the death of the rest of her sisters, Constance seems to want to get the truth about Virginie's death off her chest. Before she can do so, however, Andre suspects what she might be planning on doing and kills her.

Myrna Landers

Myrna Landers is Constance's friend and the owner of a bookstore in Three Pines. It is Myrna who contacts Gamache when Constance does not show up for her Christmas visit as planned. Myrna had once been Constance's therapist, but had developed a friendship with the woman after they ended their doctor/patient relationship. Myrna helps Gamache investigate Constance's murder. She additionally insists that Jerome and Therese come and hide in her loft above the bookstore when Francoeur and his men come looking for them. While they are waiting for the men to come, Myrna distracts them by telling the story of the Ouellet Quints and the murders of Virginie and Constance.

Jerome Brunel

Jerome Brunel is a retired medical doctor whom Gamache employs in a search of the Internet to try to discover who might have leaked a video about a factory raid led by Gamache that went bad. During the search, Jerome stumbles upon information that



makes him fear for his safety and the safety of his wife, Therese, who is a superintendent with the Surete. Hidden in Three Pines, Jerome helps Agent Nichol wire up computers so they can complete their search in time to stop Francoeur and Tessier in their plan to blow up the Champlain Bridge. Jerome's medical expertise is critical after Gamache is badly wounded by Jean-Guy when Jean-Guy shoots him in an attempt to save his life.

Olivier and Gabri

Olivier and Gabri are a gay couple who befriend Constance while she is visiting in Three Pines. Although Constance had never had much interaction with gay people before Olivier and Gabri, she leaves the town believing she would be proud if someone were to mistake the two men as her sons. Olivier and Gabri run a bistro in the town as well as a bed and breakfast. Olivier helps Gamache secure Emilie Longpre's old house for Jerome and Therese to stay in to keep them safe from Francoeur and his people.

Frere Andre

Frere Andre is the priest who blesses Marie-Harriette when she comes to him looking for help in becoming pregnant. The elderly priest is 90-years-old and ill at the time she seeks his blessing. He died the day the quintes were born. The Ouellets had a son whom they named after the priest, but kept hidden from the world because the government was afraid the boy's birth would change the peoples' view of the Quints from a miracle to a abnormality.

Rosa

Rosa is Ruth's pet duck. Rosa is used to lighten the mood of the story as she often curses, copying her owner. Additionally, Henri, Gamache's German shepherd, falls in love with Rosa. When Ruth gives Rosa, her beloved pet, to Jean-Guy so that he can get her to safety, Jean-Guy realizes that day in the factory when he felt he'd been abandoned, he'd actually been saved.

Gaetan Villeneuve

Gaetan Villeneuve is Audrey Villeneuve's husband. He does not become a character until late in the book when Gamache is investigating Audrey's murder. Gaetan is able to tell Gamache that he did not believe his wife killed herself. He also digs the dress that Audrey made for herself out of the trash so that Gamache is able to locate the memory stick she had hidden inside one of the seams.



Marc Brault

Marc Brault is the head of homicide for the Montreal police. He is in charge of working Audrey Villeneuve's death, which is officially termed a suicide. Gamache seems to be friends with the man but later is not sure if he is trustworthy as information his report should have contained about Audrey is missing. When Constance is found dead in her home, Brault passes the case to Gamache even though it isn't in his jurisdiction.

Dr. Bernard

Dr. Bernard is the doctor who is made famous because he is believed to have been the one to deliver the quints and keep them alive. Dr. Bernard wrote a book about the experience filled mostly with lies since Gamache and Myrna find out through their research into the quints' background that the girls were delivered by their father and a midwife. The doctor did not come until the following day.

Clara Marrow

Clara Marrow is one of the villagers of Three Pines. She attempts to befriend Constance during her visit but always feels a distance. Clara is responsible for helping to make the town look normal when Francoeur and his men arrive by acting as a customer for Myrna. She additionally helps in the church where two of the agents are arrested.

Annie Gamache

Annie Gamache is Gamache's daughter and the ex-wife of Jean-Guy Beauvoir. Although Annie kicked Jean-Guy out of her life because of his unwillingness to get help for his drug addiction, she still loves him. They remarry at the conclusion of the novel after Jean-Guy goes through rehab.

