

Practical Demonkeeping: A Comedy of Horrors Study Guide

Practical Demonkeeping: A Comedy of Horrors by Christopher Moore

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Plot Summary

Travis O'Hearn's traveling companion is Catch, the destroyer, a demon Travis accidentally called up seventy years ago who has a nasty habit of eating people. Since then, Travis has been trying to send Catch back to hell. In the small California coastal town of Pine Cove, Travis hopes to find the secret to getting rid of Catch. He also finds a community of odd characters who will help him in his quest.

Seventy years ago, Travis O'Hearn accidentally called the demon Catch by reading an incantation he found hidden in a silver candlestick at his seminary. The demon gives Travis protection and eternal youth, but it also kills and eats people whenever it gets a chance. Now, Catch has been bound to Travis for seventy years, and Travis has been trying to track down Amanda, the girl he left the candlesticks—and his heart—with.

Travis comes to Pine Cove, California, and finally finds the girl he has been searching for. Amanda is now a ninety-year-old grandmother, married to Effrom Elliot, but unfortunately she is out of town. Travis also meets Amanda's granddaughter, Jenny. Travis does not know Jenny is related to the girl he met so long ago, but he is immediately attracted to her.

Jenny, who works at Howard Phillips' cafe, has recently separated from her husband Robert, an alcoholic photographer whose photography business has gone nowhere. Robert has been staying with The Breeze, a forty-year-old eternal surfer who has been setting up the drug deal of his life. Unfortunately, The Breeze is eaten by Catch, blasting the drug deal—or rather, Detective Rivera's drug sting.

Meanwhile, the King of the Djinn, Gian Hen Gian, smells that Catch is nearby and recruits the owner of Pine Cove's general store, Augustus Brine, to track down Travis and Catch and send Catch back to hell. Catch, however, has his own plans. He recruits Rachel, the local pagan coven leader, to become his new master and kidnaps Effrom, Amanda, and Jenny to get what he needs.

Through a complex web of coincidence, Robert, Travis, Howard, Gian Hen Gian, and Augustus come together to rescue Effrom, Amanda, and Jenny and send Catch back to hell. Detective Rivera stumbles on the plot and nearly wrecks their plans. Then, Effrom dies of a heart attack during the rescue. Finally, Catch is sent back to hell, but Travis's unnatural youth leaves him. He becomes a ninety-year-old man. Augustus directs Gian Hen Gian to make Travis and Amanda age backwards, so the two ninety-year-old lovers who have found each other after so many years can live a whole life together. Then, he heads off to Nevada to found a brothel and give a little bit of pleasure to everyone who visits.



Part 1: Saturday Night, Chapter 1, The Breeze

Part 1: Saturday Night, Chapter 1, The Breeze Summary

Travis O'Hearn's traveling companion is Catch, the destroyer, a demon Travis accidentally called up seventy years ago who has a nasty habit of eating people. Since then, Travis has been trying to send Catch back to hell. In the small California coastal town of Pine Cove, Travis hopes to find the secret to getting rid of Catch. He also finds a community of odd characters who will help him in his quest.

As the novel begins, The Breeze drives into San Junipero, a coastal California college town, with Billy Winston. The Breeze is an unemployed surfer who makes drugs and partying a profession. He has a book that gives a reason to party for every day of the year, and today is Nambian Independence Day.

Billy and The Breeze head to a night club called the Nuked Whale. The doorman cards Billy, but The Breeze has just hit forty years old. He is beginning to show his age. After The Breeze ditches Billy, thinking he will get lucky, he gets rejected by the only girl in the place homely enough to sleep with The Breeze in exchange for drugs.

Without a ride, The Breeze tries to hitchhike back to Pine Cove. He tries to focus on the large pot deal that is supposed to go down tomorrow and all the money he will have. A car pulls up behind him, and The Breeze thinks it is a cop and swallows his cocaine. It is not a cop. A demon comes out of the car, getting larger and larger, and gobbles The Breeze up.

Part 1: Saturday Night, Chapter 1, The Breeze Analysis

Part 1 is the shortest part of the novel, consisting of one chapter and focusing on a minor character, The Breeze. This chapter serves as an introduction to the main story, providing initial excitement and building tension. The Breeze is a sad character, getting too old for his lifestyle. Billy still sees The Breeze as a hero, but The Breeze himself sees he cannot continue his current lifestyle. He has got nowhere to go but down.

While The Breeze comforts himself with the thought of a lot of money from a drug deal, the reader suspects the bright future is more fantasy than reality. The money-just-around-the-corner will never materialize. Instead, The Breeze is effortlessly consumed by a demonic creature. Normal life is disturbed by a supernatural presence. The central conflict is unveiled, dramatically. The reader is left to wonder: what is this creature? What is in store for Pine Cove?



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 2, Pine Cove

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 2, Pine Cove Summary

Pine Cove was once a whaling town called Harpooner's Cove. As whaling became less profitable, it became a ranching and mining town. After these also became unprofitable, the town's economy became dependent on tourists. In the 1960s, the town's name was changed to Pine Cove, distancing the tourist community from its whaling past. Today, the center of town is full of false English Tudor buildings, restaurants selling English food, and stores selling touristy trinkets.

On the night *The Breeze* disappears, all the dogs in Pine Cove begin barking at once. One of the town's residents, an evil developer, dies of a heart attack. Another saws a tree down on his neighbor's van. A family of raccoons gains intelligence and steals a stereo from the van.

In the morning, a group of old men gather at the general store, as they do every morning. Augustus (Gus) Brine opens up the store, where he lets the men hang out and drink free coffee. They talk about the events of the night and decide something supernatural happened. Jenny, a local waitress, comes to buy gas, and Gus consoles her on breaking up with her husband. She is annoyed. Everyone in town seems to know.

The local ambulance driver comes in and delivers the news the evil developer died the previous night. Then, a small, Arab man comes in. The ambulance driver bumps up against him, and the Arab curses. Blue swirls seem to come from his mouth. His teeth seem pointed, and his eyes seem to glow. After he recovers his calm, he asks for some salt.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 2, Pine Cove Analysis

In the second chapter, the history of Pine Cove is revealed. It is a normal-sounding history, similar to many small towns. Like *The Breeze*, Pine Cove seems very ordinary. This ordinariness contrasts with the supernatural. All the dogs bark at once. One resident dies and another goes on a rampage. Raccoons gain intelligence. The wild and bizarre is about to clash with the ordinary and everyday.

The second part of this chapter reiterates the pattern of the first part, and of the previous chapter. The scene of the old men gathering in Augustus Brine's shop, gossiping about local events, is very ordinary and familiar. Everyone in the small town knows each other. All of the events are fodder for gossip. Then, at the end of the chapter, the ordinary is again disturbed by the extraordinary. A magical man comes into the shop, shouts curses that can be seen visibly in the air, and asks for salt. This contrast creates tension, and it also creates humor, particularly the strange request for salt.



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 3, Travis and Chapter 4, Robert

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 3, Travis and Chapter 4, Robert Summary

Travis O'Hearn drives his old car along the road. The demon Catch in the seat next to him is imitating Linda Blair in *The Exorcist*, his favorite movie. Catch is wired because of all the drugs in the system of the hitchhiker he ate. Travis lets Catch get out and ride on the hood. The demon is invisible to other people, except when he is eating. Then, he grows huge and is visible to everyone. Travis has a recurring nightmare about being questioned about Catch eating people.

Travis is ninety years old, but he looks about twenty, the age he was when he called Catch. Since then, he has been traveling the country trying to stop the demon. Sometimes, Catch obeys Travis, and then Travis can stop him from killing. At other times, Travis can only influence whom Catch kills, and he tries to steer Catch toward criminals. Overcome with sudden anger at the demon, Travis hits the brakes, knocks Catch off the hood, and runs over him with the car. The car ends up disabled in the ditch, but Catch is unharmed. Catch begins pushing the car to the nearest town, Pine Cove.

Meanwhile, Robert Masterson is having his own nightmare, about being bound in the desert while a strange man makes love to his wife. Robert wakes, thirsty, and finds some beer in the disaster area of *The Breeze's* kitchen. He calls up his wife, not realizing it is the middle of the night, and begs her to take him back. She refuses and tells him to get a life.

Later, Robert is awakened again by the doorbell. It is a Hispanic drug dealer looking for *The Breeze*. Robert cannot find *The Breeze* and takes a message, but not before self-destructively aggravating the dangerous-looking man. Actually, the Hispanic man is Detective Sergeant Alphonso Rivera, and because *The Breeze* is missing, his drug bust has been upset. Rivera watches a video of a drunk-driving arrest of Robert, looking for information about this new player. He imagines he sees a small Arab man walk onto the screen and ask for salt, but when he replays the tape, the image is not there. He believes he must have dozed off.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 3, Travis and Chapter 4, Robert Analysis

At first, the reader is introduced to Travis and Catch from the outsider's point of view. *The Breeze* sees only an old car flashing its headlights and a horrendous monster. The



townspeople feel only the supernatural effects of Catch's approach. Now, the reader meets Catch and Travis personally. In humorous contrast to Catch's horrific appearance while eating, in Chapter 3, Catch is shown as an annoying little imp with a love of pop-culture. Throughout the novel, the writer will use this type of contrast to create humor.

