

Jack and Jill Study Guide

Jack and Jill by James Patterson

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Plot Summary

Jack and Jill by James Patterson is the third installment in Patterson's popular Alex Cross novels. In this novel, Cross finds himself torn between two serial murder cases. The first serial killer is active in Cross's own backyard, killing children who attend the Sojourner Truth School, the school Cross's own son attends. This case hits so close to home that Cross is passionately determined to solve it as quickly as possible. At the same time, however, a couple who call themselves Jack and Jill are killing high profile celebrities. The Jack and Jill case is more public, therefore the Washington DC Police Department is under greater pressure to solve the case. As one of their best homicide investigators, Cross is assigned to the case. Cross resents this reassignment, but becomes deeply engrossed in the mystery when Jack and Jill's target turns out to be the President of the United States. Jack and Jill is a fascinating novel that reveals the secrets of both sides of Washington DC society.

Cross is awakened early in the morning by his partner, Sampson, and told that a murder has taken place at the Sojourner Truth School. This murder hits too close to home because this school is the same one Cross's own son, Damon, attends. Cross begins the investigation only to have it closed within a few days when he and Sampson chase down a man they believe to be the killer. However, the man dies before it can be determined he is, in fact, the Truth School killer. Before Cross can satisfy himself that the case is closed, he is called away when Senator Fitzgerald is found murdered. A poem at the Fitzgerald crime scene reveals not one killer, but two, calling themselves Jack and Jill. The murder appears to be a celebrity stalking case with a sexual aspect, but Cross is not sure that the case is all it appears to be. Cross's confusion deepens when the killers send a video tape of the killing to CNN, seemingly taunting the police.

Cross learns of another killing in his neighborhood. It appears the Truth School killer has struck again. Cross investigates this new killing by interviewing neighbors and the principal of the Truth School, Christine Johnson. Cross finds Christine to be an intelligent and beautiful woman who could tempt him to give up his single lifestyle. Unfortunately, Christine is married and Cross is not the type of man to ignore his morals. However, Cross does not think twice about reaching out to Christine and calling her a friend.

Once again, Cross is pulled away from the Truth School killer case. A popular television news reporter is found dead in her exclusive apartment. While investigating the murder, Cross gets into a confrontation with his boss. As a result, Cross is reassigned to the task force investigating the Jack and Jill case. Cross is under pressure from his grandmother and his own conscience to solve the Truth School killings and feels that with him off the case, the case will not get the attention it needs. Therefore, Cross arranges for Sampson and few other detectives from the neighborhood to investigate the case on their own.

Two more murders are committed by Jack and Jill. First is a Hollywood actor killed in a Washington DC hotel room. The second is a young law student who turns out to be the



mistress of the President of the United States. Soon the task force on the Jack and Jill investigation begin to believe President Thomas Byrnes is a target of Jack and Jill. This is confirmed when Jill calls the White House, bypassing all the security channels, and tells Byrnes he is already dead.

Cross tries to stay a step ahead of Jack and Jill. Cross works closely with the task force, including the CIA liaison, Jeanne Sterling. Sterling tells Cross that she believes one of the CIA freelance assassins might be Jack. Cross investigates this possibility and focuses on one killer in particular who might be Jack. At the same time, the Truth School killer appears to have been identified. Someone uses a Prodigy account to brag about the killings. Sampson and Cross storm the home of this account owner only to find the suspect, a thirteen-year-old-boy named Sumner Moore, is missing. However, they do find proof of the killings in his room. Unfortunately, Sumner is later found murdered.

At the same time, President Byrnes has decided he does not want to hide from Jack and Jill. President Byrnes makes the decision to attend a scheduled speech at Madison Square Garden. Cross goes on this trip as well, anxious to do all he can to protect the President. However, when the time comes, Cross is unable to stop what has already been put into motion. The President is shot and killed, as is his killer, Jack. Police also find Jill dead in a local hotel room. At the same time, the Truth School killer arrives at Christine Johnson's house and kills her husband before taking her hostage. Cross rushes back to DC in order to respond to the killer's desire to speak to him. When Cross arrives, he learns that the Truth School killer is thirteen-year-old Danny Boudreaux. Danny is a confused young man whose parents both died when he was young, leaving him struggling with a mood disorder that doctors struggle to diagnose. Danny has focused on Cross because he reminds him of his father.

Cross manages to get the gun away from Danny and save Christine Johnson. It seems both cases are over. However, while searching Jill's apartment, Cross finds a tape that reveals the identity of the real Jack. Cross and other members of the task force arrest the real Jack, who turns out to be Brett Sterling. Cross also arrests Jeanne Sterling, Brett's wife and co-conspirator. Cross hopes to learn the Sterlings motivation's for killing President Byrnes, but the Sterlings are killed in prison before they can talk.



Prologue, The Game Begins

Prologue, The Game Begins Summary

Jack and Jill by James Patterson is the third installment in Patterson's popular Alex Cross novels. In this novel, Cross finds himself torn between two serial murder cases. The first serial killer is active in Cross's own backyard, killing children who attend the Sojourner Truth School, the school Cross's own son attends. This case hits so close to home that Cross is passionately determined to solve it as quickly as possible. At the same time, however, a couple who call themselves Jack and Jill are killing high profile celebrities. The Jack and Jill case is more public; therefore, the Washington DC Police Department is under greater pressure to solve the case. As one of their best homicide investigators, Cross is assigned to the case. Cross resents this reassignment, but becomes deeply engrossed in the mystery when Jack and Jill's target turns out to be the President of the United States. Jack and Jill is a fascinating novel that reveals the secrets of both sides of Washington DC society.

Sam Harrison watches outside the apartment of Senator Daniel Fitzpatrick as the senator and a beautiful woman climb out of a car. Sam waits a few minutes while the senator and his companion go inside. Finally, Sam follows and knocks on the door. The woman opens the door, naked and clearly expecting him. They greet each other with the names Jack and Jill. Jill leads Jack to the back bedroom where the senator is naked and tied to the bed. While Jill video tapes the scene, Jack shoots the senator in the head. At the same time on another side of Washington DC, a man puts on a costume and lures a girl into the bushes with some balloons. As soon as the girl trusts the man, he hits her with a baseball bat.

Prologue, The Game Begins Analysis

This chapter introduces the three antagonists of the novel. The first is Sam Harrison, or Jack, the male part of a male-female killing team. Jack has been stalking Senator Daniel Fitzpatrick for some time and now he is watching as his partner lures the senator into his apartment. Jack's motivation in watching the senator is not clear at first. However, as soon as Jill has enough time to tie the senator up to his bed, Jack joins her. Together the two kill the senator. This act seems to be an act of celebrity stalking, since Jack stalked the senator and it is clear about that in the beginning of the prologue. This act also has the feel of killing someone who seems to be a sexual deviant in the eyes of his killer, because the senator is known for his numerous and lurid affairs. The motivations appear to be similar to those of other serial killer who kill for many reasons, often stemming from the killer's own psychotic interpretations.

The third killer introduce in this prologue is a man who feels the need to put on a disguise before killing a tiny black child near the school she attends. The man confesses to hating children, giving the reader a clear impression that this man is



mentally unstable, as is further suggested by the murder he commits. The killer attacks a tiny little girl, murdering her in the bushes as though she is an animal or some object that does not require the same care and concern as any other human being. This goes further into the killer's state of mind, suggesting someone with mental instability or someone on drugs.



Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 1-14

Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 1-14 Summary

Alex Cross wakes only a few hours after going to sleep to the sounds of his partner, John Sampson, banging on the door. Sampson tells Cross that there has been a murder at the Sojourner Truth School. This is personal to Cross because his son, Damon, goes to the school. The little girl, Shanelle Green, has been laid out in the play yard at the school. The girl is missing her school clothes and appears completely normal except the beating she received to the side of her face. Cross immediately has the impression that the killer left Shanelle in this way because there is something distinctive about the killer's physical appearance. At the same time that Cross is investigating the crime scene at the Truth School, a man breaks into Senator Fitzpatrick's apartment and verifies the senator has been killed execution style. There is a poem that has been left behind at the scene.