Martin Tessier

Martin Tessier is Chief Superintendent Francoeur's second in command. He is significant in the story because he carries out Francoeur's biddings and does his boss's leg work for him. Tessier personally oversaw the murder of Audrey Villeneuve as well as Pierre Arnot. In the end of the story, Tessier is shot by Jean-Guy.

Gilles

Gilles is the former lumberjack who helps Gamache and the others by installing a satellite on an old hunting blind high in a tree. Although he isn't instrumental in the computer search, Gilles stays with the group in the schoolhouse when they conduct their search, blocking the door with his chair.



Symbols and Symbolism

Ville-Marie Tunnel

Audrey Villeneuve has panic attacks while driving through this tunnel on her way to and from work. It is later learned that she had discovered that no upgrades and repairs were being done on the roadways and infrastructure, causing her fear of the tunnel. At first, Gamache believes that the plan is to destroy this tunnel.

An Emerald Green Party Dress

It is in this dress that Audrey Villeneuve has placed her hope in life. Gamache later finds a thumb drive with the information about the unrepaired substructure of the town sewed into the hem of the dress.

Gamache's Scar

Gamache has a scar on his forehead that apparently came from the failed raid at a factory. The scar is mentioned often as a way to remind the reader of the tragedy that separated Gamache and Jean-Guy.

Small Black and White Photo

Gamache and Lacoste find this small photo of Constance and three of her sisters wrapped up in a sweater in her suitcase. It is the only photo of the sisters they find in Constance's home.

Bibliothèque Nationale

The Bibliothèque nationale is where Gamache's wife works. It is from this library that he gets a file on the Ouellet Quints. Gamache additionally gets a computer access code from the library to use to access the Internet from Three Pines.

A File on the Ouellet Quints

Gamache borrows a file on the Ouellet Quints that had once been sealed from the Bibliothèque Nationale. It is in this file that Gamache finds the films about the Quints.



Anthology of New Canadian Poetry

It is in this book that Ruth's poem about Viriginie, the Quint who died young, is published. Gamache buys this book from Myrna's bookstore while he is researching the girls' lives.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Ruth uses this Coleridge poem to explain what the treatment the Quints received as children would have done to them emotionally. She suggests that Constance may have carried an albatross, representative of a terrible secret, with her, just as the old mariner did.

The Blind

It is on this deer blind, attached to a tall tree, that Gilles suggests they try to attach a satellite through which they can get an Internet connection.

The SHU

The SHU is a special handling unit at the maximum-security prison. It is here that Arnot is housed until he is ordered killed. Gamache visits the SHU twice. Once he just sits in the parking lot. The second time he goes inside to try to visit Arnot, only to discover that Arnot is no longer there.

The Construction Schedule for the Autoroute 20

It is when Jerome and Nichol access this file in the Surete database that they set off their first alarm.

A Memory Stick

It is on this memory stick that Audrey has saved the information about the planned destruction of the Champlain Bridge. Gamache finds the stick hidden in the hem of the green party dress she'd made for herself.

The Champlain Bridge

It is through information saved on a memory stick that Gamache learns that Francoeur and Renard are planning on destroying the Champlain Bridge.



Settings

Three Pines

Three Pines is a small town during which much of this novel is set. Constance travels to Three Pines to visit her friend Myrna. She asks to return for Christmas but never does. For this reason, Gamache is called to the tiny village to investigate her death. While he is there, Gamache needs to find a safe place to hide Therese and Jerome Brunel because they have been helping him to investigate corruption in the Surete. The town is the ideal place to hide because there is no Internet connection and no cell phone service.

Myrna's New and Used Bookstore

Myrna's bookstore is the setting of various conversations and meetings between various characters throughout the course of the novel.

Emilie Longpre's House

Henri leads Gamache to Emilie Longpre's house during a walk one night. Gamache decides to see if the house can be rented as a temporary home for Therese and Jerome. Later, Gamache and his wife buy this house to live in after Gamache retires.

