

Origin in Death Study Guide

Origin in Death by Nora Roberts

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Plot Summary

Origin in Death by Nora Roberts (writing as J.D.Cobb) is a fictional tale that deals with a very topical subject. Dr. Wilfred Icove Senior is a man of science and medicine. Devastated when his pregnant wife is killed, he continues to raise his son alone while beginning his research into a branch of science that would put an end to such misery and loss forever. Icove, together with another geneticist and scientist - Dr. Jonah Delecourt Wilson — and later with the help of his son, create a medical aberration they refer to as 'Quiet Birth'. This procedure takes all of the guess work and chance out of the genetic soup that is usually the foundation for reproduction and replaces it with a sterile and infallible method of cloning that allows them to make children to order. If a mate is your desire, Icove and Wilson's Academy of horrors can provide one - at substantial cost of course. Beginning with subjects of all kinds, they strive to eliminate all imperfections, and then train and educate their subjects until they are ready for Placement.

Lieutenant Eve Dallas is a detective with the New York Police Department. She is the detective assigned to the case when Icove Senior is murdered in his office. Despite the fact that he is a Nobel prize winner, and beloved by most, it is apparent that someone has a personal issue with Icove from the start. Her investigation leads her to the second murder - Icove Junior, which leads to an investigation of the Academy in which they share involvement. When she arrives to investigate, she discovers another murder. Again, the weapon used is a scalpel plunged into the heart, making it a safe assumption that the same person is responsible for all three. Further investigation reveals the stuff of nightmares. Cloned children - all female and all ages are housed there, and the deeper she digs, the more horrifying the details are. Dallas, having come from a past which had her killing her abusive father to escape, can identify with the mindset of those who felt hopeless, trapped, and wanted nothing more than their freedom. All Dallas has to do now is find the hidden nursery and incubation labs. Finding them is difficult, but discovering the tracking system attached to the newer children enables Dallas and Roarke to track one young girl on a mission to help her mother save the world. In order to stop the experimenting and cloning, Dallas will break all the rules, push herself to the edge of her own sanity and make decisions that she would not have made even a month ago. A well written and frightening look at a possible future for our species.



Prologue and Chapter 1

Prologue and Chapter 1 Summary

The man she calls Father kisses her on the cheek. He sits with her, holding her hand. She is required to study a great deal, and take many tests. Her sisters are smarter than she is, but Father is always nice, even when she makes mistakes. The Others aren't so nice, and when Father is not there, she is punished for making mistakes. They hurt her and make her body jump. She is not allowed to tell Father. Right now though, Father asks her if she is comfortable. This time, the boy is with him, and she likes the boy although his presence makes her a little shy. She hardly feels the needle go in, and the ceiling above her bed begins to cycle through famous paintings. She names them until her eyes become heavy and he tells her it is okay to close them. He holds her hand while she drifts off and continues to hold it until she is dead. She had lived to just over five years.

It is the fall of 2059 and Lieutenant Eve Dallas struggles to get an interview with Lee Lee Ten - an icon considered to be one of the most famous faces on or even off the planet. Dallas and her partner Detective Delia Peabody wait in the lounge for the third time. The first time she was unconscious and headed for surgery; the second time she was in Recovery and Observation; and this time Dallas is determined. Lee Lee Ten had put eight holes into the man who broke her jaw and nose, shattered her cheekbone, and detached her retina. Dallas had no intentions of charging the woman with homicide, but she wanted to get the interview out of the way so that she could close out the case before having to deal with the media again. Peabody asks her when Roarke is due home, adding that she seems a little edgier than usual. He had been gone a week and Dallas wasn't sleeping well. They sit in the waiting room, discussing the case until Dr. Icové enters the room. He takes them to Lee-Lee's room where they interview her and leave. Dallas informs her attorney that she has no intentions of pressing charges. They are on their way out of the building when Dallas is paged. They go back to his floor where a woman meets them in tears and tells them that Dr. Icové is dead. When Dr. Icové comes through the doors, they realize that it is Dr. Icové Sr. who is dead. They go into his office and find him sitting at his desk with a silver handle protruding from his chest. The lack of blood tells Dallas that the blade found the heart.

Prologue and Chapter 1 Analysis

On her last day of life, she is visited by both the Father and the boy he sometimes brought with him. She likes Father, and enjoys it when he brings the boy with him. She also likes to color, and enjoys the hologram programs - especially the one where she is having a picnic with a puppy. She asks Father if she can have a real one, and he tells her 'some day'. Other than those times, she studies. It is important that she learn, and she is already aware that her sisters are smarter than she is. They don't tease her however, and she enjoys the hour in the morning and again in the evening when they



are allowed to play. Still, she is lonely. He sits beside her and takes her hand. She doesn't feel the needle that ends her life, and Father holds her hand until she is gone. She has yet to reach her sixth birthday, and now never will.

It is the fall of 2059 and Lieutenant Eve Dallas and Detective Delia Peabody are investigating the death of Bryhern Speegal who was shot eight times by one of the most well known faces on the planet, Lee-Lee Ten. Of course, this hadn't happened until he had badly beaten her. Dallas is hoping to close the case out that day to avoid having to deal with the media again, but she and her partner, Delia, had been there twice already, and Dallas is determined this time to finish it. They sit in the waiting area of the Wilfred B. Icové Center for Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery until Dr. Wilfred B. Icové Jr. himself shows up. Dallas is edgy and Peabody knows her well enough to know that at least part of the reason is the fact that her husband Roarke has been away on business for a week, which is longer than what she is used to. They interview Lee-Lee, and learn little more than what they already had. He started it, she finished it. They are on their way out of the building, having already made the decision not to charge her when they are called back upstairs. Wilfred. B. Icové Sr. is dead in his office, having been stabbed in the heart with a scalpel.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Dallas learns that Pia, Dr. Icove Sr.'s assistant found the body, while Peabody goes to get the field kits. Pia is quick to let them know that his last appointment had been with Dolores Nocho-Alvarez, who had come in at 11:30 that morning. Pia had gone to lunch, and when she returns, finds the doctor dead in his office. Icove Sr. had taken on few patients, semi-retired now, and rarely had become involved in surgery. Once the victim is formally identified, they begin to run down the crime, determining that the crime was committed by someone who is familiar with the facility. The woman had given a false identity, and can be seen on camera, calmly, making no effort to hide herself. She leaves the inner office six minutes after Pia goes to lunch and no one else is seen going into the office until Pia returns from lunch to discover the Doctor's body.

Dallas and Peabody go back to Central and they go over what they know. It is reasonably certain that their killer is a professional. Dallas wants to review security tapes and check the financial aspect, but Peabody is fairly certain that the son is not involved. Dallas sends Feeney in the Electronic Detectives Division a photo of the woman who likely killed Icove Sr., hoping to get an identification on her, and then watches the surveillance tapes of the woman as she entered and exited. The footage shows her enter the ladies washroom, and then exit again a few moments later, giving Dallas the impression that someone on the inside must have left a weapon in there for her. Then she reads through all of the data they have on the victim. He seems to qualify for sainthood which makes Dallas wonder what is hidden. They go to Dr. Icove Jr.'s Upper West Side townhouse and the door is opened by a woman who would be stunning under any circumstances.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Pia, Dr. Icove Sr.'s secretary, is still having difficulty controlling her emotions, although she manages to stop the tears. Icove Jr. is struggling to maintain his composure as he answers the questions Dallas puts to him. She asks if they can think of anyone who would want to eliminate him, but there seems to be no one who would gain from his death other than the son, and that seems highly unlikely at this point. Dallas knows that murder always has some reward, and her job is to find it. They go back to Central where they go over everything they know so far. The killer appears to be professional and likely had some help with a weapon. Dallas sees a symbolism in the way the heart was pierced. They stop off at the vending machines where as usual Dallas keeps a respectful distance. Amused, Peabody teases her, but Dallas insists that one day it will be us or them. They head to their work stations and Dallas pauses for a minute outside her door, mentally comparing either of the Icove offices to hers. She decides the space is just another status symbol she doesn't need either. Dallas goes over the background information she has for Icove Senior and can't believe how clean his profile comes back.



It is as though he lived life as a saint. She simply can't accept that any doctor can practice for sixty years and not have a single malpractice suit against him. Peabody assures her that some people are just good, but Dallas is sure that everyone has a dark and deep secret somewhere.



Chapters 3 and 4

Chapters 3 and 4 Summary

Avril ushers them in and up to the second floor - their living area. She leaves to get her husband after offering tea or coffee and Ilove returns several minutes later promising she'll be right behind him. He gets them all coffee they talk about his father. Afterward, they go to Senior's apartment and from there to the morgue for autopsy results that unfortunately are not much help. Back at Central, Dr. Mira is waiting for them. She tells Dallas that she had known Ilove Senior, and deeply respected him, asking that she be allowed to remain on the case. Dallas agrees and gets as much background on Senior as she can from her.

Next Dallas goes to the Electronic Detective's Division to see Feeney who is unable to give her the killer's identity. They banter back and forth, trying to find a profile that would fit the killer, but come up with nothing conclusive. Feeney comments that there must be a skeleton, or dirt under the rug and Dallas is thrilled that she isn't the only one who thinks so. She goes to fill in the commander before heading home, and is told to sit down. He begins by telling Dallas his wife has been a patient of Ilove Junior's and she would prefer that this information not get out. Relieved that it is nothing more, she gives her report and goes home. With Roarke out of town, she is less motivated than usual to go in, but does. Summerset doesn't immediately reveal himself as usual and she barely has time to consider the reasons for that before looking to the top of the stairs to find Roarke looking down at her. She throws herself into his arms and they make up for a week apart from each other. After, Roarke uses the Autochef to make them Fish and Chips for supper. Then he joins her, and they discuss the case together. Having come from a dark past, he is often one of her more productive assets when working on a case. She explains the basics, running through her thoughts and theories with Roarke and enjoying that he is home.

Chapters 3 and 4 Analysis

Avril invites them in and after getting her husband out of bed, they discuss Ilove Sr. and who might want to kill him. Then they head to Senior's apartment and looking around determine that he was compulsively driven and that his appearance was important to him. Everything is in its place and color coordinated but something is missing. They cannot account for how he had spent his free time. Autopsy results give them nothing new so they go back to Central. Dr. Mira is waiting for Dallas, and tells her that she and Senior had known each other in the past. He helped a friend of hers who had been the victim of a terrible attack. She asks that she not be removed from the case and Dallas agrees, provided she maintain professionalism.

Summerset is a constant source of amusement for Dallas and she enjoys doing little things that she knows will irritate him. She leaves her vehicle parked out front instead of



putting it away; she leaves her jacket on the newel post instead of hanging it up; and is always ready with verbal banter whenever they are in each other's company. Tonight, the thought of coming home to him instead of Roarke almost has her driving around the loop and back out again. She remembers the bag of work she brought home and decides to go in, parking her car in front of the door because she knows it will irritate Summerset. As majordomo to Roarke, it is his job to be the perfectionist and Dallas delights in doing little things that she knows will get on his nerves. She goes into the house and hangs her jacket on the staircase newel, again a dig for Summerset, who amazingly still hasn't appeared. She becomes aware of him before she sees him, and looks up to find she isn't imagining it. The sight of him makes her weak to this day, the husband who can turn her knees to jello with a look. After satisfying their immediate desires, Roarke gets fish and chips from the AutoChef and then joins her. He listens as she lays the case out, one aspect after another, enjoying both his input and the ability it gives her to hear her thoughts out loud and have them evaluated as well. When he asks her how she slept while he was gone, she deflects and then admits to having slept in the office some of the nights, and slept in his shirt because it smells like him and is comforting. He apologizes, knowing she had nightmares while he was away, and though she is plagued with them, they are worse when he is gone.



