

Jerusalem Inn Study Guide

Jerusalem Inn by Martha Grimes

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Plot Summary

Disappointed that the pubs aren't open, Richard Jury walks into a church in the village of Washington and interrupts a christening. He leaves hurriedly and walks into a cemetery where he discovers a woman stooped over headstones. The woman, later identified as Helen Minton, seems dizzy and Jury walks her home where she invites him in for a drink. They share sandwiches and Jury invites her out to dinner later in the week. She accepts. When he returns for the date, he finds that she's dead in an historic home, her body discovered by tourists. While an initial look at the scene indicates that it could have been death by natural causes, Jury doesn't believe so, and the autopsy soon indicates that he was correct. Jury, as a superintendent of Scotland Yard, isn't officially assigned to the case but soon becomes involved.

His investigation takes him to a neighbor who says Helen had indicated that she sometimes went to a pub, Jerusalem Inn. There, Jury discovers a working class clientele and a young man who cleans up in return for a place to stay. The young man, Robbie Lyte, was raised at the Bonaventure School, which caters mostly to orphans and is run by a woman named Miss Hargreaves-Brown. It's later proved that the head mistress is really a woman named Annie Brown and that she was paid off for her role in helping to arrange the adoption of Helen Minton's illegitimate child. That child initially appears to be Robbie Lyte, but Jury's investigation takes him on to Spinney Abbey, home of Charles and Grace Seaingham.

There, Charles' mistress and a guest at their home, Beatrice Sleight, is murdered. Jury soon makes the connection that Beatrice had threatened to tell a secret - the same secret Helen Minton had been near to discovering, and that was shared by another woman, Grace Seaingham, who had recently shown all the signs of being poisoned as well. Jury learns that Robby Lyte had been raised by a woman named Danielle, a maid. Jury eventually uncovers more of the story until he concludes that the secret is that Robbie Lyte was not Helen's son, but that Helen's true son is a young man of the same age named Tommy Whittaker. Tommy's guardian, Elizabeth St. Leger, is the woman who had arranged the swap and who had committed the murders. With the story complete, Jury agrees that he won't arrest St. Leger until after the holidays though he seems to believe that St. Leger will never allow the case to come to trial and will die before the time for her arrest. Jury also decides that Tommy and Robbie need not be told of their true identities and the story ends with Jury watching Tommy play snooker - a game he loves.



Part I, Old Hall

Part I, Old Hall Summary

Disappointed that the pubs aren't open, Richard Jury walks into a church in the village of Washington and interrupts a christening as chapter one opens. He leaves hurriedly and walks into a cemetery where he discovers a woman, stooped over headstones. The woman, later identified as Helen Minton, seems dizzy and Jury walks her home where she invites him in for a drink. They also share sandwiches and Jury invites her out to dinner later in the week. She accepts. During this initial meeting, Jury admits to her that he's a police officer and adds that it's often a problem when he's attempting to date. He learns that she works at a historic home part time and asks why she's unhappy. She doesn't answer that question but comments on his astute observation. She mentions that the dizziness could be a product of some medication she's taking and indicates that it's for a heart condition.

Agreeing to meet soon, Jury goes on to Newcastle where he spends a day with his cousin and her out-of-work husband. He buys gifts for the children, including shoes, acknowledges that the job situation probably isn't the fault of the husband but notes that he doesn't like the man anyway. In chapter two, Jury is happy to leave and goes to meet Helen only to find police gathered at the historic home. He goes inside and finds that she's dead on the bed in the master bedroom. He learns that Helen's body was discovered by tourists, a couple from Texas who had come into the house expecting a tour and had wandered into the upstairs bedroom to find Helen dead there. She was laying across the bed and her heard medication was on the floor nearby. Helen had told Jury that her recent bout of dizziness was likely a by-product of the medication she was taking. He later learns that her heart condition was well-known and notes that her murder might have gone unsolved.

Jury, as a superintendent for Scotland Yard, asks to be allowed to work on the case and is granted permission by the officer in charge after explaining that Scotland Yard isn't interested in the case but that he personally knew Helen Minton and was interested. Detective Sergeant Roy Cullen is in charge and the two men generally get along, though Cullen is naturally defensive at having a Scotland Yard officer interfering. When Cullen asks how long Jury had known Helen Minton, Jury says "a long time" so that Cullen won't dismiss him outright. Jury notes that he doesn't feel as if he lied. Cullen says that nothing exciting happens here and cites the theft of a tree planted by Jimmy Carter as at the top of the list of exciting events. He does agree to alert Jury when there are results to Helen Minton's autopsy to report.

In chapter three, Jury goes to visit a priest, Father Rourke, who gives little information but who says that he didn't believe Helen was doing research on the ancestors of George Washington as she'd claimed. Jury returns to the stone where he'd first seen Helen and discovers that it's the stone for Robert Lyte. The priest does give Jury a diagram that he'll call on several times over the course of the investigation. The diagram



calls for a series of questions being answered, and Jury knows that he doesn't yet have all the information necessary to solve the murder of Helen. Jury goes to Helen's cottage and searches for information. He finds and takes a snapshot that he plans to use during his investigation and discovers that Helen was a very neat person with little out of place in the house. He finds a portrait that was obviously painted by her genius cousin, Parmenger, that had obviously once been hanging on a particular wall but had been stored away next to a trunk.

Jury next visits with Nellie Pond, a librarian who lived next door to Helen Minton. Nellie seems a bit backwards and naïve, says she's never been to London but that Helen owned a house there, and that Helen frequented a pub at Durham called Jerusalem Inn. It's also Nellie who tells Jury that Helen didn't have any regular male callers but that she had had a terrible "row" with a recent visitor - a man. Nellie says that she'd heard Helen took an overdose and Jury doesn't comment. Jury's interview with Nellie ends with her telling him that she was surprised that Helen visited Jerusalem Inn because the place is somewhat rough and caters to the working class.

In chapter four, Jury visits Bonaventure School which teaches and houses mostly orphans and where Helen Minton sometimes volunteered her time. The mistress, Miss Hargreaves-Brown, seems unconcerned about Helen's death, belittles the efforts Helen put into the school and extols her own virtuous work. Jury notes that her accent is somewhat out of place but doesn't comment on the fact. She is very prim and proper and seems the epitome of a school mistress in many ways. Miss Hargreaves-Brown insists that Jury use both her names and tells him that it takes a special kind of person to administer the duties of the school. She seems defensive and invites Jury on a tour, which he reluctantly accepts. Jury believes she is not sharing all the information she has about Helen Minton but doesn't manage to get anything more from her. Jury meets a young girl there named Addie who shows him that she can escape from the school's locked gate and tells him "good-bye and God bless" from high in a tree when he leaves. The child, Addie, shares a jelly bean with Jury and something about her seems to touch Jury because on a later visit he brings a small gift for her, tossing it up into the tree where she's hiding.