The same contrast is present when Robert searches for a glass to drink some beer from in the middle of the night. The only clean implement he finds is a child's Fred Flintstone bowl, and Fred congratulates him for finishing his food from the bottom of the bowl. Robert's drunken stupor is contrasted with the childhood pop culture icon of Fred Flintstone, with humorous results.

This section also begins to set up the complex web of the novel's plot. Coincidence will play a large role in the story. Robert's presence in The Breeze's trailer is also part of a string of coincidences that will move the plot forward, until all the elements come together to send Catch back to hell. Part 2 begins with a quote about all mystical experience being coincidence, and by the end of the novel, the reader will wonder whether coincidence is really a divine plan.



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 5, Augustus Brine and Chapter 6, The Djinn's Story

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 5, Augustus Brine and Chapter 6, The Djinn's Story Summary

Augustus Brine is a fisherman who has not caught a fish in almost three months. He is also the owner of the general store, a practitioner of Zen, and a believer in chaos. He is puzzling over the strange man who asked for salt in the store that morning while fishing, and a state of Zen eludes him. Then, the strange man appears.

The odd man seems to assume Augustus should be afraid of him and begins drinking saltwater out of the ocean. He introduces himself as Gian Hen Gian, and Augustus thinks he is crazy, except that he saw blue swirls come out of the man's mouth that morning. Augustus accepts the situation as part of the absurdity and chaos of the universe.

The Djinn explains his race was created by God as a race of creators, before man. Then, God became jealous of the Djinn and the angels drove the Djinn into the netherworld. After that, Satan, one of the angels who fought the Djinn, rebelled against God and was banished to hell. God created mankind to "irritate Satan."

Gian Hen Gian explains that first he and then Catch were called up by King Solomon using the Seal of Solomon. God gave Solomon the Seal and incantations to give him the power to control both demons and Djinn. Gian Hen Gian and Catch were supposed to help King Solomon build his temple in Jerusalem. Gian Hen Gian created a beautiful woman for Solomon, but she distracted him so much he lost control of Catch, who went on a destructive rampage. After Gian Hen Gian brought Catch under control again, Solomon trapped the Djinn king in a jar and dumped him in the Red Sea. He promised to send Catch back to hell, but apparently did not. The Djinn says Catch is in Pine Cove and Augustus Brine must stop the demon of destruction.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 5, Augustus Brine and Chapter 6, The Djinn's Story Analysis

Throughout the story, Moore evokes many types of mythology and religion. Augustus Brine is a fisherman, which evokes the fishers of men Jesus recruited as disciples. Here, too, the fisherman is recruited by a supernatural figure. Gus's last name is even "Brine," not-so-coincidentally a synonym for salt water, which the Djinn drinks. Gus is also a master of Zen, which allows him to maintain mental concentration, the skill needed to command supernatural creatures in the story. Moore brings in Greek mythology as well as Christian religious iconography, describing Catch's planned

punishment as the same as the mythological punishment of Prometheus for bringing fire to humans.

Moore also continues to use contrast to create humor. The King of the Djinn is small and un-frightening. He compares the netherworld to a doctor's office. The mundane and the awesome are contrasted throughout the story.



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 7, The Arrival and Chapter 8, Robert

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 7, The Arrival and Chapter 8, Robert Summary

The local Pine Cove mechanic tries to convince Travis his whole engine might be shot, hoping to milk as much money from the stranger as possible. Travis insists all he wants is for the radiator to be replaced, and they agree on a price of a hundred dollars. The mechanic directs Travis to the Head of the Slug bar for pool and to H.P.'s Cafe for breakfast. On his way out of the garage, Travis sees Robert spray-washing The Breeze's dishes at the car wash.

Robert's wife Jenny is at work as a waitress at H.P.'s Cafe. Everyone has heard she kicked out Robert, and she is tired of dealing with their sympathy. When she drops her second tray of glasses, the owner, Howard Phillips, calls her into his office to talk with her. His verbose speech makes her feel a little better, and when she gets back to work, she is happy to see a customer who is not a local.

Jenny seats Travis, who pulls out a chair for the invisible Catch. Travis is immediately attracted to her. She tells him she is single, and he makes a date with her for dinner that night.

After Robert finishes washing The Breeze's dishes, he feels depressed. His life is a mess, but he believes on some level that some miraculous event will happen to make his life better. When he was a child, he worked for a fair, and after the fair was gone, he and his coworkers were given the awful task of shoveling out the manure from the animals. He was saved from the work by the arrival of a circus, where he worked the rest of the day.

A second miraculous event saved Robert after he dropped out of school because of lack of money. He was working at a grocery store and being overtaken by alcohol and depression. Then, he got fired for vandalism. That is when he met Jenny. She encouraged his photography business and supported them by waitressing. Now, he has lost Jenny, and he is lower than he has ever been. He takes his last ten bucks and heads to the bar.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 7, The Arrival and Chapter 8, Robert Analysis

Travis, Jenny, and Robert become a love triangle in this chapter. Robert's nightmare about his wife becomes a reality, since Travis is the man from Robert's dream. Robert believes, irrationally, that some sort of miracle will come and save him, and he is not



wrong. While Catch's arrival in Pine Cove is a horror, it is also Robert's eventual salvation. Robert does not seek out this salvation. Instead, he resigns himself to sinking deep into oblivion, and this allows him to be swept up in the web of coincidence that will put him in the right place at the right time with the right skills to become a hero.

The literary device of an unexpected, miraculous resolution to a problem is called a *deus ex machina*, literally the god in the machine. Robert seems to have his own personal *deus ex machina* following him through his life, and he expects a convenient resolution to his problems. This hints at the idea that not just a *deus ex machina* but a God with an intricate and mysterious plan is guiding Robert's life, pushing him in the right direction to be coincidentally available to stop Catch. On another level, the "god" that is operating in Robert's life is simply the author Moore, weaving a self-consciously intricate and coincidence-driven plot.



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 9, The Head of the Slug and Chapter 10, Augustus Brine

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 9, The Head of the Slug and Chapter 10, Augustus Brine Summary

Mavis Sand owns the Head of the Slug, the local bar. Over the years, she has lost various body parts to disease and old age: her gall bladder, uterus, heart valve, eye lenses, appendix, hearing, teeth, and most of her hair. Still, she smears her mouth with lipstick and sprays herself with perfume.

Robert comes into the bar, and Mavis gets him a beer. At the pool table, the local pool shark is playing a stranger, Travis. The Breeze's landlord and Rivera both call the bar, looking for The Breeze, and Robert becomes even more depressed. Meanwhile, the stranger is mysteriously winning the pool match by making impossible shots. The pool shark gets his custom-made pool cue from Mavis.

A seductive woman sits by Robert. Her name is Rachel Henderson, and her presence makes Robert uncomfortable. Her flirtatious attitude turns cold when Robert criticizes her women's group, the Pagan Vegetarians for Peace, for turning his wife against him. He calls them man-haters, but Rachel protests that they simply empower women. Rachel offers Robert a photography job, but he turns it down.

Gian Hen Gian comes into the bar and asks for salt. While Mavis gets him a margarita, he notices Travis and his invisible helper at the pool table and rushes out. The pool shark finally loses the game, providing Travis with the \$100 he needs to fix his car.

Gian Hen Gian rushes to Augustus Brine to tell him Catch is in Pine Cove, and he tells Gus he has to find and stop the demon. Then, Gian Hen Gian sits down to watch movies and eat chips. He leaves Gus with the impossible problem of getting rid of the immortal demon.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 9, The Head of the Slug and Chapter 10, Augustus Brine Analysis

Throughout the novel, Moore tells the stories and backgrounds of many minor characters. These side-stories give the reader an idea of a whole town, interconnected in many ways. They also provide humor and insight into the human condition. Mavis is old, falling apart, but clinging to ideas of female beauty—lipstick and perfume—although she has no chance of being attractive. She is contrasted with Rachel, who is still seductively beautiful and uses that beauty to gain personal power.

Moore also continues to use the contrast of the ordinary and the extraordinary, the mundane and the supernatural, to create humor. The Djinn watches Marx Brothers movies while Gus struggles with the problem of finding and defeating a demon. Ironically, the Djinn has found the demon through yet another coincidence, running into him in the local bar.



Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 11, Effrom and Chapter 12, Jennifer

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 11, Effrom and Chapter 12, Jennifer Summary

Effrom Elliot wakes in the morning. His wife is gone away on a trip, and for once he is alone. He misses her. He goes through his morning routine of watching women exercise on TV and thinks about the nearness of his own death. He drinks coffee, eats graham crackers, and looks forward to his nap, when he can continue his morning's erotic dream. He goes out to his workshop, where he makes sculptures and secretly smokes. Throughout his morning, he misses his wife.