Chapters 5 and 6

Chapters 5 and 6 Summary

Roarke takes half of the discs from Icove's Senior's office into his own leaving Dallas in her office with the other half. The disc she looks at covers three years of medical history, but includes cognitive exams, intelligence quotients, puzzle solving skills, artistic and musical talents, and more. At the end a notation cites that treatment is complete and placement successful. The patient is referred to by letters and numbers - called A -1 on all documents. She looks at five more discs and finds more of the same - all ending with treatment 'completed' or 'terminated'. Dallas wonders about the placement segment. Roarke comes in and they compare notes, agreeing that Dr. Icove was working with lab rats of some kind, and that the notes they have are his reference notes, not his actual charts. Roarke speculates that maybe the subjects were willing participants, but Dallas is skeptical. In the morning Dallas and Roarke talk about Thanksgiving, Roarke expressing an interest in inviting his family. Over breakfast, Roarke goes back over the case. He notes that Dr. Icove would have had to have space and privacy - something he could probably orchestrate in the center. They also agree that the son would most likely have been in on it or at the very least be aware. She gets ready to leave and he springs his newest present on her. The size of the box makes her think it's a dress of some kind so when she opens it to find a full length leather jacket, she is pleasantly surprised. She goes to Mira's office hoping to talk to her about Dr. Icove's strange files but Mira isn't comfortable talking about it so Dallas picks up Peabody and they go to see Dr. Louise Dimatto who lives with Charles Monroe, a professional licensed companion (LC).

Louise and Charles are having coffee when they arrive. Dallas shows Louise the files, explaining his degree of security and the kinds of tests being run. The more she reads, the more curious she is, and she agrees that there must be more to the files. They talk about what kind of service or 'package' the doctor was selling, and Louise pales when she realizes what Dallas is talking about. Dallas decides to go to see Icove Junior next. A droid shows them in, and Icove joins them moments later. His son Ben interrupts their conversation briefly, until Avril calls him away. When Dallas asks about the coded data and for information on the sidelines with which his father was involved. He claims not to understand and looking at the notes, he tries to tell Dallas that they may not even be his father's. The tone becomes less civilized and when Dallas tells him that his father was likely killed by one of his special specimens, Icove loses some of his composure. After they leave, Peabody comments that Icove knows something. Dallas hopes she can get a search warrant for his home. She goes to Feeney next and from there she goes through Icove Senior's properties to see if there is any place that he would have the privacy he needed for his side projects and finds dozens that would be suitable. The fact that he had given his subject labels bothers her. Mira shows up to apologize for being difficult earlier, and asks to see the documents she'd refused to view earlier. Dallas tells her it isn't necessary, but Mira insists. One thing that Mira is sure of... Icove would never have hurt a child. Dallas wonders if he would agree to see one of his subjects after the fact, and Mira believes he would, to satisfy curiosity if nothing else.



Chapters 5 and 6 Analysis

Roarke helps Dallas go through the discs after first helping her to decrypt them. The computers both responded to vocal commands for decryption and translation, he reminds her. She thinks about the level of security the doctor has employed and wonders why. The first disc deals with a patient that Dr. Ilove refers to as A-1. Five more discs reveal a continuing theme. Fifty girls in total are represented by letters and numbers, and put through an incredibly thorough series of tests on everything from cognitive function to musical aptitude, from language skills to general IQ tests. Roarke suggests that perhaps the subjects were told that Dr. Ilove would make them beautiful, teach them and even find them a perfect companion - someone with money that would choose them. Fifty patients, all female and all between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two at the end of their files and perhaps as licensed companions or spouses or a combination of the two. With so many subjects involved, it would be difficult to keep secret. They go for a run in the morning and Roarke mentions Thanksgiving is near and suggests it would probably be a good idea to invite his Irish relations to have a turkey at their place. Dallas is a bit taken aback by the number of people involved (30 or so) but she agrees. They have breakfast, discussing the case, and before Dallas leaves Roarke presents her with a new full length leather coat. He loves her excited response and sends her off smiling. She talks to Mira who doesn't really want to speculate as to what Dr. Ilove was doing, so she picks up Peabody and goes to see Dr. Dimatto. Since it is her day off, they go to her home where she and her professional LC are just getting going.

Louise and Charles are welcoming, and Dallas is eager to get right to business, giving Louise the files. She scans them and comes to most of the same conclusions that they already have. These notes aren't likely the whole file. At first she thinks that the lack of naming of patients is to protect their privacy, but when Dallas points out that they were all female and all in a certain age range, Louise is surprised. Hearing that there were five years of treatments only piques her curiosity more. The notation of 'placement' bothers her as well, and they begin discussing what the word could possibly refer to. None of the suggestions is in keeping with a legal and moral study. Dallas speculates that Ilove may have been creating and selling non traditional licensed companions (LC's). Dallas wonders where the supporting images are, and Louise agrees that they would exist. They head for Ilove Junior's residence next, and share the same information and questions with him. He is even less inclined to agreed with Dallas' theory. He is shocked and somewhat fearful when Dallas explains that she believes one of his patients killed him. When they leave him, Peabody senses he knows more than he is saying and Dallas agrees. They hope to get a search warrant for his home next. Dallas checks in with Feeney who is devastated to discover that one of his favorite video vixens has been to Dr. Ilove for several 'upgrades' as well. As Louise suggested regarding the other files, there are several before and after photographs. Dallas knows the 'respected' doctor had a secret. Much like had happened with her, he gave them no names, dehumanizing them from the start. Dallas hadn't had a name for the first eight years of her life, during which she'd been raped, beaten, tormented and imprisoned. She had been an investment - nothing more. Roarke warns her that she might feel



some similarities in this case, and cautions her against it. He is right, she realizes. Abuse comes in many forms, and somewhere in Ilove's notes is where she will find Dolores and motive. Mira shows up, apologizing for her earlier behavior, realizing that the questions Dallas had been asking her were all part of the job. She reads through the file now, surprised and dismayed by what she is seeing. They both agree that the son must have at least known.



Chapters 7 and 8

Chapters 7 and 8 Summary

Dallas and Eve head out of the building and run into Channel 75's on air reporter, Nadine Furst. Dallas gives her a quick rundown including her suspicions that Icove knew his murderer. Back at Icove's office, Dallas and Peabody begin by interviewing Pia further. She claims she knows nothing of experimental projects. They go over his last appointment again and then Dallas and Peabody re-enact the incident. It isn't hard to confirm that Icove knew his killer. Icove Junior arrives and is angry with the approach their investigation is taking, but Dallas assures him that they are simply pursuing the truth. Dallas and Peabody head to the assistant prosecuting attorney, Cher Reo, to try to hurry along a warrant, but Cher insists they'll be lucky to get it at all. When she gets there, Summerset is waiting, and wants to talk to her about Icove Senior, having worked for him during the Urban Wars.

Dallas waits for the warrant, almost too impatiently to even eat, but Roarke reminds her that there is little she can do so she may as well eat dinner. She wants Roarke to chase the money trail for her, and give her the ammunition she needs to get in deeper. When Reo calls with the news that she has the warrant, she insists on joining Dallas at Icove's since her rump was in the same sling with her. Dallas gets there first and waits for Reo and Peabody. Peabody brings McNab along and as they are waiting for the door to open, Dallas invites them to their Thanksgiving dinner bash but they are already busy. At first, all they get is a recorded privacy message, but Dallas persists and shortly afterward the female house droid opens the door. She apologizes, telling them she had been deactivated. They go upstairs to Icove's office and as soon as Dallas sees Icove on the couch, she orders the room and the house sealed. Icove is full length on the couch with a scalpel sticking out of his chest. Reo faints, and Peabody tends to her while Dallas takes a close look around the scene of the crime, talks to the household droids, and checks the security system for record of entry and exits, and tampering. She finds two entire hours have been erased. Icove's wife is picked up and on her way home.

Chapters 7 and 8 Analysis

Nadine Furst, Channel 75's on air reporter, sees Dallas and Peabody leaving the building and begs them for five minutes and, using a box of brownies as a bribe, manages to slow Dallas down. Nadine asks about Icove's murder, what weapon was used, and whom they suspect. Dallas gives her the basics and also tells Nadine that 'off the record' she believes the good doctor isn't so good. At Icove's office, Pia tells them that Icove spent a great deal of time visiting patients - both his and others, read medical journals, wrote papers and was working on his sixth book. Icove Junior arrives and tells Dallas and Peabody that he's sent his wife and children to the Hamptons. He isn't happy with the direction of their investigation. Dallas and Peabody ask the assistant



prosecuting attorney, Cher Reo, to try harder to get the warrant for Ilove Junior's residence and then Dallas goes home. When she gets there, Summerset is waiting and tells Dallas he worked for Ilove during the Urban Wars and that Ilove demanded a lot because he gave a lot and as a result, he accomplished a lot. The losses were so horrendous that Ilove took to numbering his patients instead of learning them by name - a practice he continued until his murder.

While Dallas waits for a warrant, she and Roarke eat dinner, and Roarke talks to her about the coming Thanksgiving dinner with his family. His anxiety is obvious, and this surprises Dallas who has never seen her husband rattled. She tells him that he can always cancel, but Roarke is no coward. He listens as she outlines the case again, marveling at how her mind unravels the threads that make up the facts. They joke until Reo calls to announce she has the warrant and now both of their butts are in a sling together. They assemble out front of Ilove's residence and then together approach with the warrant. The droid finally answers, apologetic as she had been shut off. It takes no time at all for Dallas to discover Ilove's body, laid out in his study with a scalpel sticking out of his heart. Reo faints at first sight and when she regains consciousness, she apologizes to Dallas, knowing that the murder had occurred so recently that a quicker warrant would have caught the killer in the act. Dallas shuts down the scene and begins her investigation.



Chapters 9 and 10

Chapters 9 and 10 Summary

Dallas goes outside to keep an eye out for Mrs. Icové and to call Roarke. She gives him a rundown of what they found, and tells him she'll be late. She is still hoping he'll find the money angle that explains everything. Avril arrives, and Dallas steers her inside where she interviews her. When she is done, Avril is given an escort back to the Hamptons to her children, and Peabody gets into the car with Dallas who hands her the recorded interview and asks her to listen to it. Peabody does, and they discuss Avril's demeanor and responses. When they reach Dallas's house, she sends Peabody home in her car asking her to return at 7am. Dallas goes inside and straight to her office where Roarke joins her moments later. He pours himself a brandy and her a coffee, and they sit discussing the case together until he goes up to bed. Dallas stays a while longer, writing up case notes, and organizing her thoughts before joining him in bed.