Cross and Sampson spend the morning canvassing the neighborhood, hoping to find a witness who might have seen Shanelle's killer. The only information Cross and Sampson are able to get is rumors about a neighborhood child molester nicknamed Chop-It-Off Charlie. The police were already aware of these rumors but were not sure the man was real or just neighborhood gossip. Even Nana Mama has heard these rumors and she mentions them to Cross when he arrives home that night. At the same time, Jack and Jill, aka Sam Harrison and Sara Rosen, are playing a game at Sara's Washington apartment. The game is how the couple chose their victims. This time a woman is chosen.

The next morning, Cross and Sampson continue their investigation. Cross finds a balloon in the park near the Truth School and suspects it has something to do with the case. That afternoon, Cross and Sampson talk to a young man on the street. The young man leads Cross and Sampson to the home of a man he believes is Chop-It-Off Charlie. Cross and Sampson are about to go to the man's door when the young man spots him coming across the courtyard. Cross and Sampson give chase when the man runs. The chase covers several area buildings, ending up on the roof of a building near where the suspect works. The suspect attempts to jump from the roof of one building to the next. However, the suspect miscalculated the distance and falls between the buildings, killing himself. Unfortunately, the suspect is not the killer. While Cross and Sampson are chasing the suspect, the Truth School killer attempts to kidnap a child from the mall. Fortunately for this child, his parents show up in time to foil the attempt.



Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 1-14 Analysis

Cross wakes to the news of a murder at the Sojourner Truth School. Cross knows this school well because his son attends it, which brings to the novel a tone of fear and vulnerability. This murder is too close to home, touching on the theme of family when Cross finds himself thinking about his own children as he investigates the murder. Cross puts his heart into this case, determined to find the killer. Cross interviews everyone in the neighborhood, hoping to find someone with some information. Instead of getting information on this case, however, Cross and his partner, Sampson, hear rumors that have been spreading for years about a child molester who mutilates his victims, nicknamed Chop-It-Off Charlie. Cross and Sampson find this man and he takes off, forcing them to chase him throughout the neighborhood. At the end, the suspect ends up jumping off a building and killing himself, hopefully ending the case.

At the same time, someone breaks into the apartment of Senator Daniel Fitzpatrick and confirms his death. However, at this point the reader has no idea who this man is or who he works for. From the radio that the man uses and his use of police jargon, however, the reader suspects he might be with some branch of law enforcement. Also at the same time, the Truth School killer tries to kidnap another child. This takes place at the same time Cross and Sampson are chasing their suspect, so the reader knows that the suspect could not be the Truth School killer, leaving this case clearly open and potentially continuing as the plot continues to develop.



Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 15-22

Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 15-22 Summary

Cross wakes to his daughter's stare. However, the day quickly takes a turn for the worse when his daughter tells him Chief Pittman and Commissioner Clouser are downstairs. Pittman believes the death of the suspect closes the Truth School case; therefore, Cross is available to work the Senator Fitzgerald murder. Cross does not agree, but the Police Commissioner puts him in a position where he cannot argue. Cross takes a day before he begins to focus on the Jack and Jill case. Cross reconnects with his children, teasing his daughter and taking his son for a walk. During this walk, Cross learns more about the beautiful principal at the Truth School who caught his attention at the Shanelle Green crime scene. As Cross and Damon walk in their neighborhood, they are watched by the Truth School killer. The Truth School killer is angry and jealous when he sees what a good father Cross is.

Jack attends a celebrity gala where Princess Di is the speaker. Jack corners a beautiful television reporter, Natalie Sheehan, and flirts with her. After a short time, Natalie invites Jack back to her apartment in the Jefferson Hotel. Jack seduces Natalie, takes her to the bed where he ties her up, then allows Jill into the room. Together Jack and Jill kill Natalie Sheehan. Cross arrives at the Jefferson Hotel and finds Chief Pittman already on the scene. Cross tries his best to search the crime scene with Pittman in the room. However, Pittman decides he wants Cross out. Pittman tells Cross to leave and then pushes him. Cross loses his temper and pushes Pittman up against the wall. Cross leaves without another word, sure his career is now over. At the same time, the Secret Service watches as President Thomas Byrnes sneaks out of the White House in order to meet a lover. The Secret Service loses Byrnes almost immediately. The agents involved are deeply concerned because of the Jack and Jill case and the unlikely coincidence that the Secret Service code names for the President and his wife are Jack and Jill.

Part One, It's Tomorrow Again, Chapters 15-22 Analysis

Cross shows interest in the principal of the Truth School. Christine Johnson is a beautiful, intelligent woman who seems out of place in the poor neighborhood where the school is located. Cross is fascinated with this woman because she is out of place and because she seems to truly care about her students. Unfortunately, Christine is married, which makes her unavailable as a romantic interest. At the same time, Cross is reassigned to the Jack and Jill case even though he believes the Truth School killer is



still on the loose. Cross's boss, Chief Pittman does not agree. Cross and Pittman do not like one another, which becomes very clear when Cross arrives at the Natalie Sheehan crime scene and he and Pittman get into a physical confrontation. This confrontation is caused by Pittman trying to throw around his weight, touching on the theme of power, as in the power struggle that exists between these two men.

Jack and Jill kill Natalie Sheehan. Clearly Sheehan is the victim Jack and Jill chose during their board game at Jill's apartment. Again there seems to be a celebrity stalking angle to this murder as well as the sexual component. A poem is left behind, just like the senator's murder. This makes Jack and Jill serial killers. However, Cross does not feel that the execution style murders fit any typical serial murder he has ever investigated before. To add to this uneasiness on Cross's part, the reader learns that Jack and Jill are the code names the Secret Service uses for the President and his wife. It cannot be a coincidence, leaving the reader wondering if perhaps Cross is right and there is something else going on with these killers.



Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 23-26

Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 23-26 Summary

Jack and Jill release a video tape of Senator Daniel Fitzpatrick's murder to CNN. Cross is among the first to view the tape. The tape shows a graphic rendition of the murder, including the moment of death, causing all who view it to feel disgust, including Cross. It is clearly an attempt on Jack and Jill's part to flaunt their crime in the faces of the police and to show the world how powerful they are. Jack and Jill speak on the tape in electronically altered voices, warning the police that they intend to continue killing people they believe are harming the American way of life with their corrupt morals. They call it a war. The next day, another child is found murdered near the Truth School. Cross arrives on the scene and finds a little boy not unlike his own son. As he is looking over the crime scene, Cross is approached by Christine Johnson, who identifies the boy as one of her students, Vernon Wheatley.

Cross, aware that the Washington DC police department was not going to make the Truth School murders a priority, arranges for several detectives who live in the neighborhood to work on the case on their own time. These men include the original detective on the Shanelle Green case. The detectives meet for a short time, discussing possible suspects. Cross gives the other detectives his impressions on the case, including his thoughts that the killer is a beginner and that there might be something distinctive about him, such as a malformation of his features.

Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 23-26 Analysis

Jack and Jill release a video to CNN, giving the police what appears to be a motive for their crimes. The motive seems to support the superficial findings at the crime scenes, that the pair are trying to rid the world of corrupt celebrities. However, Cross feels as though there is something wrong with this impression. Cross feels that the crimes lack the passion he would normally see with such crimes.

At the same time, there is another murder in the Truth School case, proving that Chop-It-Off Charlie was not the killer. Cross rushes to investigate this murder, where he once again runs into Christine Johnson, the beautiful principal of the school. As Cross speaks to her, the reader can sense his fascination with this woman, foreshadowing a time when Cross might reach out to her again. At the same time, Cross is aware that the Truth School murders are not a priority with his supervisors, so he arranges for some of his fellow detectives to help him investigate it on their own time. This move could be costly for Cross's career, but it will soothe both his conscience and that of his grandmother, who is putting pressure on Cross to keep his priorities straight.



Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 27-32

Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 27-32 Summary

During his working hours, Cross concentrates on the Jack and Jill case, but in his off hours he works the Truth School killings. As part of the investigation, Cross interviews Christine Johnson. Cross likes Christine, likes that she is smart, and likes that she lives in a prosperous neighborhood but still works in his neighborhood. Cross likes everything about Christine except for the fact that she is married. Across town that same night, Jack arrives at an exclusive hotel room and kills a famous actor who is visiting the area. The actor opens the door because he believes he is welcoming an escort, but instead finds himself face to face with Jack. The next morning, as Cross arrives at the murder scene, he is thinking about the lack of passion associated with these killings. These killings are cold and calculated, not like the serial murders Cross has investigated in the past.

While Cross is investigating the actor's murder, he is approached by a Secret Service agent who tells him he is needed at the White House. Cross is taken to a meeting of a Jack and Jill task force in the White House that includes the chief of staff, two more Secret Service agents, director of intelligence from the FBI, a member of the Joints Chief of Staff, the national security advisor, and the inspector general from the CIA. At this meeting, Cross learns that Jack and Jill have called the Secret Service directly each time they committed a murder. In fact, Jay Grayer went into each scene in order to verify the information before calling the police. At the same time the task force is discussing the case, Jack and Jill are across town enjoying a day off at a luxury hotel.

Part Two, The Dragonslayer, Chapters 27-32 Analysis

Cross is torn between two sets of murders, the high profile case that challenges his intellect and the one that is taking place in his own backyard. Cross attempts to stick with both cases, one officially and one unofficially. The investigation into the Truth School case brings Cross in contact with Christine Johnson on a regular basis, which appears to be a good thing on Cross's part. Cross is clearly drawn to Christine. This affection shows Cross as a normal human being to the reader, a man with weaknesses, including the natural human bent toward loneliness.

As Cross is investigating the third of the Jack and Jill killings, he is pulled away to join the meeting of a White House task force investigating the Jack and Jill killings. The members of this task force are very high placed law enforcement personnel, expressing to the reader how important this case has become. The reader also learns that the killers are informing the Secret Service directly, suggesting the pair have some inside information that allows them to contact this agency directly. Not only this, but the pair

also seem to have some plan that involves a high placed celebrity, possibly the President.



Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 33-39

Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 33-39 Summary

The photojournalist, Kevin Hawkins, is at an airport to kill a business man. Hawkins watches the businessman walk up the corridor and then sets off a bomb. When the man's bodyguards turn to move him out of harm's way, Hawkins sets off another bomb that kills them all. The same day, Cross returns to the White House where he meets with President Thomas Byrnes. Cross finds the President intelligent and charming. Byrnes speaks with Cross about his children, giving him souvenirs for them. Byrnes also tells Cross that he believes he is the only man on the case who has the strength to stand up to everyone in order to do what needs to be done. At home, however, Nana Mama is not impressed with Cross's new friends. Nana believes Cross should be concentrating on the Truth School killings instead.

While walking the streets, trying to get information on the Truth School killer, Cross talks to a young man he knows. The young man reluctantly tells him a rumor that a white homeless man was seen near the Truth School before Shanelle Green's murder. Cross is excited by this information because it is unusual to see a white face in this neighborhood, so he knows the homeless man must be their suspect. Cross takes this information as an excuse to visit Christine Johnson again, hoping one of the teachers at the Truth School saw this same homeless man. Cross and Christine talk about this information, but also find themselves talking about other things, learning about each other.

Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 33-39 Analysis

A new killer is introduced in these chapters. The killer, Kevin Hawkins, coldly attacks a business man in the middle of a busy airport. The coldness of the killing is reminiscent of Jack and Jill, an important contrast that may prove important as the plot continues to develop. The killing is not important, so the reader must realize that the important aspect of this killing is the method. The man is killed when his bodyguards try to move him away from danger, instead moving him directly into danger. This strategy foreshadows a strategy that will be used later in the novel.

Cross meets the President of the United States in a one-on-one meeting. Cross is impressed with Byrnes, but Nana Mama brings him back to earth, reminding him that there are more important people for Cross to protect right now, most importantly the people in his own neighborhood. Nana is like a physical conscience for Cross, keeping



him focused and trying to remind him what his priorities should be. Cross listens to Nana and goes to work on the Truth School murders in his spare time, learning that a white homeless man was seen in the park near the school the day Shanelle Green died. This is likely the suspect by Cross's estimation. Cross goes to see Christine Johnson again, under the guise of asking her to share this information with her employees. In reality, the reader can see that Cross's infatuation with the beautiful principal is growing and he simply wants to be near her. It seems the infatuation might be mutual because Christine also seems pleased to see Cross.



Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 40-52

Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 40-52 Summary

At the same time, Jack and Jill, aka Sara and Sam, fly a plane over Camp David. They are planning their next step, a step that clearly worries them both. Jack tells Jill that he thinks they need an alibi, so they should not commit the next murder. Jack tells Jill that he thinks they should have someone else commit the crime. Kevin Hawkins arrives at the Kennedy Center and watches his target. When he feels safe, Hawkins approaches the target and drops a poem in the woman's bag. However, the woman sees the poem and starts to fish it out, so Hawkins is forced to fire sooner than expected. Despite the unexpected turn of events, Hawkins hits his mark. Cross gets the call at home and rushes to the Kennedy Center. Cross and the other investigators think Jack and Jill might have made a mistake this time. Perhaps the woman was not the target, but the Supreme Court Justice she was with. However, further investigation into the woman's life reveals that she is the mistress of Thomas Byrnes, making her a likely target of Jack and Jill. Not only this, but the poem left at the crime scene says that they killed this woman to show the President how vulnerable he is and as a promise that he is next.

As part of the investigation into the Jack and Jill killings, Cross goes to Langley, to speak to the CIA Inspector General Jeanne Sterling. Jeanne tells Cross that the task force asked her to join their investigation because they believe that Jack could be one of the many freelance assassins the CIA employs. Jeanne then takes Cross to her home so that he can interview one of these assassins in order to help him identify a possible suspect. The interview frightens Cross, but also makes him more convinced that the theory of a CIA assassin being Jack is likely. While Cross is busy with Jack and Jill, Sampson visits the Theodore Roosevelt Military Academy across the park from the Sojourner Truth School, hoping one of the students might have seen something that could help the murder investigation. Unbeknown to Sampson, the killer is a thirteen-year-old boy sitting in the hall listening to his plea.

Part Three, The Photojournalist, Chapters 40-52 Analysis

Hawkins then goes to Washington and commits a murder for Jack and Jill. This makes Hawkins a part of the serial killer team. Unusual about this is that most serial killers do not work in pairs, let alone contract out killings. Hawkins kills a young law student who seems unimportant; perhaps the murder was a mistake and the true target was her companion, a Supreme Court Justice. However, when law enforcement read the poem left with her body, they realize she is the target. This unknown woman has a famous



lover, the President of the United States. The poem also promises that the President will be next, altering the tone of the novel. This is what Cross and his fellow investigators have been worried about, suggesting trouble not only for the President but for the country should Jack and Jill succeed.

Cross speaks to Jeanne Sterling and learns that the CIA is involved because Jack could be one of their freelance assassins. This possibility makes sense when the reader realizes that Hawkins might be one of these assassins. Finally, Sampson makes a plea at a local school with the hope that someone has seen something that will help with the investigation into the Truth School killings. The killer, the reader learns, is sitting in the audience as Sampson makes his plea. One of the most heinous killers in Washington DC history is ironically a thirteen-year-old boy.



Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 53-62

Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 53-62 Summary

Cross is having trouble sleeping, so he decides to go for a drive. Somehow, Cross finds himself outside Christine Johnson's house. Cross tries to talk himself out of knocking on her door, but is not successful. Christine does not seem surprised to find Cross at her door. Christine invites him inside and they share a drink. Christine seems to understand Cross needs a friend and allows him to talk about his kids and his wife. Finally Christine sends Cross home with an invitation to return whenever he needed to. Early the next morning, Jack sneaks into the home of General Aiden Cornwall, a member of the Jack and Jill task force. Jack was once good friends with Cornwall so he needs to kill him to keep him from learning the truth. However, before Jack can leave the house, Cornwall's young son sees him. Jack is forced to kill the boy as well.

