

# **Money: A Suicide Note Study Guide**

## **Money: A Suicide Note by Martin Amis**

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## Plot Summary

The fiction novel, *Money*, begins with a note from author, Martin Amis, describing the book as a suicide note from the main character, John Self. However, he does not know if Self will actually die by the end of the novel. John Self is the director of a movie, and this is the reason he came to New York City. He thinks about the people who owe him money, including Selina Street, his girlfriend. Caduta Massi and Lorne Guyland, two actors in the film, call John with their trivial problems. His friend, Alec Llewellyn, tells him that Selina Street is sleeping with someone else. John Self goes to meet Fielding Goodney, his money man, at a bar in the Carraway Hotel. They talk about money, and John believes Selina is not sleeping with Alec because Alec has no money. After they leave, John Self finds a prostitute, but cannot go through with it when he finds out she is pregnant. He sits and talks to her, and pays her. A man calls, and says John Self has messed up his life.

Doris Arthur, the writer, arrives to meet with John Self. John Self says the movie is about a father, mother, son and a mistress. The son and his father share the mistress, but the father does not know the son is also sleeping with her. The mistress has mob connections, and they all work at a restaurant or bar. They receive a delivery of flour that is really heroin, and the father wants to give it back to the mob. He receives a letter from Selina, begging him to take her back, and noting she has no money. John runs into Martin Amis and tries to make small talk, but Martin does not seem to want to talk to him. John meets with the actors, and the film gets underway. John gets drunk and goes to see Martina Twain at her house late at night, but her husband Ossie tells John to leave. A mysterious man, called Frank the Phone, calls regularly to harass John. John gets Amis to rewrite the screenplay. He learns Selina is cheating on him with Ossie, and Selina leaves him. John starts dating Martina, but Selina orchestrates a meeting and Martina catches her and John in bed. John finds out he is broke, and Fielding Goodney has been using John's money to pay for the film as part of a revenge scheme. John returns to London, where he learns the man he thought was his father, Barry Self, is not, and a man named Fat Vince is. He finds a new girlfriend and moves on with his life.



# Author's Note, page 5, and Section 1, pages 7 to 23

## Author's Note, page 5, and Section 1, pages 7 to 23 Summary

The fiction novel, *Money*, begins with a note from author, Martin Amis, describing the book as a suicide note from the main character, John Self. The book is serving as a record of Self's possible last days on earth. However, he does not know if Self will actually die by the end of the novel, (Section 1, pages 7-23). John Self, an Englishman, gets into a cab in New York City, and listens to the racist cabbie talk about how to improve the city by killing black and Puerto Rican people. John does not seem to agree with the cabbie. John has a recently diagnosed disease called tinnitus, which makes him hear things that are not there, such as jet takeoffs and breaking glass. This irritates him, along with the cabbie's spiel. The cabbie says he does not like those kind of people since they think he is a scumbag for driving a cab. John says he agrees with him, and the cabbie kicks him out. John Self is the director of a movie, alternately called *Bad Money* or *Good Money*, and this is the reason he has come to New York City. He walks a bit and gets another cab, which turns out to be the same one. He looks at the cabbie, but both seem to understand each other now. This time, he and the driver are courteous to each other. He arrives at the hotel and drinks whiskey to help a toothache. He thinks about the people who owe him money, including Selina Street, his girlfriend.

Caduta Massi, an actress, has called the hotel for John Self, but has not left a message. He leaves the hotel and walks to a topless bar, something he does frequently. He watches a girl named Dawn, who looks young but has had a hard life, dance on stage. The bartender asks if he wants to buy her a drink, and he does. However, he is more interested in another beautiful girl dancing on stage. The bartender will not leave him alone, so John Self insults her and is forced to leave. The desk clerk tells John another actor, Lorne Guyland, has called. John Self goes back to his room, and thinks about how his friend, Alec Llewellyn, told him that Selina Street is sleeping with someone else. He is bothered by the fact that she is regularly having sex with another man. Lorne Guyland calls back, and says he hates being thought of as an old man, and wants to meet with John Self to talk it over. John sits through his rant, smoking and with tears in his eyes. He makes a list of the places he needs to call to track down Selina. Selina lives her life in fear of being assaulted or raped, however she frequently dresses provocatively. He is unable to track down Selina or Alec. Caduta Massi calls him, and asks him how many children should she have. John agrees to meet with her.



## Author's Note, page 5, and Section 1, pages 7 to 23 Analysis

The novel, *Money*, by Martin Amis, begins with an author's note explaining that the novel is basically a suicide note from the main character, John Self. This indicates that John is in a position of turmoil in his life; furthermore, he is unable to find satisfaction in his job or his home life. However, the author notes that his admission does not mean John Self will die at the end of the novel; rather, it serves as an indication of how close John is to the edge. Throughout the novel, we will see how disgruntled John is with his life, and examine the factors that are causing this. One of the main factors, his girlfriend Selina Street, is introduced immediately. It is clear that John and Selina have a tumultuous relationship; John finds out early on that Selina is regularly sleeping with someone else. This implies that Selina is sometimes unfaithful, but it only bothers John when he finds out that there is another man in her life regularly. Selina is a beautiful woman, who ostensibly lives in fear of men and what they can do to her. However, the way she dresses shows she actually thrives on their attention, no matter how degrading. Both John and Selina show that they do not care for other people as much as they care for themselves and material things. John is also surrounded by shallow people in his capacity as the director of a movie. He must deal with actors like Caduta Massi and Lorne Guyland who are concerned with more trivial things, like their appearances.



## Section 1, pg. 23 to 52

### Section 1, pg. 23 to 52 Summary

John Self goes to meet Fielding Goodney, his money man, at a bar in the Carraway Hotel. Fielding is the producer for the film, and is the one arranging for the funding for the production of the film. He tells Fielding that Caduta Massi wants to have a lot of kids in the film. Fielding says the rumor is she had her tubes tied, so she cannot have kids in real life. John tries to talk him out of using Caduta, but no other appropriate actresses are available. Fielding tells John to pretend to listen to Lorne, but in the end the director can ignore him. They talk about money, and John believes Selina is not sleeping with Alec because Alec has no money. However, he is not sure who Selina might be sleeping with. After they leave, John Self finds a prostitute, but cannot go through with it when he finds out she is pregnant. He sits and talks to her, and pays her. John returns to the hotel. He drinks and waits for Selina to call. A man calls, and says John Self has messed up his life. The guy repeats things others have said to John during his time in New York, showing that he has been following John. John finds out that it is a local call from the front desk. However, he does not know who it is, and does not know what he might have done to the man.