Dallas is already on her second cup of coffee by the time Peabody shows up at seven. She goes over the details of Avril's childhood, putting together a personality assessment. She gets herself coffee while Dallas briefs her and tells her she wants to return to the Avril household. They go over the myriad of motives that might apply. Roarke joins them and tells Dallas that after his morning conference call, he did some digging and discovered almost two hundred million dollars over thirty-five years that can't be accounted for by way of normal income. Dallas asks him to find the five largest beneficiaries, and he tells her that the biggest by far is a private school called Brookhollow Academy. It is a good lead. They investigate the academy further, discovering tuition rates higher than anywhere else, and a direct connection to Avril. Nadine calls and tells Dallas that Wilson and Icové Senior worked together during the Urban War. Dallas and Peabody go back to Icové Jr.'s residence. Avril thinks about painting again and Deena tells her they have to finish what they have started. Avril knows, but still doesn't want Deena to go. She promises they'll be together soon and walks down the beach.

Chapters 9 and 10 Analysis

Dallas takes time out to call Roarke and update him, letting him know it will be a while before she is home. He asks if he can help, and she tells him that she needs him to find the money trail. Avril arrives, leaping out of the car anxiously and asking what is wrong. Dallas stops her, and tells her she has questions and needs Avril to come with her. Avril's voice goes up a notch with tension, and when Dallas tells her that Will is dead, tears begin and slide slowly down her face as she appears to try to come to grips with the information. Dallas confirms where she and the children were and from what time. After asking about Will's secret project but getting no information, Dallas sends Avril back to her children in the Hamptons. On the way back to her place, she plays the interview for Peabody who wonders the same thing she does.... Why didn't Avril ask



what happened to her husband, or want to see him? Somehow, Dallas believes she is involved. When she and Roarke talk, he wonders the same thing. He gets her a coffee, hoping it's the last for her day, and goes through the case with her again. Dallas is stuck on the tray that was taken up for Ilove with fruit and cheese. She says it is a wifely thing to do, and Roarke says he wouldn't know. Dallas takes the jibes and stands her ground. She wonders aloud if Ilove was fooling around. She works for a while after Roarke has gone to bed, and finally climbs in to sleep in his arms.

All Peabody can think of is coffee when she first gets to Dallas' house. Dallas considers Avril's past, thinking that her lack of family/relatives is weird. She wonders how much choice she had in her life. At first meeting, Dallas would have referred to Avril as elegant, even stunning, but she'd seen a single flash of steel in her eyes during her interview, and knows there is another side to the woman. She wants to re-canvas neighbors and domestics. She and Peabody consider the fact that Avril might have been romantically involved with Dolores. Roarke comes in and flirts with Peabody briefly, sending her out to get him a coffee while he tells Dallas about the money trail he's found. On the surface, Ilove was a generous man, but he gave away a good deal more than he reported for income. It is the break that Dallas has been looking for. The largest beneficiaries of his generosity were the Brookhollow Academy and the Brookhollow College. It is the institute where Avril went to school as well. They talk briefly about Thanksgiving again, discussing guests and then Dallas and Peabody investigate the academies of private education. Dallas eventually stumbles on the fact that Dolores' initials spell out DNA and wonder if it is her own private joke. Nadine calls with another clue, telling them that Ilove and the founder of the academy, Dr. Jonah D Wilson, also worked in the Urban Wars together, giving them another connection. Dallas asks her to keep digging, promising her the exclusive of the year in return. Deena wanders around the large beach house and takes Avril's hands - the woman she considers a sister, and asks her if she is frightened. She admits to a bit of fear, but exhilaration as well —even sadness, when she thinks of Ilove, knowing there truly was love of a kind there, however twisted it was. Deena dreams of having a house with a garden, birds, flowers, trees and a big dog, maybe even a man to love her - days of quiet without hiding, death, or war. They talk about Dallas and how they will have to be careful around such an intelligent woman, realizing that under other circumstances, they would have likely enjoyed each others company. Deena leaves, as is their plan, walking away down the beach while Avril stays with her children. Her daughter comes in, tearful and missing her father and Avril agrees, in a strange way missing him herself.



Chapters 11 and 12

Chapters 11 and 12 Summary

Back at the Ilove residence, Dallas and Peabody go over the crime again. The tray of fruit and cheese untouched in the office still bothers Dallas. She is convinced that only the killer would have brought it up, and must have cared for Ilove to some degree to have done so. Dallas notices that the bathroom seems small for the house and discovers an old panic room. Since Roarke is closer than EDD, she calls him in to help her find the entry point. While they wait, Dallas confirms Avril's alibi. She calls Morris and learns that Ilove had a mild sedative and a blocker in his system when he died, making him groggy, but not unconscious. Roarke arrives and quickly finds the release for the panic room door opening up a high security office containing inner and outer surveillance and Dallas is convinced that Avril would have known about it. Chief Tech Dick Berenski tells her he found two natural blond hairs, and that the fruit platter wasn't drugged and the tray had no prints. Returning to Central, she has Peabody read through the background information from Nadine, and sends another squad member, Baxter, to the Ilove Center to pose as a potential client. Lunch with Feeney reveals another curiosity. Ilove regularly booked free time for eleven months on Monday and Thursday evenings and on Wednesday afternoons for which they can find no activity or meetings. Next, Dallas updates Whitney and then Mira who agrees that Ilove may have been seduced by the idea of gene manipulation to create perfection.

Baxter returns convinced that Ilove Center is a racket having booked a five-hundred dollar electro-imaging analysis. He tells her about the rest of the consultation, adding that the entire staff appear to be in mourning. Peabody capsulizes the information given to them by Nadine and the only real new information is that Ilove Senior's wife had been pregnant when she was killed. Dallas tells Peabody to get Louise to join them that night for makeovers, and then calls Roarke and leaves a message, asking if he is interested in an underhanded assignment. At home, she is faced with a gang of women, all thrilled with the prospect of a makeover, and discussing things like shoes to such a degree that Dallas is amazed. Next the conversation turns to the pregnancy and how Mavis is feeling. As the others head for the pool house, Dallas pulls Nadine and Louise to one side. Louise agrees quickly and says she will set things up with Roarke. Then she sets Nadine up to interview Avril in the hopes that she can get more information as to her suspicions regarding gene manipulation. Finally, unable to put it off any longer, Dallas submits to a facial. Trina works on her and it dawns on Dallas that she'd neglected a valuable source of information. She asks Trina about Avril, learning that she has had face and breast work done.

Chapters 11 and 12 Analysis

Dallas and Peabody return to the Ilove residence where Dallas discovers an old panic room entered into from the office bathroom. Roarke helps her with access to the



converted high security room, with inner and outer surveillance of the entire house. They talk more about Thanksgiving dinner, and he tells her that Mavis and Leonardo are coming and she mentions that Nadine and a date are also in. Mavis has also sent word through Roarke to Peabody that she and Trina are excited and would meet that evening at Dallas's. Dallas pales and whirls on Peabody while Roarke tells her to be brave. Dallas isn't amused. Trina is the one person who makes Dallas nervous. Roarke holds Dallas back while Peabody makes her escape. The rest of the day is spent digging, trying not to think about the coming evening.

Baxter returns, claiming Ilove Center has found enough of him that needs fixing that the bill would be in the neighborhood of twenty thousand dollars. He laughs, and admits to having scheduled an expensive analysis. From Nadine's research, they learn that Ilove Senior's wife was expecting when she was killed. Before heading home, Dallas has a brainstorm. She knows how she will elicit more information, using Roarke, Louise and Nadine to help. She lays out her plan for Louise who is easy to convince, and Nadine, when told the entirety of Dallas's suspicions, knows the sky will be the limit when she is able to publish her story. Finally, she submits to the obligatory facial, avoiding hair coloring or extensions.



Chapters 13 and 14

Chapters 13 and 14 Summary

When everyone is gone, Dallas searches for records of any consultations that Avril might have done before having the surgery. She finds nothing, which is a surprise. She has the computer search for any photos from the registry of Brookhollow, hoping for comparison photos. She adds the command to compare photos found with the security image on file for Dolores. Then she allows Roarke to fully distract her and he is surprised to find three sparkling hearts pointing the way. When they are finished, the computer also beeps, completing its tasks. Only one match is found - Deena Flavia. She searches for and finds Deena's parents in Rome, and finds another connection to Icove who served on the advisory board of the Children's Institute in Rome as did Jonah Delecourt. Another match is shown of a young girl identified as Diana Rodriguez, born March 17th , 2047. Her parents, Hector Rodriguez and Magdalene Cruz are also associated with both Icove Senior and Junior, and Jonah Wilson. There is no mistaking that the child came from Deena. She asks the computer for a more advanced search before allowing Roarke to take her to bed. In the morning, she learns the computer has found fifty six matches. She is stunned by the sheer number of visual matches, thinking something is wrong. An hour later, they come to the sickening conclusion that the matches are all clones of Deena and sold into marriage or into the marketplace as a licensed companion. She picks up Peabody on the way to Central and fills her in. Then, together, they go to Whitney who asks many questions and then tells her to assemble a team for briefing and to keep a lid on all of it for now.

Deena has been groomed for covert ops. She arrives at the Academy, dressed in black and ready to complete the next step of her only mission in life. She has altered her appearance, knowing that if she is discovered, she will never be allowed to leave again. Ms. Samuels greets her at the door but without recognition. She gives her the grand tour, and Deena tries to behave like the interested parent they believe her to be, posing as Mrs. Frost. Deena sees the girls, and has a momentary tremor of recognition and memory. Then she sees herself as a child come into the room and introduce herself. Deena forces herself to look into the younger eyes that are her own and behave normally. As soon as the opportunity presents itself in Samuel's office, Deena leans in close and plunges the scalpel into her heart. She leaves - after taking what cash she found and more importantly, every disc from the vault, walking out to where her driver waits.

Roarke manages to use his money and influence to wrangle a meeting with the acting Icove Center's CEO. On the way, he tells Louise what she can expect when they get there. They are given five minutes with the acting CEO, Avril Icove, but she admits to knowing nothing of the business beyond being a figurehead, and passes them off to Carla, who also graduated from Brookhollow College. Dallas conducts her briefing, shocking most at the table. While Peabody loads the photos, Dallas lays out the murder, the murderer and the circumstances that likely drove her to it. The Chief Legal Counsel



for the NYPD wants to see everything before making a decision on a case that is bottled lightning.

Chapters 13 and 14 Analysis

Once everyone is gone, Dallas goes upstairs where she corners Roarke, calling him a coward for walking out just as their role in the upcoming birth of Mavis' child was discussed. He agrees, but tells her it didn't help since Mavis had tracked him down, giving him the schedule for the instruction they have to take in order to be participants in the birth. When he adds that there are videos and simulations, Dallas cringes. When the computer uncovers evidence that the Ilove's were cloning women for later sale or service, Dallas is sickened. Fifty-six matches so far, related only to Deena. The numbers are staggering and the ramifications include two deaths and a deep dark secret of political, moral and religious impropriety. Dallas is given permission to assemble a team while a warrant for the school is arranged. Whitney is concerned about leaks, but Dallas assures him there will be none.

