

The Last Supper: A Novel Study Guide

The Last Supper: A Novel by Charles McCarry

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Plot Summary

The Last Supper by Charles McCarry follows the careers of three American intelligence agents, Hubbard Christopher and his son Paul, and their associate Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz from World War II through the Nixon years. At the end, Barney confesses to having been a Soviet agent all along and confirms Paul's growing suspicions of what has really taken place.

American novelist Hubbard Christopher marries in Germany and with his son Paul is expelled by the Nazis in 1939. His wife Lori is arrested. Hubbard joins The Outfit of American intelligence and spends the war in Germany looking for Lori and developing a successful spy ring. Meanwhile, Barney is posted in Burma during the war with the cowardly Wadsorth "Waddy" Jessup, against whom he swears vengeance. Barney gets himself posted to Berlin as Hubbard's second-in-command. The Outfit in Europe so successfully that the Soviets kill Hubbard.

Paul joins The Outfit in his father's footsteps. He is posted to Indochina under Waddy, posing as a poet. He next goes to Vienna as Barney's second-in-command. Their joint mission with British intelligence ends, in Paul's opinion, in a fiasco, but the Director assures him that it is an unprecedented success. The Outfit cannot be bested by the Soviets. Working independently, Paul develops embarrassing theories that make him persona non grata and inspire the Vietnamese to take out a contract on his lover, Molly Benson. Paul heads back to Saigon to offer his life instead, but Molly dies in a hit-and-run reminiscent of Hubbard's death. Paul does not learn about this for ten years because his pilot in Vietnam lands them inside China and Paul is arrested as a dangerous counter revolutionary. He is sentenced to death but the execution is postponed twenty years to allow him to show remorse.

After ten years at hard labor in solitary confinement, Paul is released and flown home. He and Stephanie Webster, whom he knows as a child in Paris, become lovers. Paul uncovers details about all the things that he, his parents, and Molly have suffered, and leads a sting operation that brings down Barney, who admits that he has been a Soviet spy. Barney engineers everything to get even with the Yale types who lord it over others inside The Outfit and also to keep Paul alive despite his genius and tenacity. In particular, he lands Paul in the Chinese prison to keep him out of reach by Soviet assassins. Barney is proud of how Paul has figured everything out when no one else has a clue. Paul and Stephanie name their daughter Lori in his mother's memory.



Prologue, Molly

Prologue, Molly Summary

Molly Benson awakens her lover, Paul Christopher, from a nightmare in which he sees himself at age thirteen, steering his father's yawl when his mother drowns. Molly dreads Paul's going to Saigon, convinced that he will exchange his life for hers. Paul slips out while she sleeps, but Molly takes a taxi to the airport where Tom Webster fails to talk Paul into disappearing with her. Instead, Molly is run down by a dark green Peugeot that flees the scene.

Prologue, Molly Analysis

The Prologue introduces protagonist Paul Christopher, his beautiful lover, Molly Benson, and Paul's friend in the intelligence agency, Tom Webster, who continues helping protect Molly from Vietnamese agents intent on getting even with Paul. This is highly-charged and emotional in tone. Characters and relationships are concisely sketched on the last night of Molly's life. Paul's airplane leaves Paris just as a hit-and-run driver strikes Molly down as Tom watches. There is a mystery man on the scene. This sets a dramatic tone for the work.

Every detail of Paul's nightmare, from which Molly wakes him with a kiss, is based on events that are spelled out in Book I, in a variety of contexts. Molly has a theory that dreams continue after one awakens but the action cannot be seen. The actors in the dream may however continue to watch the dreamer. In the dream, Paul sees characters dressed as Gestapo and Jews, a clear anomaly when he is thirteen in 1915, but which are fleshed out while he is an adolescent before being expelled from Nazi Germany.



Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, Part 2

Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, Part 2 Summary

Paul's father, Hubbard, at age twenty-one is a Berlin-based writer who in 1923 visits his late father's friends, the Buechelers on Rügen Island. There he meets Lori who is eighteen years old and gloriously pretty, independent and forward. Hearing Hubbard read his draft novel to her, she declares him a genius and seduces him. In Chapter 2, Lori is eight months pregnant when her Uncle Paulus and Hubbard's cousin Christopher visit. Both stand as godfather for the baby born 14 Jun. 1924 at Berwick. Paul from the start is a quiet and reflective person, as well as a reader and an athlete. The family enjoys sailing their yawl, the Mahican, to Falster Island, where Hubbard tells stories about his ancestors. Coming back from a trip, Lori makes Paul promise never to be silent about the truth.

Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, Part 2 Analysis

Book I opens with an explicit declaration that Molly's murder can be traced back to Paul's parents meeting in 1923 on an island in the Baltic Sea. McCarry quickly shows that this is not as far-fetched as it sounds. Paul's father, Hubbard, is a young American writer in Berlin. He meets and marries Lori, a beautiful and feisty young German. McCarry packs voluminous amounts of history and family into the pages. He sketches the dismal economic conditions in Weimar Germany and clashes between Bolsheviks and the Army, weaving details into Hubbard and Lori's courtship. He presents an anecdote depicting Bismarck's famous temper and touching battle scenes from World War I and the Mexican Revolution. Lori is clearly a character not to be bothered, suggesting that she may be her own worst enemy. Hubbard's most salient feature, in terms of what is coming ahead, is his extraordinary height and American behavior, which make him stand out easily. He is fluent in German however.

Chapter 2 jumps forward, showing Lori close to giving birth to Paul. Her surprise meeting with her stiff yet likable Prussian uncle, introduced in Chapter 1, and Hubbard's almost identical American cousin Christopher is played for humor, as well as the birth in a traditional setting and the midwife being scandalized by Hubbard's presence. There is a brief sketch of Paul's enjoyable boyhood centered on books and athletics. The family enjoys sailing the yawl introduced in the Prologue on the Baltic. At home, anecdotes are not allowed during conversation periods, but visiting Falster Island, Hubbard tells a long story about his ancestors before the American Revolution. It is fascinating in detail and shows that the ancestors have a strong code of honor and are willing to buck authority.



Coming back from a trip to Falster, Lori makes Paul promise never to be silent about the truth. He will be as good as his word. His sharpest memory is of his parents, where his father is towering and his mother is tiny, standing together as one in foul-weather gear. Tragedy has to loom over such happiness.



Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 2, Part 3 to Chapter 3, Part 2

Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 2, Part 3 to Chapter 3, Part 2 Summary

The Nazis come to power. When Paul is twelve in 1936, a new Gestapo chief, Stutzer, angers Lori by kicking the village fool. She slaps him. That summer Paul finds Lori and the artist Zaentz talking in the woods, follows them down on a swim a half mile out to the Manican, and over to Falster, where Zaentz is dropped off. Paul is vowed to silence. Stutzer finds their clothing on the beach and remarks on the particular smell of Jewish garments. Paul spends the next summer in Harbor with Uncle Elliott and Aunt Alice, who shows him the family cemetery. This act shows that all the women die young of boredom, says Alice. Elliott's house guests are all creative and male.

The Christophers send Paul to a French school on Lake Geneva where he defends himself against older students and earns a reputation. Back in Rügen in the summer of 1939, the sea shows signs of coming war but island life is unchanged. Mahican continues her night runs and Paul surprises Stutzer watching the house. During a picnic, Lori and Paul meet Rothchild, who asks passage to freedom. En route to Falster in heavy seas, Lori falls overboard and Paul nearly drowns as he rescues her. Stutzer meets Mahican as she returns to port, examines everyone's papers, remarks on Lori's German citizenship, points to evidence of a missing passenger, and warns against any more unauthorized trips. He stares at Lori's breasts and smiles to show that he knows everything. Paulus warns them not to be politically stupid.

The Christophers catch the Paris express. At the frontier, the Gestapo questions them, confiscates Zaentz's drawing with a leer, forcibly expels Hubbard and Paul, and detains Lori. She forbids them to say goodbye or display emotion before the Nazis. Germany invades Poland that night and when France declares war on Germany, communications cease. It takes two weeks for Paulus to wire that he has not traced Lori and urge them to go to America. Hubbard does not speak crossing the Atlantic, while Paul dreams of his mother's many painful deaths. Elliott meets them in New York and introduces Hubbard to an ingenious English friend, Sir Richard Shaw-Condon, who after a proper interrogation offers a simple solution: impersonate Elliott and use his passport to return to Germany and find Lori. He promises help and that it will be great fun.

In Chapter 3, Lt. Paul Christopher is on Christmas leave from the Marine Corps at the Harbor. After sledding with his second cousin Horace, he is reunited with his father after four years and learns that Lori has become a non-person in Germany. She is probably in a camp. Alice's brother Waddy Jessup arrives with his Neanderthal-looking aide, Barnabas Wolkowicz for a last celebration for the duration of the war. Alice is annoyed by the secrecy surrounding The Outfit. Waddy tries to recruit Paul to "Force Jessup," which operates covertly behind Japanese lines. Paul receives as a present a copy of



Zaentz's portrait of his mother, made from memory. Hubbard is sure that Lori is alive. Barney sensitively plays a Bach fugue.

Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 2, Part 3 to Chapter 3, Part 2 Analysis

Paul's idyllic youth falls apart as the Nazis come to power in Germany. While claiming to be non-political, Lori is the most provocative, characterizing Nazi rule as "government by operetta" (pg. 43), which she claims Germans need, and getting off to a bad start with the new Gestapo chief, Stutzer. Islanders thereafter are afraid to look her or her family in the face. The Christophers are shown using their boat to smuggle Jews and Bolsheviks to Denmark. During one trip, Lori falls overboard, providing the context for part of Paul's nightmare in the Prologue. Stutzer makes clear that he knows what they are doing but cannot catch them red-handed.

One of the people that they rescue is the hated Rothchild, who has fought in the Spanish Civil War, which had served as a proxy war for Nazis and Soviets to try out their new armaments. Rothchild is shown as an opportunist when the two powers sign a non-aggression pact and his ilk appear on lists of individuals to be eliminated. Swimming out a half mile out to the Manican with another refugee, the artist Zaentz, Paul meditates on what he has learned from his Uncle Paulus: do only what you know for sure that you can do. Sent for the summer to the U.S., Paul learns from Aunt Alice that all of the women in the family have died young. The tragic story of Indian Joe is recalled and the likelihood of tragedy befalling Lori is suggested. Zaentz's drawing of Lori is brought back into focus. It will play a crucial role during the family's flight from Germany, Lori's arrest, and the family's last Christmas at home. The drawing shows Lori pregnant with Paul and naked. The Gestapo agents leer at it and her breasts, suggesting the fate that awaits Lori.

Paul's bleak schooling near Lake Geneva explains additional details of his nightmare: the odd feeding of buttons. It also demonstrates his fighting spirit and ability to keep his head while planning strategy. These will be crucial throughout his career. Back in Rügen, McCarry shows Paul spotting U-boats offshore and likens them to extinct sea creatures come back to life, a subtle reference to disarmament requirements of the Treaty of Versailles.

Hubbard and Paul return to America, where cousin Elliott sets Hubbard up with an English friend, Sir Richard Shaw-Condon that promises to help get Lori out of Germany. Sir Richard strikes poses as a British politician and talks of the mission as great fun, promising training in various deadly arts. Hubbard evidently takes him up on the deal, but none of the action is seen. He is gone for four unseen years and returns, reporting no progress in finding Lori. He is described as a Navy man who is learning to parachute. Note the subtle references to Elliott being a member of Yale University's secret Skull and Bone Society and Sir Richard's secret yet suggestive talk. The only overt thing that he says is that he may not speak openly with Americans because of the U.S. Neutrality Acts, which continue to rankle Britons until the U.S. enters World War II several years



later. Hubbard and Paul are repeatedly advised to travel on neutral shipping. While this is a prudent choice because of the U-boat threat, it is also required by U.S. law. The Allies are confident that they so outnumber the Germans that the war will be quick, and yet they fail to attack and everything goes the Germans' way. The French do no sing as they march, as do the Germans.

Secrecy carries over into the final chapter of Book I, as Alice decries the male penchant for secrecy, at which females are far better. Paul is a Marine Corps officer at Christmas of 1943, bound for the Pacific theater. Several key figures in Book II are introduced, including Alice's brother Capt. Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup and his Neanderthal-looking aide, WOJG Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz. The Outfit is first mentioned and Waddy tries to recruit Paul to "Force Jessup," which operates covertly behind Japanese lines. This sets up the next part of the novel.



Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 1-2

Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 1-2 Summary

Waddy and Barney parachute into the Shweli River region of Burma to command 20 Kachin guerrilla fighters. Affecting a British accent, Waddy treats Barney like his houseboy. Once on patrol Force Jessup is ambushed. Barney is left behind to cover the squad's retreat and when he finds his way back to camp, starving and dehydrated, he finds Waddy nonchalant about his survival. Barney notices this attitude - and Waddy's absence during fighting - when they demolish a Japanese tank and capture work elephants, which Waddy plans to help them crash through the dense rain forest more speedily.

Despite dysentery, Barney blows up the tank, attracting surrounding Japanese troops, who encircle the squad. When the one surviving elephant is not hit by intense gunfire, Barney though irreligious decides that it is touched by a higher power and drags Waddy into contact with it. The elephant carries them for five hours before falling, exhausted. Waddy has no concern for locating their heavy weaponry, but for finding his samurai sword and getting rid of it, lest the Japanese find it in his possession and kill him for the effrontery. Waddy suffers a superficial wound, has a baby-like tantrum, sings Yale songs, and talks about being proud to die a communist. He gallops away atop the elephant, leaving Barney to be captured.

Barney's captors admire how many of their own he has killed, even as they torture him. He passes out as each tooth is extracted with a bayonet and believes that he has been blinded when he awakens in darkness. In fact, he is in a Chinese or Kachin encampment, and his saviors are eating the roasted livers of his captors, whose heads are mounted on stakes. The English commander keeps Barney around for the best six months of his life, recovering and occasionally helping ambush the Japanese. Liberated, Barney identifies himself as a member of The Outfit, is flown to Ceylon, and reunited with Waddy, whose shameful cowardice under fire he writes up. Waddy counters with a battlefield commission and promise of decorations. He wants bygones to be bygones, to allow only the elephant never to forget. In return, Barney demands posting to Germany after the war.

Chapter 2 shows devastated Berlin in 1946 as Barney arrives, a natural spy, doing the work of twenty under the direction of Hubbard Christopher, who remains whenever possible silent. Barney's anti-Yale attitude, crudeness, and distrust of everyone annoys co-workers, so he mostly works alone. Growing sure that the Zechman Bureau, a wartime intelligence agency recruited by Hubbard and forming the very heart of American intelligence, has been infiltrated by the Soviets, Barney gets permission to bait a trap for Zechmann using beautiful Ilse Bauer. Ilse's cover story is that in 1939 her horse cart is sideswiped by a Gestapo Mercedes and en route to the hospital, a prisoner identifies herself as Lori and asks Ilse to tell her uncle that she is alive and en route to



Buchenwald. Ilse's mother takes her to Switzerland and she only now manages to return to Berlin with the news. Zechmann is enchanted.

Hubbard crazily believes the carefully rehearsed lie, whose details Barney fills in, ending with his saving her from gang rape by Russians. Meanwhile, taken by her rare virginity, Zechmann courts Ilse in vain and learns that she is living off a Swiss bank account. He waits for her money to run out before proposing marriage, but is turned down. After allowing him to kiss her (and expecting him to demand more), Ilse asks for a job. He hires her as an interpreter. Barney recruits a minor functionary in the Soviet security apparatus, Horst Bülow (code name: "Bowstring"), by preying on his poverty and love of culture. He then has Ilse flirt with two suspects in the Zechmann Bureau, talking about a document that Bülow has stolen to see if he is on their suspect list. When he is not, Hubbard terminates the investigation but accepts to be Barney's best man when he marries Ilse.

Barney has Bowstring photograph captured SS and Gestapo files, including one on Lori up to her arrest. Hubbard insists on speeding up the process, having Barney call Ilse at work to set up a meeting. Bülow chooses to meet at a streetcar stop in the Wilmersdorf Wood, far from the Soviet Zone at 4:30 AM. The street appears empty, but the Army driver is told to be alert to pick Hubbard up in an instant. Hubbard recognizes Bülow just before a hurtling car hits, killing Hubbard instantly. Barney shoots the driver dead and pulls his body from the burning wreck. He weeps and curses, driving Hubbard back to headquarters.

