

# **Phantoms Study Guide**

## **Phantoms by Dean Koontz**

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# Plot Summary

Phantoms, by Dean Koontz is a supernatural thriller that details the events that take place in Snowfield, California over a few days. Dr. Jennifer Paige, a resident of the small ski town, and her younger sister Lisa, arrive in Snowfield to discover the population dead or missing. Though Jenny tries to find a reasonable explanation for the situation, the truth of the horror in Snowfield is eventually revealed.

Dr. Jennifer Paige and her younger sister Lisa arrive in Snowfield after the death of their mother. Lisa's introduction to Snowfield is a bit off, however, as the town appears extremely quiet. Jenny agrees, finding things too quiet, and a bit unsettling. The Paige sisters discover the dead body of Hilda Beck, Jenny's housekeeper on the kitchen floor in horrible condition. Jenny struggles to identify what might have caused the woman to die while preparing dinner.

The horrible truth presents itself to the sisters while trying to find a working phone. The entire population of Snowfield is either dead, in the same state that Hilda is in, or missing.

Jenny contacts the sheriff's office in nearby Santa Mira for help and Sheriff Bryce Hammond responds with several deputies to the small ski town. As the police arrive the sisters are in the street, terrified, as the church bells and sirens in the town sound repeatedly in the night. It is clear from the very beginning that whatever is going on in Snowfield is not anything that can be considered normal.

Sheriff Hammond, a man battling tragedies in his own past, calls for the help of the US Army and a scientific team to see what is going on in Snowfield. While waiting for the cavalry to arrive, the group searches Snowfield looking for any sign of survivors. More bodies are discovered, as well as empty houses and a cryptic note written on a bathroom mirror; "Timothy Flyte, The Ancient Enemy."

General Galen Copperfield and his team arrives and begin the painstaking task of trying to figure out what is going on in Snowfield. Bryce Hammond's reports are ignored as the team tries to explain the situation logically, until one of Copperfield's men is taken by whatever creature has been acting in the small town. Copperfield is finally forced to believe that there is something going on that cannot be explained.

It is not long before almost the entire military team, including Copperfield, is killed and consumed by the creature. The survivors gather in the lab and are amazed when the creature begins to communicate with them through the computer terminals. Sara Yamaguchi tries to discover what is causing the horrors in the town and why, but is rebuffed. The creature simply wants Timothy Flyte in Snowfield.

Once in town, Flyte is quickly pulled into the horror when the creature decapitates Frank Autry in front of the group. Flyte's desire to examine the creature up close is granted, and in one of the labs the group discovers that tissue separated from the main body for



too long will die. Sara Yamaguchi also discovers the base of the creatures composition and arranges to have Biosan-4, a chemical that destroys oil slicks, delivered to the town.

The group discovers that Biosan-4 does indeed destroy the tissue of the creature and a battle takes place on the main street of Snowfield as the survivors fight for their lives. Flyte dies at the hands of the creature, betrayed by the man it considered its biographer. Tal, Bryce, Jenny and Lisa survive and are finally able to leave the town behind them, though not their troubles.

Fletcher Kale, a man who Bryce had arrested for the murder of his wife and young son in order to get access to the son's trust fund, is in the woods outside of Snowfield. Having escaped from jail, Kale heads to the cabin of the dead deputy, Jake Johnson, in order to hide and plan. At the site of the cabin, Kale discovers the cave where he hoped to hide is now inhabited by Gene 'Jeter' Terr, the head of the local motorcycle gang, and a strange pulsating blob. Kale is thrilled to accept Jeter's explanation that the creature is Lucifer and they are its apostles.

The recovering survivors are confronted with one more horror as Jeter and Kale arrive at Santa Mira hospital to kill them, following the orders of the creature as it retreated from Snowfield. The man are killed, unsuccessful in their attempt and the four survivors as well as Hammond's son Timmy, are safe.

Bryce and Jenny are married the following year, accepting the good that has come out of the horrible events that took place in Snowfield. Though Jenny is still cautious, wondering what will come when and if the Ancient Enemy should return, she accepts the happiness that she has found and plans to live her life, embracing the world around her and cherishing those she loves.



# **Part One: Victims. Chapters 1-5: The Town Jail, Coming Home, The Dead Woman, The House Next Door, Three Bullets**

## **Part One: Victims. Chapters 1-5: The Town Jail, Coming Home, The Dead Woman, The House Next Door, Three Bullets Summary**

Deputy Paul Henderson sits in the police station in Snowfield, California, reading. Paul thinks he hears a scream and stops to listen. Silence follows and the deputy settles in to read again when he hears another scream. Getting up to check things out, Paul hears a noise behind him and turns to discover he is no longer alone and reaches for his gun.

In chapter two, Dr. Jennifer Paige and her sister, fourteen-year-old Lisa, drive to Snowfield. Jenny is now the legal guardian for her sister, as their mother had died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage six weeks earlier. Jenny has not been home much since she left for school and the two had not spent much time together as Lisa is seventeen years younger than Jenny.

The sisters arrive in Snowfield and Lisa is enthralled with the little ski town where her sister is the doctor. At Jenny's house and office, Lisa comments on the quiet in the town and Jenny realizes that it is abnormally quiet. In fact, there is no one at all on the small main street.

In the house Jenny calls out to Hilda Beck, her housekeeper, and gets no answer. The two go into the kitchen and Lisa screams. Jenny sees Hilda, dead on the floor, seemingly black as she is completely covered in bruises. Lisa, shaken, comments on the fact that there is no odor in the house, which is strange if Hilda has been dead for the few days that Jenny suggests.

In chapter three, Jenny examines Hilda's body and can think of nothing that would have killed the woman so suddenly, leaving her covered in bruises. The bruises are also strange, covering Hilda's entire body evenly, so they could not have been from an assault. Jenny wonders if Hilda had a disease, but the food on the counter is still cool to the touch. Nothing could have come on that suddenly. Jenny heads to her office to call for assistance but the phone line is dead. The two Paige sisters head out to the neighbors, hoping to use their phone to call for help.

In chapter four, Jenny and Lisa go next door and find the house unlocked. Jenny calls out but gets no answer and the two reluctantly enter the house. No one is home but



dinner is on the table, untouched. Lisa is very worried, thinking that there is something seriously wrong in the town. Jenny tries the phone but there is no dial tone, though the line sounds like it is open. The sisters leave and begin to walk down the silent street to the police station.

In chapter five, Jenny and Lisa find Paul Henderson in the same condition they had found Hilda, swollen and bruised. Lisa stands in the doorway while Jenny examines the body. Again, Jenny wonders if there is some disease that might cause this. Jenny picks up the gun beside the deputy and sees that three bullets have been fired. Searching the room, the doctor finds the empty cartridges, but no holes in the walls or furniture. Jenny is perplexed; if the deputy had fired at an assailant and hit them three times, there should be blood everywhere.

## **Part One: Victims. Chapters 1-5: The Town Jail, Coming Home, The Dead Woman, The House Next Door, Three Bullets Analysis**

The novel begins with Deputy Paul Henderson sitting in the quiet town of Snowfield, reading. Henderson is bored, since it is not ski season. Two screams startle the deputy, who gets up to investigate. Henderson hears a noise and discovers he is not alone, though he had been a second ago. The deputy draws his weapon, giving the reader the idea that whoever is in the room is an enemy.

The reader is introduced to two of the main characters in the novel, Jennifer and Lisa Paige. The two sisters, separated by seventeen years in age, have not really been close, but the sudden death of their mother has changed that.

Jennifer is a doctor in the small ski town of Snowfield, California and is now Lisa's guardian. The two are returning to the town after settling their mother's affairs. Jennifer is happy to be home and Lisa is excited by the prospect of living in the small and beautiful town.

The town appears deserted, and though Jenny finds it odd, at first there does not seem to be anything sinister about it. The two sisters forget about the strange silence for a few minutes when they discover the body of Hilda, the housekeeper, dead in the kitchen. Jenny examines the body and is unable to come up with any idea what might have killed the woman. Checking the kitchen, Jenny discovers that the food Hilda was in the middle of preparing is still cool to the touch, which means that Hilda must have died in the last hour or so. The condition of the body suggests that death had come days earlier.

Jenny and Lisa try and call for help but the phone is not working. This leads them to the neighbor's house. Though there are no bodies in the home, the still warm meal on the table is almost more frightening. Nothing else appears out of order other than a chair that is tipped over, but the scene is still ominous. The phone is not working at the



Santini's either, but Jenny gets the feeling that someone is listening. The sister's grow more fearful, but Jenny tries to keep things together so that Lisa does not get more frightened.

At the police station, the sisters discover the body of Paul Henderson in the same condition as Hilda's. Jenny examines Paul as well and then checks the phone, but it is dead like the others. The discovery of the gun recently fired and the shell casings is very strange as there are no bullet holes. Things seem to be getting more strange by the minute in the small town.

Lisa's comments that the town is a graveyard seem harsh to Jenny, but the older sister agrees that there is something seriously wrong. Whatever went on in Snowfield, it seems that Jenny and Lisa missed it by a short period of time.



# **Part One: Victims, Chapters 6-10; Novelties and Notions, The Country Sheriff, Barricades, A Call for Help, Sisters and Cops**

## **Part One: Victims, Chapters 6-10; Novelties and Notions, The Country Sheriff, Barricades, A Call for Help, Sisters and Cops Summary**

Jenny and Lisa walk down the street, peering in deserted shop windows and discussing what might have happened to everyone. The two stop outside Liebermann's Bakery and Jenny leads Lisa to a dark tunnel between two shops. In the tunnel, Jenny gets a sense that they are being watched and senses something moving in the rafters over her head. Panicked, Jenny bursts into the alley with Lisa close behind her. Lisa is as upset as Jenny, but insists she saw something on the ground in the tunnel, not the rafters.

The two sisters enter the bakery and Jenny looks around and sees a rolling pin on the table, lying in dough. Holding the handles of the pin are two severed hands. Things get even more disturbing when Jenny sees the severed heads of Jakob and Aida Liebermann staring out of the oven doors. The two sisters flee through the front door to the street, trying to make sense of things, but there is no reasonable explanation.

In chapter seven, Lieutenant Talbert Whitman watches Sheriff Bryce Hammond interrogate Fletcher Kale, a real estate agent. Tal watches as Fletcher underestimates Bryce, as many people do, since the sheriff does not look like he is very clever. Hammond talks to Kale about the tragic events of the week before when Kale says he was forced to kill his drug addicted wife after she killed their son and then came after him with a cleaver. Kale plays the part of the grieving father and husband well and Tal is impressed with the emotions Kale shows, but wonders if they are true. The lieutenant also worries about his friend, knowing that the case is hitting close to home for Bryce. The sheriff is still recovering from the loss of his wife after a tragic car accident, an accident that has left his son in a coma for over a year.

Fletcher Kale seems comfortable with the sheriff and relaxes when the Bryce tells him there are only a few more questions. The first question is why Kale did a load of laundry before calling the police after he was forced to shoot his wife.