The B and B

Olivier and Gabri own and run the town's B and B. Gamache has a room that is kept there for him which he stays in occasionally. It is while he is in this room, talking to Lacoste about a raid Jean-Guy has been sent on, that Nichol tries to tell Gamache it was she who leaked the factory raid video but Gamache slams the door in her face.

Constance's Home

It is in Constance's home that Gamache and Lacoste find that she has been murdered. Although there isn't much in the way of family effects in the home, all of the hats that the Quints mother knitted for them are tucked away inside the house.

Saint Joseph's Oratory

It is to Saint Joseph's Oratory that Marie-Harriette goes to beg God to allow her to have children.



The Old Schoolhouse

Gamache and the others use the old schoolhouse at Three Pines as headquarters for their Internet operation because it is the building that is farthest removed from the village. Gamache hopes this move will keep the village itself from being attacked if Francoeur and his men learn where Gamache and the Brunels are staying.

St. Thomas's Church

This is the church in Three Pines where Annie and Jean-Guy get married for the second time. It is in this same church that both agents working with Francoeur and Tessier are arrested.



Themes and Motifs

Gamache

Gamache's character is interesting and central to the novel not only because he is the hero of the story but also because he is such a well developed example of a seasoned police officer. At one point, he is described as having the personality of a sniper. It is a characteristic that Therese Brunel noticed about him when she first met him as her teacher. She describes him as being willing to wait, watch, and take aim. While he rarely made shots, he also rarely missed. Sometimes Gamache took so much time in his investigations that those involved interpreted his actions as inactivity. The description of Gamache in the novel goes on to describe Gamache as the one who would arrest the guilty party while other investigators, in their hurry, ran right by him.

Gamache additionally has a knack for throwing people off track with his words and actions. For instance, when Therese hands him the note telling him she believes her office is bugged, he quickly plays along, appearing to buy in to her plans to make Jerome stop helping him. Gamache plays a similar game with his psychiatrist. Knowing that information about his sessions is being leaked back to Francoeur, Gamache goes to his doctor ranting and raving about the way Francoeur is turning Jean-Guy against him. Although Francoeur is suspicious of Gamache's intents, Gamache is believable enough to put doubt in the man's mind.

Perhaps the biggest ruse that Gamache pulls in the novel is that of his continued association with his agents who were transferred out of his department into other areas of the Surete and various governmental offices. What Francoeur had meant as a punishment actually works out in Gamache's favor as he is able to have eyes and ears in all departments. When he sends the agreed upon code for his agents to go into action, his retirement email, one that Francoeur never suspects has a hidden message, Gamache's agents spring into action carrying out their orders. Although Lacoste had been frustrated with her boss's lack of frustration with the lazy, worthless agents who had been transferred into his department, Gamache can overlook some things, knowing he is more in charge than some may think.

Ruth's Poem

The poem that Ruth wrote about Virginie's death is called "Alas." One portion of the poem that is regularly repeated in the novel are the lines, "Who hurt you once / so far beyond repair / that you would greet each overture / with curling lip?" When Constance first realizes it is Ruth who had written this poem, she wants to ask the question to Ruth but is afraid it will be turned back around on her. Later, when Constance goes to visit with Ruth and tells her she is one of the quints, she lets Ruth know that she had penned Virginie's story correctly. The reader learns later that the poem was written after Virginie's death. Later, Gamache echoes the thought of the poem wondering if, when



they find Constance, she will be far beyond repair. When Gamache discovers Constance has been murdered, he thinks that indeed, she is very far beyond repair.

Although the poem is the one that made Ruth famous, Myrna explains to Gamache that Ruth never seemed to recover from the idea that she profited from someone else's tragedy. Ruth, however, uses the words from the poem when she tries to help Jean-Guy understand that Gamache did not abandon him in the factory raid. It is when she asks the question to Jean-Guy that he finally acknowledges that she is sitting next to him.

Speculation can be put into who was hurt and who did the hurting that is indicated in the poem. It may be Andre who was hurt by all of the attention his sisters go while he was hidden from sight. In Virginie's case, it was probably her situation that caused her the most hurt. Of course, when she wrote the poem, Ruth would probably have thought that Virginie had killed herself, as was a common belief. Ruth may have thought it was the hurt of growing up a celebrity that caused Virginie's hurt, ultimately causing her to kill herself.