A man comes to the door asking about Effrom's wife Amanda, and Effrom tells the man she will be back the next day. The man is Travis. He has finally found the woman he is looking for, but he pretends to be disappointed when he gets back to the car so Catch will not know.

Jennifer gets home from work and narrowly avoids another drunken, pleading call from her husband. She takes a bath, trying to relax. Unknown to her, the ingredients of her bath are actually the same ingredients in primordial ooze, and they only lack sunlight to create life. She tries to relax but finds herself worrying about going out on her first date after years of married life.

Part 2: Sunday, Chapter 11, Effrom and Chapter 12, Jennifer Analysis

Effrom Elliot is another new character. He is marked by a secret life where he smokes and watches women exercise for erotic entertainment, but he is equally marked by a strong love and need for his wife, Amanda. Amanda, in turn, is the woman Travis has been searching the country for. The reader does not yet know how Amanda and Effrom are important, but clearly they have a role to play in the developing plot. What is that role? Who is Amanda? How does Travis know her? These questions build suspense and keep the reader turning the page.

Meanwhile, Jennifer is involved in mundane, everyday worries about her dissolving marriage and her upcoming date. Again, the mundane and everyday world is contrasted with a secret supernatural world. Under Jennifer's nose, her bathwater holds the potential for life. This contrast creates humor, but it also reinforces the idea of a secret, supernatural world underlying the mundane, everyday world.



Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 13, Nightfall and Chapter 14, Dinner

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 13, Nightfall and Chapter 14, Dinner Summary

Pine Cove is in a bad mood. The whole town is suffering from lack of sleep, and everyone is irritable. Mavis has been telling the story of the town's pool shark's losing game all day. She enjoys telling stories and even records herself with a small tape recorder, but tonight she is as irritated as her customers.

Augustus Brine is irritably trying to figure out how to track down the demon. Robert is miserable because Jenny has not called him and The Breeze's utilities get cut off. Rivera is sure his career as a police officer is over, since The Breeze has disappeared. The Breeze floats out of his body and into a tunnel of light, only to realize he owes money to everyone who waits for him in the afterlife. The raccoons, now without extra intelligence, go off in search of garbage. Jennifer rushes around trying to prepare herself for her date. Billy Winston anxiously awaits the late-night time when he can slip on his high-heeled shoes, don the personality of Roxanne, and chat with his lovers online.

Catch realizes Travis's grip on him has been shaken. The woman he met is distracting him, and Catch has more freedom. He plots to find a new master, one who will allow Catch to unleash destruction on the human race.

Travis arrives at Jenny's house and leaves Catch in the car, ordering him not to go anywhere. He and Jenny go off on their date. Jenny has vowed not to talk about Robert, and Travis cannot talk about Catch, limiting their conversation. After their initial discomfort, they get along well, although Travis's stories about himself are necessarily lies.

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 13, Nightfall and Chapter 14, Dinner Analysis

The supernatural events are going on under the surface in the town, but their influence seems to be felt by the townspeople. Everyone feels on edge, but the reasons why are vague. Chapter 13 begins by talking about the town in general and then details each character's experience of the evening. This makes the story about, not one or two characters, but the town as a whole. Everyone is interconnected, and the whole community is affected by the events that are unfolding.

The undercurrents of secrets and mysteries are reflected in Jenny and Travis's date, as well. Travis must tell Jenny a stream of lies about his background, and although they get

along well, secrets still stand between them. Meanwhile, Catch has a sinister secret of his own. He can tell Travis's will is waning, and he plans to make the most of this opportunity.



Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 15, Rachel and Chapter 16, Howard

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 15, Rachel and Chapter 16, Howard Summary

Rachel Henderson lives in a small house on the Beer Bar cattle ranch, owned by Jim Beer. She picked up Jim in the Head of the Slug bar, flirted with him, and asked if he knew any houses for rent. Then, she seduced Jim at his rental house. Afterwards, Rachel took a lock of his hair from the pillow, tied two knots around it with red thread to hold her power over him, and put the hairs in a jar. She has a collection of such jars. Since then, Rachel has lived in the house rent free, and Jim is too embarrassed to come near her.

Rachel's past is a mystery to Pine Cove. She was an unattractive young girl, and she slept with men to gain acceptance. She married a man she had known six hours, and after that he kept her locked up in his trailer while he crop-dusted local farms. A Vietnam vet, he took out his violent rage on Rachel. Finally, she met a woman who gave her a pamphlet about abuse. Rachel left Merle, but when he promised to change, she went back. First, he treated her coldly. Then, he erupted, beat her, disabled the phones, and locked her out of the trailer 15 miles from any help. During the night, she drained the oil out of his plane, and the next day, he crashed and died. No one ever suspected her.

Howard Phillips is sitting in his cottage, looking out the window. He sees a monstrous shape, and he believes it is evidence of the Old Ones, an ancient race of beings Howard believes lived before humans. He stares at it out the window, and it stares back. Finally, Howard pulls the blinds shut. He berates himself for not having the presence of mind to snap a photo. Then, suddenly terrified the creature will come back to kill him, Howard calls the police and reports a prowler. They will arrive in twenty minutes, but that is too long. Howard steels himself and then makes a run for it out the front door.

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 15, Rachel and Chapter 16, Howard Analysis

Rachel Henderson is a practitioner of magic, but her magic falls flat. She can use her seductive power to get things from men, but this is a natural power. In fact, the power of female seduction is an important element of the novel. Rachel uses it for material gain, but other women use this power unconsciously, causing chaos. Solomon's lover's seductive nature causes him to lose control of Catch, and similarly, Jenny's seductive power causes Travis to lose control of Catch. Women's power in the novel seems to be sex appeal, and its result seems to be to cause men to stop thinking straight.

Howard Phillips is an intellectual, of a sort. He uses an erudite and arcane vocabulary, both in his menus at his cafe and in his everyday speech. Howard is an homage to the early 20th century horror writer H.P. (Howard Phillips) Lovecraft, sharing his name, his propensity for long-winded, flowery descriptions, and his belief in the "Old Ones."



Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 17, Billy and Chapter 18, Rachel

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 17, Billy and Chapter 18, Rachel Summary

Billy Winston finishes his work at the motel and logs onto his computer, where he takes on the personality of Roxanne and begins talking with his lovers. He has ten lovers, all over the country, and he portrays a different personality to please each of them. Roxanne, wearing his high-heeled shoes, is engrossed in his conversation when the door opens. At first, Billy thinks it is just a customer, but then he looks up and sees a monster—Catch.

Billy races away, twisting his ankle in his high heels. He uses his passkey to get into one of the motel rooms, but the demon comes after him. Billy thinks he is dead. Then suddenly, the demon stops and asks about the Magic Fingers on the bed. He tells Billy to give him a quarter and drops it in the Magic Fingers box on the bed, even though he is so big his body hangs off the bed. Billy watches in terror. The demon tells Billy he can go, and Billy starts to run off. The demon, though, laughs as he catches Billy back at the last minute. He was not serious Billy could leave. Without further delay, he devours Billy.

After Rachel's husband's death, she moves to Berkeley, where she finds a group of supportive women. She becomes an aerobics instructor, but she pushes herself too hard. Finally, she falls sick. One of her women students come to help her, and the two women became lovers. The older women brings Rachel into a coven and teaches her about pagan rituals and female empowerment. Then, Rachel catches her lover in bed with the landlord. This is how she pays the rent. The two women fight and part. Then, Rachel travels around California. She settles in Pine Cove after learning it has the highest percentage of divorced women of any town in California and starts her own coven.

Catch realizes Rachel's need for power, and he comes to her house and wakes her in the middle of the night. He pretends to be an Earth spirit summoned by her pagan rituals and offers her power if she is willing to deny the Christian God, something Rachel did long ago.

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 17, Billy and Chapter 18, Rachel Analysis

Catch is out of control, and he has two missions. He wants to feed, and he wants to find a new master, one who will allow him to let loose his destructive powers. Catch settles on Rachel because he sees her desire for power, which stems from her powerlessness



in her youth and during her relationship with her husband. Even with her female lover, Rachel takes on a submissive, powerless role. The woman takes care of Rachel, and they are never on equal footing. Her need for power makes her vulnerable to Catch's offer, but Rachel does not realize who Catch really is or what she is agreeing to do.

During the action sequence of Billy's death, the horror of the monster contrasts with the human pathos of Billy's life as a closet transvestite. Like Rachel, Billy looks for an outlet for his personality and a situation where he has power and control. He finds this with his online "lovers" in the guise of Roxanne.

When Billy is about to die, Catch suddenly notices the Magic Fingers on the motel beds. Again, the author creates humor by contrasting the horrific situation with an everyday, commonplace interaction. Catch loves Magic Fingers, and he needs a quarter from Billy. The humor, though, is particularly dark, as Catch finally kills the bewildered youth.



Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 19, Jenny's House and Chapter 20, Effrom

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 19, Jenny's House and Chapter 20, Effrom Summary

Jenny and Travis get back to Jenny's house after their date. Travis goes to check on Catch and finds him reading a Cookie Monster comic book. As Travis follows Jenny into the house, Catch, unseen, spits up a red, high-heeled shoe.

Robert drives up to Jenny's house and sees the strange car out front. He is filled with jealousy and confusion. Finally, he decides to spy on his wife through the window, and he sees Jenny on the couch with Travis, the man he dreamed of having sex with his wife. Robert searches Travis's car and finds a suitcase, which he takes with him.

Meanwhile, Effrom is dreaming about being a soldier in England in World War I, daydreaming about his girl Amanda. He sees a zeppelin flying overhead and is paralyzed. He does not warn the base, and the ship passes him and starts dropping bombs.

When Effrom wakes, he hears a noise in the empty house. He gets out his gun and loads it. The noise is coming closer; it sounds like someone searching the house. When it is outside his room, he shoots, and he hears what sounds like a woman's scream. For a moment, he thinks he has shot his wife. Then, the door opens, and the monster comes in, unharmed by the bullet, saying "fooled you."

Effrom starts to have a heart attack, but the monster lays a hand on him and stops him from dying. Effrom does not believe Catch is real, but finally decides the monster must be an alien. Catch questions Effrom about Travis's visit, and Effrom reveals Travis wanted to see Effrom's wife. Catch asks when Amanda will return, and Effrom tells him she is coming back the next day. Catch drags Effrom off with him. For the second time, Effrom thinks he has killed his wife.

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 19, Jenny's House and Chapter 20, Effrom Analysis

Travis is distracted by Jenny's femininity, which is the downfall of any demonkeeper. Travis does not notice Catch has left the car and does not seriously question Catch's unusually good-natured mood. Catch takes full advantage of Travis's distraction to try to find a new, more congenial master.



The situation becomes complicated as Robert discovers his wife with Travis and takes Travis's suitcase out of the car. Neither Robert nor the reader knows what is in the suitcase, and this builds suspense. How will the suitcase further the complex plot?

Catch uses childlike words like "jammies" and says things like "fooled you" that contrast with his character as a man-eating demon of destruction. Catch is childlike, and this creates humor alongside horror.



Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 21, Augustus Brine and Chapter 22, Travis and Jenny

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 21, Augustus Brine and Chapter 22, Travis and Jenny Summary

Augustus Brine returns to his house with grocery bags full of seal bombs the Department of Fish and Game gives to fishermen to scare seals. Gian Hen Gian berates him that these will not hurt the demon, but Gus says that is not the plan. He gets the Djinn to bring in the other bags, which are full of flour.

Travis and Jenny talk after their date. Travis has told Jenny he is an insurance salesman, and she chides him about his supposed profession. He knows nothing about insurance and changes the subject. Then, they start talking about religion, and Travis tells her he knows, with certainty, that there is a God.

Travis and Jenny put aside this subject, too, and begin to make love. All night, they take on different roles: servants and masters, attackers and victims, caregivers and wounded. Then, they gorge themselves on the food in the kitchen. When Jenny leaves for work at the cafe, Travis is sound asleep. He is woken by the sound of explosions.

Part 3: Sunday Night, Chapter 21, Augustus Brine and Chapter 22, Travis and Jenny Analysis

Augustus Brine has decided on a plan, but the reader is left in suspense. What are the seal bombs for? What is the flour for? Gian Hen Gian has no idea, and the reader only has a hint that the flour is to make the demon visible. The reader's curiosity is aroused with this brief and tantalizing chapter, and then the reader is whisked off to another scene: Travis and Jenny making love.

The encounter between Travis and Jenny seems necessary to both their sanity. Travis finally has a break from his life with Catch, and Jenny has a break from her life as a newly separated woman. They take on roles as a method of escape. Still, this moment of found pleasure is a fatal one, since it gives Catch the freedom he needs to plot his escape from Travis's bondage. As Travis is bound to Catch, Jenny is bound to Robert, and he also reacts to Jenny's moment of freedom. How will Robert and the suitcase play into the upcoming battle?



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 23, Rivera and Chapter 24, Augustus Brine

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 23, Rivera and Chapter 24, Augustus Brine Summary

Rivera comes to The Breeze's trailer with a search warrant and arrest warrants for Robert and The Breeze. The officers find a suitcase full of pot. Rivera arrests Robert on possession of marijuana and conspiracy to sell marijuana. At first, Robert thinks Rivera's arresting him because he stole Travis's suitcase, but as he wakes up, Robert realizes Rivera is after drugs. Robert, though, keeps harping on Travis's suitcase, which he has not been able to open, and Rivera brings it with them to the police station.

Augustus Brine and Gian Hen Gian wait in Gus's pickup outside Jenny's house, ready to put Gus's plan into action. Gus is concerned the demon might be in Travis's car. Jenny comes out of the house on her way to work, and Brine is relieved she will be out of danger. Her car has trouble starting, and Gus is afraid she will go back in the house. Gian Hen Gian is willing to sacrifice her safety, but Gus is not. Luckily, her car starts, and she drives off.

Gus and the Djinn get out of Gus's car and plant the explosives around the yard. Each seal bomb is enclosed in a bag of flour. Brine goes up to the porch, and then the Djinn sets off the bombs. They explode in sequence, and the flour unexpectedly catches fire as it floats into the air, setting the trees aflame. Travis comes to the door, and Gus hits him and drags him to the truck through the fog of flour.

Gian Hen Gian tells Gus the demon is gone and Travis has lost control of it. Otherwise, Gus could never have hurt Travis. Gus berates the Djinn for not telling him this before; Gus would have been killed if the demon were there. Travis begins regaining consciousness, but Gus knocks him out again and drives off.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 23, Rivera and Chapter 24, Augustus Brine Analysis

Rivera arrests Robert as a poor second choice compared with The Breeze. The suitcase is still a mystery, and it continues to build suspense as the reader wonders about its importance and its role.

Meanwhile, Augustus Brine puts his plan into action. Gus continues to act almost blindly. He does not truly know what he is up against, and if he had all the facts, he would never have caught Travis. Only by virtue of pure luck does Gus survive; only because Travis was distracted by Jenny can Gus capture him. The bad situation has in a way become good, benefiting the forces working against the demon.

The convoluted plot to capture Travis and get the incantation to send the demon back to hell is beginning to emerge. Without the help of coincidence, Augustus could never have gotten this far. Is coincidence merely coincidence, or are supernatural forces protecting Gus in his quest?



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 25, Amanda and Chapter 26, Travis's Story

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 25, Amanda and Chapter 26, Travis's Story Summary

Amanda leaves her daughter's house early, anxious to get away from her daughter's constant anxiety that Amanda will die soon. Amanda misses her husband and drives quickly back to their home, thinking about Effrom's secrets—smoking and watching aerobics. She knows about both but allows him this secret world. When Amanda gets to the house, there is a strange smell. She cannot find Effrom and begins to worry. Hesitantly, Amanda checks in his workshop and discovers a new secret: Effrom's sculptures are all nudes of her. She marvels at them, but she is distracted by her worry. Where is Effrom? Then, the phone rings. It is a call from Effrom's kidnappers.

With Gian Hen Gian in the other room, Augustus Brine resuscitates Travis and gets Travis to tell his story: Young Travis is a farm boy. When he is sixteen, World War I starts, and his mother gets him into seminary school early to avoid the draft. One of the priests resents him and punishes him with extra work. Then one day, the priest, overcome with wrath, whips the boy. Travis curses God. At the time, he is polishing some valuable Vatican candlesticks. He notices a flaw. The candlesticks are hollow. Inside, he finds a paper in Latin and Greek. He sounds out the Greek, and suddenly a monster appears—Catch. Catch rushes off to avenge the priest, and Travis runs away as fast as he can, with the candlesticks.

Travis hops a train and meets Amanda, a young girl engaged to a World War I soldier. The two nearly make love, but do not. Then, Catch finds Travis on the train. Travis runs again, back to his parents' farm. Catch has beat him there and eaten Travis's family. Travis learns the rules: As long as Catch is around, Travis will not age or be sick or harmed. Catch is immortal and bound to Travis. He is invisible to everyone else, except when he is in eating form. Then, he grows huge. Catch needs to eat, and Travis cannot always stop him. Sometimes Catch obeys completely and sometimes not. Travis does not know why.

Travis tries exorcism to get rid of Catch, but Catch eats the priests. Travis knows he must track down Amanda and the candlesticks, hoping the key to sending Catch away is hidden in them. After years on the road, searching for a World War I veteran whose name begins with E and who is married to a girl named Amanda, Travis has tracked them down to Pine Cove. On the verge of success, though, Catch has gone out of control, and Travis must stop him.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 25, Amanda and Chapter 26, Travis's Story Analysis

Amanda is the key to sending Catch back to hell, as Travis's story reveals. The reader knows Amanda is now embroiled with Catch's scheme, and since Effrom has been kidnapped, Catch seems a step ahead of Travis and Gus Brine. While Travis tells his story, the reader knows what Catch has been up to, which creates dramatic irony and suspense.