The next day, John plays tennis with Fielding Goodney. John is not very good at it, and Fielding tries to make him feel better, but John is annoyed. John goes to his room, and cannot stop thinking about Selina. John tells Fielding that a guy that was watching at the tennis court has called him up. A woman named Martina Twain calls, and they make plans to meet. John has had a crush on her for a while, but since Martina is married to a man named Ossie, they have never gotten together. They arrange to meet in the morning, but John does not wake up until the nighttime. He cries when he realizes he missed his chance to meet her. The next day, he wakes up, and realizes he has not been crying in the night. John tells Fielding he has to fly home for a while. He buys his ticket. He realizes that Selina is probably cheating on him, and thinks that he should ask her to marry him. The mysterious man calls again, and John lays into him. The man says they will meet one day. John blacks out. John gets ready to leave New York, buying drugs and taking them. He visits pornography shops before going to get a drink with Fielding Goodney, who gives him his plane ticket, and the female actor Butch Beausoleil. He gets on the plane.

### Section 1, pg. 23 to 52 Analysis

John Self works with Fielding Goodney, his producer who has secured the money for the film. Goodney seems to be a stable person, commiserating with John over the antics of the actors. Fielding gives him advice on how to handle the actors, who are more concerned with their own needs than the good of the film. They talk about money for the film; as producer, Fielding is paying for everything and working with the money men. John keeps thinking of Selina, worrying over the question of whether she is



cheating on him regularly or not. He does not seem to mind so much if she occasionally sleeps with other people. However, the idea that she is regularly with another man bothers him. John is preoccupied with sex himself; he frequently visits topless bars and reads pornographic magazines. He thinks the only way to solve his problem with Selina is to give her more money. He does not seem to view her as a person, more as a liability that he must sustain. John clearly has a problem with addiction, that shows in many ways: he cannot stop thinking about money, he is obsessed with sex, and also drinks profusely to the point of black-outs.



## Section 2, pg. 53 to 88

### Section 2, pg. 53 to 88 Summary

John Self is being interviewed by Bill, a writer for Box Office, a Hollywood trade magazine. John says working on this movie is one of the best times of his life. John has spent five days in London, but has not found Selina Street yet. He seems to be concerned about this, but more because he does not want any other man to have her. Alec Llewellyn has been unable to help John out. Alec says he wanted to warn John, because Selina wants all his money. Alec then asks to borrow more money for himself, because he owes money to some bad guys to close a deal. He says he will pay him back, but John knows that when Alec gets money, he will want it all for himself and John will most likely never see it. Some men come to the door, and Alec asks John to answer the door. John manages to make the man, who has come to collect Alec's money, go away, although the man promises to be back. Doris Arthur, the writer, arrives to meet with John Self. Doris is dressed in a mannish style. She asks John Self about the idea for his movie. John Self says the movie is about a father, mother, son and a mistress. The son and his father share the mistress, but the father does not know the son is also sleeping with her. The mistress has mob connections, and they all work at a restaurant or bar. They receive a delivery of flour that is really heroin, and the father wants to give it back to the mob. However, they realize they could sell the heroin themselves for money.

Doris Arthur listens to John's spiel about the plot of the movie. Doris asks about the mistress's motivation, the character Butch Beausoleil is playing. John takes her to see Veronica, a stripper, and asks Doris about Veronica's motivation. He tries to use the stripper as an example, showing that the only motivation in life is money, as far as he is concerned. John tries to hit on her, but Doris calls him an asshole and leaves. John drives to his home in West London. All of his expensive possessions do not satisfy him. He calls and apologizes to Doris. He receives a letter from Selina, begging him to take her back, and noting she has no money. John Self calls Selina, who agrees to come over. A man answers the phone at first. John goes to buy champagne. He mentions a writer named Martin Amis lives near him. John and Selina go to dinner. When they return to his place, he asks if Selina has slept with anyone else lately. She says yes, and tells him about it. They then have sex.

John goes to see Roger Frist, his dental hygienist. He is worried about his health again. Selina tells John he threw her out and called her a whore the night before he left for New York. John tells Selina that Alec said she was regularly sleeping with someone else. She tells him Alec is crazy, and changes the subject. John goes to Carburton, Linx & Self, his advertising agency he owns with Terry Linx and Keith Carburton. The agency is extremely prosperous. John goes to lunch with Terry and Keith. Later, Terry asks if there is someone who wants to hurt John, saying he heard someone is out to get him. John finds money in Selina's underwear drawer, and she says she won it at roulette. She says she was working at the casino, and received part of the money as a





tip. John knows she could be telling the truth. John apologizes to Doris, but hits on her again. He opens a joint bank account for Selina, who in turn lets him do anything he wants to when they are in bed together. John runs into Martin Amis and tries to make small talk, but Martin does not seem to want to talk to him. John tells Selina to behave while she is away.

## Section 2, pg. 53 to 88 Analysis

John Self is looking for Selina Street, who seems to have disappeared while he was away. Selina eventually comes back because she has no money, but John is not as bothered at this as he might be. Selina denies that she is regularly sleeping with someone else, but John does not seem to believe her totally. He varies from day to day about his thoughts on Selina, showing that he is not convinced they should be together, since all she wants is money. We also see evidence of John's blackouts after drinking. Selina tells him that John threw her out while in a blackout. John seems to get violent when he drinks, which gives credence to the mystery man's claim that John did something bad to him. John is not above hitting on other women himself, as we see when he tries to put the moves on Doris Arthur, the screenwriter. However, Doris, who is dressed in a mannish fashion, seems to be a lesbian. He apologizes to Doris and spends some time with her. However, he blacks out during this period at some point. He does not remember the details of his night with Doris. John runs into a man named Martin Amis, which is the name of the author of the book. The author has inserted himself into the book, a common technique that exemplifies post-modern literature.



## Section 3, pg. 89 to 136

### Section 3, pg. 89 to 136 Summary

John Self stands at a bar, reading a tabloid magazine called Morning Line. He has flown back to America. Fielding Goodney tells John to keep a handle on the addiction industries, including pornography, alcohol and drugs. Fielding tells him about a maniac who drops heavy tiles from the roof onto people walking below. John does not understand why the guy would do this, because he thinks there is no money in this. He has to meet Caduta Massi to reassure her about the film. He goes to make sure Martina Twain's phone number is not in his address book, so he does not have to apologize for missing their date, but he sees Selina has written it there. John meets a woman, She-She, and pretends to be a writer named Martin, before they have sex. He then spends some time reassuring the actors. He goes to see Caduta, and they talk about the movie. She wants to make sure there are no sex scenes about Lorne Guyland. She says she is too old, and shows him her breasts. John has a crying fit. John calls Lorne Guyland to tell him Caduta will not take her clothes off, and Lorne gets angry. Lorne is upset because his character, the father, loses a fight to the son. The actors want to insert themselves into the writing process, but John knows if he lets them do what they want it will ruin the film.