In chapter eight, Jenny and Lisa go to another home because Jenny knows that there is a shortwave radio there. The sisters are forced to break a window and enter the den of the home. The bodies of the couple are in the den; the woman on the floor and the man





at the desk, hand clutching the microphone. Both are in the same condition as the other bodies, with their mouths open as if they died screaming.

More interesting, the couple is in a locked room and there is a cabinet barricading the door from the inside. Whatever had killed the couple had gotten to them anyway. Though Jenny thinks a gas might have been the cause, there is no way to barricade against it, and it was not a gas that killed the Liebermann's.

Before the sisters leave, the phone rings. Jenny picks up the receiver and there is nothing but silence on the other end. As Jenny is about to hang up, there is a click and a dial tone. Stunned, Jenny quickly places a call to the county sheriff.

In chapter nine, Bryce Hammond listens as Fletcher Kale alters his story a bit, now stating that he had forgotten holding his son and getting his clothes bloody. Afraid that he would be suspected of a crime, he had cleaned up in a moment of panic. Kale seems contrite, but when Hammond points out that Mrs. Kale's lungs showed she had never smoked pot or anything else, Kale begins to get more and more quiet. Bryce tells Kale and his lawyer, Mr. Robine, that there was more PCP in Joanna Kale's stomach than in her blood, reports that the local drug dealer has stated that Fletcher Kale, not his wife was the pot smoker. He then outlines his theory.

Hammond believes that Kale had come home with ice cream, and laced his wife's with PCP. After the snack, Kale had killed his wife and son, then cleaned up the evidence. Kale does not show any type of reaction until Sheriff Hammond mentions High Country Investments, at which point the suspect leaps from his chair and bolts from the room. Bryce and Tal follow quickly and Bryce and Fletcher struggle on the ground. Kale is about to grab for Hammond's gun when Tal hits him, knocking the suspect out.

Back inside, Tal speaks to the sheriff. Tal asks Bryce if Jennifer Paige seems to be a trustworthy person. When Bryce says she is, the lieutenant informs Bryce of Jenny's call reporting everyone dead in Snowfield.

In chapter ten, Lisa tells Jenny that she has always been proud of her. Jenny apologizes for not getting home more often, and Lisa says she understands, just like their mother, who was also so proud. Jenny is rocked by this, wondering if their mother has ever said anything to Lisa about their father and if she blamed Jenny. Lisa is confused by this.

As the two sisters talk in the silent town, three police cars head to Snowfield from Santa Mira, with the sheriff and Tal, along with Frank Autry, a career military man, Stu Wargle, an incompetent loudmouth, and Gordy Brogan, a young deputy who is worried that he might be called on to use his weapon. Gordy dreads this, knowing that he will be unable to do so.

While the police get closer, the church bells in Snowfield begin to ring and the siren on the firehouse begins to sound. The sisters move to the street, trying to figure out what is going on. As quickly as the sound starts, it ends. Lisa comments that whoever was making the noise seems to be teasing them.



Jenny hears engines and is relieved to see two police cars drive up the road. As Bryce and Tal exit the cars followed by the deputies, Jenny has a horrible feeling that not all of them will leave town alive.

## **Part One: Victims, Chapters 6-10; Novelties and Notions, The Country Sheriff, Barricades, A Call for Help, Sisters and Cops Analysis**

Things get stranger and more horrifying in Snowfield for the Paige sisters as they look for anyone who might still be alive. Though it is a Sunday night, the town appears desolate and empty, causing the normally calm and collected Jenny to feel a sense of dread. Unwilling to make her sister more upset than she is, Jenny tries to hold herself together, calling on her professional training as a doctor to pull her through. Despite this, Jenny does feel almost uncontrolled panic when she and Lisa walk through the dark tunnel on the way to the back of the Liebermann Bakery. It is in the tunnel that the reader gets a glimpse at the evil that has taken hold of Snowfield, though the picture still remains unclear. The stirring that Jenny feels in the rafters and the sense that Lisa has that there was something against the wall on the ground is very important, as is the fact that the sisters sensed a presence in both places at once.

The horrifying scene in the bakery of the severed hands of Jakob on the rolling pin, seemingly frozen in the act of work, as well as the heads of the Liebermann couple in the ovens, puts to rest any thought of a disease or poison for Jenny, as neither is capable of murder. Even more disturbing is the fact that despite the gruesome scene, there does not seem to have been any type of struggle in the bakery. Whatever happened to Jakob and Aida happened so quickly that neither was aware of it.

Perhaps more shocking is the discovery at the Oxley home of the couple barricaded in the den. Both apparently died terrified of whatever killed them after having done whatever they could to be safe. Jenny is at a loss to explain what is going on in the town, and as the sisters prepare to leave and get help, the phone rings. No one is on the line, though Jenny once again gets the feeling that there is someone there, listening. The sudden dial tone is a shock, and Jenny is finally able to call for assistance. The abrupt availability of a working phone seems odd, almost as if someone does not want the sisters to leave the town in order to get help.

In Santa Mira, the reader is introduced to several important characters, including Bryce Hammond, the sheriff, Lieutenant Talbert Whitman, and Fletcher Kale, a suspect in a horrible murder. The reader learns that despite appearing otherwise, Hammond is a very smart man, one that is able to maneuver a suspect into a dangerously comfortable sense of calm. It is also clear that Hammond counts on Whitman and that the two are close. Learning of the tragedies in the sheriff's life, one can see how the case of Kale's wife and child being killed would cause Hammond to feel a bit like he is reliving his own past.



Fletcher Kale is introduced as a seemingly distressed man, after killing his wife in self defense when she had gone crazy after taking drugs and killed their young son. Despite this, Hammond presents another theory, one that places Kale in an entirely different light. Though the reader does not learn all the details at this point, it is clear that High Country Investments is somehow tied to the death of Joanna Kale and young Danny.

Kale's attempted escape is thwarted and he reveals a bit of his true nature to his lawyer before the man quits. It is clear that Kale does not look at the murder of his wife and child as a crime, but rather simply something that needed to be done in order for his life to continue as planned. Kale will factor into the novel later, and his psychopathic persona will present itself again.

In Snowfield, the arrival of the sheriff's department is preceded by the ringing of all the church bells and the firehouse siren. Again, the fact that all of these locations are spread around the town is significant. The bells and sirens must be operated manually, so logically, one would assume that there is more than one person involved in what is going on. This will turn out not to be the case.



# **Part One, Chapters 11-15; Exploring, Battleground, Suddenly, Containment, The Thing at the Window**

## **Part One, Chapters 11-15; Exploring, Battleground, Suddenly, Containment, The Thing at the Window Summary**

Bryce Hammond examines the body of Paul Henderson and confirms that there is no trauma to the body. The eight people then go to Liebermann's Bakery to examine the heads of the couple.

The police search the bakery, but are unable to find the bodies of the victims. The group then moves outside to the tunnel and Bryce ventures in to investigate. Not far into the tunnel, Bryce also feels as if he is not alone, and thinks he sees something moving in the drain. Bryce cannot get over the sense of dread he feels and quickly leaves the alley.

The group splits up to investigate the town. The first group, Frank Autry, a former military man with a serious nature, Stu Wargle, Gordy Brogan, the young deputy who is afraid of conflict and Jake Johnson, a deputy in his late fifties, search several homes and businesses. In one apartment they find a man dead, felled in the act of making a sandwich. In the bedroom, a naked woman looks like she died in terror, a recently fired gun at her side. Eight bullets have been fired, but there is no evidence that they have hit anything, and there is no blood on the scene, perplexing those present. Wargle makes inappropriate sexual comments about the woman and Frank lashes out. Wargle seems a bit contrite, but it is clear he is clueless.

Bryce, Tal, Jennie and Lisa search the liquor store, and there are no bodies. There is, however, a large puddle of water on the floor. Though it is suggested that there might be a leak in the plumbing, Bryce thinks there is more to the water than a simple explanation. In the pharmacy, Frank has found a similar large area of water and takes a sample.

Jenny's group heads to the Candleglow Inn. No bodies are found in the office or living area and the group investigates the six rooms that are occupied in the hotel. The rooms are all empty, except for the possessions of the guests. In a locked bathroom the group discovers words written on the mirror; "Timothy Flyte The Ancient Enemy". The block letters are written in what appears to be black eye pencil, though there is no pencil in the room. The parties wonder who the Flyte named might be, a victim or a killer, and where the eye pencil might be. Leaving the inn, they discover a severed hand on a table



in the lobby. The group is horrified to see that the hand is clutching the missing pencil, and even more horrified to realize that the hand was not there when they entered.

In chapter twelve, Jake Johnson waits for Sheriff Hammond's group outside Gilmartin's Market. Jake does not want to go in the market where something terrible has obviously taken place. The windows are broken and bottles and cans litter the sidewalk.

Hammond arrives with the others and the group enters the market. Inside, there is another large puddle of water on the floor. They head further into the store to investigate, and though the store is in disarray, there are no bodies. Hammond starts to speak and the lights go out.

Something strikes Tal from behind, knocking him into Wargle and Autry. Frank's flashlight illuminates the group for a moment before breaking on the floor. In the confusion, Jake feels something slide around his throat and lift him in the air, holding his arms to his body. Jake is unable to scream but smells something horrible and knows he is in the presence of terrible evil. The deputy tries to escape as he hears the others calling out to each other but they sound further and further away.

In chapter thirteen, the lights in the market go on and the group realizes that Jake is missing. A search is conducted, but the deputy is nowhere to be found. The group tries to figure out what is going on in Snowfield. Ideas are exchanged among them and Bryce asks Frank Autry why he refers to the unknown culprit as 'it'. Frank replies that he is as perplexed as the rest of them, and that being military trained puts him in a tough place. Bryce questions the rest about what they are feeling and they are all equally unsure. Lisa speaks, voicing the thoughts of the group, that whatever is behind the situation is not natural. Stu Wargle reacts angrily, as he lacks any type of imagination at all, but the others grow quiet, contemplating Lisa's comments.

Hammond decides not to investigate further that night, unwilling to lose another member of the party. As the group heads toward the police station, the church bell starts to ring again. Frank suggests they head to the church and see who or what is ringing the bell, but Bryce comments that 'it' wants them to do that. The sheriff realizes that he too is referring to the unknown suspect as 'it'.

In chapter fourteen, Bryce finds the phone working in the sheriff's office and calls his station, instructing the man on the desk to send twelve more armed men. Hammond also orders that the two routes into town be blockaded. The sheriff instructs Charlie to call General Copperfield of the Army's Civil Defense Unit.

Bryce then calls the governor, Jack Retlock, a long-time friend from his early days in the police department. Hammond tells Jack a bit about what is going on in Snowfield and asks that he keep the National Guard and Health Department at bay until General Copperfield's team can discover what is going on. Hammond also asks that some generators be provided to keep power in the town. Retlock agrees reluctantly, and comments that he is thankful that 'Doody' is nickname for Bryce, is on the scene.



Bryce hangs up so he can call the general but the line is once again dead. Before he can hang up he hears animal noises, followed by screams. Bryce is horrified, when once there is silence, though he can sense something on the line. Hanging up quickly, Bryce looks around but the others are all busy with different tasks. Picking up the phone, Bryce once again hears a dial tone and places a call to Copperfield.