Drug Addiction

Although it is not a major theme, the book teaches a powerful lesson about drug addiction. Jean-Guy is not the average addict. He started taking painkillers after an injury during a factory raid. He believes he is still taking the pills to control his pain, not realizing that he is addicted. His inability to admit that he is addicted to the pills costs him his wife and almost costs him his life. Those who knew Jean-Guy before he became addicted do not recognize the man they see after the pills have taken hold. He is described as seeming empty and with no will to live.

During the encounter with Francoeur at Three Pines, Therese warns the others that Jean-Guy may be the most dangerous man there because he has so little left to lose. She tells the others that drugs have the ability to make one turn on those they were once loyal to, even when the loyalty ran as deep as Jean-Guy's loyalty to Gamache. Additionally, Francoeur and his men are feeding Jean-Guy more drugs, adding anti-anxiety pills to the mix as they try to push him over the edge. They have told Jean-Guy lies about Gamache's behavior in the factory. They say Gamache abandoned Jean-Guy. With his judgement impaired by the effect of the drugs, Jean-Guy believes the lies the men tell him. It is Ruth, with her duck, that finally breaks through to Jean-Guy.



Styles

Point of View

The story is told from the point of view of an omniscient third person narrator. This narrator knows the emotions and thoughts of all the characters and is able to bounce back and forth from character to character as the story progresses. As this story involves many different characters, each with their own unique role in the novel, there would be no way to tell the complete story using any other point of view.

In some parts of the novel, especially as the story reaches its climax, the narrator often switches quickly back and forth between two different but consecutive story lines. For instance, the writer uses this technique to cover both Jerome and Nichol's act of breaking into the Surete's computer system and the reactions of Francoeur and Tessier to the breach in an almost simultaneous manner.

The story is told through exposition and dialogue, as well as the private thoughts of individual characters. These three aspects of communication give the reader a full picture of what is going on in the minds of each of the characters. This is particularly important since much of Gamache's technique deals with hiding his real feelings and emotions. If it were not the clues given as to what he was really up to, his feeling of satisfaction after leaving his psychiatrist's office for example, it would be even harder for readers to pick up on what Gamache was really up to.

Language and Meaning

In this novel, one aspect of language that catches one's attention is the author's fondness for playing with words, sounds and meanings. For instance, when Ruth is "coaching" the kids playing ice hockey, the author gives the idea that one of the kids voices an explicative without actually using the word in her text by writing that Constance heard the child say something that "might have been 'duck.' Or 'puck.' Or..." In another portion of the book when Constance and her family relations are being discussed, Ruth offhandedly drops the name of her poem about the quint who was believed to have killed her self, in common conversation. The use of the poem title "Alas" is a way of making a word play and giving Ruth's friends the idea that Ruth might have been more familiar with the story of the quints than anyone realized.

One quote from the book that is a prime example of the author's colorful writing style comes when Isidore's expression when he first realizes he has quintuplets is described. The author describes the new father as looking as though God "had come for dinner and burned down the house." While Isidore's wife's pregnancy was considered a miracle, like God coming for dinner might be, the five babies might be more of a curse than a blessing, as if the honored guest, expected to do only good deeds, had instead been destructive.



Structure

The 406-page novel is divided into 42 chapters, each about nine pages long. Three different story lines are introduced in each of the three introductory chapters. The first is the seemingly unrelated story of a woman who appears to be losing control as she imagines the tunnel through which she drives each day on her way to work collapsing. The second deals with Constance and her visit to Three Pines. The third story line deals with Gamache and his failing department at the Surete.

As the novel progresses, the story begun in Chapter One eventually ties into Gamache's troubles in the Surete. Although it doesn't start out this way, this story line comes to be the main story of the novel. Through his investigation of a leaked video, Gamache discovers the Surete and premier of Quebec are involved in a ring of corruption involving the construction and repair of roads, bridges and tunnels. Audrey Villeneuve was scared to drive through the tunnel because she'd stumbled upon the documents detailing the lack of repairs to the infrastructure.

