

Miss Julia Strikes Back Study Guide

Miss Julia Strikes Back by Ann B. Ross

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Miss Julia Strikes Back Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapters 1-3.....	6
Chapters 4-6.....	8
Chapters 7-9.....	10
Chapters 10-12.....	12
Chapters 13-15.....	14
Chapters 16-18.....	16
Chapters 19-21.....	18
Chapters 22-24.....	20
Chapters 25-27.....	22
Chapters 28-30.....	24
Chapters 31-33.....	26
Chapters 34-36.....	28
Chapters 37-39.....	30
Chapters 40-42.....	32
Characters.....	34
Objects/Places.....	39
Themes.....	43
Style.....	45
Quotes.....	47
Topics for Discussion.....	49



Plot Summary

Miss Julia, a middle-aged woman of some wealth, discovers her engagement ring and the bulk of her friend's jewelry has been stolen from her home. After contacting authorities, learning of a possible ring of jewelry thieves in the region and deciding the police move too slowly, Miss Julia packs up her friend's son, Lloyd, and sets off to find her belongings.

Their sleuthing takes them to West Palm, Florida, where they attempt to employ the very intoxicated Frank Tuttle, private investigator. After one whole day of sobering Frank, Julia explains her situation, and Frank refuses to help. After generous salary offerings, however, he changes his mind.

Frank's agreement in no way signifies compliance, however. He frequently tries to slip away from Julia and return to the bar. However, he does learn of suspicious activity at one house in a West Palm neighborhood. After one, short night of surveillance, in which everyone, Julia, Lloyd, Julia's acquaintance from North Carolina, Etta Mae Wiggins, and Frank, the investigator decides the house is under federal investigation, Frank refuses to return.

Not to be dissuaded, Julia recruits Etta Mae to pose as door-to-door bible sellers, in order to get a look inside the suspicious house. When a man comes to the door, Etta Mae fakes heat stroke to get the women inside. After a few, tense minutes, Etta Mae "recovers" and the women leave the neighborhood. A stern man in a dark suit, presumably a federal agent, advises them to stay out of the neighborhood. As they drive away, Etta Mae shows Julia a necklace she picked from the man's pocket. Julia recognizes it as a family heirloom of one of her neighborhoods in Abbotsville, North Carolina. The proof stiffens her resolve to get her jewelry back. After a brief consideration, she decides she cannot call the authorities, because they would keep the jewelry as evidence for an unknown period.

Etta Mae and Julia return to the office of Tuttle Investigations, where they find Lloyd alone. Julia decides to drop Frank Tuttle's help and just as she turns to leave, he enters. Etta Mae suggests keeping him around, and they take him back to their hotel to sober him up again.

Over lunch, the women discuss their options. They fear that, given the missing necklace, the thieves will move soon. Etta Mae devises a plan and leaves to buy walkie-talkies. Julia and Lloyd drive to a Target to get more weather appropriate clothes. A woman of high society, Julia refuses, at first, to buy goods of such questionable quality. When she spots the thieves buying luggage, however, she quickly changes, to not be recognized. Lloyd and Julia leave the store just in front of the thieves.

In their new clothes and with their new electronics, the foursome sets out to spy on the house once again. Frank balks at first, but Julia's generosity quickly changes his mind.



At Frank's advice, they park their car at a house obviously hosting a party and pretend to be a family out for a stroll. Julia becomes morally offended when Etta Mae and Frank seem to be carrying their husband and wife charade too far. For her sake, they fall further apart. On the block behind the house in question, Julia and Frank prepare to slip through the hedgerows while Etta Mae and Lloyd make their way back to the car, in case a quick getaway is needed.

After several mishaps, Julia and Frank find themselves behind the thieves' house. They quickly realize the thieves are preparing to make a getaway. Frank approaches the cars and then hastily leaves, telling Julia the stakeout is over. Julia approaches for a closer look and sets off a car alarm. They frantically call to Etta Mae on the walkie-talkie as they scramble through the bushes to the street behind.

Once they all pile into Julia's car, they watch as federal agents peel out after the thieves first SUV. Frank admonishes them to stay and follow the second SUV, correctly assuming the first one is a decoy. Frank also shares he put a piece of tape over the taillights of the SUVs, so they can identify it when the truck passes them.

The authorities stop the first SUV on bridge leading out of the community and this quickly causes a traffic jam. As it backs up down the block, they spot the SUV in question. They break into the line of traffic and pursue the truck onto the northbound interstate.

After hundreds of miles, they follow the SUV into a rest area. After everyone takes time to freshen up, Frank goes into a fast food restaurant for some provisions. While he is gone and only one man remains with the SUV, Julia decides to try for a closer look. She instructs Etta Mae to create a diversion for the only man left looking after the SUV. This Etta Mae does effectively, so Julia gets access to the SUV. She crawls to the cargo area in the back and begins feeling through several duffel bags and suitcases. The first several bags are filled with cash. Not even tempted, Julia passes over the money in search of her jewels. Just as she locates a bag of jewelry, she hears the warning signal from Lloyd that the thieves are returning.

To create a diversion, she opens the door and throws the cash into the parking lot. This quickly creates a mob, with people greedily grabbing for loose bills. Julia dashes back to her car with the bag of stolen jewelry. There, she finds Etta Mae is still missing. She leaves the jewelry with Lloyd and returns for her friend.

About that time, Frank emerges as well. He tries to convince Julia to stay with the car while he goes for Etta Mae. She, as usual, does as she pleases. She finds Etta Mae hiding under a parked car and joins her as the crowd begins to get out of control. People attack the SUV with crowbars and grab for more bags of money.

Julia and Etta Mae sneak back to the car and they drive away just as the SUV pulls out of the rest area. Not far down the interstate, the police pull over the SUV with its remaining money. Julia hires Frank to drive them back to North Carolina and the group drives a little farther before stopping at a hotel for the night.



With Frank driving, they make it home to Abbotsville much quicker. Julia admonishes Frank to begin attending church, to change his destructive lifestyle. She promises to pay him for his church attendance for one year. That weekend, he attends church in Abbotsville. Julia watches with excitement as he talks with the pastor after the service. She becomes frustrated, however, when he becomes quick to point out others' shortcomings.

When Julia's friend and housemate, Lloyd's mother, returns, they inspect the contents of the bag. They recover Julia's Princess Diana replica engagement ring and many of Hazel Marie's pieces. Then, they turn the remaining jewelry over to local authorities.



Chapters 1-3

Chapters 1-3 Summary

As the novel opens, Miss Julia tears through her house in a panic. She seeks the help of her friend and housekeeper, Lillian. Upon finding Lillian in the kitchen, Julia shares that something is missing. Lillian assumes Miss Julia forgot that her husband, Sam, and her housemate, Hazel Marie, left on vacations.

Lillian attempts to calm her employer, to no avail. Though she never slows down to explain her panic, Julia continues ranting about her missing objects. She brushes away all of Lillian's help. Finally, as the chapter closes, Julia explains her rings are gone from her room.

Chapter two flashes back one day. Julia recalls, for the reader, a party she hosted, to take her mind from the boredom of her husband being away. The party fails to entertain Julia, however, and she gladly shows the last guest out. Ever a proper woman of society, though, Julia never shows her boredom to her guests.

After the parties end, Julia helps Lillian collect napkins and pieces of her second best china dishes. She shares her discontent with Lillian, who suggests another party. Julia brushes the idea away, admitting the first party failed to meet her expectations.

Lillian continues to admonish Julia to find something to cheer her, before her poor attitude spreads to Lloyd, Hazel Marie's son, as well. The reader learns both women had a relationship with the house's former owner, Wesley Lloyd Springer. He was Julia's husband; she admits his exact relationship with Hazel Marie is unknown to her. This ambiguity remains throughout the novel.

Lillian suggests Julia remodel a room in the large house, as Hazel Marie has just done. She points out that all of the women at the party admired the job done on Hazel Marie's room. When Julia refuses this advice as well, Lillian points out Julia had the opportunity to join either Sam or Hazel Marie on their vacations. Julia brings up seemingly logical reasons for staying behind.

In the beginning of chapter three, Julia expounds on her reasons for not joining her husband or friend. Hazel Marie, Julia points out, most likely took Mr. Pickens, her suspected romantic interest. Sam, on the other hand, booked his trip to Russia before he married Julia. The tour was full by the time he invited Julia to join him.

Likewise, because Julia rightly guessed Hazel Marie took Mr. Pickens with her to Mexico, Julia declined to go along. When Lillian admonishes Julia to withhold judgment on Hazel Marie, Julia promises she is doing so. Furthermore, she vows Hazel Marie's personal life barely intrudes on her thoughts of the younger woman. Lillian also points out that, being in the company of a law enforcement officer offers Hazel Marie an extra degree of protection.



As Julia and Lillian continue cleaning up from the party, Julia shares a plan to take Lloyd, whom she calls Little Lloyd, as he was named after his father, to the mall for new tennis shoes. Lillian asks how long the family plans to call the child Little Lloyd, as she fears it ruins his credibility in future career choices. At first, Julia fails to see the problem, but after a few minutes of insistence from Lillian, Julia promises to practice calling him simply Lloyd.

As the women continue straightening around the house, Lillian noses her way into Julia's marital affairs as well. Lillian asserts that allowing Sam to go off alone, along with Julia's rough attitude towards Sam in general, is unwise. Julia acts shocked and slightly offended by Lillian's unsought advice. Julia argues her side of the problem, and Lillian appears to back down, but still insists on having the last word with "I'm jus' sayin."

Chapters 1-3 Analysis

The confusion in the opening chapter grabs the reader's attention. The reader, though, gains little insight into Julia's character or other characters from the novel. In the end, the first chapter serves only to start the conflict of the novel.