Meanwhile, Jenny and Tal get to know each other, with Jenny impressing Tal with her story of standing up to the leader of the local motorcycle gang, Gene Terr. Frank Autry is disgusted with Stu Wargle when the officer makes lewd comments about Jenny and young Lisa. Lisa realizes that she likes Gordy, discovering the kind nature behind the gruff exterior, and commenting to the young deputy that he does not seem like a police officer to her. Gordy is shocked that someone has discovered his secret, as he does not feel like a police officer at all. As the group keeps busy, the lights flicker and once again go out.

In chapter fifteen, Bryce has a brief talk with General Galen Copperfield, who immediately begins gathering his team. When the lights go out, Bryce gathers the group together as thumps begin to sound outside. The group's attention is drawn to the window where they see a large insect, a moth-like creature as large as an eagle. The insect bangs against the window in a frenzy, then abruptly is gone. The lights in the building come back on, and the street outside is empty.

The group discusses what they have seen, but Stu Wargle refuses to admit that whatever had been outside could be anything other than a bird. Bryce tells the group the noises he had heard on the phone and Tal wonders if the sheriff had not heard a recording, but instead, hostages being held in a secret location. After more discussion, Tal admits that the hostages might not be being held by a person, but rather something unnatural. Lisa wonders if the missing might be being held like insects trapped in a spider's web. Bryce realizes that it is time to accept that the impossible might be possible.

## **Part One, Chapters 11-15; Exploring, Battleground, Suddenly, Containment, The Thing at the Window Analysis**

The cavalry arrives in Snowfield in the form of Bryce Hammond and his team. Lieutenant Tal Whitman, Frank Autry, Gordy Brogan, Jake Johnson and Stu Wargle join the sheriff in examining the body of Paul Henderson and then the decapitated heads of the Liebermann couple. The reader learns a bit about the deputies that accompany Hammond to the small town through their thoughts and actions.

Frank Autry is a career military man who joined the police force after leaving the army. Frank is kind and thoughtful, but serious about his job. Frank is married and looks to his wife for strength in difficult situations. Frank does not have any use for Stu Wargle, who he considers incompetent at best, and a fool.



Stu Wargle is a callous, ignorant man who does not like Bryce Hammond and believes his boss is out to get him. Stu demonstrates his lack of tact when he comments on the naked woman they find dead in an apartment and again when he comments on Jenny and his sister. Though Frank calls him on his comments and Stu seems contrite, his comments about Lisa will become an issue later in the novel.

Gordy Brogan is the youngest deputy and does not like violence. Brogan has discovered that he is not capable of firing his weapon in times of danger and worries that he or one of his fellow officers will be hurt because of his actions. Lisa notices the kindness that seems to seep from Brogan, and he is a bit caught off guard that someone else has noticed what he has tried so hard to hide.

Jake Johnson is a cautious man. Though he takes his job seriously, he does everything he can to keep himself away from danger. Jake will place himself farther away than other officers when a call comes in that might be risky, responding when he feels that the risk is lessened. The son of a former officer, it was assumed that Jake would follow in his footsteps, but he did so only because it was the easiest path to take. Ironically, Jake once again places himself in the middle of the line entering the market in order not to be a direct target, yet the enemy they face apparently picks him out of the line, regardless.

The reader also learns that Tal Whitman is a steadfast officer, one who takes everything in stride. Tal prides himself on acting professionally and getting the job done, and considers each job just another day, no matter how intense or dangerous it might be.

The group explores the town, sometimes finding victims, sometimes finding no one. The situation grows stranger when they begin to find large puddles of water in various areas in the town. Frank Autry collects a sample of the water and Bryce Hammond agrees that it might seem innocent but seems to be important. The significance of the water will be revealed later in the novel.

The dynamics of the group becomes clear as they move throughout the town. It is clear that Stu Wargle is disliked by all, though some find it more difficult to keep their feelings hidden. Gordy is liked by all, as are Jake and Frank. There is a clear respect in the department for Hammond by all but Wargle.

The enemy presents itself directly for the first time when the entire group enters Gilmartin's Market to investigate. The market is the first place in town where there is evidence of a great deal of violence and seems worth investigating further.

Inside, there are no bodies, just more water on the floor. Before Hammond can speak, the lights go out and pandemonium ensues. Jake Johnson is the first victim of the original group, taken from the middle of his party without a sound. It seems that Jake might have been targeted because he has placed himself in what he had believed to be a safe position. This reveals to the reader that despite precautions, no one can be truly safe.





Jake's thoughts as he struggles with his unseen assailant are revealed. Jake smells something horrible as he fights for his life, unable to call out for assistance, and feeling as if he is being squeezed by an enormous force. Jake can hear the others calling out, but the sound seems to be growing further and further away. As the novel progresses, the reader will discover why this is significant.

The disappearance of Jake Johnson sends everyone back to the police station to regroup. Bryce calls the governor, a long time friend and explains the situation in Snowfield to him. The governor agrees to provide Bryce with whatever he needs and to hold off on sending anyone else until the situation is under control. The fact that the governor is taking the advice of Hammond points out that the sheriff is a highly trustworthy individual who can be trusted in a troubling situation.

The arrival of the insect-like creature at the windows of the police station gives the reader a glimpse at what the group is dealing with. The insect is moth-like, but the size of an eagle. It is clear that the insect is at the window to frighten those inside, though Lisa is once again the only one willing to give voice to such thoughts. Though Lisa is the youngest, she seems to have a grasp on the situation and is willing to accept, perhaps with childlike innocence, the fact that they are not dealing with something of this world. Gradually, the others at least open up to the idea, though Stu Wargle refuses to accept any such thing. This fact will also come into play later in the novel.





# **Part One: Chapters 16-20; Out of the Dark, The Hour Before Midnight, London, England, The Dead of Night, Bodysnatchers**

## **Part One: Chapters 16-20; Out of the Dark, The Hour Before Midnight, London, England, The Dead of Night, Bodysnatchers Summary**

Bryce leads the group onto the street. As they progress, the moth swoops out of the air and latches onto Stu Wargle's face. Bryce advances and tries to help, but Wargle staggers around the street. The moth finally lets go and takes off as Stu crumples to the ground. Tal shoots at the insect, which flutters for a moment and then resumes flight. Bryce looks at Wargle and sees that his face is gone.

In chapter seventeen, the group gathers in the Hilltop Inn. Tal wonders why the insect did not die when he shot it. Lisa calmly states that guns will not save them. The young girl then goes on to say that the insect has specifically targeted Wargle because he had refused to believe what he had seen at the window. The creature had been teaching them all a lesson. Though Tal thinks that Lisa might be crediting the thing with too much intelligence, he begins to wonder himself.

Bryce and Jenny examine the body of Stu Wargle. Not only is the deputy's face gone, but so is his brain. Bryce blames himself for taking the group into the street, but Jenny reminds him that Jake was taken in a store. It appears nowhere is safe. As they talk, the street lights up and Bryce notes the arrival of his ten deputies.

In chapter eighteen, Burt Sandler, a literary agent, meets with Dr. Timothy Flyte in London, England. Sandler is interested in representing Flyte in the rewrite of his seventeen-year-old novel, *The Ancient Enemy*. Flyte explains to Sandler how he was drummed out of the university where he had been teaching after his book had been published. Flyte's novel documented the mass disappearances of both humans and animals throughout the centuries, and had been considered highly questionable by his colleagues.

Sandler suggests that if more disappearances had taken place since the book was published, Flyte might have had more credibility. Flyte informs Sandler that there have been at least two such cases, one of which involved the mass disappearance of fish in the ocean. Sandler is stunned, but realizes that if *The Ancient Enemy* were rewritten in a more commercial way, there is money to be made.



In chapter nineteen, Bryce makes sure the Hilltop Inn is secure. The body of Stu Wargle has been moved to a utility room, visible by four men. The group settles down for the night and Jenny talks to Lisa, again asking if their mother ever blames her for her father's death. Lisa reiterates that their mother was always proud of her.

Bryce and Jenny talk, sharing their lives. Bryce talks about his wife and son and Jenny remembers reading the article in the newspaper. Jenny tells Bryce about her mistakes. Jenny had lived with a man when she was young, and her parents had disapproved. Jenny's father's blood pressure caused him to die of a stroke and Jenny has always believed that she was the cause, and that her mother had too. Jenny feels more free than she has in years, as she has learned from Lisa that their mother had not blamed her at all.

Lisa wakes and heads to the bathroom, where she is startled by the arrival of a naked Stu Wargle. The deputy's face is again intact as he advances on the young girl, making sexual gestures and asking for a kiss. Lisa screams and passes out as the deputy closes in on her.

In chapter twenty, Jenny and Bryce try and reassure Lisa, who they had found alone in the bathroom. Bryce and Tal check the utility room and discover the body of the deputy is gone. The deputies outside tell Bryce that no one went in or came out of the utility room. There is no other access point to the room except the drain and the heating vent.

Frank tells Bryce about Stu's comments earlier regarding Lisa. Frank reminds Bryce that there is no way that Lisa could have heard Stu make sexual comments, and in his eyes, that gives Lisa more credibility.

In the woods outside Snowfield, a fox searches for prey. The fox sees a raccoon, which then changes into a group of field mice. The quick changing continues, as the fox knows instinctively that something is very wrong. Crossing a hole in the ground, the fox is seized and dragged in.

## **Part One: Chapters 16-20; Out of the Dark, The Hour Before Midnight, London, England, The Dead of Night, Bodysnatchers Analysis**

The thing that has been terrorizing the town of Snowfield shows itself again as the group heads to the Hilltop Inn. The moth-like creature swoops out of the air and eats the flesh from Stu Wargle's face as well as his brain in a matter of seconds. Jenny also discovers after examining the body that it appears that the officer's blood has been drained as well.

The impossibility of the situation breaks Jenny's composure, finally, but Bryce is able to calm her, reminding her that she has held her own where most people would have been frightened beyond belief.



Lisa, though the youngest in the group, seems to have a better idea of what is going on in the mind of whatever is toying with them, for it does seem that they are being toyed with. Lisa comments that the moth had attacked Wargle because he had refused to believe in what he was seeing. Lisa's thoughts frighten Tal, as he can't imagine whatever they are dealing with having that much intelligence.

The fact that the enemy has intelligence and is toying with the group is proven when Lisa is faced with the restored but naked Stu Wargle in the bathroom. The dead man makes crude sexual remarks to the girl, echoing the comments he had made to Frank Autry earlier in the novel. As Frank points out to Bryce, there is no way that Lisa could have heard Stu's comments, and this gives Lisa credibility in the eyes of the officers, though her strength in the situation has already earned their respect.

Jenny's past is revealed when she shares her youthful mistakes with Bryce. Jenny had lived with a man, acting in a way that upset her parents. Jenny has always believed that the disappointment her father felt had caused the stroke killed him. Lisa finally gets the truth through to her sister and the relief that Jenny feels, after working so hard to prove herself worthy, is palpable.

The emotional state of the different officers is explored a bit, allowing the reader to get a better sense of them and the feelings that they are keeping to themselves.