As Gamache uncovers more and more information about the corruption in the Surete, the story of Constance's murder takes a backseat. It seems to be developed as a way to get Three Pines involved in the story. During the course of the novel, however, Gamache not only saves the people of Quebec but also solves the mystery of Constance's murder and uncovers the secret the family had been hiding for years.



Quotes

Monsters existed. They lived in cracks in tunnels, and in dark alleys, and in neat row houses. They had names like Frankenstein and Dracula, and Martha and David and Pierre. And you almost always found them where you least expected.

-- Audrey Villeneuve (chapter 1 paragraph 26)

Importance: Villeneuve realizes that monsters can be the average person that one meets each day. Interestingly, one of the names she mentions in this this list is Pierre, Arnot's first name.

Four days. And she had two gay sons, a large black mother, a demented poet for a friend and was considering getting a duck.

-- Constance (chapter 2 paragraph 59)

Importance: In this thought, Constance considers the way her life and her thinking about others has changed since she has spent some time in Three Pines.

The most successful homicide department in the nation had been gutted, replaced with lazy, insolent, incompetent thugs.

-- Narrator (chapter 3 paragraph 11)

Importance: This sentence describes what has been done to Gamache's investigative department in an attempt to get him to retire.

Who hurt you once, / so far beyond repair / that you would greet each overture / with curling lip? (chapter 5 paragraph 20)

Importance: This is a line from Ruth's poem about Virginie's death. It is often quoted during the book as various characters try to determine what exactly happened to Virginie and Constance. Ruth reports to the others that Constance had told her during a private visit that she got the poem right.

Including Jean-Guy Beauvoir. The swaggering, annoying smartass had gone into that factory, and something else had come out.

-- Narrator (chapter 6 paragraph 93)

Importance: Although Jean-Guy wasn't killed in the factory raid that went bad, his whole personality changed after the experience making the person he was before disappear.

It's everything. Laptops, smart phones. Tablets. Nothing works here. There's phone service and electricity,' said Gamache. 'But it's all landlines.

-- Gamache (chapter 14 paragraph 29)



Importance: Just after Jerome and Therese arrive in Three Pines, Gamache explains to Jerome that nothing that requires a satellite connection works in that small village.

Isidore Ouellet looked as though God had come for dinner and burned down the house.
(chapter 16 paragraph 5)

Importance: The author's sense of humor is captured in sentences like this where she describes the combination of amazement, shock and horror on Isidore Ouellet's face when he realizes he is the father of five identical girls.

Looking back, I realize she was a great one for hints. She dropped them all over the place, for a year.

-- Myrna (chapter 16 paragraph 76)

Importance: As Myrna recalls her journey in discovering Constance was one of the Quints, she laughs as she remembers the hints that Constance dropped but Myrna never picked up on.

They basically sold their kids to the government, then got huffy when the money ran out. Figured they were owed more.

-- Ruth (chapter 17 paragraph 61)

Importance: During a conversation with Gamache, Ruth reports how the book says the Quints parents are described as being greedy and trying to blackmail the government for more money.

Pierre Arnot was as infamous as the Ouellet Quints were famous.

-- Narrator (chapter 21 paragraph 40)

Importance: The author clarifies how bad Arnot is by comparing them with the quints, five innocent babies born through a miracle.

Except they didn't cash in at all,' said Thérèse. 'Not according to the film. That bénédiction paternelle was when the girls were almost ten, and the Ouellets were still in their old home. They hadn't sold it.

-- Therese (chapter 25 paragraph 29)

Importance: The legend of the quints leads the people of Quebec to believe the quints were saved from a life of poverty with their parents by the intervention of the government. The people are told the parents basically traded the girls for money which the government paid for the farm. When Myrna and the others watch the film, however, they learn that rumor is not real as their parents were still in their original farmhouse when the girls were ten.

It might not be, but their mother knitted those hats. It seems the only things they kept from their childhoods. The only souvenirs.

-- Gamache (chapter 25 paragraph 62)



Importance: These hats, and the tags sewn into them, turn out to be the key to solving Constance's murder.

And then no number of woodsmen, of huntsmen, of villagers, of demented poets, of glorious painters and innkeepers could stop what would happen. To Three Pines. To everyone in it.