Chapter two flashes back to the day before Julia's rings went missing.

The reader quickly learns Julia enjoys a privileged life, for which she feels no shame. She sees her wealth as a reward for living with a difficult man for many years. She worries much about what others think and show this concern by trying her best to impress her friends. However, she outwardly gives an air of independence that belies her concern.

The author remains very vague about Julia's background. She makes a few remarks about her deceased husband and unusual housing arrangements. This second book in the series, however, lacks the usual in-depth description of the protagonist's past. Most obviously, it remains unclear to the first time reader how Julia comes to live in the same house as her husband's son and the child's mother. Also remarkable is the fact Julia and Hazel Marie cohabit on rather friendly terms, despite very different backgrounds. Such peaceful arrangements speak to Julia's superb breeding. Ironically, little about Julia's upbringing comes out in the novel. The reader assumes she has always known a life of privilege, but no evidence of this is forthcoming.

In chapter three, the reader finally learns why Julia is living practically alone, with both her new husband and Hazel Marie on simultaneous vacations. Though Sam and Hazel Marie's characters play large roles in the novel, they appear very little.

Lillian's character, on the other hand, appears frequently, especially in the beginning. Julia's maid offers not only cleaning services, but also counseling, though often her advice receives little welcome from Julia. Though Julia frequently admonishes Lillian for her nosiness, Julia inwardly heeds much of her advice, such as treating Sam more nicely in the future.



Chapters 4-6

Chapters 4-6 Summary

As Lloyd and Julia prepare for their trip to the mall, Julia admonishes Lillian to take the night off as well, and spend time with her great-granddaughter. Julia plans to take Lloyd shopping, and then to a movie, if any of the options meet her standards of entertainment. Silently, she reconsiders Lillian's advice and vows to treat Sam much nicer when he returns.

Lloyd finds the athletic shoes he has been hoping for. After purchasing them, he encourages Julia to try on a pair. She laughs, but refuses, claiming instead her dependable pumps. Julia allows Lloyd more time for window shopping in the mall, though none of the mediocre offerings tempt Julia to purchase.

After a meal in the mall's cafeteria, Lloyd suggests a family movie. He describes it as a picture for children, about a youngster's sports team. They sit for just a few minutes before Julia's faculties are offended. She marches herself and Lloyd out of the theater, only stopping to tell off the employee. On the way home, Julia apologizes to Lloyd for the abbreviated evening. Lloyd responds with characteristic aplomb, commenting only on the satisfactory way Julia told off the theater worker.

Back at home, Julia enters the dark, empty house with trepidation. However, she is careful not to let her fear show, so as not to worry young Lloyd. She admonishes him to finish his homework and get to bed. Then, she settles into her own room, with Lloyd's baseball bat propped secretly next to her bed.

In chapter five, Julia and Lillian conclude the rings are not lost, but stolen. They ponder the guest list from the party, but cannot fathom that one of their friends would steal anything, let alone such precious gems. One by one, they mention the well-respected names on the list. Systematically, they reject each possibility on purely logical grounds. At this point, they believe the thefts to be isolated incidents.

As both women simultaneously remember the large cache of jewels in Hazel Marie's room, they rush to check. They find Hazel Marie's large jewelry case nearly bare. Piece by piece, Julia laments the personal and financial loss for Hazel Marie. Panic sets in for Miss Julia. She worries about how such a thing will devastate Hazel Marie. As she examines a few pieces left in the large jewelry chest, she comments that they were the only pieces of costume jewelry Hazel Marie owned. The thieves had an eye for quality.

Chapters 4-6 Analysis

Lloyd's character first appears in chapter four. Without any clue into his background, the reader notices Lloyd's superior intelligence and experience for his young age of twelve. Throughout the novel, he aids Julia with advice about travel and electronics, among



other things. In addition to his intellect, Lloyd treats his elders, such as Julia, very respectfully, even when they live by a somewhat outdated moral code.

While on a trip in town, Julia expresses her dislike of fashion and movie trends. She appears to be morally offended by the language in a so-called family movie. The author uses some regional idioms when Lloyd describes Julia's dressing down of the theater employee as "blessed out."

The novel returns to present time at the end of chapter four, when Julia's discovers her rings to be missing. The ensuing panic makes much more sense to the reader the second time. For emphasis, some of the same dialogue repeats.

Julia reinforces her high place in society by repeatedly pointing out that none of her friends would commit such a crime. Furthermore, none of them need to, because they all enjoy the same privileged life she does. Lillian supports this notion. Briefly, Lillian suggests a sensational possibility that one of their friends suffers from kleptomania. Such a possibility takes hold, until they learn further the scope of the crime spree.

Though she repeatedly vows the opposite, material possessions hold great importance for Julia and her family. She feels security in them. However, Julia knows such materialism conflicts with the conservative, Christian values she purports. Therefore, she takes the opportunity to point out the foolishness of such feelings to others, such as Lloyd. Julia seems to find no hypocrisy in such statements.



Chapters 7-9

Chapters 7-9 Summary

Once again, Lillian and Julia sit down to ponder the guest list. They determine that, while they were home, no one but the party guests entered the house. Yet, none of the women has a history and a motive that would justify such actions. Julia calls one friend, hoping to gain some insight into the incident. The friend, assuming Julia means to place blame, becomes offended and hangs up. Julia decides the time has come to call the police.

Before she can make the call to the police, another woman calls Julia, sharing that thieves stole her jewelry as well. Julia, impressed now as to the gravity of the situation, redoubles her vow to call the authorities. She admonishes her friend to do the same.

Julia's friend, Colman Bates, who is also the sheriff's detective, comes to Julia's house. He explains cops suspect a ring of thieves throughout the southwest. The authorities believe they watch society pages for women wearing pricey jewelry. The thieves steal the items and sell the loose stones. This news, and the ring's possible link to international drug dealers, causes further distress to Julia. She intimates that her highbrow sensibilities cannot comprehend such low dregs of society.

After Bates leaves, Julia decides the best action is her own. She vows officials take far too long, and would only lock her jewels up as evidence for unknown years. Unfortunately, Hazel Marie's friend, Mr. Pickens, is out of town, conveniently at the same time Hazel Marie left for Mexico. Mr. Pickens works as a private investigator in the Abbotsville area. Julia realizes Mr. Pickens and Hazel Marie enjoy a private, personal relationship. Their mutual disappearances support this theory. She struggles to remember the name of Pickens' friend in Florida, where authorities believe the thieves may head with their loot.

It is Lloyd who remembers the name of Frank Tuttle, private investigator in Palm Beach Florida. He looks up the number and Julia places several calls to the man's office. The woman with the answering service in Florida treats Julia rudely, or so Julia thinks. She tries every means possible to make an impression on the woman as to her importance, from her knowledge of key law enforcement officials, to her money and family name. When no satisfactory response comes by the next day, Julia takes her plans for independent investigation to a new level.

Chapters 7-9 Analysis

For Julia, the right thing supersedes all else. She forgets about her image in front of her friends when she loses her rings. She risks offending these very friends to find the truth. The right thing, however, proves subjective. Julia seems to think the wrongdoing of



someone else, such as the jewel thieves, excuses any wrong one may do to catch such a person. Also, any action is excusable in correcting a personal offense to Julia.

In the same theme, Julia wastes no time in calling the police. She gladly accepts the information they give about the crime spree. However, she feels no duty to share any information she eventually discovers with the authorities. In such instances, one of the novels' themes—the end justifies the means—emerges.

The author employs irony in the fact the thieves target wealthy women they see in the society pages. The very prestige Julia enjoys serves to make her and her friend targets for international criminals. This fact points out that a life of privilege carries added risk.

In her early dealing with Tuttle, Julia's unexplainable luck begins. Julia sees the luck as divine favor in her life. She takes this to be approval for her actions, even when those actions contradict her usual moral feelings.

The author heightens suspense once again at the end of chapter nine, by telling the reader Julia has a plan, but withholding the details of the plan until the next chapter. She uses this device several times throughout the novel.



Chapters 10-12

Chapters 10-12 Summary

In chapter 10, Julia shares with Lillian her plan to take Lloyd to Florida, to find Frank Tuttle and send him on the trail of the jewel thieves. Julia shares Lillian's worries about the safety of the trip, especially for Lloyd. However, Julia feels the risks cannot be avoided.

During her preparations for the trip, Julia meets Etta Mae Wiggins. Etta Mae stops by, ignorant of the whole problem, to ask Julia to take an offering to church for one of her homebound clients. Etta Mae works as a personal assistant to ill and elderly patients. Julia believes Etta Mae to be too rough, socially, and therefore beneath her own social strata. She admires Hazel Marie for helping Etta Mae get a legitimate job, as manager of a mobile home park, and Julia admires Etta Mae for doing a good job in cleaning up the clientèle at the park. However, Etta Mae's folksy attitude grates against Julia's refined mannerisms.

Considering the impending snowstorm, and the miles of travel, Julia decides a different car is in order, as she refuses to consider flying. She calls the luxury car dealership and arranges for him to deliver, to her home, a brand new, luxury car, perfect for traveling and with all the newest features. Julia promises to pay cash.

After making the phone call, Julia instructs Lillian to pack Lloyd's bag for warm weather. Etta Mae, after learning the nature and destination of Julia's trip, sticks around to observe the excitement. She advises Julia about obtaining travelers' checks and hiding a portion of her money in the car. Though Julia responds with polite aloofness, she inwardly appreciates Etta Mae's wise advice.

Despite Lillian's pleas, Julia remains stubborn in her determination to go after, first Mr Tuttle, then the jewel thieves. She loads up the new car and, after taking a test drive around the block with Etta Mae, Julia sets off on her own.

