

Lucky You: A Novel Study Guide

Lucky You: A Novel by Carl Hiaasen

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Plot Summary

Lucky You is a novel by bestselling writer Carl Hiassen. In this novel, JoLayne Lucks wins the lottery, only to have the ticket stolen by a couple of bumbling racists who cannot live with the idea of having to split the jackpot. JoLayne chases after the thieves, taking along her reporter Tom Krome who has his own list of personal problems following him around Florida. Lucky You is a comic novel filled with suspense and colorful characters that will charm and entertain both Hiassen fans and readers new to Hiassen's work.

JoLayne Lucks learns that she has won the lottery and is happy that she can now afford to buy Simmons Wood, a small parcel of land not far from her home where she likes to wander among the wild animals. However, JoLayne's ticket is stolen by a couple of bumbling racists who decided that winning half of a twenty-eight million dollar lottery is not good enough.

Tom Krome is a reporter who has been trying to divorce his wife for four years. Unfortunately, Krome's wife is determined to not become the first woman in her family to be divorced and she keeps hiding from the process server. At the same time, Krome has an affair with the religious wife of a local judge. When his lover decides that she must confess her sins, Krome's house is suddenly attacked and all the windows are broken.

Krome leaves town to interview JoLayne Lucks and finds her to be a charming, if private person. She decides that she would prefer to not allow him to write an article about her good fortune. However, during the night, JoLayne comes to Krome and tells him how two men broke into her house and forced her to give them her lottery ticket. JoLayne wants the ticket back but she does not want to go to the police for help.

Krome and JoLayne set off across Florida to find the thieves, using the charges the thieves make on JoLayne's stolen credit card to track them. JoLayne enlists the help of her friend Moffitt who is an ATF agent. Moffitt breaks into an apartments of one of the thieves, Bode Gazer. He discovers that Bode is a white supremacist. Moffitt leaves a message on Bode's wall that sends him, his partner Chub, and follower Shiner on the run.

JoLayne and Krome follow Bode and his buddies into the Florida Keys where they camp on a deserted island. The men are met by their follower Shiner whom Chub sends to kidnap Amber, a Hooters' waitress that he has become obsessed with. As Chub attempts to rape Amber, Krome and JoLayne invade their camp and take back what is rightfully theirs. However, only Bode and Chub know that there are actually two lottery tickets. On her way back to Miami, Amber discovers the other lottery ticket hidden inside Chub's gun.

JoLayne and Krome leave Bode and Chub stranded on the deserted island and cash in their lottery ticket. JoLayne rushes home to put in a bid on Simmons Wood. When



Moffitt learns that there is competition for the property, he gets information on the other buyer and blackmails him into backing off. At the same time, Amber learns that someone has proof that the lottery ticket belongs to JoLayne so she decides that it is time to give it back.

JoLayne gets Simmons Wood and finds the other lottery ticket in her mail. JoLayne gives the ticket to Krome, suggesting that it came from an anonymous source. Together Krome and JoLayne relax and enjoy becoming millionaires together.



Chapters 1-2

Chapters 1-2 Summary

This is the seventh novel by bestselling author Carl Hiaasen. Hiaasen was born and raised in Florida and hence his choice of placing his novels within the setting of Florida provides an authentic and touching portrayal.

In Chapter 1, JoLayne Lucks buys a lottery ticket, as she has done every Saturday for five years, with numbers that correspond to the age that she is when she breaks up with six different losers. Near Miami, Bode Gazer and Chub also buy lottery tickets whose numbers are chosen randomly by a computer. Bode and Chub hope to win the lottery to finance their white supremacy group. On Saturday night, JoLayne Lucks and Bode Gazer both discover they have each won half of a twenty-eight million dollar jackpot.

On Sunday morning, Tom Krome wakes up to find his new lover preparing to go to church. Katie wants Krome to go with her but a call from his features editor at The Register saves him from that particular fate. Sinclair wants Krome to go to Grange and interview a woman who has just won the lottery. In Grange, word is quickly spreading that JoLayne Lucks has won the lottery. Demencio and his wife Trish discuss it and decide to go talk with her.

In Chapter 2, Demencio and Trish drag JoLayne out of bed with their unexpected visit. Demencio asks JoLayne to mention his weeping Madonna when the press comes to interview her about her winnings. In Miami, Bode Gazer and Chub discuss their winnings. Bode believes half of the jackpot could never be enough to pay for everything that they will need to fight the NATO troops. These troops are in the Bahamas and according to Bode, are planning to invade America to suppress the white man. In fact, Bode is convinced the other winner must be from a minority group and that NATO rigged the lottery to help that person win. Bode wants to steal the other ticket.

Krome packs to go to Grange. Katie makes him promise to call her when he arrives and to call early because her husband, a local judge, will be home late in the evening. Katie then gives Krome a disposable camera and asks him to take pictures of the crying Madonna.

Chapters 1-2 Analysis

These first two chapters introduce the main characters in the novel. First is JoLayne Lucks, a calm and quiet woman who lives a calm and quiet life in Grange. JoLayne is thirty-five and has had trouble finding a good man to have into a relationship with. JoLayne has become somewhat jaded about men because of these experiences and prefers her own company to that of a man now. JoLayne has made a good life for herself and is content in it, suggesting to the reader that winning the lottery will turn JoLayne's life upside down in a way that will cause her some measure of discomfort.



Three hundred miles away, Bode Gazer and his friend Chub also win the lottery. Bode and Chub are white supremacists who want a large amount of money to finance their fight against imagined threats to the white man of America. However, Bode is not happy to win half a jackpot, but insists that they must steal the other ticket in order to have enough to do what they want. They are selfish and bumbling criminals who are sure to offer both suspense and humor to the plot.

Tom Krome is a hard-nosed reporter who has come to a small paper as a features writer because of the financial downturn of the newspaper industry. Krome's editor, Sinclair, is terrified of him so Krome spends a lot of time on the road. At the same time, Krome is having an affair with a married woman whose husband is a judge with some power in their hometown. This spells trouble for Krome as the plot begins to develop.



Chapters 3-5

Chapters 3-5 Summary

In Chapter 3, JoLayne gets a visit from the mayor of Grange who hopes that JoLayne will speak kindly of Grange when the reporter from The Register arrives. JoLayne balks at the idea of speaking to a reporter because she prefers to hang on to her privacy. In Miami, Chub tries to talk Bode into cashing in their ticket immediately but Bode refuses. Instead, Bode hides the ticket in a condom package and insists that he and Chub go to Grange to find the other ticket. Back in Grange, Krome arrives at the bed and breakfast and immediately heads over to JoLayne Lucks' house. Krome finds JoLayne in the bathtub when he arrives. JoLayne has a gun and forces Krome into the bathtub after she climbs out. While Krome is vulnerable and lying in the tub, JoLayne speaks to him, but refuses to allow him to record their conversation in any manner.