Fielding and John discuss Caduta's breasts, and determine she cannot do a nude scene because she is too old. Fielding tells John that Doris is gay, explaining why she was not interested in John. John gets drunk and goes to see Martina Twain at her house late at night, but her husband Ossie tells John to leave. John reaches his 35th birthday. He is plagued by a sore back. He writes an apology letter to Martina. He calls Selena, who says she has a rich boyfriend. Fielding says they can go with an actor named Spunk Davis for the role of the son. After screening his movies, John agrees. John gets a call from Ella Llewellyn, Alec's wife. She tells him Alec is in prison. John is pleased since it means Alec will sink low. Martina tells John how he was incredibly drunk at her house, and the antics he got up to. They pass a bookstore, and Martina buys John a book, and tells him he can call her when he has read it. The mysterious man calls again, and laughs at John's feelings for Martina. John and Fielding meet with Spunk, who tells them he will do the movie but has his demands.

### Section 3, pg. 89 to 136 Analysis

John Self is now back in America, working on the movie again. He meets with Fielding Goodney, who recommends that John keep a tab on his addictions, since it is the addiction industries that make all the money. However, Fielding is also telling John to spend money, since the film is paying for it all and they have earned the right to live lavishly. Fielding also tells John about a man who kills others by dropping things on their head. However, John does not understand this, because there is no money in it, and John thinks that money is the only motivation for anyone to do anything. John also has



to continue to deal with the actors, who are shallow and need constant reassurance. Although they are all famous and have plenty of money, it is clear that they are not happy. John also learns that his friend, Alec, is in prison, but this does not bother John. In fact, he is happy because it means he is doing better than Alec, and now he knows Alec will stay away from Selina. John goes to see Martina, who is a contrast to Selina. Martina is cultured, well-read, and apparently happily married. She is nothing like anything else in John's life, and this is what attracts him to her. John also continues to have medical problems, a continuous theme that shows he is not happy in his life.



## Section 4, pg. 137 to 168

### Section 4, pg. 137 to 168 Summary

John Self goes to the Shakespeare, a bar in London, and talks to Fat Vince, a bouncer there. John likes the bar because the people there make him look good. John Self's dad comes in, and John notes that his dad is better looking than him. His dad introduces him to Vron, the woman he is going to marry, and shows him adult pictures of Vron in a magazine. John realizes that Vron is Veronica, the stripper from the Shakespeare. Vron seems out of touch and distracted when Barry is showing John the pictures. He goes home to Selina, who says his dad hit on her once. John does not seem surprised or bothered by this. John says when he and Selina have sex, they talk about money. John is annoyed that Selina is expecting him to come home. John does not know what to do what himself while waiting for the movie to move ahead. He plays card games to try to pass time, but has not opened the book that Martina Twain gave him. He drinks too much. He goes into another bar, but they will not serve him because the bartender says John was in there last night and caused trouble, but John does not remember.

John Self gets a dirty magazine, but a woman sees him reading it and asks him why he reads it, and what that image says to him. He replies, "Money." He fights with Selina about trivial things when he is drunk. Selina figures out that Martina Twain gave him the book. He agrees to let Selina move in, and they go to get her stuff. John Self goes to visit Alec Llewellyn in prison. The rest of the prisoners and guards are wary of Alec because he speaks English well. John Self goes to California. He gets drunk and hires a car, then picks up a hooker. They are in the car when a housewife comes and yells at them for being in her driveway. The hooker's pimp comes, and John hears the pimp hit something with the bat. John throws some money down and leaves. In London, John realizes it's different at home with Selina there. John realizes he should marry Selina, and finally have her for the rest of his life without worrying about other men bothering her. He is giving her more money than ever. John meets Martin Amis at a restaurant. Martin says he should have argued with the woman who bothered him about magazine. They leave, and John thinks about his dad, who sent him an invoice for his upbringing when he fell on hard times. His father takes the money John gives him, and bets on a horse, winning enough money to buy the Shakespeare.

### Section 4, pg. 137 to 168 Analysis

John Self meets his dad, Barry Self, at the Shakespeare, a bar in London. Barry Self is a good-looking man, much better looking than his son. He seems to have his son's proclivity for pornography. Barry plans to marry Veronica, a stripper he met. He has even convinced Vron to appear in a pornographic magazine. Vron seems wary about her appearance in the magazine. It is clear John gets his tendencies from his father, including his obsession with sex and with money. His father actually charges John for his upbringing. A telling point is that John and Selina talk about money during sex,



showing that they are obsessed with it. John indicates that money is the only motivation for people several times, but it is clear he is projecting onto others. John himself is so obsessed with money and sex that he has no other interests. He cannot think of anything to do when the film is not going on, and cannot involve himself in the book Martina has given him. John picks up a pornographic magazine at a newsstand, and a woman chastises him for it. He tells her that the image says money to him, clearly linking money and sex in his mind. However, while John frequently goes to topless bars and prostitutes, it seems the times he actually has sex are few and far between. He thinks that he should be paying for sex, but his actions indicate he knows it is hollow and he needs something more from life. John tries to fix his problems with Selina by letting her move in with him. He thinks that by keeping her close, he will be able to keep a leash on her and prevent her from seeing other men.



## Section 5, pg. 169 to 213

### Section 5, pg. 169 to 213 Summary

John Self goes to see Lorne Guyland in New York. When Fielding calls to tell him that, he says he is not spending enough money. Lorne wants to talk to John about his role in the movie, playing Gary, the father. John says Gary is based on Barry, his own father. The character of the son, Doug, is based on John himself. Lorne tells John that he thinks Gary is a very cultured man, and even gives John his reading list. John says the film will not work, since there is no reason to keep the heroin the characters plan to sell. The meeting ends with Lorne, naked, asking John if he has the body of an old man. At his hotel, John begins to worry about money. He talks to Martina Twain, and tells her he has not really started the book yet. John goes to meet Fielding Goodney. They are pretending to interview girls for Butch's part, although Butch is definitely getting the part. Fielding just uses the other girls so they can see them strip and they can hit on them. John tries to read the book Martina gave him, but he stops on the word pop-holes because he does not know what they are. He is unable to get through it with such distractions.

John meets with Spunk Davis, the actor playing Doug. John tells him they need to change his first name, because it refers to semen in England. Spunk gets up and leaves, upset at this revelation. John reveals the name of the book Martina gave him is *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell. John tries to read it, but constantly distracts himself. The book concerns civilized pigs, and John wonders if the author has ever seen a pig. He keeps reading. He meets Caduta Massi, and lets her talk about trivial matters while he sits in silence. John does not see the point of her babbling, but is happy to placate her to get the movie made. She shows him pictures of her god children, indicating she has some wish for children even though she cannot have them anymore. John thinks about his mother, Vera, who he does not really remember. He likes other members of his extended family. At age fifteen, he comes to live with his dad at the Shakespeare. Martina calls, and tells John that he did not show up for their meeting. Felix tells John he came back drunk and was gone for a day. John realizes he has forgotten everything he has read in *Animal Farm*.