She stops at the bank for the cash and travelers' checks, as recommended. To herself, she admits rumors will soon fly around the little town about the withdrawal amounts, but she promises this will not bother her. As the snow flurries begin, Julia picks Lloyd up at school, after collecting his assignments for the week. When she explains the nature of the trip to the boy, he responds with enthusiasm.

Chapters 10-12 Analysis

In keeping with the nearly comic nature of the mystery, Julia haphazardly decides to go to Florida herself. This begins another theme in the book—to get something done, one must do it one's self.



Though younger than Julia, Lillian begins to emerge as a mother figure to Julia, giving unwanted personal advice and worrying about her safety. In a childlike manner, also, Julia submits to the coddling, phoning to check in at least once a day while in Florida.

Julia once again begins using her wealth to open difficult doors. She takes note of other's attention to her wealth. Though she claims it does not bother her, she makes great mention of it. In such a small town, her actions provide much needed entertainment. The reader will notice, however, that no evidence exists of the scrutiny, other than in Julia's own imagination. Assuming all small towns to be the same, the community no doubt does take notice.

More of Julia's prejudice comes out when Etta Mae arrives. She makes several observations about the younger woman's lack of breeding. However, Julia gains some valuable advice and, eventually, a great deal of help, from Etta Mae. Thus, the importance Julia places on breeding seems to be of less importance than she believes it to be.

Etta Mae's promise to help Julia serves as foreshadowing for Etta Mae's larger part, later in the novel. It seems to be a concession for Julia to seek the help of someone beneath her on the social ladder. However, she points out that such low class problems as public drunkenness are more suited to someone of Etta Mae's background.

Julia's determination shows the stubbornness of her character. This aspect of her character stems from her moral leanings as well as her age.

In addition, Julia's lack of guidance on the trip turns it into a zany string of unbelievable coincidences. Yet, Julia's confidence never wavers, though they have little to go on.



Chapters 13-15

Chapters 13-15 Summary

Though Julia attempts a brave front for Lloyd's sake, she feels much anxiety about driving, especially as the traffic picks up outside of Atlanta, Georgia. She makes remarks about other people's driving to Lloyd, who cannot help but agree. She finds a safe place behind a large truck and follows him until they are clear of the city traffic to the south.

The first day, they stop early, as the day's driving takes a physical toll on Julia. She checks them into an upscale hotel and orders room service. After a comfortable night and a few decent meals, they are back on the road. The next day, they arrive in Palm Beach. After they locate the office of Tuttle Investigations, they find it to be deserted. Though the neighborhood and general lack of upkeep does little to assure Julia, she continues.

With authority in her voice, she inquires at the beauty salon next door. The women point her towards The Strip Hall, a bar at the end of the shopping center. After some innocent banter, Julia understands the nature of the establishment. Her courage never wavering, she marches both Lloyd and herself into the dark interior of the bar and strip club.

Though morally offended by the decor and general clientèle of the bar, Julia and Lloyd march in and demand the owner point them to Mr. Frank Tuttle. The owner balks at Lloyd's presence, citing the trouble that awaits him, by law, if authorities discover a minor in the bar. Nevertheless, Julia repeats her demand. Tuttle stands up, briefly identifies himself and passes out on the floor at Julia's feet.

Julia and Lloyd load Tuttle into her car and drive to a motel with exterior entrances, to ease getting the very inebriated Tuttle inside. A heavy downpour starts just as they begin to move the man indoors. Without the physical means to move an unconscious adult man, Julia and Lloyd seek shelter from the rain, leaving Tuttle passed out in a growing puddle.

Eventually the water rouses him briefly. He vomits just off the car's bumper and finally stumbles into the room. Julia and Lloyd attempt to clean him up, but he once again passes out in the shower. After much stubborn work, they get him undressed and into one of the beds. Julia makes the determination that his clothes are no longer worth saving and throws them into the hotel's dumpster.

Realizing it has been hours since their last meal, but not trusting Tuttle enough to leave him alone, Julia instructs Lloyd to order pizza. At the scent of food, Tuttle briefly awakens, but the smell only makes him sick again. Before too long, he is unconscious. As Julia and Lloyd eat the pizza, Julia remarks on the sub-par condition of the motel. She promises Lloyd better accommodations once Tuttle sobers up.



Chapters 13-15 Analysis

Julia's age is highlighted as she drives to Florida. The author makes many concessions for her lack of tolerance for traveling. Yet, age does not hinder Julia from accomplishing her tasks. Though Julia uses her money to open many doors, she rarely misses a chance to be in the middle of the action. Though she briefly considers simply hiring Tuttle, ultimately, she decides the best work will be done if she goes in person. During the drive, the action of the book pauses. However, once they arrive, the action speeds forward.

Julia's first impression of Tuttle reveals what will bring much conflict into the novel—the difference in morality between Julia and Tuttle. Julia appears personally offended by Tuttle's bad habits. Though she bristles at rudeness from others, she sees no problem in treating Tuttle with short, bossy answers.

At every turn, Julia's highbrow senses seem offended. The hotel and its amenities fail to meet her requirements. The very weather in Florida seems to be personally against her, with the humidity, heat and unexpected showers. The casual style of a seaside town fails to live up to her southern charm. She also frequently assures the reader her life provides no experience with drunks. Therefore, she does not know how to sober up Mr. Tuttle.

It seems that, as a result of Tuttle's poor character, Julia's quest ends prematurely. In a slapstick way, however, she rebounds from severe setbacks and comes out on top. Though she makes everyone aware that the situation is, ultimately, sinful, she deals with each obstacle in rapid succession. One of Julia's best traits is her rapid decision making skills.



Chapters 16-18

Chapters 16-18 Summary

The next time Tuttle wakes up, he attempts to call a taxi, for alcohol and a rescue from the unknown woman who has captured him. Julia sends the cab away and describes the nature of her business to Tuttle. She promises more details, once he is sufficiently sober.

Feeling Tuttle's condition is beyond her expertise, Julia calls Etta Mae Wiggins. She implores Etta Mae to join them, all at Julia's expense. Etta Mae responds excitedly, promise to fly down as soon as she can. Satisfied, with more help on the way, Julia takes Lloyd to a restaurant for dinner. She decides that, in his state of ill health and undress, Tuttle poses little flight risk. After unplugging the room's phone, she leaves him for the evening.

When they return from dinner, Julia finds Tuttle just as sound sleep as when they left. A call to the hotel's office reveals that no cots remain available for rent. She gains one mattress for Lloyd. Julia herself claims the room's only chair. They pass a somewhat restful night.

The next morning, stiffened but slightly rested, Lloyd and Julia have a cold breakfast in the room. Tuttle awakens, seemingly in his right mind once more. Julia explains the jewel thieves, her leads from Bates and her knowledge of Mr. Pickens. She haggles with Tuttle on a daily investigating fee and persuades him to eat breakfast. She refuses to give in to his pleas for drink, citing the moral and physical dangers of such habits.

Chapters 16-18 Analysis

One aspect of Tuttle's sobering that seems a stretch of reality is the apparent kidnapping of Tuttle. With little explanation, he goes with Julia and stays for more than twenty-four hours before she offers any explanation. Yet, Julia explains this as a gross danger of engaging in such immoral behavior as binge drinking.

The action of the novel jumps back to life when Etta Mae joins the quest in Florida. Her expertise in health care, and her less than ideal past, give her just the right experience to deal with Tuttle and his habits, along with other unsavory characters they encounter. Julia, on the other hand, learns to accept those different from herself. She comes to really value Etta Mae's knowledge and even her companionship.

For all of her prejudices towards others, Julia proves very resourceful in her endeavors. She suffers great discomfort in sleeping arrangements without complaint. Partially, she does this to show Lloyd how to react appropriately in a difficult situation. She also thinks quickly when faced with a problem, such as deciding to go to Florida and deciding to

actively sober up Tuttle. Her quick thinking allows the novel to move along at a very fast pace. In all, the action of the novel takes less than one week.



Chapters 19-21

Chapters 19-21 Summary

After making Tuttle shower and carefully wrap himself in a blanket, for his clothes are gone, Julia loads everyone into her car. Upon seeing the fancy import, Tuttle tries to renegotiate his price. Julia remains firm—the price is fair, regardless of her own personal finances.

Before taking Tuttle to his condominium for clothes, she stops to pick Etta Mae up at the airport. Julia regretfully observes Etta Mae's uncultured habits, but rejoices in the way she takes the naked man in stride. Julia explains that Frank's appearance, directly related to his drinking problem, prompted Julia's call for help.

Tuttle then directs Julia to his condominium. After Etta Mae helps Tuttle get dressed, and Julia stops him from getting a drink in his condominium, the entire group makes their way to Tuttle's office.

Back at the office, Julia inquires about Tuttle's means of investigation. He promises to make some calls and Julia takes Etta Mae and Lloyd for some fast food. They bring the lunch back to the office, only to discover Tuttle has obtained drink from a stash in his office. Julia, with righteous indignation, expresses her displeasure.

That evening, Julia seeks a better hotel for the group. She obtains one room for herself and Lloyd and a nearby room for Etta Mae and Tuttle, with separate beds, so Etta Mae can keep an eye on the investigator.

At the hotel, Tuttle explains he can gain the best leads at a local restaurant, where many police and other law enforcement types hang out. At first, Julia resists allowing Tuttle into such an establishment, but finally agrees, for the sake of her jewelry. Julia admonishes Lloyd and Etta Mae to rest for the evening.

After a restful afternoon, Tuttle prepares to consult with his former colleagues at the bar. Julia insists she and Etta Mae accompany him, mostly to keep his drinking in check. He voices severe complaints, to no avail. Julia instructs Lloyd to stay the room and order room service. The three adults take Etta Mae's car, which Tuttle insists upon driving.