In Chapter 3, Barney takes Hubbard's ashes to the Harbor, where Paul scatters them without ceremony. By family tradition, there are no tears. Paul's Harvard roommate, David Patchen, is surprised by the merriment at the meal afterwards. Looking ill at ease, Barney delivers Hubbard's effects to Paul and tells him about the death, omitting classified details that make it not sound accidental. Barney sheds the only tears that day. Paul takes Barney's photographs to Zaentz in Greenwich Village, NY, to study for his mother's face, sure that he knows it better than anyone. Zaentz urges him to drop his father's obsession. The family banker, Sebastian Laux, informs Paul that to get his father's estate he must declare Lori legally dead. Paul refuses. His parents have already dispersed some \$250,000 to refugees. The family seems to find money comical.

Laux tells Paul that the Russians murder his father out of fear for him and accompanies him to Washington, D.C. to receive from The Outfit Hubbard's posthumous medal. Paul must sign a secrecy agreement to attend. Also there are Elliott, Barney, who is also decorated, and Ilse. The two citations detail the bloody circumstances of Hubbard's death. Ilse believes that it is best that no one knows what men like this do for their country. They relinquish the medals, to be kept in the Director's safe. In the spring, the Director visits Boston to recruit Paul to The Outfit; his poetry is a perfect cover, allowing him to travel anywhere and meet anyone. David Patchen, the Director informs Paul, has been part of The Outfit since the war.

Assigned to Indochina because of his fluency in French, some six months into his service, Paul hears for the first time from Barney, who invites him to lunch to warn him



about what he will face in Hanoi: his dangerous fool of a cousin Waddy. Meanwhile, Waddy smuggles 50 copies of Paul's book into the country and distributes it in bookstores to establish a reputation for the young poet among the avant-guard. He is taught Vietnamese by his lover, Lê, and goes out into the bush with the Vietminh to describe for an American magazine the other side of the conflict. He admires the ingenuity of the guerrillas, but deplores their massacring Catholics in one village. His account is censored by the magazine as being racist, but his welcome in Hanoi is over. He returns to New York, after Waddy is removed as a security risk, having failed a polygraph about homosexuality..

Paul is trapped into seeing Waddy again at Waddy's sister Alice's New York home, as he picks up sixteen-year-old Horace, to visit his father Elliott and new stepmother Emily. Waddy is depressed and drinking heavily, because Congress is investigating him as a communist, which he has always proudly maintained that he is but now denies because of the danger. He claims that Barney is spreading lies about him and the Republicans, who have pulled off a putsch in Congress, are after all intellectuals. Mention of prison sends Waddy into a crying fit from which he must be shaken and slapped loose. Alice is ashamed of his cowardice.

Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 1-2 Analysis

Book II focuses on rough-mannered Barney Wolkowicz during and immediately after World War II. During the war, in Burma, Waddy is Barney's commanding officer in a commando unit. Twice Waddy abandons Barney to his fate, convincing him that he is a coward. Barney develops a hatred for Yale graduates, who form the nucleus of the clandestine Outfit, which becomes a major focus of the novel. The secrecy of the Skull and Bones society is again elicited but not fully revealed.

Barney's heroism in destroying an enemy tank is played for comedy as the noise from a severe case of dysentery threatens to give away his position. A Japanese sentry laughs at his explosions shortly before being killed. Barney is shown to be irreligious but convinced that elephants have some mystic power. An elephant plays a part later in the novel as Barney has a clandestine meeting in a zoo. Facing death, Barney understands but cannot condone the Japanese attitude towards death. Waddy is obsessed with not being found in possession of a samurai sword and other Japanese paraphernalia that he has collected. He is sure that he, as an officer, will alone be of intelligence interest to the enemy.

Barney is tortured by beatings and having his teeth pulled. The porcelain smile that dentists eventually give him becomes a calling card, regularly mentioned. Late in the novel it will be revealed that The Outfit encourages prisoners of war to tell anything that their interrogators request, rather than undergo torture, which no one can successfully endure. As Paul Christopher will find out when captured by the Chinese, the truth of not knowing anything does not convince determined questioners. The description of Barney's torture is intense and transitions into his being freed by his belief that the enemy has blinded him. He is simply in a dark room in a Chinese or Kachin



encampment. Recovering is the best time of his life. Late in the novel he will ask Paul if the Chinese emasculate him, as seems to be their penchant in Burma. They also have the curious, unexplained habit of eating their enemies' roasted livers.

Liberated, Barney as a member of The Outfit is flown to its cushy headquarters on Ceylon, where Waddy is in temporary command. Barney is determined to have him court-martialed for cowardice under fire, but is bought off by help being posting to Germany after the war. Note that Waddy receives the Distinguished Service Cross or DSC, the U.S. Army's second highest medal for bravery. When he later in the novel falls afoul of the McCarthyites and is found in fact to be a Soviet spy, it helps him obtain leniency.

Chapter 2 shifts to Berlin in 1946 with an impressionistic description of the devastation. Barney works under Hubbard Christopher, who has yet to emerge from his depression over losing Lori. Barney notes that the 10% Hubbard gives to the job is worth more than the 90% he and others give. They do not see eye-to-eye on many aspects of espionage, but admire one another. Meanwhile, Barney's anti-Yale attitude, crudeness, and distrust of everyone annoys his co-workers. He is convinced that the Zechman Bureau, which Hubbard recruits from the Nazi era and so depends on for U.S. intelligence that he uses virtually no other assets, has been infiltrated by the Soviets, Zechmann and the beautiful young Ilse Bauer are introduced. Barney uses her to trap suspected spies and ends up marrying her. Her life's story changes in several explanations. One puts her in touch with Lori en route to the concentration camp, and although assured that it is invented, Hubbard clings to it. In the end, this indirectly sets up his murder. Much is made of rapes by Red Army men, who are denigrated as Mongolians. The Americans' willingness to recruit turncoats and treat them as dispensable is shown, with less moral judgment. They label Soviet hit-and-run assassinations by car "flyswatting," because the results look similar. It is the same technique that was used on Molly in the Prologue and Hubbard is murdered in the same way after he is too anxious to obtain stolen SS and Gestapo files documenting Lori up to her arrest.

Chapter 3 finishes the tale of Hubbard Christopher, watching his ashes come home to the Harbor and be scattered to the wind without ceremony. Paul's Harvard roommate, David Patchen, is introduced. He is destined to play a major role, rising through the ranks of The Outfit eventually to become Director. At this point he is an observer of the family's seemingly lighthearted acceptance of Hubbard's death. Only tough Barney weeps and will feel guilty about his failure to protect Hubbard for the rest of the novel. The artist Zaentz reappears briefly, urging Paul to drop his father's obsession about finding Lori, and the family banker informs Paul that he would be rather wealthy if he would have Lori legally dead. Paul refuses and the principal is allowed to earn interest. This will become important in the final part of the novel, when Paul returns from China and is cut off from The Outfit.

The banker is also The Outfit's recruiting agent. The secretive ceremonies for granting medals for bravery are detailed. Several more presentations will follow in later chapters. Paul is told that being a poet provides a perfect cover, allowing him to travel anywhere



and meet anyone. Paul's first assignment is in Indochina, where the Vietminh, predecessors to the Viet Cong, are fighting for independence from French rule. Paul works under his cousin Waddy, whose mental disintegration is progressing. Paul admires the Vietminh until they commit unthinkable atrocities against civilians. The article he writes to counter pro-French propaganda in the West is censored to remove graphic detail that suggests racism. Back in the U.S., Paul watches Waddy fall deeper into depression and alcoholism, anticipating being exposed as a communist. He has bragged about this repeatedly, but now finds it safer to claim it is a joke. He has been already fired for homosexuality and jokes about how he might enjoy prison life put him into a seizure.



Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 4-7

Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 4-7 Summary

Meanwhile, in Washington, DC, Barney supervises the searching of the apartment of a suspected Soviet agent, Jocelyn Frick. He has been investigating her secret twenty-year affair with her boss, Mordecai Bashian, who has been using her as a courier to communist associates. Arresting her, Waddy assures her that her forced prostitution will not come out if she testifies before Congress about the Addressee Spy Ring, which includes Waddy. Elliott Hubbard convinces Dennis Foley, the Committee's fiery counsel, to allow a lesser charge if Waddy pleads guilty, and insists that Barney has evidence of espionage against no one but Bashian. They agree to protect The Outfit's name. Waddy and Bashian are given a year in prison.

For this work, Barney in Chapter 5 again receives The Outfit's highest award. He invites Paul to attend the ceremony. Later, at dinner with David Patchen, who has risen to the Director's personal staff, to come to dinner, Barney angrily reject Patchen's reference to his circus for politicians. When David leaves, Barney asks Paul to be his second in Vienna. Chapter 6 takes place in Vienna, where The Outfit is fronted by an underground garage. Long tunnels lead into an abandoned sewer that runs beneath Soviet headquarters in the Imperial Hotel. Five teletypes churn out Russian text. Barney's British counterpart is Robin Darby, mastermind behind obtaining the secret coding machines. Darby's assistant, Rosalind Wilmot, invites Paul to dinner, where she explains why Barney and Darby do not get along (they are too alike and Ilse fancies Darby). She initiates a sexual friendship with Paul. Six months later, they catch Darby and Ilse being intimate at a resort. Barney calls Darby out to a melodramatic fight in the woods. Within three to four minutes, both are bloodied and exhausted. Barney warns that it is not over.

The next night, Ilse pounds on Paul's door, demanding refuge. She fears that Barney is going after the Soviets to reveal that her father had served in the SS, running a camp in Poland. They will kill her in retribution. Paul goes to find Barney and Rosalind refuses to stay with Ilse. Barney is in the Sewer, sober and reading. In the morning, Paul takes Barney to his apartment, where he finds a note from Ilse; she is moving to the U.S. A report comes that Ilse is kidnapped from a taxi by Russians. Teams arrive from London and Washington to investigate, because Ilse knows about the decoder. They debate whether Ilse is a spy and if so, for how long. Is the kidnapping a charade? Barney regrets having broken his rule to trust her. Experts analyze data and determine that it has not changed, suggesting that the Soviets have not learned about the Sewer.

Barney is sure that Ilse will betray them and plants more listening devices and explosives to thwart a Soviet attack. When the alarms go off three months later, Barney orders evacuation and destruction. Only Barney and Paul remain when the Soviets blast through the wall, but they manage to kill the invader and blow up the teletypes and the cave itself. Back in Washington, Barney and Paul are secretly decorated again because



The Outfit considers The Sewer the greatest coup in espionage history. It would be humiliating to admit that Ilse might have been a Soviet agent before having her adultery uncovered. Then she is blackmailed. It might be cynical, but the only way to avoid paranoia is to deny that the enemy might be smarter. One must choose madness to remain sane. Patchen advises that Paul resume his deep cover as a poet and work alone, reporting secretly to Pratchen. He will become a legend in his own time if he can break loose of Barney.

Chapter 7 opens years later, with Rosalind and Paul having dinner in Washington. He has been abroad, while she works for Darby, who heads British intelligence in the U.S. and has become a drunken embarrassment. The Outfit has shut him off, thanks to Barney's vengeance. Barney works for Dennis Foley, the President's assistant for intelligence matters, on loan from The Outfit. Darby wants Rosalind to resume her affair with Paul in order to learn about Barney's vendetta, but she refuses. Paul believes that Darby is suffering alcoholic delusions. They part with a chaste kiss, both realizing that they have been lying to one another all evening. She has been warning Paul that the business with Darby is no joke.

Paul and a fatter and belligerent Barney meet at the elephant cage in the zoo, apparently a regular place for Barney to conduct business. There are a series of clear signals. Barney admits to running a counterintelligence operation and reporting to Foley in the White House. He is forbidden to tell The Outfit anything, which drives David crazy. They want Paul to act as intermediary. Paul is surprised to hear why he is spying on Darby, which has nothing to do with Ilse. Later, David confides to Paul that he also suspects Darby but is forbidden by the White House to go after him. They want to spare British intelligence embarrassment. David is now chief of operations, running the whole U.S. espionage system and sees Darby as key to why no operation has been run successfully against Russian targets inside or outside the USSR.

A week later, drunk at a party, Darby shocks everyone by suggesting that U.S. Sen. Oliver Brooks is kept young by oral sex from his beautiful and young wife. Barney says that Darby wants to appear crazy when he is arrested. Horace Hubbard, now an agent, warns that Darby is meeting a Soviet agent and Darby is seized carrying false Canadian papers and cash. Tried in London, Darby admits working for the KBG but laughs at the idea that he is a traitor. On the eve of his transport to prison for life, Paul and Barney visit Darby. He then slips his jailers a favorite Soviet poison and escapes, leaving behind a taunt about Ilse written inside a copy of *The Manchurian Candidate* that Barney has given him.

Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapters 4-7 Analysis

Waddy's predicament grows worse when his nemesis, Barney, breaks an espionage and prostitution ring and he is among the mid-level functionaries throughout the U.S. government who is implicated. The long description about Jocelyn Frick and Mordecai Bashian looks at many aspects of immigration, race relations, and militant revolution in the U.S. in the 1950. It also examines Sen. McCarthy's crusade to root out communists



and travelers. McCarthy and his Select Committee are never named, but the atmosphere of the time is depicted well. Waddy colorfully calls it a Republican putsch, alluding to Hitler's first attempt to seize power in Germany. Elliott Hubbard is involved, watching out for the interests of The Outfit, and Dennis Foley is introduced as the Committee's fiery counsel. He will play a large role late in Book II. The whole fiasco ends in plea bargaining.

Paul's former roommate, David Patchen, rises in the hierarchy and conflicts with headstrong Barney. This continues going forward. When posted to Vienna to head an unusual joint mission with British intelligence, Barney takes Paul along. Patchen commends Barney's audacity in private. Barney soon conflicts with the head of the British contingency, Robin Darby, who is at first a rather dashing figure who obtains Soviet decoders that are yielding unmanageable mountains of data. The method used to obtain the equipment is rather humorous and the story is topped off with a bit of gallows humor. For example, the mechanic who steals the machines piece-by-piece and is handsomely paid, dies of rabies in a country where all dogs have supposedly been eaten.

Barney's world begins to implode as Darby and Ilse begin an affair. It is counterpoised to Paul and Darby's assistant, Rosalind Wilmot, becoming "sexual friends," which today would be "friends with benefits." Rosalind laughs when they catch Darby and Ilse kissing and fondling at a ski resort. Barney has them watched and confronts Darby with photographic evidence. Darby coolly asks for prints of the high-quality indoor shots with full nudity. He later jokes about an operatic duel with pistols, but holds his own when Barney begins punching. Barney warns that it is not over and makes good on the threat, investigating Darby when he is transferred to Washington, DC. He eventually captures him as he is preparing to flee the country. Like Waddy, Darby begins drinking heavily and grows depressed and obsessed. For that matter, Barney is a heavy drinker but never appears impaired.

In the course of the investigations, Ilse changes her story. Her father is not a member of the Waffen SS, the elite forces that fight alongside the regular German Army, but the regular SS responsible for running the infamous concentration camps. The rest of her story remains the same, but she fears being killed by the Soviets in retribution. Ilse is last seen being seized by Russians, and there begins a great debate about Ilse's actual status. Barney grows more distrustful than ever of human nature. In the end, The Outfit declares that the debacle that befalls The Sewer - invasion by Soviet troops and last-second demolition to prevent the capture of top secrets - a victory because it is unthinkable that the enemy could have outsmarted them. They reduce it to a sex scandal, however farcical that might seem. Paul pauses to think about how little truth matters any more. As an aftermath, Paul resumes his cover as a poet, independent from Barney.

Barney goes to work for Dennis Foley, who now works in the White House, working to prove that Darby is a traitor. This causes conflict with The Outfit and Paul is asked to work as an intermediary. When he meets at the elephant cage of the zoo, Barney recalls his fondness for elephants going back to his Burma days. David Patchen heads



the whole U.S. espionage system and agrees that Darby is the key to why no operation has ever been run successfully against Russian targets inside our outside the USSR. Darby's take-down is a classic of spy vs. spy. Barney calls the KGB's attempt to get Darby out of the U.S. amateurish. Horace Hubbard is re-introduced to the story as junior agent of The Outfit, destined to play a larger role in Book III. He shows some beginner mistakes but considerable promise in his first case.

Part II ends with Darby's London trial, in which he laughs at the idea that one could be a traitor to contemporary British society. In jail awaiting transport to a spartan prison, Darby reveals a life-long interest in botany. On the floor of his cell is a fine Isfahan carpet, such as adorned *The Sewer*. Barney gives him a copy of *The Manchurian Candidate*, wishing him an enjoyable read before losing all privileges. Darby pens a a taunt in Russian inside the tome, describing how Ilse had always lain face-down on the carpet during sex. He wants this image to remain burned into Barney's memory.