In Chapter 4, Chub and Bode arrive in Grange and ask directions to the convenience store from Demencio. At the store, Chub and Bode talk to Shiner, the clerk, and learn the name of the lotto winner. Meanwhile, Krome and JoLayne enjoy a leisurely conversation that becomes more personal than Krome expected. However, at the end of the evening, JoLayne makes it clear she does not want Krome writing an article about her. Back at the bed and breakfast, Krome calls his lawyer and learns that his wife has once again outmaneuvered the process servers. This has been going on for four years. Krome is quite frustrated with his wife's insistence that she will never be divorced. A few hours later, Krome is awakened by JoLayne. JoLayne has been badly beaten and her lottery ticket is stolen.

In Chapter 5, Bode and Chub break into JoLayne's house and beat her, using guns to frighten her. However, it becomes clear that she has no intention of telling them where the ticket is until Bode had Chub shoot one of the many turtles she keeps in an aquarium. Then JoLayne relents and tells them where the ticket is. After leaving JoLayne's, Bode and Chub return to the convenience store to buy supplies to treat the scratches and bruises that JoLayne inflicts upon them. They talk to the clerk and invite him to join their white supremacy group. As part of his membership, Chub asks the clerk to do something for the group to prove his loyalty. The following morning, after cleaning up JoLayne's broken living room, Krome and JoLayne visit the clerk, Shiner, at his home. JoLayne asks Shiner to back her up if he is questioned about whether she bought the lottery ticket. However, Shiner claims that he does not remember JoLayne purchasing a lottery ticket that day.

Chapters 3-5 Analysis

JoLayne gets multiple visits on Sunday from various people who want her to use her new fame to promote the town and their fake religious artifact. Grange is a unique town filled with unique people that leaves the reader rather amused and feeling sorry for



JoLayne, whose only desire is to have her privacy. When Krome shows up, JoLayne is not thrilled to meet him because of his profession, but they find a personal connection that neither can deny. Therefore, when JoLayne is attacked and robbed, she turns to Krome for help, setting in motion a relationship that will change both their lives.

Bode and Chub rob JoLayne and find out that she is an unusually tough adversary. Bode and Chub also prove to the reader that they are not quite as dumb as they appear. They convince the convenience store clerk to not tell anyone that JoLayne has bought the winning ticket. Shiner is a naive and somewhat slow individual who jumps at the chance to be a part of a club, even if that club is based on hatred and darkness. His decision to lie about JoLayne buying the winning ticket changes things for her and makes it impossible for her to go to the police for help.



Chapters 6-7

Chapters 6-7 Summary

In Chapter 6, Mary Andrea Finley Krome is in a rehabilitation clinic, but is not addicted to medications nor is she depressed. Mary Andrea is hiding from the process servers attempting to force her to get a divorce she does not want. Mary Andrea is not still in love with her husband. No woman in her family has been divorced for many generations and she refuses to be the first. At the same time that Mary Andrea shares her fears with the doctors at the rehabilitation clinic, Krome returns to The Register offices and argues with Sinclair over a story that Krome wants to do about JoLayne's attempts to get her ticket back. Sinclair refuses and Krome quits. At home, Krome packs to return to Grange. Krome's windows have all been shot out. Katie arrives and explains that she feels that she has to tell her husband about their affair due to her religious beliefs. However, her husband does not take it well, especially after reading the detailed list of her sexual relations that she gives him.

Demencio is depressed to hear that JoLayne loses her lottery ticket, meaning that she will not be able to promote his Madonna to the press. JoLayne goes to work at the vet's office as usual and is bitten by a frightened dog. After work, JoLayne takes Krome to Simmons Wood, a private area that was once owned by a rich man who used it as a private hunting area. JoLayne often walks in Simmons Wood and it is here that she has begun gathering turtles to protect them in case the property is purchased and flattened for the building of a new mall. Now that JoLayne has won the lottery, she hopes to buy Simmons Wood to protect it and the animals that live there. However, she needs to get her ticket back.

In Chapter 7, Bode and Chub go to a gun show after leaving Grange to stock up on weapons. Then they go to Hooters. The men pay for all of their purchases using a credit card that they stole from JoLayne Lucks. From the Hooters' waitress, they learn that the name they have chosen for their group, White Rebel Brotherhood, is actually a music group that includes several black members. They decide to change the name of the group to White Clarion Arayans. At the same time, Shiner has quit his job and stolen money and the security tape that shows JoLayne buying her lottery ticket. He also gets a tattoo with the initials WRB in it. JoLayne and Krome take the turtles to Demencio for babysitting while they chase the men who stole JoLayne's lottery ticket.

Chapters 6-7 Analysis

The people in Krome's life are interesting. Krome's wife does not want a divorce. She does not want the stigma of being the first divorced woman in her family for multiple generations. This causes Krome a great deal of grief because he has been trying to get a divorce for four years. At the same time, Krome's editor is frightened of him but manages to stand up to him. Krome decides to quit rather than being stopped from



helping JoLayne, someone he has just met but already feels close to. Finally, Krome's house has been vandalized by a clerk working for Katie's husband because Katie feels the need to confess their affair in detail to him. This sets up a situation in which it appears that Krome's life could be in danger.

Bode and Chub got away clean from Grange, but apparently are not as smart as the reader first suspected. They take JoLayne's credit card, giving her a way to track their movements through Florida. At the same time, Shiner has decided to run away and join Bode and Chub, even going so far as getting a tattoo with the initials of their group on it. He is unaware that Bode and Chub have changed the name of the group. This shows the readers that Shiner is as bumbling and silly as Bode and Chub.



Chapters 8-10

Chapters 8-10 Summary

In Chapter 8, JoLayne and Krome arrive in Miami and take a hotel room. JoLayne wakes Krome early in the morning and learns that he has taken out a loan through the paper to pay her credit card so that they can follow the criminals as long as necessary. At the newspaper, Sinclair is afraid to tell his boss that Krome has quit since the managing editor is a huge fan of Krome's work. Sinclair writes a memo that makes Krome's resignation appear to have been a mental breakdown. In Miami, Bode and Chub discuss how they will claim their lotto winnings. Bode insists that they should wait a week and then one of them will turn in their ticket. A week or so later, the other can turn in his. In the meantime, Krome and JoLayne wait for Bode and Chub to use the credit card again.

In Chapter 9, JoLayne takes Krome to an all-black bar where they meet with a friend of hers named Moffitt. JoLayne explains to Moffitt what has happened and he promises to help. Krome is nervous when he meets Moffitt, especially when he sees a gun under Moffitt's jacket, but JoLayne clearly trusts him. Across town, Bode and Chub go to the same Hooters that they visited the previous night. Their waitress has trouble with her boyfriend. After her boyfriend leaves, Bode and Chub also disappear for a time. After they return, Amber gets a call from her boyfriend telling her that someone has set fire to his Miata. At the hotel, JoLayne calls the real estate agent and learns that someone else has made an offer on Simmons Wood. Back in Grange, Demencio has trouble with the pump in his Madonna statue at the same time that he expects a large bus full of pilgrims. Demencio decides to paint the apostles on twelve of JoLayne's turtles.

In Chapter 10, Krome learns that Mary Andrea has once again managed to escape the process servers. Back home, Krome's lover receives pictures of the crying Madonna that he sent her. When the judge sees the pictures, he becomes irate that she is still in contact with Krome. Later that day, Krome's house blows up. In Miami, Bode and Chub return to Chub's trailer from breakfast and find Shiner waiting for them, recently tattooed and with his head shaved. Shiner is disappointed to learn that the group has changed their name. That night, Chub and Bode decide to go to dinner and leave Shiner guarding the trailer. As they arrive at Hooters, JoLayne and Krome wait for them.