Deena is good at altering her appearance. She returns to the Academy, fearful, but her face is serene as she introduces herself to Ms. Samuels but she is not recognized. Evelyn Samuels takes her to her quarters, believing they are going for tea, but Deena has another agenda. On the way, she is introduced to one of the children, recognizing her as her daughter. Looking into Diana's eyes, she feels like she is looking into her own and makes a quick promise to herself to get her out of the Academy. Not wanting to risk further exposure, she comments on Evelyn's necklace, admiring it and moving to look at it more closely. In her other hand, a scalpel waits and without hesitation, she plunges it into Evelyn's heart. She looks at Deena, surprise on her face, and Deena expresses her own surprise that she wasn't recognized. Then she explains how she feels about the obscenity they are perpetuating and tells her it has to stop as Evelyn dies in front of her. She leaves after clearing out every disc, getting into the car where her driver still waits. Avril is surprised that she has returned so quickly. Roarke manages to get a meeting at Ilove Center, and on the way there briefs Louise. They talk about cloning and the ways in which it is already being used legally. Louise expresses her opinion that a person evolves into who they are as a result of their experiences, and that cloning a person is simply against everything she believes in. Roarke has to agree, telling her how meeting Dallas changed his life as did his meeting Louise and Charles. They meet briefly with Avril Ilove, acting CEO, who admits to being a figurehead and hands them off to another graduate of Brookhollow, Carla. Meanwhile, Dallas and Peabody conduct a full briefing, complete with photos of the clones, and Dallas is cautioned to proceed with all care because of who is involved.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Roarke follows Carla Poole around the facility, noting where surveillance cameras are, and what kind of security is in place. Louise is properly impressed by the sheer volume of equipment and personnel, as well as the space and how it is used. The walls are fashioned like a sunburst, and each arm is color coded. The researchers in each arm wear matching lab coats, ensuring that cross contamination is impossible, as is going from arm to arm invisibly. Roarke tunes out the monologue being conducted by Carla to Louise, and while managing to look interested, he cases the facility. Dallas finishes her briefing with the fifty-six perfect matches. She tells them that fifty-three percent of the graduates of the College are married or cohabitating; thirty-eight percent of graduates work in one capacity or another at an Ilove facility and the rest have simply vanished. Her briefing gets her the warrant she wants, and a quick call to Roarke is enough to get her some fast transportation. He promises to have a jet-copter on their helipad in thirty minutes. Dallas gets a basic rundown on cloning so that she knows what to look for and Roarke arrives with Louise in a black jet-copter. They all climb in and Roarke lifts off, warning them that the weather will make for a rough ride. On the way, Dallas is briefed on their meeting and the extensive security measures that are in place. She realizes that there is every chance that the expecting girls could and would have been housed somewhere in the facility. The warrant comes through en-route and Reo has enough time to print out a copy before they arrive. Close to landing, Dallas sees three police units and an ME van out front. She quickly gets information on who the Sheriff is, and getting out she asks for him by name, taking the approaching officer off guard for a split second. Sheriff Hyer meets her on the grounds and tells her that the school president was found dead. He is somewhat surprised when she not only knows the woman's name, but can cite how she died. She introduces her team briefly, and asks that she and Peabody be taken to see the body. He agrees, hoping for some mutual cooperation, and Dallas promises to give him everything she can. Hyer tells Dallas about the meeting Evelyn Samuels had with Desiree Frost and Dallas assures him that the name will be a phony. They get up to Samuels' office and Hyer introduces their ME, Dr. Richards and his two forensics men, and Dallas gets to work.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Roarke does a great job of pretending to be interested in the conversation while actually paying no attention whatsoever. Instead, he scans the facility for signs of security and takes mental notes as to where each camera is placed, and their security protocols. He knows that Louise will handle obtaining the other information. Dallas finishes her briefing, managing to convince those with power that a warrant is the next step. ADA Cher Reo insists on accompanying them, as does Louise when she shows up riding shotgun with Roarke in the jet-copter. Mira also asks if she can join in, feeling the need to see the case through, despite her personal involvement. Dallas gives her a last



minute chance to back out, knowing how hard it will be for her, but she is adamant. On the way, Roarke gives Dallas the low down on their meeting, taking her mind off of the rough weather they are having en route. Though the security is incredibly involved and in some cases even overkill, it is exactly what would be necessary to isolate some groups from others. Dallas is intrigued by the layout described by Louise as a sunburst with all arms independent and reporting only to the central hub. It is inefficient in Louise's opinion, but Dallas considers how the police lab functioned - many stations feeding a single sector. They arrive, discovering police and an ME's wagon already on the scene. Roarke enjoys watching his wife work as she flexes her authority and warrant. In no time, she is inside and getting ready to get to work. The school has the same effect on her that all schools do, making her extremely uncomfortable. It is as quiet as a tomb, and Hyer informs her that the children have all been moved to another building. They get to Samuels' office and Dallas gets to work.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Dallas tells the Sheriff that they believe the killer attended the Academy, and killed the Icoves as well. He wants more information, but Dallas tells him she is under Code Blue and he stops pestering for reciprocal information. Dallas promises more reciprocal information as soon as she is authorized to give it to him. Peabody helps Hyer with the identification match, and confirms it is the same woman. She had spent eleven minutes inside, where no security cameras exist, coming out with a handbag heavier than when she went in. Dallas concludes that the discs they were hoping to find have already been taken. She takes Roarke upstairs, and he has little trouble finding the secure wall vault in Evelyn's office. It is a specialized unit and Roarke requires time to crack it, so Dallas goes down to begin the process of statements and interviews.

She begins by interviewing Diana Rodriguez privately. Composed and intelligent, when Dallas asks her if she wants to leave Brookhollow, Diana falters, finally responding that her mother will make that decision when the time is right. When pressed, she simply tells Dallas that no one will believe either of them. Dallas promises that she can help, and Diana says she believes her, but can't help her. Then she asks to be excused, telling Dallas she doesn't know where she began. Dallas asks for the Vice President next - Ms. Sisler or Ms. Montega. Dallas answers her phone and learns that enough forensics have been found to put Avril in the drivers seat of the car. The investigation heats up and Feeney asks her to have Reo arrange a warrant while he heads out to pick Avril up.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Dallas asks Sheriff Hyer how many times he's been called out to the Academy because of problems and he has to admit that this is the first time. In all his time as Sheriff, he's never been called out because a town boy climbed the wall; or because a homesick kid ran away. There have been no thefts or vandalism either. In fact, the only times the Sheriff has been anywhere near the Academy was as a result of his wife dragging him to a play. Dallas isn't able to share much with Hyer, which frustrates him, but when Dallas tells him that they have been given a Code Blue designation, he backs off. She does tell him that she is sure the Academy was not acting entirely legally. Peabody confirms that the woman on their video surveillance is the same woman they know as Deena, although some minor changes were made. The footage reveals that Deena was in the office for eleven minutes. It stands to reason that she knew what she wanted and how to get it long before she arrived. Her handbag appears heavier leaving, and Dallas asks Roarke to find the vault she knows is in Evelyn's office somewhere. It takes him little time to find it, and only fractionally more to get it open. Unfortunately, it is empty.



Diana Rodriguez comes down the stairs on the video and Dallas can't help but compare the poised and confident young woman to who she was at that age. Dallas and Mira argue over her continued involvement as it becomes increasingly clear that her loyalties lie with the children, and she seems unable to maintain objectivity. Mira argues insisting that Dallas can't interview children without her present as a licensed counselor. They argue heatedly and briefly before Dallas takes a breath and calms down. She has to separate herself from the present, but they continually overlap. Diana Rodriguez is brought in and Dallas questions her, quickly discovering that the young girl is extremely intelligent. When Dallas says so, Diana admits to an IQ of almost 190. They banter back and forth before Dallas tries to throw her a lifeline, telling her she can get her out of the school, but Diana only wants to return to the other girls. She doesn't remember any of the first five years of her life, she tells Dallas as she's leaving. After she leaves, Dallas talks to Feeney and is surprised to find the driver identified as Avril Ilove, The interview will be interesting.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

Avril does a one on one interview with Nadine Furst and as a result, Dallas will not be able to get an arrest warrant. Dallas knows it's time to bring Avril in. She approaches the Ilove home after dinner and again deals with a do not disturb flag. Again she insists on compliance and the household droid grants entrance. Avril comes down and Dallas informs her that she wants her to come in for questioning. She gives instructions to the household droids, calls someone to come over and be with her children and asks Dallas to wait for just one hour. At that time she will be wholly forthcoming. Dallas talks to Roarke who has discovered that the Academy is laundering money out to non profits. The security goes to green and Avril Ilove and Avril Ilove enter. A third Avril Ilove is brought downstairs by Peabody and the three versions of the woman sit down together, holding hands and speaking in unison. Wanting to keep the entire issue under control, Dallas calls Roarke and asks him to supply a contained interview room. When they arrive, they are taken to the level three meeting room. Dallas has the women sit under Peabody's watchful eye, and retreats to ask Roarke how equipped the room is. The women provide prints and DNA which all comes back to Avril Ilove. Dallas interviews them, and learns that there were two more Avril's as well. One died at the age of six months and the other was terminated at five years of age because she wasn't strong enough or didn't develop quickly enough. Then they explain the reason for their recent behavior. When their children were born naturally to them, they asked only that their children not be involved in any cloning activities whatsoever. Both Will and his father promise not to involve the children. They kept their promise until eleven months ago and then took cells from the children. Adding the fact that they are pregnant again - three weeks since conception - they couldn't take the chance. They have to do whatever it takes to ensure that their children are kept safe and that this stops.

Chapter 17 Analysis

It chafes at Dallas to have to wait for the time it takes to requisition, receive and orchestrate the logistics required for a team of droids to search while Feeney watches over them and time for Reo to convince those holding the reins to issue a warrant. The best she can get is permission to bring Avril in for questioning but not under arrest. Nadine Furst has already had Avril in for the first of a three part series.

Peabody, having tried to track down the transportation used by Deena and her driver, manages to eliminate all but three flights - one to Chicago, one to Italy and one to Argentina. As soon as she says it, Dallas knows where she needs to focus her attention. She calls Whitney and tells him that she believes Deena is on her way to the couple listed as Diana Rodriguez's parents. It is after eight that evening before Dallas finally makes it to the Ilove residence to bring Avril in for questioning. Once again, the automated system tries to fend her off, but persistence opens the door and the



household droid ushers them in. After some initial resistance, Avril agrees to go along with them, but asks that they allow her an hour to wait for someone to come to see to her children. Dallas agrees, using the time to call Roarke while Peabody takes Avril upstairs to clean up and check on the children before leaving.

Roarke has good news, telling Dallas that he found evidence that the Academy was being used to launder money. Feeney hasn't turned up much, but plans to continue looking and in the meantime, the Avril residence is graced with two more people - both of them Avril as well. Identical in every way, the Avril women not only look alike, but speak in concert with each other, finishing each others' sentences, and even moving in exact synchronicity with each other. The third Avril is brought back downstairs by Peabody, and is visibly relieved to see her other selves have arrived. Dallas tries to discern which of the women actually lived with Will, but they all claim to have. Dallas wonders if they are telepathic as well.