Chapters 19-21 Analysis

In a light-hearted way, the author does show the negative effects of alcoholism. Tuttle's business suffers unnecessarily, because of his drinking. Though he proves quite talented in his chosen field, Tuttle fails to secure regular work. One wonders, then, how he lost his place in law enforcement. Meeting Julia proves fateful, in a positive way. She finally motivates him, first with money, then with religion, to kick the habit.



The author's critique of alcoholism continues. The temptation proves irresistible to Tuttle for much of the middle of the novel. Nothing, not even all of Julia's apparent wealth and promises of reimbursement, motivate him to stay sober. This illustrates the irresistible pull of addiction on a person. Julia remains resolute in her task, however. She latches onto the smallest clues and follows the leads to find her stolen property.

Tuttle's daily fee from Julia comes up frequently, especially in the beginning of their business together. It seems logical to the reader that Tuttle doubts Julia's honesty, because they are basically strangers, and Julia effectively kidnapped him into her employ. However, Julia responds with great offense to any question of her integrity.

Julia's character grows beyond resourceful when she insists on accompanying Tuttle on every aspect of the investigation. However, her inclusion of Lloyd seems a bit irrational, given the conservative nature of her character. She asserts she includes him on the trip to keep an eye on him and keep him safe. Nevertheless, the reader wonders how accompanying Julia on her quest to Florida proves more safe than a quiet week back in Abbotsville.



Chapters 22-24

Chapters 22-24 Summary

As they enter the cop bar, Julia inwardly expresses her disapproval of the clientele. She observes with apparent amazement that many of the men occupying the bar wear law enforcement uniforms.

In the back room, the group orders their food. Etta Mae maintains her excitement about the case and even the bar, saying it reminds her of a place back home. Tuttle eventually gains a tip about a house in a wealthy West Palm Beach neighborhood that appears to be under observation by federal officials. Satisfied with the information, the group leaves, to Julia's relief.

On the way back to the hotel, Tuttle announces he wants out of the case, due to the involvement of the federal investigators. Julia insists on continuing. Repeatedly, throughout the day, Julie and Tuttle remind one another about the daily fee she has promised.

Somewhat calmed by the promise of a sizable check at the end of the day, Tuttle announces a stakeout on the house. Julia insists she and Etta Mae join him. Furthermore, she points out she cannot leave Lloyd alone any longer, so he must go along as well.

Therefore, much to Tuttle's frustration, the entire quartet sits in Julia's car, watching a large mansion in an exclusive island community of West Palm Beach. After just a few hours, though, everyone but Tuttle expresses a need to use the bathroom.

Tuttle reacts with frustrated anger. As they drive away, he points out the obvious federal presence in the neighborhood. He also points out the suspicious house the feds appear to be watching. Police, he explains, usually keep jars on hand, so officers never need to leave the scene for a call of nature.

The next day, Julia explains she and Etta Mae are going shopping. She assures Tuttle they will not hinder the investigation. However, she insists she leave Lloyd with Tuttle, to make sure he stays out of trouble.

Chapters 22-24 Analysis

While Julia temporarily puts some of her prejudices aside, she in no way gives them up. Though she goes to the cop bar, she makes it clear she disapproves of the atmosphere inside. She refuses to subject Lloyd to this environment, which makes it more surprising to the reader when she insists he go along on the stakeout.



The involvement of the federal authorities adds more suspense to the plot of the novel. However, it proves ironic that Julia and her lack of expertise outwit the federal authorities and all of their resources. This supports Julia's new-found philosophy that one must accomplish things one's self.

Tuttle shows an unexpected turn of conscious when he tries to back out of the job after learning the feds are involved. However, his greed wins out in the end. This begins the power struggle between Julia and Tuttle. With Tuttle in top physical form, free of alcohol, he proves a near match for Julia's stubborn nature. In the end, she gives in somewhat to his superior experience, but continually reminds him who controls his pay.

The conflict continues to mount in Julia's search for her stolen property. As the action escalates, Julia's ideas never run out. Though she proves unqualified for an all night stakeout, she dreams up new ways to gain information about the house in question. Tuttle's faith in Julia, however, runs out too soon.

Julia's innocence to the ways of the criminal world is best illustrated by Lloyd's presence in potentially dangerous situations. She worries about leaving him alone, in North Carolina, then in the hotel. Yet, she takes him along to stakeout the house of suspected international drug dealers. These actions also underline one of the themes of the book, that Julia only trust the outcomes of tasks she does herself. She trusts no one to keep Lloyd safe but herself, even though doing so puts him in potentially more danger.



Chapters 25-27

Chapters 25-27 Summary

Julia sends Etta Mae back to her room, with instructions to change into clothes that are more conservative. Even after she returns, Julia adjusts her outfit, to make her appear even dowdier. Once they both meet Julia's approval, they leave Lloyd and Tuttle at the investigator's office. The women stop at a religious goods store, where they buy several tracts about the Ten Commandments and some new bibles.

Pulling into the exclusive island neighborhood once again, the women begin at the end of the block and pretend to be selling bibles, door to door. After a few houses, they perfect their sales pitch and approach the house in question.

A small man answers the door, appearing to be alone. In the middle of Julia's spiel, Etta Mae swoons. Blaming the heat, Julia admonishes the man to get a cool towel. Once he leaves, Etta Mae revives and reveals her ruse to Julia. They cautiously look around the room. The two women note a room nearby full of computer monitors, each displaying a newspaper website. This confirms Bates' theory that the drug dealers spot targets on the society pages of local newspapers throughout the south. The man returns, Julia prays over her fallen friend and Etta Mae revives.

Quickly, the women make their retreat. Julia laments that the trip, while informative, provides no concrete evidence that the jewel thieves inhabit the house in question. Back at Julia's car, Etta Mae produces a lavalier she picked from the man's pocket, during her swoon.

At once, Julie recognizes the lavalier as belonging to her friend in Abbotsville. Convinced they have found their jewel thieves, Julie returns to Tuttle's office. They find it deserted and a quick search discovers Lloyd sitting outside the door to the Strip Hall. Inside, the women find Tuttle, once again inebriated senseless. Julia vows she no longer needs the man, since they found evidence of the thieves on their own. In a fit of righteous indignation, she storms out of the bar.

Chapters 25-27 Analysis

Julia and Etta Mae prove to be just the right combination of morality and immorality. Julia knows enough about religion to pull off the bible salesman farce, while Etta Mae employs her talent as a pickpocket to gain the evidence against the men in the questionable house.

Etta Mae's acquisition of the lavalier could be cited as the climax of the plot. All events from this point on lead the group to the resolution and, ultimately, to the recovery of Julia's rings.



The author employs some irony in that neither the authorities nor the investigator hired by Julia find the missing jewelry, either time it appears. Instead, Julia and her unbelievable luck stumble across each piece of jewelry that turns up. Presumably, without Julia's interference, the thieves would get out of the country with their entire haul, even with the full force of the FBI on their tail. Such evidence seems to verify Julia's feelings that the end justifies the means. In other words, interfering with a federal investigation is excusable, because, in the end, she helps catch the perpetrators, and no one is hurt.



Chapters 28-30

Chapters 28-30 Summary

Etta Mae pleads for Tuttle, pointing out that he has not been useless, since he was the one who gained knowledge of the location of the house. She promises to sober Tuttle up herself this time. Julia gives in and they load Tuttle into the car. Back at the hotel, they settle him into his bed and Julia admonishes them all to rest, because they will go on another stakeout that evening.

In his room with Julia, Lloyd points out that they have not checked in with Lillian for more than one day. Lloyd places the call on his cell phone, and Lillian responds with much concern. She voices her dislike for dishonesty when Hazel Marie and Sam call and inquire about Julia. Julia assures Lillian that the investigation is progressing well and they will be home soon.

In a quest for more comfortable clothes in the hot, humid weather, Julia and Lloyd drive to a nearby Target store. Julie reacts disdainfully at the cheap merchandise. Normally, she tells the reader, she shops in exclusive boutiques that cater to each client personally. She selects a few outfits for Lloyd but refuses to consider the subpar items for herself.

On their way out of the store, however, they spot the men from the thieves' house. Realizing she is still wearing the same clothes she wore to sell bibles, Julia returns for a change of clothes. She slips into the previously discarded outfit and turns to Lloyd for a plausible reason to wear the new merchandise out of the store. He precedes to rip her old dress, thereby giving her a believable ruse.

At the checkout, however, the cashier insinuates Julia may be wearing more than she is paying for. After giving the cashier a severe dressing down for insinuating she was trying to steal the items, Julia makes the purchase and hurries away from the store. Just as they pull out of the parking lot, they see the thieves, carrying a number of new suitcases.

Chapters 28-30 Analysis

Fate also intervenes for Julia in the form of Etta Mae. When Julia decides to abandon Tuttle, Etta Mae asks her to give the investigator another chance. Tuttle's quick thinking proves instrumental in finally finding the thieves once they leave their hideout. Without his tracking tactics, they would never be able to follow the thieves to the rest area. Such fateful events may also be seen as situational irony.

Many readers will not relate to Julia's character when she scoffs at the low quality of materials in the discount store. They will, however, appreciate much of her observations

about the place, which come from an outsider's point of view. For instance, many shoppers understand overspending from the sheer volume of choices.

It proves ironic that Julia runs into the very same man she met at the door while shopping in Target. Her quick thinking does not fail her, however. Lloyd also proves helpful in getting Julia out of the store safely. Her prejudices continue to be challenged, as well. She wears the discount store clothes under duress, but comes to appreciate them for their practicality and comfort. However, she still expects others to assume her honest without asking questions. The irony in this is that Julia rarely extends this trust to anyone else.