The Manchurian Candidate is a 1959 novel by Richard Condon, is a political thriller in which members of an American platoon during the Korean War are turned into sleeper agents by the communists, set up to overthrow the U.S. government and install a McCarthy-like replacement. The citing the title is meant to elicit thoughts of medals for bravery, terrible nightmares, cloak-and-dagger plots, and the turbulent times of the McCarthy hearings - all components of *The Last Supper*. It also subtly points forward to Part III, where Paul will fall prisoner to the People's Republic of China and be held for ten years not far from Manchuria in northeast China. It is an effective and subtle transition.



Book III, Christopher, Chapters 1-3

Book III, Christopher, Chapters 1-3 Summary

A week before Molly's murder, Paul joins her in Zermatt, Switzerland, for the holidays and some skiing. She had been in hiding there while he has been in Washington, DC, and Vietnam, making the enemies who now threaten their lives. At breakfast on the hotel terrace, Paul studies every face for the possible killer. Wearing a new Tyrolean hat, Barney enters, complaining about the cold. Molly introduces herself. Barney knows that Paul is a spy. Molly has only in the last month learned that Paul is too. Barney reports that Patchen has ordered everyone to avoid Paul and shows proof that the Truong toc has ordered Molly's assassination to make Paul suffer. Paul must return to Vietnam, entrusting Molly to Webster. Horace is in Saigon, willing to help. Barney gives him the name and number of a pilot, Gus, to get him to Hue and warns Paul to trust no one else. Remarking that Molly looks like Lori, Barney gets off the train at Visp. Paul had never noticed. Driving towards Paris, Molly warns that if Paul ever makes love to another woman, she will by sorcery take that woman over and turn her frigid.

Tom and Sybille Webster risk The Outfit's anger by welcoming Paul and Molly into their apartment but believe her safer elsewhere. Tom spirits Molly, disguised as a hooker, to a lightly guarded cul-de-sac and upstairs to an apartment decorated in black, glass, tiger skins, and 360° mirrored walls. Tom explains security codes and emphasizes that she is safe provided she never goes outside. Molly is happy making love with Paul there.

As he boards his plane to Saigon, Paul regrets leaving Molly without a word. He knows that she hates that. Nguyễn Kim is flirting with a French stewardess as he waits for Paul. He warns that the Truong toc is still brooding about Paul before sleeping most of the trip in the position of a Buddhist monk. Before landing, he changes into Vietnamese dress and manner before instructing Paul how to arrange to talk with the Truong toc in Hue. Horace and a Vietnamese official meet Paul in the terminal and Barney's old driver, Pong, soon has him at Barney's old house. Paul declines The Outfit's standard kit of weapons. While Horace naps, Paul slips out to find Gus, who agrees to fly him to Da Nang for \$1,000 up front. They spend some time in a raw strip bar catering to American civilian pilots to let the moon go down, and then fly quickly out over the South China Sea to avoid Vietcong anti-aircraft fire. With the plane on autopilot, both Paul and Gus fall asleep. Paul dreams about his mother and Molly, both saying goodbye. Gus awakens, realizing that they have overshot Hue. Circling, he lands to refuel and ask directions, but they come under attack and are prevented from taking off again. After a firefight, Paul is taken prisoner.

In Chapter 2, Paul is tried and sentenced to death for espionage, with the execution being suspended for twenty years of solitary forced labor, time to admit his guilt and possibly be reprieved. David Patchen in Hong Kong debates the cruelty of this sentence with a Chinese intelligence officer. As Paul and the current U.S. government insist on his innocence, the point is moot. On the anniversary of Paul's capture, his friends Tom,



Horace, David, and Barney gather at a private club to toast absent friends. A fifth place is set for Paul. David tells what little he learns in Hong Kong, which is that Paul is alive. Tom is drunk and demands that they try to do something. Barney speaks gruffly for David. The Outfit has no obligation to Paul, as Paul well knows. Barney wanted to use U.S. helicopters to rescue him but has been told it is imprudent. The Outfit is happy to be rid of an embarrassment. They can only wait for the political atmosphere to change in China and the U.S. Guilty over Molly's death, Tom is too angry to speak and weeps about how Paul will learn the truth. Barney pities Paul having only them as friends.

Chapter 3 jumps forward 3,753 days (10.3 years.) Since he is forbidden writing material, Paul adds a single word to the poem that he is creating in his memory every night. It is 3,569 words long. He begins after the initial period of round-the-clock interrogation and loses twenty-eight days while recovering from being buried alive when an earthquake collapses the trench that he is digging. He remembers waking up in a Peking hospital and seeing Gus in a colonel's uniform talking with a doctor who feeds him oranges. For seven years, Paul makes no sense of this. Every night, he remembers Molly in Rome but refuses to dwell on her or say goodbye.

Paul's days start at dawn. Paul dresses and folds his bedding as required, follows the silent guard Cheng to the latrine, fetches water washing, eats an sparse, unvarying meal, and begins work in his ditch. He is expected to dig 1.5 cubic meters a day. It has no purpose but is 2 km. long and Paul takes pride in his perfect walls and bottom. At forty-one, Paul is in perfect health. Although talking is forbidden, he learns some Mandarin from Cheng and amazes him with stories from home. Paul may borrow books and treasures the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary that Ze his weekly interrogator has given him. Every Wednesday Ze gives him another chance to confess his guilt, which Outfit rules allow, but Paul will not lie to save his neck. He admits to spying on my nations, but not China. After ten years, Ze gives an ultimatum: the death sentence can be executed at any time. When Paul refuses to lie, Ze believes him and shakes hands.

Next morning, Cheng returns Paul's belongings and takes him to a helicopter, which flies him over th Great Wall to an airport in smoggy Peking. Horace, for eighteen months had of The Outfit's new station in Peking, waits aboard the plane that flies Paul to America. David boards in the Aleutians, looking uncomfortable and emotional. He tells Paul that since The Outfit does nothing to gain his freedom, he owes it no debriefing, but may talk with him or Horace as he wishes. The media are likely to hound him. The U.S. is much changed. After a meal, David tells Paul about Molly. Paul goes into the restroom, studies his face for the first time in ten years, and whispers, then shouts goodbye to her. He recalls the pain of the Nazi policeman's truncheon when he is parted from his mother.

Book III, Christopher, Chapters 1-3 Analysis

Book III begins by backtracking to events just before Molly's murder. Barney, who has appeared in an unflattering manner as The Outfit's station chief in Saigon in The Tears of August, which precedes this novel, goes out of his way to warn Paul of the specific



danger and to set him up with a trusted pilot when he reaches Vietnam. He seems to condone Paul's suicidal mission. Only at the end of the novel this choice is revealed. Barney wants to keep Paul safe from Soviet assassins in the only place he trusts. Barney draws Paul's attention to how strongly Molly resembles Lori. This observation escaped the detail-oriented Paul, which is strange. However, the obvious Oedipal implications are not drawn out. Prophetically, Molly warns Paul that if he ever makes love to another woman, she will haunt that woman and turn her frigid. When Paul next has sex, some ten years later, this will stick in his mind and complicate the new relationship.

Nguyễn Kim, the chief Vietnamese assassin in France, a character from *Tears of August*, reappears in this book to share the flight to Saigon and demonstrate the dichotomies in Vietnamese life after colonialism. He tells Paul how to get in touch with the man responsible for the death sentence, Truong toc, now in Hue. Kim and the Truong toc are assassinated, making Paul's self-sacrifice unnecessary, but he flies off before learning this. Barney's old driver, Pong, is reintroduced and details from the earlier novel are woven in such as the pet snake. Pong becomes a crucial character again ten years later. When Paul hires Gus, whom Barney recommends, to fly him to Hue, he wonders about the elderly Chinese man's Cockney accent, but boards the plane. To delay take-off until the moon sets, so Vietcong gunners will have a harder time hitting them, they visit a strip bar catering to American civilian pilots - would-be cowboys. This seems little more than an attempt at injecting a bit of gratuitous sex into the novel, but ends up being a key element in Paul's deciphering what has befallen him and why.

During the flight, note Paul's dream about his mother and Molly, in which both say goodbye. Paul will soon be said to have been a vivid dreamer all his life, but the experience of Chinese imprisonment destroys that. He will be unwilling to have sexual dreams in China once he can no longer picture Molly naked.

The description of Paul's arrest upon landing mistakenly in China emphasizes the chaotic elements and he is not certain that he sees Gus torn apart by machine gun rounds. The description of Paul's secret trial is as sparse as that earlier of Robin Darby in London. This parallelism turns out to be vital as Darby is revealed to be far more important a character than it seems to this point. McCarty goes out of his way to describe Paul's incarceration for ten years in positive terms. He is not tortured, unless being forced to stand in chains for hours while interrogators scream questions is considered torture.

Chapter 3 describes Paul's daily and weekly routine for over ten years and for much of the novel going forward Paul appreciates the hard physical labor combined with time to concentrate his intellect on remembering every aspect of his life. He composes a long poem about his life, adding one word per night. He also trains himself to read slowly in order to fill his time.

David Patchen appears in Hong Kong talking with a Chinese intelligence officer who offers little information beyond that Paul is alive and has 20 years to admit his guilt,



even if he is not a spy. This seems unlikely, so the only hope of a reprieve lies in a change in attitude between Peking and Washington. Halfway through the sentence, this is precisely what happens as Nixon (unnamed) opens relations with the communist nation. Patchen and the unnamed official debate the humanity of Paul's sentence, which appears to be commonplace in China: condemnation to death but time to prove rehabilitation. Note that they debate inside a high-class Western hotel in Hong Kong, the epitome of capitalist excess on the border of the communist nation. The irony is pointed out to the reader.

On the anniversary of Paul's capture, his friends gather to toast absent friends. An empty place is set for Paul. David tells what little he learns in Hong Kong, which is that Paul is alive. The friends drink heavily and bicker about what can or should be done for Paul. Barney, as can be expected is the most vocal. Late in the novel it is revealed that this becomes an annual event, which ends when Paul is present physically. That becomes the Last Supper that gives the novel its title and begins the unraveling of the garment that has been woven to this point. Among the details to be reconsidered is how Gus gets Paul lost in China if he is so commendable a pilot and how when hospitalized briefly in Peking Paul is sure that he sees Gus alive in an army colonel's uniform. Paul recalls too many concrete details in the same period for that to be hallucination. It is the one question that haunts him going forward. Everything else falls into place.

The description of Paul's routine shifts between the typical and the very specific on the day before and day of his release from prison. Much local color is given and Paul is shown to be accepting of everything that befalls him. He rebels against nothing and develops a discipline and fortitude that will serve him well after his release. He takes pride in doing everything by the numbers and is considered a model prisoner. He leaves China at age forty-one in perfect health.

When his guard brings him his own clothing and belongings on the last day, Paul does not know whether he is about to be released or killed. He seems unfazed by either possibility. It is never said why Paul is released, although it appears on the surface that his regular interrogator Ze appreciates his confession to espionage against other nations, but not China. McCarthy considers that Ze as an orthodox communist may have come to doubt his own ability to coerce a confession as a Jesuit would if a conversion is not achieved. Earlier in the novel there are conversations about how all totalitarian systems have a religious aura. Note that The Outfit explicitly allows agents taken prisoner to confess everything, knowing that human beings cannot resist torture.

On the flight home, David Patchen warns that U.S. society is much changed in ten years. Patriotism is disparaged and what used to be the press has grown into a monster called the media. Paul is likely to fall under the glare of its lights. Since The Outfit has done nothing to gain his freedom, Paul owes it no debriefing, but he may talk with David or Horace if he wishes. Paul will talk to others of his friends as well, trying to make sense of his experiences. The media will indeed hound him through the rest of the novel. Chapter 3 ends touchingly as Paul learns of Molly's fate and tearfully says goodbye to her, recalling the pain of the Nazi policeman's truncheon as he is parted

from his mother decades earlier. Much deeper truth about these matters remains to be revealed.



Book III, Christopher, Chapters 4-6

Book III, Christopher, Chapters 4-6 Summary

Paul's return interests television newsman Patrick Graham, who pumps his old fellow revolutionary, Stephanie Webster, for background information. She offers no comment. Paul learns that his net worth has grown to \$1,458,292, and moves into Horace's small house on O St., which Stephanie has been house-sitting. He keeps to his spartan prison routine and begins writing down the poem he has been composing in his mind.

Barney visits, asks about how he had been treated in China, and is surprised to hear that his friend Gus had been responsible for Paul landing there. He now feels guilty for the fate of the only two people he has ever liked, Paul and Hubbard. They commiserate on having had no sex in years. Paul's heightened senses pick up a rose fragrance mixed in with Barney's meat and whiskey smell. David warns against seeing Barney, who is being hounded by the media, from whom secrets can no longer be kept. Americans are now paranoid. As they walk they come upon Barney, who demands to know why David has canceled his investigation of Graham. When David declares the wiretapping illegal, Barney rants that the law of self-preservation cannot be repealed and wants Paul to decide the matter.

The Websters host Paul's homecoming. Barney says that David's black suit is fitting, for he is burying The Outfit by befriending the Red Chinese. Communists are communists. Sybille hopes that Paul will get together with daughter Stephanie to jog, which is the latest fad. Stephanie's good points must be promoted if she is to marry. Paul laughs for the first time in a decade and everyone is glad to have him back.

After midnight, Barney drags Paul outside, where they are barraged by television lights. Barney's pistol is caught on film as is his knocking Graham over. Graham asks the camera why America's most decorated spy is tapping his phones and following him. Back inside, the Websters tell Paul that no one knows where Barney sleeps at night. He is a romantic figure, like the Scarlet Pimpernel. Tom walks Paul home later and stops to tell him what he recalls about Molly's death. He does not understand how it happens. A suspicious Frenchman uses a rolled up newspaper to signal a taxi as Molly steps into the street. She is hit crossing and the Frenchman rides away.

In Chapter 5, Stephanie visits Paul, sees him unselfconsciously study her and notes his own muscular and weathered look. She describes Graham as not posing a danger because of his short attention span, but beloved for the paranoia that he promotes. Paul tells about his years of satisfying digging, and agrees to jog with Stephanie for exercise. He studies the concentration with which she runs and can still see her as a child but also is able to appreciate her adult beauty. They become inseparable. She alone asks him about China and considers him the only person she knows who has truly suffered. His candid answer about his sexless life in China throws her. She begins reading his poem without invitation and continues while he sleeps. She is surprised that in person



he is emptier than in his writing. Stephanie comes to bed and initiates lovemaking. Paul cannot get Molly's promise to haunt him out of his mind. Stephanie is happy when Paul lies and tearfully calls her love.

In Chapter 6, Graham shows a film of his confrontation with Barney and promises more revelations. Barney believes that Graham is a Soviet agent being fed scandals from inside The Outfit. David fears that Graham will come after Paul next. Graham enjoys the melodrama by which his contact arranges meetings with an elusive long-haired girl who passes secret photographs planted in an orange. Graham confronts Paul and Stephanie during a jog and asks, off the record, for Paul to contribute to telling the truth about The Outfit. The media consider Paul a true victim and does not want to hurt him. Graham is disconcerted by Paul's lack of response when the alternative is having the story run wild. Graham intends to follow Barney to Berlin and cannot understand what Paul owes these creeps.

The season premier of The Patrick Graham Show recreates Hubbard Christopher's death thirty years earlier and features interviews with retired Sgt. Jimmy Jo Mitchell, Hubbard's driver, now an alcoholic. Graham prompts him skillfully to tell about picking up Secret German files that show a girl whose face he has helped a a police artist reconstruct. Graham summarizes Lori's story and speculates on the family's relationship to Barney.

When Barney returns from banishment in Berlin and meets Paul to confess that he has lied about Lori, hoping to spare him his father's obsession. He speaks with surprising agitation about the Gestapo file and agent but denies reading it or knowing what happens to it after. Berlin has been a crazy place, with people being killed right and left. Lori has been bait to kill Hubbard, who has been hurting the Soviets. Barney has a hard time getting out that he had used Ilse to set up the meeting with his agent.

Barney takes Paul to the Thai Pagoda restaurant in Alexandria, VA, where he resumes: Paul is like his father a persistent genius. Barney had known that Paul would not be destroyed in China. He tells Paul how to drop notes here to arrange meetings and advises him to ask David about Graham's direct line into The Outfit. Paul confronts David about his mother's file, refuses to accept that Graham knows more about her fate than he, and says that he is tired of waiting to hear the truth.