While Catch is deeply embroiled with his scheme to get a more ruthless master, the heroes of the tale seem to be way behind. Augustus and Travis have gotten together, but Augustus thinks Travis purposefully called and controls Catch. The two men are working at cross purposes until Travis finishes his story, and meanwhile Catch's plans are moving ahead.

Amanda is a woman Travis has been searching for over the last seventy years. She is not merely, though, the owner of the candlesticks. Amanda symbolizes happiness, and Travis's time with her on the train seems like the only happiness in his memory. Just as Jenny saved Robert at his lowest point, Amanda can save Travis.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 27, Augustus and Chapter 28, Effrom

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 27, Augustus and Chapter 28, Effrom Summary

After Travis finishes telling his story, Augustus unties him. Gian Hen Gian returns from taking his bath and threatens Travis with torture. Augustus explains that Travis, too, is trying to find the Seal of Solomon, which Gian Hen Gian admits could have been made into a candlestick, and send Catch back to hell. Augustus also introduces Travis to the King of the Djinn. They believe that, concealed in the candlesticks, there is also an invocation that will bind Gian Hen Gian to the invoker, thus giving him the power to destroy Catch. Travis is worried Catch will return to Jenny's house, and Augustus reveals one more piece of the puzzle: Jenny is Amanda's granddaughter.

Effrom wakes and thinks he is dead, but he cannot figure out if this is heaven or hell. Actually, he is in a cabin, and Rachel is calling his wife, demanding the candlesticks in exchange for Effrom's freedom. Amanda brings the candlesticks to the cabin, and Rachel opens them. She finds the incantations, but there is a problem. They are in Greek, and she cannot read Greek. Catch knows Travis can translate them, and he plans to kidnap Jenny and hold her hostage to force Travis to complete the translation. Meanwhile, Catch insists on keeping Effrom and Amanda as hostages, too, so they cannot warn Travis.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 27, Augustus and Chapter 28, Effrom Analysis

Up to this point in the story, Catch always seems to be one step ahead. However, during Chapter 27 and 28, the story reaches a turning point. Finally, Travis and Augustus have pooled their knowledge and are ready to work together to stop Catch. Also, Catch reaches an obstacle. One of Catch's shortcomings is that he cannot read. The incantations are in Greek, and Rachel cannot read them either. Catch needs Travis to complete his plan, and this gives Travis an opportunity to defeat the demon.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 29, Rivera and Chapter 30, Jenny

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 29, Rivera and Chapter 30, Jenny Summary

Rivera questions Robert Masterson and realizes Robert does not know anything about The Breeze's whereabouts or the drugs. Rivera imagines his career is over. The only loose end is the suitcase Robert took out of Travis's car. It is full of handwritten notes of names, addresses, and dates, going back to the 1920s. Rivera gives the information to Chief Technical Sergeant Irving Nailsworth, nicknamed the Spider by his fellow officers and nicknamed the Nailgun by himself.

The Spider is an overweight computer genius. He creates a database of all the information and discovers every entry is a World War I veteran whose first or middle name begins with E. Then, he runs it through a Justice Department database and finds the dates and cities all match unsolved disappearances. The results cannot be coincidental. Rivera may have stumbled across a serial killing spree going back seventy years. Rivera heads back to Pine Cove to investigate, and the Spider begs Rivera to check on his online girlfriend Roxanne, who never showed up to chat last night.

Meanwhile, Jenny is still flying high from her date the previous night. She gets a call from Rachel asking her to join the coven for a ritual at some nearby caves. Jenny agrees and leaves a message for Travis that she will be back from work late.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 29, Rivera and Chapter 30, Jenny Analysis

Rivera is still outside the struggle going on between the evil Catch and the forces of good: Travis, Augustus, and Gian Hen Gian. His investigation of The Breeze has, in a roundabout way, brought him up against Catch, who truly is a serial killer. Rivera, firmly planted in a rational world of investigation, has no clue he has uncovered something supernatural.

Rivera's story, though, highlights the close interconnectedness of all the characters, whose lives constantly crisscross each other. The Spider is in love with Roxanne, who is now a victim of the serial killer. Robert unknowingly brings Rivera evidence of Travis's travels, linking together Catch's murders across time. This interconnectedness seems evidence of some sort of plan for the universe. Chapter 29 also underlines the layers of secrets in the story. The Spider keeps his true appearance secret from Roxanne. Roxanne keeps her identity as Billy secret. Travis lives in a secret world, where Catch secretly kills.

The short chapter about Jenny reminds the reader of the imminent danger of Catch. Jenny is being lured away, and just at her happiest moment, she is about to be plunged into a life-threatening situation.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 31, Good Guys and Chapter 32, The Head of the Slug

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 31, Good Guys and Chapter 32, The Head of the Slug Summary

Augustus Brine, Travis, and Gian Hen Gian go back to Jenny's house, waiting until Rivera has left to enter. They listen to Jenny's message that she will be late from work. Then, a call comes in. It is Rachel, and she is holding Jenny hostage. She demands Travis translate the invocations in exchange for Jenny.

Travis, Brine, and the Djinn go to the Head of the Slug to discuss their options. There, they run into Robert, who attacks Travis out of jealousy. When they calm Robert down, they explain Jenny's been kidnapped. Robert agrees to help them. Howard Phillips is also there, and he joins the party. They come up with a plan. While Travis goes to the cave, the others will hide nearby. Travis will hold up the incantations, and Robert will take instant photos with a telephoto lens. He calculates that the text will be readable, and, since Howard happens to know Greek, Howard will translate the text that gives someone mastery of Gian Hen Gian. Gus will record it on Mavis's tape recorder. Then, as soon as they get the candlesticks, Gus will play back the incantation at high speed and give Gian Hen Gian the power to stop Catch.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 31, Good Guys and Chapter 32, The Head of the Slug Analysis

Because Catch needs Travis to translate the Greek texts, Travis has the opportunity to turn the tables on Catch and finally get rid of him. The danger also increases as the story nears its climax, increasing tension and suspense. For Travis, with Jenny's life at risk, the stakes have never been higher.

Also, the reader sees the heavy hand of coincidence in this section. Robert believes that, mysteriously, at his lowest point something will happen to save him. Here, salvation is suddenly at hand. Robert has the opportunity to rescue Jenny and become a hero, and coincidentally, he has the photography skills and equipment to play an instrumental role in defeating the demon. Also coincidentally, the cafe owner, Howard, who coincidentally saw the demon and therefore believes in him, is fluent in Greek. All the ingredients for success come together at the Head of the Slug, even a convenient cassette recorder. The interconnectedness of the characters in the town resolves into a pattern. All the pieces are in place. Is this web of coincidence a natural occurrence or a supernatural one?



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 33, Rivera and Chapter 34, U-Pick-Em

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 33, Rivera and Chapter 34, U-Pick-Em Summary

Rivera realizes, on his way to Pine Cove, that he has left his bullet-proof vest behind. He purposefully told no one where he was going, since the hunt for a serial killer might be a wild goose chase. No one is home at Effrom Elliot's house, and the policeman enters, perhaps illegally. He sees the bullet hole in Effrom's bedroom door.

When Rivera reports to the station, he gets a message from Nailsworth that Effrom's granddaughter is married to Robert, Rivera's suspect, and so Rivera heads off to track down Jenny. He learns there was a fire at her house and sees for himself the aftereffects of Gus Brine's floury explosions. No one's home, and the cafe is closed. Rivera heads toward the town watering hole, the Head of the Slug.

Moore detours to tell the history of the caves where Jenny is being held hostage. The Pagan Vegetarians for Peace believe they are a mystical location where Ohlone Indian rituals were held, but this is not true. The caves are full of bats. In the 1960s, a farmer grew mushrooms in the caves and sold them to customers who picked the mushrooms themselves. They were very popular, until the farmer tried to string lights to sell the mushrooms at night. Then, the bats attacked people, causing a lawsuit that shut him down.

The Breeze had the idea to grow magic mushrooms instead, and he and the farmer went into business together. However, one weekend when The Breeze happened to be in jail, animal control came by to destroy the bats, since one of the mushroom-pickers had gotten rabies. They found the mushrooms and arrested the farmer, failing in the process to rid the caves of bats. The Breeze sent him mushroom spores in jail, and soon the farmer had a profitable business selling mushrooms to the other inmates.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 33, Rivera and Chapter 34, U-Pick-Em Analysis

Rivera is a wild card in the story of Catch. He does not know what is going on and has no idea of any supernatural activity, but he has detected the string of remarkable coincidences that bind the characters together. Effrom's name was in Travis's suitcase; Jenny is Effrom's daughter. Robert is Jenny's husband, and Rivera's only link to The Breeze, Catch's first victim. The characters are so interconnected that Rivera must investigate, even though he has no idea of the web he is entangling himself in.