The same morning of Cornwall's murder, Jill calls the White House and speaks to the President. Somehow Jill got around all of the White House's security measures when she made the call. During the call, Jill promises the President that his assassination is already set in stone. As Cross listens to the recording of the conversation between Jill and the President, he realizes he must speak to the President immediately. It is obvious to Cross that Jack or Jill is someone close to the President. It is unusual, but Cross gets to see the President; however, the President only reluctantly allows Cross to know who his enemies are and refuses to allow Cross to put any of them under surveillance. The President names among his enemies, Vice-President Mahoney, several members of the senate, and the head of the FBI. At the end of the meeting, Cross advises the President to continue to avoid making public appearances until this case is over.

Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 53-62 Analysis

Cross reaches out to Christine Johnson when he cannot sleep, further exploring the relationship and showing the reader how deeply Cross's feelings for her go even though he will not go beyond acceptable boundaries while she is married. Cross simply needs a friend and she offers him that much. Also exploring the theme of friendship, Jack breaks into the home of a close friend. However, Jack is not there for socialization, but to kill his friend because he is in a position of discovering Jack's true identity. Unfortunately, Jack also has to kill his friend's son. This action not only shows how cold Jack can be, but Jack's hesitation to kill the child and his obvious attack of conscience in killing his friend shows he does have some human emotion despite his deep believe that he is doing the right thing.



Jill calls the President, somehow bypassing the White House security, suggesting that either Jack or Jill is close to the President. Cross interviews the President, hoping to learn the identity of some of the President's private enemies. However, the President does not allow Cross to put any of his enemies under surveillance because most of them are some of the highest ranking politicians in America. Among these suspects is the Vice President, suggesting to the reader that this might be a person who has the most to gain from the President's loss of respect and possibly his death. The President's refusal to cooperate with the investigation suggests that he will make other decisions that might place his own life in danger, especially since Jill clearly stated that she plans to kill him at some point and she seems to have access to things the common criminal would not.



Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 63-76

Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 63-76 Summary

Someone is using a Prodigy message board to talk about the Truth School killings, giving information that only the killer could know. A censor for Prodigy is watching this message board and is shocked by what the subscriber is writing. The censor continuously removes whole messages, hoping to scare the subscriber off, but the subscriber only becomes angrier, giving more information on the killings. The censor does not know if these killings are real since she does not live in DC and the case has not been wildly published in the media. However, the details are so heinous that the censor shuts the subscriber down and has her supervisor call the police in Washington DC. When Sampson gets the information, he wakes Cross and arranges for the two of them and two other detectives to storm the home of the Prodigy subscriber. At the house, they find Colonel Moore and his wife having breakfast in the kitchen. They tell Cross and Sampson that the Prodigy is their son, Sumner Moore's, account. However, when they go to the boy's room, he is gone, but on his bed is Shanelle Green's shirt. While Cross and Sampson are busy at the Moore home, the Truth School killer is hanging around outside the Truth School. Mrs. Johnson sees him and sends him away.

Cross travels back to Langley and tells Jeanne Sterling that he suspects an assassin named Kevin Hawkins. Sterling suspects the same man. Sterling and Cross go to Hawkins' sister's house, but Hawkins spots them and takes off on a motorcycle. Cross chases him in his own car through the suburb where his sister lives, but loses him when they get tangled in traffic behind a school bus. Cross returns home late that night, tired and disappointed. Cross finds Sampson with Nana Mama. Someone has been calling the house and hanging up. Sampson suspects the Truth School killer. Cross arranges for Sampson and the other detectives on the case to take turns standing guard at his house. The following day, the President calls the task force members to his office and tells them he refuses to appear afraid to the world. The President has decided he will continue with his scheduled appearances. Across Washington, the Truth School killer is hiding in the attic of his foster parents' house. The killer slips out of the attic and kills his foster parents. The next morning, Sampson gets a call that another child has been found dead. When Sampson arrives, he realizes the child is Sumner Moore.

Part Four, A-Hunting We Will Go, Chapters 63-76 Analysis

The Truth School killer needs to brag about his crimes, so he goes on Prodigy and brags on the message boards there. Through his account, the police are able to find a



name. Sampson, Cross, and two other detectives go to the subscriber's home and learn the account belongs to a thirteen-year-old named Sumner Moore. In his room they find Shanelle Green's blouse. This evidence seems to say that Sumner Moore is the Truth School killer. However, later Sampson finds Sumner Moore dead. This tells the reader that the identity of the Truth School killer is still unknown to the police. However, the killer is quickly degrading, killing faster and closer to home. Due to this, it is possible the police will learn his identity soon. At the same time, however, Cross's family is being threatened. Cross is concerned for their safety and has a guard placed on the house, but does not move the family. The reader wonders if this might have been a mistake.

The President too makes a decision to not hide from his would-be assassins. The President wants to show the world he is not afraid. While a good political decision, this is not a good decision as far as his personal safety is concerned. This decision changes the tone of the novel once more, making it more serious, and foreshadows a possible assassination attempt on the President of the United States. Before this, Cross and Sterling go looking for a possible suspect in the Jack and Jill murders. Unfortunately, they do not apprehend the suspect, but the fact that the man ran is a good indication he is guilty. However, the reader knows that Hawkins committed one of the Jack and Jill killings in order to provide the real Jack and Jill an alibi, suggesting that Hawkins is not Jack. This leaves the reader wondering who the real Jack is.



Part Five, No Rules, No Regrets, Chapters 77-86

Part Five, No Rules, No Regrets, Chapters 77-86 Summary

Cross travels with the President to New York, where he is scheduled to give a speech at Madison Square Garden. The flight into the city is uneventful. At the airport in New York, the President and his entourage are joined by more than three hundred New York City police officers. The security surrounding the President is larger and more intense than it ever has been before, for fear that Jack and Jill will make an attempt during this visit. From the airport the motorcade to the Waldorf-Astoria goes off without a hitch. Unknown to Cross or the hundreds of other law enforcement officers involved, Kevin Hawkins watches the President with the rest of the spectators outside the hotel. Jack, too, is watching from a separate vantage point as Jill appears among the President's entourage. Once the President is inside the hotel, security is flabbergasted when it is discovered that Jack and Jill have somehow guessed where the President is staying and have sent him flowers. The note with the flowers warns that the assassination is inevitable.

Back in Washington DC, the Truth School killer is watching Cross's house. The killer wants to kill Cross because he reminds him of his own father who was also a cop. The killer's father abandoned him when he was a small child and Cross abandoned him by focusing on the Jack and Jill murders instead of the Truth School killings. However, when the killer approaches the house he finds the front door closed, something that stuns the killer because he had assumed he would be able to simply walk into the house. The killer goes around to the sun porch, but he finds John Sampson there. The killer believes at first that he is caught, but then realizes that Sampson is asleep. The killer slips away without anyone knowing he was ever there.

Cross has trouble sleeping, so he takes a walk through the hotel attempting to figure out where Jack and Jill plan to hit. It has to be somewhere where they can escape the overwhelming number of law enforcement agents protecting the President. This does not seem possible, but Cross knows this is the plan. Jack and Jill will not be caught. At the same time, the President spends a few tender moments with his wife. Across town, Jack meets up with Jill in his hotel room. While holding her in an embrace, Jack shoots Jill. Jack leaves a note in Jill's hand that is the final Jack and Jill poem.



Part Five, No Rules, No Regrets, Chapters 77-86 Analysis

The President is due to make a speech at Madison Square Garden. The venue is highly public, placing him in danger from an assassin's bullet. The President is determined not to look as though he is frightened. This determination, however, might cost him his life. As a result, there are hundreds of cops and Secret Service agents on hand, but it seems they are useless considering Kevin Hawkins is in the crowd and Jack is watching Jill emerge with the President's entourage. Jill's position, however, answers a few questions for the reader. Jill must work for the President, explaining how Jack and Jill seem to have so much inside information on the President and how Jill made the phone call that bypassed so many of the White House's security channels.

In Washington, the Truth School killer is stalking Cross. As he does this, the reader learns some details about the Truth School killer, including the deaths of his parents and his fixation on Cross. The Truth School killer feels as though his parents abandoned him when they died and that Cross has also abandoned him. The Truth School killer is focused on families, a theme of the novel, and his lack of one. This fixation goes to the Truth School killer's motivations, explaining in part why he chose the victims he did.