Chapters 8-10 Analysis

Krome's boss is afraid to tell anyone he quit, setting up a situation that places his job in danger with the managing editor. He attempts to cover things up to save his job. At the same time, Krome's wife again avoids being served with divorce papers. Katie, Krome's lover, tells her husband about the pictures that Krome sent her of the weeping Madonna. This makes him so angry that Krome's house is later blown up. Again it appears that Krome's life, which is in chaos already, can be in danger.



JoLayne and Krome manage to keep close tabs on Bode and Chub, even though they do not know their names. They finally see them as they arrive at Hooters for the third time. Again Bode and Chub show their stupidity when they not only come to the same place three times, but use the same stolen credit card three times. On top of this, Shiner has joined them, complicating the situation with his presence.



Chapters 11-13

Chapters 11-13 Summary

In Chapter 11, the managing editor of The Register calls Sinclair to his office and demands that he find Krome before the beginning of the following week when Krome is expected to win an Amelia, an award for feature writers. Sinclair immediately packs to go to Grange. In Miami, Chub imagines he is in love with Amber, the Hooters' waitress and that he can convince her to love him. Bode does not like the idea, however, because Amber's boyfriend appears to be Hispanic, which makes her impure. When Bode and Chub leave Hooters that night, Krome and JoLayne follow. When Bode and Chub arrive at Chub's trailer, Shiner panics and opens fire on their truck. At the sound of gunfire, Krome and JoLayne take off, causing Chub and Bode to hear their car and give chase.

In Chapter 12, Krome and JoLayne hide on a side road where JoLayne immediately decides to go for her shotgun. However, Krome holds her back until the pickup passes them. Sinclair arrives at Demencio's in Grange where the painted turtles are a huge hit with the pilgrims. Sinclair asks questions about Tom Krome and writes everything down, testing the patience of everyone he speaks to. Back in Miami, Bode is outraged at the gun holes Shiner put in his new truck.

In Chapter 13, JoLayne and Krome meet with Moffitt. With the license plate number, Moffitt now has the name and address of Bode Gazer through his connections with his job in the ATF. Moffitt tells them that he will check out Bode's apartment to see if he can find the ticket there. Back in Krome's hometown, Judge Battenkill is nervous about his future. Battenkill's clerk, Champ Powell, has disappeared after promising to take care of Krome. Krome's house explodes and Battenkill is afraid that he will be connected to the crime. In Miami, Krome learns that JoLayne has discovered that he quit the newspaper, but is helping her anyway. This leads to an intimate moment.

Chapters 11-13 Analysis

Sinclair's attempts to manipulate Krome's resignation backfires and he finds himself under the threat of losing his job if he does not find Krome. This brings Sinclair to Grange where he meets Demencio, his Madonna, and painted turtles. This foreshadows a moment of personal revelation for Sinclair that will take him down an interesting road.

Krome and JoLayne follow Bode and Chub, finding themselves in danger as gunfire erupts. It also brings them to a romantic moment where Krome asks himself why he is so determined to help JoLayne. JoLayne is a private woman who picks her relationships carefully, leaving good men like Moffitt to be with bad men who use and abuse women. The reader wonders where Krome fits in this classification. At the same time, Krome

and JoLayne are a step closer to finding her lottery ticket as Moffitt gets Bode's name and address.



Chapters 14-16

Chapters 14-16 Summary

In Chapter 14, Krome and JoLayne spend an intimate moment in bed while Chub and Bode begin a power struggle. At the same time, Moffitt breaks into Bode's apartment and begins searching for the ticket. Moffitt finds nothing of value, but is deeply offended by the posters and hate literature he finds. Moffitt decides to leave Bode a message before going. In Grange, Sinclair discovers the turtles and has something of a mental breakdown. While visiting the turtles, Sinclair learns that a body was found in Krome's house. This news takes Sinclair further down the path of mental instability. Back in Miami, Krome tells JoLayne that he has Bode Gazer's address as well. He did not tell her earlier because he did not want her rushing into a dangerous situation.

In Chapter 15, Bode, Chub, and Shiner force a man off the road, thinking that he is Amber's boyfriend. When they discover that it is only a Cuban stockbroker, they steal his money and a gun from his briefcase. In Montana, Mary Andrea once again slips away from process servers. After hearing this news, Krome's lawyer gets a call from The Register informing him of Krome's death. In Grange, Bernard Squires pushes the real estate agent to present his offer on Simmons Wood to the owners. In Miami, JoLayne and Krome meet with Moffitt who tells them that he did not find the ticket, but thinks that Bode might have hidden it inside a condom package. A few hours later, JoLayne and Krome are outside Bode's apartment when they discover the message that Moffitt leaves for them claiming that someone called the Black Tide is watching them. Bode and his buddies are so frightened that they decide to head for the Keys.

In Chapter 16, Chub gives Shiner a secret mission to complete while he and Bode make plans to get out of the area. In Montana, Mary Andrea reads about Krome's death and plans to rush to Florida to play the grieving wife. In Grange, Sinclair's sister brings him the article in The Register about Krome's death but he is so far gone that she cannot get a response. However, Sinclair's presence at the shrine has brought Demenico a great amount of money. In fact, Demenico decides to paint the rest of the turtles to increase his profits. In South Florida, Krome learns about his suspected death and calls his parents to assure them he is still alive. Krome and JoLayne watch Bode and Chub steal a boat from a boat dock on Florida Bay.

Chapters 14-16 Analysis

JoLayne and Krome become intimate as they continue to follow Bode and Chub. The lottery ticket is not in Bode's apartment as the reader knows. However, Moffitt finds practice condom packages and knows where he is hiding. Now all Krome and JoLayne have to do is find Bode. They follow them as they leave Bode's apartment, spooked by Moffitt's message. They hope to catch up with them at a moment when it will be



possible to overtake them. The reader is curious, however, what will happen if Bode suddenly decides that it is time to cash in the lottery ticket.

Sinclair is so obsessed with the painted turtles that he cannot focus on even the simplest things in life. To the reader it appears that Sinclair has simply succumbed to the pressures of his job and his lack of self-confidence. However, Sinclair's mental breakdown has taken place in such a way that it benefits Demencio. This makes him paint all of JoLayne's turtles to increase the cash flow coming from the pilgrims who want to see Sinclair and the turtles. This leaves the reader wondering what will happen to all these people when JoLayne returns and wants her turtles back.



Chapters 17-19

Chapters 17-19 Summary

In Chapter 17, Shiner kidnaps Amber from the Hooters parking lot with a screwdriver. Shiner is not supposed to talk to her but she starts up a conversation with him. In Krome's hometown, Judge Battenkill gets nervous about the body found in the burnt remains of Krome's house. Battenkill tells his secretary that he is going away with his wife for a while. In the Keys, Krome talks JoLayne into renting a boat for them while he keeps an eye on Bode. At that moment, Chub is in the water with the stolen boat and he runs the boat up onto a sandbar that he somehow manages to see. Chub has to get out to push the boat, causing his leg to get wet and his hidden lottery ticket to slip away.