The reader is introduced to Dr. Timothy Flyte, apparently the person named on the bathroom wall in the hotel room. While speaking to Burt Sandler, Flyte discusses how his career was destroyed because of his book, *The Ancient Enemy*. Flyte's book apparently details his theory of mass disappearances throughout hundreds of years. Flyte does not go into detail about his theory, but the fact that his theory ties into whatever is happening in Snowfield makes it clear that there is a connection in Flyte's book to whatever is happening in the California town.

Fletcher Kale returns to the novel, sitting in his cell and planning what he will do once he is out of jail. Kale is full of himself, never imagining that he will remain in jail for the horrible murder of his wife and son. To Kale, it was his right to kill them, as they stood in the way of what he wanted. Kale plans to escape to the mountains, and since that is where Snowfield is, it is clear that he will somehow become involved in the crisis in the small town.

The 'talents' of whatever is active in Snowfield is showcase in the woods when a fox comes across raccoons. The shape shifting abilities of the raccoons, gives the reader an idea that the moth and the raccoons and mice are all part of the same thing.



## **Part Two, Phantoms: Chapters 21-25; The Big Story, Morning in Snowfield, The Crisis Team, Cold Terror, Questions**

### **Part Two, Phantoms: Chapters 21-25; The Big Story, Morning in Snowfield, The Crisis Team, Cold Terror, Questions Summary**

Through a series of leaks to the media, word quickly spreads about what is going on in Snowfield. By the time Monday morning arrives, the media has swarmed Santa Mira, waiting for word about what is going on the small town.

In chapter twenty-two, as generators and a short wave radio are delivered to the road block, Jennie stops at her house to gather medical supplies. The phone rings and Jenny answers, only to be greeted by the noises that Bryce had heard. Animal cries, children laughing and crying and screams come across the line, followed by the voice of Stu Wargle telling Jenny what he plans on doing to her sister. Jenny then stops at the pharmacy for more supplies where the phone again rings. Stu Wargle once again speaks about his desire for Lisa.

Jenny returns to the inn and tells Bryce what she has heard. Lisa interrupts them and hurries them to the kitchen where a child's voice is singing nursery rhymes. The voice is coming from the sink drain. When the singing stops, Bryce nears the sink. As he leans forward, a gush of disgusting water sprays to the ceiling, spraying those in the kitchen with the rancid water.

In chapter twenty-three, the CBW Defense Unit arrives with two large motor homes. The team exits, wearing biohazard suits and carrying machine guns. Bryce and Jenny are shocked to be held at bay by weapons. General Copperfield exits a trailer and tells the men to stand down. Hammond is angry at Copperfield's procedure, which Copperfield explains as normal. The general tells those assembled that they are deployed to find out what is going on in a situation and are not equipped to help. Jenny is angry to discover that Copperfield's team would kill the 'victims' of a horrible situation if they deem it necessary for the operation.

Hammond tries to tell Copperfield about what has been going on in town, but the general tells him that he will examine the town and the team will determine what is going on. The party departs for the bakery.

In chapter twenty-four, Copperfield's team documents the situation with photos, then takes the heads and hands to examine. Samples are taken from everywhere to see if there is any evidence of a toxin or nerve gas. The group continues to the apartment



where the dead woman had fired shots at her assailant. Jenny tells the general that the woman was a marksman and would not have missed at such close range.

At Gilmartin's Market, Hammond tells the general what happened to Jake Johnson. Copperfield suggests that the group has been having mass hallucinations. A noise from the cooler alerts them and the voice of Jake Johnson calls for help, claiming that his leg is broken. Copperfield sends his men to check, though Hammond tells him not to.

A soldier enters the cooler and the door slams shut. Screams are heard and gunfire. Hammond takes the handle of the cooler apart so that they can get the door open. All are horrified to see the empty biohazard suit of the man hanging from a meat hook.

In chapter twenty-five, two of Copperfield's men enter the sewer to run a power line. The general has told the men to evacuate immediately if they see anything odd. After the job is completed, the men are shocked to see a parade of animals, dogs, cats, snakes, rabbits and all sorts of others walking through an adjoining tunnel. The men run for the ladder, one escaping, but the second being dragged back just as he reaches the street. The microphone on the soldier's suit is still active and all of Copperfield's team can hear the man screaming, 'It's the devil!'

## **Part Two, Phantoms: Chapters 21-25; The Big Story, Morning in Snowfield, The Crisis Team, Cold Terror, Questions Analysis**

Word reaches those outside of Snowfield about the strange activities that are taking place. Despite the efforts the police have made to keep things quiet, the press arrives in Santa Mira, waiting for word about what is really going on.

While waiting for the arrival of Copperfield's team, Jenny tries to keep herself busy, gathering supplies for whatever injuries might occur. Though Jenny is trying to be helpful, she is sadly aware that there are no injuries in Snowfield, only death. Regardless, as a doctor, Jenny feels the need to do what she can in case of emergency. Stopping first at her office and then the pharmacy, Jenny receives two phone calls from the mysterious creature that torments them. Jenny hears the animals and screeching that Bryce had heard, but then hears the voice of Stu Wargle making crude remarks about Lisa. Jenny refused to react, as it seems that whatever is causing the trouble in Snowfield enjoys toying with those that have survived.

The arrival of Copperfield and the CBW team is not the relief that Jenny had first hoped for. To look forward to having someone fix the situation and then be met with weapons and a cautious response is a disappointment. Copperfield's matter of fact statement that there are times when they are overwhelmed by victims of a crisis and they might need to use guns to keep the team safe is a wake-up call for all present.

Copperfield's matter of fact attitude might be a relief to others in a different situation, but in Snowfield it is wasted. The general's refusal to discuss an explanation outside of



something scientific is unsettling to Hammond and Jenny. Though Jenny is a doctor, she has moved beyond the point of disbelief that has troubled her since arriving back in Snowfield.

Copperfield's team is brought to full awareness when the group enters the market where Jake Johnson was taken. The general suggests that Johnson might have deserted, angering Hammond and his men. The general goes on to suggest that maybe the group is delusional, affected by whatever is happening in Snowfield. Copperfield's opinion changes when his own man becomes a victim, lured into the cooler by the voice of Jake Johnson. When the empty cooler, littered with shell casing but no blood is revealed, the general must accept that whatever is going on is beyond his experience.

The disappearance of another man while in the sewers beneath the main street forces the CBW team to accept that they must work harder than they ever have in order to discover what is going on in the small town. They have never seen anything like it, and the tests that they begin may mean the difference between life and death for them all.



## **Part Two: Chapters 26-30; London, England, Escape, Body Count, On the Run, Some Answers/More Questions**

### **Part Two: Chapters 26-30; London, England, Escape, Body Count, On the Run, Some Answers/More Questions Summary**

Burt Sandler calls Timothy Flyte and informs him of what is going on in Snowfield. Flyte is amazed, then stunned when Sandler tells him he must get to California at once to have a press conference and tell everyone about the mass disappearances he has written about. Flyte is concerned about taking advantage of the situation but Sandler convinces him he must go for the good of all.

In chapter twenty-seven, Fletcher Kale is taken to court. At first Kale finds himself crying as he realizes that he might not reach his dreams. Kale realizes he will have no other chance and he attacks the deputy, using his only weapon, his teeth. Biting the deputy he is able to rip into the man's throat, killing him. Kale finds a car in a nearby parking lot and escapes.

In chapter twenty-eight, search teams look for bodies and try to document the missing. In Our Lady of the Mountains, Autry and Brogan discover the priest has been hung on the cross over the altar. The priest is the only body that has been found decomposing. Gordy is visibly shaken and states that the creature is trying to take away their faith that God will help them survive.

In an abandoned kitchen, Frank makes another discovery. Hundreds of bullets are strewn on the floor. Frank Autry realizes that the bullets must be the ones fired at the unknown assailant, and that whatever it is simply expelled the bullets from itself.

In chapter twenty-nine, Fletcher Kale hears a report on the radio about Jake Johnson and remembers selling the deputy a cabin in the woods. Kale had visited the site and found a nearby cave filled with survival equipment. Kale goes to Johnson's house in town and breaks in, changing his blood stained clothes and searches for a stash of weapons.

In chapter thirty, Bryce Hammond and Jenny Paige find a sink filled with all sorts of jewelry and are at a loss to explain it. Lisa believes that the jewelry is the same as the bullets. The creature simply expelled what it could not absorb.

Hammond is informed of the escape of Fletcher Kale as Sara Yamaguchi, a scientist, gives the sheriff and Jenny a report of her findings. The bodies that have been left





behind appear to have been injected with a type of preservative, like a spider would use its web to preserve a meal. All of the victims appear to have been killed by asphyxiation.

The group continues to discuss what is happening when Sara realizes that the others in her party should have returned by now. Hammond leads his group to the trailers where they find the suits of Copperfield and the rest of the team, empty. No shots have been fired and there appears to be no sign of violence, yet everyone is gone.

## **Part Two: Chapters 26-30; London, England, Escape, Body Count, On the Run, Some Answers/More Questions Analysis**

Timothy Flyte learns of the situation in Snowfield and is amazed that the subject of his book is at work again. Flyte worries that he might be capitalizing on the terrible situation in Snowfield, but Sandler convinces him that it is his duty to inform the public of the horrors that have taken place in the past and might be tied to the small skiing town. Flyte has been an obscure academic for many years, but his life and his book are tied to Snowfield because of the message on the mirror in the inn. It is clear that the professor will have more to do with the people that survive in the small town.

Fletcher Kale, feeling sorry for himself in jail, wonders how he will manage to make his dreams a reality. Kale has refused to believe he is meant for anything less than greatness, but the reality of his predicament suddenly dawns on him as he is being transported to court. The taunts of the other prisoners as he is led out in tears, and the contempt of the officer escorting him, leads Kale to make a chance at escape. Taking advantage of the fact that the police are short staffed, Kale uses his teeth to bite the throat of his escort, a kind of animal sense of survival taking over the killer. Once again free, Kale rationalizes yet another murder, believing that he is meant for better things and that those that stand in his way are supposed to be handled however necessary.

Kale hears of the situation in Snowfield and once again takes advantage of other's tragedies by heading to Jake Johnson's home in town. Kale searches for guns after cleaning himself up, planning on using the cabin in the woods that he sold to Johnson the previous year. Kale is a user, and has no problem whatsoever doing what he feels is his right.

Several important discoveries are made in town, the first being the expelled bullets and the jewelry in the sink of an empty house. It is clear that the shots fired did strike the being that is terrorizing Snowfield, but they had no effect on it at all. The entity simply expelled them when it had a few spare minutes. The jewelry shows that the victims have been absorbed in some way, but the jewelry, being metal, was of no use to the creature and was also expelled. The fact that the jewelry is in a sink connects to the use of drains and sewers as a means for the creature to move around. It again explains how the 'thing' got into locked and barricaded rooms.





The discovery of the priest hung on the cross appears to be exactly as Gordy describes it. The fact that the priest is not preserved like the other bodies found shows that the entity in Snowfield is mocking religion and trying to erase the hope of the survivors in whatever God they believe in. The survivors are meant to lose hope, and it is clear to the reader that Gordy is losing his.