Finally, Jack kills Jill in his motel room. Jack then leaves the final Jack and Jill poem in her hand. This alerts the reader to the idea that Jack and Jill are finished with their schemes and are cleaning up their mess. The reader wonders, along with Cross, how Jack plans to end this game. Clearly Jack does not want to be caught, though he almost expects it will happen. The reader is just as confused as to how Jack thinks he will walk away from this act.



Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore— Nobody, Chapters 87-93

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 87-93 Summary

The President leaves the hotel safely and arrives at Madison Square Garden. The President is escorted through an underground tunnel to the room where he is to give his speech. Cross remains in the crowd, watching for anything suspicious among the people gathered to hear the speech. Unbeknown to him, Kevin Hawkins is in the crowd dressed as a woman with FBI credentials. Cross focuses on several people who appear to be possible suspects, but the reader knows none of them are Hawkins. Hawkins is watching the whole thing under his disguise with amusement, knowing the police and Secret Service will never recognize him in the dress he is wearing. Not only that, but Hawkins feels he is ugly enough that no one will remember him when it is all said and done.

When a bomb goes off on the stage, Cross is too far from the President to see if he is hurt. Cross pushes through the frightened crowd and sees the President being escorted out the way he came in. Suddenly Cross realizes what the plan is. Cross screams for the Secret Service to change their escape route, but he cannot be heard above the roar of the crowd. Cross pushes through the crowd as quickly as he can as the Secret Service escorts the President back down the same tunnel through which he arrived. Cross draws closer and is able to see the President, but still no one can hear his shouts of warning. Suddenly Cross hears five gun shots. When Cross finally reaches the President, he finds he has been shot three times in the chest. Kevin Hawkins is also dead while Jack is calmly escaping New York through the Holland Tunnel. In the aftermath of the attack on the President, Cross gets word that a body has been found in a local hotel. When Cross arrives, he learns the dead woman has a poem from Jack and Jill. The poem claims that the Jack and Jill war is over.

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 87-93 Analysis

The President has made the decision not to hide and to continue to make public appearance. As such, Cross is in New York with the President, going to Madison Square Garden for a speech. Cross works the crowd, looking for possible assassins. The reader sees Cross focus on men and wants to scream that Hawkins is dressed as a woman. The reader can clearly see that Cross will not figure out the plot in time, increasing the obvious tension in the novel and changing the tone to one of intense fear. The author has purposely misled Cross, making him something of an unreliable narrator at this point in the story.



As predicted in a previous chapter, Hawkins killed a man by distracting his bodyguards with a bomb before setting off the bomb intended to kill. Hawkins does the same when he attacks the President, setting off a bomb on the stage where he is to give a speech and then ambushing him on his escape route. The reader has the advantage to see this coming, but Cross sees it too late and is unable to stop it from happening. The President is shot, Hawkins is killed, and Jill is found dead in a hotel room. Jack manages to disappear. It appears as if the case is closed. However, Cross is already suspicious that Jill did not die by suicide as it appears, but was murdered. If so, Cross needs to figure out if Hawkins killed her and is therefore Jack, or if there is another person involved, perhaps the real Jack.



Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore— Nobody, Chapters 94-101

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 94-101 Summary

News of the shooting hits the airwaves almost immediately. Christine Johnson is watching the news coverage when her husband arrives home from work. Christine and her husband, George, have struggled in their relationship lately because George works long hours and seems to have no time for Christine. However, this night George puts his work aside and focuses on his wife. Christine and her husband settle down to watch the terrible coverage together. Despite the terrible news on the television, Christine and George spend an intimate few hours together that is more precious and important than any time they have shared together in several years.

While waiting for word on the President's condition, someone knocks on the door. When George Johnson opens the door, the thirteen-year-old boy standing there shoots him twice in the chest. The boy then takes Christine Johnson hostage in her own home. Cross rushes to the scene the moment he arrives in Washington because the killer is asking specifically for him. Sampson apprises him of the situation. Cross goes against Sampson's advice and enters the house. Cross places himself across the room from Christine so that the boy, Danny Boudreaux, can only kill one of them at a time. Danny chooses Christine. After Danny fires, Cross body slams him and knocks him to the ground. Seconds later Danny has a seizure, a result of withdrawal from his medication.

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 94-101 Analysis

Unfortunate for Cross, Christine Johnson seems to be trying to make a go at her marriage to her husband, George. Clearly the marriage has been troubled or else Christine would most likely have not let Cross so close to her, inviting him into her home in the middle of the night. Christine clearly loves her husband, and like Cross, does not believe in infidelity. However, a bad marriage cannot survive. Christine reaches out to her husband in a time of struggle, showing her depth of character and her desire to remain true to her marriage vows.

In Washington, Christine Johnson's husband is murdered and she is taken hostage by Danny Boudreaux, the Truth School killer. Cross arrives as quickly as he can when he hears the killer is asking for him. Cross gets into the house, placing himself in danger. This shows the reader the depth of Cross's personality and the bravery with which he faces the dangers of his job. Cross manages to place the killer between him and Christine, forcing the boy to kill them one at a time. The boy chooses Christine, giving



Cross the chance he needs to ambush him and get the gun away. Once again Cross is the hero. This time his instincts came quick enough for him to save Christine, despite coming too late to save the President. Cross's success changes the tone once more, from one of desperation to a spark of hope.



Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore— Nobody, Chapters 102-115

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 102-115 Summary

Cross returns home to the news that President Byrnes has died. A few days pass before Cross feels up to facing any more work. Finally Cross goes with Sampson to the apartment belonging to Jill, aka Sara Rosen. Cross and Sampson spend the whole day in the apartment and find nothing. Cross returns the next day and continues to search on his own. Cross finds a video tape that has unedited footage of Senator Fitzgerald's murder. On this tape Cross finds a clear image of Jack. Cross and Jay Grayer arrest Jack as he leaves the school his children attend. After this arrest, Cross and Jay Grayer go to the home of Jeanne Sterling. Jay and Cross tell Sterling what they know, how she and her husband, Brett, planned the assassination and how Brett acted out the plan as Jack. The only thing they do not know is who hired them to plan the assassination. Suddenly, Sterling pulls a gun and shoots Jay. Cross chases Sterling out to the garage where she is trying to escape in her car with her three-year-old daughter. Cross fires at Sterling, taking care not to hit her or the child. Finally, Cross approaches the car and punches Sterling, knocking her out.

A few days after Jeanne and Brett Sterling are arrested, Cross gets a call to come to Lorton Prison. Jeanne and Brett Sterling are dead. Someone managed to get into their cells and poison them. Jeanne put up a fight. Now no one will ever know who was really behind the assassination plot. Cross puts the whole case behind him and returns home to celebrate the Christmas holidays. While decorating the tree, Gary Soneji calls and tells Cross that he left Rosie the cat on his porch. Cross puts the phone down and decides to worry about it another day.

Part Six, Nobody is Safe Anymore—Nobody, Chapters 102-115 Analysis

Cross finds evidence Sara Rosen left behind that allows him to identify Jack. Once Jack is identified, the entire investigation is blown wide open. Jack is Brett Sterling, Jeanne Sterling's husband. Now Cross knows that Thomas Byrnes was the target all along and the other murders were just a cover to confuse the police. This plot explores the theme of politics and greed, since the person behind the assassination must have wanted Byrnes gone for political reasons. The theme is further explored when the reader takes into account the idea that the Sterlings plotted the assassination for money. Cross makes the arrest with the Secret Service, acting the hero once again when he takes down an armed Jeanne Sterling himself. Cross again is the hero, showing his depth of character and his strong ethics.



The tone has changed once again, filled now with optimism and hope. However, the tone changes a second time when the Sterlings are found dead in their prison cells. Now no one will ever know who was behind the plot, including the reader. The tone is deflated, leaving Cross and the reader feeling unsatisfied, comparing this assassination to other assassinations that were never totally satisfied in the eyes of the American public, namely those of the Kennedy brothers. Finally, the next novel is foreshadowed at the end of the novel when Soneji calls to announce that he was the benefactor who left Rosie on the porch.