John Self thinks he has a boil on his buttocks. He thinks it is because of his bad living. He goes to see Martina, who tells him the book is an allegory for the Russian Revolution. She explains how the characters represent the peasantry, a propagandist, and more. John is shaken up by this. John and Martina drink on her terrace. John always thought Martina and Ossie were the optimum couple. He realizes that Martina only wants to be friends with him. He asks for another book, and she gives him *1984* by George Orwell. John gets a call from a stripper, thanking him for a date, which he does not remember. The mysterious man, who John calls Frank the Phone, calls and tells him that the people John have been mean to over the years are all him. He points John to a matchbook in his pocket, which says Frankie and Johnny were lovers. John and Fielding interview another actor, Nub Forkner, in case Spunk Davis does not come



back. When Spunk hears they interviewed Nub, he calls and is back in. John enjoys 1984. Doris Arthur finishes writing the screenplay, called Good Money now.

## Section 5, pg. 169 to 213 Analysis

Fielding Goodney urges John Self to spend more money, implying that the money men behind the movie will take care of it all. He says that in their industry, living lavishly is the norm, not the exception. The actors are still very shallow and needy. John finds himself having to try to placate them so they will continue to work on the movie. It is clear the actors want to change the characters to suit their own true nature. They are also very worried about their appearance. In addition to Caduta Massi, Lorne Guyland also shows John his naked body. Both actors are clearly trying to make themselves feel better about growing older. Spunk Davis, the third actor, is a contrast because he seems to believe in his principles. He is not as easily placated as the other two actors, and only the threat of being replaced on the film is enough to bring him back. This turnaround shows that Spunk also has narcissistic qualities. John continues to talk to Martina, who represents a different world for him. She is cultured and well-read, and she tries to make an impression on him and help him better himself. Meanwhile, Frank the Phone keeps calling, although John is not that bothered by it. He does not believe the man can actually get to him. We also see that John Self is still preoccupied with his health condition. Whether he is really experiencing these ailments or whether they are psychosomatic is not clear. It is possible that the stress in his life is making him feel unwell.



## Section 6, pg. 215 to 253

### Section 6, pg. 215 to 253 Summary

John Self says there has been an increase in the murder of gays and whores in his neighborhood. He knows that Selina is up to something, but he does not know what. Their relationship seems to keep going from hot to cold; however, they usually are not the same temperature at the same time. When Selina is in the mood and being kind to John, he wants nothing to do with her. However, when John is nice to Selina and wants to sleep with her, Selina does not want to deal with him. Martin Amis calls John Self, who has been trying to find the author. John wants Martin to work on the movie script. John thinks Selina looks like she could be in a men's magazine, although he believes no girl is actually like how they appear in those magazines. He thinks that the way women are portrayed is a way of masking their true nature. John tells Martin he has been reading *Animal Farm* and *1984*. He tells Martin about the problems with the screenplay. Martin says no to rewriting it, but John says he will double the money. John says he has been getting paranoid lately. John tells Selina they should get married, but she does not agree.

John Self goes to the Shakespeare, where they talk about the impending wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Di. The patrons of the bar are very interested in the impending nuptials. John talks to his dad, Barry, who says that Vron has been acting strangely since the magazine came out. Vron is very proud of her body now. Martin and John work at solving problems in the screenplay. Selina is keeping her distance from John. They argue about marriage and he tries to rape her, but does not succeed. She later accepts his apology. John visits Alec in prison, who is not doing so well now. Terry Linux tells John he saw Selina going with a man to have sex at a hotel. Selina tells him she is pregnant, but it is not his, and she is leaving him. John finds out that the man she slept with is Ossie Twain. John and Martin watch the Royal Wedding, and Martin is entranced. John starts crying. John starts falling apart and drinking more. He gets pulled over, and his car is taken away. John gets a hooker, but only cries to her. He cries to Martin again.

### Section 6, pg. 215 to 253 Analysis

John Self finally finds out that Selina Street is really sleeping with another man, namely Ossie Twain, the husband of Martina Twain, the woman John has a crush on. John tries to get Selina to marry him before finding out, but it works out for the best when she leaves him. It is clear that Selina is only with men because of the money they have, and she is willing to leave John for Ossie. She does not feel badly about what she has done to John, twisting the knife by telling him she is pregnant with another man's child. John also realizes that if Ossie is out of the picture, it may have cleared the way for him to be with Martina. Also back in England, John meets with Martin Amis, the writer. John realizes that Martin can really make the screenplay come to life. Martin, who does not



seem too impressed with the screenplay, but proves even he has his price when he accepts after John doubles his fee. John also sees Vron, learning that she is proud of her sexuality even more now that the magazine came out. However, her words ring hollow, showing that she is not as satisfied as she wants John to believe. John is very disturbed by Selina's actions; proving his statement that each only wants the other when the other does not want them. John finds himself crying, and using Martin Amis as a sounding board for his troubles.



## Section 7, pg. 255 to 292

### Section 7, pg. 255 to 292 Summary

John Self sleeps with Butch Beausoleil. He is surprised how easily the actress warms up to him, noticing he hardly had to work on getting her into bed. After they have sex, she tells him she believes they need to keep explicit sex scenes in the movies to have the contrast between old and young. He goes to the bathroom and returns to find Butch watching a tape of what they have just done. He realizes that when she was talking about the contrast between old and young, she was also talking about them. He asks her to delete it, and she refuses since she only sleeps with someone once. John roughs her up a bit, and she agrees. She likes his roughness and tries to get him back in bed, but he refuses. Fielding Goodney tells him that whatever he did to Butch helped, and she is no longer giving them trouble, and neither are the other actors. Fielding does not think Martin has done much to improve the screenplay for *Bad Money*, but John disagrees. John goes to see Martina Twain, who has gotten a new dog. John realizes Martina knows nothing about Selina and Ossie's affair.

John and Martina take the dog for a walk. The dog strains on the leash, and Martina says although he has a good life, it is in his nature to try and leave. Frank the Phone calls again, and John thinks he is getting the better of him. He is not afraid of the man, but still wonders who he is. He seems more irritated by the calls than actually afraid. He asks how the woman is that Frank claims to have seen him with. Frank says if he could remember what the woman told John, he would not be in New York but back in London. Frank says they will meet one day. Spunk has agreed to change his name to S.J. Davis. John goes to see Spunk, and finds that Spunk's father has beaten up his mother. Spunk wants to kill his father, but John cautions him against it, saying he is the better man. They talk for three hours. John says he has managed to quit swearing. He has to babysit the actors while they rehearse together, as the stars tend to fight. He has to convince Lorne Guyland to keep working.