Book III, Christopher, Chapters 4-6 Analysis

Several crucial characters are introduced after Paul's return, including an aggressive television newsman Patrick Graham and his old friend in the radical underground, Stephanie Webster, whom Paul knows as a child in Paris. Stephanie offers no comment about Paul or The Outfit, but Graham does not relent. He goes on to collect information from a source apparently inside The Outfit, confronts Barney with cameras on the sidewalk and capture his worst side, and produces docudrama about Hubbard's death and The Sewer operation. Paul is independently wealthy and used to his spartan prison routine. He begins writing down the poem he has been composing in his mind at night,



which attracts Stephanie to him. Women seem always to move first with Paul. Recall Molly's threat to haunt Paul should he ever make love with another woman. Paul cannot get it out of his mind. He already struggles not to think of her as a little girl.

Barney is close to being persona non grata in the Outfit. No one knows where he sleeps at night but Paul, with heightened senses from his years of deprivation, smells roses mixed into his other typically Western smells. A few characters fill Paul in on how American society has changed during his absence, mostly for the worse. In particular the press has evolved into the aggressive media. On the other hand, jogging is a bourgeois fad that Paul finds invigorating in his suddenly inactive life. It helps bond him and Stephanie, although she considers it as silly as spending money on diet cookbooks. Barney rants about undercutting the law of self-preservation. He drinks more heavily than ever and finally showing evidence. His comments about Outfitters are sharp and apt, but as he begins confessing to Paul details that he had earlier had to omit for security's sake, he occasionally has difficulty getting things out. The man who does nothing without purpose seems indefinably different.

Introducing the Thai Pagoda restaurant in Alexandria, VA, as a place for Paul to drop notes to arrange meetings, Barney says that he had known that Paul would not be destroyed in China, but also talks with paranoia about Graham's direct line into The Outfit. David Patchen also shows rare emotion talking about evidence concerning Lori's status. He promises information when he is able but Paul has run out of patience. David calls him a a Jeremiah, referring to the Hebrew prophet who badgers the people in exile to be true to the Law of Moses.



Book III, Christopher, Chapters 7-12 and Epilogue

Book III, Christopher, Chapters 7-12 and Epilogue Summary

Stephanie goes with Paul to the Harbor and suggests that they conceive a child. Mitchell in the veterans' hospital recalls the rolled newspaper signal that the agent gives for Hubbard's murder. Paul is devastated since this gesture tells him who has killed everyone he loves. He fears for Stephanie and a child and cannot believe that he wants to kill someone whom he has always loved.

In Chapter 8, Paul invites himself to lunch at Alice Hubbard's house and finds David Patchen there. Alice chides Paul about his relationship with Stephanie, whom she knows from the voyage of the Paris. She is surprised the David has not pumped Paul about China and wishes that Graham's broadcast had been stopped. Waddy drops in. He is a cult hero on college campuses, lecturing about his sufferings as a victim of anti-communism. He believes that everything has worked out for the best and that prison focuses the mind. Outfitters will face Nuremberg-style justice some day. Every member of the so-called spy ring is a proud communist but is convicted on trumped up charges, allowing the big fish get away. Everyone is happy.

Stephanie recalls meeting Waddy aboard the France when she was fourteen. She was dressed in unisex clothing and calls herself Steve. Waddy mistakes her for a male and begins coming on to her, providing her first sexual arousal. He discovers his mistake just as a German matron encourages them to go away. Her accent and perfume resembled a melancholy countess whom Stephanie had tailed around Paris until she was caught and pulled like a doll into a changing booth. Stephanie has been afraid of garter belts ever since. Wolkowicz rescued Stephanie at that time. Now Paul suggests hypnosis on Stephanie in order to bring out more details on the countess.

Paul shows David the drawing of Loni and says that he wants explanations. David lists all of the fatalities in the story, including Bashian and Jocelyn, and Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc, and asks if Paul has a theory. Like Waddy, Paul sees diversions. Paul takes Stephanie to the Thai Pagoda, where the proprietor, Pong, tells him privately about killing Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc on Barney's orders and giving him an address for Barney's pilot, Gus Kimber, who gives flying lessons in Blythe, CA.

Visiting the Kimber Flying Service in Chapter 9, Paul is surprised that Kimber is a tall Texan. Kimber flies him over the Blythe intaglios, ancient rock formations high on mesas, whose makers never see them from this angle. Kimber explains how he is beaten savagely outside Rosie's in Saigon on New Year's Eve and while in the hospital has his new Piper Apache stolen. He does not recall a Chinese pilot with a Cockney accent.



Graham's next episode details the Sewer operation. David sees Graham's source as selective, omitting Darby and Barney, and believes that Darby in Moscow could be the source. It is odd that Graham receives only dated material, all of which centers on Paul after his release. When Paul and Barney next meet at the zoo, Barney rants about David always blaming outsiders. Recalling circuses as a child, he wishes that he could rub Graham into elephant droppings as a drunken midget once threatens a Youngstown policeman. When Paul asks about Kimber, Barney admits to getting him treated in a U.S. Army hospital after the beating and believes the plane is running drugs. David has polygraphed all of the other pilots but not revealed the results especially to Barney, who had favored invading Hainan Is. with helicopters to get Paul out. David is good friends with the Chinese.

In Chapter 10, Sir Richard Shaw-Condon is happy to meet Paul at last. After hearing his reminisces about the good war, Paul asks to examine the archives of British intelligence and finds a wartime photograph of Darby surrounded by troops in Burma. He is identified as Capt. R. Dirzinskaite. Visiting his old flame, Rosalind Wilmot, Paul learns Darby's history and obtains a copy of his service file. In Chapter 11, Paul on the first anniversary of his release visits Pong's daughter to arrange a meeting with Barney.

That night Paul's four friends gather for a last supper with Paul. Barney drinks five tumblers of Rob Roy quickly and eats voraciously. He points out how happy Paul is. David makes a speech about meeting every year, not knowing what has happened to Paul or why. Barney objects that they all had known that Paul goes to Vietnam to get himself rather than Molly killed because The Outfit hangs him out to dry over the JFK revelations. He also reveals that Pong kills both Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc on the night that Paul leaves Paris. Horace had not yet gotten the opportunity to tell Paul this. Barney orders the killings because of his debt to Paul's father. Blaming Tom for letting Molly get killed, Barney vomits intentionally.

As the five step out of the club together, Graham and his camera crew are waiting. Three retreat and lock the door, leaving Paul and Barney to race down the street, dogged by Graham. Barney loses Paul in Lafayette Park, but Paul spots a distinctive footprint and finds him, exhausted and freezing. Paul gives him his raincoat. Barney forces Paul to see that David alone has always known everything, whereas others have only known bits. When Paul says nothing, Barney throws in the towel: the Fool Factory has won. Kissing Paul goodbye, Barney runs off. When he is out of sight, Paul phones David.

Barney is awakened by a phone ringing and his aging but still beautiful and exciting companion borrowing money and going out for a moment. He is slow getting up to follow and realizes that she has answered the phone in German. He also realizes that he has forgotten to put in his false teeth. Reaching the lobby, he sees her cross the street as a man hails a cab with a rolled-up newspaper. He calls Ilse's name and draws his weapon. The car spins and Horace jumps out, covering Barney. Two more cars converge. Ilse complements Paul on pulling off something that no one else could.



In Chapter 12, Barney and Ilse are taken to a windowless safe house in the Virginia woods. Barney figures out that Paul's raincoat is bugged. They are allowed to talk in private, although Barney knows that the room is bugged. Paul shows a picture of Barney and Darby with native troops in Burma. Among them is Gus, who learns Cockney English from Darby. Darby easily recruits Barney because Waddy had shot an elephant. Paul tells what he has pieced together: Darby rescues the abandoned Barney and bond in Russian. Barney demands to be posted in Berlin, where the Soviets build his reputation. Hubbard admires Barney but sees through the Soviets' painting Zechmann as a counterspy. After Hubbard's death, which Barney denies arranging, Barney is posted to Washington and invents the Addressees' spy ring as a witch hunt to hide true Soviet agents in America. Next comes the Soviets' disinformation operation in Vienna. They cannot believe that the Americans and Britons think they are getting away with espionage beneath their very feet. The Soviets outrun their ability to manufacture lies but cannot stop without terminating the Sewer operation too. They use Darby and Ilse's affair and her kidnapping. Both of these events are contrived and false. Barney's men seize her and she lives underground thereafter, wherever he is stationed. It keeps their marriage alive. The Soviets allow the capture of Darby for Barney's sake. Ready to retire to work on botany, Darby allows his arrest and trial and Barney provides the deadly drugs to enable his escape. Barney gets another medal.

Barney confesses to setting up Hubbard. The file on Lori is a Soviet fake. Getting the rest of the information is the only possible way to lure Hubbard into the position to be kidnapped for a few years in the USSR. Barney does not know that he will be killed and tries thereafter to protect Paul, a genius like his father and Darby. It is amazing that Paul is still alive. The JFK investigation terrifies the Soviets and they are ready to kill him, but Barney puts him safely out of harm's way in a Chinese prison. Barney would do it again, to keep Paul alive. Barney had hoped that Tom would keep Molly safe from the Soviets' agents, but he would allow her to die again to save Paul. Barney's face glows with relief. He and Ilse are both happy. Barney has done all of this to get all of the Waddy Fool Factory types. He is a Red, Barney laughs.

David forbids the use of torture on Barney, who evades no questions and passes repeated polygraphs. He is repeatedly shown a film about a horrible insane asylum in Arkansas from which no patient leaves. He is allowed once a week to play piano. When he is allowed to shave, Barney knows that the interrogation is over. David explains that he is free to leave but Ilse will remain a hostage against his talking. If he does, she goes to Arkansas. In Chapter 13, Barney is released in Washington, D.C. He walks to a part of town where the agents tailing him will stand out and hires a prostitute to make a scene to cover his escape. He borrows Pong's cabin cruiser, heads down Chesapeake Bay, remembering a lifetime of memories. Sure that no one is watching, Barney sets up his suicide to look like an execution hit.

The Epilogue shows that it works. Barney is buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery. David and Paul talk about it, high on the slope at the Harbor, as Paul and Stephanie's young daughter, Lori, sleds fearlessly down. Paul is afraid of Lori's bravery.



Book III, Christopher, Chapters 7-12 and Epilogue Analysis

Paul's process of discovery speeds up as he seeks out witnesses and hard clues. Stephanie's suggestion that they have a child together heightens his fears about how safe they would be, given what has happened to everyone he loves. He has not yet learned that those who seek him harm are dead or that, despite appearances, he has enjoyed a protector all along. His first stop is a New England nursing home, where Sgt. Mitchell recalls additional details of his father's murder, including a signal to the murderer as in Molly's killing. Stephanie the psychologist verifies his need to cry.

A visit to New York brings closure on a number of Waddy, who has transformed from a sniveling coward into a successful campus lecturer, relating his ordeal in the 1950s to a new activist generation. Alice serves the same lunch in the same room as during Waddy's earlier breakdown before his arrest. This time, he consumes the health foods that he has brought along. This points up the change and makes more palatable his contention that everyone everyone had been happy with the outcome of the Addressee Spy Ring, which he insists is altogether trumped up and which allows the big fish to get away. Waddy is also sure that Paul will agree that prison helps a person concentrate his or her mental and spiritual powers. Paul has already said that and written down the poem that he had composed mentally. A bonding occurs however between old adversaries.

In this section, characters regularly recall anecdotes but then suggest that Paul get the full story from someone else who is more intimately involved. Alice mentions a mysterious voyage of the Paris but leaves it to Stephanie to fill in. This allows for a minor bit of suspense.

Stephanie reveals an odd story about Waddy thinking she is an older male at the age of fourteen and coming on to her, only to be interrupted by a German woman wearing too much perfume. This morphs, somewhat confusingly into Stephanie amusing herself by trailing a countess around Paris and being rescued by Wolkowicz. Paul wants to hypnotize Stephanie to bring out additional detail on the countess. This thread is promptly dropped as David uncomfortably reveals the deaths of Bashian and Jocelyn and Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc. The pretext for including him is exceedingly thin, given David's personality, but it allows Paul to begin verbalizing a theory about what has been going on. Like Waddy, Paul sees diversions. He gets major new evidence when Pong confirms that he kills Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc on Barney's orders. Pong also provides a surname and contact information on, who is far from dead.

Visiting the Kimber Flying Service, Paul learns that his flight to China is in a stolen plane and the Chinese pilot is using a Texan's identity. The purpose of the strip bar in Saigon is clarified: Kimber had frequented it along with other American pilots and had been mugged outside it, by Tog it later turns out. More revelations about the flight await. In the meantime, Paul enjoys seeing a local wonder, the Blythe intaglios. They have nothing to do with the story but are an interesting tidbit.



Graham broadcasts an exposé of the Sewer operation, which again stirs controversy over who his source might be. Barney and David are increasingly at odds. Meeting again at the elephant enclosure, Barney tells Paul about an incident in his youth at a circus. It explains his love of elephants, which is a recurring theme, and expresses what he would like to do to Graham if David would allow him. Barney's suggestions that David is a homosexual grow increasingly obvious and crude. Barney talks about arranging for Kimber's medical care, because The Outfit does not provide insurance to minor employees, and grouses that David blocks a rescue mission for Paul as imprudent.

Paul takes his questions to London and learns from Sir Richard Shaw-Condon and Rosalind Wilmot about Darby's early life and career in Burma as Capt. R. Dirzinskaite. A photograph links him, Barney, and the Chinese Gus, whose Cockney accent matches Darby's. Note the details in the photograph: the decapitated and skewered head of a Japanese soldier is included and Darby holds instead of a weapon a flowering bamboo shoot. Bamboo flowering is a rare event, particularly interesting for a botanist.

The novel's climax begins with a last supper by Paul and his four loyal friends. Barney drunkenly reiterates that all's well that ends well and shouts down David's contention that they had every year wondered what had happened to Paul and why. He summarizes how Paul is hung out to dry over the JFK revelations. He admits to ordering the deaths of Nguyễn Kim and the Truong toc to eliminate the threat to Paul. Barney vomiting intentionally recalls Waddy in the jungle vomiting when he shoots himself in the hand to see if such a small Japanese pistol hurts. Barney is back in combat.

Graham and his camera crew pursue Barney and Paul as they leave the club. Barney outruns Paul but leaves clear tracks to be found in the park. He accepts Paul's raincoat, because he is freezing after being sick in the restaurant and running. Before parting with a kiss (building on the theme of last supper), Barney insists that David alone has always known everything. Paul phones David and The Outfit moves to lure Barney from his secret lair. Barney is living with a somewhat aged but still beautiful Ilse, who answers the phone and rushes out. Barney follows, worried, and finds himself in a street scene much like the murders of Hubbard and Molly. He and Ilse are taken into Outfit custody rather than killed, and they enjoy listening to Paul conjecture, rather accurately, on what has taken place over decades.

Barney has since Burma been a Soviet agent, recruited by the English officer with an interest in Asia. This interest turns out to be Darby. Barney has arranged for the Soviets consistently to steer American (and British) intelligence to their own end, aided by The Outfit's inane insistence that it cannot be penetrated or out-thought. From the description of his machinations, Paul sees that Barney has worked for his own interests rather than any institution's. Chapter 12 offers a concise yet colorful summary of the novel from Barney's point of view. Many details that had not connected well together convincingly now do. David does not allow Barney to be tortured physically and Barney talks willingly about almost everything. At the very end of the story, he recalls certain private items that he holds inside. Only when he talks about people whom he loves does he flutter on the polygraph. He shows no guilt about anything, which is the normal



trigger for nervous reactions. When he finishes, Barney is relieved. Everything that he has done has been to get even with Waddy and the Fool Factory types he represents. Barney the great enemy of communism is, after all, a Red.

During his interrogation, Barney is repeatedly shown a film about horrible conditions in an Arkansas insane asylum in order to suggest that that is Ilse's fate if Barney ever tells his story to anyone. Like Lori, Ilse is held prisoner while her man is sent into exile. Barney takes the hint and knows that he lacks the resources to find and rescue her. He leads the agents who tail him on a merry chase, making fools of them and their amateurish ways, and disappears, reappearing in Chesapeake to borrow Pong's boat. The body of the novel ends with a detailed description of Barney setting up his suicide to appear like an assassin's hit. All evidence against him disappears and The Outfit gives him a hero's funeral. Ilse wants to cremate him, but that could lead to conspiracy theories (this is the decade for them in light of JFK and other assassinations). After the funeral, the Epilogue segues into recollection of Paul's wild sled ride with a young Horace Hubbard at the beginning of Paul's career as a spy. This time, Paul, the seemingly ubiquitous David, and Stephanie watch Paul and Stephanie's young daughter, Lori, survive the dangerous trip. Apparently the world is safe for a new Christopher generation and Lori is worryingly fearless.