Chapters 31-33

Chapters 31-33 Summary

The two of them hurry back to the hotel. They find Tuttle still hung-over. Etta Mae shows them her purchase of a set of walkie-talkies. Soon after, Tuttle wakes. Julia explains her plan to sneak back into the neighborhood and watch the house from behind. While in the neighborhood earlier, Julia noticed a stand of bamboo in the back yard.

As the women practice with the walkie talkies, Tuttle expresses his extreme discomfort with the idea. Lloyd shows the women how to adjust the volume on the radios as Julia convinces Tuttle to go along with the idea. Once again, she brings up his pay, not due until the end of the day.

Thus convinced, Tuttle gives his own instructions for the evening. Julia bristles at losing authority over the situation. She reminds Tuttle who is the employer. Tuttle cites his experience in law enforcement and investigating as superior to her money. Such backbone rarely emerges in Frank Tuttle.

Julia, in the end, relents to go along with Tuttle's idea that the four of them pose as a family out for an evening stroll. However, she insists that, after the case wraps up, Tuttle must attend church on a regular basis. She promises to pay him his daily rate for the effort.

On the way to the neighborhood, Julia gives Tuttle a large check for his fees, plus expenses. She reminds him, though, that the day is not over and he must continue with the evening's plans. She reminds him it is too late to cash the check tonight.

Tuttle parks Julia's car near a house that appears to be hosting a party. Tuttle explains he and Etta Mae will pose as a married couple, claiming Lloyd as their son and Julia as the grandmother. None of this offends Julia. However, Etta Mae and Tuttle's closeness in perpetrating their lie proves too much. Julia admonishes them to act more appropriately in public.

Chapters 31-33 Analysis

Julia's nearly slapstick luck continues, as her plan to catch the thieves coincides with their planned evacuation of the house in Palm Beach. Tuttle seems to give in to Julia's plans more easily this time. He seems to be noticing Julia's unusual luck. Her offers for generous compensation also influence his cooperation.

The power struggle between Julia and Tuttle flairs once again. Julia responds, as usual, with promises of more money. This does not come easily for Tuttle, however. Julia now insists he begin attending church. Tuttle fails to acknowledge this demand. Julia seems to believe that, though he may begin attending for the money, eventually he will convert



and go to church on his own. Nevertheless, she sees the expense as a worthwhile contribution to society, as a means of cleaning up a known drunk.

Julia's delay of paying Tuttle is, no doubt, on purpose. She proves to be a savvy business woman, which may catch some by surprise. Tuttle must come through on all his promises before receiving any pay. Regardless of his failings, and return to alcohol, however, Julia maintains her end of the deal, showing evidence of the integrity she insists she possesses.



Chapters 34-36

Chapters 34-36 Summary

Walking down the block behind the house in question, Julia has trouble remembering where the bamboo thicket lies. Though the original plan called for Etta Mae to go with Tuttle into the thicket, leaving Julia to watch Lloyd and the car, Julia expresses doubts. She worries, given their questionable morals, that Tuttle and Etta Mae cannot be trusted. Furthermore, she fails to remember the exact location of the bamboo thicket in question. Once again, she decides the job will only be done correctly if she does it herself, despite the peril from the hike and the proximity to the criminals.

Aloud, she expresses worry for Etta Mae's safety. Furthermore, she points out, rightly, that Etta Mae is a more able driver, in the event of a quick evacuation of the area. Therefore, Julia sends Etta Mae and Lloyd to the car with one radio and turns the other one on low as she follows Tuttle into the bushes.

Impatiently, Tuttle takes off into the underbrush. He shows no sympathy for Julia's pleas for a slower pace. After a few dirty mishaps, they find themselves behind the desired house. There, they see two dark SUVs, with men obviously packing them for an impending getaway.

Tuttle is the first to approach the cars. After an apparently cursory examination, he returns to the bushes and tells Julia it is time to leave. Unsatisfied, she approaches the cars. When the car alarm goes off, they quickly make their getaway. They page Etta Mae, instructing her where to meet them with the car. As they reach it, one SUV peels out of the drive in an obvious hurry. Various federal agents hotly pursue. Tuttle admonishes Etta Mae to remain in her current location.

Tuttle explains to the group he believes the first SUV to be a decoy, to distract the authorities for the getaway of the second vehicle. The police quickly create a roadblock on the only road leading off the island. There, they pull over the first SUV.

As they continue watching the traffic, Tuttle explains he placed tape over a taillight on the SUVs. Therefore, they only need to watch for the marked car and follow it. Julia compliments him on his ingenious thinking. She begins to think her investment in Frank Tuttle will pay off.

Chapters 34-36 Analysis

Etta Mae lives up to Julia's worst fears, morally, when she shamelessly flirts with men of questionable character. Such actions reinforce Julia's prejudices against middle class people. It also causes Julia to rearrange her plans for the evening, not trusting Etta Mae alone with Tuttle. Whether such caution is necessary or not, the switch makes the most sense, because of Etta Mae's experience and confidence behind the wheel.



Despite her genteel lifestyle and age, Julia never makes excuses. She puts in as much effort as she demands from everyone else, another fact which supports her claims of moral character. Such drive, however, stems from her distrust in nearly everyone else, including the police.

The action of the novel escalates as Julia nears the house of the jewel thieves. Tuttle's presence proves valuable, as he marks the SUV in question and further advises them about the possibility of a decoy car in the lead. The reader may question, though, why an ex-police officer knows such facts, but apparently none of the actual police on the case think of such a detail. However, only Tuttle knows about the marked taillight, so the point proves moot.

Julia's desperation shows in her efforts to get into the traffic jam. However, she never shirks in her moral duty to tell the irate driver that she finds his behavior unacceptable. The reader will notice the irony in Julia illegally holding up traffic, while interfering with a police investigation, and reprimanding a driver on his unacceptable language.



Chapters 37-39

Chapters 37-39 Summary

After several minutes, they spot the car in question easing along in the slow traffic. Etta Mae and Julia jump out of the car to stop traffic, allowing Tuttle to pull into the traffic jam. When one irate driver gives Julia the finger, she takes time to give him a dressing down.

At the entrance to the state highway, however they lose sight of the SUV. Making a guess, Tuttle heads north. When the direction proves correct, Tuttle begins to comment on Julia's uncommon luck. Such occurrences seem to make Tuttle think a divine power is on her side. Perhaps, they pave the way for his eventual conversion.

Coincidentally, they spot the SUV entering the interstate. Tuttle follows from a safe distance back. For hours, they follow the SUV north through Florida. Julia takes the opportunity to catch some sleep.

She awakens as Tuttle is following the SUV into a service station. He remarks with relief that the stop allows for much needed gas and bathroom breaks. They observe that the men in the SUV take turns going in for food and bathroom breaks, never leaving it unattended.

When Tuttle goes inside the rest stop, Julia decides to make a move. She instructs Etta Mae to create a distraction for the one man remaining in the SUV. Etta Mae throws herself into the role, catching the man's attention with her seductive walk before faking a fall. The young man rushes to her aid.

As she leads him further off, Julia climbs into the SUV. Crawling back to the cargo area, she finds bags full of cash.

Chapters 37-39 Analysis

The group's ability to find the SUV, repeatedly, further shows Julia's ironic luck. This luck draws Tuttle into the chase, in order to see how it will conclude.

Irony abounds in chapter thirty-eight. Julia now not only employs Tuttle, but trusts him enough to sleep while he drives her car to pursue the SUV. Also, the plan is almost foiled because Tuttle needs to use the bathroom, much as Julia foiled his first stakeout. However, they are saved when the SUV pulls into the service station.

Just as she seized control from law enforcement, Julia makes her own move once Tuttle leaves her in the car. As evidence of her philosophy that the end justifies the means, Julia encourages Etta Mae to distract the man in the SUV through any means possible, though Julia usually scoffs as sexual displays.

The author emphasizes Julia's privileged life by the way she scoffs at the bags of money, desiring only to find her own jewels, for their sentimental value. However, considering the rings hold sentimental value because they came from her new husband, Sam, Julia mentions Sam very little. She becomes so caught up in the chase that she seems to forget what motivated it in the first place. The author further emphasizes this when Julia rides the whole way home without opening the bag of jewels to see if she, in fact, recovered her precious rings.



Chapters 40-42

Chapters 40-42 Summary

Just as Julia finally finds one bags full of jewels, she hears Lloyd's warning that the men are returning. To cause a distraction, she throws out handfuls of cash. Tuttle appears to rescue Julia from the SUV. She stows the bag in her car, but goes back to rescue Etta Mae, despite Tuttle's admonition to stay put.

Around the SUV, a mob has formed. Greedy hands grab for handfuls of money. Etta Mae gains Julia's attention from under a neighboring car. The women lay there, waiting for the coast to clear. Finally, they make their way back to Julia's car. As Tuttle drives away, Julia marvels at the greedy mob. Etta Mae regrets leaving behind the thief she befriended. Julia marvels at this fact as well.

Julia decides to drive straight home, arranging for their belongings at the hotel to be shipped home, later. They drive a little way north before stopping for the night. Before stopping, they see the police with the second SUV pulled over. The mob scene and bags of money caused someone to eventually call the authorities. The final outcome for the criminals themselves remains unclear for the rest of the novel.

At the hotel, Julia retains possession of the bag of jewelry, but cannot bring herself to look inside. She simply falls into bed and is soon fast asleep.

Back at home in Abbotsville, Julia finds Hazel Marie home, waiting for them. She greets Lloyd with excitement and relief. Julia also notices Mr. Pickens returned the same time as Hazel Marie, further confirming her suspicions that they were truly together in Mexico.