Sara Yamaguchi's reports interest Jenny as a doctor, as the scientist reveals that the bodies that have been left behind appear to have been injected with some type of preservative. Jenny remembers Lisa stating that perhaps the missing people were all being held somewhere, like a spider weaves its victim in a web. It seems that the bodies left behind are meant for later consumption, and Snowfield is the creature's web.

The discovery that Copperfield and his entire team has been taken in the few minutes since they went to change out of their suits is another blow to the survivors. It is becoming even more clear to those left that they will never make it out of Snowfield alive.



## Part Two: Chapters 31-35, Computer Games, Destiny, Phantoms, Saying Goodbye, Pandemonium

### Part Two: Chapters 31-35, Computer Games, Destiny, Phantoms, Saying Goodbye, Pandemonium Summary

A computer comes to life and invites Hammond to play Twenty Questions. Sara Yamaguchi sits down and begins to type questions. The group is told that it has many names, such as countless, and many. The thing then tells them they are cattle, and wants to know when Flyte, its biographer will arrive. Flyte is guaranteed safe passage by the creature who declares, "I am all and none, I am nothing, I am everything."

In chapter thirty-two, Fletcher Kale has found guns in Jackson's home as well as cash that the deputy's father had hidden over the years. Kale reflects on how a few hours ago he had been in jail and now he has enough money to take care of his problems. Kale finds it amusing that the money would have been enough to keep him from killing his wife and son when Joanna would not give him money for his real estate deal with High Country Investments.

In chapter thirty-three, the survivors head back to the inn when a dog approaches them. Gordy goes to the dog, though the others warn him not to. As Gordy comforts the animal, it changes before the eyes of the group into several other creatures, then begins to surround Gordy's body. Gordy screams as he is consumed. Tal shoots his friend, rather than see him suffer. As Gordy's body is completely consumed, the beast changes to a wolf. A flood of jelly-like substance shoots out of the sewer and towers over the group, changing from a tower of limbs and faces to a serpent. The wolf is absorbed into the column then the blob recedes and the night is quiet.

In chapter thirty-four, the survivors discuss the creature they have seen. The bruises on the remaining bodies are clearly from being squeezed by the creature they saw do the same to Gordy. Jenny also realizes that the water they have found throughout town is the water that is left after bodies have been absorbed. Sara and Jenny realize that the creature can take on the shape and sound of the things it has absorbed, and Jenny mentions that it appears to absorb their memories and intelligence as well.

In chapter thirty-five, Flyte arrives in Santa Mira and speaks to Bryce Hammond on the phone. The sheriff tells the professor about the massive amoeboid thing that they have seen. Flyte is amazed that his theory is correct. Hammond tells Flyte that the creature wants him in Snowfield and the two are interrupted by different voices inviting Flyte to 'come play.' The professor is in awe of the seeming intelligence of the creature and makes plans to go to Snowfield despite Hammond's warnings that the creature should not be trusted to keep his promise of safe passage.



## Part Two: Chapters 31-35, Computer Games, Destiny, Phantoms, Saying Goodbye, Pandemonium Analysis

The creature that has been tormenting the survivors in Snowfield makes contact with the group inside one of the now empty trailers of General Copperfield. The being is condescending and rude, mocking those present. The creature exhibits the intelligence that Lisa has suggested is present, and claims that it is known by many different names. This fits in with the theory that Timothy Flyte has; that many different people over the centuries have called the thing by many different names.

The Ancient Enemy asks when Timothy Flyte will arrive in Snowfield, shocking the group. The thing claims that Flyte is his biographer. This also fits with the theory that Jenny has voiced. It seems that the Ancient Enemy learned of the existence of Timothy Flyte when it absorbed the body and therefore the knowledge of the person who wrote the names on the bathroom mirror.

Flyte is guaranteed safe passage by the creature, though the others know that there is little chance of them making it out of the town alive. Hammond tries to convey this to Flyte when they speak on the phone, but the voices the creature uses tell the professor if he does not come to Snowfield, all the survivors will be killed.

Gordy snaps under the pressure of what has been going on in town and convinces himself that he has earned the wrath of God because he ignored the wishes of his parents by not becoming a veterinarian. The dog that appears on the street seems to Gordy a sign of redemption, and though the others warn him he goes to the animal anyway. The viciousness of the creature that lurks under the town is exhibited as the dog morphs into several other creatures and devours the poor deputy. It is clear that despite the fact that the creature is not always visible, it sees and hears what the survivors are thinking, as well as taking advantage of any weakness it can find.

Fletcher Kale has found the guns he searched for at Jake Johnson's house, as well as a stash of money that Johnson's father had buried years earlier. Kale once again exhibits his narcissistic personality by not regretting the death of his wife and son, but finding irony in the fact that the money would have covered his needs. Kale thinks it is funny that he has gone from being a criminal to a free man, one with money to spare and a bright future before him. Kale is still unable to recognize the problems that might present themselves in his life and continues to believe he is destined for greatness.



## Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 36-40,

### Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 36-40, Summary

Ringling church bells announce the arrival of Timothy Flyte in Snowfield. Hammond tells Flyte about what has been going on in town and the professor is amazed. Flyte tells the survivors that the creature they are dealing with might be a survivor of the Mesozoic Era, feeding periodically off of large villages throughout history, which is Flyte's theory about why there have been such occurrences throughout time. Flyte claims that the Ancient Enemy might even be responsible for the disappearance of dinosaurs.

The creature arrives, emerging from the vents on the wall. Tentacles form and reach out, grabbing Frank Autry around the waist and throat. Frank's skin seems to melt and his head is severed. Though horrified, Flyte comments that he wishes to study the creature and a disembodied voice emanates from the creature, directing the group to the lab.

In chapter thirty-seven, the survivors gather in the lab. The computer screens flash on, announcing the arrival of a spider, the screen declaring it 'flesh of my flesh.' The survivors watch as the spider morphs into a cockroach, a mouse and a spider once again.

In chapter thirty-eight, Sara and Jenny examine the samples under microscopes. Sara tells the others that the creature is made up a substance close to that of petroleum jelly. Jenny and Bryce ask if this is significant, but Sara seems reluctant to answer.

Lisa calls the others to the Petri dish where the spider has been rapidly transforming into other creatures, growing frantic. While the group watches, the spider turns to a jelly-like substance and is still. The small portion of the creature is dead. Jenny thinks that the spider has died because it was away from the host too long.

Sara tells the creature through the computer that Flyte would like to run more tests in order to document it more accurately. The creature agrees readily. Timothy Flyte tries to communicate with the Enemy and asks it why they cannot live in peace together. The Enemy responds that humans are cattle and that it is the superior being. When Flyte suggests that the only reason the creature is intelligent is because it has consumed humans, taking their intelligence, the Enemy tells Flyte that he is boring. Sara Yamaguchi calls her base and requests some supplies. Sara names some specific things but is as vague as possible, as she does not want to alert the ever present Enemy.

In chapter thirty-nine, Fletcher Kale is in the woods near Jake Johnson's cabin, but hesitates, seeing the motorcycles of the Demon Chrome gang surrounding the house. While Kale tries to decide what to do, Jake Johnson, completely naked, comes out of the woods and walks toward him. Before Kale can react, another Jake Johnson exits the woods, then another and another. Kale shoots at the men but the bullets have no



effect. The beings raise their hands which appear to melt, and Kale finds himself herded into the cave he has been seeking all along. Inside the cave Kale finds a pulsing tower of slime rising out of the pool where a well had been, and Jeter, leader of Demon Chrome, sitting beside the column that changes constantly, pulsing with eyes, mouths, wings and limbs.

In chapter forty, a helicopter delivers a large crate to Snowfield. Sara removes four large spraying devices mounted on back harnesses. Sara explains that the sprayers contain Biosan-4, a chemical that was developed to 'eat' oil spills. Sara hopes that the Biosan-4 will work on the creature the same way it works on oil spills.

The group works quickly, knowing that the Enemy will be listening and will act. A buzzing sound alerts the group and they all look up to see a giant wasp swooping toward them. Jenny and Bryce quickly spray the insect which reacts, but it continues forward. Tal sprays the wasp again and finally it falls to the ground where it tries to transform but is unable to. The group is amazed when the wasp turns into a puddle of ooze and dies.

Tentacles erupt from the drains and angrily flail around. Sara is grabbed before anyone can react, and the tentacles quickly behead the scientist, then toss her body to the ground. Tal rushes to the sewer and sprays the chemical down into the drain and the tentacles retreat. Before there is a chance to relax and regroup, the ground splits and separates the group as a gaping hole now exists. Timothy Flyte is pinned beneath a giant slab of concrete and Bryce tries to get to him. Jenny worries for the man she has grown to respect and admire as she realizes that the ground beneath her shifts as well.

## **Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 36-40, Analysis**

As the novel nears its climax, events begin to happen rapidly. The arrival of Timothy Flyte in Snowfield is heralded by all of the church bells in the town as the Enemy realizes that its biographer has arrived. The fact that church bells are rung is a bit significant, as there have been religious references throughout the novel. Two of the major references are the death of the priest on the cross in the church, and the fact that the creature refers to Flyte as its "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John". The fact that Gordy believed that he had turned his back on God by denying his parents' wishes and had died trying to set things right is also important. It is clear that the creature has knowledge of religion when it provides a sample for the survivors to examine, referring to the spider as 'flesh of my flesh'.

Frank Autry's death prompts Flyte to state that he wishes to study the creature. The Enemy is eager to prove how wonderful it is, so it directs the group to the lab to await a sample. Though there is no way for it to know it at the time, this action will be the Enemy's downfall in the end.

Sara makes a discovery in the lab, but does not share it aloud with the others, knowing that the creature is listening. Instead, Sara respectfully asks for more equipment to



conduct more work. Again, the creature is more than willing to prove how great it is and agrees. Before the group leaves, Timothy Flyte speaks to the Enemy through the computer, suggesting to it that without man it would not be as great as it believes. The creature is angered and it is this moment that seals the fate of the professor.

Sara is able to communicate her needs to her base without alerting the creature and the army delivers what she needs. Biosan-4, a chemical harmless to humans, has been developed in order to clean up oil spills. Sara hopes that the chemical will react to the petroleum base of the creature the same way it works with oil. When the deadly giant wasp arrives on the scene it is sprayed with Biosan-4. Amazingly, the chemical works and the wasp dies.

The Enemy is clearly angered by this and reacts quickly, decapitating Sara Yamaguchi before the others can react. Tal's quick thinking buys them some time when he sprays the tentacles that had killed the scientist, but the world erupts around them, splitting the group on opposite sides of the large hole in the road.

The size of the Enemy is highlighted when Fletcher Kale encounters the pulsing column of ooze in the cave on Jake Johnson's property. Even while tormenting the group in town, the creature is communicating with Gene Terr. Kale had been herded like the cattle that the creature calls humans by four naked beings that have the form of the dead deputy.

Kale is frightened at first, but quickly accepts Jeter's explanation that the creature in the cave is Lucifer and they are his disciples. Rather than question it, Kale accepts easily, thinking that perhaps he has been acting with the protection of this demon all along.



## Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 41-45

### Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 41-45 Summary

In the cave, Jeter tells Fletcher Kale that the creature in the well is Lucifer and they are his disciples. The gang member tells Kale that he found the creature after being herded into the cave by the four Jake Johnson's just as Kale had. Jeter has been sitting in the cave for two days, watching Lucifer and listening to the creature explain things to him. Kale feels something like a religious rapture when Jeter tells him that Lucifer is their god and they will be protected forever if they do his work.

In chapter forty-two, Tal grabs Jenny from behind and pulls her to safety before she falls in the chasm in the road. Bryce is unable to reach Flyte, who slides into the hole as a giant spider comes forward toward him. Bryce quickly grabs the extra canisters of Biosan-4 and climbs into the hole toward Flyte, while Jenny and Tal shoot liquid from their sprayers onto the spider.

The spider, though injured, reaches Flyte and states, "I thought you were my Matthew, but you were my Judas", then bites the professor. While Flyte dies, Bryce Hammond dumps the containers of chemicals deep into the hole, then flees. The blob surges, busting windows out of the buildings on the street and out of the chasm and tentacles form, searching for prey. A tentacle grabs Lisa but she is able to break away. Another grabs Tal and begins to drag him, but Jenny is able to pry the thing loose from the deputy without much damage. Jenny is relieved to see that her sister and Bryce are safe as well, and tells Tal that she thinks they might have won.

In chapter forty-three, Kale is not afraid, but his leg is bothering him as he sits in the cave and tells Jeter what has gone on in Snowfield. Jeter thinks that this is a sign from Lucifer, and that as its apostles, they can do anything now. The creature speaks, asking the two men if they are his. Kale and Jeter swear alliance and the creature tells them that it will be leaving soon, that it is not its time, but that if they will perform five tasks they will be protected as its soldiers. The two men readily agree.

The creature creeps into the ground, shedding pieces of itself as it retreats to the sea. Having reached the end of its feeding period it had planned to go to sea regardless, but has stayed in Snowfield toying with the survivors. The Ancient Enemy realizes that it has been condemned by the mythology that it has encouraged through the years. Though the creature has grown to an enormous size though the years it has flourished, it winds up a small piece of itself, sheltered deep in the earth, hoping to have the strength to return one day.

In chapter forty-four, the town is silent and Lisa tells the survivors that the Enemy is dead, remarking that the town feels different. Jenny wonders aloud that man might be responsible for the evilness of the creature; that if it had absorbed man's intelligence, it





surely had absorbed the evil from them as well. The group heads to one of the squad cars, and is finally able to leave Snowfield.

In chapter forty-five, five days have passed and Bryce is in Timmy's room in the hospital in Santa Mira, thankful that he is able to hold his son's hand. It is time for healing. Tal and Jenny are upstairs where Tal is being discharge. Tal suddenly pulls his gun and starts firing at Gene' Jeter' Terr, who has come to kill them. Downstairs in Timmy's room, Bryce is confronted with a very ill Fletcher Kale, who has come to kill Timmy and Bryce. The death of the five survivors is the task that the Enemy has given to Kale and Jeter. Bryce kills Kale and is wounded himself, but the wound is minor. Tal kills Jeter. Jenny tells the men that Kale died with spotted fever the result of spider bites he had gotten in the woods near Jake Johnson's cabin.

A year later, Bryce and Jenny are married and on their honeymoon. The two discuss the past and Bryce tells Jenny that he has had a dream where Timmy spoke and told him that if there is a devil then there must be a God. Jenny responds that she doesn't know about God and the devil, but she does know that they were meant to survive, and they were meant to be together. Despite Jenny's optimistic attitude, she cannot help but wonder where the creature waits, and what is to come should it ever return.

## **Part Two: Phantoms; Chapters 41-45 Analysis**

Tal is able to keep Jenny from tumbling into the hole but Bryce is not as lucky in saving Flyte. Already injured, Flyte is approached by a giant spider who states that Flyte is not its Matthew, but its Judas. Again, religion is the focus as the creature accuses Flyte of being the apostle that turned on Jesus, rather than the apostle that documents the life of Christ in a glorious manner.

The same religious theme continues in the cave with Jeter and Kale as the leader of the motorcycle gang convinces Kale that they are apostles, or disciples, but instead of worshipping God, they serve Lucifer.

Bryce is unable to save Flyte from death at the mouth of the giant spider but thinks quickly by dumping the Biosan-4 into the giant hole the creature resides in. Though the creature retreats immediately, it is clear that there has been a dramatic change. The tentacles that reach for victims are weak, and though there is still acid in the tentacles, Tal has only minor burns and does not come close to be decapitated.

The group is finally able to leave the ghost town that Snowfield has become, but not before Jenny comes to the realization that though the creature might have obtained its intelligence from the men it has consumed over the centuries, it has learned to be evil from them as well.

The creature retreats, shedding the pieces of itself that have been damaged, but is unable to regenerate quickly enough to replace the flesh it loses. The creature realizes that its over-confidence and ego have played a part in its downfall as it finds a place deep in the earth to try and heal. Before it dies, however, it tries one more time to kill the





survivors of Snowfield as it has promised to do all along. The creature tells Jeter and Kale that if the two men complete five tasks, which the reader will learn is to murder the survivors as well as the son of Bryce Hammond, they will be protected.

The theme of good versus evil that has been woven into the entire novel comes to a head again as the survivors gather in the hospital in Santa Mira. Though the group believes the horrors of Snowfield are behind them, they soon discover this is not the case when Jeter and Kale arrive to perform the tasks put forward by their master. Jeter is killed by Tal, who reacts with his usual speed, and Bryce kills Kale, who is very ill, suffering from spotted fever. Again, the triumph of good over evil is shown as the two men die while trying to serve the creature they believe is Lucifer.

The novel ends a year later as Bryce and Jenny celebrate their marriage on their honeymoon in Hawaii. Though the two have come a great distance from the horrors in Snowfield, it is clear that they still struggle with the past. Despite this, they have taken the good that has come from the bad and moved forward. Jenny still wonders what might happen someday in the future if the Ancient Enemy returns, but chooses to accept the gifts she has been given and cherish the life she has.



# Characters

## Dr. Jennifer Paige

Dr. Jennifer Paige is an attractive redhead in her thirties, who owns her own practice in the small skiing town of Snowfield, California. Jennifer, or Jenny to her friends, is an intelligent woman, someone who keeps her head in critical situations. As the guardian of her younger sister, Lisa, this is something that will come in handy. After the sudden death of their mother, Jenny plans on living her life with her sister in the town she now calls home. Despite Jenny's best intentions, things in Snowfield quickly prove that even the best laid plans might not happen.

Jenny and Lisa return to Snowfield to discover that the entire town population is either dead or missing. As a doctor, Jenny looks for a rational explanation for the situation, but the two sisters quickly learn that whatever is going on in the small town is not anything that can be explained away. Despite the gruesome bodies that they discover in the homes and businesses, Jenny manages to keep her head on her shoulders and protect her sister at the same time.

The arrival of Bryce Hammond, the sheriff of Santa Mira, gives Jenny an adult male to interact with, one that brings the doctor out of her shell. The reader learns that Jenny has always felt responsible for the death of her father due to the personal choices she made when she was young. After Jenny dropped out of college to support her older live-in lover, Jenny's father had died of a massive stroke. Jenny quickly realized as her personal relationship with her lover deteriorated that she had made the wrong choices in her life. That, coupled with the feeling that her mother blamed her for her father's death, pushed Jenny to exceed beyond even her own expectations, but by doing so she was missing out on life. Lisa's revelation that their mother had never expressed any issues of blame releases Jenny from the shadow she has lived under for so many years.

Jenny's relief allows her to look outside of herself for the first time, and the attraction that she feels for Hammond, as well as the connection that two share, also allow her to keep her senses while the horror that takes place in Snowfield comes to a head. Because of Jenny's inner strength and determination, she is able to survive what seems to be a hopeless situation.

## Sheriff Bryce Hammond

The sheriff in nearby Santa Mira, Bryce Hammond is an attractive thirty-nine-year-old whose appearance sometimes makes others think that he is not as smart as he seems. Despite this, Hammond is an extremely intelligent man, one who can lull a suspect into a false sense of security before they realize they have been effectively trapped.



Hammond also suffers from tragedies in his life, similar to Jennifer Paige. Hammond's wife had been killed instantly in a car accident. The same accident has left Hammond's young son in a coma for over a year. Though the horrifying tragedy had caused Bryce to shut down emotionally for some time, he is beginning to come back into himself at the beginning of the novel.

The situation in Snowfield is one that no law enforcement officer has had to deal with, but despite this, Hammond presents himself as a capable individual, one that takes in the situation that is handed to him and works with what he has. Hammond is very capable and the faith that his officers have in him also makes this clear to the reader. Hammond uses his wits to keep those around him as safe as possible, but he is a caring person, one that feels the loss of each person who is killed or taken.

Bryce Hammond is attracted to Jenny but is aware that they might not make it out of Snowfield alive. Rather than act impulsively, adding an added complication to the already tense situation, Hammond instead proposes that the two make a date for the future, giving them something to look forward to. Jenny agrees readily, knowing that they might not ever make it out of town, but relishing the ability to look forward to something. By acting this way, Hammond reinforces the feeling that he will make sure everything is fine.

## The Ancient Enemy

The Ancient Enemy is the entity that takes over the town of Snowfield, killing the entire population. The entity encompasses pure evil, destroying all living things it can, whether human or animal. Though it calls itself by many names when interacting with the survivors, there is never a clear indication of what the creature actually is.

The devastation in Snowfield has already taken place when Jenny and Lisa arrive, but the condition of the victims is unexplainable at the time. The people that have been killed and left behind are covered in what appears to be one large bruise, and though there is swelling to the bodies, there is no decomposition. Later in the novel, after those present have a chance to see the Enemy in action, they learn that the victims are suffocated while being completely enveloped by the creature. Such enormous pressure is put on the individuals that they are bruised over every inch.

Some of the victims also appear to have been killed without any warning, found dead in the act of chewing food or preparing a meal. This shows how quickly the Enemy can kill, acting so quickly that no one has any idea that death is seconds away. There are also other victims, people who have died with screams of terror forever frozen on their faces. It is clear to those that find them that whatever has killed them was horrific. In other cases, there are victims that are dismembered. The survivors learn that the creature excretes an acidic material that cuts through whatever it touches very quickly, leaving very little blood behind, and giving the victim no time to struggle.



The Ancient Enemy eventually communicates with those present by using the computer terminals in General Copperfield's trailers. Hammond, Jenny and the others learn that the creature has no intention of letting them live, and has been toying with them. The Enemy wants only one thing, for Timothy Flyte to come to town so that 'he' can meet the man that has discovered his existence.

The team learns through Timothy Flyte that The Ancient Enemy, the title of Flyte's book, has been around for centuries, possibly since the beginning of time. Flyte believes that the Enemy is responsible for mass disappearances that have taken place throughout time. The disappearance of species of fish, the Mayans, settlers in America, entire villages of people, have been taken by the creature that now exists in Snowfield.