Characters

Paul Christopher

The novel's protagonist, Paul wonders about the suspicious death of his father, Hubbard Christopher, but with less obsession than Hubbard decades earlier seeks to find his wife, Lori. His aristocratic, German mother, wants Paul to be a poet but feared that he will be a warrior. Following his father's death, Paul follows him into the spy trade, joining the super-secretive U.S. intelligence agency called The Outfit. Throughout his career he is linked with Hubbard's lieutenant, Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, a man he loves his whole life.

Paul is born in Berwick on Rügen Island in the Baltic Sea, at about the time of his parents' marriage. He grows up in Berlin with summers spent reading and sailing at Berwick. It is often remarked that he looks like his mother but has his father's personality. Paul is briefly educated at a French school in Switzerland. When the Nazis arrest his mother and deport him and Hubbard, Paul attends an unspecified American boarding school and then Harvard University, bucking the family tradition of being educated at Yale.

When Hubbard is killed in Berlin, Paul is recruited to The Outfit and poetry is made his cover. Since he is fluent in French, Paul is first posted to Indochina, where a Tonkinese poet, Lê, falls in love with him. He accepts a commission from an American magazine, determined to show the non-French side of the conflict. Paul next goes to Vienna, Austria, where a joint mission with British intelligence ends in a fiasco, but the Director assures him it is an unprecedented success. Paul returns to his cover of poet, working independently, develops leads that the Vietnamese are behind U.S. President John F. Kennedy's assassination. He becomes a persona non grata in The Outfit.

Receiving evidence of a Vietnamese plot to kill his lover of two years, Molly Benson, Paul heads back to Saigon to offer his life instead. Molly is killed but Paul learn of it only ten years later, having been imprisoned as a dangerous counterrevolutionary, under sentence of death. Released, he settles in Washington, D. C. and begins a relationship with Stephanie Webster. Paul begins uncovering details about all the things that he, his parents, and Molly have suffered, and leads a sting operation that brings down Barney, who admits that he is a Soviet spy. Barney tells Paul that he engineered everything to get even with the Yale-educated snooty people inside The Outfit and also to keep Paul alive despite his genius and tenacity. In particular, Barney admits to landing Paul in the Chinese prison as being impenetrable by Soviet assassins. Barney is proud of how Paul has figured everything out when no one else has a clue. Paul and Stephanie have a daughter whom they name Lori in his mother's memory.



Barnabas Wolkowicz

Introduced as a great, squat and muscular U.S. Army warrant officer or WOJC with a broken nose, large chin, Slavic cheekbones, and slanting eyes, Barney is reputed as a child to have walked 5,000 miles from Kiev to Shanghai carrying a pack and eating raw pony meat in Mongolia. He downplays this, saying he does not remember much and had simply accompanied his father. He speaks all of the languages that he knows with a faint upper-class Russian accent. He looks like a Neanderthal or football lineman, blocking for his wispy blond superior, Capt. Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup.

Barney grows up in working-class Youngstown, OH, where he learns to drink boilermakers but later develops a taste for Rob Roys and can consume vast quantities. He graduates from Kent State College, majoring in music. During World War II, Waddy and Barney parachute into the Shweli River region of Burma to command twenty Kachin guerrilla fighters. Waddy treats Barney like his houseboy. Twice Waddy abandons Barney, the second time to be tortured and have most of his teeth removed by bayonet. Barney is rescued by an English officer who recruits him to oppose the likes of Waddy. Barney demands posting to Germany after the war. Barney proves himself a natural spy, but his anti-Yale attitude annoys co-workers. Barney is obscene, coarse, and rude, but also truthful, loyal, brave, generous, and kind.

Women fall for Barney, including beautiful Ilse Bauer, whom he eventually marries and by whom he is later betrayed. Barney witnesses Hubbard Christopher's murder and conveys his ashes home to the family. When Hubbard's son, Paul, joins The Outfit, Barney takes a special interest in his welfare, including making him second-in-command in a major operation in Vienna, Austria. When the Soviets catch on, the mission ends and Barney returns to Washington, D.C. where he works for the White House. He is briefly in Saigon, Vietnam, and then appears to wander about the world a good bit. His career declines during Paul's imprisonment in China, but he attends annual gatherings of Paul's friends. He is elusive when Paul gets out and no one knows where he spends his nights. He is hounded by an investigative reporter, Patrick Graham, who produces a docudrama about Hubbard's murder that makes Barney begin to tell the truth to Paul. Since 1946 he has masterminded everything to the Soviets' advantage and to keep Paul from falling victim as had his father. Barney stages a suicide that looks like an execution-style killing. He is buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Wadsworth Jessup

For most of the novel, Waddy is seen as a sniveling coward, first as a combat officer in World War II and then as a life-long communist who fears being outed by the McCarthy committee. A Yale University graduate, Waddy is a captain in the U.S. Army in 1943, aided by WOJC Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz. "Force Jessup" is a crack team of killers and linguists, who use stealth and cunning behind Japanese lines, rather than throwing themselves suicidally onto the beaches. In Burma, commanding twenty Kachin guerrilla



fighters, Waddy wears an Australian bush hat and a Yale track shirt, carries a samurai sword, and affects a British accent. Waddy twice abandons Barney to his fate with the Japanese. He is rescued, flown to Ceylon, promoted to major, decorated for bravery, and becomes acting commanding officer. When Barney reaches Ceylon, he prepares a detailed written report highlighting Waddy's shameful cowardice. Waddy breaks down at the thought of court martial, but prepares incentives to let bygones be bygones. In return, Barney demands posting to Germany after the war.

Assigned next to Hanoi, Waddy establishes protagonist Paul Christopher's reputation, but while Paul is in the jungle, Waddy fails a polygraph about homosexuality. He is returned to desk work in the U.S. and moves in with his sister Alice and nephew Horace. Waddy is depressed and drinking heavily. After fifteen years of proclaiming himself a flaming Red, Waddy, under investigation by Congress, claims that it is a joke. He believes that Barney is spreading lies about him. Waddy is implicated in the Addressee Spy Ring and receives a year in prison. Barney is the chief investigator.

After Paul's return from China he again meets Waddy, who has become an environmentalist and college lecturer about his sufferings as a victim of anti-communism in the 1950s. He has become a cult hero. He believes that everything has worked out for the best and that prison focuses the mind. Waddy denies ever having sex with a woman, which is how he had been implicated. He claims that the big fish get away, making everyone happy.

Hubbard Christopher

Protagonist Paul Christopher's father, Hubbard is a native of the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, a New England patrician, and Yale graduate. He lives cheaply in Berlin as a writer between the wars, but prefers the countryside. At Berwick, he meets Baroness Hannelore von Buecheler "Lori," whom he marries about the time that son Paul is born. Tensions with the Gestapo or secret police rise as the Christophers smuggle Jews and Bolsheviks to safety in Denmark and Lori antagonizes the local Gestapo chief. Fleeing Nazi Germany, they are stopped at the border. Hubbard and Paul are forcibly ejected while Lori, is arrested. Hubbard becomes obsessed with finding and liberating Lori.

Hubbard is put in contact with a British friend of his nearly identical cousin Elliott Hubbard in New York, and is recruited by The Outfit, the highly secretive U.S. intelligence service. He spends a year in Germany, pretending to be Elliott and signing up a network of German spies. Elliott has to dye his hair and tone down his fluent German to fit the role. When Hubbard becomes the chief of American intelligence in postwar Berlin, his deputy is Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, secretly a Soviet spy, who creates a story about Lori's survival that keeps Hubbard constantly preoccupied. Unable to wait a week for more information, Hubbard breaks protocols and pays the ultimate price. A hit-and-run driver runs him down in front of Barney, who cremates his remains and takes them to The Harbor for scattering. Son Paul is recruited to The Outfit and proves as tenacious as his father. Eventually Barney confesses to inventing the



evidence that draws Hubbard out, but denies that his intent had been to get him killed. He has believed that the man whose genius is driving the Soviets crazy would be taken to the USSR for a few years and then released.

Baroness Hannelore von Buecheler (Lori) Christopher

Protagonist Paul Christopher's mother, Lori is a Prussian baroness living with her parents on Rügen Island in the Baltic Sea. It is isolated from the economic and political troubles besetting Berlin in the 1920s. When she meets and marries the American writer Hubbard Christopher, Lori is eighteen, gloriously pretty with auburn hair, delicate limbs, and an unblemished and creamy face. Her large and heavily-lashed gray eyes are her most prominent feature. Lori makes clear that no male will ever make precautions on her behalf. When the Nazis come to power, Lori publicly offends the new Gestapo chief. She nearly drowns in August 1939, helping a Jew escape the country.

Lori speaks up boldly for her rights when her family is stopped at the French border, fleeing Germany. She is detained by the Gestapo while Hubbard and Paul are expelled. She becomes a non-person in the Nazi camp system, never to be heard from again. Paperwork invented by Soviet intelligence about Lori draws Hubbard out to assassination. is killed instantly in a hit-and-run attack that late in the novel his lieutenant and friend, Barnard "Barney" Wolkowicz, admits to setting up. Paul eventually names his first daughter Lori in his mother's memory.

Molly Benson

Protagonist Paul Christopher's beautiful and busty lover of two years, Molly is murdered in a hit-and-run accident in on a rainy night in Paris, just after Paul leaves for Saigon, Vietnam. Her death is the pretext for looking back to the evolution of "The Outfit." Her death is described briefly and poignantly in the Prologue and her life is developed somewhat in Book III. For a full portrait, one must read *The Tears of Autumn*.

The Buechelers

Residents of the Schloss Castle Berwick on Rügen Island, Baron Paulus has a shiny bald head and is clean shaven. He is polished with a military bearing and loud voice. The Baroness Hilde is a timid woman, bereft of three sons during World War I and nervous about hyperinflation in the Weimar era. She has wavy gray hair and the face of a falcon. Their beautiful eighteen-year-old niece, Baroness Hannelore "Lori" becomes protagonist Paul Christopher's mother. During World War II, Paulus dies in service, while Hilde survives and lives after the war in the basement beneath the rubble. A beautiful young woman called Ilse Bauer visits to convey an invented story about Lori.



Horst Bülow

This is a former Abwehr or German military intelligence captain who after World War II has a minor job in the Soviet security apparatus, Bülow is recruited as an American spy by Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz to root out bigger fish. Bülow is used to lure Hubbard Christopher to his death.

Robin Darby

This is the head of British intelligence in Vienna, Austria who teamed with The Outfit's Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz. Darby uses the services of a disgruntled Soviet employee to smuggle out a coding machine piece-by-piece over the course of three years. When it works, copies are installed in all Eastern capitals to capture volumes of raw text. Sufficient translators to keep up with the flow cannot be found. Darby is tall and thin, with a large hooked nose, domed forehead, and bold, expressive, yet guarded eyes. His full beard is ginger with gray mixed in. He had known the late Hubbard Christopher in Berlin. Darby pretends to have an affair with Barney's beautiful wife, Ilse, as the operation is brought to a close.

Years later, Darby is posted to Washington, D.C. where he obsesses about Barney's supposed vendetta against him, which has frozen him out of cooperating with The Outfit. He rudely insults a U.S. senator's wife to appear insane rather than criminal when he is arrested for espionage. Darby admits everything but denies that he is a traitor. On the eve of being sent to a spartan jail for the rest of his life, Darby, a biology buff, poisons his guards with a favorite Soviet potion and escapes to Moscow or perhaps the Crimea.

Paul discovers in the archives of British intelligence a photograph of Robin identified as Capt. R. Dirzinskaite, D.S.O., M.C. and draws out that he is the Special Forces officer who recruits Barney for Soviet intelligence.

Dennis Foley

This individual first appears the aggressive young counsel for the Congressional committee in the 1950s investigating communist infiltration in the government. Dennis befriends Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, who breaks open the so-called Addressees Spy Ring. By the time that Barney returns from assignment in Vienna, Austria, Dennis is the President's assistant for intelligence matters and borrows Barney from The Outfit for unspecified duties.

Jocelyn Frick and Mordecai Bashian

This is the government secretary determined by Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz to be a Soviet agent. Jocelyn is the youngest daughter of a justice of the Virginia Supreme



Court, R. Beaulieu Frick. Voluptuous and late-blooming Jocelyn turns down three proposals of marriage and enters a relationship with a gloomy Armenian called Mordecai Bashian, her supervisor in the Bureau of Labor Standards. Bashian sweetly seduces her, insists that they will never marry, and forces her into prostitution with various Addressees, including the confirmed homosexual, Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup. Sent to prison, Jocelyn and Bashian both die before Barney confirms that he had set up the entire operation to divert attention from real Soviet spies, himself included.

Patrick Graham

This is an investigative reporter based in Washington, D.C. Graham works to learn all he can about protagonist Paul Christopher and The Outfit after Paul is released from ten years of imprisonment in the People's Republic of China. A graduate of Yale University, Graham is "a paranoid with a narcissistic personality disorder" and "a merchant of paranoia. His audience loves it" (pg. 296). He receives spotty classified information from inside The Outfit, which he uses to produce a docudrama about Hubbard Christopher's murder in Berlin after World War II. It cites information that Paul has never heard and he begins investigating. Eventually it leads back to Barney and his supposedly lost wife who turns out to be the informant.

The Hubbard Forebearers, Indian Joe, and Eleazar Stickles

These individuals form part of a story that Paul's father Hubbard Christopher loves to tell his son Paul. Connecticut Yankees before the American Revolution, the Hubbards move to the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts and settle peacefully on land ceded to them by the Mahican Indians. "The First Aaron" is the pioneer. The family takes in the sole survivor of a measles epidemic, Indian Joe, who befriends protagonist Paul Christopher's great-great-grandfather, "The second Aaron." Indian Joe is framed for killing a neighbor, John Parker, and hanged. Years later, another neighbor, Eleazer Stickles, on his deathbed confesses to second Aaron murdering Indian Joe. Second Aaron had never believed his friend guilty and had silently attended church weekly to glare at the people who had hanged Joe. Paul sees Indian Joe's gravestone, into which "vindicated" is carved. As a political prisoner in the Republic of China years later, Paul tells these odd stories to his jailer.

Alice (Jessup) Hubbard

This is the first wife of protagonist Paul Christopher's second cousin, Elliott Hubbard. Alice is throughout the novel a source of quips about the family's idiosyncrasies. Alice gives birth to one son, Horace, who grows up to become an agent in The Outfit and associate of Paul. Alice divorces Elliott when she learns about an affair. Having studied Post-Impressionism at Vassar, she claims half of the family artwork. Alice is also the brother of Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup, the wartime nemesis of Barnabas "Barney"



Wolkowicz, a close confidant of both Hubbard and Paul. Alice takes Waddy in after he is fired from The Outfit, having failed a polygraph question about homosexuality. Alice derides her brother for suddenly claiming not to be a lifelong communist. She believes that he ought to admit this before Congress and become a hero.

Elliott Hubbard

Hubbard Christopher's almost identical cousin, Elliott lives at The Harbor with his first wife Alice Jessup in the Berkshires, north of New York City. He opens his home to male artists, mostly Yale Skull and Bones friends. The couple have a son, Horace. Elliott introduces Hubbard to the Briton who offers to help him enter Germany using Elliott's passport. After the war, Alice learns that Elliott has a lover and divorces him, taking half of the paintings. He marries a younger painter, Emily, who bears him a son, Julian, but then dies young of cancer.

Emily Hubbard

Elliott Hubbard's second wife, Emily is a dreamy painter and a muddy abstractionist, whose canvases fill the holes left when first wife Alice claims the Cézanne, Seurat, Cassatt, and Hicks. Emily and Hubbard have a son, Julian, who looks like Elliott. Emily dreads meeting protagonist Paul Christopher, because of the sad life he has lived and her inability to understand his poetry. Emily is "a serious painter, but not a very talented one" (pg. 159), as Alice, her predecessor, cattily points out at every opportunity. Emily dies early of cancer.

Horace Hubbard

The only son of Elliott and Alice Hubbard, Horace is protagonist Paul Christopher's much younger cousin. He lives with his mother after his parents' divorce, attends Yale University and joins The Outfit. He is tall and gangling, resembles his father but has mannerisms like the ability to mimic, which come from his mother. Paul meets him after many years, as Horace works his first assignment under Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, tracking a suspected Soviet spy inside British intelligence in Washington, D.C. Horace is next posted to Vietnam, and finally to Peking. He is on hand when Paul is released from ten years in a Chinese prison. Horace attends the annual dinners commemorating missing companions and Paul's confinement and takes part in Barney's arrest for spying.