In Chapter 18, Bode is frightened of the Black Tide that leaves a message on his apartment wall. While Chub is gone, Bode takes apart the AR-15 to clean it and to show any Black Tide members who might be around how tough he is. However, Bode cannot figure out how to put the gun back together again. Bode decides to leave Chub because Chub is taking so long to meet him, but sees Chub arriving as he gets up on the highway. At the same time, JoLayne rents a boat from a crabby man who seems unhappy about renting the boat to her. JoLayne catches up with Krome just moments after Bode and Chub left the marina. In transit to meet Bode and Chub, Shiner tells Amber about the lottery ticket in hopes of impressing her and to get her to fix his tattoo. Chub, who finds the lottery ticket in the grasp of a blue crab, has a crab claw stuck to his hand. He is in no mood to listen to Bode complain about leaving his truck.

In Chapter 19, Demencio finishes painting all of JoLayne's turtles. Demencio is annoyed with Dominick, a neighbor who has drilled holes in his hands and feet to resemble stigmata, because he keeps trying to steal turtle boy or Sinclair away. To protect his investment, Demencio shows Sinclair the other turtles and invites him to stay at his house. At the same time, Krome and JoLayne watch Bode and Chub meet up with Shiner and Amber at Jewfish Creek. Krome sees this new development as a good thing because it will most likely cause fighting among the men.

Back in Krome's hometown, Battenkill has bribed a lawyer into holding out in an accidental fall case. This forces the insurance company that is involved to pay out half a million dollars, half of which goes to Battenkill. At the same moment, Mary Andrea is on a flight to Florida, expecting her husband's death to make her an overnight star.

Chapters 17-19 Analysis

Shiner kidnaps Amber because Chub has become obsessed with her and cannot imagine leaving the area without seeing her again. Amber flirts with Shiner, either because she likes him or because she wants him as an ally. The reader is not quite sure what Amber is up to but it seems that she is not just another dumb blond. At the same



time, Chub and Bode make their way into the Keys on a stolen boat. They are so inexperienced that they continuously run the boat up on sandbars and other high sections of land, forcing them to have to get out and push. At one point, Chub loses the lottery ticket he stuck with a band aid on to his leg, but retrieves it from the blue crab who tries to steal it. This crab has to be sacrificed, leaving its claw stuck and rotting on Chub's hand. This will prove to be important later in the novel.

JoLayne and Krome appear to be close to finally getting back JoLayne's lottery ticket. However, the reader wonders what will happen to the other ticket. The reader also wonders whether Krome will be going home to since his house has been bombed and the world thinks that he is dead. At the same time, this crime has Judge Battenkill breaking the law to get out of town before someone figures out who the dead man in Krome's house is. This shows that not only is Battenkill a bad husband with homicidal and jealous tendencies, but a man willing to do anything to cover his own mistakes.



Chapters 20-22

Chapters 20-22 Summary

In Chapter 20, JoLayne wakes up after a bad dream. She has been sleeping in a makeshift camp with Krome near Pearl Key, the island where Bode and Chub are hiding out. In their camp, Chub attempts to make Amber comfortable, but she has befriended Shiner. This makes Chub jealous. Amber asks about their plan and reveals the power struggle going on between Chub and Bode. At one point, Amber takes Chub aside and tells him that if he tries to rape her, she will lie perfectly still and not move. However, if he makes an attempt to be nice to her, she might one day willingly have sex with him. Chub agrees. As a token of their friendship, Amber gives Chub her Hooters' shorts.

In Chapter 21, Amber flirts with Shiner some more, getting him to tell her how they stole the lottery ticket from JoLayne. In their camp, Krome tells JoLayne about his dream of moving to Alaska. Then they hear gunfire. Shiner sees something moving near the camp and fires at it. Bode investigates and insists that it is an animal and not a NATO soldier. Later, Bode and Chub decide that they must get rid of Shiner. They decide to offer him a thousand dollars to leave the group, minus what it will cost to repair the bullet holes in Bode's truck. In the meantime, JoLayne finds a raccoon that Shiner has shot and insists on bandaging its wounds.

In Chapter 22, Mary Andrea steps off the plane in Florida and is shocked to find that there are no reporters waiting for her. The managing editor of The Register picks her up and takes her to her hotel, promising that if she attends the presentation of the Amelia in Krome's name, there will be press. Across town, Katie Battenkill thinks of all the reasons that she should forgive her husband for killing Krome or at least making it appear that he has been killed. Over breakfast, Katie's husband tells her that he wants to retire and move to the Bahamas.

In Grange, the real estate woman feels pressed to present Squires' offer to the owners of Simmons Wood when Squires shows up in her office. Squires is also under pressure from the mobster that he allows to skim from the pension fund that he represents. Across town, Shiner's mother is arrested when she tries to stop the road workers from paving over the stain of Jesus Christ. She worships at this spot and collects money from pilgrims for several months.

Chapters 20-22 Analysis

JoLayne questions Krome's motives while across the bay, Amber attempts to keep herself from being raped. JoLayne and Krome are close to getting back JoLayne's ticket but must bid their time. Krome hopes that Amber's presence will cause a fight between Bode, Shiner, and Chub. It appears that there is tension rising there, which is



compounded by Chub's burning need to cash in the lottery tickets and Bode's continuing caution. The reader suspects that disaster will come to this group soon.

Krome's ex-lover and her husband conspire to escape the country in light of the body found in Krome's house. However, Katie, who is highly religious, has not yet decided if she should support her husband's illegal efforts. The reader hopes that Katie will decide against helping her husband for the sake of justice. At the same time, Krome's wife wants to use his death to promote her own career, but everyone is terribly disappointed when Krome's death does not garner a great deal of attention. This leaves only the presentation of the Amelia for Mary Andrea's hopes of becoming a media sensation. This event could end up in disaster since Krome is still alive.



Chapters 23-25

Chapters 23-25 Summary

In Chapter 23, Chub falls asleep with his hand in the water and the decaying blue crab claw attracts another hungry blue crab. Chub wakes from the pain of the attacking crab. At that same moment, Amber attempts to fix the initials on Shiner's tattoo, talking to him about the club and the possibility that Chub and Bode might attempt to throw him out. Krome and JoLayne approach the camp and nearly grab Bode, but stop when they realize that he is too close to his camp. Chub refuses to allow anyone to help him with the crab that is now stuck to his hand. Instead, he turns his attention to riding them off Shiner. However, Amber has convinced Shiner to tell Bode and Chub that he has called his mother and asked her to retrieve his car. Inside the car, there is security footage of JoLayne buying her lottery ticket, something Shiner tells his mother to send to the police. Shiner goes into the woods while Bode and Chub think about this. While they argue, they do not notice that Amber has retrieved Chub's gun. The lottery ticket is concealed inside the gun.