The chapter that describes the history of the caves is really an aside to the rest of the story. This foray into the past also shows the interconnectedness of the characters, through the town's history. The cave itself is an important place for the Pagan Vegetarians for Peace and therefore Rachel, and it also has close ties to The Breeze. Even though The Breeze is dead, he lives on not only in the afterlife but also in the realities of the characters' day-to-day existence. If it were not for The Breeze, Rivera would not be involved in the story at all. If it were not for The Breeze, the bats in the caves would have been destroyed by animal control, and then in the next chapter, the hostages would not have been moved out of doors, putting a serious cramp in the heroes' plan. By a bizarre coincidence, or perhaps some overarching supernatural plan, The Breeze is instrumental in getting rid of Catch.

The story of the cave also creates a break in the heightening action of the plot. Just as the characters are about to all come together for the final battle, the plot, metaphorically, takes a deep breath. The reader is drawn into the past, and away from the tension, for a brief intermission before all hell breaks loose. In other words, the reader is held in suspense.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 35, Bad Guys, Good Guys

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 35, Bad Guys, Good Guys Summary

Catch and Rachel have Effrom, Amanda, and Jenny hostage in the caves. A bat flies by, unsettling Rachel, and she insists on moving them outside. Meanwhile, the party of good guys arrives. They have doubts about the plan because it is full of potential pitfalls, but they decide they must all move forward with it with confidence, as if they know it will work.

The plan goes into action. Travis finds the hostages already in the open and is able to hold up the incantations to be photographed. As he feared, Catch and Rachel will not let the hostages go before they know the incantation works. However, he falsely tells them the candlesticks cannot be nearby if the incantation is to work and gets them to place the candlesticks away near Jenny. Travis starts to translate the wrong incantation to buy time, but they check his work immediately and make him begin translating the other paper.

Robert takes the Polaroid snapshots of the incantations, and Howard Phillips begins translating. When he finishes, Gus records it on the tape recorder. Just as they are ready to move in to get the candlesticks, Rivera appears to interfere with the heroes. He insists on finding out what is going on and threatens to drag them all back to the station. Travis is anxiously awaiting the heroes, and he runs out of ways to stall. Just as things are looking their darkest, Mavis comes up behind Rivera and knocks him out with her baseball bat. Robert and Gus jump into the truck and drive up to get the candlesticks, hoping Gian Hen Gian will be a distraction.

Meanwhile, Rachel has read Travis's translation, but nothing has happened. Catch knows that somehow, he has been tricked. The demon grows large and visible and picks up Effrom, wielding him in the air. Just then, Gian Hen Gian appears, and Catch tosses Effrom to the side. The demon sees the truck, though, and heads for Gus and Robert.

Gus wrenches the wheel of the truck and turns it over on top of the demon, injuring Robert's arm and trapping Gus in the front. Robert runs for the candlesticks. Catch is clawing at the truck, and he finally pushes it off of him. When the demon roars, Robert is at first frozen with fear, and then Gus calls to him, snapping Robert out of it. The demon is trying to get at Gus in the truck's front seat when Robert finally gets the bag to him and Gus begins playing back the tape.

A hundred miles away, a strange unidentified flying object is detected: an owl with an eighty-foot wingspan. Meanwhile, in Gus's worse moment, when he knows the demon is



going to kill him, Gus slips into a state of Zen. Rivera has regained consciousness and sees the whole supernatural scene. He tries to shoot Catch, but his bullet has little effect.

Gian Hen Gian realizes Gus has successfully completed the incantation, but the Djinn cannot do anything until Gus gives him a command. However, he can and must complete the last command of his last master: to bring Catch to a rock outside of Jerusalem to be bound and punished. Catch has just reached Gus inside the truck, but Gus simply smiles at the monster. Catch, startled, pauses to ask if Gus is out of his mind. It is enough of a delay for the giant owl to swoop down and carry Catch away toward Jerusalem.

The heroes find Effrom has died of a heart attack during the struggle. Brine directs the Djinn to heal Robert's arm and Gus's wounds from the demon, but the Djinn cannot bring Effrom back to life. The Djinn explains that, according to Solomon's command, the Djinn is being carried to Jerusalem. Travis will not have this open display of the supernatural, so he reads the incantation to send Catch to hell. As a result, Travis ages to his natural ninety years, separating himself from Jenny forever.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 35, Bad Guys, Good Guys Analysis

This chapter is packed with action as the heroes finally send Catch to hell. It is also packed with the fulfillment of coincidences. Every person in the town, it seems, has their role to play. The Breeze's illicit dalliances in the cave assure there are bats to drive Rachel and the hostages into the open. Gus uses his talent for Zen. Robert uses his talent for photography. Howard uses his talent for Greek translation. The Djinn uses his supernatural powers. Even Mavis contributes a swing of the baseball bat she keeps behind the counter, using it to knock out Rivera.

Is the complex web of elements at the end of the story part of some overarching supernatural plan? Robert has a belief in some miracle coming and rescuing him from his darkest moments, and this belief is proved true. It speaks of faith, and furthermore, the characters agree they must all act as if their rather sketchy and risky plan is to work. They agree to have faith. The success of their plan is analogous to the faithful who put their trust in a Christian God and are rewarded. In the fight against evil, the presence of God is discernable—just barely. This world of demons and Djinn, however, is ultimately a constructed world of the author. The true force behind the coincidences that coalesce at the end of the story is Christopher Moore himself.



Part 4: Monday, Chapter 36, Jenny, Robert, Rivera, Amanda, Travis, Howard, and The Spider and Chapter 37, Good Guys

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 36, Jenny, Robert, Rivera, Amanda, Travis, Howard, and The Spider and Chapter 37, Good Guys Summary

Rivera drives Jenny and Robert home together. He decides he cannot reveal what happened to the police department. Soon he is working at the Seven-Eleven—undercover on the track of robbers. He makes the bust and gets a promotion to lieutenant. Gian Hen Gian turns Effrom's body to stone, and they leave him as a monument in the cave. Amanda and Travis go off together, and Amanda tells Travis that because of their experiences, she knows Effrom is living on in an afterlife. Nailsworth never knows what happened to Roxanne, and in his grief, he loses all his extra fat and ends up marrying a girl who also loves computers.

Augustus Brine gives his general store to Jenny and Robert. He directs Gian Hen Gian to make Amanda and Travis age backwards, so they can grow young together. Rachel picks Gus and the Djinn up at the side of the road, and they drive off to Nevada, where King's Lake suddenly appears in the desert. Gus and Rachel open a brothel there. Visitors' money is returned when they leave, and they never quite remember their visit. Still, afterwards, they relish the simple, everyday pleasures of life.

Part 4: Monday, Chapter 36, Jenny, Robert, Rivera, Amanda, Travis, Howard, and The Spider and Chapter 37, Good Guys Analysis

The final two short chapters wrap up the characters' stories and create a conclusion to the story. Augustus has always thought he would make a good madam, and he wants to bring simple happiness to others' lives. In his store, he brought good food and fine wine to people. In his magical brothel, he brings the enjoyment of the everyday. Ironically, the brothel itself is the work of something extraordinary, the King of the Djinn, and yet its purpose is to provide appreciation for the ordinary. Perhaps the brothel is analogous to Moore's book—a book of the supernatural that celebrates and strives to cause the reader to appreciate everyday life.



Characters

Travis O'Hearn

Travis O'Hearn is an ex-seminary student who accidentally bound himself to Catch the Destroyer, a demon. Travis is an intellectual accepted into the seminary at an early age, and in the novel, intellect is a quality of goodness. Travis is also around ninety years old, but he looks like he is in his early twenties, since the demon prevents him from aging. Catch has killed Travis's family, and Travis is wracked with the guilt of all of Catch's murders, although he tries to separate himself from Catch's crimes by rationalizing he is not responsible. Travis has been traveling around the country for years, looking for the Vatican candlesticks containing the incantation that will allow him to send Catch back to hell.

Travis exists in a state of purgatory. At the seminary, Travis is abused by a jealous priest. The priest says he is testing Travis, and on one level, at least, this is true. Travis curses, renouncing God, after being whipped by the priest. His renunciation of God is what allows him to call the demon Catch, and ever after, Travis is saddled with a demon who murders constantly. In this way, Catch is a punishment for Travis's sins, and only when he finds Amanda and the candlesticks can Travis be released from this purgatory.

In Travis's life of horrors, Amanda is a savior, symbolizing romantic love and joy. She is, in this way, a purveyor of everyday pleasures, much as Catch is a purveyor of the opposite—supernatural horrors. Travis is on a quest to escape purgatory and begin a new life, which he finds with Amanda.

Catch the Destroyer

Catch the Destroyer is a demon whose status is somewhere in the middle ranks of hell's hierarchy. Catch is a childlike character, contributing irony and humor to the story through reading Cookie Monster comic books, imitating scenes from movies, referring to pajamas as "jammies," and stopping in the middle of a gruesome killing to relax on the Magic Fingers of a motel-room bed. Despite Catch's childlike qualities, he is certainly a murderer, finding fulfillment only in wreaking havoc and destruction.