Characters

Alex Cross

Alex Cross is both a homicide detective and a trained psychologist. As such, Cross has a special insight into the minds of murderers. Cross has solved many homicide cases and is often called in to consult on others. In this novel, Cross is involved in two serial killer cases. The first is one that takes place in his own backyard. Cross, who has two children of his own, is called to investigate the killings of small students from his own son's school, the Sojourner Truth School. The first death is a little six-year-old girl, the second a seven-year-old boy. These killings hit so close to home that Cross finds himself emotionally involved from the first moments at the crime scene. Cross can imagine what it would be like to be in the shoes of these children's parents, so he is more determined than ever to find the killer. When the killer becomes focused on him, Cross is drawn even deeper into the case, finding himself facing the killer one on one in a hostage situation.

The second case is Jack and Jill. Jack and Jill are a pair of killers who appear to be celebrity stalkers. This team hunts and kills famous people who appear to have offended Jack and Jill with their promiscuous ways. While Cross would rather focus on the Truth School killer, he finds himself dragged into the Jack and Jill case. From the beginning, Cross does not believe that Jack and Jill are simple serial killers. There is something cold and dispassionate about the way they kill. When Jack and Jill threaten to come after the President of the United States, Cross finds himself in a position to help shape history. Unfortunately, Cross figures out how the assassins plan to kill the President to stop what is already in motion. Later, Cross is determined to learn the true identities of Jack and Jill. It is because of Cross's persistence that the government finally learns these identities and are able to arrest Jack and Jill.

While fighting crime in Washington DC, Cross is also a devoted family man. Cross has two small children he cares for with the help of his grandmother. Cross's wife, Maria, died a few years before leaving Cross a single father. In the past few years, Cross has also had a few failed love affairs. When Cross meets Christine Johnson, the principal of the Sojourner Truth School, he falls head over heels for the bright, beautiful woman. Unfortunately, Christine is married and Cross will not cross that line within his personal moral code. Cross fights these feelings throughout the novel, leaving him deeply attached to a woman he cannot have.

John Sampson

John Sampson is Alex Cross's partner. Sampson is as devoted a detective as Cross, but leaves the psychological aspects of the job to Cross. Sampson is a big man, intimidating to the criminals with whom he deals on a daily basis. Sampson is also Cross's best friend. Sampson and Cross grew up together in the poorer section of



Washington DC. Sampson looks out for Cross, helps him track down criminals, and cares for his psychological health. It is Sampson who runs the Truth School killer investigation when Cross is called away, Sampson who camps out on Cross's porch when the Truth School killer makes threats against Cross's family, and Sampson who advises Cross not to go into Christine Johnson's house while Danny Boudreaux holds her hostage. Of course, Cross does not listen to Sampson, but deeply appreciates his concern.

Christine Johnson

Christine Johnson is the principal of the Sojourner Truth School. Damon tells Cross that Mrs. Johnson is braver than even Cross himself. Cross slowly begins to learn that this is true as he gets to know the brilliant Mrs. Johnson. Christine is beautiful, intelligent, and more sophisticated than a person might expect the principal of an inner city school to be. Cross falls in love with her from the first moments they meet, but does not make any moves on her because he knows she is married and he does not believe in infidelity. However, this does not stop Cross from reaching out to Christine as a friend. When the Truth School killer goes to Christine's house and kills her husband, Cross immediately rushes to the scene. Christine is held hostage by the killer, who demands that Cross come and speak to him. Despite all advice, Cross does just that, talking the killer down and ending the standoff. Christine is grateful and reaches out to Cross in the aftermath, initiating a friendship that will expand into the future.

Brett and Jeanne Sterling

Jeanne Sterling is an agent with the CIA who has been assigned the task of cleaning up the agency after a major spy scandal. Jeanne Sterling has also been assigned to the Jack and Jill taskforce, because law enforcement believes that one of the CIA sanctioned freelance assassins is Jack. Cross works closely with Jeanne, even going to her home to interview one of these assassins. Later, after Jack and Jill appear to have been killed, Cross finds evidence at Jill's home that Brett Sterling was Jack. During his investigation into Brett Sterling, Cross and the task force learn that Jeanne Sterling was the mastermind behind the plot, the real Jill. Cross suspects that Brett and Jeanne Sterling plotted the Jack and Jill killings in order to gain monetarily from someone who wanted the President to die. Cross and law enforcement were never able to find out who was behind the plot, however, because Jeanne and Brett Sterling died in jail before they could be properly interrogated.

Sara Rosen

Sara Rosen is a sad, lonely woman who has worked in the White House for more than ten years. Sara is unmarried and everyone affectionately calls her the sexy spinster. Sara also has a limp for some unexplained reason that she believes has caused her to miss out on the normal courting rituals most young women go through. As a result,



when Sara meets Brett Sterling, she falls head over heels. Sara does not know Brett's real name, only the name he wishes for her to know. However, Sara is so blindly devoted to Brett she is willing to do anything for him, including kill. Sara joins Brett in his Jack and Jill killings, helping to lure Senator Fitzgerald to his death, as well as assisting on the Natalie Sheehan murder. Sara believes that Jack and Jill is a just cause and that what they are doing is for the benefit of the country. Sara also believes that she and Jack, or Brett Sterling, will be together for the long haul. However, Brett kills Sara the morning President Byrnes is assassinated. When Cross follows up on Sara's death, he finds a video tape in her apartment that reveals Brett Sterling as Jack, the killer of Senator Fitzgerald.

Danny Boudreaux

Danny Boudreaux is a thirteen-year-old boy whose parents both died when he was a small child. Danny's mother died when he was an infant, then his father, who was a cop, killed himself. Danny began to suffer from a mood disorder that doctors had trouble diagnosing. Danny was placed on medication, but stopped using it. After Danny stopped using his medication, he began killing children. First Danny kills Shanelle Green, a tiny six-year-old who attends the Sojourner Truth School. Then Danny kills another student from the Truth School, earning him the title of the Truth School killer. Later, Danny uses the Protegy account of a classmate, causing police to focus on the other child. Danny then kills this child and his own foster parents. As time goes on, Danny becomes more and more unstable from the lack of medication.

Danny focuses on Cross, angry with Cross because he is a good father to his son, Damon, and because he is apparently more concerned with the Jack and Jill murders than the Truth School murders. This is a slap in the face to Danny, at least in Danny's mind. Danny considers killing Cross, but instead focuses on Christine Johnson, the principal of the Sojourner Truth School. Danny goes to Christine Johnson's house and kills her husband before taking her hostage. Cross arrives and is able to talk Danny down, helping law enforcement take him into custody.

Shanelle Green, Vernon Wheatley, and Sumner Moore

Shanelle Green is a six-year-old child who attends the Sojourner Truth School. Shanelle is walking home from school alone when she comes across a man with a handful of balloons. Shanelle takes a balloon from this man only to have him pull her into the bushes and beat her to death with a baseball bat. Shanelle's body is then transported to the play yard at the Sojourner Truth School where it is found and investigated by police. Later, another body is found in a park. This boy, Vernon Wheatley, is a seven-year-old child who also attends the Sojourner Truth School. Vernon is the second victim of the Truth School killer. Finally, police find Sumner Moore, older than Vernon and Shanelle and a student at another school. Sumner is a schoolmate of Danny Boudreaux's, whom Danny focuses on because he is a good student and is popular among the other



students. At first, Danny tries to make it seem Sumner is the Truth School killer. Then Danny kills him to satisfy his dark desire to kill.

President Thomas Byrnes and Sally Byrnes

President Thomas Byrnes is the President of the United States and Sally Byrnes is his wife. Thomas Byrnes is a liberal politician who has come to the White House with the intention of making changes. Many people do not like the changes that Byrnes is trying to make, so Byrnes has a great many of enemies. When Jack and Jill focus on the President, law enforcement believe at first it is because Byrnes, who no longer shares a bed with his wife, has a habit of sneaking out of the White House in order to visit a mistress. This behavior seems to fit the pattern of the Jack and Jill killings. However, Cross begins to believe that the true motivations of Jack and Jill have more to do with politics and greed than sexual promiscuity. President Byrnes is put under police protection, but after a time makes the decision to stop hiding. The President does not want to appear weak to either his constituents or other world powers. The President travels to Madison Square Garden where he is shot while escaping a bomb detonation on the platform where he was to make his speech.