In chapter five, Jury drives toward Jerusalem Inn and picks up a man named Dickie who is walking and carrying a leek. The leek has won a prize and the man carries it around for some time. He gets several congratulations for his efforts and consolation for having not won the previous year. Jury learns that Helen had been at the pub and had talked to a young man named Robbie Lyte who had lived at the Bonaventure School until he was sixteen. Robbie is slow and can't really remember anything of which Helen talked to him. Jury is then called by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Newsom, asked why he is working a case when he's supposed to be on vacation, and orders him back to London. He plans to take the 8:30 train the following morning but spends a little more time playing Pac Man with Robbie.

It's during this visit that he meets the young daughter of the proprietor, Chrissy, and learns that the Baby Jesus is missing from the creche and that the girl's baby doll is being used to fill in that role this holiday season. Apparently, both the baby and a wise



man have been broken, and Jury will find replacements for both which he presents as a gift in the final chapter. Chrissy makes a point of the fact that the baby doll isn't the real thing at this point and it will be that honest comment later that prompts Jury's way of thinking to change so that he cracks the case.

Part I, Old Hall Analysis

There are several points of foreshadowing in the first chapter. One of those is that Jury sees a pair of sparrows fighting in a hedge and notes that one of them has bloodied the breast of the other. While Jury commonly sees carnage in his work as a police officer, he notes that the fighting seems out of place and rougher than normal. Those birds seem to signify Jury's life. When he begins feeling sorry for himself, it's that sparrow, perched on his shoulder, that chastises him for the weakness. While that sparrow is only symbolic, it's an important point of foreshadowing.

Another point of foreshadowing occurs when Jury visits Father Rourke. There's a mangy cat that is very timid of the priest who says the cat has been hanging around for months but has never lost its fear. He notes that the one exception was Helen, who the cat followed whenever she was around. As Jury leaves the churchyard, he notes that the cat is following him as well and says that he's glad Father Rourke didn't turn around to see the incident.

Robbie Lyte is not a bright young man; Jury learns from Mr. and Mrs. Hornsby that they allow Robbie to live with them at the Jerusalem Inn and provide him a small allowance in return for cleaning up the pub. Mrs. Hornsby says that Robbie is turned out of the Bonaventure School when he turned sixteen and that the attitude is that young men of that age can earn their own living. In fact, there are serious economic issues at work here and many are out of work and "on the dole," which means drawing some sort of welfare. It's pointed out that many of the youngest of the working age men have never known anything different while the older chaff at the situation.

There's an instant connection between Robbie Lyte and Richard Jury. Jury had noted upon his inspection of the Bonaventure School that he had memories of a similar institution. He tells Robbie that he'd lived in an orphanage for four years after the death of his mother. Robbie pulls out a photo of his own mother - also dead - and Jury says that the woman was very pretty, adding that his mother had also been pretty.



Part II, Pub Stop, and Part III, London Times

Part II, Pub Stop, and Part III, London Times Summary

In chapter six, Melrose Plant, Vivian, Ruthven and Lady Agatha Ardry are introduced. Melrose has a title but has given it up, though Lady Agatha is horrified at that action and continues to point out that he has the title to anyone who doesn't know or might have forgotten. Ruthven is Melrose's personal servant and he refers to Melrose as "my lord." Melrose notes that he had long ago given up trying to change the form of address. Vivian is a pretty woman and a writer who is engaged to an Italian. It's noted that she and her fiancé are not together, though it is the Christmas holiday season. Vivian excuses the separation by saying she doesn't get along with his family and also chooses not to travel.

It's Vivian who is invited to the home of Charles Seaingham for the holidays. He's a critic of the arts and has invited several writers and painters to his home. Lady Agatha says she can't believe Melrose would consider making the trip with Vivian because he "never" travels at Christmas and is an "unconfirmed bachelor." Melrose sarcastically responds that he's a bachelor but not confirmed, and says that Vivian isn't content to be bored to death alone which resulted in his own invitation to join her. There will be other literary and artistic types there, including Helen Minton's cousin, Fredrick Parmenger.

In chapter seven, Jury returns to the office of his superior, Chief Superintendent Racer, at Scotland Yard where he's asked why he's involved in the case at all. His chief yells at him for about fifteen minutes, yells at the secretary to remove the cat who has wandered in, and then tells Jury to go ahead and get the search warrant he wants for Helen Minton's home. There is an extensive description of his boss and the office secretary, Fiona Clingmore. There is also a cat named Cyril who Racer seems to hate but apparently likes because he doesn't order that the cat be taken from the office permanently. When Racer comes toward Cyril, Cyril ignores him but manages to move just before Racer would have kicked at the cat. At one point, Jury notes that he is living a lonely life and that he should perhaps take Cyril for his own, but doesn't do so.

The relationship between Racer and Jury is explained only somewhat, but the interaction between them offers information. Racer gives Jury an extended lecture on his role as a superintendent of Scotland Yard, and Jury merely sits and partially listens, noting that Racer then gripes because Jury has made him late for a lunch date.

In chapter eight, Jury goes to talk to Helen Minton's housekeeper, a woman named Maureen Littleton. Maureen tells of Helen's upbringing, including the fact that she was the ward of Fredrick Parmenger's father, Edward, and that she was sent away to school while Fredrick was educated in London. It takes some time for Maureen to begin to wonder why Jury would be asking questions about Helen until he asks if she knows



anyone who had a grudge against Helen. Only then does Maureen ask if Jury believes Helen was murdered. Over tea, Maureen fills in more details about Helen's life, including that Helen was at a very expensive school for only a year or two and that she doesn't know why Helen was taken out.

Maureen says that she has been told that Helen's father killed himself and that Helen's mother died later, "of a broken heart." Jury, realizing that Maureen hates talking about her beloved Helen, suggests that Edward was obligated to take her in though he didn't want to and that he feared something closer than a sibling relationship between Fredrick and Helen. Maureen doesn't disagree. She then reveals that Helen's father was Edward's younger brother and that he "cooked the books" for Edward's business dealings. Feeling that Maureen may know something more but realizing the strain on her, Jury and Wiggins leave.

In chapter nine, Jury visits with his neighbor, Mrs. Wasserman. She's eccentric and believes someone has been pursuing her for many years. Jury seems to be the only person who doesn't dismiss her claims of a pursuer, having realized that something that happened in World War II to be the source of her anxiety. She remains inside her house except for the necessary trips to the store, but now is less afraid though she continues to believe that someone is pursuing her. Later, Jury gets a phone call from his superior who explains that Sergeant Cullen has called and the autopsy report on Helen Minton has confirmed that she was poisoned.