Nguyen Kim

An acquaintance of protagonist Paul Christopher in Saigon, Vietnam, Kim is the hit man assigned to target Paul's lover, Molly Benson, in Paris, France. He is on the plane that carries Paul to Saigon as Molly is killed outside the airport. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz has Kim strangled, granting the murderer Kim's prized ruby rings.



Gus Kimber

Protagonist Paul Christopher accepts that a wrinkled, flat-faced old, and Cockney-speaking Chinese pilot in Saigon, Vietnam, is his friend Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz's friend. Paul hires him to fly him to Hue, but Gus gets lost and lands in the Republic of China. Prevented from taking off from a deserted airfield, Gus emerges shooting and running for the tree line while Paul is thrown to the ground. Paul believes that he sees Gus torn apart by gunfire, but later is sure that he sees and hears him in a Peking hospital. At the end of the novel, it develops that this Gus steals the real Gus Kimber's plane after Kimber is beaten up in the strip bar. Paul flies to Blythe, CA, to talk to him, viewing the ancient intaglios from the air.

Sebastian Laux

A small and pale man, Laux is the Christopher family banker, representing D. & D. Laux & Co. He invests the money left by Hubbard Christopher during the time son Paul is in a Chinese prison. Arranging to have mother Lori declared legally dead, Laux tells Paul that he is independently wealthy. Laux is also instrumental in recruiting Paul to The Outfit.

Lê

An angry and petite Tonkinese poet, Lê, whose name means "tears" in Vietnamese, falls in love with protagonist Paul Christopher as soon as he arrives in Hanoi in the early 1950s. She teaches him Vietnamese and talks politics constantly, except in bed. She prints her poems on a small press bought by Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup of The Outfit.

Sgt. Jimmy Jo Mitchell

Col. Hubbard Christopher's driver in Berlin, Germany, shortly after World War II, Mitchell has been drinking on the day Hubbard is murdered by a hit-and-run driver. Thirty years later, he appears in a docudrama, talking about that day. Hubbard's son, protagonist Paul Christopher, visits Mitchell to learn more. Mitchell reveals that they hypnotize him to enable him to describe Lori Christopher well enough for a police sketch artist to make a rendering. It also helps him remember lost details about why he shoots at the escaping German agent, who has signaled to the hit car by raising a rolled-up newspaper. This detail helps Paul link that murder with his late lover Molly's and suggests a pattern in his life.

David Patchen

Protagonist Paul Christopher's Harvard University roommate, David is disfigured and partially crippled by a grenade blast during World War II. Recruited into The Outfit,



David, because his wounds make him easily identifiable and goes into administration. His photographic memory is perfect for his new job. He rises steadily through positions of influence on the Director's staff and clashes with Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz over the handling of the so-called Addressee Spy Ring. David owns a house near Georgetown University and enjoys walking his Doberman pincher across campus. The lame professor and his dog become a familiar sight. Paul often walks with him. Learning that Paul has been tried for espionage after wandering innocently into the People's Republic of China and sentenced to death, David, who has become the Director, flies to Hong Kong to deny that Paul is still an agent. However, he is told that unless Paul admits guilt that he cannot be spared. David is a gloomy figure at annual dinners to remember the missing. When Paul is released, he attends the last supper in person.

Pong

This is Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz's Thai driver while he heads The Outfit's Saigon office in the mid-1960s. Pong is an amiable thug. On the night that Paul next flies to Saigon, Pong on Barney's orders kills Paul's enemies, the Truong toc and Nguyễn Kim. He also hospitalizes pilot Gus Kimber so his plane can be stolen and fly Paul into China, where he is arrested as a spy and imprisoned for ten years. Barney helps Pong and his family immigrate to the United States and set up the Thai Pagoda restaurant in Alexandria, VA. a drop site for contacting Barney. Paul learns from Pong that Gus, the supposedly dead Chinese pilot who had flown him into China is alive in California. Pong is the proud owner of a cabin cruiser, which he lends to Barney at the end of the novel. Barney stages his suicide on the cruiser to look like a professional hit.

Otto Rothchild

Hubbard Christopher's best friend in Berlin between the wars, Rothchild is a Russian émigré, impeccably dressed, with the wiry figure of a fencer. He has perfect teeth and languid eyes. He advises Hubbard to establish an account at Horcher's restaurant as a hedge against hyperinflation. Lori von Buechler, Hubbard's future wife, takes an instant dislike to Rothchild, whom she invariably calls "Hubbard's Russian." She considers him a human rat. Rothchild fights in the Spanish Civil War on the nationalist side. In August of 1939, as the Nazis and Soviets sign a non-aggression pact, Otto is warned by Horst Bülow, a member of the Abwehr, to flee Germany because he is on Stalin's wanted list.

Sir Richard Shaw-Condon, Bart.

A friend of protagonist Paul Christopher's paternal uncle, Elliott, Sir Richard is seen twice in the novel, first as a dashing young man striking the pose of a junior minister of the Crown and decades later as a reminiscing retiree. At the first meeting with a bereaved Hubbard Christopher in New York's Yale Club library, Sir Richard in typical English style offends, commiserates, and offers a solution, which draws Hubbard into The Outfit. Late in the novel, an aged Sir Richard reappears, helping Paul find in secret



British files information to make sense of the tragedies that have befallen him and his family.

Stutzer

The chief Gestapo or Nazi secret police officer on Rügen Island, Stutzer lives up to his name, which means Dandy, by dressing elegantly in black, with the addition of a white aviator's scarf. He is a sallow twenty-five year-old with a triangular face and soft pink lips. In the Kursaal Café in Putbus, Stutzer kicks the village fool and is slapped by protagonist Paul Christopher's mother, Lori. Stutzer thereafter watches the Christophers and makes clear that he knows about their illegal smuggling operations. The Christophers flee to France, but Stutzer forwards their dossiers to the Gestapo at the border, resulting in father and son's expulsion and mother's arrest.

Stephanie Webster

The daughter of Tom and Sybille Webster, Stephanie is destined as a grown woman to be the lover of protagonist Paul Christopher, whom she knows as a child in Paris. She has an ear for languages and loves to spy on adult conversations. While Paul is imprisoned in China for ten years, Stephanie graduates college, spends a year in the East Village of New York City as a member of chic revolutionary cell, and then becomes a psychotherapist. She jogs two miles early every morning. Paul begins joining her. After reading Paul's autobiographic poem, Stephanie initiates sex. She offers to bear him a child to perpetuate his remarkable family and encourages him to learn the truth about what has happened to him. They name their daughter Lori after Paul's mother.

Tom and Sybille Webster

Protagonist Paul Christopher's loyalist friends within The Outfit after he becomes a persona non-grata, Tom and Sybille live in Paris. They take in his lover, Molly Benson, and arrange for her to live in a safe house. Tom witnesses Molly's murder and takes hard Paul's fate of being imprisoned as a spy inside China. He begins drinking heavily. He resents the lack of action to get Paul released. Tom and Sybille host Paul's homecoming. Their daughter Stephanie becomes Paul's lover and the mother of his daughter Lori.

Rosalind Wilmot

Assistant to Robin Darby, head of British intelligence in Vienna, Austria, Rosalind becomes protagonist Paul Christopher's sexual friend, while being in incestuous love with her younger brother, Clive. Years later in Washington, DC, Rosalind warns Paul Darby is a danger. More years later, after Paul's decade in a Chinese prison, Paul looks Rosalind up in London and learns from her that Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz and



Robin are actually great friends and provides the photograph that explains to Paul everything he has endured.

Ilse Bauer Wolkowicz

A beautiful young German woman, Ilse is introduced to the story as bait to smoke out traitors in Friedrich Zechmann's intelligence organization. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, arranges for Ilse to bring to his boss, Hubbard Christopher, a story about Hubbard's missing wife, Lori. Ilse has golden hair and smells of roses. Few German girls look as innocent as she in 1946. Barney begins sleeping with her and eventually marries her. Ilse tells two versions of her life's story, one of which makes her vulnerable to Soviet reprisal. She appears to be kidnapped by the Soviets after being caught in an affair with Robin Darby, but this is a charade. Barney and Ilse live in secret wherever he is assigned. Barney is released but Ilse is held hostage to guarantee that he never divulges the truth.

Zaentz

A stout artist friend of protagonist Paul Christopher's parents, Zaentz sketches a nude portrait of Lori while she is pregnant with Paul before fleeing Nazi Germany with the Christophers' help. He flees to New York City, where he draws a duplicate from memory after the Gestapo confiscates the first. Zaentz urges Paul to drop his father's obsession about finding his mother.

Friedrich Zechmann

One of the most valuable spies for the Western Allies inside the German Army during World War II, Zechmann has "the sly blank face of a cabaret comedian." Zechmann easily sees through Hubbard Christopher's ruse about being his cousin Elliott when he returns to Nazi Germany and offers to help find Christopher's missing wife, Lori. In 1945, Zechmann and his agents surrender to Hubbard and are "reconstituted intact as the Zechmann Bureau, an arm of The Outfit" (pg. 117.) Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, Hubbard's lieutenant who cannot stand Zechmann, sets up a sting operation to prove that the Zechmann Bureau has been infiltrated, but fails. Zechmann wants to marry Ilse, but loses out to Barney.



Objects/Places

Berlin, Germany

Berlin is the base of operations for the protagonist Paul Christopher's father. It is depicted as a dangerous place. In the 1920s, Hubbard Christopher is a writer. The Red Front and Stahlhelms or Steel Helmets of the German Army clash violently and post-World War I hyperinflation is crippling. One U.S. dollar is worth 2 trillion Reichsmarks. Hubbard establishes an account at Horcher's restaurant, where his twenty-dollar American bill will seemingly never be used up in purchases. Hubbard has a furnished flat in fashionable Charlottenburg, whose furniture his future father-in-law characterizes as medicinal. Berlin locations mentioned in conjunction with Hubbard and Lori's courtship include the Swedischer Pavillion by the Wannsee, Kaminskys Telephonbar, and Potsdamer Platz, where Lori nearly causes a car accident.

Hubbard returns to Berlin in the summer of 1945 as head of the European Outfit and finds the beautiful city in smoking and blackened ruins. This is the result of 76,652 tons of Allied bombs and over 40,000 Soviet shells during the final assault. Berlin has 200,000 fewer residents than when he leaves in 1939 compared to a total of 292,100 U.S. war casualties in total. Many dead are still buried in the ruins. Five years of fires in Berlin have only burnt out in 1946 and the stench contrasts with beautiful Ilse Bauer's rose perfume. Ilse believes that Berlin will be resurrected. The Tiergarten has been cut down for firewood. The widowed Hilde von Buehceler, lives in the basement beneath the rubble of their home in Charlottenburger chaussee. U.S. agents from outside the Zechmann Bureau find themselves being "flyswatted" suffering hit-and-run accidents by Soviet agents, being squashed against "one of Berlin's sawtooth rubble walls" (pg. 117.) Hubbard is killed by a hit-an-run assassin at a streetcar stop in the Wilmersdorf Wood, far from the Soviet Zone. Late in the novel, Barnabas (Barney) Wolkowicz is exiled to Berlin to get away from the cameras of an investigative journalist, who visits Berlin to recreate the murder for television.

Blythe, CA

The small town of Blythe, CA, provides an interesting aside late in the novel, as protagonist Paul Christopher learns that the Chinese pilot who lands him in a Chinese prison for ten years is not dead as he had believed, but is giving flying lessons out West. Paul is surprised that Gus Kimber is a tall Texan and has been attacked and nearly killed by thugs at the time his plane is stolen in Saigon, Vietnam. He fondly recalls a favorite stripper in the cowboy bar there. For fifty dollars, Kimber flies Paul over the Blythe intaglios, a group of gigantic figures atop mesas. The largest is a human figure with enormous testicles. As the intaglios reveal their form only from the air, the ancient creators, supposedly local Indian tribes, never see their work properly. They are forgotten until a pilot accidentally spots them in 1932.



Burma

The Southeast Asian country currently called Myanmar, Burma during World War II is a British colony. U.S. and British officers command bands of indigenous Kachin guerrillas to harass the the 56th Division of the Japanese Imperial Army occupying the dense rain forest of the Shweli River region. Communist Chinese guerrillas also attack the Japanese from across the border. U.S. Army Capt. Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup affects a British accent as he commands 20 Kachin, aided by WOJC Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, his adjutant. The Kachins are "slim cheery men" (pg. 85) the size of American school children, armed with antique weapons. Brave and well-trained warriors, they collect the genitals of slain enemies. The Burmese rain forest is a stinking and deadly green haze. Waddy develops a plan to steal work elephants from the Japanese to crash through the jungles, making movement easier. Force Jessup attacks a Japanese tank emplacement but is then overrun. Waddy escapes on the lone surviving elephant, leaving Barney to be taken captive and tortured before being liberated by Chinese guerrillas and eventually sent to Ceylon. The Englishman commanding the Chinese and Kachins explains that the communist civil war of Stalinists versus Trotskyites has been put on hold to fight the Japanese together. Late in the novel it is revealed that Barney is recruited to be a Soviet spy in Burma while recovering from Japanese torture.

Ceylon

This is the island country in the Indian Ocean currently known as Sri Lanka. During World War II, Ceylon becomes the headquarters for British special operations in the China-Burma-India theater of operations and for The Outfit. Maj. Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup lives in the luxurious Grand Hotel in Nuwara Eliya in the hill country. After Burma, it is a placid environment.

Falster Is., Denmark

The frequent destination for Hubbard and Lori Christopher's white-hulled yawl called the Machican, Falster lies nine hours across the Baltic Sea from their home on Rügen Island, Germany. The Hubbards smuggle a series of Jews and Bolsheviks to Falster under the Gestapo's nose before being grounded. On Falster, Hubbard enjoys passing time by telling stories about his ancestry.

The Harbor

This is the Hubbard family home in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts. The Harbor is an old rough-cut, one-room building put up before the American Revolution on twenty square miles of land ceded by the Mahican Indians. In the family cemetery, the bodies are buried in a circle with their feet facing in. None of the women reach the age of forty. Protagonist Paul Christopher's paternal uncle, Elliott Hubbard and his wife Alice live at



The Harbor and offer hospitality to an endless line of creative guests. When Paul's father, Hubbard Christopher, is killed in Berlin, his ashes are strewn at The Harbor and a lighthearted celebration is held in lieu of a sad wake. Paul's Harvard roommate is surprised by this. Decades later, Paul and new lover Stephanie Webster visit The Harbor and conceive a baby named Lori in his mother's memory. Several times young people are shown sledding down the steep and treacherous hill from the cemetery to the house.

London, England

Late in the novel, protagonist Paul Christopher visits London. He dines in a declining private club for underground veterans of World War II with an aged Sir Richard Shaw-Condon. Photographs of young English officers surrounded by native troops adorn the walls. The cuisine is traditional but has slipped in quality. Shaw-Condon arranges for Paul to search the archives, where he finds the face of Capt. R. Dirzinskaite, D.S.O., M.C. or Robin Darby. Paul visits his old colleague and former lover, Rosalind Wilmot at her flat in Onslow Gardens to discuss Darby and talk her into smuggling him a picture that clarifies his understanding of all that has happened throughout the novel.

Mahican

Hubbard and Lori Christopher's white-hulled yawl called the Machican is named for the Indian tribe that once lives in the Berkshire Mountains where Hubbard grows up. Mahican sails in all weather in the Baltic Sea. Lori packs delicious lunches in a special basket. They make regular overnight trips to the Danish island of Falster, delivering Jews and Bolsheviks from Nazi persecution without being caught red-handed, but the Mahican is thoroughly searched after several of the voyages. Returning from one mission, Lori falls overboard and Paul narrowly saves her from drowning. Confronted by the Gestapo, the Christophers decide to leave Germany but are intercepted and Lori is arrested. The novel's Prologue pictures Paul as an adult dreaming about piloting the Mahican at age thirteen when Lori drowns.

New York, NY

New York City figures in a number of scenes in the novel. Protagonist Paul Elliott's uncle Elliott Hubbard has an apartment on 93rd Street, where it is suggested that he has an affair that leads to his wife Alice's suing for divorce. Elliott introduces his identical cousin Hubbard Christopher to Sir Richard Shaw-Condon, who meets Elliott in the posh Yale Club library in Midtown Manhattan, where the Briton offers to help Hubbard enter Germany using Elliott's passport. Paul pays several visits to his uncle and Alice, where he keeps up with Alice's brother, expelled Outfitter Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup.



The Outfit

This is the insider name given to unnamed U.S. intelligence agencies or the wartime Office of Strategic Services "OSS" and later the Central Intelligence Agency "CIA." The Outfit appears to be largely an extension of Yale University's secret Skull and Bone Society, a means of dodging American neutrality legislation prior to World War II, in order to aid the British war effort. Operations in Washington, DC, have no headquarters per se, but staff are scattered around the city in temporary buildings. The Outfit maintains several safe houses in and around Washington. The Outfit has a tradition of allowing members of any rank freely to criticize senior officers without fear of reprisal.