Though Julia still cannot garner the strength to examine the bag for her rings, Hazel Marie insist they look at the contents. Together, Hazel Marie and Julia sort thorough the jewels. Hazel Marie identifies a number of her belongings and Julia notices some from other women in the area.

Just as Julia feels despair at the fate of her rings, Lloyd finds her Princess Diana replica engagement ring. With excitement and relief, she slips the ring back onto her finger. Tuttle expresses his surprise at the events of the week. Julia's remarkable luck makes an apparent impact on Tuttle, personally.

The next day, Sunday, Tuttle attends church with Julia and her friends and family. He confers with the pastor after the service, immediately embracing the religion. That afternoon, he reads the bible, prays and admonishes the sins of the household. Julia thinks to herself that Tuttle's newfound religion rankles just as much as his previous alcoholism.



In the weeks following her return, Hazel Marie remarks about Etta Mae's new car. Julia outwardly remarks she is glad for Etta Mae's good fortune. Inwardly, she suspects Etta Mae capitalized on the money that poured from the SUV. Julia explains to the reader that, after returning as many of the jewels to their rightful owners as she could, she returned the rest to the local authorities, answering as few as possible.

When Sam returns from Russia, Julia tells her husband a cleaned up version of her story. He admonishes her to be careful in the future. Julia tells the reader, in closing, that she learned, from this, to do things herself, when she wants them to be done.

Chapters 40-42 Analysis

The plot begins resolving when Julia finds the bags of jewels. Her quick thinking reaches a peak when she throws the cash to create an adequate distraction for her escape. Tuttle shows some humanity by rescuing Julia from the SUV and returning for Etta Mae.

Julia remarks with sadness at the greed of the mobs surrounding the SUV. However, she fails to see any parallel between their actions and her own madcap pursuit of her jewelry.

Ironically, Julia shows no worry for any material goods in Florida when she decides to go straight home and trust the hotel to forward their belongings, at her expense. This decision shows that it was not just materialism that fueled Julia's quest, but sentimentality over her engagement ring. Justice seems to be served, either in spite of or, more likely, because of Julia's interference, when they spot the second SUV pulled over on the interstate. It may surprise the reader, however that, after all her effort, Julia fails to look through the bag of jewelry right away.

Immediately after recovering the bag of jewelry, Julia expresses doubt she will recover her possessions. The reader assumes, though, that the author will not bring her this far, only to leave her empty handed. When she and Hazel Marie sort through the jewels, it is not a completely happy ending, but the bag holds much of their missing property, including Julia's engagement ring.

Perhaps Julia's incredible luck, possibly via divine intervention, makes as much spiritual impact on Tuttle as the minister's sermon on Sunday. Either way, Tuttle immediately makes a turn around. Julia seems to get more than she bargained for and is, ironically, happy to see the religious Tuttle leave for Florida.

Julia's decision to keep the seedier details of the trip from Sam could be her way of treating him more nicely, as Lillian suggested in the opening chapters. Dishonesty in a relationship rarely equates with decent treatment, especially for a religious and moral person such as Julia. However, her belief that a satisfying ending justifies questionable means of execution allows for such an action.



Characters

Miss Julia

As a middle-aged woman, Miss Julia suffers from boredom. She has too much free time and not enough to do. Her strong willed nature leads her to take matters into her own hands much of the time. The substantial inheritance from her late husband, after an apparent life of privilege, equips Miss Julia to assume this control easily. Though she treats everyone in a polite and friendly manner, she has few close friends. Through the course of this novel, however, she comes to see the value and humanity in people from various social classes.

Soon after her marriage, Miss Julia finds herself alone in her big house. Her husband leaves for a sightseeing trip to Russia, which he planned before their marriage. Julia declines to accompany him. Her other housemate, Hazel Marie, wins a trip to Mexico. Correctly suspecting a budding relationship between Hazel Marie and the local sheriff's deputy, Julia also declines a seat on the trip to Mexico. Not until just before they depart does Miss Julia realize the trips occur simultaneously.

To avoid loneliness and boredom, Julia plans a luncheon with her friends in their small town. She selects an inferior china set, for its cheerful pattern. Yet, the party fails to fully lift her spirits. Often, Julia confides in her maid Lillian at such times. Though Julia obviously sees herself as socially above Lillian, she often finds herself without other company. For her part, Lillian fails to acknowledge the difference in class.

Julia first shares the problem of the missing jewelry with Lillian. Together, they decide no one at the luncheon could be to blame. After contacting the authorities, and learning a little about the rash of burglaries in the southeast, Julia acts in her typical fashion. She sets off on her own to catch the thieves and find her jewelry. She takes only Hazel Marie's son, Lloyd, for company. She unashamedly uses her large bank account to outfit their trip with the best-equipped luxury car available. On the slightest of tips from the local authorities, Julia sets out to West Palm Beach, Florida. Because the authorities mentioned it, and because Hazel Marie's friend, Mr. Pickens, knows a private investigator there, Julia sees West Palm as a promising place to start.

During their investigations in Florida, Julia thinks nothing of bossing everyone around. She insists on the best of moral, Christian behavior from those she meets, though she excuses her own lapses in Christian attitude as necessary for the job at hand. She also continues to throw around money, and her successes in Florida, which may seem like blind luck, seem to verify her belief that money can cure many of a person's problems.

Similarly, Julia scorns certain actions and venues as below her, socially. She abhors shopping for clothes at so common a place as a discount department store. She prefers her exclusive boutiques back home. She even silently marvels at Etta Mae's surprise over accommodations. Julia feels no self-respecting person would ever settle for less.



In the end, Julia recovers many of the stolen jewels, though some never turn up. She seems satisfied in her catch, however, and justifies times she bent the rules. She justifies her actions as due to the slow process of the law. Moreover, she believes in a rather unchristian ethic that the end justifies the means. She keeps many of the details of the trip from her husband. In addition, she becomes perturbed when Mr. Tuttle gains religion, after she insists he attend church. His newfound self-righteousness, not that different from her own, rankles Julia.

Lloyd

Julia's relationship to Lloyd remains somewhat unclear throughout the novel. The author explains that Lloyd's father was also Julia's late husband. Yet, Lloyd is not Julia's son. Nonetheless, all parties involved appear to get along amiably. What is more, Julia strives to teach Lloyd important lessons while he is under her supervision. She takes her responsibility towards him seriously, which ultimately explains why Lloyd accompanies Julia to Florida.

Though Lloyd is very young, only twelve, he proves valuable to Julia because of his expertise in many areas, especially electronics. He aids Julia in the operation of the navigation system in the car, the cell phone and, eventually, the walkie talkies. Lloyd also aids Julia in explaining her need for wearing new clothes out of Target, by way of disguise.

In general, Lloyd's character develops little throughout the novel. He always shows respect where necessary and never complains. Furthermore, he responds politely to all of Julia's lessons on moral character.

Sam

Sam appears little in the novel, in fact, he is only seen in person in the final chapter. However, his absence effects the plot greatly. One could question whether Julia would pursue the thieves, if Sam had not been out of town. Furthermore, the question also arises that, had Sam been home, would the robbery have occurred at all?

Though Julia seems offended by Lillian's inference that her treatment of Sam is less than loving, she takes the advice to heart. Though, in the beginning, she vows to treat Sam differently, in the end, Julia hides many details about her week from her new husband.

Mr. Pickens

Mr. Pickens appears in person only during the resolution of the plot. However, it is through him that Julia knows of Frank Tuttle, investigator in Florida. Julia expresses disappointment in the character of Tuttle, however. She expects him to be more like Mr. Pickens. Apparently, she approves of more of Pickens's morals. However, she does not



approve of the way Pickens and Hazel Marie vacation together, sneaking away from town separately, only to rendezvous in Mexico.

Sergeant Coleman Bates

Julia describes Bates as a former housemate of hers. After his marriage, though, he moved elsewhere. She wishes for the security of having a law enforcement officer under her roof once again. When she learns of the robbery, Julia does not hesitate to call Bates for help. Perhaps their friendly past allows Bates to share more details of the case than he normally would with a possible victim. Regardless, his information leads Julia on her quest that eventually catches the thieves and returns many stolen jewels to the women of Abbotsville. He also allows Julia to return the remaining jewels with few questions.

Opal Nixon

Opal Nixon, a guest at Julia's dinner party, redecorates Hazel Marie's room in Julia's large house. Julia notes that, like herself, Hazel Marie desires to erase any reminder of the house's former owner, Julia's late husband. This thought receives no more explanation, however.

Julia briefly suspects Opal as the thief, due to her access to the house. However, such notions are quickly thrown out, as Opal never showed any such tendencies in the weeks she spent in the house, renovating.

LuAnne Conover

Initially, Julia calls LuAnne for information about the guests of the party. However, LuAnne wrongly assumes Julia is accusing her of the theft. Thus, the friendship seems in jeopardy due to this misunderstanding. The author never resolves this conflict.

Mildred Allen

Gossip quickly spreads among the women of Abbotsville and, within minutes, Mildred phones to tell Julia of her own missing jewels. This leads Julia to the conclusion that a crime spree has occurred.

In Florida, Etta Mae recovers a lavalier Julia recognizes as one of Mildred's pieces. This signifies the climax of the action and assures Julia they have found the thieves. In the end, Julia returns a number of Mildred's pieces.



Frank Tuttle

Julia travels to Florida in search of both her jewels and Mr. Tuttle. She expects to find a respectable investigator, like Mr. Pickens. However, she finds a filthy, drunken man. Though Tuttle exhibits talents in investigating, along with valuable sources, his vices hinder his success. Only Julia's wealth tempts him into the investigation.