The Ancient Enemy, referred to by names like 'it' and simply called the creature through most of the novel, is eventually defeated when it is discovered that it consists of a substance that is similar to petroleum. The group of survivors manage to destroy the creature by spraying it with a chemical that was developed to consume oil spills. Though the creature is nearly destroyed, there is a question of whether it will be able to feed and grow again, many years in the future.

## Lisa Paige

The younger sister of Jennifer Paige, Lisa is now in the care of her sister since the untimely death of their mother. Though she is only fourteen, Lisa has a good head on her shoulders, which is evident when the reader learns that Lisa had discovered the body of her mother. Though there are times in the novel when Lisa reacts as a 'normal' teen would, it is clear that neither Lisa nor the situation is normal.

Despite Lisa's age, the teen has a clearer concept of the situation in Snowfield than the adults that are there. This might be because Lisa, as a teen, still has a concept of imagination than someone who is older. Regardless, Lisa senses from the beginning that whatever is taking place in Snowfield is nothing that can be easily explained. Lisa accepts from the start that whatever is killing and taking the townspeople has an intelligence, something that the others scoff at early, but eventually come to agree with.

Lisa's easy acceptance of the seemingly unexplainable allows the teen to survive the ordeal. Lisa simply deals with the situation as best she can, giving the reader a sense of the young girl's maturity.

## Timothy Flyte

The disgraced professor and author of *The Ancient Enemy*, Dr. Timothy Flyte lost the respect of his fellow academics when he wrote *The Ancient Enemy*, a novel which expressed his opinion about the mass disappearances of both people and animals throughout history. Flyte's theory, that an unknown creature has consumed entire villages of people, or species of animals, is met with ridicule from his colleagues, and he is effectively drummed out of the university where he had taught.



Flyte is linked to the town when one of the victims has written his name and the title of his book on the mirror in Snowfield. At the same time, news of the situation in Snowfield reaches Flyte's publisher, who rushes Flyte to the scene, hoping to capitalize on the situation and create free publicity.

Flyte, a decent person, only wishes to do what he can in order to understand what is going on in Snowfield and help in whatever way he can. Though Flyte has a better idea of what might be going on in the small skiing town, he has no better idea of what to do to stop the creature than anyone else. Despite this, and despite the fact that Flyte has no vested interest in protecting Snowfield or the remaining residents, the professor does what he can, eventually sacrificing himself to the creature that he alone has believed in for so long.

## Talbert Whitman

Lieutenant Talbert 'Tal' Whitman is a member of the Santa Mira sheriff's office and a good friend of Bryce Hammond. Though Bryce is his boss, Tal not only respects Bryce, but also truly likes him. This creates a good work environment for both men, one that allows them to know that they can count on each other without question.

Raised in Harlem by his aunt, Tal is the product of an abusive home, a young man who could have gone wrong but instead chose to improve his life. Leaving the city of New York behind him, Tal winds up in California, living in the sun and enjoying a life in law enforcement.

Though the situation in Snowfield is hard to believe, Tal is smart enough to know that sometimes the impossible is possible. This, coupled with his refusal to recognize fear, allows Tal to get through a horrific situation. Tal is injured in the final battle with the Ancient Enemy, but manages to survive and continue his career in law enforcement. Though Tal was forced to face his fear while dealing with the creature in Snowfield, surviving the battle allows him to look fear in the face again.

## Fletcher Kale

A resident of Santa Mira, Fletcher Kale is arrested for the murder of his wife and son after his wife refuses to give him any more money for his investments. Fletcher shows no remorse for his actions, believing that he is simply doing what needs to be done in order to achieve his goals. Kale feels he is entitled to succeed, and that others have intentionally held him back. Kale feels this way about Bryce Hammond as well, as the sheriff had seemed to be an unworthy adversary but had outwitted Kale in the end.

Kale escapes from jail, killing a deputy in the process, and heads to the mountains where Jake Johnson, one of Hammond's deputies has a cabin and a cave nearby loaded with survival equipment. When Kale arrives at the site, he is confronted with the site of three, naked, Jake Johnsons, who herd him into the cave where the supplies are located. Once in the cave, Kale discovers Gene Terr, the leader of the local motorcycle



gang in the cave, apparently worshiping the creature known as The Ancient Enemy. Terr convinces Kale that the creature is the devil and can provide them with their heart's desire if they do what is asked of them.

## **Paul Henderson**

The first character introduced in the novel, Paul Henderson is a deputy in Snowfield, California. Henderson hears screams in town and is about to investigate when he discovers that he is not alone in the previously empty station. Paul's body is discovered by Jenny and Lisa Paige when they are attempting to get help.

Jenny notices that Henderson has fired his gun three times, but there is no evidence that he struck anyone, though the bullets are nowhere to be found.

## **Jakob Liebermann**

The owner of Liebermann's Bakery, Jakob is the first victim discovered that died in a different manner than the others. Jakob's hands are severed, still clutching his rolling pin while he worked, and his head is in the oven at the bakery, grotesquely staring out into the kitchen through the window.

## **Aida Liebermann**

Aida Liebermann is Jakob's wife. Aida's head has also been severed and placed in an oven in the bakery kitchen.

## **Tom Oxley**

A resident of Snowfield, Tom is found clutching the microphone to his shortwave radio, barricaded in his den. Tom's body is covered in bruises like the other victims, but his face has a look of terror. It is clear that whatever Tom had been trying to keep out of the locked room got in anyway, before a call for help could be made.

## **Karen Oxley**

The wife of Tom, Karen is also dead in the barricaded room, also killed by something so terrifying that the look of horror on her face is frozen, even in death.

## **The Santini's**

The family that lives next door to Jenny Paige, The Santini's apparently vanished into thin air while preparing to eat Sunday dinner.



## **Bob Robine**

Fletcher Kale's attorney, Robine quits when he discovers how terrible a man that Kale is.

## **Gene 'Jeter' Terr**

The leader of the local motorcycle gang, Demon Chrome. Jeter discovers the Ancient Enemy in a cave in the mountains. Jeter, an evil man, makes what he believes to be a deal with the devil, in order to achieve his wishes.

## **Gordy Brogan**

A deputy for Bryce Hammond, Gordy is the youngest of the law enforcement officers in Snowfield. As the time in the town grows more horrific, Gordy begins to question his choices in life, wondering if he is being punished for his decision to be a police officer instead of the vet his parents had encouraged him to be. Gordy decides to leave the department and pursue a career with animals should he survive. Gordy, fearful and distraught, is thrilled when the opportunity to change his life presents itself in the form of an injured dog. Despite the warnings of the others, Gordy approaches the dog with the intent of helping it. The dog changes, absorbing Gordy as it changes into a blob like creature, devouring Gordy as it dissolves his flesh and bones.

## **Frank Autry**

A deputy of Bryce Hammond, Autry is a career military man who followed his life in the army with a career in law enforcement. Autry is an intelligent man.

## **Stu Wargle**

A deputy for Hammond, Wargle is a callous man with little integrity, Stu is killed by a giant moth-like creature. After death, Stu is used by the Ancient Enemy in order to torment the others in the group that have survived.

## **Hilda Beck**

Jenny's housekeeper, Hilda is the first body discovered in Snowfield by the sisters. Hilda is covered with bruises, and though Jenny tries, she is unable to think of something that could cause such a rapid onset of death with such bizarre symptoms.



## **Joanna Kale**

Fletcher Kale's wife; murdered because she would not give him the money to continue his investment in High Country Investments.

## **Danny Kale**

The son of Fletcher Kale, murdered so that Fletcher would have access to his trust fund.

## **General Galen Copperfield**

The head of a specialized army unit. Copperfield and his CBW team arrives in Snowfield to investigate the strange happenings in the town. At the outset, Copperfield believes the cause to be a nerve gas or toxin, but quickly realizes that there is something else going on in the town. Though Copperfield apologizes to Hammond for not believing him from the beginning, it is already too late for most of the team. Copperfield, as well as the majority of his team, are killed by the creature that has killed and consumed the population of Snowfield.

## **Governor Jack Retlock**

The governor of California, and an old friend of Bryce Hammond. Jack and Bryce were police officers together before Jack went into politics. Retlock, though obviously distressed by what is going on in Snowfield, has nothing but faith in how Bryce will handle the situation.





## **Objects/Places**

### **Snowfield, California**

The small ski town where the events in the novel take place.

### **Santa Mira, California**

The location of Sheriff Bryce Hammond's department, called into Snowfield by Jennifer Paige.

### **Liebermann's Bakery**

The bakery where Jenny and Lisa discover the hands of Jakob Liebermann as well as the heads of Jakob and his wife Aida in the kitchen ovens.

### **Demon Chrome**

The motorcycle gang led by Gene 'Jeeter' Terr.

### **Gilmartin's Market**

The market in town where Jake Johnson is taken by The Ancient Enemy

### **The Hilltop Inn**

The base of operations for the group of people stuck in Snowfield, California

### **Biosan-4**

The chemical developed to consume oil spills, Sara Yamaguchi discovers that the substance can be used to destroy the creature that torments Snowfield.

### **Santa Mira Hospital**

The hospital where Timmy Hammond survives in a coma after an accident a year earlier. Fletcher Kale and Gene Terr are killed in the hospital when they try to kill the survivors of Snowfield on the orders of the creature known as The Ancient Enemy.

## **Hawaii**

The islands of Hawaii, where Jenny Paige and Bryce Hammond enjoy their honeymoon a year after the horrors of Snowfield.

## **Wintergreen and Wyle**

The publishing firm that wishes to have Timothy Flyte rewrite his book, *The Ancient Enemy*.



# Themes

## Good Versus Evil

Phantoms, by Dean Koontz, has a central theme that is clearly good versus evil. Though the characters in the novel have their own personal demons, they are inherently good people, caught in a terrifying situation. The first instance of good versus evil that takes place in the novel is between Bryce Hammond and Fletcher Kale. Though Kale seems to be a devastated man after the deaths of his wife and young son, it is revealed that Kale has killed his family in order to obtain the funds for an investment deal.

The main instance of good versus evil is the battle between the ancient creature that has chosen Snowfield as its feeding ground and the people that arrive in the small town after the destruction and death of all that lived there. When the Paige sisters arrive in the empty town, Lisa senses that there is something horribly wrong. Though Jenny tries to find a scientific explanation for what is going on, she too comes to realize that there is something desperately wrong. All that is left to do is call for help, which arrives in the form of Bryce Hammond and his deputies.

The moral issue of good winning out over evil is one that has been going on for centuries, though in most cases good does win out in the end. This is not to say that 'good' does not suffer some loss, such as the deaths of some of the deputies and the army soldiers that come to Snowfield to find out what is going on. Despite the difficulties that are faced, those that operate on the 'good' side of things general tend to win out in the end, vanquishing evil permanently or in the case of The Ancient Enemy, at least breaking free from the monster that torments them.

## Forgiveness

In Phantoms, forgiveness plays a part in the novel, though in this case it is self forgiveness and the ability to move forward on a personal level. The first example of this is Jenny Paige, a successful doctor in Snowfield who has worked her entire life to prove that she is worthy. In her late teens, Jenny had made personal choices that affected those she loved and, she believed, caused the untimely death of her father. As a result, Jenny has spent her life working hard in order to earn the respect of her mother, who Jenny believes has blamed her for her father's death.