Part II, Pub Stop, and Part III, London Times Analysis

The conversations between Melrose, Vivian and Agatha go a long way toward outlining their roles in the events to come. Melrose admits that Agatha has always feared that there might be something between him and Vivian and that Vivian's engagement hasn't eased her mind on that point. Melrose will later note the tension between Vivian and Jury as well as the fact that it seems likely they will never do anything about that attraction.

At one point, Vivian shudders and says that some minor statement reminded her of a murder. This is an indication of her involvement with another of Jury's cases. Though the relationships are explained in sufficient detail, the reader of a single episode of the Jury books will not understand the depth of the relationships among the various characters.

As Jury talks with Maureen about Helen and her relationship to the family, it may have begun to occur to him that the relationship between Helen and Fredrick was more than siblings, and that this budding romance would have been the reason Edward send Helen away to school. Jury will later be completely surprised to learn that Helen and Fredrick were not cousins, but half-siblings. Edward fathered both and that close familial tie may have been the reason he was so desperate to end the budding relationship between the two. Fredrick much later says that his father left instructions that Fredrick



was to be told that he and Helen were half-siblings, apparently to keep them from marrying after Edward's death.

There's a connection between Wiggins and Maureen and the two talk about Christmas dinner as Wiggins and Jury are leaving. The two are discussing the merits of various foods, which makes Jury somewhat angry that the everyday events go on while Helen Minton is dead. His reaction is a statement of the deep impact she had on him in the very short time they knew each other.



Part IV, Snowblind

Part IV, Snowblind Summary

In chapter ten, Melrose Plant, Vivian, Agatha and Melrose's butler, Ruthven, are driving toward Charles Seaingham's home when the blizzard gets so serious they can't see. They come to an inn and discover it's Jerusalem Inn. There, the typical evening's festivities are underway and the newcomers are barely given notice. Melrose asks the proprietor if he knows Charles Seaingham and is told they're on the right track. Melrose phones the Seaingham home and Charles promises to come get them in the Land Rover, saying that nothing less could make the trip under the current conditions. Melrose suggests that they might get a room at Jerusalem Inn for the night, a suggestion that upsets Agatha. Charles arrives after only a short wait, during which Melrose watches a game of snooker in the back room of the inn. As they leave, Charles predicts that they'll be snowed in for the next three days.

In chapter eleven, they arrive at Spinney Abbey, the name of the mansion where Charles and Grace Seaingham live and the guests are introduced. Grace Seaingham is, Melrose notes, every bit the lady and an excellent hostess. Another of the guests is Lady Elizabeth St. Leger. She is obviously well-bred and is decked out in an expensive outfit. Next is Susan Assington and her husband, some thirty years Susan's senior, and Grace Seaingham's personal physician, George. Susan Assington seems a flirty woman and also somewhat rough among the titled people with generations of wealth behind them.

The next guest described by Melrose is Beatrice Sleight. She's attractive and Melrose notes that her hair looks as if she's just preparing for bed, which she probably usually is. Sleight is a writer of fiction and it's soon apparent that some of those present don't approve of her trashy style of writing. Another writer in attendance is William McQuade who is admired greatly by both Vivian and Charles. There's music playing during this time. The musician, who has neither talent nor skill, is Tommy Whittaker, the charge of Lady St. Leger. She later explains that his parents died and she, as their closest friend, took him in. Another of the guests is Fredrick Parmenger. It's Fredrick's presence that will later prompt Jury's visit. At dinner, the assembled group turns the discussion to murder and mystery, and it's suggested that a murder within the group would be an exciting diversion.

Fredrick Parmenger is visiting on an invitation from Charles Seaingham to paint a portrait of Grace Seaingham. Fredrick will later admit that he didn't use all his time painting, but that he was also doing some searching of his own and that he knew Helen was in the area.

In chapter twelve, Jury learns the details included in Helen Minton's autopsy report. He then hears from Wiggins who went back to talk to Maureen and then went to do some additional research. Wiggins now reports that Helen was removed from the school as a



young woman because she was pregnant. Wiggins also reports that Parmenger is visiting at the home of Charles Seaingham. Jury notes that it is nearby and tells Wiggins he is to come by train the following day to Newcastle.

In chapter thirteen, Jury travels to the Margate Hotel on a tip and finds Isobel Dunsany staying there. The hotel is a run-down resort with no customers except a few old people who are allowed to "stay on the cheap," apparently meaning they pay little. Jury finds Miss Dunsany in the parlor though the fire there seems to have not been lit in ages. He talks to her for a few minutes and, seeing that she is chilled, lights the fire. This brings the manageress, Mrs. Krimp, running, ready to gripe out the person who had dared light the fire. Jury notes that he never does anything for effect, but that he's come to have a way of standing up that makes it look as if he's unfolding more than the six-foot-two he has. Jury tells her that hotels have minimum standards that must be maintained. He says he isn't a hotel inspector, but that he'll see that one comes to visit her soon. She leaves in a huff, granting Miss Dunsany's request for a glass of port with reluctance. In fact, she brings a bottle back and it's shared among the guests who are all elderly.

Jury tells Miss Dunsany that Helen has died and Miss Dunsany says that it obviously wasn't Helen's heart condition or Scotland Yard wouldn't be interested. Jury gives little in the way of details of Helen's death. Miss Dunsany says Helen had visited her and they had talked at length. At first, she says she doesn't believe Helen was looking for information. After Jury questions her some, she admits that Helen may have been looking for information, though at the time it seemed as if Miss Dunsany was merely taking the opportunity to ramble on about her own life. Now, Miss Dunsany recalls that Helen was very interested in a former maid employed in the Dunsany household, a woman named Danielle Lyte. Miss Dunsany says that she only met the child once and that he seemed "backwards." She also says that Danielle came to her with excellent references and that she'd had some money saved that her husband had taken off with, forcing Danielle back into service as a maid. Jury quickly discerns that this is the mother of Robin Lyte, the young man he met earlier at Jerusalem Inn and will much later learn that the money was to quiet Danielle for her role in the cover-up of the switching of Robbie Lyte and Tommy Whittaker.

In chapter fourteen, Tommy Whittaker tells Melrose Plant of his boredom and of his plans to go to Jerusalem Inn that night. He says he plans to ski there and asks Plant to go with him so he'll have an excuse if he is caught. Tommy explains that his guardian is very strict. Melrose is also sick of being cooped up and hopes the snow would dissipate so he could leave. Tommy tells him they'll reach the Jerusalem Inn by ski or snowshoe and Melrose agrees with the plan.