Through the course of the investigation, however, Tuttle notices an unusual amount of luck in Julia's life. In the end, he attends church only because Julia offers to pay for the effort. But, Tuttle quickly "finds religion." Julia feels as annoyed by the righteous Tuttle as she was by the drunken Tuttle. Thankfully, he quickly leaves for Florida.

Ralph Peterson

Julia calls Peterson to arrange for a new car for her trip. Peterson jumps to Julia's assistance, also because of her apparent wealth. Julia takes for granted that her money and social status cause people to go out of their way to assist her.

Mac McGruder

McGruder, an officer with the Palm Beach Police Department, warns Tuttle that federal authorities have interest in the jewel thieves Julia is pursuing. This information may be the most valuable in the case, because it points Julia to the specific house inhabited by the thieves. In the beginning, however, it is unclear whether the men in the house are the thieves or the feds. Etta Mae's discovery of the lavalier settles this uncertainty, however.

Tim

Etta Mae uses her apparent sexual attractiveness to lure Tim away from the thieves' SUV at the service plaza. Julia uses this opportunity to slip into the truck and take the bag of jewels. As Julia and her group drive away, Etta Mae laments leaving Tim behind, as she finds him to be a nice man. Julia cannot believe Etta Mae's bad taste in men.

Pastor Ledbetter

Julia remarks, with satisfaction, that Pastor Ledbetter, pastor of the Presbyterian church where Julia has membership, delivers a quality sermon when Frank Tuttle is in attendance. Julia gets more than she bargains for, however, when Tuttle embraces religion to the extent that he rebukes sin in the lives of others.



Lillian

Julia's house cleaner, Lillian, acts like a mother figure to Julia, though they women seem to be of similar age. Lillian rebukes Julia for her attitude towards her husband, and Julia reacts like a daughter, outwardly offended, but inwardly effected. Lillian also insists Julia keep in touch while out of town. In spite of this, though, Lillian worries about the safety of Julia and Lloyd.

In her housekeeping duties, Lillian seems to work with no complaint. She feels comfortable talking about Julia's friends and the success of her party. Lillian obviously is an integral part of the household.

Hazel Marie

The relationship between Hazel Marie and Julia remains unclear throughout the novel. The author explains they both had a relationship with Mr. Springer, Julia's late husband and Lloyd's father. Now, they both inhabit his house, with an apparent friendship. Hazel Marie, however, befriends a lower class of people than Julia, including the likes of Etta Mae Wiggins.

Julia knows Hazel Marie well enough to be invited to accompany her to Mexico. Furthermore, she knows the woman well enough to suspect Mr. Pickens is her true travel companion. Julia opposes such activities outside of marriage on a moral basis, but outwardly claims to have no opinion on the arrangements.

Etta Mae Wiggins

Etta Mae happens into the plot accidentally. She only stops by Julia's house to ask Julia to deliver an offering to church for one of her clients. Etta Mae works as a personal assistant to shut-ins. However, she quickly joins the action as Julia prepares to leave town. Julia acknowledges the value of Etta Mae's advice about money and traveling, along with route planning. Therefore, when the situation with Tuttle and his drinking goes beyond anything Julia has experience with, she calls Etta Mae.

For her part, Etta Mae never seems to notice, or at least not to mind, Julia's apparent social superiority, real or imagined. Selflessly, Etta Mae helps Julia, with only the opportunity to get out of town as payment, beyond Julia picking up her travel expenses. In the end, though, it appears Etta Mae did seize an opportunity to advance herself. Hazel Marie remarks on Etta Mae's new car, after returning to Abbotsville. Julia suspects Etta Mae grabbed some of the cash from the SUV, but fails to mention this aloud.



Objects/Places

Diamond Ring/ Jewelry

The entire plot of the novel centers around first, the disappearance of Julia's Princess Diana replica engagement ring, then much more jewelry belonging to Hazel Marie and Mildred Allen, among others. Julia takes matters into her own hands by pursuing the jewel thieves to Florida. Eventually, she finds many of the stolen jewels, including her engagement ring. She assures Lloyd that one should never place undue importance on material possessions. However, the sentimental nature of her connection to the ring gives it much importance to her. She rejoices greatly when it is returned.

Spode China

Julia points out that she realizes her Spode brand china is an inferior pattern. However, she chooses it for her dinner party due to its cheery nature. Even though it is not her best china, Lillian treats it carefully, washing it by hand. It represents a marriage of Julia's privileged life and practical nature.

Hazel Marie's Room

Julia points out that Hazel Marie's motivation for remodeling stems from her desire to remove reminders of Julia's late husband. However, the result exemplifies successfully Hazel Marie's personality in a pleasing way.

Russia

Julia's new husband, Sam, leaves for a tour of Russia before the novel begins. This leaves Julia lonely and bored in Abbotsville. She explains to Lillian that Sam planned the once in a lifetime trip before he met Julia. The tour filled before Julia could sign up to join him. Therefore, Sam leaves alone and Julia tries to stay busy in his absence.

Sam's great distance appears to give Julia more freedom to make her own decisions, though such actions seem the norm for her, regardless of Sam's opinions. When asked by Lillian why she does not call Sam about the robbery, Julia easily refers to the incredible distance to Russia and avoids the call.

Mexico

At the same time Sam travels to Russia, Julia's other house mate, Hazel Marie, travels on an all expenses paid trip to Mexico. When Lillian points out that Hazel Marie offered Julia a place on the trip, Julia points out Mr. Pickens has also left town. She rightly



assumes he will rendezvous with Hazel Marie in Mexico. When Hazel Marie returns early, out of concern for Lloyd and her property, Mr. Pickens returns early as well, under the guise of a professional conference.

Abbotsville, North Carolina

Julia lives in the rural town of Abbotsville, outside of Ashville, North Carolina. Gossip occupies the women of Abbotsville, and news travels fast. Case in point, minutes after Julia first tells someone about her missing jewelry, she receives a call from another women missing valuables. The citizens of Abbotsville, in large part, are moral, Christian people who see little crime and much prosperity.

Duffel Bags

Ironically, Julia runs into the thieves, shortly after positively identifying them at their door, as the thieves purchase duffel bags from Target. She escapes discovery there. After the events of the evening, she finds an SUV, filled with the newly purchased duffel bags, which are, in turn, filled with cash. Scorning the cash, Julia uses it only as a diversion so she may get away with the one bag filled with jewelry.

Palm Beach, Florida

On one, obscure tip from Coleman Bates, Julia makes her way to Palm Beach, Florida, where she stumbles upon the hideout of the jewel thieves. Her actions manage to rouse the thieves from their hideout. She pursues them north to a service station along the interstate, where she steals back her jewelry.

Julia dislikes any place other than home. The heat and unpredictable weather of Florida cause her much distress. Furthermore, she finds Florida filled with questionable characters and places that have her longing for the safety and familiarity of Abbotsville.

Baseball Bat

Julia shamefully sets Lloyd's baseball bat next to her bed, to assuage her fears of sleeping alone in the house, or as the only adult. Each morning, she hides the bat in her closet, so Lloyd will not know of her fears.

Lloyd's Cell Phone

While out of town, Julia contacts Lillian on a regular basis. However, she relies on Lloyd's knowledge of the cell phone to connect her to Lillian. She readily admits that, alone, she cannot operate such contraptions.



Disney World

When Etta Mae Wiggins hears of Julia's plans to travel to Florida, she shares that she dreams of visiting Disney World. Such a dream seems frivolous for an adult woman. With the same excitement, Etta Mae responds to Julia's plea for help in Palm Beach.

The Strip Hall

Though morally offended by the sight of the place, Julia proudly strides into the Strip Hall to retrieve Frank Tuttle. Twice, she enters the establishment in pursuit of the drunken man. She rebukes, without shame, the owner of the bar and Tuttle himself.

The Royal Palm Court

For her first night in Florida, Julia chooses to stay at the Royal Palm Court, a hotel clearly beneath that which she is accustomed. However, she chooses it for its exterior entrances, so she can get a very drunk Tuttle inside without too many questions. As quickly as she can, however, she seeks better facilities.

Maxey's Seafood

When Tuttle tells Julia he must go to another bar for information about her jewels, she reacts with the expected hesitation and distrust. However, MacGruder gives them their best tip while in the back room of Maxey's.

Fruit Jars

In a bit of situational humor, Tuttle wishes for fruit jars, with screw on lids, when the rest of the group begs for an early end to their first stakeout, because of their bursting bladders. Ironically, as they follow the black SUV in the end, the group nearly loses them because of Frank Tuttle's own need for a bathroom.

Bibles

Julia uses her ruse of selling bibles to gain access to the house of the thieves. She sees no problem with the dishonesty of such an action, and the hypocrisy of undertaking it while carrying bibles. In spite of Julia's Christian morality, she uses whatever means necessary to gain the acceptable end to her problem. This supports the novel's theme that the end justifies the means.



Mildred's Lavalier

When Julia learns Mildred Allen also has been robbed, she realizes hers was not an isolated incident. In addition, the recovery of one piece of Mildred's jewelry assures Julia and her group that they are on the right track. Etta Mae uses some of the very talents Julia scorns to gain the lavalier by picking the thief's own pocket. The missing item, though, causes the thieves to quickly leave town.

Target

From the beginning, Julia scoffs at the large, discount store. She assures the reader that, back home in Abbotsville, she is not in the habit of frequenting such a store. Once inside, she scorns the low quality of the clothes and quickly places them back on the rack. The impersonal customer service only seems to verify her contempt. However, when she spots the thieves in the housewares department, she quickly changes into the previously scorned clothing, for a disguise.