Jenny discovers after speaking to her sister Lisa that her mother never blamed her, and had, in fact, been very proud of her. Jenny is released from the pressure she has lived with for more than a decade, and realizes that she is the only one that has blamed herself.

In the case of Bryce Hammond, the sheriff blames himself for surviving. Though Bryce was not in the accident that left his son in a coma and killed his wife, Bryce suffers from survivor's guilt, believing that if he had been in the car things might have turned out



differently, or at the very least, he too would be dead. Bryce has lived the year since the accident in a kind of fog, barely seeing what goes on around him and participating in life only when required. Things change for Bryce when he is confronted with the events in Snowfield, not only because of the unexplainable that is taking place, but also because of Jenny Paige.

Because Bryce and Jenny are able to let go of the pasts that haunt them, forgive themselves and move forward, the two are able to work together and stay alive in Snowfield. The bond that the two share in the small California town continues as they once again take hold of life and move forward, together.

## Religion

Religion is a central theme in *The Ancient Enemy* from the outset, in small ways at first, then in more dramatic ways. The first sign of religious reference is when Jenny and Lisa find the dead bodies of some victims in Snowfield as well as discover the amount of missing people. When the sisters call for help and wait outside, all of the church bells in town begin to chime, almost as if taunting Jenny and Lisa. A church, a sanctuary for those that believe in God, was being used to torment and frighten the two sisters. Throughout the novel, the church bells will ring during important passages, such as when the police arrive and when Timothy Flyte arrives as well. The bells ringing is significant because in religion, the bells can signify the coming of an important event, or conversely, the toll of the bells can signify the sorrow of a death.

Another important religious reference in the novel is the death of the priest on the cross. The priest is murdered, but is not preserved like the rest of the citizens of Snowfield that are found in the silent town. The priest is left to decompose, but his body is hung on the cross over the altar in the same way that Jesus Christ was hung on the cross to die. As the deputy Gordy states, it is as if the religious beliefs, or hopes of the survivors in Snowfield are being mocked by the creature that torments them. It is clear that the Ancient Enemy wishes to strip the comfort that religion might bring from those remaining.

The Ancient Enemy itself refers to religion throughout the novel, mocking the beliefs of those it communicates with. The creature states that it has many names, and even tells Gene Terr and Fletcher Kale that it is Lucifer, the devil. When the creature declares that Timothy Flyte will be safe in Snowfield, the reason is that Flyte is its 'Matthew'. The creature is referring to Matthew, who documented the life of Christ in the bible. When Flyte works with the others to destroy the creature, he is called Judas, the disciple that traded the life of Christ for thirty pieces of silver.



# Style

## Point of View

Phantoms, by Dean Koontz, is written in the third person. This point of view is omniscient, which is very helpful to the reader, as it allows one to know not only what a character is thinking and feeling, but why they make the choices they do throughout the novel. This is important, as the novel encompasses the lives of many characters who are caught up in a world beyond anything they have previously imagined. By allowing the reader to get a sense of the emotions and feelings of the characters, the point of view lets the reader get a sense of the terror and uncertainty that is taking place during the story.

The novel contains both dialogue and descriptive passages, moving the plot along quickly as the story takes place over the course of a few days. The dialogue gives the reader a sense of the personality of the characters and the descriptive pieces allow one to see the town through the eyes of the characters. There are also passages where the characters thoughts and feelings are described in greater detail, which lets the reader get a better sense of the actions they take as well as their motivations.

## Setting

The novel Phantoms is set in the small ski town of Snowfield, California. The town is picturesque and quaint, populated in the off season by approximately 500 year-round residents. Snowfield is at first the haven of Jennifer Paige where she creates a life for herself, though upon her return with her sister Lisa, Snowfield has become a terrifying place.

There are several locations visited within the town, the first being the sheriff's department. It is in the department that the reader first gets a glimpse at the strange horror that has taken over Snowfield, though at the time it is still a mystery. Jenny and her sister return to the sheriff's office later in the novel with Bryce Hammond and his deputies.

## Language and Meaning

the language in the novel is modern and straightforward, as the story takes place in the present day. The characters express themselves clearly, allowing the reader to get a better sense of who they are, as well as how they feel. There is a bit of medical terminology in the novel, as one of the main characters, Jennifer Paige, is a doctor, though it is written in such a way that the reader does not get bogged down in technical terms. This is also the case when military assistance arrives in Snowfield. Though there are times when the technical aspects of the military team can seem difficult to understand, it is explained in such a way that the reader can comprehend it.



The characters all appear to be educated and are understandable to the reader, and there is really no differentiating within the language that suggests any one character is above another. There are however, aspects in each character, expressed through their speech that give the reader a better sense of the characters' personalities. An example of this would be Stu Wargle, the deputy who is portrayed as a malevolent character.

There is a slight difference in the language of The Ancient Enemy, the evil entity that has taken over the town of Snowfield. The Ancient Enemy expresses itself in English to the characters, as well as communicating through computer terminals at times. The creature also expresses itself at times with sounds, either of animals, or the voices of the humans it has consumed. The cacophony of sound is meant to terrorize those it hears, which it does successfully. The entity seems to be able to communicate in English, or any other language it chooses because it has consumed people or things and has been able to absorb their intelligence.

## Structure

The novel *Phantoms* consists of two parts, both titled. The novel contains forty-five chapters, which are numbered as well as titled. The chapters vary in length from one page to more than ten. The titles of the chapters give a sense of what is contained within, and each chapter focuses on a key aspect of the novel. The chapters are fairly self-contained, focusing on one character or event at a time.

The plot of the novel is fairly straightforward, relating the story of the terror that takes place over a few days in Snowfield, California, and how each character is affected by the events, as well as how they react. The events are streamlined and focused, with very little jumping from place to place, giving the reader a sense of continuity. Some back story is provided for the characters, but it is presented to the reader in the form of thoughts or memories of the characters.

The novel details the disappearance or deaths of the entire town of Snowfield while Jennifer Paige is out of town getting her younger sister after their mother's death. Upon the return of the Paige sisters, the horror that has taken place reveals itself. An ancient being, referred to as The Ancient Enemy, has killed or consumed the entire population of the town. As the novel progresses, it is learned that this entity is responsible for the mass disappearances of large numbers of people through the centuries. The creature, a massive blob able to take the shape of whatever it has consumed in its long life terrorizes the small group of survivors that find themselves in Snowfield.

The protagonists are able to triumph in the end through use of their intelligence and with a chemical spray recently developed by the military. Though the entity is apparently destroyed, its core manages to escape, presumably to recover and return some time in the future.

The novel is enjoyable and a very fast read, as it is easy to get caught up in the characters and the events that take place. The writing is fluid and quick, giving one the

feeling of the rapid way events unfold. Though this is one of Dean Koontz's earlier novels, the novel is very entertaining and vivid, allowing one to be easily swept up into events that are so horrific.



## Quotes

"He sighed, looked down at the magazine that lay on his desk-and heard another scream. As before, it was distant and brief, but this time it sounded like a man's voice. It wasn't merely a shriek of excitement or even a cry of alarm; it was the sound of terror."  
Chap. 1, p. 10

"'He's dead. he can't hurt me. There's no reason to be so scared of him. It's wrong to give into irrational fears. It's wrong to be weak and stupid. A person should face up to fears like that,' Lisa insisted. 'Facing up to them is the only way to get over them, right? So I decided to face up to this.'"  
Chap. 5, p. 33

"There are silences and silences. No one of them is quite like another. There is the silence of death, found in tombs and deserted graveyards and in the cold-storage room in the city morgue and in hospital rooms on occasion; it is a flawless silence, not merely a hush but a void. As a physician who had treated her share of terminally ill patients, Jenny was familiar with that special, grim silence. This was it. This was the silence of death."  
Chap. 6, p. 42

"The siren sounded again, whooped and then died, whooped and died, and the church bell began to toll again, and the bell and the siren cried out at the same time, again and again, as if announcing the advent of someone of tremendous importance."  
Chap. 10, p. 63

'I think you're crediting it with too much intelligence,' Tal said. 'It was big, yes, and like nothing any of us have ever seen before. But it was still only an insect. A moth. Right?' The girl said nothing. 'It's not omniscient,' Tal said, trying to convince himself more than anyone else. 'It's not all-seeing, all-hearing, all-knowing.'"  
Chap. 17, p. 122

"I was accused of trying to explain every mysterious disappearance from the Mayans to Judge Crater and Amelia Earhart, all with a single theory. That was most unfair. I never mentioned the judge or the luckless aviatrix. I am interested only in the unexplained mass disappearances of both humankind and animals, of which there have been literally hundreds throughout history."  
Chap. 18, p. 132

"Maybe it was because she had thought of him and his people as the cavalry, riding in to save the day. She had wanted all the problems to be solved, all the ambiguities cleared up instantly upon Copperfield's arrival. When she's realized that it wasn't going to work out hat way, when they had actually pulled guns on her, the dream had faded fast. Irrationally, she had blamed the general."  
Chap. 23, pp. 175-176





"It was neither a human scream nor like any animal sound, yet it was unquestionably the cry of a living thing. There was no mistaking the raw emotions of that alien, blood-freezing bleat. It wasn't a scream of fear or pain. It was a blast of rage, hatred, and feverish blood-hunger."

Chap. 25, p. 198

"There were words among the screams, spat out on explosive gasps. The corporal was making a desperate, babbling attempt to explain to those aboveground - and maybe to himself - just what he was seeing.

'...lizard...bug...dragon...prehistoric...demon...'

And finally with both physical pain and anguish of the soul in his voice, the corporal cried out, "It's the Devil, it's the Devil!"

Chap. 25, p. 203

"Gordy said, 'Maybe some of us have been counting on God to get us through this alive. Probably most of us have. I know I've sure been praying a lot since we came here. Probably you have, too. It knew we would do that. It knew we would ask God for help. So this is its way of letting us know that God can't help us. Or at least that's what it would like us to believe. Because that's its way. To instill doubt about God. That's always been its way.'"

Chap. 28, pp. 222-223

"'Yes,' Jenny said. 'The entire performance on the computer, this demonic image it wants to project-all of that's only more misdirection. It's never going to tell us the truth about itself because if we knew the truth, then we might be able to think of a way to beat it.'"

Chap. 31, p. 258

"Over the centuries, it had eagerly assumed the role of Satan and other evil figures, which men had attributed to it, had amused itself by catering to their superstitions. Now, it was condemned to a fate consistent with the mythology it had helped create. It was bitterly aware of the irony. It had been cast down. It had been damned. It would dwell in darkness and despair for the rest of its life-which could be measured in hours."

Chap. 43, pp. 339-340



## Topics for Discussion

Why does Lisa Paige move to Snowfield with her sister, Jennifer?

Why does Jennifer feel responsible for her father's death? Do you believe she is? Why or why not?

What happened to Sheriff Bryce Hammond's wife and son?

Why does the being wish to have Timothy Flyte come to Snowfield?

In your opinion, what ability of the evil being is the most dangerous? Why?

Why do you think the evil being keeps only a select few alive?

In the novel, it is theorized that the evil being has absorbed its nature from the people that it has devoured. What is your opinion?