In chapter 15, Jury arrives at Jerusalem Inn and asks for directions to Charles Seaingham's mansion which prompts the proprietress to laugh and say there were others recently asking directions to the same location. Jury asks some questions and realizes it's Melrose and Vivian who had been there asking for directions ahead of him. Jury has no idea why Melrose is there, but admits that he's glad to learn of Melrose's presence because the two have worked on cases together. Jury goes into the back room and watches a game of snooker in progress. Tommy and Melrose reach



Jerusalem Inn to find Jury already there. Jury, who knows Melrose is in the area is only slightly surprised, but Melrose, having no idea that Jury is in the area, is very surprised.

When Melrose asks Jury what he's doing in Spinneyton, Jury counters by asking if Melrose hasn't read the story in the papers about the death of Helen Minton. Melrose responds that they've been snowed in and have had no contact with the outside world. Melrose questions Jury about his involvement, expresses sympathy that Jury had known Helen, and then offers his first impression of Parmenger, saying that he doesn't seem the type to "put himself out" for anyone, and that he's surprised Parmenger would travel to this remote area to paint a portrait. Jury quickly realizes the advantage of having Melrose in the home to observe the people and their actions, and they make plans for Melrose to continue in that role. Melrose now tells Jury some of his impressions and explains how he came to be at the inn with Tommy. He tells Jury that Tommy's guardian is Elizabeth St. Leger who is there but offers little information about the woman other than to say that she's determined that Tommy "uphold the family honor."

It's during the conversation between Melrose and Jury that the instant and important connection between Jury and Helen is again mentioned. Jury tells Melrose that he hardly knew Helen Minton and immediately feels a pang of remorse, almost as if he is belittling their connection by saying that it was unimportant.

Part IV, Snowblind Analysis

While the assembled group is having their first dinner together at the Seaingham's, talk turns to murder - a foreshadowing of what's to come. While the murder itself is not particularly surprising, there is another note of foreshadowing at this point that will be overlooked by most readers. As someone is telling the story of a local landowner who poaches his own game, Beatrice Sleight says that the entire landed gentry are mad and blames it on inbreeding. Melrose says that the only thing inbreeding accomplishes is "look-alike noses and protruding teeth." The concept of the inbreeding will come up again when it's revealed that the child born to Helen Minton was fathered by her half-brother. This is also the first sign that Beatrice Sleight is aware of a cover-up by Lady St. Leger regarding her nephew.

There's also a minor occurrence at this point in which Grace points out that Susan Assington brought the flowers that are displayed in the hall. Because the poison being used comes from a plant, Susan's knowledge of flowers will become an interesting fact and will seem to indicate that she's involved. William McQuade is the writer of a book called "Skier," which will later become an important fact. When Beatrice Sleight is found murdered, McQuade's knowledge will be cited as making him a viable suspect in the killing.

Isobel Dunsany tells Jury that she's not destitute as is the case with most of the residents and he initially dismisses her claim as being the statement of a formerly wealthy woman who's fallen on difficult times. In fact, she's telling the truth and is better



off than most. Miss Dunsany tells Jury that she brought a case of expensive liquor with her but that the manageress, Mrs. Krimp, is now refusing to provide it when asked. Miss Dunsany tells Jury that she only returns to the resort because of her memories. She recalls her life as a child visiting the hotel with her parents. She says there were dances and excitement. Jury notes that the hotel almost comes alive with her memories.

The exact relationship between Melrose and Jury is not developed at this point though there are some clues. The two men have apparently worked on cases together before this case and have some common information. When Melrose gives only a few brief pieces of information about Tom, Jury is able to figure out much more, and it seems to be based on common knowledge the two share. It's also noteworthy that Jury seems to have some sort of unrequited crush on Vivian and has compared her to the movie star, Vanessa Redgrave.



Part V, Safety Play

Part V, Safety Play Summary

In chapter sixteen, Tom wins the snooker tournament easily and Tom and Melrose ski back to the mansion with Jury coming in his car. Just inside the gate, Tom trips and Melrose discovers he fell over a body. He initially finds the ermine cape belonging to Grace Seaingham, but Grace quickly arrives on the scene in her nightclothes. As everyone begins to gather, Melrose marks off the guests until he deduces that the body belongs to Beatrice Sleight. Melrose says that no one is to disturb the body, and it's pointed out that the police will take hours to arrive. Melrose says he doesn't believe it will take that long at all.

In chapter seventeen, Jury arrives, notes that Sleight was shot with a shotgun and alerts local police investigators to the murder. Jury then asks Fredrick Parmenger to go with him to the study. There he tells Fredrick about Helen and Parmenger says that Helen had no enemies. On the subject of the murder of Beatrice Sleight, Parmenger says that she was a bitch and that no one liked her. He says he didn't hear a shot. He is still dressed and sarcastically tells Jury that he had to be dressed in order to go outside and kill Beatrice Sleight.

In chapter eighteen, Cullen arrives with Trimm, learns the identity of each person and hears from Charles Seaingham that he was having an affair with Beatrice Sleight. Jury notes that Seaingham's hands are shaking when asked whether Parmenger's cousin, Helen Minton, was found murdered nearby. As they question Sir George Assington, Grace's physician, Cullen reveals he believes Grace to have been the true target, and that the person who shot Beatrice Sleight did so thinking it was Grace. Next, Jury questions Sir George about a case of murder a century earlier in which a physician poisoned his patient. Sir George immediately reveals his knowledge of poisons but says no one is poisoning Grace.

In chapter nineteen, Jury begins questioning Grace who seems more upset at the news that Parminger has a cousin who was murdered than in the news that Grace may have been the target when Beatrice was murdered. She also says that she knew of her husband's affair.

Jury next questions Elizabeth St. Leger, Tom's guardian, who seems relieved to know Tom isn't a suspect though she is concerned over his being out on skis so late at night. Next is Vivian and the sparks fly as Jury asks who she believes might be guilty of the crime. Vivian asks as she's leaving if Jury isn't going to ask why she isn't yet married, and he responds that it has nothing to do with the murder investigation.

The questioning takes most of the night with the last of the group allowed to return to bed around five in the morning. Shortly after seven, Jury wakes Melrose and tells him that they're going to Jerusalem Inn. He doesn't explain why except to say that he's



going to talk to Robbie having come to the conclusion that Robbie is Helen Minton's son.