Sir Richard Shaw-Condon, Bart., recruits protagonist Paul Christopher's grieving father Elliott to spy in Nazi Germany, promising to help find his captured wife, Lori. The conversation sets the tone of conspiracy and promises plenty of dirty tricks and violence. Another Christopher relative, Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup, heads guerrilla activities against the Japanese in Burma and Waddy's adjutant, Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, on being liberated from the Japanese is the first explicitly to evoke The Outfit by name. He goes on to work under Elliott in the Berlin office of The Outfit.

During the war, Elliott fails to find his wife but does excellent work recruiting spies, most notably Friedrich Zechmann. Rumors that there is a traitor in his operation cannot be proved. Elliott is killed by the Soviets in Berlin. Son Paul is recruited at Elliott's funeral and stationed in Saigon and later Vienna. Every defeat by the Soviets is interpreted as a victory on ideological grounds. When Paul comes up with an unorthodox theory of John F. Kennedy's assassination he becomes persona non grata in The Outfit, but his close friends continue to help him. In the end, Barney confesses that he has been a Soviet agent since World War II, intent on getting even with the Yale incompetents.

Paris, France

Protagonist Paul Christopher's former assignment as an agent of The Outfit, Paris is seen primarily as a hide-out for him and his lover, Molly Benson, as they try to avoid Vietnamese assassins. Molly like her new friend and protector, Sybille Webster who hates the darkness and rain. She, husband Tom, and daughter Stephanie live in a cold, damp, and lightless apartment in the avenue Hoche. Tom believes Molly is better off in an official safe house. He spirits Molly, disguised as a hooker, through the streets of the 16th Arrondissement to a cul-de-sac off the boulevard Beauséjour. The apartment reflects the taste of its absentee owner who is a "sporting Brazilian" (pg. 235.) It contains black and glass furniture, tiger skins, and 360° mirrored walls. Molly feels like King Zog's mistress, but is quite happy making love with Paul there for what turns out to be the last time. Stephanie as an adult recalls following a German woman around Paris for fun.



People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China, pejoratively called Red China by Americans, is protagonist Paul Christopher's home for ten years and one hundred days after he is caught flying in from Vietnam. No one believes his story about the pilot being unable to find Hue and straying into Chinese airspace. They land to refuel and ask directions, but the plane is disabled and the expatriate Chinese pilot appears to be killed in a fierce fire fight. Paul undergoes 156 days of round-the-clock interrogation in an undisclosed location, is given a secret trial, and is sentenced to death as a spy and dangerous counterrevolutionary. As is common, the sentence is suspended for twenty years of hard labor and solitary confinement. It can be commuted if he admits his guilt and is a model prisoner.

Paul digs a trench daily for 3,569 days. Every Tuesday he is asked to admit his guilt. He gradually builds up rapport with his interrogator, Ze, and his guard, Cheng. Paul eats meagerly twice a day and is allowed limited reading material but no writing material. Three years into his sentence, Paul is badly injured in an earthquake, which collapses his trench. He recovers for 28 days in a Peking hospital. After his release, Paul learns that he is held on Hainan Island in the South China Sea, just two hours from Da Nang, Vietnam. His old Yale roommate, David Pratchen, begins negotiations with the Chinese after Paul is sentenced but claims not to have effected his release. At the very end of the novel, Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz confesses that he arranges the flight and imprisonment as the only sure-fire way of preventing the paranoid Soviets from killing Paul.

Rügen Is. / Berwick, Germany

A beautiful and wooded island rising on white chalk cliffs from the Baltic Sea, Rügen resembles the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts, where protagonist Paul Christopher's father, Hubbard, grows up. Berwick is home to the von Buechelers, whom the Christopher family has known for generations. Hubbard finds Schloss Castle in Berwick bigger inside than it appears from outside. It is a square structure in the Italian Renaissance style furnished in a rustic style with tapestries, heads of game, and suits of armor. When Otto von Bismarck dines at the Berwick in 1860 and takes offense at a joke by Bartholomäus von Buecheler, no one visits again until after Iron Chancellor's death.

The Buechelers escape the chaos of Berlin on Berwick. Hubbard meets beautiful young Hannelore von Buecheler "Lori," who shows him around the island, including a 128-meter chalk cliff where strong up-currents lift her safely into the air. The forests are more manicured than the Berkshires. The Borg is a section in the interior where a pagan temple to Hertha is overturned by Christians in the twelfth century. Several scenes in the novel are set there.

With the rise of Nazism, the Gestapo or secret police comes to Rügen in the person of Stutzer. Lori and Paul confront him in the Kursaal Café in the town of Putbus near



Berwick, which begins the process leading to her arrest. After World War II, the Soviets confiscate Berwick as their headquarters.

Vienna, Austria

Recently freed of control by the Soviet Red Army after World War II, Vienna is home to a joint espionage effort by The Outfit and British intelligence. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz heads the operation, assisted by protagonist Paul Christopher, son of Barney's late boss, Hubbard Christopher, who is killed years earlier in Berlin. The Outfit's front is an underground garage, which allows vehicles to come and go without raising suspicion. A long tunnel, an abandoned sewer, takes them fifty feet beneath Soviet headquarters in the Imperial Hotel. Persian rugs cover the ground and soundproof the walls. The tunnel is wired to explode if ever invaded, but the detonator box is covered by an ornate birdcage to prevent accidental activation. Five teletypes churn out Russian text. Robin Darby heads the British team, assisted by Rosalind Wilmot, who soon becomes Paul's lover. Darby calls the place Plato's cave. Others simply call it The Sewer. Darby and Barney's wife Ilse are followed about in a brief love affair and Darby and Barney are seen fighting in the woods. Supposed Soviet spies are seen kidnapping Ilse from the streets in broad daylight. At the end of the novel Barney reveals that the Soviets have been deceiving the Westerners all along, feeding massive disinformation. They invade and let Outfitters demolish the equipment when they can no longer afford to run the deception.

Vietnam

Part of French Indochina when protagonist Paul Christopher is first assigned by The Outfit to Hanoi, Vietnam becomes two independent nations after the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and subsequent pull-out: a communist North Vietnam and a South Vietnam struggling to be a democracy. The U.S. supports the Saigon regime in its continuing war against Hanoi and the Vietcong guerrilla forces.

In his first visit prior to 1954, Paul's poetry is admired by Hanoi's café intelligentsia, and the local head of The Outfit, Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup, seeks to use Paul's talents to promote the revolution of the Vietminh, who he sees winning in the end. Paul's lover, Lê, is Tonkinese. Tonkin is the heartland of North Vietnam. Paul accompanies the Vietminh into the jungle, admires their "stealth and fearless skill" (pg. 156) building underground cities and attacking the French as the Japanese had the allies in World War II, but decrying their massacre of Catholics in one village as a warning to others.

Paul next causes trouble in Saigon a decade later by digging out evidence that the Truong toc is behind the assassination of U.S. Pres. John F. Kennedy in 1963. This is the substance of the preceding novel, *The Tears of Autumn*, and so is glossed over here. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz is The Outfit's chief of station. Paul returns to Vietnam in the present novel when Barney provides proof that Molly is being targeted to



torment Paul. Paul flies to Saigon, but slips away from the new chief of station, his cousin Horace Hubbard, before he can be told that his enemies have been killed.

Paul meets an older Chinese pilot named Gus on the roof of the Majestic Hotel and spends a few hours in a raw strip bar on Tu Do St. that caters to American civilian pilots. Gus swings out over the South China Sea to avoid Vietcong antiaircraft fire, puts the plane on autopilot for Da Nang, and sleeps for several hours. When Paul tells him his true destination is Hue, Gus admits that he does not know how to find the ancient capital city and lacks charts. Both fall asleep and Gus finds that he has overshot Hue. Circling, he lands to refuel and finds that they are inside the People's Republic of China. The plane is prevented from taking off again, a firefight erupts, and Paul is taken prisoner.

Washington, DC

The base of operations for the secretive Outfit, Washington, DC, figures in a number of scenes in *The Last Supper*. The first is a paneled conference room in an undisclosed location, where protagonist Paul Christopher receives his father's posthumous award for heroism and Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz is likewise rewarded. The walls are hung with prints of square-rigged sailing ships. The Outfit has no headquarters per se, but its staff are scattered around the city in temporary buildings. It maintains several safe houses in and around the city. Barney meets people in public locations, making sure that they are not overheard. These include the aquarium, the elephant cage at the zoo, and in the Hirschhorn Sculpture Garden, where Barney hates the abstract pieces.

British spy Robin Darby is arrested leaving a replica of the Sistine Chapel on display in the National Geographic building. David Patchen, rising in the hierarchy of The Outfit owns a house by Georgetown University and often meets Paul to stroll the campus with his Doberman pinscher. Horace Hubbard inherits his mother's small house on O St. with a nice garden in the rear. While he is in China it is occupied first by Stephanie Webster and then by Paul after his released from ten years in prison. Stephanie and Paul jog every morning through Georgetown. Throughout his imprisonment, Paul's friends gather annually to toast him at a fancy private club (unnamed) somewhere near the capitol. They are confronted outside it by a television news crew, leading up to the novel's climax. Barney uses the Thai Pagoda in Alexandria, VA, a suburb of Washington, DC, as a drop site to keep in touch with select people including Paul. No one has an address or phone number for him. Arrested, Barney and wife Ilse are interrogated in a safe house in the Virginia woods and he is released at 14th St. and Constitution Ave. He leads two teams of identically-dressed agents towards F St., where they will stand out and hires a prostitute to stab one agent in the thigh as a diversion so he can escape. Barney borrows Pong's cabin cruiser, moored on Chesapeake Bay, and takes her out a ways to commit suicide in a way that will suggest a hit. He is buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.



Yale University

An Ivy League school in New Haven, CT, Yale is the alma mater of most of the major characters in *The Last Supper*. Most of them are also members of Yale's secret Skulls and Bones society. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, a graduate of Kent State College in Ohio, calls Yale the "Fool Factory" after tangling in Burma during World War II with a Yale graduate. It becomes his synonym for all left-leaning intellectuals as the fear of communism on which *The Outfit* is founded disappears from American society. Yale graduates look down in particular on Harvard University, from which protagonist Paul Christopher graduates.

Zermatt, Switzerland

An Alpine resort in the shadow of the Matterhorn, Zermatt is the refuge to which Tom and Sybille Webster spirit protagonist Paul Christopher's girlfriend, Molly Benson, after learning of Vietnamese death threats against her. After completing his investigation into President John F. Kennedy's assassination and being told by *The Outfit* to forget what he has learned, Paul hurries to Zermatt for gala holiday celebrations and a few days of skiing and making love. They then head to a safe house in Paris, France and unwittingly to Molly's murder.



Themes

Sex

The Last Supper by Charles McCarry tells tales of espionage without titillating the reader with gratuitous violence or sex. McCarry deals often with sex simply to illustrate various eras in the novel. Between the wars in Germany, Baroness Hannelore von Buecheler or "Lori" is a liberated young woman, unwilling to have any male tell her what to do. Reading Hubbard Christopher's manuscript, she declares him a genius and seduces him. They marry only when the birth of Paul is imminent. Note that the Christophers represent the upper classes of their respective societies. A nude portrait of Lori pregnant with Paul appears throughout the novel as a lovely and chaste symbol of life.

After World War II, sex is portrayed in a vile and filthy manner. Aristocratic German women are forced to perform oral sex in the streets for American and Russian enlisted men to earn enough to survive. Beautiful Ilse Bauer who is golden-haired and smells of roses, is one of few German girls who look "pure and untouched" (pg. 121.) One story of how she achieves this puts her in Switzerland during the war and living on her bank account in 1946. Another has her about to be gang raped by the Russians when Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz rescues her. They end up marrying, but not before she is used by The Outfit to try to smoke out traitors in the Zechmann Bureau. Friedrich Zechmann is personally enchanted by Ilse but gets no further than a chaste kiss pursuing her. She assumes that he will demand much more. Ilse flirts with two suspected agents, dropping confidential information, but neither takes the bait.

Years later in Vienna, Austria, Ilse is caught in a tryst with the head of British intelligence, runs away, and is supposedly kidnapped by the Soviets and disappears. In fact, she is hidden as part of her husband's schemes to control both Eastern and Western intelligence and they live a satisfying and clearly sexual life in secret for decades. They still enjoy fondling one another just before their capture by The Outfit and Barney is teased with having a final conjugal visit before their separation is complete. The British chief's deputy offers Paul the chance to be sexual friends without any emotional bonds and they are shown several times cavorting in bed and joking.

In the Prologue and later in the novel, looking back, Paul is shown with his lover of two years, Molly. She is the more sexually aggressive partner. Barney points out that Molly strongly resembles Paul's mother, but the oedipal theme is left undeveloped. With perhaps a foreboding of death, she warns Paul that if he ever makes love to another woman she will be inhabiting the woman's body, turning her frigid except when she chooses to nap and then will allow the woman pleasure. Paul is thrown off recalling this when he meets Stephanie Webster, whom he knows in Paris when she is a child. She reads his poetry and climbs into his bed to comfort him. A psychologist, Stephanie asks Paul about what he does during his ten years in China, suggesting that he has sex with fellow male prisoners. Paul says that he is in solitary confinement the whole time and



stops masturbating once he can no longer remember what a woman looks or feels like. Stephanie follows up clinically, asking does Paul need this contact to achieve orgasm. It turns out that he does.

Finally, the novel examines Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup's homosexuality. Everyone in The Outfit knows that he is gay and looks the other way until they suspect him of communist sympathies that he readily admits and need him out of field operations. He is then given a polygraph, the political parts of which he passes easily, but grows flustered by questions that involving graphical phrases about homosexual oral sex. When labeled a spy before a Congressional committee, Waddy bristles at the idea of ever having had sex with a woman. He would not endure that, even imagining that a male was performing it on him.

Truth

At the core of the story of *The Last Supper* by Charles McCarry are questions about the essence of Truth itself, about the relationship of individuals with it, and the need of individuals to shape it to meet their view of themselves and their place in the world.

In fighting both fascism and communism, The Outfit, America's super-secret intelligence agency, has no use for the Truth. It appears to approach its operation less playfully than its elder brother, British intelligence, which recruits spies simply for the exercise rather than to fulfill specific goals and individuals are entirely expendable and even meant to be expended.

This contrasts with the Christopher family's obsessive need to know the Truth, no matter what the cost. Hubbard Christopher tells stories from before the American Revolution about how an ancestor refuses to believe that his Indian friend is innocent of murder and resolutely stares down in church those who hang Indian Joe. In the end, the true murderer confesses the Truth on his deathbed and Aaron feels vindicated. Hearing this again, Paul's mother, Lori, makes him promise to never to be silent about the truth. Lori declares Nazism a stupidity that must be opposed. She will not allow her son to grow up hearing stupid people claim that Jews "smear themselves with goose grease and sew themselves up in their underwear for the winter" (pg. 64.)

Predictably, Lori angers the Gestapo or Nazi secret police and finds herself arrested while her husband and son are deported from Germany. Bereft, Hubbard joins The Outfit, dyes his hair, and returns to Germany on his identical cousin's passport. The Outfit does little to help him search for Lori, but he recruits spies and after the war finds himself in charge of the Outfit in Berlin. He spends 90 percent of his energy thinking about Lori and still becomes too big a problem for Soviet intelligence to endure. He is so obsessed with learning the truth about Lori that he believes forged SS and Gestapo documents and is lured out to receive the rest. A hit-and-run driver mows him down. Nothing else could have brought him foolishly to expose himself.



Son Paul is recruited, largely because his mind so resembles his father's. This ensures him trouble. He works closely with Hubbard's assistant, Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, who is known to want revenge against Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup, his cowardly World War II commander, and against all members of the "Fool Factory," Yale University and its secretive Skull and Bones society. As the conflict grows, Barney regularly gripes about the Director's blindness and refusal to be pragmatic. Nevertheless, Barney succeeds in jailing Jessup and fellow communists and earns a reputation as America's greatest spy. Meanwhile, Paul gets a "time out" in a Chinese prison, affording him time to recall everyone he has ever known and to put in place everything he and his loved ones have endured. He is released needing only one element to know the Truth.