John Self goes to the opera with Martina Twain, and realizes she knows all about the affair. He takes Martina home, but when they get in the elevator a guy with a knife gets in with them. Martina gives him her purse, and the kid goes with them to her apartment, planning to rob them. When they get to the door, John gets fed up with the robbery attempt and punches the guy in the face. Martina calls the cops while John watches the guy, who cannot walk from the beating. Martina wants John to let the man go. They pay a cab driver to take him away. He points out a ginger-haired woman who has been following him to Martina. John thinks it is a man in drag, and is tied to Frank the Phone, the man who keeps mysteriously calling. John tells the cops he beat the man up, and the man ran away. John stays on Martina's couch.



## Section 7, pg. 255 to 292 Analysis

John Self sleeps with Butch Beausoleil, an apparent attempt to get over Selina Street. He turns to another woman who treats sex dispassionately, and seems to enjoy it when a man is rough or rude to her. Butch is a shallow woman who is obsessed with appearances. She is too concerned with herself to truly get involved with a man. Butch and Selina are very similar, in that they are attracted to men who treat them badly. However, John cannot sustain the necessary demeanor to keep either woman happy. He meets with Martina, who has learned about Ossie's affair. The two are now free to begin dating, but it moves very slowly. They come together as friends first, and John helps Martina get through her feelings about Ossie's betrayal. Martina does not seem to like to rock the boat, as when she convinces John to help get rid of the mugger instead of waiting for police. Martina is too easy on others, and seems to be something of a doormat, the antithesis of Selina Street. John also deals with Spunk Davis, convincing the man to change his name. John and Spunk get along well, because John sees something of himself in Spunk. Both have been mistreated by their fathers, and the two are able to bond over this.



## Section 7, pg. 292 to 329

### Section 7, pg. 292 to 329 Summary

John Self and Martina Twain kiss, the beginning of a new relationship for both of them. Back on the movie set, he still plays the go-between for the actors when they have differences. John returns to Martina's apartment, using his own set of keys to let himself in. The two have settled into a comfortable routine. Martina cooks for him, and they play chess. He realizes he has not cried in a long time. He has tried to have sex with Martina, but he is impotent. He has begun masturbating again. He also thinks he is becoming attracted to Spunk. He thinks it may just be because Spunk reminds him of himself. He still accompanies Martina places, to art galleries and other places of culture. He is also beginning to feel attracted to Caduta Massi. Although he has always had a thing for Martina, it seems now that he is with her, he is still searching for some kind of sexual satisfaction. Frank the Phone calls, and says the ginger-haired girl will not be following him anymore. John realizes that Frank is crippled in some way, after letting Frank babble on for some time. Frank confirms this.

John Self feels unreal, as he lies in bed with Martina. He goes to meet the moneymen about the movie. Martina and John take out Shadow and let him off the leash as a test, but the dog disappears. John eventually finds the dog. Selina calls John, and asks to meet him since she is in New York. He goes to lunch with Butch and Spunk, and Butch tells him she is pregnant, and it may be Spunk's. He meets Selina, who says she and Ossie are finished. He goes with Selina and they begin to have sex, but Martina walks in on them. Frank the Phone calls, and John demands to meet him. He goes to an alley to meet him, but is attacked by a man, who is masquerading as the ginger-haired woman. He goes back to his hotel, where Felix tells him to pack a bag and leave, since the management has figured out he owes a lot of money. He goes up the hotel, and finds Fielding Goodney, who tells him there is no money, and John has been paying for everything. John leaves and runs into Doris, who tells him she knew the whole time. He goes to the airport and tries to buy a ticket, but his cards are cut up. He gets on a plane, but the pilot finds out the airline is shutting down and turns back to the airport.

### Section 7, pg. 292 to 329 Analysis

John Self begins a relationship with Martina Twain, who he sees as his ideal woman. She is cultured, and tries to bring John into her world. However, he is unable to perform with her in bed. Although Martina represents a different world from the crass, harsh world of pornography and bars where he spends most of his time, John is not able to make the transition. He is not happy in Martina's high class world, and it is not the change he needs to find satisfaction in life. His impotence is a physical reaction that represents how he is feeling inside. He is unable to perform in bed with her, and seems uncomfortable in her world. He is not used to the cultural events she takes him too, such as when he is uncomfortable and has to urinate when she takes him to the opera.



Sensing that her world is not right for him, John agrees to meet Selina, and they almost have sex. Martina catches him, and her relationship with John is quickly ended. Martina is not a woman who can handle betrayal. John's world continues to fall apart when he realizes that Fielding Goodney is Frank the Phone, and the person who has been following him dressed as a woman. Fielding reveals that he has ruined John, managing to get ahold of John's money and using it to finance the film as a way to ruin John's life. Fielding does not have a clear motivation for this. John ends up fleeing back to London; however, the plane he is on must return after the airline goes bankrupt. John has clearly hit bottom.



## **Section 8, pg. 331 to 350, and Section 9, pg. 350 to 363**

### **Section 8, pg. 331 to 350, and Section 9, pg. 350 to 363 Summary**

John Self goes to talk with Martin Amis, telling him about everything that has happened over the past few days. He realizes that Fielding is Frank the Phone, and he does not understand how he could have hurt Fielding. Martin says he does not think that John did. He tells John that he thinks his name has something to do with it. Martin offers to give John back his check, but John tells him to keep it since some of the money might have been good. Martin tells him that all of the money men were actors. John tries to cash a check, and searches his clothes for money, but does not find much. He calls Selina, who admits she contacted him to set him up in front of Martina. Selina says she did it because it is fun deceiving people. She said she would not want him to be happy with anyone else. Selina gives him enough money to get home to London.

John tries to get money from his friends that owe him, including Alec, but does not get much. He visits Alec Llewellyn, who only gives him three pounds. John tells him he had sex with his wife, Ella, and Alec admits to having sex with Selina. John goes to the Shakespeare. He meets Vron, who offers herself to him. John is about to have sex with her when Barry appears, and tells John he will not get his money. Fat Paul is waiting for him, and beats him up for going after his father's wife. Barry tells him that he is actually not his father. At Martin's, they play chess for money. Martin says everything was going Fielding's way, until Martin came into the picture, because Martin made the script workable. Martin says if he wins, he only wants one thing. John loses, forced in a spot where his king has to move. John tries to swing at Martin, but misses and falls, passing out. John goes to get scotch and tranquilizers, and writes a suicide note.

(Section 9, pp. 350 to 363) John Self nearly kills himself the other day, riding in his Fiasco, when he loses control of the car. It is Christmastime in London. His lawyers have verified all the money Fielding spent on the film was John's, so he is broke. The four stars try to sue him, but only Butch Beausoleil keeps up the suit. Fielding Goodney is undergoing psychiatric tests. John's lawyer thinks he can fight the suit and pin the deal on Goodney. Fat Vince has found John a job working in an ice cream van. The ad-men he used to work with will not work with him anymore, but John thinks he will eventually be back. He says his suicide bit did not work. John remembers the times he blacked out drunk, he received warnings about what Fielding was doing. He has a new girlfriend, Georgina. He still writes to Martina, but she has not written back. He wants money again, but feels better that he does not have any. He has discovered that Fat Vince is actually his father. John thinks this is an improvement.