In chapter twenty, Jury, Melrose and Tom arrive at Jerusalem Inn where Tom plays Snooker with Robbie and attempts to get information from him. He's unsuccessful but Jury has come to the conclusion that Beatrice Sleight was the intended victim and that it was made to look as if she was mistaken for Grace. Melrose voices the theory before Jury.

In chapter twenty-one, Jury reveals to Grace that he doesn't believe she was the target and that he knows she's ill. She asserts that she's dying but doesn't know of what, and Jury responds that she also needn't worry that her husband is poisoning her. They share lunch and Jury faces the problem of who is trying to poison Grace.

In chapter twenty-two, Melrose's butler, Ruthven, says that he's heard from the other servants that Charles requested a divorce and Grace declined. Melrose talks briefly with Susan Assington, the physician's wife, and seems to believe she's not very bright. He then talks to several others before agreeing to take Tom out for awhile.

In chapter twenty-three, Wiggins arrives at the train station in Newcastle with information about Miss Hargreaves-Brown. Her name is Annie Brown, who had barely been an adequate teacher though it was she Helen Minton confided in with news of her pregnancy. Brown was then granted the title "headmistress" and set up in the Bonaventure School with an annual stipend to help the school operate. Brown says her role was simply to keep Helen until the child was born, then send Helen back home and find the child a home. The adoptive parents were Danielle and Robin Lyte; Robbie Lyte was returned to the Bonaventure School upon the death of his mother. Brown admits all this information, filling in some blanks herself and adding that Helen Minton and Fredrick Parmenger were not cousins but half-siblings.

In chapter twenty-four, Jury goes to visit Fredrick Parmenger at Helen's home and reveals that he's come to the conclusion that the attack on Beatrice Sleight wasn't a mistake, and that Grace Seaingham would be the next victim. In chapter twenty-five, Jury goes to Jerusalem Inn where he talks briefly with Chrissy, the daughter of the owners, who is playing with the doll that is supposed to be in the nativity scene. Chrissy tells Jury that it seems ridiculous to her that Mary and Joseph wouldn't know it was the doll named Alice instead of their son, Jesus. That comment sets Jury thinking and he announces to Melrose, currently watching Tom play snooker, that he's figured out the missing piece of the puzzle and that he'll be dining that evening with Grace Seaingham.

Part V, Safety Play Analysis

The segment of the story in which Melrose and Tom find the body is a classic detective story scene. The body is discovered by the two men which would typically eliminate Tom from suspicion. Melrose, his own instinct kicking in, refuses to allow anyone to disturb the scene any more than it already has been. Next, Melrose believes the victim to be



Grace Seaingham until she arrives on the scene, apparently having just gotten out of bed herself. Her appearance surprises the two men and Melrose tries to figure out the identity of the corpse. In typical detective-novel fashion, it's assumed that the dead person is a guest and not a servant though there are certainly bound to be a large number of servants present at the estate. When Melrose, having accounted for all but one, says the victim is Beatrice Sleight, he notes the reactions of each of the others, which is also a typical part of a detective novel. There follows the dry humor as someone says it will take hours for the police to arrive and Melrose replies, "I don't think so."

Melrose notes that the exchange between Vivian and Jury is stilted and supposes it always will be, though there's an obvious attraction there. Neither uses first names and Melrose wonders if there are any additional clichés he can think of to describe their interaction.

The relationship between Charles and Grace Seaingham comes to the forefront immediately after the body of Beatrice Sleight is discovered. The fact that Charles is having an affair with Beatrice puts both Charles and Grace in a position of having motive. Jury quickly comes to believe that neither are guilty of the murder but then he becomes positive that Grace is being poisoned, though not with the same poison used on Helen Minton. Grace has apparently also come to that conclusion but fears that Charles is behind the poisoning. Jury assures her this is not true and stakes that information on his observation of Charles. He says that Charles loves Grace, prompting Grace to wonder if Jury is a hopeless romantic.

Tom Whittaker wants to play billiards - usually in the form of the game snooker - more than anything. He notes that his father was apparently obsessed with the game and that Tom's few precious memories of his father are centered around the snooker table. Tom's aunt and guardian fears that he'll become a gambler and so keeps him from playing. Tom's dedication to the game is such that he practices piano so that his fingers will stay strong, practices shooting so that his aim will remain steady, and plays oboe so that he can carry his pool stick in the oboe case. Tom's playing of oboe and piano are horrible and when he begins playing in chapter 22, Melrose is asked to take Tom out somewhere to get him away from the piano. Melrose claims to want to see a cathedral in a nearby town and asks Tom to go along but then reveals that they'll be going to Jerusalem Inn so Tom can play snooker.



Part VI, End Game, and Part VII, Jerusalem Inn

Part VI, End Game, and Part VII, Jerusalem Inn Summary

In chapter twenty-six, Grace Seaingham announces to everyone that Jury is coming to dinner and several, including Charles, object, saying that they've had enough of the police presence. Jury arrives and he and Grace talk at length over dinner about food, wines and places of interest. As the meal ends, several guests depart momentarily, including Fredrick Parmenger, Charles Seaingham and Lady St. Leger. As they all have their after-dinner drinks, Grace offers Tom some of her liquor and Lady St. Leger immediately interrupts, spilling Grace's drink. Jury mops it up with his handkerchief and Lady St. Leger asks to see him alone. In another room with Melrose present, she admits that she killed Beatrice Sleight and that she poisoned both Helen Minton and Grace. She says that she arranged a meeting with Helen staged to look like chance and befriended her, then poisoned her so she couldn't continue the search for her son. Lady St. Leger, having admitted to the crimes, agrees that she won't leave the area, and Jury agrees that she won't be arrested until after the holidays. She then leaves and Jury and Melrose proceed to drink and to talk about the outcome of the case, including that Tommy and Robbie had been switched as babies and that St. Leger feared that truth would come out.

Jury and Melrose talk for a while longer and Melrose asks why Tommy's parents hadn't simply adopted an heir rather than "stealing one." Jury points out that those with titles are expected to produce an heir and that adoption would not be accepted. He goes on to say that even a case of doubtful parentage would not be accepted and cites an example. Jury and Melrose then prepare to go to Jerusalem Inn, and Melrose says he doesn't suppose Lady St. Leger will object in this case.

In chapter twenty-seven, Tommy goes to Jerusalem Inn with Melrose and Jury and is challenged to a game of snooker by a professional player, hired to be there by Melrose. Though Tommy loses, he has a great time and the professional compliments him on his playing.