Walkie Talkies

Part of Julia's plan for sneaking up on the house of the thieves involves communication by two way radio. She splits them into two teams. She and Tuttle sneak up on the back of the house, while Etta Mae and Lloyd wait, ready, in the car nearby. Julia depends, once again, on Lloyd to adjust the radios and explain how to use them. When the car alarms sound on the SUVs, Julia desperately pages Etta Mae, who picks them up just in time to witness the hasty departure of the first SUV.

Black SUV

When Julia returns, under cover of darkness, to the house of the thieves, she finds two black SUVs, preparing to evacuate the house, its occupants and its contents. Tuttle, wisely, marks each truck with tape on a taillight, allowing them to follow the thieves hours north on the interstate, until they overtake them at a service plaza, where Julia steals her jewels back.



Themes

Social Class

Much of Julia's outlook stems from her place in the upper class of society in Abbotsville. She places much emphasis on one's place in society, especially as it effects one's sophistication in society. One signifies one's class, not necessarily by money, but by manners, breeding and associations.

Though Julia does not place all importance on one's finances, she remarks that many middle class citizens, such as Etta Mae Wiggins, show less of the good manners that she herself exhibits. She allows the lack of breeding as an excuse to an extent, but she rarely passes on an opportunity to point out those of less refinement.

With her manners, breeding and moral habits, Julia feels some entitlement. She desires that others, especially those of the working class, such as a cashier at Target, assume the best of her. However, she rarely offers this consideration to others, especially those of a lower social caste. In a narrow minded or perhaps naive way, Julia assumes everyone intends to operate by her own conservative, Christian moral code. In turn, she sees her own privilege as divine approval for the way she operates.

End Justifies Means

To Julia, the end justifies the means. She uses whatever means necessary to accomplish her task. Though she normally operates under a strict, Christian moral code, she feels it acceptable to bend those rules when necessary. Others, however, rarely receive such leeway.

In pursuing her missing jewels, Julia makes a lot of excuses for her actions. As far as she is concerned, if honest people are not hurt, any means are fine. However, if dishonest people suffer, such events are acceptable, as they signify divine approval for one's questionable actions.

Julia's entitlement, due to her higher class, also excuses some actions usually unacceptable, such as her capture of Tuttle. She claims superiority and leadership due to both her higher moral and social class.

Self Reliance

In the closing paragraphs of the novel, Julia tells the reader the moral of the story is that, when one needs something done, one must do it one's self. From the beginning, Julia seizes control of the situation. When authorities move too slowly and investigators fail to respond, Julia becomes more personally involved. She never fears giving more of herself to accomplish the ends she desires.



Julia's self reliance may also be the cause of the marital strife Lillian perceives. Independence causes Julia to treat her own husband like an outsider. Lack of close, personal relationships signifies Julia's habit of such independence.

The plot of this novel, however, only emphasizes the rightness of such thoughts. Julia remarks that, because she accomplished her goal without much help from law enforcement or a capable investigator, one must act alone. She gives little credit to the very valuable information gained from both Bates and Tuttle. She also fails to acknowledge the unusual amount of luck she enjoys in tracking down the jewel thieves.



Style

Point of View

The author presents this novel from a first person point of view. It directly addresses the reader. The protagonist, Julia, tells the story as it happened to her. The reader gets comprehensive access to Julia's thoughts and reactions, both spoken and silent. Everyone else's character appears only through Julia's perception of that person. While her motivations are explained, sometimes excused, others are heavily critiqued and sometimes rejected as immoral or unacceptable for other reasons of class or entitlement.

This novel reads almost like a diary or a witness statement. Julia tells the events, as they happen, by way of explaining her actions to the reader. It appears, though, that she never recalls these events for any character in the book, at least not in their entirety. Furthermore, she admits that, when recounting the events to her husband, Sam, she cleans up the story considerably.

Though the author uses present tense, Julia obviously tells the story after the fact, as becomes quite clear in the final chapter. She explains the outcome of several characters, including Tuttle and Etta Mae, to the reader.

Setting

The story opens in the rural town of Abbotsville, North Carolina. Usually a sleepy, country town, Abbotsville's residents discover themselves, to their alarm, to be the targets of international jewel thieves. Abbotsville's own Julia decides to pursue the thieves. On a tip, she drives to West Palm Beach, Florida, where she employs investigator Frank Tuttle.

Much of the action occurs in and around Palm Beach, especially in one high brow neighborhood where the jewel thieves hide out. In an unbelievable chain of events, Julia tracks the thieves, with the help of Tuttle and Etta Mae, not to mention young Lloyd. She retrieves her jewels and returns to Abbotsville, where her loved ones wait to hear the details of her case.

Traveling out of Abbotsville makes Julia very nervous, but she readily rises to the challenge. Repeatedly in the novel, she faces and conquers her fears. She becomes accustomed to traffic and less than ideal accommodations. However, she returns with joy to her well appointed home. Even in the midst of her relief, though, she neglects to respond to her husband's plea to avoid such reckless behavior in the future.



Language and Meaning

The author employs conversational, American English for most of the novel. The vocabulary suits young adult readers and up, though many of the terms hold more meaning for more mature readers, Julia herself being middle-aged.

Some colloquism appears, as Julia refers to terms in a southern vernacular. Her regional dialect may seem awkward, but it is rarely hard to decipher. Lillian's character, though, speaks in a broken, accented English common in the South. The author spells much of Lillian's speech nearly phonetically. This emphasizes the class difference between Julia and Lillian, thus establishing one theme of the novel.

It seems assumed that she is on par with Julia, in terms of social class. Julia mentions some expensive items in passing, signifying she thinks everyone must know what value they hold, such as her Spode china or Haviland candy dish. Other things, such as money market accounts, also appear. Either the reader relates to these things, and thus with the character of Julia, or the reader fails to relate, thus elevating Julia's status anyway.

Structure

The author splits the 339 pages into 42 chapters of roughly equal length. The opening chapter, an introduction, begins with conflict, though unnamed. In the following flashback, the reader learns much about the setting and characters, but not the conflict. Finally, when the plot comes back to the present, the reader learns of the missing jewelry in chapter five.

Time passes quickly, yet little time is covered within the novel. All of the action takes place in a few, hectic days. Julia leaves for Florida early in the week, only to apprehend the jewel thieves and get Tuttle into church the following Sunday. Such a device echoes that of classic, comedic plays, such as those of William Shakespeare.



Quotes

"...and my engagement ring! The one Sam gave me that is almost an exact replica of Princess Dana's, only mine is better and can't be replaced. Oh, Lillian," I cried, as the tears welled up, "my precious rings are gone, and I know they were here yesterday, and now I cannot find them anywhere," p. 3.

"Now that they were leaving, though, a wave of dread swept over me as I watched and waved at the several groups of well-dressed women talking and laughing together on their way to the cars parked along the curb," p. 4.

"Opal Nixon was the decorator Hazel Marie had engaged to help her redo her upstairs bedroom. They'd done it in pink with gold accents, which didn't reflect my taste, but it had impressed any number of my guests," p. 8.

Besides, when Lit..., I mean, when Lloyd comes of age, it won't do o hae 'Little taked on to hi nam. how would it look hen he's managing money and propery, an ealing with lawyers, andmkin a rel name fo himself in his town? p. 15

I never likd going no the dark house, and the one smll light i' d left on over he kitchen tove only made h house seem lonelier. p. 22

I couldn'e cried, thinking of Mildred Alen, who had just had the sones in some o her favorite rings make into earrings. p. 28

Sam had kept James on o see to his house, even though h no longer lied there. Sm used hi house as an office here he piddl ih firs one ing an anothe, giving m an excuse o kep Jmes on h payroll. p. 31

"Hazel Mariee's never iont oet over this. Sh gets mor pleasure out of jewlry than any oman I kno, an ha's saying somhing." p. 34

I continued ot sit by th telephon, trying o ecide how to repair a friendhsip tha I hd unwittingly broken. p 43

"we're working n hese guys, nd we'll do the best we can to ge your htngs ack>" As he



closed the door behind me, I looked at Lillian. "I don't think they're going to be good enough, do you?" p. 52

"Speed, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness are the attributes of the private sector, and you don't forget that, Lloyd." p. 58

"First of all, I don't intend to lie. And second, I have to start somewhere, and if Coleman thinks it's Florida, then that's where I'm starting." p. 62

Still, I wanted Hazel Marie to put that life behind her and, with my help, build a new one based on socially acceptable friends and decent living. p. 68.

I twisted my mouth, not at all sure that I would have been that determined to do after the heives if they had taken only Hazel Marie's jewelry. But they hadn't, so I stopped thinking about it. p. 73

Everything takes longer than you plan for, and it took twenty-five minutes to get the traveler's checks and the cash I wanted. Of course, my transaction was well noted by the teller and by other people in line, even though I lowered my voice and hid the amount on the check I wrote. p. 85

We stopped for the night in midafternoon, when I was so stiff and tired I could hardly crawl out of the car. p. 93

There was no mistaking his place of sin when we reached it. p. 101

"Sober him up, though for the lie of me, I don't know how it's on. p. 107



Topics for Discussion

Which character do you most relate with? Explain.

Does Miss Julia abide by the same standards to which she holds others?

What role does religion play in Miss Julia's daily life?

How does geography effect the plot?

What impact does Miss Julia's age have on her character?

Is Lloyd's character realistic? Explain.

Compare and contrast Julia and Etta Mae.

What role does Lillian play in the story with respect to Miss Julia's character?

Is Sam a major or minor character? Explain.

How does luck play a role in the recovery of the stolen jewels?

Is Mr. Tuttle necessary to finding the criminals? Explain.

How would the story differ if they found the criminals in Chicago?

Does the author seem equally knowledgable with Florida and North carolina?

Does the story have a plausible and satisfying ending? Why or why not?

Discuss an instant of foreshadowing within the novel.