Jay Grayer

Jay Grayer is a Secret Service agent with whom Cross works during the investigation into the Jack and Jill murders. Jay is the first person on the scene when each of the Jack and Jill murders take place, because Jack and Jill call the Secret Service directly after each murder takes place. Jay goes into the crime scenes and looks, verifying the information before calling the Washington DC police department to inform them of the murders. Cross does not learn this until he joins the Jack and Jill task force. Jay is a deeply serious man who is very concerned about the President being assassinated on his watch. Cross sees this and tries to help prevent the inevitable. Later, after the President dies, Cross and Jay take Jack and Jill down together. Jay is shot when Cross and Jay attempt to arrest Jeanne Sterling. However, Jay is not injured badly and is able to follow up on the case. In fact, when the Sterlings are found dead in jail, it is Jay who calls Cross to inform him of the bad news.

Chief Pittman

Chief Pittman is the chief of detectives, of Jefe, with the Washington DC Police Department. Chief Pittman dislikes Cross and often lets his dislike be known. Cross and Pittman have had words many times, but not like they do in this novel. When Cross arrives at the Natalie Sheehan crime scene, Pittman asks him to leave the room before he has finished looking around. Pittman then pushes Cross. Cross becomes angry. Cross grabs Pittman and shoves him up against the wall, instructing him to never touch him that way again. Later, Cross is reassigned to the Jack and Jill task force, possibly

by Pittman. After both Jack and Jill and the Truth School killer are apprehended, Cross is suspended from the department for an indefinite amount of time.



Objects/Places

Poems

Jack and Jill leave poems at each of their crime scenes, taunting police.

Video Tape

Jill films the killing of Senator Daniel Fitzpatrick in order to send the video tape to CNN to taunt the police. Jill, aka Sara Rosen, keeps an unedited version of the tape with which Alex Cross and other law enforcement agents are able to identify her partner.

Reinforced Baseball Bat

The Truth School killer kills his tiny victims with a baseball bat reinforced with electrical tape.

Piano

Cross has a piano on his sun porch. Cross often plays the piano when he has trouble sleeping or is stressed out about something, especially his many horrific homicide cases.

Jefferson Hotel/The Natalie Sheehan Crime Scene

While inspecting the Natalie Sheehan crime scene, Cross gets into a fight with the chief of detectives when The Jefe tries to force Cross to leave the room.

Rosie the Cat

Cross and his family found a cat on their front porch that they have adopted. At the end of the novel, Cross learns that his nemesis, Gary Soneji, left the cat there to remind Cross how vulnerable he and his family are.

Madison Square Garden

The President is assassinated while being taken out of Madison Square Garden after a bomb has been detonated on the stage where he was to give a speech.



The Cross Home

The Truth School killer goes to the Cross home in order to kill Alex Cross, but is scared off when he finds Sampson sleeping on the porch.

The Sterling Home

Cross arrests Jeanne Sterling in her home, finally realizing how lavishly the Sterlings live and guessing money is part of why the Sterlings planned and executed the assassination of President Byrnes.

The Waldorf-Astoria

The President stays at the Waldorf-Astoria while in New York to make a speech. Jack and Jill somehow find out where the President is staying and send flowers warning him of his impending assassination.

The Sojourner Truth School

The Sojourner Truth School is a school in Washington DC where Alex Cross's son goes to school. A killer targets the students of this school, killing two students before taking the principal, Christine Johnson, hostage.

Washington DC

Alex Cross lives in a poor section of Washington DC, where he grew up in the care of his grandmother, Nana Mama.



Themes

Family

Family is extremely important to Alex Cross. Cross is devoted to his two children and his grandmother, Nana Mama. Cross spends all his free time trying to be the best father he can be. When he is working, Cross solves homicides in order to make the world safer for his children. Cross knows he could move his children out of the poor neighborhood where he was raised by his grandmother, but he would rather have them grow up in the real world rather than be isolated in private schools and a world that is not realistic. Not only this, but Cross is proud of his background and wants his children to grow up with the same pride. Unfortunately, by remaining in such a neighborhood, Cross's children are constantly exposed to the dark side of poverty and racism. In this novel, several murders take place near his son Damon's school and the victims are Damon's tiny classmates.

Family is also important to both sets of criminals Cross is chasing in this novel. The first, the Truth School killer, is a young man whose parents both abandoned him. Danny Boudreaux's mother died when he was only an infant and Danny's father committed suicide soon after. Danny has been in foster care for many years. However, Danny has never emotionally connected with any of his foster parents. Not only this, but Danny suffers a mood disorder that doctors have had difficulty diagnosing. Danny has been on medication, but has chosen to stop taking the pills, leaving him erratic, aggressive, and angry. Danny focuses on Alex Cross when he begins killing and Cross begins hunting him. Danny sees what a good father Cross is to his son Damon and becomes angry at Cross, comparing Cross to his own father and often confusing the two. As a result, Danny targets Cross and the people in his life, leading him to take Christine Johnson, the principal of the Truth School, hostage in her own home.

The Sterlings too believe deeply in family. Brett Sterling, aka Jack, believes that by killing the President of the United States he is making a better world for his children. Brett's wife, Jeanne, believes the same thing and as such has been the mastermind behind the Jack and Jill massacres. Jeanne holds a high power position with the CIA, giving her access to all the information she needs in order to plan the assassination. This job also gives Jeanne the cover she needs to keep law enforcement from suspecting her. In this way, Jeanne is able to protect her three small children from the possibility of losing both their parents should they be identified as Jack and Jill. Brett Sterling believes what he is doing is for his children and the night before the assassination takes comfort in speaking to his youngest daughter. Unfortunately, Jeanne does not value her children quite as much. Jeanne uses her youngest daughter as a shield the day Cross comes to arrest her.



Politics and Greed

Jack and Jill are a team of serial killers who appear to be celebrity stalkers. The first target of their murderous rage is a senator who is known for his overzealous sexual appetite. The second is a female television news reporter who also has a taste for one night stands. The third is a Hollywood star who likes to take anonymous male lovers. Finally, Jack and Jill assassinate a young woman who law enforcement learn was the mistress of President Byrnes. All the victims have some sexual component in common as well as the fact that they are all famous in some way or another. It seems that Jack and Jill have focused on these people in order to rid the world of political liberals and sexual deviants. However, Cross quickly learns there is more to the situation than first meets the eye.

Cross believes that Thomas Byrnes is a target of Jack and Jill because of his political views. Byrnes came into the White House with the intention of shaking up American politics, and this is exactly what he sets out to do. By doing this, the President makes a lot of enemies, including the mystery person who hired Jack and Jill to assassinate the President. When Cross learns the true identity of Jack and Jill, he begins to formulate a theory, in which greed was the main motivating factor. The President cost a lot of high powered people to lose ill gotten funds. Not only this, but someone clearly paid Brett and Jeanne Sterling a lot of money in order to plan and execute the assassination plot. As a major motivation in the murders, politics and greed become an important theme in this novel.

Power

Power struggles are a prominent theme of this novel for several reasons. The first reason is because power is something Jack and Jill crave. Jack deeply wants to prove how powerful he is by killing powerful people who should not be accessible by a man such as him. Jack revels in his ability to get close to senators, actors, and television personalities. Each kill makes Jack feel more powerful, as if he could do almost anything. The same is true with the Truth School killer. Danny Boudreaux feels powerful, as though he is teaching the world a lesson with each tiny, vulnerable child he kills. This power only grows when Danny kills Christine Johnson's husband and takes her hostage, forcing Alex Cross to come to him.