Part VI, End Game, and Part VII, Jerusalem Inn Analysis

Some of the details of the case are left to the reader to figure out while other points are spelled out clearly. As it is revealed from Lady St. Leger's confession and the conversation between Jury and Melrose, Lady St. Leger says the couple who raised Tommy, Irene and Richard, were in Kenya when their expected child was born. Irene



phoned Lady St. Leger with the news that there was something wrong with the child. Lady St. Leger gives Danielle money and has her offer to adopt Helen's child from the Bonaventure School. Danielle does so and the two boys - Robbie and Tommy - are switched. Danielle eventually takes Robbie to raise as her own son and Tommy is raised as a marquess. When Danielle dies, Bonaventure School takes Robbie in where he remains until he's sixteen.

When Helen Minton comes to town searching for her son, Lady St. Leger fears the deception will be discovered and kills her with the poison. Beatrice's exact role in the situation is not detailed. St. Leger notes that Beatrice "put it to me," and seems to indicate that Beatrice knew of the situation and had threatened to tell.

Melrose expects Jury to have Lady St. Leger arrested but Jury says he doesn't expect it will happen. He seems to believe that she'll commit suicide and save the family the scandal, and says that means Tommy can go on living as heir to the title marquess. Melrose asks if Jury's allowing that to happen isn't unethical and Jury says that it is, but doesn't change his plan of action. As Jury watches Tommy and Robbie while Tommy plays snooker and Robbie serves as referee, he notes that Tommy is well suited to the life he'll live as marquess.



Characters

Richard Jury

Referred to simply as "Jury" throughout the story, he is a superintendent with Scotland Yard. He is single, handsome, six-foot-two, and serious. He lives alone and seems to be reaching a point of dissatisfaction on this point. His caring nature is obvious in his attention to a female neighbor who fears an imaginary pursuer and to an elderly lady, Miss Dunsany, who he meets at Margate Hotel. Jury also has a soft spot for children. He notes that he goes to visit family and that the children know he has a soft spot and that they tap him for gifts. He also brings candy to a child at the Bonaventure School and spends some time with Robbie Lyte.

Jury is a clever detective and there's little doubt from the beginning of the story that he'll be the one to solve the murder of Helen Minton. Though he doesn't technically have jurisdiction in Helen's murder, he asks if he can participate and is told he can. He takes some abuse from his boss on the action, though his boss obviously has complete confidence in Jury's ability and does tell him to go ahead and get a search warrant for Helen Minton's home. Jury's ability to connect pieces of information is uncanny and he is willing to track down any lead he comes across, which puts him in contact with people who have the information he needs to take the next step in the case. Jury's caring attitude seems to prompt his decision to allow the murderess, Lady St. Leger, to remain free until after the holiday, and he seems to expect that she will commit suicide before her arrest. Asked if it's ethical, he agrees that it probably isn't but doesn't change his mind.

Melrose Plant

The former Earl of Caverness who has given up his title, he's an acquaintance of Jury and the two sometimes work cases together. It's Melrose who knows Jury is headed to the estate before he arrives, having met him at Jerusalem Inn earlier that evening. It's also Melrose who discovers the body of Beatrice Sleight. Melrose seems to be a bit of a snob. He is not at all reluctant to say that he needs to bring his butler along on the trip to the Seaingham's home over the Christmas holiday. He seems to barely tolerate his aunt's presence though he doesn't go so far as to be openly rude to her. When she tells him that she's embroidering a coat of arms for him, he thinks back on the fact that she's never given him a gift but doesn't say so aloud.

Melrose, like Jury, seems to have a soft spot for children. When Tommy Whittaker is playing the piano, Jury notes that he plays very badly. Later, he befriends Tommy and learns that he plays piano in order to keep his fingers limbered up so that he can play snooker better. Melrose slips out with Tommy so Tommy can participate in a pool tournament, though it means the pair travels by skis across country some distance. As the story draws to a close, Melrose arranges for a professional snooker player to meet



them at Jerusalem Inn to play against Tommy, knowing that it will mean a great deal to him. When Jury asks Melrose how much it cost to make that arrangement, he simply dismisses the cost as being worth it so that Tommy finally has a worthy opponent.

Robbie Lyte

The young man who is slow and who beats Jury at Pac Man at the Jerusalem Inn. It soon seems that Robbie is the son Helen Minton gave birth to, but it is later revealed that he was actually born to a landed and titled couple who, realizing he was not completely normal, allowed that he be exchanged for a normal boy. Robbie was then taken in by a young woman named Danielle Lyte who was paid for her silence on the matter. When her husband runs off with the money and Danielle dies, Robbie is taken in at the Bonaventure School until he is sixteen. After that, he's taken in by the owners of Jerusalem Inn who give him a place to live, food and a small allowance in return for cleaning up the place.

Helen Minton

Helen is the half sister to Fredrick Parmenger, though she believes them to be cousins. She is also the mother of the young man named Tommy Whittaker, though the initial investigation seems to indicate that Robbie Lyte is her son. Minton suffers from heart disease and her death could have been ruled a result of natural causes, but an autopsy reveals that she was poisoned.

Nellie Pond

The librarian who lives next door to Helen Minton. It's Nellie who gives Jury the information that Helen spent time at Jerusalem Inn.

Miss Hargreaves-Brown

The mistress of Bonaventure School who reveals to Jury that Helen and Fredrick Parmenger were actually half-siblings rather than cousins. Wiggins later proves that her real name is Annie Brown and that she had been a teacher at an expensive school where Helen attended as a teenager. When Helen became pregnant, it was Annie Brown Helen first told. Brown was given an annual stipend and the title "headmistress" of Bonaventure School in return for attending Helen through her pregnancy and arranging for the adoption of the child.



Isobel Dunsany

The elderly lady who is staying at Margate Hotel and who tells about both the hotel's past and about visits with Helen Minton. Dunsany tells Jury that Robbie was the son of Danielle Lyte and that Helen had been very curious about them.

Tommy Whittaker

The young man who is raised as a marquess and who sneaks out to play snooker at Jerusalem Inn. Tommy is actually the son of Helen Minton and her half-brother, Fredrick Parmenger. When the real heir to the title marquess is born with an obvious defect, the two boys are switched and Tommy is raised as the heir. He loves snooker and goes to great lengths to hone his skills, even when he can't practice the game. For example, he plays piano - very badly - to keep his fingers in shape.

Fredrick Parmenger

Helen Minton's half-brother, he is an artist of some renown. He and Helen are raised as cousins rather than siblings and Fredrick says he learned of the true relationship after his father's death.

Beatrice Sleight

The woman who is murdered at the Seaingham's estate. She is having an affair with Charles Seaingham and Melrose Plant notes that her hair looks as if she's just preparing to go to bed, and that she probably is always just preparing to go to bed. She makes a comment at the dinner table, referring to the inbreeding of the titled gentry. It's later revealed that she knew about the switch of the two babies and that knowledge apparently gets her killed.