Catch is invisible to everyone but his master, currently Travis, except when he is in his feeding form. When Catch is on the rampage, he grows exponentially in size and becomes visible to all around him. Catch is annoyed by being bound to Travis because Travis tries to stop Catch from killing at every turn. Travis controls Catch through the strength of his will, and unfortunately, when he is distracted by Jenny, Travis loses control of Catch. Just as Travis wants to rid himself of Catch, Catch wants to rid himself of Travis and makes a plan to find a new and more destruction-happy master.

Catch's childlike nature and his inability to read marks him as being decidedly un-intellectual, a quality the author seems to equate with evil. The Djinn functions as a



literary foil to Catch, since he is a similar supernatural character but with opposite characteristics. Where Catch is childlike, the Djinn is wrinkled and old. Where Catch is un-intellectual, the Djinn is studious, fond of long words and able to read. Where Catch is a destroyer, the Djinn is a creator. This dichotomy gives insight into the author's ideas of good and evil.

Augustus Brine

Augustus Brine is a master of Zen who enjoys fishing and enjoys bringing simple pleasures to those around him. Brine is recruited by Gian Hen Gian, King of the Djinn, to defeat Catch. Augustus Brine is well read, marking him as an intellectual and therefore good in the context of the story. Brine also brings with him the unique talent of Zen which allows him to distance himself from the horrific happenings at the climax of the story.

Brine's name is significant, since it means saltwater, the thing the Djinn loves to drink and the element of creation that began life on Earth. Perhaps the Djinn chooses Brine not merely because he is a fisherman, but also because Brine is a creator, like the Djinn. Brine is not a man of action; he is a man of thought. At the end of the novel, Brine creates a paradise or heaven on Earth, a spiritual place reputed to be a brothel, but where, in fact, people come to learn to appreciate the simple pleasures of life.

Robert Masterson

Robert Masterson has been staying with The Breeze since his wife, Jenny, threw him out of the house. Robert is a photographer and an alcoholic. Each time he reaches a low point in his life, some miracle seems to save him, and at the beginning of the novel, Robert has reached perhaps the lowest point in his life.

Robert's belief in a saving miracle is, in fact, analogous to Christian faith and the idea of putting oneself in God's hands. At the end of the book, a miraculous event does save Robert, as he is swept up in the plan to save Jenny and destroy the demon Catch. Robert turns out to be instrumental because he has the knowledge and equipment to formulate and carry out a plan to translate the incantation that will allow the Djinn to use his powers to defeat Catch. Being thrust into the role of hero allows Robert to win back Jenny and it makes his defunct photography business moot, since in the end of the story Augustus Brine gives Robert and Jenny the general store.

Jenny Masterson

Jenny is recently separated from Robert Masterson. She works as a waitress in H.P.'s Cafe. When Travis sees Jenny, he is strangely attracted to her. They go on a date and share an intimate night together. Later, Travis discovers Jenny is the granddaughter of Amanda Elliot, a woman he fell for on a train years ago.



Detective Sergeant Alphonso Rivera

Rivera has been planning an undercover sting to catch The Breeze and use him to get evidence on higher-up drug dealer contacts. Rivera's plans are foiled when The Breeze disappears. Rivera thinks his cover is blown, but really The Breeze has been eaten by the demon Catch. Rivera nearly foils the good guys' plan to send Catch back to hell, but Mavis Sand saves the day by conking him on the head with a baseball bat.

Mavis Sand

Mavis is the elderly proprietor of the Head of the Slug. Her body has been slowly eaten away by time, and she enjoys eavesdropping on her customers and telling interminable stories about things that happen in the bar.

The Breeze

The Breeze is an unemployed surfer who dabbles in drug dealing. Just when he thinks he is on the verge of making his first big drug deal (but is really on the verge of being caught in a police sting), The Breeze is eaten by the demon Catch.

Gian Hen Gian

Gian Hen Gian is the King of the Djinn, an Arabic-looking, small-statured creature who sends blue swirls flying in the air when he curses. Gian Hen Gian is addicted to salt from his time trapped in a bottle in the ocean, when he drank the salt water that dripped into his prison.

Effrom Elliot

A World War I veteran, Effrom is a sculptor who carves only nude figures of his wife, Amanda. Effrom has a bad heart and dies of a heart attack after being thrown in the air by the demon Catch.

Amanda Elliot

Years ago, when Amanda was a young girl affianced to Effrom Elliot, who was away at war, Amanda met Travis O'Hearn on a train. The young Travis had just unknowingly called up the demon Catch, and met Amanda on the run. The two nearly became lovers, and Travis left the candlesticks, created from the Seal of Solomon and containing the incantations for calling and sending away the demon, with Amanda. Years later, Travis finally tracks down Amanda, hoping to regain the candlesticks and send Catch back to hell.



Rachel Henderson

Rachel Henderson was an abused wife. She has since found self-empowerment through pagan rituals. Catch pretends to be an earth spirit and convinces Rachel to conspire with him to retrieve the candlesticks containing the incantations for calling and sending him away. Catch hopes Rachel will call him, become his master, and use him to wreak terror on the world in exchange for power.

Howard Phillips

Howard Phillips is the owner of H.P.'s Cafe. He believes that before the human race existed on Earth, a race called the Old Ones ruled the planet. He also believes they will some day come back to take the planet over. When Howard sees Catch, he realizes the Old Ones were demons.

Billy Winston, a.k.a. Roxanne

Billy Winston is a friend of The Breeze. Billy works nights at a local motel. He wears women's undergarments, and when he is alone, he slips on high-heeled shoes. As Roxanne, Billy spends his nights conversing with online male lovers, and his dream is to buy his own computer and become Roxanne full-time. Catch cuts Billy's dreams short by devouring him.

Chief Technical Sergeant Irving Nailsworth, a.k.a. The Spide

Nailsworth is an overweight computer genius who provides technical support for the police department. He is having an online love affair with Roxanne, and he has no idea she is actually the cross-dressing motel employee Billy Winston.



Objects/Places

Pine Cove

Pine Cove is a small coastal California town that was once a whaling community and is now a tourist town. Travis finally tracks down the magical implements he needs to send the demon Catch back to hell in Pine Cove.

The Head of the Slug

The Head of the Slug is the local bar and pool hall in Pine Cove.

H.P.'s Cafe

H.P.'s Cafe is a Pine Cove restaurant catering to a local clientele. The cafe is owned by Howard Phillips, and Jenny Masterson works there.

Brine's Bait, Tackle, and Fine Wines

Augustus Brine owns the local general store, where old men gather to drink free coffee and talk. The store also sells fine wine and gourmet food items.

The Pagan Vegetarians for Peace

Rachel has a coven of thirteen women called The Pagan Vegetarians for Peace. Most women who join the coven are on the verge of divorcing their husbands and looking for support.

The Caves

The caves near Pine Cove were once used to grow mushrooms, but when the customers disturbed the caves' bat population, animal control put an end to the business. After that, The Breeze had the idea to use the caves to grow magic mushrooms. This business did not last long, and The Breeze's partner ended up in jail. Rachel makes the caves the meeting place to exchange her hostages for Travis's translation of the incantations that control the demon Catch.

The Candlesticks

Travis stumbles on the candlesticks while he is in seminary, studying to become a priest. The candlesticks are valuable Vatican relics, created from the long-lost Seal of



Solomon. In secret compartments, the candlesticks also contain the incantations to call Catch, send Catch back to hell, and control Gian Hen Gian, King of the Djinn.

The Seal of Solomon

The Seal of Solomon was a staff owned by King Solomon, used in a magic ritual to call the demon Catch and also Gian Hen Gian, King of the Djinn. The lost Seal of Solomon was made into candlesticks.

The Incantations

The candlesticks made from the Seal of Solomon contain three incantations. One of them calls the demon Catch the destroyer and puts him under the caller's control. The second incantation sends Catch back to hell. The third incantation calls Gian Hen Gian, King of the Djinn, and puts him under the caller's control.

San Junipero

San Junipero is a larger college town near Pine Cove.



Themes

Coincidence, Interconnectedness, and a Divine Plan

Moore's novel is rife with coincidence. As the inhabitants of a small town, all of the characters' lives are intertwined in many different ways. Amanda and Effrom are related to their granddaughter Jenny and her husband Robert. Robert is staying in The Breeze's trailer because Jenny threw him out, and this fact connects him to Rivera, who wants to arrest The Breeze. Rachel and Jenny are in a coven together, and Jenny works for Howard Phillips. They all hang out at Mavis's bar. They all shop at Augustus Brine's general store. The connections, large and small, stretch out throughout the novel.

The characters all also seem to possess unique qualities that suit them to take part in the complex plan to rid the world of the demon Catch. Howard knows Greek, which allows him to translate the incantations. Robert is a photographer, which allows him to photograph the incantations. Gus has mastered the art of Zen, which allows him to separate himself from the horrors during the climax. The fact all these people exist in the one small town where Amanda and the candlesticks, made from the Seal of Solomon, reside is highly improbable. Is it coincidence?