To avoid mass media attention, Dallas decides to avoid Central and take the women to her home for questioning instead. Roarke helps her to set up a suitable place before they arrive. Then, once settled, she has their fingerprints and DNA tested, all coming back to a match for Avril Ilove. As promised, the Avrils are forthcoming and honest, answering all of Dallas's questions. They tell Dallas how the Iloves began experimenting, and how they eliminated any children who didn't measure up. Dallas is horrified and feels a certain comradeship with the Avrils. When they explain that their actions were brought about by Ilove Junior and Senior's broken promise, Dallas no longer believes any of the three should be charged and are victims. The Avrils tell Dallas about the promise they elicited from the Iloves that they would not clone or manipulate the genes of their naturally born children, and how that broken promise was the catalyst to the murders that followed.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

The Avrils continue to tell their side of the story, speaking separately now, but with one picking up where the other left off. They planted the scalpel for Deena. Dallas asks which one of them actually killed Ilove Jr., but they claim to be 'one'. They are the same. Dallas asks about the Academy's second generation, but Will Junior asked his father that the Avrils not be included in it, so they weren't. Dallas wants to know where Deena is, and the Avrils know. Aware that time is short, Dallas interviews most of the night and finally takes the Avrils back to their house with monitoring bracelets. They are confined to their home for now.

Dallas drives Peabody home, and after dropping her off, calls Nadine and tells her to come to the club right away but with only notepad and pencil - no electronics of any kind. The bouncer, Crack, gives her a private room in which to conduct business. Of course, she tells him, you never saw me. Not long after, Crack ushers Nadine in. Nadine goes through two notebooks before they are done and Dallas finally goes home. Summerset is waiting and is almost as well informed as Dallas is where the Academy is concerned, and manages to convey his opinion that Deena and Avril were doing a public service and should be let off. Overly weary, she makes her way to the bedroom. When she wakes, it is late in the morning, and Roarke has coffee and breakfast ready. He reminds her that his family will begin to arrive that afternoon.

She goes into the office and meets with Feeney first who gives her the rundown of the Academy and its records, learning that they had operated on children as young as eight to correct what they deemed to be imperfections. Other than Deena, more than a dozen had run from their Placements until Samuels had implanted all of their students with an internal homer - an addition she did of her own volition and shared with no one having determined that the Iloves were too involved with one in their own family. She updates Whitney next, and they briefly touch on the legalities involved with the children at the Academy and their 'parents'. She also warns him that Nadine is hot on the trail and is already well informed, likely to break the story over the holiday weekend. He finally tells her to go and enjoy the holiday herself.

Chapter 18 Analysis

The Avrils explain how they found the records of their children and how at first they wanted only to run and hide, but in order to learn what they needed to, they had to have more control which could only occur if Ilove Senior and Junior were dead. Dallas asks about Evelyn Samuels and why she had been killed and learns that she was also a replicate. She had even helped to terminate the Avrils and Deenas that did not measure up to their standards. Hundreds of children are given no choice, trained daily for as much as twenty-two years before they are ready for Placement. From the start, one



lived with Icove Junior, one lived in a French chateau and the third lived in the Tuscan countryside in Italy. Every year, they would rotate so that every three years each one would have a normal year with the children. They confirm that some of the children were sold, although it was termed Placement. They offer to allow Dallas to select one of them as a sacrifice to pay for the murder of the Icoves, but Dallas doesn't want to do that.

Reo makes it clear that it is unlikely they will even consider filing charges with an issue as volatile as this one. She tells them that somehow they have to get a message to Deena to stop now. Any more killing now would not help their cause, and Dallas wants to help. Dallas tells Peabody not to delay her Thanksgiving dinner with her parents. After dropping her off, she calls Nadine and asks her to meet her at the strip club, despite the late hour. The first thing she does when the door is locked behind her is ask her to empty her bags, not willing to take the chance. Then she outlines her conditions. No one is to know they spoke and Nadine is to erase the logs of her call. She is to make it appear as though she came across the information on her own. Two notebooks filled with notes later, Dallas finally goes home where Summerset immediately corners her. Weary beyond words, she goes upstairs to where Roarke has left a small light on for her. That simple kindness pushes her over the edge, and tears begin on their own. She crawls into bed and into his arms where she finds the only comfort she has ever really known.

The next morning, she heads in to work after almost fighting with Roarke over breakfast. Though patient most of the time, he would not stand by and watch while she ran herself into the ground over this case. Feeney gives her an Academy update, and tells her that they had already seeded graduates in government positions in advance of having laws changed and bans removed. Calling the birth method 'Quiet Birth', they advocate taking the guesswork, pain and discomfort from child birth by replacing it with the made to order version of creation. Their project foreshadowed enforced sterilization which would also allow them to regulate who could and who could not have children. The possibilities are endless. Choose a made to order mate; create an extra set of hands (or two) to help with the work load; watch yourself grow up..... the permutations are endless. Whitney is her next stop, and she tells him everything she's learned, including that Nadine is getting close to breaking the story. He knows that she likely fed Nadine, and comments that anyone who would do anything of that sort would certainly be intelligent enough to cover their tracks. She tells him she wouldn't know. With the prospect of having the story break the next day, he sends her home for Thanksgiving.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Traffic is snarled as all New Yorkers make their way home for the holiday. A small fender bender escalates until Dallas intervenes, getting a purse in the head for her troubles. She stops in on the Icovs on the way home, hoping to discover Deena's location, but is unsuccessful. When she finally gets home, there are children in the yard and one runs alongside her car to the house. Sean is friendly and talkative, knocking Dallas off her game temporarily. It doesn't get easier. There are more children of all ages inside and their assorted adults as well. Roarke moves easily among them, and asks only that Dallas try, apologizing for the Roarke family invasion again. Later, he takes them on a city tour and to go ice skating afterward while she returns to her office. She begins looking for the incubation sectors, believing they are most likely being hidden at Ilove Center where both Ilove Senior and Junior would have easy access. Bringing up plans, she eliminates public areas, and begins looking at labs one at a time. Sinead is suddenly behind her, having lost her way as she tried to return to the library. They talk briefly about the familial invasion, and Sinead worries that there are too many of them for Dallas to handle, but Dallas assures her that her husband's happiness is her prime concern. She asks Sinead about the past, and if she could have found Roarke as a child what she would have done. The question is enough to get her brain going in another direction and suddenly she realizes the truth in something Diana had said to her. Diana told her that she would wait for her mother to tell her what to do and where to go. She calls the Academy and asks for a location on Diana, but it is already too late. Deena has already come for her daughter.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Dallas is on her way home when she witnesses a small fender bender and she makes her way to them, but the woman involved is beyond listening and convinced that she is being set up for robbery. A tourist in the big city, she is prepared for the worst, and begins yelling for police. Before Dallas can get her to be quiet long enough to identify herself, the woman swings her heavy purse and clips Dallas across the side of the head, making her see stars. She checks on the Ilove residence before going home to an Irish zoo. Children are everywhere, and Dallas is rattled by the sheer numbers of family members already there. She is also not used to the overly friendly, hugging, kissing kind of family greetings that Roarke's family obviously favors. Sinead, the only relative whom Dallas knows, takes her under her wing and wanders throughout the room introducing her to the rest of the relatives. Sinead, Roarke's Aunt, introduces her to her mother, Alise Brody, who insists that Dallas call her Granny and give her a kiss on the cheek. What is most surprising however, is the look on Roarke's face. He isn't horrified, or anxious, or uncomfortable at all. In fact, he looks happy, and is stunned by their acceptance and affection without cost or expectation. Later, when he is playing tour guide with a large portion of the group, Sinead finds Dallas in her office working



and asks her honestly if she would prefer it if they all went back to Clare. Dallas assures her that isn't the case, and that she loves seeing her husband so happy. Sinead is brought to tears as she thinks about how proud her sister Siobhan would have been to see her boy now. She would give anything to show her. Dallas asks her hypothetically, if she'd known where to find Roarke as a boy, what she would have done. She tells him she would have moved mountains to get him back. At that moment, the truth hits Dallas in the face. She realizes that Diana wasn't waiting for the family named on her paperwork to come and claim her. She was waiting for her real mother - Deena. She quickly calls the Academy using her link and asks the lead officer to check on the whereabouts of Diana Rodriguez. Sinead looks on as Dallas dresses Officer Otts down to the quick while a full search is begun for Diana.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

Dallas can't believe that she didn't see Diana as being the key earlier. Furious, she talks it through with Roarke who looks up Diana's records. Imprinted to succeed, it is unlikely that Diana will stop until she accomplishes the mission she is on. Feeney arrives and Dallas allows them twenty minutes before going in. The signal showed her as being at Ilove Center. She tells Roarke to gear up and he needs no further instruction. In minutes, they are both ready to go. When they get to the Center, alarms are going off. A sulphur cube emits a stench that Dallas and Roarke know will be with them for some time. Roarke uses a device to help them get through secure areas as they follow the trail of Diana and Deena. Deena had already bypassed the retinal scanner, and Roarke is impressed with her choices. Security spiders come after them first and they manage to defend themselves. Next they are confronted by another security force. Identical young men, faces set in stone, advance until Dallas and Roarke are left with no choice but to defend. Diana and Deena can hear the commotion behind them. Deena goes through the doors marked Gestation, and sees Jonah Delecourt Wilson at about the age of thirty. He holds a stun gun to a sleeping baby's throat and on the floor is a younger version of Wilfred Ilove. He explains that they have to leave. Deena asks him to give the baby to Diana and let them leave. In return, she'd cooperate. Jonah isn't impressed, telling her that she is just as flawed as his former partner. He isn't pleased that she cost him two decades of progress and now he will be forced to start again. Still, he has all the records he needs, the funds and the time. As Diana raises her hands, she uses a laser scalpel on the Jonah holding the toddler, who screams as he goes down. Wilson returns her fire as she pushes Diana to the ground and out of harm's way. She shoves the toddler into Diana's arms and tells her that she has to go after Wilson and the baby. She pulls Diana into her arms, kisses them both, and runs after Wilson while Diana, with laser in hand, struggles with the weight of the toddler and heads back.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Angry with herself for not having thought of it sooner, Dallas waits for Feeney to arrive so that they can track her homing device. Diana was trained to be a spook, use infiltration techniques and complete covert ops. What they didn't count on was her reaction when she recognized her mother. Dallas realizes that she was the one who started the clock by involving Nadine. Diana knew that Deena was going to come for her and she was ready to go when she did. Freedom was a remarkable feeling. They went to Avril's in New York City. Diana had heard Deena and Avril as they argued about what still had to be done. Deena finally told Avril what she was planning while Diana listened and remembered. When Deena leaves, Diana follows quietly behind her, fearless. Deena isn't thrilled to see her. Deena hasn't got the time to take her back and return, and Diana knows it. She has no choice but to continue. Diana is of the same mindset. There is nothing more important than ending this once and for all. When Dallas and