Elizabeth St. Leger

Known as "Aunt Betsy," Lady St. Leger has raised Tommy since the death of his parents. She has all the appearances of a true lady though it's later revealed that she will go to any lengths to maintain appearances. When Tom's mother gives birth to a defective child, it's Lady St. Leger who arranges that the defective baby be switched for a healthy baby. When Helen Minton begins searching for her son, Lady St. Leger befriends her and poisons her. When Beatrice Sleight threatens to tell the secret, Lady St. Leger shoots her. She is also poisoning Grace Seaingham, another who apparently knows the secret. She gives up the information when it's obvious Jury knows she is guilty. When she's told she won't be arrested until after the holidays, she seems relieved and Jury seems to expect that she'll commit suicide rather than allowing her family name to be dragged through the mud with a trial.



Objects/Places

Scotland Yard

Where Jury works as a "superintendent."

Newcastle

Where Richard Jury's cousin lives and where he spends Christmas.

Washington

The village where Jury stops to look around and where he meets Helen Minton in a graveyard.

St. Timothy's Graveyard

Where Richard Jury meets Helen Minton.

Northumbria

The location for the headquarters of the police who are first on hand to investigate Helen Minton's death.

Bonaventure School

A school which is really nothing more than an orphanage and where Helen Minton sometimes visited with small things for the children.

The Joke-Shop

What the people call the unemployment office.

Margate Hotel

The resort where Miss Dunsany is staying that has now become nothing more than a place for a few elderly people to stay "on the cheap."



Jerusalem Inn

The pub where Robbie Lyte works and where Tom Whittaker plays snooker.

Spinney Abbey

The name of the home of Charles and Greace Seaingham.



Themes

The Image of a Hero

Richard Jury is, in all ways that count, a hero. He is not only one of Scotland Yard's finest detectives, he also exhibits all the traits of a true hero. His kindness to others is chief among those and there are many instances of this trait. For example, there is an older woman who lives in his building who reports she is being pursued. Jury knows this is an imaginary pursuer, conjured up from the woman's fear and memories of the horrors of World War II, but he doesn't dismiss her claims. He patiently takes down descriptions and his caring attitude makes it possible for her to begin living a more normal life with something less than total terror.

Jury's attitude toward children is another exemplary trait. He visits relatives just before Christmas and admits that the children of the family recognize him as a "soft touch," and that he buys them some necessities such as shoes and then several toys. When he visits Bonaventure School and encounters a young girl named Addie, he brings her candy on a return trip.

Possibly the most definitive point of Jury's good traits is the cat he encounters at the church near where he'd first met Helen Minton. Father Rourke points out that the cat is afraid of everybody but that it loved Helen. As Jury walks away, the cat follows him, apparently recognizing the inherent goodness in Jury just as it had in Helen.

The Importance of Appearances

It's actually the importance of appearances that begin the entire saga of Tommy Whittaker and Robbie Lyte and which prompted the murders of Helen Minton and Beatrice Sleight as well as the attempted murder of Grace Seingham. As Elizabeth St. Leger put it, the family simply could not stand the disgrace of having as heir to the title a child who was slow as Robbie Lyte obviously was at birth. Lady St. Leger arranged to swap the defective child for a healthy baby, the illegitimate child of Helen Minton and Fredrick Parmenger. She then went to whatever lengths were necessary - including murder - to keep the switch a secret. Her desire for that ultimate appearance of respectability has prompted the order to keep the billiard room off limits, so Tommy has to sneak away to play. An interesting point is that he will also maintain that air of respectability by practicing the piano so that he can keep his fingers in shape for snooker. He won't give up the game, but does what he can to soothe his guardian's concerns.

Jury seems to understand the concept and tells Melrose Plant that families with incidents of adultery often cover it up rather than face the scandal. When Jury agrees to allow Lady St. Leger to remain free until after the holidays, he seems to expect that she



will commit suicide rather than face the humiliation of a trial. He admits to Melrose Plant that the action probably isn't ethical but doesn't change his decision.

Good Police Work

Good police work is at the heart of the story as Jury happens upon a case of murder. He begins, as all good detectives do, by asking questions of those who knew the victim. In the method of good police work, Jury follows the leads, always seeking out the next piece of information. While he's seldom surprised at what he learns, he does always keep an open mind for clues that will take him in some new direction.

And, like all good police work, there is the element of chance. It's by chance that Jury happens to follow Fredrick Parmenger to the home of Grace and Charles Seaingham where Grace is being systematically poisoned and Charles is having an affair with the next victim, Beatrice Sleight. Given the new situation, Jury quickly comes to the conclusion that Charles is not the murderer but admits to himself that he doesn't yet know who it is. It's with this information and a hunch about the true identity of Tommy Whittaker that Jury arranges a sting to flush out the true murderer and discovers it to be Lady St. Leger.

Through it all, Jury remains professional and is helped along by a cantankerous but trusting boss and a loyal if slightly backward sidekick named Wiggins.



Style

Point of View

The story is written in third person from an omniscient point of view. This is the only real option open to the author because the action takes place in various scenes with various characters playing the most important role of the moment. For example, the story focuses on Richard Jury and his chance meeting with Helen Minton as the story opens and remains focused on Jury for some time as the investigation in Helen's murder is initiated. Then the focus switches to Melrose Plant, where Vivian and Agatha make plans to go to the home of Charles Seaingham for the holiday. With this change of focus, it becomes obvious that limiting the point of view to only that of Jury would have been impossible.

The point of view is limited in what the author offers up as information. There are clues along the way - such as the chance remark by Beatrice Sleight about the effects of inbreeding, which later is revealed to have been directly related to her murder. However, other pieces of information are doled out at the author's discretion. For example, it's not until Lady St. Leger is actually telling the reason for the murders that the reader learns that she knew Helen Minton. Until that point, the reader is left completely in the dark on that point and therefore has no reason to believe that Lady St. Leger is a viable suspect.

Setting

The story is set in England and the time period appears to have been in the recent past. There seems to be no cell phones in use and some other modern conveniences seem missing, but there are telephones, modern vehicles and trains, indicating a fairly recent setting. There is also a reference to World War II having already occurred and the Vietnam conflict, which seems to be either underway at the time of the story or an event of the very recent past. The setting is believable, including the fact that George Washington's home place is included as a historical setting. The people are at least marginally believable though most are overly predictable. The majority of the people and scenes are engineered for furthering the plot of the story. For example, there are sufficient guests at the Seaingham household to leave the reader guessing as to the identity of the murderer.