In Chapter 24, Krome and JoLayne take Shiner hostage. JoLayne demands to know where the lottery ticket is but Krome does not know. Amber threatens to kill Chub and Bode if they do not let her go. Chub does not appear frightened and in fact makes threats of his own. When Amber attempts to fire the gun, it fails to go off. Chub grabs the gun and throws her on the ground, hoping to finally have sex with her. Amber fights him, demanding to know his name. When he tells his real name, Amber tells hers. Bode recognizes Amber's last name as a Jewish name and demands that Chub not have sex with her. Just then Krome and JoLayne come into the clearing and fire the shotgun at Chub. JoLayne then asks Bode for his wallet.

In Chapter 25, Battenkill finishes the accidental fall case and is assured that he will receive his money. Katie reads about Krome's wife in the paper. At Demencio's, Sinclair meets Shiner's mother and they bond while Demencio experiments with making the Madonna statue cry bloody tears. At the boarding house, Squires worries about the purchase of Simmons Wood. He is aware that if he disappoints Richard Tarbone, he will most likely be killed. Down in the Keys, Amber and Shiner make their way back to civilization on the Reel Luv, having been sent away by Krome and JoLayne. Once they are back on land and headed towards Miami, Amber becomes curious why the gun misfired. Inside a bullet chamber, Amber finds JoLayne's stolen lottery ticket.

Chapters 23-25 Analysis

Amber proves to be a very smart girl. Amber convinces Shiner what to say when Bode and Chub attempt to throw him out of the group, using Shiner as a buffer against the acts of these two men. However, this fails to work when Krome and JoLayne kidnap Shiner in the woods. As a result, Amber pulls a gun on Bode and Chub, unaware that



Chub has hidden the lottery ticket inside the gun. JoLayne and Krome come to Amber's rescue, allowing her to leave with the gun because they do not know there is a second lottery ticket. JoLayne has the ticket hidden in Bode's condom package. Therefore she has no reason to suspect that there might be another ticket somewhere else.

Battenkill gets his money while his wife learns of Mary Andrea's visit to their fair city. Katie is left with a dilemma, attempting to decide if she wants to remain with her husband because of what he can provide for her, or if she wants to stick to her religious ideals and expose him for the criminal he is. The reader is curious which course of action Katie will choose. At the same time, Sinclair, who continues to have a mental breakdown, has become friends with Shiner's mother, who is also a religious opportunist in Grange.



Chapters 26-28

Chapters 26-28 Summary

In Chapter 26, JoLayne, who was once a nurse, tries to treat Chub's gunshot wound, but he is cruel and hurtful toward her. Bode gets loose during the struggle to help Chub. Krome chases after him and they fight on the edge of the water near JoLayne's rented boat. At one point, Bode steps on a stingray, the marine creature stabs Bode in the leg, severing the artery in his groin. JoLayne tries to get Bode to tell her why they decided to rob her, but Bode is too weak to respond. Krome and JoLayne leave the island, leaving Bode and Chub stranded.

In Chapter 27, Shiner and Amber arrive at Chub's trailer only to find that Shiner's car has been broken into. The video surveillance tape is missing. This frightens Amber and she decides they cannot keep the lottery ticket. Moffitt is the one who finds the car and takes the tape. Back at The Register's offices, Mary Andrea prepares to accept Krome's Amelia. However, in the middle of her heartbreaking speech, Krome's lawyer serves her with divorce papers, announcing to everyone that Krome is alive and well. On Pearl Key, Bode dies as Chub grants his last wish, brushing his teeth with WD-40.

In Chapter 28, Sinclair and Shiner's mother attempt to make a deal with Demencio for a portion of his Turtle Boy profits. Demencio reluctantly agrees, even allowing Shiner's mother to present another image of Christ on his property. In Tallahassee, JoLayne and Krome have dinner in a fancy restaurant to celebrate her lottery winnings. JoLayne tests Krome to see if his interest in her has everything to do with the money and he passes the test. Back in Krome's hometown, Battenkill discovers that his wife has left him. Battenkill decides to go to the Bahamas alone but he is arrested by federal agents as he walks out the door. In the meantime, Katie drives to Grange with Mary Andrea in hopes of finding Krome. Katie tells Mary Andrea everything about her affair with Krome and her husband's actions, including the fact that she turned Judge Battenkill into the police just that morning.

Chapters 26-28 Analysis

Bode is fatally wounded. JoLayne and Krome leave the two men to die on the island, aware that Bode is already dead and it is only a matter of time before the infections on Chub's hand cause his death. This seems like a harsh thing to do, but JoLayne wants to kill them herself. She feels that this is a just punishment for what they have done to her.

JoLayne gets her lottery earnings and worries about Krome's true intentions. At the same time, Mary Andrea learns that her husband is still alive as his lawyer serves her with divorce papers. It seems that everything is reaching a nice conclusion. In fact, even Katie has turned to her honest values and turned her own husband in to the police.

Everything has come to a nice conclusion, leaving only the matter of Simmons Wood unfinished.



Chapters 29-30 and Epiphany

Chapters 29-30 and Epiphany Summary

In Chapter 29, JoLayne goes to the real estate office and enters into a bidding war with Bernard Squires. JoLayne is beginning to fear that Squires will be able to beat her in their bidding war. Moffitt shows up and takes Squires into a private office, informing him that he knows he works for Tarbone. He threatens that if Squires buys Simmons Wood, that he will make sure that a reporter in town does an expose on the purchase and the intended use of the land and the men behind it. Aware Tarbone does not need added publicity, Squires quickly pulls out of the deal, leaving JoLayne the only bidder. At that same time, Krome arrives at Demencio's to pick up JoLayne's turtles. Krome finds Sinclair in the house and feels sorry for the mental break he has clearly suffered. Krome reluctantly allows Sinclair to keep one of the turtles. Late that night, Katie and Mary Andrea arrive in Grange where they settle in at the boarding house. To fill time, they decide to go see the shrine of the crying Madonna.

In Chapter 30, Moffitt takes JoLayne home where she finds a lottery ticket among her other mail. Amber drops Shiner off at his house after they return the lottery ticket to JoLayne. They say their goodbyes and Shiner holds on to the hope offered to him by Amber when she suggests that he move to Miami and become a busboy at her Hooters. Mary Andrea confronts Krome in front of Demencio's house but assures him that she is not angry and that she will not fight the divorce. Bernard Squires wanders around Grange, depressed because he knows that Tarbone will kill him now. Squires comes to Demencio's house and decides to join Sinclair in the turtle mote,

In an epiphany, JoLayne again tests Krome, trying to convince herself that he is with her because he loves her. When he passes the test, JoLayne gives Krome an envelope, claiming that it came anonymously to the house. Inside the envelope, Krome sees the second lottery ticket. Krome figures out what JoLayne has done but does not say anything to her about it. Chub survives at Pearl Key for several days, afraid of the vultures that JoLayne warned him about before she left. However, he finally succumbs to exposure and massive infection. JoLayne and Krome take the turtles back to Simmons Wood and look forward to their future together.

Chapters 29-30 and Epiphany Analysis

Moffitt helps JoLayne get the land she wants even though he knows that she is in love with Krome and that there will never be a chance for him. Moffitt is a good man who does a good thing for the woman he loves. At the same time, JoLayne does the same for Krome by giving him the other lottery ticket. JoLayne has convinced herself that Krome is with her out of love. Therefore she gives him the ticket as a sign of her faith in him.