A sensationalist journalist, Patrick Graham invites Paul to tell the Truth about The Outfit, which even before his imprisonment treats him as persona non grata. The alternative is having the story run wild. Surely Paul cannot owe these creeps anything. Paul confronts the Outfit's Director and his own college roommate long ago, David Patchet about his mother's file and refuses to accept that Graham knows more about her fate than does he. Paul declares that he is tired of waiting to hear the Truth and begins searching personally. He is troubled by The Outfit's insistence that a debacle in Austria is a de facto victory because it is unthinkable that the enemy could outsmart them. They reduce everything to a sex scandal, which Paul knows first hand is farcical. Paul pauses to think about how little Truth matters any more.

Paul resumes his cover as a poet, independent from Barney, who is complaining too loudly about Soviet infiltration of The Outfit. Paul pieces together proof that Barney has all along been a Soviet spy. Barney is relieved to confess virtually everything, venting his ire at his foolish enemies and gloating that he has been loyal to the Truth.

Vengeance

Vengeance runs through Charles McCarry's novel *The Last Supper*, but its extent is revealed only in the final chapters. Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz is portrayed from the start as an underdog. He is physically ugly, held to the rank of a non-commissioned officer, and treated as a houseboy by his Yale-educated captain, Wadsworth "Waddy" Jessup. Twice Waddy proves himself a battlefield coward, leaving Barney behind for dead. The second time Barney is taken prisoner and has his teeth gouged out by bayonet to learn information that he does not know.

Barney refrains from immediate Vengeance by getting Waddy court-martialed in return for posting to Berlin after the war. This seems too facile at the time and makes sense only when in the final chapters Barney confesses that in Burma, recovering his health, he signs up to be a Soviet spy. As a rising insider in The Outfit, Barney eventually does get even with Waddy by having him indicted by Congress as a communist in a cooked-up plot. On a larger scale, Barney gets even with the whole snooty Ivy League establishment. Barney rails throughout the novel about members of the Fool Factory, as he calls Yale. Berlin puts him in an ideal place to manipulate American intelligence to make it appear that the Soviets are being outmaneuvered, when in fact the Soviets are



running the show. Barney betrays his boss, Hubbard Christopher, whom he loves, when he is too effective against the Soviets. Soon after, as chief of the Vienna operation, Barney succeeds even more brilliantly in convincing the Allies that they have broken open the Soviet operation, when in fact the Soviets are feeding so much disinformation that they have to close down. Back in Washington, again proclaimed a hero, Barney is in position to manipulate a few operations to his own advantage.

Lesser themes of Vengeance in the novel include a Gestapo chief's informing a colleague at the border of Lori Christopher's bad attitude, resulting in her arrest while her husband and son are deported. Released from federal prison, Waddy becomes a successful lecturer on college campuses, talking about being a victim of the Republicans' anti-communist putsch in the 1950s. He becomes a folk hero and is sure that the next generation will bring The Outfit to a Nuremberg-like accounting. Finally, Patrick Graham, a new-style investigative reporter, stalks Paul to get him to tell the truth about The Outfit, which has disowned him, and Barney in particular. He asks why Paul would cover for this gang. Far from covering but not cooperating with Graham, Paul follows leads, gathering the information to arrest Barney, whom he has trusted and loved for most of his life. There is no sense of vengeance in this final take-down. Barney arranges his suicide to look like a professional hit by his former colleagues.



Style

Point of View

In *The Last Supper*, Charles McCarry uses an anonymous and omniscient third-person narrator. It is told in the past tense but dialogue is used extensively. This switches naturally between past, present, and future tenses. The narrator is positively inclined towards the protagonist, Paul Christopher, his parents, Hubbard and Lori Christopher, and his lover of two years, Molly Benson. A few characters are painted rather consistently evil including, of course, Japanese, Nazi German, and later Soviet enemies. There is a sniveling officer who turns out to be not only a Red but also a homosexual, which in the 1950s is considered villainous and a preening and aggressive investigative reporter.

The narrator is ambivalent towards Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, a character in focus more of the time than any other. Barney is a physically ugly character whose musical talent regularly causes amazement. He is ill-treated early in the novel and shows noble characteristics in warfare, but is obsessed with how graduates of Yale University and its secret Skull and Bones Society control the Outfit. He calls it the Fool Factory and argues increasingly with his colleagues and superiors.

Only late in the novel is it revealed that Barney is recruited by Soviet intelligence already in Burma in 1944 and has manipulated all of the events of the first two thirds of the novel to his own ends. Everything receives a new and more satisfying interpretation as Barney relieves himself of what cannot exactly be called guilt. One does not get the impression, listening to Barney and to Paul describing what he believes has happened, that the narrator has been disingenuous. His omniscience appears simply to have been selective.

Setting

The Last Supper by Charles McCarry spans much of the world through at least six decades of the twentieth century. Following *The Tears of Autumn*, it opens in Paris, France, where protagonist Paul Christopher is leaving his lover Molly Benson in the hands of trusted fellow spies to return to Vietnam and offer his own life instead of Molly's. He will not know for ten years that she is murdered outside the airport before his plane takes off or that his enemies in Vietnam are also killed, making his flight meaningless. Paul spends ten years in solitary confinement at hard labor in a Chinese prison as a dangerous counterrevolutionary when his lost pilot lands for fuel and to ask directions. It turns out that this is the safest place for Paul to be as Soviet assassins might be stalking him.

Much of the action takes place in Germany. Depicted are the economic and political turmoil following World War I, the triumph of brutal Nazism, and the total destruction



wrought on the country during World War II. Paul's parents meet and marry in Germany, living part of the time in Berlin and partly on the Rustic Rügen Island in the Baltic Sea. The Christophers use their yacht to carry possible Nazi victims to Denmark. When this becomes too dangerous, they flee by rail to the French border, where the Gestapo arrests Lori and deports her husband and son.

Hubbard and Paul are shown briefly in New York City, where Hubbard is recruited to the super-secret Outfit of American intelligence and Paul goes off unseen to private school. Hubbard returns to Germany to recruit spies and, mostly to search for his wife without success. He is shown again in Berlin after the war as local head of The Outfit. The Soviets murder him on the street and his ashes are returned to the family home in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts. Paul is recruited in Washington, DC, does a tour of duty in French Indochina, both in Hanoi and in the countryside, and then returns briefly to the U.S.

Paul goes to Vienna, Austria, as second-in-command to Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz, who is previously seen during World War II fighting in the jungles of Burma. The Americans and British work together in The Sewer, a carpeted listening post deep beneath Soviet headquarters in the Imperial Hotel. Little else is seen of the war-torn city. When this operation is crushed, the general focus shifts to Washington, DC, headquarters of The Outfit. Its operation is decentralized around the city. Barney favors meeting at places like the zoo.

Coming off the action in Tears of Autumn, Paul and his lover Molly are seen at Zermatt, Switzerland, and Paris, France. He then flies to Saigon, Vietnam, while she is killed outside the Paris airport. In Saigon, Paul arranges for a flight north to Hue, but the pilot gets lost and they land inside the People's Republic of China, where Paul is incarcerated for ten years as a dangerous counterrevolutionary. Released, he is assaulted by a television news reporter in Washington, DC, and begins based on Graham's broadcast to look for clues relating to why he and his loved ones have suffered. This takes him to Massachusetts, London, and Blythe, CA. The finale, in which Barney is revealed as a Soviet spy and commits suicide, takes place in a safe house somewhere in the Virginia woods and on Chesapeake Bay.

Language and Meaning

According to publisher information on the book jacket, author Charles McCarry works as a deep-cover CIA operations officer in Europe, Africa, and Asia during the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, he writes about spy craft with the assurance of first-hand knowledge. He resists any temptation to bury the reader in jargon and even scoffs at how the media stereotypes spies.

The anonymous narrator follows three interlinked characters closely. They are Hubbard, Paul Christopher, and Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz. There are also a host of intelligence officers, mostly graduates of Yale University and members of its secretive Skull and Bones Society, about which they are sworn to say nothing. Hence very little is



said about this secret group. During World War II, they serve in secretive units. Hubbard is a spy inside the Third Reich, building up a team of spies but mostly searching without success for any trace of his wife, whom the Nazis detain when expelling him and Paul in 1939. Barney resents the Yale crowd, which looks down at him, as he survives torture in Burma and blackmails his way into a plum assignment in Berlin in 1946. Murder, dirty tricks, and sex scandals are depicted with the reticence that one might expect of that period.

Hubbard is murdered and Paul is recruited to The Outfit, while Barney remains a constant. He loses favor with the upper brass but repeatedly earns kudos and secret medals for his successes. He is a bit crude in character, but only occasionally foul-mouthed as one might expect him to be. The occasional swear word is always warranted in context and the rarity of use punches up the drama. There is little gratuitous violence or sex, although violence and sex clearly occur. Women regularly make the first move on Paul and a few trysts are built into the story with little explicit depiction. Even Paul's imprisonment in China involves no physical torture and late in the novel the Director forbids torturing Barney, who is revealed as a traitor.

Structure

The Last Supper by Charles McCarry consists of thirteen numbered and titled books plus a brief Prologue "Molly" and a three-page Epilogue "Lori." The length of the book varies considerably. Each book consists of multiple numbered but untitled chapters and each chapter consists of multiple numbered but untitled sections. The chapter and section numbering restarts following the breaks.

The Last Supper first appears in 1983 but has now been reissued by Overlook Press. The book flaps describe McCarry as a retired U.S. intelligence officer who at the height of the Cold war serves as a deep-undercover agent in Europe, Africa, and Asia. McCarry displays this expertise in four Paul Christopher novels, of which this is the fourth. It reprises all of the characters found in previous novels such as The Miernik Dossier, the best-selling The Tears of Autumn, and The Secret Lovers. By examining Paul's father's life and death as a spy, McCarry is able to survey the history of U.S. intelligence and its place in turbulent world history from the 1920s through 1960s.

The Prologue sets up how Molly Benson, the protagonist's lover, is killed in Paris while Paul Christopher flies to Vietnam to plead for her life. Book I, "Hubbard," examines the first steps that ultimately lead to this act. Consisting of three chapters, it focusing on how Paul's parents meet and marry in Weimar Germany, smuggle endangered Jews and Bolsheviks into Denmark, and decide to flee the Nazi regime. However, they are separated. Americans Hubbard and Paul are forcibly deported while the German Lori is arrested. Book I is generally upbeat, despite the terrible conditions in Germany between the wars, because much of it is set on an idyllic island and the Christophers love one another.



Book II, "Wolkowicz," consists of seven chapters. Its mood is almost universally depressed. While named for the tough character, Barnabas "Barney" Wolkowicz introduced at the end of Book I as a warrant officer, it continues Hubbard's story as he searches for Lori during the war as part of the clandestine U.S. intelligence agency called The Outfit. Barney is twice betrayed in combat by his commanding officer, who is also a member of The Outfit, and as the price for not seeing him court-martialed for cowardice, gets him to recommend him to a postwar job in Berlin. He works for Hubbard building a reputation for himself and witnesses Hubbard's assassination by hit-and-run. Paul joins The Outfit, serves in Indochina, and then is sent to Vienna, Austria, as Barney's second in command. They run an amazingly successful operation right under the Soviets' noses, but personal jealousies lead to a key defection and destruction of the facility.

Book III, "Christopher," consists of thirteen chapters. It returns to events just prior to the Prologue, as Paul decides to return to Vietnam to offer his life in return for Molly's. Paul finds himself mistakenly inside the People's Republic of China, incarcerated as a dangerous counterrevolutionary awaiting death at the end of twenty years of hard labor. Paul is a model prisoner and sees value in the physical work and opportunity to contemplate his life in minute detail.

At the half-way mark in his sentence, Paul's claims of innocence are suddenly and inexplicably accepted and he is released. A new lover, a nosy investigative reporter, independent wealth, and the breakdown of relations among his former colleagues in The Outfit combine to offer clues to what his life has been about. Paul actively follows leads until he knows the truth. He then participates in capturing Barney, who partially confesses that he has all along been a Soviet agent and confirms Paul's hypotheses. Much of what occurs in Book II receives new meaning. Barney is relieved by this catharsis and the other principals are satisfied to know the truth. Barney's inventive suicide is even uplifting because it thwarts the Fool Factory, as he refers to his former colleagues. Barney is buried with full military honors in the Epilogue, which shifts location to Massachusetts to picture Paul and Stephanie with their young daughter, Lori.



Quotes

"The first link in the chain of events that led to the murder of Molly Benson, an innocent young woman who happened to love Paul Christopher, was forged on an August afternoon in 1923, on the island of Rügen, before either of the lovers was born" (Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 1, Part 1, pg. 13.)

"Lori turned away and walked to the window. 'Politics? I don't care what they believe in,' she said. 'It's the stupidity I have. It must be opposed, Paulus. My son won't grow up in a country of the stupid, hearing people say that Jews smear themselves with goose grease and sew themselves up in their underwear for the winter. I won't have it.'" (Book I, Hubbard, Chapter 2, Part 11, pg. 64.)

"With each twist of the bayonet, the torturer uttered his horrible shout. Then Wolkowicz screamed. Time after time, their voices merged in this shrill diphthong of cruelty and agony" (Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapter 1, Part 4, pg. 103.)

"Hubbard saw the envelop fly out of his own hand, spinning. Then it froze in midair, stopped by some mysterious force. Hubbard felt his own body for the last time as it was lifted into the air. The impact ruptured his aorta, and in the fraction of a second of life that remained to him, he believed that he was flying. He descended into a beech forest. There was no pain. Freed from the lifelong weight of his long bones, he flew even more swiftly into the chalky light of the German morning" (Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapter 2, Part 9, pg. 139.)

"Chest heaving, he tucked his holstered pistol into the waistband of his trousers and put a hand on Christopher's shoulder, moving him to one side. He spat a globule of reddened saliva into the snow and pointed a finger at Darby. The finger was broken. 'I just want you to know,' Wolkowicz said, coughing, 'that this was only round one. Nothing's over yet. Got it, Limey?'" (Book II, Wolkowicz, Chapter 5, Part 3, pg. 193.)

"Christopher heard a sob. Thinking that one of his boyish captors had been wounded, he looked into the flat features of the soldier who was twisting his arm. Christophe realized that he was in China, and that the sobs were coming out of his own throat" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 1, Part 9, pg. 250.)

"'It means that he is under sentence of death but that the sentence will not be carried out for twenty years.'

'That's a very cruel sentence.'

'No, it is most clement,' said the Chinese. 'Many of the criminals who receive this humanitarian punishment are saved'" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 2, Part 1, pg. 251.)

"'Graham's protected by the Constitution,' he said. 'He's trying to kill us, but we haven't got the right to bug his phone or follow him. We've lost the right of self-defense. That's what you've come back to, kid. Patchen will fill you in. He's our guru, where civil liberties are concerned'" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 4, Part 4, pg. 286.)



"Oh, Patrick. Those were the happiest days of his life. All that meaningless sex, all that synthetic fear of Big Brother. Just the environment for a paranoid with a narcissistic personality disorder.'

'Are those his problems'"

'Problems? They're the reason for his success. He's a merchant of paranoia. His audience loves it'" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 5, Part 1, pg. 296.)

"I want to kill them,' he said. 'I want them to die. I've been so lonely, Steph. First my mother. Then my father, then Molly. Will they let you live? Can a child of mine live in this world? I'm alone, absolutely alone. The loss! Prison was nothing to me. I went in alone and came out alone. And now that I know, I want to kill a man I've always loved. That's the final aloneness, that will make it complete. I hate them, I didn't know I could do that, Steph.'

He cried at last" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 7, Part 3, pg. 319.)

"To die for stupidity? A great deal of difference, I should have thought. To you especially. You were quite eerie, you know, the way you never did a stupid thing. Not even on the female body. That's awfully rare in a member of your sex, to know where everything is.' Rosalind warmed her hands. She hadn't intended to speak about their life in bed; there had never been anything between them but sex and jokes" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 10, Part 2, pg. 351.)

"The raft was already sinking. He only had a moment to act. He threw the knife into the water, seized the gun, and placed his thumb on the trigger. With a last smile for this final act of cunning, Wolkowicz reached behind him, pressed the muzzle of the deringer against the back of his skull, and pulled the trigger" (Book III, Christopher, Chapter 13, Part 2, pg. 384.)



Topics for Discussion

What role do elephants play in this novel?

How does poetry and literature at large figure in this novel?

What likenesses do characters see in Hubbard and Paul Christopher? Are there notable contrasts?

How is Yale University and its graduates treated in the novel? How do they view graduates of other schools and the world at large?

How surprising do you find Barney's revelations in the final chapters? Looking back, what hints does he give earlier to his role over the decades?

Do you find David Patchen a sympathetic character? Does he change over the course of the novel or merely characters' perception of him.

How does Patrick Graham epitomize the changes in America in the 1970s?