-- Narrator (chapter 28 paragraph 10)

Importance: Gamache fears what will happen when Francoeur and his men come to Three Pines to find Jerome, Therese and the others. He fears the town will be destroyed but badly underestimates the abilities of eccentric people who live in the town.

They weren't just private, they were secretive. They were hiding something.

-- Gamache (chapter 29 paragraph 96)

Importance: Gamache believes the quints went beyond protecting their privacy in their behavior. He believes they were hiding something.

By 'deal with,' you mean throwing Audrey Villeneuve off the Champlain Bridge,' the man said. 'A problem you and Tessier created.

-- Francoeur's companion (chapter 30 paragraph 37)

Importance: Francoeur's companion, who is possibly Georges Renard, lets the reader know that Audrey Villeneuve was not a suicide, but was, indeed killed by Francoeur and his friends.

Armand Gamache had always held unfashionable beliefs. He believed that light would banish the shadows. That kindness was more powerful than cruelty, and that goodness existed, even in the most desperate places. He believed that evil had its limits. But looking at the young men and women staring at him now, who'd seen something terrible about to happen and had done nothing, wondered if he could have been wrong all this time.

-- Narrator (chapter 30 paragraph 121)

Importance: When looking over the agents in Francoeur's department, who most certainly know what is happening in their department yet doing nothing, Gamache has to question his belief that there is a limit to evil.

If there was an old sin and a long, dark shadow in Québec, it was the construction industry.

-- Narrator (chapter 35 paragraph 143)

Importance: The construction industry in Quebec is one that has a long history of being fraught with corruption and bid rigging. Gamache senses this may be where the corruption lies in the instance he is investigating.



None of it repaired, perhaps in decades. Instead, the money went into the pockets of the owners, of the union, of organized crime, and those who were entrusted to stop it. The Sûreté. Billions of dollars. Leaving kilometer after kilometer of roads and tunnels and bridges about to collapse.

-- Narrator (chapter 35 paragraph 195)

Importance: Jerome and Nichol uncover in their search that instead of money being spent to repair roads it was going into the pockets of people such as Francoeur, who was hoping for a catastrophe.

The key now is Audrey Villeneuve.

-- Gamache (chapter 35 paragraph 246)

Importance: The death of the seemingly unimportant woman who is believed to have committed suicide becomes central to Gamache stopping a national crisis when he realizes Audrey Villeneuve was killed because she knew, and told others, what was planned for the city.

The link between Pierre Arnot and Georges Renard. As young men they'd worked in the same area. One policing the Cree reserve, the other building the dam that would destroy the reserve.

-- Gamache (chapter 36 paragraph 80)

Importance: It is through the Cree reserve that Arnot and Renard met one another and began to concoct their great plan.

More than quintuplets were born that day. A myth was also born. And with it, something else came to life. Something with a long, dark tail.' Her voice was hushed and they all leaned forward. 'A murder was born.

-- Myrna (chapter 37 paragraph 165)

Importance: As Myrna and the others wait for Francoeur and his people to come, Myrna tries to distract them with the story of the Ouellet Quints.

She actually said that hockey was brother André's favorite sport. I was the one who capitalized the B, not her. Not Brother André, but brother André. The sixth sibling. Named after the saint who'd produced a miracle.

-- Myrna (chapter 38 paragraph 179)

Importance: After she reads Gamache's letter, Myrna finally understands the significance of what Constance told her before she left Three Pines. The quints had a brother named Andre who was the sixth player on the family hockey team.

Jean-Guy Beauvoir knew then that he and Rosa hadn't been abandoned, they'd been saved.

-- Narrator (chapter 40 paragraph 199)



Importance: Ruth's act of love for her duck, making Jean-Guy take it out of Three Pines, help him to realize that Francoeur and his men had been feeding him lies about Gamache abandoning him. Instead of being abandoned, he, like Rosa, had been saved.

My agents, Sylvain. Mine. Never yours. I didn't fight it because it served my purposes. While your plan progressed, so did mine.

-- Gamache (chapter 41 paragraph 79)

Importance: Gamache finally is able to voice his anger at Francoeur for destroying his department. While Gamache was angered by what was happening, it also gave him the opportunity to have eyes and ears in a variety of different governmental departments.