Roarke arrive, they find pandemonium. A sulphur bomb, harmless but stinky, was thrown in a garbage can and Dallas knows right away that Deena is responsible. They push past the panicking people, and continue to follow Diana's homing beacon. Dallas also realizes that Diana must be with Deena since as it is unlikely that she would have done this on her own. Roarke gets them through the various levels of security as they go along, and is ever more impressed with how Deena is managing. In fact, he's so impressed that he considers offering her employment. They have lost Feeney's signal, but keep moving, knowing they are on the right path as they discover the remains of security spiders. More insects attack, but they manage to persevere. When more than a dozen young men attack, they continue to defend themselves. Dallas doesn't think about anything other than survival. Roarke finally uses a miniboomer to clear the hall, and they are both cut, bruised and battered, but alive. She can see now that the boys were all human - all alive, and it eats at her, but Roarke reminds her that they were bred for war. They were given no choice. Diana and Deena move forward, listening to the war behind them. They find the door marked Gestation and go in. Jonah Wilson, long dead, stands in the lab holding a sleeping baby. He is young, no more than thirty, and is not alone. He tells her that they need to leave - that he has to start over. Another young Wilson steps into view, and Diana kills him with the laser scalpel she has secreted. The first Jonah disappears with the infant in the meantime. Determined to finish things, Deena shoves the toddler at Diana and tells her to take her to safety. She will finish this - she has to.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

Dallas and Roarke keep moving. They blast their way through the locks on 'Experimental Studies' and what they see is disturbing, but there is no life in there now. Roarke is unable to turn off the yellow alert, and they realize that someone other than Deena must have set it. They go back out into the tunnel to find Diana standing with the scalpel in her hand and young Darby in her arms. Dallas asks where Deena is and she tells them, telling Dallas that Darby seems drugged and is unable to run. Roarke offers to take her and then follows Diana to the Gestation area where she last saw Deena. Containers are everywhere, filled with fetuses in varying stages of development. She turns and asks Roarke to take the children to safety while she continues. At first, he refuses, but then he realizes she is right. She continues after Deena through another lab. She manages to kill one man and injure another, realizing he is Dr. Wilson. She asks where Deena is and he grins, asking her which one. She knocks him out and follows the sound of Deena's voice into the Stage One Nursery. The sight of Stages Two and Three nearby curdles her stomach.

Roarke is almost out with Diana. She understands his anxiety and tells him they are close enough now that she can get them out and he can return to help Dallas. He gives her his keys and tells her to hide in his car, making her promise she will do so. He also gives her his earpiece and tells her to let the man on the other end know where they are when she gets outside. Giving her a stunner as well, he tells her not to use it unless she has to.

Dallas can see Deena in the next lab with her hands in the air, begging that the baby be given to her. Wilson argues with her, telling her she was street garbage before they perfected her. Dallas announces herself, and tells him to give up, but he fires at her, using the infant as a shield. A movement draws her attention and she is surprised to see Roarke. Wilson tosses the baby in the air and initiates fail-safe. Deena leaps up to catch the baby and is hit just as she catches the infant. Together they manage to take Wilson down, but the computerized warning is droning in their ears.

Dallas goes to Deena who begs them to just take the children and get out. She knows she is done. She asks Dallas to give Diana and Darby to Avril and begs her to let them go, giving her a deathbed confession on the spot. Then she pushes the infant at them, begging them to leave. The computer voice announces eight minutes to self destruct. She tells them not to bother with Gestation because any attempt to unhook them will cause their deaths. Deena begs them to save the rest. Roarke tells Dallas that the nurseries are clear, and the response teams are taking them upstairs. Dallas asks him if there is any way to save the others, but he had already tried, and found the oxygen to be integral. They can't be saved. The electronic voice announces four minutes. They run with the baby, both bleeding, white with pain. The security card is so smeared with blood that the first couple of times he tries, it won't read. He finally gets them in as the voice



announces three minutes. The elevator seems to move at a snails' pace as the voice drones thirty seconds. With seven seconds to spare, the doors open. A vibration and rumble under her feet signals the end of all that remained.

Dallas gets into her coat and tells Roarke that she might be a while, explanations and reports necessary. He tells her he will be outside, and heads to his car where as promised, Diana and Darby are waiting. She already knows Deena is dead, and Roarke tells her that she died saving her sister. Diana takes her into her arms and asks if all the Wilsons are dead. He tells her that they are and the facility is gone. She asks what will become of them, and he tells her that he promised to take them to Avril but Diana panics, telling Roarke that she will run again now if they discover her location. They need time to get organized, she explains. Knowing the truth of that statement, and seeing the maturity in the eyes of the young girl, he asks her if she can make it there on her own with the children. She tells him she can, and he lets her go, knowing it will be the best for all concerned. He watches until they are out of sight.

It takes almost two hours for Dallas to finish and then Louise tends to her before they head home. When Louise pulls out, she asks Roarke where the children are, and he shrugs, unable to tell her. Dallas had already called Feeney and asked that the trackers be shut down. Since there are no records, it appears they will be safe. Telling Dallas they have a lot to be thankful for, she takes his hand and squeezes it hard. Then she gets in the car beside him, watching dawn break over the city.

Chapter 21 Analysis

Dallas and Roarke know they should split up, but the risks are too great. They get into 'Experimental Studies' and someone had already turned off the life support in that lab. Roarke realizes that a yellow alert is in progress and worries that it is a prelude to a red alert or self destruct. Knowing time is short, they go back out into the hall to find Diana with the toddler in her arms and the scalpel, ready to use. Though defensive at first, when Dallas explains that they've come to get her out of there, she relaxes a little, telling them that she thinks Darby has been drugged as the toddler is unable to run. Roarke offers to take her and she passes her to him, letting him know if he hurts her she will kill him. Roarke tells her that is acceptable, and they follow her back to the Gestation lab where Dallas gets her second shock. The room is a warren of chambers in which there are stacked and interlocked chambers containing fetuses in varying stages. A tube replicating the umbilical cord is attached to a mass she can only presume is the artificial placenta. Movement in the tanks rattles her.

She asks Roarke to take the children to the surface, which he reluctantly does when she explains there is no choice. She follows Deena through another door and finds herself in the Nurseries. Stages one through three hold different stages of development and ages. Roarke gets Diana and Darby almost to the surface, then arms her and gives her his keys before heading back down to help Dallas. Dallas is surprised to see him, but can use the help. Together, they finally manage to eliminate Wilson, but Deena is hit in the process of saving the baby he held in his arms.



She knows she is done, and gives Dallas a deathbed confession for all of the murders. She begs them to let Avril and the children go. Dallas assures her that they will, and she dies there on the floor, in the same room as she was once born. They rescue as many children as possible, barely making it to the surface in time before the lower levels explode. It takes more than two hours to get through the police business before Dallas returns to Roarke who had called and been treated by Louise already. Louise looks after Dallas next, and then recommends bed rest for both. When she leaves, Dallas asks Roarke about the children, and he tells her that they are gone. Dallas had Feeney turn the trackers off already, so they were truly as safe as could be. Filled with love for each other, and the peace that follows the adrenaline of a near death experience, they get into the car and head for home where a family full of Irish await Thanksgiving with them. Today, they both feel as though they have a lot to celebrate.



Characters

Lieutenant Eve Dallas

Eve Dallas is a Lieutenant in the New York City Police Department who works in the Homicide Division. Eve has long legs that are at the bottom of a long body. She wears her brown hair in a careless and choppy manner framing a lean face with large brown, brandy colored eyes. She is a tough, no nonsense kind of detective who works homicide seeing every case as her personal mission to solve. Eve is fearless, dedicated, and until she met her husband, a distinct loner who liked her life the way it was. Coming from a troubled and abusive past during which Eve was forced to kill her abuser (and father), she is a loner. She grew up without family ties, and is uncomfortable around large gatherings excepting when it involves work and she is in a position of power over the situation. Eve is plagued by nightmares from her past that surface whenever she manages to doze off - even for a short time. They increase in severity and strength whenever her husband is away on business, and she deals with them by either staying awake, sleeping in his office chair, wearing his shirt to have the smell of him near, or any combination of the aforementioned band-aids.

Eve is married to Roarke who has interest in or owns a piece of just about every area of art, business, development and entertainment on the planet. In his efforts to convince her to live with him, he recreates her entire apartment inside his own home so that there would always be somewhere she would feel comfortable. He loves her unconditionally, knowing who she is and what her past was. She reciprocates on both counts. Eve wears a diamond as big as a baby's fist around her neck - a gift from Roarke, which she tucks under her shirt and has finally gotten used to the weight of.

At work, Eve is well respected and trusted. She answers to Commander Whitney, and prefers to give her oral statements standing up.

Roarke Dallas

Roarke is Eve's husband and source of strength and comfort. He has a face that radiates power, framed by thick black hair that he often wears tied back in a ponytail. He has brilliant blue eyes that rest above a full mouth that Eve finds irresistible. His skin is smooth and his body is lean and well muscled. Roarke is of Irish descent. His mother was killed when he was young, and his abusive father took him, hiding him from the rest of the family. He eventually goes to Ireland and meets his mother's sister, Sinead. As Thanksgiving approaches, he takes a huge leap of faith and invites his large Irish family to come for a visit. To his surprise, a great many of them accept. What begins as a nerve wracking idea soon blossoms into a house filled with relatives who are warm, outgoing, friendly and accepting of him and of Eve.



Roarke makes no secret of his past where Eve is concerned. In fact, the similarities are part of the glue that binds them so tightly together, and allows Eve to trust him with her darkest feelings. Roarke spent a great deal of his youth alone, living on the streets, and working his way up in life. Now, he has more resources that the International Security Council, is almost richer than God, and often helps Eve on cases. He is a skilled computer hacker/operator, with access to any and all of the newest programs and applications. He knows his way around most firearms owning an arsenal that includes explosive devices and deterrents. He can bypass most security systems, locks and safes, finding his way into panic rooms, and secure facilities with little difficulty.

Deena Flavia (aka Dolores Nocho-Alvarez)

Deena is born on June 8th, 2027 in Rome. Her father of record was a pediatric specialist and her mother a psychiatrist. She has no siblings and no relationships of record. Deena kills both Icove Senior and Icove Junior. She is skilled at changing her appearance. After Icove Junior is killed, she becomes a dark redhead, and her eyes are a vivid green.

In reality, Deena's life began at Icove Center, as did most others who attend the Brookhollow Academy and College. Her instruction, as with the others, is vigorous and intense. She is expected to excel and continue until she is ready for Placement. Deena speaks four languages fluently, and can solve complex math equations and theorems. She is skilled with electronics which come easy for her and she can date and identify most archeological remains. On top of all that, she can successfully organize a dinner for two hundred and act as a competent hostess. She is trained for covert ops, however, and not marriage. Her education is deemed a success.