Mary Andrea gives up on trying to prevent the divorce and finally agrees to it. She and Katie appear to have become good friends. Mary Andrea appears to have learned something from her experiences in Florida. Squires is afraid for his life and like many others before him, he turns to the fake shrines of Granger to find peace. Sinclair welcomes him with open arms.

The religious overtones of this novel come to a conclusion at the end of this book. The author seems to imply that religion is a good thing up to a certain point and then makes fun of it, showing the people of Grange making money from fake shrines. At the same time, the author makes gods out of tiny turtles, comparing nature and religion. The reader thus comes away from the novel with the impression that to believe in God and in goodness, one should only look to the nature that God has given us.



Characters

JoLayne Lucks

JoLayne Lucks is a beautiful black woman who lives in Grange, Florida. JoLayne has experienced bad luck with men for most of her life. On Saturdays, JoLayne often plays the lottery. She uses numbers that correspond with the age she was when she had a particularly bad relationship. When JoLayne wins the lottery with these numbers, she is not particularly overjoyed. She is happy to discover however that she will finally be able to buy the stretch of wilderness near her home that she enjoys exploring.

When someone breaks into JoLayne's house and forces her to tell where the lottery ticket is, JoLayne refuses to sit back and allow them to steal all her hopes and dreams. JoLayne turns to a reporter that she has just met to help her find these men and get her ticket back. Unfortunately, JoLayne is under a time constraint because the land that she wants to buy has caught the attention of a corrupt retirement fund controller. JoLayne proves that she can be both tough and cruel as she searches for her lottery ticket and eventually recaptures it.

Tom Krome

Tom Krome is a newspaper reporter who used to report hard news, but has been forced to take a job as a features writer in order to pay the bills in a declining newspaper industry. Tom has been married for several years to an actress and has tried to divorce her for more than four years. Unfortunately, Tom's wife refuses to be the first in her family to be divorced and she keeps dodging the process server. Tom begins an affair with a woman who is married to a judge. As Tom takes on the story of the small town lottery winner, Tom's lover decides to tell her husband about the affair in amazing detail.

Tom interviews JoLayne Lucks and discovers that she is a woman of grace and charm. Unfortunately, JoLayne will not allow Tom to write down or record any of their conversation. She insists that he does not write an article about her in order to protect her privacy. That night however, JoLayne appears in Tom's hotel room. She is badly beaten and tells him how two men beat her and took her lottery ticket. Tom agrees to help her, even quitting his job in order to do so. Tom falls quickly in love with JoLayne and finds himself following her into a dangerous situation for no reason other than he wants to.

Bodean 'Bode' Gazzo

Bode Gazzo is a life-long criminal who has a long list of crimes such as check-kiting and stealing credit cards. Bode learns in prison that hatred of the races is a good way to channel his anger. So he decides to create his own white supremacist group. Bode tells anyone that will listen that NATO is in a conspiracy to take over the United States and



allow minorities to run the country. Bode claims that NATO has a hidden base off the Bahamas and that they plan to invade any day.

Bode has decided that he needs to win the lottery in order to finance his white supremacy group. Bode plays the lottery every week. One weekend Bode wins, but finds out he has to share the jackpot with another winner. Bode decides that this is not acceptable and decides to steal the other ticket in order to take the entire jackpot. However, after stealing the second ticket, Bode is reluctant to cash in the tickets, giving JoLayne Lucks time to locate him and get her ticket back.

Chub

Chub, born Onus Gillespie, is raised in an upper middle class family. Chub is the youngest of seven children and often reminded that his conception is an accident. As Chub reaches adulthood, he finds out that he prefers a life of laziness and crime to the hard work his father often preaches. Chub is thrown out of his family's home and comes into possession of some printers used for counterfeit. He then build sa business selling fake handicap parking permits. This is how Chub meets Bode Gazer.

Chub needs direction and is ready when Bode begins preaching his white supremacy mantra. However, as Chub gets to know Bode better, he starts to believe in Bode's purpose less and less. In fact, Chub finds himself resisting Bode's attempts to boss him around and become the leader of their little group. Chub becomes obsessed with a Hooter's waitress and eventually has her kidnapped with the hopes that she will fall in love with him and agree to run away with him. Unfortunately, this does not happen and Chub finds himself stranded on an island in the Florida Keys where he eventually dies of a massive infection.

Shiner

Shiner is a dumb clerk working at a convenience store in Grange where JoLayne buys her winning ticket. Shiner likes Bode's stories of a brotherhood and unity against a NATO attack. He agrees to join his group and lie about JoLayne buying her ticket in his store. Shiner takes to the white supremacist lifestyle easily and enjoys shooting guns, but he finds himself frightened of an unexpected attack when he is alone.

Shiner kidnaps Amber from the Hooter's parking lot at Chub's orders. Instead of delivering her silently, Shiner gets to know Amber and finds out that he really likes her. Shiner does not realize that Amber is using him for her safety. When Shiner and Amber discover that they have possession of JoLayne's lottery ticket, they decide to return it to her. They do this in order to prevent JoLayne from suing them in court. Shiner then returns home to his mother and the aimless life that he lived before he met Bode and Chub.



Amber

Amber is a waitress at Hooter's. Amber is exceedingly nice to Bode and Chub when they come into the restaurant on multiple occasions because they leave her a hundred-dollar tip. Amber does not know that Chub has become obsessed with her until he has Shiner kidnap her. Amber uses Shiner to keep Chub and Bode from raping her, but this plan only works for a short time. When Chub does attempt to rape her, Amber tells them that her last name is Bernstein so that they will think she is Jewish. This does the trick and Bode makes Chub stop touching her because it goes against their beliefs to have sex with a woman who they consider does not come from a pure race.

After escaping from Chub and Bode with the help of JoLayne and Krome, Amber finds JoLayne's lottery ticket in Chub's gun. Amber at first decides to cash the ticket in. However, when they discover that someone has stolen the surveillance tape from the convenience store from Shiner's car, they decide they have to give it back. Amber returns the lottery ticket and Shiner goes back to Grange. Amber returns to Miami and her old life.

Sinclair

Sinclair is the features editor at the newspaper where Tom Krome works. Sinclair is an edgy young man who is constantly in fear of being humiliated by Tom Krome. When Krome quits his job, Sinclair refuses to accept his resignation and makes up a story about what happened between the two of them. Sinclair's boss sends him to Grange to find Tom. While he is there, Sinclair has a psychological breakdown while visiting a shrine made up of a weeping Madonna and tiny painted turtles.

Demencio

Demencio is a Grange resident who owns a fiberglass Madonna. He adds a hydraulic pump to the statue to make it appear as though the figure weeps. Demencio makes money from pilgrims who come to see the Madonna and the sale of associated T-shirts and refreshments. When JoLayne asks Demencio to babysit her turtles, Demencio gets the bright idea to paint them and add them to the shrine. Along with the daily appearance of Sinclair at the shrine, this brings Demencio twice as much money.