One point about the setting is that readers who aren't familiar with England will likely be left in the dark about some specific events, statements and foods. For example, Wiggins talks about the foods he enjoys, including "plaice and chips." In another scene, a man lights a cigarette and waves his match out as elaborately as a "catherine's wheel." There is no definition given for the "catherine's wheel," which can be either an elaborate form of torture or a particular firework. It seems likely in this case that the reference is to the fireworks. While there are several terms such as these that are specific to the region, full understanding of them is not necessary to understanding the story.



Language and Meaning

The book is generally written in a straight-forward style, though there are many pieces of information handed out that seem completely irrelevant to the case at hand. For example, Jury has a neighbor who has the idea that she is being pursued by an unnamed stalker and Jury, the only person who hasn't dismissed her concerns, has helped her overcome some of her fears. It's while he's visiting with her that he admits he doesn't really want to go back upstairs to his empty apartment, indicating that he doesn't like being alone. This really has nothing to do with the case at hand though the reader may be misled to believe that it does. It seems that the purpose of this is merely to offer more information about Jury as a person.

Structure

The book is divided into seven parts. Each is titled to give the reader a clue as to the contents of that section. The titles are, "Old Hall," "Pub Stop," "London Times," "Snowblind," "Safety Play" and "Endgame." The title of the book, Jerusalem Inn, is the title of the final part and is the name of a pub. This is where several scenes in the story occur, though it does not have the importance some reader may be expecting. Each of these parts is also divided into chapters. The number of chapters varies greatly. "Endgame," "Pub Stop" and "Jerusalem Inn" each have one chapter; whereas, "Safety Play" has nine.

Chapters are further divided into segments. These segments are also numbered and the number of segments varies greatly. Chapter nineteen has six, but chapter twenty has only two with the second being only two and a half pages in length. In chapter fourteen, the second segment is less than a full page in length. This variation is typical of the entire book with no real "typical" length for either chapters or segments.

The chapters generally cover one event. For example, chapter thirteen covers Jury's visit to Isobel Dunsany. The entire chapter is about that visit, including his arrival and first impression of the hotel and then his conversation with Miss Dunsany. That chapter is not subdivided. Chapter twenty-three covers Wiggins' arrival at Newcastle and the visit to Bonaventure School. Wiggins' arrival is one section. Section two of that chapter covers their visit to the school and a brief description of their dinner afterward. These are examples of the apparently erratic way chapters are divided and subdivided by the author.



Quotes

"That was when he first thought it: that a meeting in a graveyard was not the best way to begin an attachment. The sparrow fluttered near him but he shook it off. The next time he saw her, he would certainly find out why she was unhappy. The next time he saw her she was dead." Chapter 1, Page 13

"It's records, you see, those headstones. And she asked to see the parish register. She was looking for someone but probably it hadn't anything to do with the antecedents of George Washington." Chapter 3, Page 28

"The Jerusalem Inn was a square, stucco building with a sign as plain as the rest of it, a board with the name in wide black letters stuck on the side like an afterthought and lit by a weak overhanging lamp." Chapter 5, Page 46

"He felt the loss of something irreplaceable, as if a their had come out of the night, velvet-gloved and softly shod, and taken whatever it was away without Jury's ever having know, and slipped through the square, with its crisscrossed strings of tiny lights." Chapter 7, Page 79

"Melrose waited for Vivian and looked around the Jerusalem Inn. Despite the fight, the Spartan fixtures, the plain deal furniture, in its Christmasy décor, the pub was trying to live up to its name." Chapter 10, Page 103

"But I am inclined to feel one should live his life as he likes. As it's the only one he has."
- Melrose Plant, Chapter 11, Page 125

"The boardwalk (long since gone), the bathing machines, the ladies with parasols and gentlemen in white trousers and striped coats. As she talked, Jury could hear the wind roaming about the little building, slamming a distant shutter, creaking an unlatched screen door, seeking a way in. As she spun out her past, the room rattled with memories." Chapter 13, Page 144

"Jury got up from where he'd been kneeling beside the body and knocked the snow from his trousers.

'Shotgun.' He beamed the torch Marchbanks had found for him around the area where the body lay. 'Bloody mess.'" Chapter 17, Page 174

"It was Cullen's opinion that most of the people collected here in Spinney Abbey might be considered as unemployed (or unemployable, according to the South of England) as the rest of the Newcastle-Sunderland area, and had got their money (and plenty of it) in ways that Cullen likened to finding stuff that dropped off the back of vans. Making money by writing books was something Cullen couldn't quite square with his own thankless job and the salary it brought him." Chapter 18, Page 182



"Do you know Aunt Betsy's told the butler to keep the billiard room stuff locked up? The way some people would lock up the liquor if they had a flaming drunk in the family."
Chapter 20, Page 219

"He then went off to the music room to tell Tommy Whittaker that he could stop playing the Whittaker rendition of what used to be Chopin, get his togs on, and start playing the real thing." -Melrose preparing to take Tommy to Jerusalem Inn, Chapter 22, Page 241

"She cocked her head. 'Are they so dumb they don't know it's Alice?' And with that sacrilege, she slipped off the chair and hunkered under the rope to stuff the doll in the crib." Chapter 25, Page 260

"Because nobiliary entitlement does not work that way. No adoptions, no suspect parentage." Chapter 26, Page 281



Topics for Discussion

How does Jury meet Helen Minton? What does he say is the significance of the location of their meeting? What does he learn about her in the short time they are together that day? What is the significance of the sparrows?

What is the purpose of Jury's visit to the Newcastle area? Does he achieve that purpose? What is his job?

How does Jury become involved in the investigation into Helen Minton's murder? In what way does he mislead the officer in charge of the investigation? Describe the depth of Jury's feelings for Helen Minton during their one and only meeting?

What is Bonaventure School? What is the Margate Hotel? What is Jerusalem Inn? Describe, in detail, one event that happens at each of these locations.

Who is Helen Minton? Isobel Dunsany? Danielle Lyte? Annie Brown? Miss Hargreaves-Brown? Fredrick Parmenger? Edward Parmenger? Tommy Whittaker? Robbie Lyte? Elizabeth St. Leger? Beatrice Sleight?

What is the true relationship between Helen Minton and Fredrick Parmenger? How does Jury come to learn that relationship? What is the relationship between Robbie Lyte and Tommy Whittaker? How does Jury come to realize that relationship?

Who is found to be guilty of the murder of Helen Minton and Beatrice Sleight? Why were each of the women killed? What is Jury's decision on a course of action against the killer? Why?

Who is Melrose Plant? Vivian? Agatha? When Jury learns that Melrose is at the Seaingham home, he is glad. Why? What is Melrose's intended role in solving the murder?