Deena runs away from the Academy at the age of twenty, and lives for over twelve years in secrecy and hiding, dreading a lifespan of approximately one hundred and fifty years of this constant nightmare. She has only one mission in life - to stop the men who are responsible. Deena is well on her way to accomplishing it. She successfully infiltrates Icove Center first, and boldly entering the executive office, she uses a scalpel to kill the man she grew up knowing as the Father, Wilfred Icove Senior. Deena is largely responsible for the end of the experimentation, having accomplished her mission to stop the secret cloning being done. Deena herself has been cloned many times as well, and her 'children' are all raised in the Academy. It is her aim to free them to have a normal life.

Dr. Wilfred B. Icove, Sr.

Wilfred Icove Sr. started the Wilfred B. Icove Center for Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgery. His wife died during the Urban Wars and he then raised his only son alone. Referred to as beloved by those around him, he is known for his work with burn and accident victims and he is well respected by the scientific and medical communities. He is eighty-two years old at the time of his death and has two grandchildren that he



adores. His fingernails are manicured and his watch is expensive and his physical health was like that of a man twenty years younger.

Icove comes from very little. Both parents had been doctors working in depressed countries and area. When his mother is burned trying to save children from a fire, her injuries inspire her son to make reconstructive surgery his mission in life. She is never the same and takes her own life just three years later. Icove runs a portable clinic during the Urban Wars and is in Europe helping with Urban Strife when his wife is injured. She self-terminates just thirty-six months later, and Icove continues to found clinics, create foundations, take on hopeless cases and basically devotes his life to medicine. The biggest surprise is that there seem to be no records of any lawsuits or scandals whatsoever.

Wilfred B. Icove, Jr.

Wilfred B. Icove, Jr. steps into his father's shoes at the Icove Center competently and oversees all. Known as the 'sculptor to the stars', he is considered to be discreet, skilled and wealthy. He is forty-four years of age, and has a full head of hair swept back from his forehead in wings. He has eyes of crystalline blue, a narrow nose, square jaw and carved lips. He stands about five feet, eleven inches tall and his body is fit and trim. He dresses with elegance and style, and his smile reveals perfect teeth.

Dr. Icove lives in an Upper West Side townhouse with his family. They also have a place in the Hamptons; a shack in Maui, and another place in London.

Avril Hannson Icove

Avril can easily be described as outrageously beautiful, but that is no surprise. Her voice is rich and lovely like the rest of her. She was born to be perfect in every way. Avril became the legal ward of Wilfred Icove Sr. when her mother is killed and her father vanishes shortly after Avril is born. Her father is later killed by a jealous husband, leaving her with no family other than Wilfred. She is raised in the Brookhollow Academy and College. Her instruction, as with the others, is vigorous and intense. She is expected to excel. When she reaches the pinnacle of her education, Icove Sr. gives her to his son to be his wife. Other versions of her continue to grow up, and excel under the unrelenting tutelage of those at the Academy and the College.

Avril is a talented artist like her natural father was, creating portraits of family that hang on their walls. She enjoys crime dramas.

Avril gives her husband two children, Lissy and Ben, who both take after her. Knowing all about the experiments that her husband and her guardian are doing, she asks them for one consideration. She asks that her children not be cloned and that they be left to grow up as they are. When her husband breaks this promise, she contacts her 'sister' from the Academy, Deena, who comes to her aid. It is clear that in order to stop them from using their children and turning them into the same kind of multiple identity as she



is, Ilove Senior and Junior will have to be eliminated, as will their partner at the Academy, Dr. Jonah Wilson.

Detective Delia Peabody

Delia Peabody is a Detective in the New York City Police Department and works under Lieutenant Eve Dallas. She recently recovered from an injury received in the line of duty, and is celebrating a complete recovery. Delia's partner and love of her life is the Electronic Detectives Division hotshot, Ian McNab. Ian recently gave her a four leaf clover pendant for luck and to celebrate her recovery. She tells Dallas that it makes her feel warm inside to wear it. Delia is a Free-Ager who believes in karma (often referring to it as cosmic balancing). She is larger in frame than she would like to be, often comparing herself to those more petite in size.

Captain Feeney

Captain of the Electronic Detectives Division, Feeney has ginger hair that is wiry, and his face is hangdog. His clothes look as though he's slept in them. When the search warrant for Brookhollow Academy comes in, Feeney joins the group that goes to enforce the warrant, and when they discover that another murder has been committed, Feeney is left behind to conduct the search along with a team of droids while the others continue their investigation.

Dr. Mira

Dr. Mira is a sharp dresser, with mink colored hair that she wears swept back and rolled at the nape of the neck. She has soft blue eyes that are set in a smooth and pretty face. Mira prefers herbal tea over coffee. She has a personal relationship with the Ilove family, and is saddened by the news of the murders. Her relationship with them clouds her judgement to a degree, and Dallas is forced to ask her to leave the Academy at one point.

Detective Amaryllis (Ammy) Coltraine

Recently arriving from Savannah, Detective Amaryllis (Ammy) Coltraine is blond with deep blue eyes and a voice that could melt butter.

Morris

Chief medical examiner, Morris is a flirt. He dresses in a style that is described as snappy which suits his avid eyes and sharp facial features. He has dark hair that he wears pulled back twice, one stacked on top of the other and tied off with a gold colored cord.



Commander Whitney

Commander Whitney is a big man with big shoulders, a lined face and threads of gray in his hair. He has been Dallas' commander for ten yers.

Donatella

Donatella is building concierge for Ilove Senior's apartment building.

Dr. Louise Dimatto

Louise Dimatto has blond hair, gray eyes, and a petite frame. She comes from a wealthy background, and enjoys the licensed companionship of a professional named Charles Monroe.

Summerset

Majordomo to Roarke, Summerset is a constant source of amusement for Dallas. She enjoys pushing his buttons by leaving her car parked in front of the house instead of putting it away, or hanging her jacket on the newel post when she comes home. Summerset has connections, and reveals that he knew Wilfred Ilove during the wars. Summerset met and worked for him in London forty years earlier.

Evelyn Samuels

Evelyn Samuels has memorable dark and sharp eyes and she wears her soft and gentle brown hair short. She wears a unit on her wrist that holds a communicator.

Nadine Furst

Nadine Furst is the Channel 75 on-air reporter. She has streaked hair, green eyes and walks as comfortably in heels as most are in sneakers. She is the reporter to whom Dallas feeds information regarding the covert actions of the Doctor's Ilove Senior and Junior as well as Dr. Jonah Delecourt Wilson. She is tough, determined and dedicated to the idea that freedom of information is the most important part of her job.

Dr. Jonah Delecourt Wilson

Dr. Jonah Delecourt Wilson was born on August 12th, 1964 and died on May 6th, 2056. He was known for his work on genetics. He was married to Eva Hannson in June 1999 and they ran the Brookhollow Academy and College until their deaths.



Jonah is cloned many times, as are the Icoves and others in an effort to attain a sort of immortality.

Cher Reo

Assistant prosecuting attorney who has a reputation for being hungry, Cher Reo is the one who manages to get the warrant to search the Academy, and joins the search herself.

James Hyer

James Hyer is the county Sheriff in James County, New Hampshire who is in attendance at the Academy when Dallas arrives with her group and a warrant. At fifty-three years of age, he was born and raised in the country and spent four years right out of school in the army. He has worn his badge for twenty years, and has been Sheriff for the last twelve. James has been married for eighteen years. He has one son, fifteen years old.

James has a military style haircut, light blue eyes and light brown hair. He has an excess of crow's feet lining his ruddy complexion and easily looks his age.

Deputy Max Gaitor

One of the two uniforms who are with Sheriff Hyer at the Academy when Dallas gets there with her entourage, Deputy Max Gaitor tries to flex his jurisdictional control and is quickly put in his place.

Dick Berenski (aka Dickhead)

Dick Berenski (aka Dickhead) is the chief technician who worked on the Icove murders.

Mavis Freestone

Mavis Freestone is a former street thief and current music video sensation.



Objects/Places

Wilfred B. Icove Center for Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surg

Wilfred B. Icove Center for Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surg is the medical center where Lee-Lee Ten is taken after being attacked by Bryhern Speegal.

AutoChefs

AutoChefs are instant food preparation units common in most places and used extensively in the year 2059.

Roarke Enterprises

Roarke Enterprises is a management firm that owns the apartment building where Icove Senior lived, and is one of many companies owned by Roarke.

Roarke and Dallas's home

Roarke and Dallas's home has lights that come on when the gates open , illuminating the curving driveway up to the house which is itself part castle and part fortress. To Dallas, it is also part fantasy with its towers and peaks and countless windows.

ISC

ISC is the acronym for the International Security Council.

Central

Dallas works out of the Central Hub.

Brookhollow Academy and College

Icove sent Avril to Brookhollow Academy and College after she became his ward. The school is also one of the top beneficiaries of Icove Senior's secret income. Established in 2022, just a couple of years before Avril was born and founded by Jonah Delecourt Wilson, the facility is used to create clones that are raised to be sold into marriage or as licensed companions.



Code Blue

The investigation Dallas is conducting at Brookhollow Academy is given a Code Blue status.

James County

Brookhollow Academy and College is locate in James County

Quiet Birth

The term Avril uses to describe the cloning birth as opposed to a natural child birth is Quiet Birth.

Gestation

Gestation is the name of one of the secret labs in the Icove Center where the Icoves worked to perfect the human race.

Experimental Studies

The secret lab in which failures or defects were allowed to continue developing so that they could be studied or experimented on is called Experimental Studies.

Urban Wars

Dr. Jonah Wilson and Dr. Wilfred Icove Sr. first meet in the Urban Wars and begin the collaborations that would last their lifetime.



Themes

Cloning vs Natural Selection

Origin in Death explores the possibility of a mad scientist of a different kind. Like Frankenstein, this scientist and his partners created monsters, but that's where the similarities end. In this novel, cloning is taken to an extreme limit where young girls have their DNA taken, adjusted to remove any imperfections or flaws and recreated. The clones, if perfect, are educated with an eye to their future. Cloning could provide us with the childhood we never had, allowing us to raise ourselves. It enables a person to recreate themselves so that they can be in multiple places at the same time, work and raise a family without outside help, and maintain a level of competence overall that could only be accomplished if one could clone themselves.

Of course, cloning would reduce and alter who we are as a species forever. By cloning, we could increase the population in a world already exploding with people. Cloning would also remove all individuality. Once human cloning laws relax, the issue of legality would also enter the picture. Can your clone decide to leave? Can a clone own property? Should they be registered? One of the largest problems with cloning is the way that it affects our natural evolution. We will not evolve if cloning ever becomes a reality, even if we could edit our clones to a semblance of perfection.

Quiet Birth vs Natural Birth

Quiet Birth, as described in this novel is a style of birth that occurs entirely outside of the body. Gestation is completed in a tank, timed for the date of birth, and fed via tubing that mimics an umbilical cord. Although they attempt to recreate the environment of birth by playing a recording of a heartbeat, and beginning education by playing tapes of languages and music, a Quiet Birth lacks the one thing that every developing fetus must have. The intangible value of love from a mother to child is lacking in this clinic example of how birth could be handled. There may be some benefits, however. For example, the mother would no longer have to stop working to accommodate the physical issues of pregnancy. There would be no weight gain, or physical discomfort. There is no chance of unnoticed health problems or questionable delivery dates.