Power struggles also come into play with Alex Cross and his boss. Chief Pittman dislikes Cross because Cross stands up to him. Cross dislikes Pittman because of his incompetence and his unpleasant attitude. At one point, Pittman tells Cross to leave a crime scene and gives him a push. Cross is unhappy with this, fighting back by pinning Pittman up against a wall. As a result, Pittman has Cross reassigned to the task force working the Jack and Jill case and then has him suspended. Another power struggle in this novel is the struggle President Thomas Byrne finds himself fighting against a need to stay safe and the need to put forward the appearance of fearlessness. Byrne does not want the world to believe that he needs to hide from serial killers. Byrne also does



not want his enemies to believe he scares that easily. It is because of these reasons that Byrne decides to go to New York to give his speech, despite the fact that Jack and Jill have promised to kill him there. Byrne makes this decision and ends up dying, just as Jack and Jill predicted.



Style

Point of View

As with the two Alex Cross novels before it, this novel moves between a third person point of view and the first person point of view. When Alex Cross is the narrator, he narrates in the first person point of view, giving the reader a deeply intimate insight into his thoughts and feelings. This allows the readers to not only develop a relationship with this main character, but it also takes away any confusion as to who the main character in this multi character novel is. There are also a few other characters who narrate within the novel in the third person point of view. These characters, ranging from John Sampson, Alex Cross's best friend and partner, to the Truth School killer, share their feelings and thoughts with the reader as well. However, this is done in the more removed third person point of view, giving the reader a view into their thoughts, but not the same level of intimacy as the reader achieves with Alex Cross.

These points of view work because they not only allow the reader to distinguish between the main character and minor characters. These varying points of view also allow the reader to see the thoughts of the bad guys as well as the good guys without developing the empathy that might develop should the writer have used the first person point of view all the way through the novel. Finally, these differing points of view work because they allow the readers to feel a deeper intimacy with Alex Cross than would be available with the third person point of view. Alex Cross is the star of the novel, the only character the reader should root for and hope to see doing well. Making Alex Cross's narration in the first person point of view allows the reader to see this from the first sentence of the novel.

Setting

The novel is set primarily in Washington DC. This setting is important to the overall plot of the novel because a majority of the victims of the serial killers Jack and Jill are political personas. Jack and Jill target such people as a senator, an actor, and the President of the United States. If the novel was set somewhere less political, these murders might not have the same impact that they have in this novel. The setting is also important because of the poor section of the mostly highbrow city where Alex Cross lives and works. It is also in this poorer section of the city where the Truth School killer is at work, killing the tiny children who attend the same school as Alex Cross's little boy, Damon.

The setting of the novel takes on a life of its own, almost becoming a character in itself. Washington DC is notorious for the political power struggles that take place there as well as the rich, well known people who live there. One of the major plots of the novel follows the killing of these people, including a senator, a television personality, and an actor. As a result, it is essential that these murders take place in Washington DC. This



setting is also important because of the contrast between the highbrow, powerful people targeted by Jack and Jill and the poor, tiny children who live in the poorer section of town and are the targets of the Truth School killer.

Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English that uses very little slang or otherwise difficult to understand language. Cross is a cop, but he is also a psychologist; therefore, he is quite educated and his language reflects this. There are times in which Cross speaks with people whose speech is less educated; one time in particular he speaks to a drug dealer who speaks in slang, but this is not often. This novel also does not include much of the professional dialect often used in novels that include police procedure, again making it easier for the reader to understand the plot.

The language in this novel works because it keeps the language simple without taking away from the overall plot. The author includes some slang, keeping the dialogue authentic while complicating the language slightly, but not enough to discourage the reader. The author also does not use a lot of complicated, professional language that could cause the reader confusion, keeping the language simple and easy to understand.

Structure

The novel is divided into 114 chapters, an epilogue, and six parts. Each of the novel's parts is titled for someone or something that takes place within that particular part. The chapters are each short, some only as long as two pages, other four or five pages. None of the chapters are longer than six pages. The short chapters keep the action going, giving the reader less opportunity to put the book down once the action begins.

The novel is divided into two main plots and a few smaller subplots. The first major plot follows the exploits of Jack and Jill, a pair of serial killers who appear to be celebrity stalkers. The second major plot follows the work of the Truth School killer, a disturbed young man who kills two children who attended the Sojourner Truth School, a few blocks from Alex Cross's home. The subplots include a power struggle between Alex and his boss, Chief Pittman, the power struggle between law enforcement and the President of the United States, and the romance that is slowly budding between Alex Cross and Christine Johnson, the married principal of the Sojourner Truth School.



Quotes

"In a different part of Washington, in a different world, another would-be killer was playing an equally terrifying game." Prologue, The Game Begins, p. 7

"History was made.
The game of games had begun.
Jack and Jill."
Prologue, The Game Begins, p. 15

"Oh no, it's tomorrow again." Part One, Chap. 1, p. 19

"John Sampson was the noisemaker; he was the trouble in my life; the day's first disturbance, anyway. All six foot nine, two hundred forty pounds of him. Two-John, as he was sometimes called. Man Mountain." Part One, Chap. 1, p. 20

"I didn't want to look, but I had to. I bent down close to Shanelle. I could smell the little girl's blood: copper, like a lot of pennies had been thrown on the ground. I couldn't help thinking about Damon and Jannie, my own kids. I couldn't stop the overwhelming sadness I felt. It ate at me, like acid splashed all over my body." Part One, Chap. 3, p. 27

"I could feel the presence of the killer inside the tree branches, challenging me. I sensed Shanelle's presence as well, as if she were trying to tell me something. I wanted to be alone in here for a moment or two." Part One, Chap. 8, p. 45

"The dragonslayer was on guard. Tired and sleepy and oversentimental, but ever so watchful." Part One, Chap. 16, p. 79

"Jack and Jill came to The Hill.
To kill, to kill, to kill."
Part One, Chap. 20, p. 96

"Jack pulled out a Beretta with a silencer and aimed it between the actor's startled deep-blue eyes. He fired. It fit the pattern of Jack and Jill. People in high places. Execution-style murder. Kinky touches and poem to follow." Part Two, Chap. 28, p. 141

"So who might be angry and crazed enough at the President to want him murdered? I knew that was why I was at the White House. I was here to conduct a homicide investigation. In the White House. A search for a couple of killers who could be planning to murder the President." Part Three, Chap. 35, p. 171

"You're a dead man, Mr. President.
Your assassination is already a done deal.



Why were they warning us?

Why warn us about what they planned to do?" Part Four, Chap. 60, p. 266

"Gary Soneji hung up the phone with a gentle click.

And then so did I. I went back to the beautiful tree and Jannie and Damon and Nat King Cole.

Until next time." Part 6, Chap. 115, p. 466



Topics for Discussion

Discuss Alex Cross. Who is Alex Cross? What are his motivations? Why does he continue to live where he does? How did his wife die? How does that affect Cross's actions? Why does Cross feel as though the Truth School killer is not a priority with his department? How does that affect Cross's home life?

Who is Danny Boudreaux? Why does he choose the Truth School to terrorize? How does Cross affect Danny's decision? Why does Danny fixate on Cross? What does Cross do to offend Danny? Why does Danny focus on Christine Johnson? Why does Danny kill George Johnson? What does Danny's fixation on Cross and Johnson seem to symbolize about the couple?

Who is Jill? Is Sara Rosen the real Jill? Why does Jack kill Sara Rosen? Did Sara know she was going to die? Why or why not? Who is Jeanne Sterling? What is her involvement in the Jack and Jill plot? Why does Jeanne become involved? What are her motivations? What are Sara Rosen's motivations?

Who is Jack? Why does Jack begin killing? Why does Jack kill the senator? The television reporter? The movie star? The President's lover? Are these people the true targets of Jack and Jill? Why do Jack and Jill go after President Byrnes? Who is their real target? Why?

Discuss Gary Soneji. Who is Gary Soneji? Why is Danny Boudreaux jealous of Soneji? Why does Soneji haunt Cross? What did Soneji do? Why is Cross worried about him? Why does Soneji call Cross at the end of the book? What does this suggest to the reader?

Discuss greed. What is greed? Why is it a theme of this novel? How does greed become a motivator? How many characters in this novel are motivated by greed? Why are the characters motivated by greed?

Discuss family. Why is family important to this novel? Why is it a theme of the novel? Who is Nana Mama? How does she motivate Alex Cross? Who are Damon and Jannie? How do they motivate Cross? How would Cross be different without his family? How did family motivate Danny Boudreaux? How did it motivate him?