Moffitt

Moffitt is an old friend of JoLayne's who works for the ATF. Moffitt gets involved in JoLayne's missing lottery ticket when she calls him for help. Moffitt finds out who owns the red truck that JoLayne's attackers drove and then searches Bode apartment. When Bode leaves the apartment, he leaves behind a written sign on the wall that declares that the Black Tide is watching Bode. This frightens Bode to such a degree that he takes

a boat and escapes to a remote island in the Florida Keys. Later, Moffitt helps scare away a rival buyer for the land that JoLayne wants to purchase.

Bernard Squires

Bernard Squires is the rival buyer for Simmons Wood. Squires is the investment manager for the Central Midwest Brotherhood of Grouters, Spacklers and Drywallers International. Squires uses this fund to allow a mobster to skim money. Squires plans on buying the Simmons Wood property and then halting the construction. This will appear as a loss on the books that will be double the real loss in order to provide funds to the mobster. The mobster places Squires under a great deal of pressure to speed up this deal. However, Squires is forced to pull out when Moffitt threatens to leak information about the mobster to the local press, placing his life in grave danger.



Objects/Places

Lottery Tickets

Bode Grazer and Chub win the lottery. They steal JoLayne Lucks' lottery ticket in order to cash in on the full twenty-eight million dollar lottery. Unfortunately, they do not cash in the tickets before JoLayne catches up with them. Unaware that there are two tickets, JoLayne takes Bode's ticket. Amber finds JoLayne's ticket, giving it back to JoLayne so that she ultimately has both tickets.

Turtles

JoLayne has more than forty baby turtles that she has rescued from Simmons Wood. JoLayne gives the turtles to Demencio to watch while she tracks down her lottery ticket. Demencio paints the apostles on the back of some of the turtles and adds them to his fake shrine in order to make money. This creates a situation in which Sinclair becomes enamored by and obsessed with the turtles.

Weeping Madonna

Demencio owns a fiberglass Madonna that he has equipped with a hydraulic pump to make it appear as though the statue cries. Demencio adds scent and color to the tears to make them extra special.

Video Tape

Shiner steals the surveillance tape from the convenience store that shows JoLayne buying her lottery ticket. At Amber's request, Shiner later uses this tape to blackmail Chub and Bode. This same tape is taken from Shiner's car by Moffitt, prompting Amber and Shiner to give JoLayne her lottery ticket back.

Condom

Bode slices an opening in a condom package in order to hide his lottery ticket inside.

White Rebel Brotherhood

Bode originally wants to call his white supremacy group the White Rebel Brotherhood, but soon discovers that this is the name of a band that includes several black members.



White Clarion Aryans

After learning that his white supremacy's groups first name is shared by a music group, Bode changes the name to the White Clarion Aryans. This prompts Shiner to change the initials that are tattooed on his arm.

Reel Luv

Reel Luv is the name of the boat Bode and Chub steal in order to escape to a remote island in the Florida Keys.

Red Dodge Pickup

Bode has a brand new red Dodge pickup that he is extremely proud of. However, it is his purchase of this pickup that helps Krome and Moffitt find his name and address.

Simmons Wood

Simmons Wood was once a private hunting area for a rich businessman. When the man dies, his children want to sell the land. JoLayne enjoys exploring this natural area and wants to buy it to preserve it from development.

Hooters

Hooters is a restaurant in the southern states that requires its waitresses to wear short shorts and tight T-shirts. Chub and Bode meet Amber in one of these restaurants in Miami.

Grange

Grange is a small town in northern Florida that is filled with a surprising number of religious tourist attractions.



Themes

Greed

The novel begins with two individuals winning the Florida lottery. Each ticket is worth more than fourteen million dollars and is paid out in just over half a million dollars a year. However, sharing this jackpot is not something one of the winners Bode Gazer is willing to do. Bode wants to have all of the money. Bode and his friend Chub steal the other ticket and make plans to turn them both in for the reward. However, their plans are sidetracked when they fear that a black political group has targeted him. In the end, the rightful owner ends up with the tickets. It is greed that brings Bode into possession of these tickets and greed that also leads to his downfall.

At the same time that Bode and Chub are on the run with these winning lottery tickets, the town of Grange has become overrun with religious schemes for its citizens to make money. Demencio and his wife have a Madonna statue that they have rigged to cry. Demencio adds turtles that have been painted with the faces of the apostles to this display. However, a malfunction of the Madonna's pump prevents the statue from "crying" just moments before a big group of pilgrims are due. Across town, an unemployed carpenter has drilled holes in his hands and feet to resemble the crucifixion wounds Christ suffered at the time of his death. Another woman in town has decided that an oil stain on the highway is the image of Christ. However, when that image is paved over by the state, the woman finds an omelet that also resembles Christ.

Greed is a theme of this novel through Bode's decision to pursue the other half of the million-dollar lottery ticket and in the everyday actions of nearly every character in the novel. Demencio is greedy because he would rather lie to people than go out and get a real job. Shiner's mother is greedy because she would rather fool people into believing inanimate objects resemble Christ than work two jobs to support her only child. It is for these reasons that greed is a theme of the novel.

Racism

Bode Gazer has always been an angry young man. During a stint in jail, Bode learns that racism offers an outlet for his anger. For this reason, Bode decided that he hates all minorities and that these minorities are the reason that bad things happen to white people. It does not matter what white people might have done to bring this trouble down on themselves in his opinion. To this end, Bode has decided to begin a white supremacy group and Chub is his first member. The two men plan to relocate to the Bahamas and fight the NATO troops that have built a base there in order to prepare for their invasion of America.

When Bode wins the lottery and learns that he must share the jackpot with another winner, he automatically assumes that this other winner is a minority. He views this as



yet another attempt by NATO to undermine the white man and empower the minorities. When he learns that JoLayne Lucks, the other winner, is black, this discovery only seems to support Bode's opinions. Bode and Chub beat JoLayne and kill one of her turtles to force her to tell them where the lottery ticket is hidden. Aware of their hatred, JoLayne still decides to chase them alone, without the help of the police and recover the ticket. In the end, it appears that Chub is the more racist of the two men, calling JoLayne terrible names as she tries to repair a bullet wound in his shoulder. This underscores the hatred that motivates these two men.

Racism is a theme of the book because of Bode and Chub's white supremacy group. However, even as these two men claim to be superior, they often prove themselves to be quite inferior to characters such as JoLayne Lucks. Therefore, while the theme of racism is present in the novel, it turns into a joke as the reader observes Bode and Chub fumble through the motions of their hatred. The theme that emerges is one of stupidity rather than hatred.

Right and Wrong

JoLayne Lucks wants to use her lottery winnings to buy Simmons Wood. This piece of land is a natural environment for many animals that live there undisturbed by the humans living nearby. JoLayne wants to protect these animals and allow them to remain as nature intended. However, an investment executive from Chicago wants to buy the land for illegal reasons. He wants to build a mall to cover money embezzled by his mobster boss. This will destroy the natural environment.

At the same time, JoLayne is forced to follow two men who have stolen her lottery ticket because they are too greedy to be happy with half of the winnings. JoLayne follows these men until an opportunity arises to take the ticket back. When she does get the ticket back, JoLayne is faced with a fight to save the land she loves so much. JoLayne becomes involved in a bidding war with this other buyer until her friend Moffitt arrives and threatens the other buyer with unwanted publicity.