Of course, natural birth is the warm, loving vessel in which all human beings deserve to begin life. A natural birth is much more than a heartbeat and the appropriate nutrients. It is also the critical bonding stage for mother and child. It is the first meeting where child hears its mothers voice and identifies with it, is calmed by it and begins the process of connection. Without this period, the bonding is not done, the mother's voice not recognized, nor the sway of her body as she moves and soothes. All these things would be lacking. A stable heartbeat on a monitor cannot compare to the soft throb of a mothers loving heart, or the excitement and pleasure she feels as the baby kicks and develops. All in all, a natural birth cannot be mimicked adequately.



Freedom for Clones vs Full Disclosure

Origin in Death explores the possibility that human cloning is accomplished by overzealous scientists seeking perfection of the species and immortality for themselves. In the process, they clone dozens of young girls, creating hundreds of clones. They are created to be perfect in every way. Physically, the job is completed early in the embryonic stage with the exception of minor alterations that were done surgically as the children developed. Once their creators are killed, the clones are left in a state of limbo. They have no legitimate identities, no parents to be returned to, and no idea where to go. Roarke makes the decision to honor his promise to Deena, allowing Diana to take the infant and Garby to Avril's without his intervention. Since Avril is financially secure and well schooled in the art of deception and hiding in plain sight, it is a decision that will likely grant them freedom for their lives. In this instance, no other choice makes sense. The children who are still housed in the Gestation labs will easily adjust to life in an orphanage or similar housing situation, but those who had attended the Academy and College or still do, deserve the opportunity to have their freedom. Identities will have to be arranged for the others, and their true circumstances should never be made public. The fact that the information is given to Nadine to publish shouldn't alter the fact that anonymity is paramount. If the children who are cloned can ever hope to have a normal life, it will only be if no one ever knows the truth about their history.

Style

Point of View

Origin in Death by Nora Roberts (writing as J.D. Cobb) is a fictional novel written entirely in the first person perspective. Told through the eyes of the main character in the story, Lieutenant Eve Dallas, the narrative is consistent and reliable throughout. Nora Roberts takes a difficult subject, and writes a believable story using the perspective of the homicide detective assigned to the first and subsequent murders. Her emotional responses lend important depth and realism to a subject that has been hotly debated in the medical and ethical communities for years.

The author also does a good job of revealing just enough about Eve's past, tying her to Roarke and his troubled past, so that the reader can identify with the emotional responses they have to the horrors that reveal themselves during the investigation. There is enough dialogue between Eve and her support staff that the reader will have no trouble becoming absorbed and invested in the emotional aspects of the story. While the details of this story are most often revealed through Eve's eyes, there are occasional insights into Roarke's and Mira's emotional response, giving depth and realism to the story. There are also the emotional forays into the feelings of the murderer, explaining why the victims met their end the way they did.

Setting

Origin in Death is set in the year 2059 after the Urban Wars. The story begins in New York City, where most of the tale unravels itself, excepting short segments that deal with Brookhollow Academy. The story begins in Icove Center where Wilfred Icove Senior is found dead in his office. His death is a shock to all who know and work with him, including his son. Investigation into that murder will take Dallas and her partner Peabody to the Icove residence where Wilfred Junior is killed soon afterward. In both cases, it appears that the murderer is known to the victim since there are no alarms tripped.

When the third victim is killed, Dallas and her team find themselves at Brookhollow Academy in Spencerville, New Hampshire. The Academy is the first stage of education that the children face after leaving Icove Center, or a first stop for those who are recruited at an older age. The death of the third victim, Evelyn Samuels, leads Dallas on an investigation into cloning, DNA, and reconstructive surgery at its worst, and takes Dallas and Roarke into the bowels of Icove Center where the stuff of nightmares is created and manipulated for the benefit of a few.



Language and Meaning

Set in the year 2059, *Origin in Death* is an exploration into the possible future of mankind. After the Urban Wars, during which Dr. Wilfred Icove Senior loses his expectant wife, Icove along with his son and namesake begin a project with Dr. Jonah D. Wilson. The project takes children from the Urban Wars, most orphaned and living on the streets, and uses the most modern medicine to recreate them into perfect beings. Using corrective surgery and gene manipulation, they slowly weed out some traits while increasing or accenting others. The author uses words and phrases consistent with the kind of science described such as the employment of droids for everything from household tasks to security and auto chefs that prepare food at will.

In addition and lending to the authenticity of the story are the clones themselves, educated to be perfect in every way. Some self-terminate in a display of deep unhappiness while others continue to Placement with men who purchased them in advance and had them trained to order, or simply selected from an available group of Licensed Companions ready to go. Pop is served in tubes instead of cans or bottles and electronic surveillance and security is commonplace. The story finishes with a climactic ending in which Dallas and Roarke rescue many of the cloned children from Icove Center before one of the clones of its founding fathers blows the facility up.

Structure

Origin in Death by Nora Roberts is a fictional work of two hundred and eighty-four pages. The story is divided into twenty-one chapters which range in length from ten to twenty-five pages. The chapters are identified by numerals alone. In Chapter One, the reader is introduced to the main character, Eve Dallas, and we learn a little about her profession. Chapter One also contains the notification of Wilfred Icove Sr.'s death. In Chapter Two, Lieutenant Eve Dallas and Detective Delia Peabody go to the crime scene at Icove Center, and interview Pia - the assistant who found the victim. Chapter Three introduces one of the victims of cloning, Avril Icove. Chapter Four gives insight to Eve's job and introduces her husband, Roarke. Chapter Five reveals the character of Roarke, and hints at his expertise in electronics and data flow. In Chapter Seven, Roarke invites his family for Thanksgiving. In Chapter Eight, Dallas gets a warrant for the Icove residence and when she arrives, she discovers Icove Junior dead in his office. Chapter Eleven reveals the relationship between Deena and Avril. In Chapter Twelve, Evelyn Samuels is killed and the investigation kicks into high gear. Chapter Seventeen introduces the clones that are Avril. In Chapters Twenty and Twenty-one, Dallas and Roarke lead the effort to rescue Diana and as many children as they can.

Quotes

"This place is like a palace of physical perfection." Ch. 1, Pg. 19
Peabody to Dallas as they investigate the Ilove murders at Ilove Center.

"Our primary suspect is a professional, or a talented amateur, who used a false name and information to gain entry to the victim's office." Ch. 2, Pg. 27
Peabody to Dallas as part of her summary of Dr. Ilove Sr.'s murder.

"He's known for being a perfectionist, and expecting the same from those who work with him." Ch. 4, Pg. 52
Whitney to Dallas as they discuss Ilove Junior and his wife's impression of him.

"Young female subject, excellent physical condition, high intelligence quotient, small corrections to vision and facial structure." Ch. 6, Pg. 73
Louise reading from Ilove's notes citing a subject that was tested thoroughly for disease and defect as well as artistic and mental prowess.

"I think anyone who looks that clean's got grime washed down some drain." Ch. 7, Pg. 87
Dallas to Nadine as they discuss the press release that she and other reporters are working on.

"Interesting, isn't it, that a man with a questionable income would choose to donate it - quietly, even anonymously - to worthy causes." Ch. 10, Pg. 126
Roarke to Dallas and Peabody after he uncovers philanthropic donations made but without the corresponding income variations to show for them.

"The world is full of people who are locked away without any bars." Ch. 11, Pg. 145
Dallas to Mira after telling Mira that she suspects Ilove of gene manipulation.

"And as frothy as it sounds, there are times I feel as though that was when I took my first breath." Ch. 14, Pg. 179
Roarke to Louise as they discuss cloning and life experience on the way to their meeting at Ilove Center.

"If she was no longer able to accept what had been done to her as a child, by the man she should have been able to trust most, she may have killed." Ch. 15, Pg. 188
Dr. Mira to Dallas, questioning the emotional dynamics associated with the murderer and the crime committed.

"When a human trait or emotion is applied to an inanimate object, it poses an interesting query." Ch. 16, Pg. 207
Diana to Dallas during their interview, when Diana asks if it is the human element that expresses that trait or emotion, or if an object itself can hold that trait or emotion.



"If I can show they used the school for laundering unreported income, channeling it into nonprofits, I can use RICO, tax fraud, all manner of juicy stuff, and have those schools shut down whether or not we find anything wonky on premises." Ch. 17, Pg. 213
Dallas to Roarke after he finds out that the Academy is being used to launder unreported money.

"I not only have proof, I have three clones known as Avril Ilove under house restriction." Ch. 18, Pg. 235
Dallas to Nadine as she outlines her case, despite the Code Blue, giving her everything she can.

"I wish I could give her even an hour of my life that she could stand here and talk to his wife in their beautiful home." Ch. 19, Pg. 258
Sinead to Dallas as she expresses her wish that her sister Siobhan could have seen what a fine man her son Roarke had turned into and how happy he is with his wife.

"Sarcasm later, hunt down lair of mad scientists now." Ch. 20, Pg. 267
Dallas to Roarke after he manages to unlock the cabinet that reveals the elevator.

"You exist because I permitted it." Ch. 21, Pg. 277
An Ilove clone to Deena as he tries to impress upon her that if it were not for him, she would have no life.



Topics for Discussion

During what time period does this novel take place? What specific references are there that are not part of our current day lives? How does the author help the reader to accept the time period as stated? Is this done effectively?

What history do Eve and Roarke share? How has it shaped who they are? What pieces of the past haunt them still and how? What affect did their childhood have on the type of adults they have become, if any?

What is Brookhollow Academy? How does it measure up to other Academies in its class? What kinds of programs are offered there? What sets it apart from the others on the surface?

What kind of business is Roarke in? In what ways is he able to help Eve? What does he contribute directly to the investigation and resolution of the case Eve is working on?

Which two events reveal a great deal about Eve's personality? Each one is difficult in its own way. Why and how? Which event may one day voluntarily be repeated over the other? Why is one so much more difficult than the other? What makes the second event bearable by comparison to the first?

What education is Avril given? What Placement is she given? What and how does her programming enable her to love and hate the same person? What 'flaw' in her education causes this conundrum? What do the Icovs do in an effort to correct this 'flaw'?

How are the murder victims killed? What weapon is used? What symbolism is attached to the use and particular placement of this weapon? In each case, who wields it?

What laws are being broken by the Icovs and Dr. Wilson? What steps have they already taken towards having the laws changed to suit their activities? Had they been able to continue, what is the likelihood of their success? Is this a method of change that could be used today? Why or why not?

What event is the catalyst for the first and subsequent murders? What line is crossed? Why is there no alternative to the drastic measure of murder? Who makes the call, and to whom, that gets the whole thing started?

Diana talks to Dallas about what happens "when a human trait or emotion is applied to an inanimate object." In what context is Diana speaking? What is she referring to when she makes this comment? What are some other examples that would be consistent with the one given, and how are they consistent?

What are the moral and ethical issues that surround the existence of cloned people? What are some of the immediate problems that can be foreseen? What might some of the benefits be to having yourself cloned, if any?



What is the likelihood that cloning people to improve natural selection will happen in our lifetimes? How close are we to that kind of a reality? What experiments in cloning are being done now - with great success? What living examples of cloning have there been?