## Section 8, pg. 331 to 350, and Section 9, pg. 350 to 363 Analysis

John Self has finally learned the truth about the film, which is no more since the financing is gone. Fielding Goodney has managed to get his hands on John's money to fund the film. John does not understand what he could have done to Fielding. Martin suggests that John has actually done nothing to Fielding, that Fielding has some other motivation for ruining him. Martin becomes a source of reassurance for John, helping him through this problem. Martin proves that he is the only well-adjusted person presented in the novel, which is fitting since the character of Martin represents the author. Martin even offers to give back the money John paid him, indicating that money is not a motivating factor for Martin. Selina admits to tricking John, but does show she has some care for him by giving him money to get back to London. She has moved on with her life in her attempts to find the next rich man. John learns that his father is actually Fat Vince, not Barry. Surprisingly, John is healed by this knowledge, and knows he does not have to be influenced by Barry and his crass needs anymore. John is finally able to find satisfaction in his life, in a place between the dirty world he knows best, and the classy world of Martina Twain. He finds a new girlfriend to suit his new life, and enjoys his new father. While he still thinks about money, he realizes that he feels better without it, showing he has grown. As Martin Amis promises in his author's note, John Self no longer exists, but not because he kills himself. It is because he is not the son of Barry Self, and therefore John Self is not a true person.



# Characters

## John Self

John Self is an ad man and the director of a movie that is alternately called "Bad Money" and "Good Money." He lives in London, England, until he is contacted by Fielding Goodney, the producer for his movie. John goes to New York to take part in the casting for the movie. He leaves behind his girlfriend, Selina Street, but is afraid that she is cheating on him when he is not there. John is good at working with the actors on the film, helping placate their needs so the film goes smoothly. He has a crush on a woman named Martina Twain, which works out for him when he finds out Selina is sleeping with Martina's husband Ossie. He dates Martina for a brief time, but they break up after Martina catches him in bed with Selina. Selina admits she set the whole thing up because she does not want anyone else to have John. John is the son of a man named Barry, who is supposed to marry a stripper named Vron, or Veronica. Like Barry, John is obsessed with money and sex. John also has mysterious ailments, probably a product of his unhappiness. The producer of his film, Fielding Goodney, eventually reveals that he is funding the movie with John's money, and John is broke. The movie does not get made and John flees back to London. He learns that Barry is not his real father, but Fat Vince, a man who works in his father's bar, is. John is happy to learn this and meets a new girlfriend, Georgina.

## Selina Street

Selina Street is John Self's girlfriend in England. She is a very beautiful woman. John describes her as a woman who is afraid of men being tough and raping her; however, she dresses very provocatively and likes when men pay attention to her. She is unfaithful to John on a regular basis. She is a very sexual person, and frequently uses her sex appeal to attain money. She does not care for culture, only what she can buy. Her obsession with money frequently leads her to sleep with other men as well. She stays with John because he gives her access to his bank account, and then moves in with him. However, she ends up having an affair with Ossie Twain. John plans to ask her to marry him so he can keep her close and ensure she stays faithful, but her affair puts a kink in those plans. When John finds out about this, she leaves him. Later, when John is dating Martina, Selina comes to see John. She seduces him, but Martina walks in on them. She later reveals she set up the whole thing. She treats John badly, and when they are together, they have a love/hate relationship. However, when John needs to return to England, she gives him money, showing she is not completely heartless.

## Fielding Goodney/Frank the Phone

Fielding Goodney/Frank the Phone is the moneymen for John Self's movie. He is the producer, and pretends that he knows people who are financing the film. He also calls





John Self, as Frank the Phone, and harasses him. He reveals that the money he was using was all John's, and the film is never made.

## **Martina Twain**

Martina Twain is a friend of John Self's. He has had a crush on her for some time, but she is married to a man named Ossie. When Ossie cheats on her with Selina Street, she dates John Self, until she catches him in bed with Selina. She is a very cultured woman and tries to be a good influence on John.

## **Caduta Massi**

Caduta Massi is an actor who is in the movie John Self is directing.

## **Alec Llewellyn**

Alec Llewellyn is a friend of John Self's in England. He goes to prison because he is in debt. He sleeps with Selina Street, and later reveals it to John Self.

## **Lorne Guyland**

Lorne Guyland is an actor who is in the movie John Self is directing.

## **Butch Beausoleil**

Butch Beausoleil is an actor and friend of Fielding Goodney's. She plays the mistress character in John Self's movie. She sleeps with John Self.

## **Spunk Davis**

Spunk Davis plays the role of the son in John Self's movie. He later changes his professional name to S.J. Davis.

## **Felix**

Felix is a black bellhop who fetches things for John Self while he is staying in New York.

## **Doris Arthur**

Doris Arthur is the writer for John Self's movie. John Self tries to hit on her, but she rebuffs him. She is revealed to be a lesbian.



## **Keith Carburton**

Keith Carburton is part-owner of the ad firm, Carburton, Linex & Self, with Terry Linex and John Self.

## **Terry Linex**

Terry Linex is part-owner of the ad firm, Carburton, Linex & Self, with Keith Carburton and John Self.

## **Fat Vince**

Fat Vince is a bouncer at the Shakespeare, a bar in London. He is actually John Self's father.

## **Fat Paul**

Fat Paul is a bartender at the Shakespeare and the son of Fat Vince.

## **Ossie Twain**

Ossie Twain is Martina Twain's husband. He has an affair with Selina Street.

## **Ella Llewellyn**

Ella Llewellyn is the wife of Alec Llewellyn. John Self has slept with her.

## **Barry Self**

Barry Self is John Self's father. He is dating Vron, also known as Veronica, a stripper. It is revealed that he is not actually John's father.

## **Veronica**

Veronica is a stripper at a club in England. John Self discovers she is dating his father, going as Vron.

## **She-She**

She-She is a woman John Self picks up.



## **Dawn**

Dawn is a topless dancer at a club in New York City. John Self feels bad for her and buys her a drink.

## **Bill**

Bill is a writer for Box Office, a Hollywood trade magazine.

## **The cabbie**

The cabbie picks John Self up when he first arrives in New York City. He is racist and kicks John Self out of his cab.

## **Roger Frist**

Roger Frist is John Self's dental hygienist.

## **Gary**

Gary is the father character in John Self's movie. He is played by Lorne Guyland.

## **Doug**

Doug is the son character in John Self's movie. He is played by Spunk Davis.

## **Shadow**

Shadow is Martina's dog.

## **Georgiana**

Georgiana is John Self's girlfriend at the end of the novel.