Right and wrong is a simple theme that is often too simple for modern bestselling novels. However, in this novel right and wrong is a clear theme that is not complicated by gray areas that often appear in real-life situations. In this novel, the reader never doubts that JoLayne Lucks is a kind and gentle woman who deserves to have her lottery winnings and that her plans for Simmons Wood is the best option for the natural area. JoLayne is the little person who is often trampled on by the government or large companies. In this novel, JoLayne survives to come out on top, making right and wrong a major theme of the novel.



Style

Point of View

The novel is written from the third-person and omniscient point of view. The novel does not have one narrator but instead, has many narrators. The author often moves from the mind of one character to the next often as quickly as one line of dialogue to the next. This movement between narrating characters allows the reader to see and hear what the multiple characters are thinking and feeling. This offers full insight into the actions of these characters in the plot of the novel.

Through this point of view, the reader can see the plot through the eyes of every character who has an impact, no matter how small, on the plot. The narration moves from character to character, sometimes in the middle of a grouping of dialogue. This can leave the reader occasionally confused as to whose mind they are currently inside of, but also gives the reader a well-rounded view of the plot. The point of view allows the reader to get to know each character and to see the humor in the plot that exists because of the thoughts, emotions, and opinions of each of the characters.

Setting

The novel is set in Florida. The novel moves all over the state, including settings in and around Miami and then moves upstate to Grange. The novel also includes scenes that take place in the Keys off the Florida coast. The setting of Miami is simply a backdrop to the novel, but Grange becomes something of a character to the novel. Grange becomes a character whose collection of odd religious artifacts inspires and changes some of the characters in the novel.

The novel is set in Florida like many of the author's previous books. This setting is deeply important to the writer who was raised in Florida and continues to make his home there. This unique intimacy allows the writer to bring to the novel a love of his setting that fills the pages through characters such as JoLayne Lucks. This also inspires the reader to see Florida through her unique point of view. The writer takes what might have appeared to be a mundane and incidental setting and turns it into a passion.

Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English. The novel contains dialogue and wording that can at times be difficult to comprehend, partly because of unique grammar and content. However, this choice of words creates authentic dialogue and realistic and three-dimensional characters.

The language of this novel is simple enough for the youngest readers to understand. However, there is a humor in this novel that can at times be hidden in the language.

This requires that reader has some experience in this world and some sophistication to catch the humor. The humor, although hidden, can leave the reader rolling on the floor with laughter. At the same time, the language is true to its characters and simple to understand.

Structure

The novel is divided into thirty chapters and an epiphany. Each chapter varies in length, but most are filled with multiple scenes that show the plot not only through one set of character's eyes, but often many. The novel is told in both exposition and dialogue, often with sections of authorial voice that gives the reader background information on the characters as well as commentary that injects humor into the novel.

The novel contains one main plot that is supported by multiple subplots. The main plot follows the activities of Bode and Chub as they steal and attempt to protect a lottery ticket from JoLayne Lucks that would have shared a jackpot with a ticket they own. One of the many subplots follows JoLayne as she not only attempts to retrieve her stolen ticket, but as she falls in love with a reporter she has somehow convinced to help her. Another subplot follows the obsession of Chub with a Hooters waitress. Another subplot follows the exploits of the townspeople of Grange as they attempt to make their living from false religious artifacts. All these plots come to a funny and satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



Quotes

"The significance of her Lotto numbers was this: each represented an age at which she had jettisoned a burdensome man" (Chapter 1, pg. 3.)

"A series of unhealthy friendships eventually drew Bode Gazzo into the culture of hate and hard-core bigotry" (Chapter 2, pg. 18.)

"His experience as a visiting journalist in small towns was that some folks would tell you their life story at the drop of a hat, and others wouldn't say boo if your hair was on fire" (Chapter 3, pg. 32.)

"When a small alligator swam by, JoLayne tossed it part of her ham sandwich, to keep its mind off the turtles." Chapter 4, pg. 42

"She was, however, stubborn. And it was her very strong desire to not be a divorced woman" (Chapter 6, pg. 58.)

"Chub couldn't decide where to stash the stolen lottery ticket—few hiding places were as ingenious as Bode Gazzo's condom" (Chapter 8, pg. 86.)

"The firebombing of Tom Krome's house was the most serious managerial crisis of Sinclair's career" (Chapter 11, pg. 116.)

"For Moffitt, seeing JoLayne Lucks was simultaneously excruciating and heavenly" (Chapter 13, pg. 138.)

"It was Shiner's first kidnapping, and despite a shaky start it came off pretty well" (Chapter 17, pg. 181.)

"A despondency settled upon her; it might have been mistaken for authentic grief, although not by those aware of Mary Andrea's background as an actress" (Chapter 22, pg. 235.)

"But Bodean James Gazzo was done talking. He died with the gun brush in his cheeks. His final breath was a soft necrotic whistle of WD-40 fumes" (Chapter 27, pg. 303.)

"Not long afterwards, Chub lay down in the coarse bleached sand and did not move" (Epiphany, pg. 351.)

Topics for Discussion

Who is JoLayne Lucks? What does she win? What is her reaction to this good fortune? How do her neighbors and friends react? What does JoLayne plan to do with her winnings? How is this plan interrupted? Why does JoLayne refuse to go to the police? What does this say about JoLayne's personality? Why does JoLayne turn to Krome for help? What does this say about JoLayne?

Who is Tom Krome? Why is he trying to divorce his wife? Why is he having little success? Who is Tom having an affair with and for what reason? How does his house get blown up? How does Krome react to this turn of events? Why does Krome help JoLayne? How does he feel about her? Does this have anything to do with his actions?

Who is Moffitt? Why is Moffitt ashamed of his job? What happens that bring shames to his work? Why does Moffitt agree to help JoLayne? How does Moffitt feel about JoLayne? What does this say about him? What does it say about JoLayne? How does Moffitt scare off the other person who is interested in purchasing Simon Woods? Why does he do this?

Who is Amber? How does she become involved in the lottery ticket scam? Where does she find the ticket? Why does she not cash it in herself? What does Amber do with the ticket? What happens to Amber after this? Why does Amber behave in this fashion? What does this say about her personality? Is Amber really Jewish? Is her father really a rabbi?

Who are Bode Gazzo and Chub? Why do they form a white supremacist group? What do they plan to do with their group? Why do they want to win the lottery? Why do they not want to share the lottery jackpot? What do they decide to do about the jackpot? Why do they not cash the tickets right away? How does this delay cause them to lose both tickets?

Discuss miracles. Why does Demencio make his statue of the Madonna cry? Why does the unemployed carpenter drill holes in his hands? Is it right to take money from pilgrims in the name of a miracle when the miracle is not real? Why are people willing to pay money to see these things? What benefit do they think will come of it?

Discuss the turtles. Where does JoLayne get the turtles? Why does she give them to Demencio? What does Demencio do with the turtles? How does this impact Sinclair? What does all this say about religious artifacts, nature, and Simmons Wood? What does it say about JoLayne's desire to protect Simmons Wood? Are all these things connected and in what way?