## **Objects/Places**

### **Good Money**

Good Money is one possible name for John Self's film.

### **Bad Money**

Bad Money is one possible name for John Self's film.

### **New York City**

New York City is the busiest and most active city in New York State.

### **Animal Farm**

Animal Farm is the book by George Orwell that Martina Twain gives to John Self.

### **1984**

1984 is another book by George Orwell that Martina Twain gives to John Self.

### **Carraway Hotel**

Carraway Hotel is a hotel in New York City where John Self meets Fielding Goodney, his moneymen.

### **Box Office**

Box Office is a Hollywood Trade magazine.

### **England**

England is a country in Europe where John Self is born and raised.

### **Butcher's Arms**

Butcher's Arms is a club John Self frequents in England.

## **The Fiasco**

The Fiasco is John Self's car, a vintage purple coupe of which he is exceedingly proud.

## **The Shakespeare**

The Shakespeare is a bar in London, where Fat Paul and Fat Vince work.

## **Carburton, Linex & Self**

Carburton, Linex & Self is an advertising agency in England that John Self owns with Keith Carburton and Terry Linex.

## **Morning Line**

Morning Line is a tabloid magazine.



# Themes

## Excess

The name of the novel "Money" by Martin Amis clearly states one of John Self's biggest obsessions: money. Throughout the novel, John makes his preoccupation with sex and money well known. He is frequently thinking about the money he is spending, the money he has, and the money other people have. When he is not thinking about money, he is visiting strip joints or pornography shops, or picking up hookers. John lives his life to excess, not worrying about how he spends money. He equates money with sex in his mind, and so do some of the people around him. When he is dating his girlfriend, Selina Street, he says that they talk about money while having sex. John is searching for some kind of happiness in his life, but he does not know where to look properly. He puts all his efforts into finding peace through sex and money, but does not understand why he is not satisfied. It takes the fact that Fielding Goodney tricks him and loses all John's money to snap John out of his funk. At first, John tries to commit suicide, sure that he cannot live without money. However, when he is unsuccessful, he eventually learns that he can be happy without money, and finds that living moderately has its pleasures. In the end, he is much happier without money and with his new girlfriend, Georgina.

## Post-modernism

The novel "Money" by Martin Amis is the epitome of a post-modern novel. The term post-modern refers to an experimental type of writing, often using metafiction as well as author insertion to distinguish it from a more typical type of writing. In post-modern literature, the author frequently pokes fun at the conventions of novel-writing, using black humor, irony, and the character's paranoia. In the novel, "Money," Amis inserts himself as a character in the novel as a way of using metafiction, which means calling attention to the fact that a work of fiction is, in fact, a work of fiction. Amis knows that the reader most probably realizes Amis is the author of the book, using this to make his point. Amis is also not afraid to poke humor at his characters, putting himself as the most sane and relatively straight person in the novel. He also brings out John Self's paranoia, showing how throughout most of the novel, John is obsessed with money and sex and thinks about them all the time. John seems to believe that if he does not have these things, he will not be able to survive. He is paranoid about living without them. He also becomes paranoid about his health; frequently believing that he has boils, teeth issues, and a hearing condition called tinnitus. Amis uses all these elements to create a typical post-modern novel.

## Suicide

At the beginning of Martin Amis' novel "Money," Amis includes an author's note that explains the novel is about the suicide of John Self, the main character. Amis explains



that he does not know if that means John Self will be dead at the end of the novel, however. Throughout the novel, John Self begins to slowly spiral downward. He is living a lifestyle that keeps him mostly concerned with money and sex, and this life starts to break down when Selina leaves John. John then begins to date Martina Twain, and although he thinks he loves her, he eventually finds that her high-class lifestyle is not for him. Selina breaks up John and Martina, and John starts his steep decline. He thinks he still has the movie to keep him together. However, he soon finds out that his producer, Fielding Goodney, has been cheating him and using his money to fund the film. John has the rug pulled from under him, and he crumbles when he learns that he has no more money. He tries to commit suicide by taking pills, but is unsuccessful. He returns to England, and learns that Barry Self is not his father, Fat Vince is. This, in effect, lets John Self become a new man. He is no longer John Self, since he is not the son of a man named Self. Therefore, John Self does cease to exist at the end of the novel.



# Style

## Point of View

The novel "Money" by Martin Amis, is told from the point of view of the main character, John Self. The point of view would be considered first-person limited point of view. As the main character, John narrates all of the action, and we only see into his mind. We only learn of the other characters and their natures through the eyes of Self, so our opinions of them are tainted by his feelings and his interactions with them. For example, John says that his girlfriend, Selina, is afraid of men raping her, yet she dresses very provocatively and she fawns on their attention. Therefore, we get an idea of Selina's character before we even meet her. As a narrator, John freely discusses his feelings and neuroses with the reader. He reveals his obsession with money and with sex, and frequently ponders these obsessions throughout the novel. He frequently puts himself down, saying he is unattractive and has many medical ailments. What we learn of the world in the novel is all through John's eyes and therefore we are exposed to his take on the world. This allows us to get to know his character intimately, more so than if the narration had been third-person and outside of John's head. John also finds himself drawn to Martin Amis, who has inserted himself into the novel as a character. The author does not present himself as a narrator, letting John's character paint his own portrait. Overall, using the first-person point of view allows the reader to fully comprehend John's character and actions.

## Setting

The novel "Money" by Martin Amis takes place in several locations, mainly New York City and London, England. The main action takes place in these two big cities, which have much in common. Both cities have millions of citizens and plenty of opportunities for John to visit strip clubs, pornography shops, and bars. John is attracted to the trashy side of the cities. In New York, he spends much of his time finding new bars and shops to visit. While in London, he tends to frequent the same places, namely, the Shakespeare, the bar owned by his father. When in New York, John seems to be more attracted to new places and experiences, while in London, he goes to familiar places. However, both sets of places usually revolve around money and sex. In New York, he also experiences some culture when he is dating Martina Twain, as she takes him to operas and galleries. John is not entirely comfortable in these places, so different from the world he is used to. John also travels to California during the planning of the film, "Bad Money" or "Good Money," depending on the title at the moment. He is overseeing the actors who are shooting the movie, and is required to go there to keep tabs on and cheer up the actors when they are upset.





## Language and Meaning

The novel "Money" by Martin Amis is written in a very urbane style. The novel concerns John Self, who is born and grows up in London, England. At the beginning of the novel, he comes to New York City to work on his film, alternately titled "Good Money" and "Bad Money." Therefore, much of the novel is set in an urban world, and the language reflects this. Some of the language Amis uses is very harsh, and he is not afraid to use profanities when he deems it necessary. The novel revolves around John and his obsession with money and sex. Therefore, the language is sometimes very crass, especially when describing sex among the characters or when John visits strip clubs or pornography shops. Amis uses this language well, however, creating a concrete and vivid world in which John operates. John also spends a good part of the novel pondering his outlook on the world and how he feels about certain events, so at times, the language is very meaningful and pondering. Amis is a modern writer, and the story is set in the 1980s, so the language he uses is easily accessible to today's reader.

## Structure

The novel "Money" by Martin Amis has a very loose structure overall. The novel is divided into nine different unnumbered sections, and each section is divided by lines to distinguish events that happen at different times. By not numbering the chapters, Amis allows the novel to flow together more easily. The reader becomes lost in the story without being concerned about how long the novel is. Furthermore, the loose structure adds to the free-flowing, stream-of-conscious style of John Self's narration. This allows John to blur events together when he is narrating, or to separate them when it is necessary. John's narration jumps from his experiences in New York to his experiences in London and California. Since there is no clear marking as to when he is in what place at a certain time. This makes it hard for the reader to differentiate between the places, which may be a conscious effect the writer was trying to create. Furthermore, John's experiences in New York City and London are similar. Amis also includes an author's note at the beginning of the novel, which explains the novel is about John's suicide note. The last section is presented in italics, creating a noticeable contrast to the rest. This indicates that at this point, John's outlook on life has changed.



## Quotes

"This is a suicide note. By the time you lay it aside (and you should always read these things slowly, on the lookout for clues or giveaways), John Self will no longer exist. Or at any rate that's the idea. You never can tell, though, with suicide notes, can you?"  
Author's Note, pg. 5.

"Things still happen here and something is waiting to happen to me. I can tell. Recently my life feels like a bloodcurdling joke. Recently my life has taken on form. Something is waiting. I am waiting. Soon it will stop waiting—any day now. Awful things can happen any time. This is the awful thing." Section 1, pg. 9.

"'Yeah,' I said, and started smoking another cigarette. Unless I specifically inform you otherwise, I'm always smoking another cigarette." Section 1, pg. 13.

"I sometimes think that Selina would stand stock still in front of an advancing juggernaut, so long as the driver never once took his eyes off her tits." Section 1, pg. 19.

"We're going to make lots of money together. Making lots of money—it's not that hard, you know. It's overestimated. Making lots of money is a breeze. You watch." Section 1, pg. 23.

"I don't think Selina Street is fucking Alec Llewellyn. Why? Because he hasn't got any money. I have. Come on, why do you reckon Selina had soldiered it out with me? For my pot belly, my bad rug, my personality? She's not in this for her health, now is she?... I tell you, these reflections really cheered me up. You know where you are with economic necessity." Section 1, pg. 28.

"My head is a city, and various pains have now taken up residence in various parts of my face." Section 1, pg. 30.

"Lying in that slipped zone where there is neither sleep nor wakefulness, where all thoughts and words are cross-purposed and yet the mind is forever solving, solving, Selina came at me in queries of pink smoke." Section 1, pg. 39.

"How I hate my life. I called for divining cards. I've got to stop being young. Why? It's killing me." Section 1, pg. 52.

"Money is very versatile. You really have to give money credit for that." Section 2, pg. 56.



"'You asshole,' she said. 'I didn't know they were still cranking them out. You think that despite ourselves women like me are attracted to men like you. But I don't want to go to bed with men like you. I don't want men like you to exist.'" Section 2, pg. 63.

"Something is missing from the present too. Wouldn't you say? Mobile, spangled and glamorous, my life looks good—on paper, anyhow—but I think we're all agreed that I have a problem." Section 2, pg. 67.

"This writer's name, they tell me, is Martin Amis. Never heard of him. Do you know his stuff at all?" Section 2, pg. 72.

"Sometimes when I walk the streets—I fight the weather. I take on those weather gods. I beat them up. I kick and punch and snarl. People stare and occasionally they laugh, but I don't mind. Tubbily I execute karate kicks, forearm smashes, aiming for the sky. I do a lot of shouting too. People think I'm mad, but I don't care. I will not take it. Here is someone who will not take the weather lying down." Section 2, pg. 84.

"Sometimes I feel that life is passing me by, not slowly either, but with ropes of steam and spark-spattered wheels and a hoarse roar of power or terror. It's passing, yet I'm the one who is doing all the moving." Section 3, pg. 108.

"Here is a secret that nobody knows: God is a woman. Look around! Of course She is." Section 3, pg. 136.

"Life is hoarded elsewhere by others. Money is so near you can almost touch it, but it is all on the other side—you can only press your face up against the glass." Section 4, pg. 144.

"'Why then? Why? Without you they wouldn't exist. Look at it.' We looked down again. The lovedoll was turned almost inside out. 'What does that say to you?' 'I don't know. Money.'" Section 4, pg. 150.

"The creatures outside looked from pig to man, I read, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which." Section 5, pg. 191.

"Walking hurts, standing hurts, sitting hurts. Abiding hurts. It must be the booze, it must be the junk, it must be all the pornography." Section 5, pg. 196.

"Martin Amis was in the book all right—in fact, he was there twice, once as Martin, once as M.L. Some people will do anything to get their names in print." Section 6, pg. 219.

"The distance between author and narrator corresponds to the degree to which the author finds the narrator wicked, deluded, pitiful or ridiculous. I'm sorry, am I boring you?" Section 6, pg. 229.

"Everyone's a joke in the end." Section 7, pg. 266.



"There are so many voices now, another one won't hurt." Section 7, pg. 269.

"Towards the end of the novel you get a floppy feeling. It may just be tiredness at turning the pages. People read so fast—to get to the end, to be shot of you. I see their problem. For how long do you immerse yourselves in other lives? Five minutes, but not five hours. It's a real effort." Section 8, pg. 331.

"Without money, you're one day old and one inch tall. And you're nude, too. But the beauty of it is, there's no point in doing anything to you if you haven't got any money." Section 9, pg. 353.

"Money, money stinks. It really does." Section 9, pg. 359.



## Topics for Discussion

Does John Self die at the end of the novel? Explain.

John Self throws himself into his addictions, but do they make him happy? Why or why not? How does he change at the end of the novel, if at all?

John describes Selina Street as a woman who is afraid of rape, but yet dresses very seductively. What does this say about her character and her relationship with John?

John dates Selina Street and later Martina Twain. How is his relationship with each woman different? What problems does he have with each woman that prevent him from being with them by the end of the novel?

Fielding Goodney pretends to fund John Self's film, but in the end everything collapses. What is Fielding's motivation for doing this? Why does he call John Self throughout the novel and threaten him?

John Self eventually finds out that the man he thought was his father, is in fact not. How does this change John's outlook on life? Is he happier by the end of the novel, after learning this information? Why or why not?

Compare and contrast the actors in the movie, Caduta Massi, Lorne Guyland, Spunk Davis, and Butch Beausoleil. How do each exemplify the shallow stereotype that actors are so often labeled with? Do any of the actors have redeeming qualities? Why or why not?