As the heroes go into the final battle, they decide amongst themselves they must all go into this fight believing the plan will succeed and each fulfill their role with confidence. This is the definition of faith. The characters decide they must have faith. The combination of faith and coincidence speaks to the existence of a divine plan the characters, unknowingly, are all a part of.

Simple Pleasures

When Augustus Brine decides to open his general store, it is because he wants to provide simple pleasures he associates with happiness to others. To say Brine is a follower of Zen is somewhat a misnomer, since Brine discovered Zen before he knew what it was. Brine is, instead, a natural practitioner of Zen, a person who has transcended the worries and difficulties of everyday existence. This seems to clear Brine's mind, enabling him to accept the simple pleasures of life: fishing, fine wine, fine food, sensual pleasure. These pleasures are portrayed as pure and good and the essence of good life.

In a novel that constantly contrasts the everyday with the supernatural, the everyday comes out as the clear winner. The supernatural brings mostly horror, and the real goodness of life is found in the everyday. When Travis and Jenny make love, they eat everything in her kitchen, relishing sinking their teeth into a watermelon. This brings them joy. Effrom finds joy in secret smoking and watching aerobics on TV. Travis finally



finds joy in companionship with Amanda. All the elements of happiness are found in the simple pleasures of life.

The characters who seek after power and fail to find happiness in the everyday, like Rachel, find only sorrow. Rachel's desire for power has left her alone and gets her involved with Catch. When she gives up this desire to align herself with Gus, whose goal is to give people simple pleasures, she finds some sort of peace. In the end of the novel, Gus creates a vision of paradise, and this paradise provides, not grandeur, but the appreciation of simple pleasures.

Salvation

One of the themes of the novel is salvation. Travis is trapped in a purgatory through his relationship with Catch. He is being punished for failing his tests of faith at seminary and cursing God. Travis is eventually able to find salvation, and he finds it through a woman, Amanda, who represents both love and pleasure.

Robert is also seeking salvation. He has sunk to the deepest depths, given up his dream of being a photographer, and given himself up to drink. Robert needs salvation because he is lost in alcoholism and lack of purpose. Since Robert maintains faith, he is in the right place at the right time to save Jenny, send Catch to hell, and therefore achieve salvation. A woman is also instrumental to Robert's salvation; he gets his wife back.

Even Augustus Brine needs some sort of salvation. When the Djinn tells Gus he will gain a sense of purpose through destroying Catch, Gus is at first resentful. Then, he realizes the Djinn is right; he has no sense of purpose in life. He, also, has lost his way. Through destroying Catch, Brine finds a kind of salvation and a way to fulfill his lost dream of providing simple pleasures to others. Again, a woman plays an instrumental role in Gus's salvation. When he leaves, he leaves with Rachel, and his dream paradise is a brothel, a house of womanhood and simple pleasures.

Even the Spider, who strives for the love of a woman but is blocked by his sedentary, isolated life, achieves some sort of salvation in the end. His sorrow at losing Roxanne allows him to lose weight and connect with a real life woman. Throughout the novel, women are tied to both salvation and happiness.

Style

Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person omniscient. This point of view allows the writer to follow each character in turn, tell events from different points of view, and give the reader access to details of both the past and the present. This is the story of a whole town, a community, not just a single person, and the writer uses a broad point of view to give perspective on all aspects of the events as they unfold. No one individual sees all the intricate details of the plan falling into place, but the reader sees them. The third person omniscient perspective allows the reader to wonder about the detailed dovetailing of all of the characters' paths. Is this merely coincidence, or is this a divine plan unfolding?

The writer also uses varying points of view to provide humor and insight into humanity's interpretation of the supernatural. Each character, seeing Catch for the first time, has a unique reaction to and experience of the superhuman monster. The reader experiences The Breeze's drugged reaction to both the monster and the experience of death. The reader experiences Billy/Roxanne's gaping response to Catch's glee at the motel's Magic Fingers. The reader experiences Howard Phillip's awestruck response to seeing what he assumes is an Old One walking through the forest and Rachel's unsettled response to what she assumes is an Earth spirit. All of these varying points of view reveal how humanity interprets the supernatural and the spiritual in diverse ways, without any basis in objective truth.

Setting

The setting of Moore's novel is a small town on the coast of California called Pine Cove, and the town itself seems to become a character in the novel. During several parts of the novel, the author gives the story, not of what is happening to one particular character, but of what is happening simultaneously to all, or many, of the inhabitants of the town. This gives a sense of the town not only as a place but also as a web of connected lives. The people make up the town and the setting for the story.

Because Pine Cove is a small town, the lives of all of the inhabitants are very closely connected. Jenny is married to Robert, and she is Amanda and Howard's granddaughter. Jenny is in a coven with Rachel and employed by Howard. Everyone eats at Howard's cafe. Everyone shops at Augustus Brine's general store. Everyone drinks at the Head of the Slug Saloon.

Because the town is small, all the characters know each other or at least have mutual close ties. Effrom and Rachel do not know each other, but they are related through Jenny and probably other ties as well. This interconnectedness allows the writer to use



coincidence and create a feeling that events, perhaps, are somehow pre-planned. All of the stories tie in to other stories.

The town of Pine Cove also has a history, and the writer brings in the town's history as part of the setting by detailing the founding of the town and the different eras of the town's economy. The writer also details the history of the caves where the story's climax takes place. This element of the past worked into the storytelling shows the setting is interconnected not only across the lives of the characters but across time.

Language and Meaning

Moore uses clever language for humor throughout the novel, and also to reveal his characters' personalities. Moore's humor is mainly based on contrast, such as having Catch, the demon of destruction, using childish words like "jammies." The demon's use of childish language also marks him as un-intellectual, a trait that seems aligned with evil in the novel. The King of the Djinn uses ornate, archaic, pompous language, but he also uses words and phrases of the present, such as a description of a blender from a Sears catalog. The Djinn's mode of speech marks him as intellectual, unlike Catch, and therefore aligns him with good instead of evil.

The supernatural characters are not the only ones defined by their use of language. Howard Phillips speaks in a style reminiscent of his namesake, H.P. Lovecraft. His verbose style also shows his turn of mind is intellectual, and the reader is not surprised to learn he knows Greek and joins the party of heroes who defeat Catch in the end.

The writer also uses meaningful naming for some of his characters. Both Howard Phillips and Augustus Brine have names tied to their personalities. Howard takes on the first two names of H.P. Lovecraft, and Brine's name means salt water. This both ties Brine to his persona as a fisherman and ties him to the Djinn who chooses Brine as his next master, since the Djinn craves salt water.

Structure

Moore's novel is structured in four parts, with 37 short chapters averaging less than seven pages in length. This allows the author to jump back and forth between multiple characters and situations throughout the town of Pine Cove, building tension and keeping up a rapid, exciting pace. It also allows the writer to include multiple characters whose lives are all intertwined, as part of the community of Pine Cove, and it allows the writer to move off into tangential stories, such as the history of the caves where the climax takes place.

Despite some side trips, the novel is basically chronological, and each part is determined by a period of time. Part 1 is Saturday night. This briefest episode chronicles The Breeze's death and serves as an enticing introduction to Catch, the approaching demon. The second part is Sunday, and this part sets up the story. Travis and Catch arrive in town, and the threads of various stories are established.



Sunday night, covered in Part 3, is a pause before the serious conflict begins. Travis's date with Jenny culminates, and Catch puts his plans into action. Meanwhile, the whole town is tense and on edge. In Part 4, Monday, all of the previously established threads come together. Augustus, Travis, Robert, and Howard find each other and begin working together. The conflict comes to a head, and finally, the demon is defeated. The novel wraps up by giving the reader a peak into each of the major characters' futures, providing a sense of conclusion.



Quotes

"The Breeze turned and started to run. He got three steps before the jaws clamped over his head and shoulders, crunching through his bones as if they were peppermint sticks," Chapter 1, p. 10.

"The unnatural light in the Arab's eyes dimmed, and in a humble, obsequious manner he said, 'Excuse me, please, but could I trouble you for a small quantity of salt?'" Chapter 2, p. 21.

"If there was no order in the universe, then why should it be out of order to be sitting on the beach talking to an Arab dwarf who claimed to be king of the Djinn, whatever the hell that was? Strangely enough, Brine took comfort in the fact that this experience was invalidating every assumption he had ever made about the nature of the world. He had tapped into the Zen of ignorance, the enlightenment of absurdity," Chapter 5, pp. 40-41.

"Secretly, Robert believed that if things got so bad that he couldn't see his way out, something would come along and not only save him from disaster but improve his life overall," Chapter 8, p. 58.

"Now the genie was sitting in the chair across from Brine, munching potato chips and watching a videotape of a Marx Brothers movie," Chapter 10, p. 74.

"When Jenny finished adding all the ingredients, the water was the soft, translucent green of cheese mold. It would have come as a great surprise to Jennifer that two hundred miles north, in the laboratories of the Stanford Primordial Slime Research Building, some graduate students were combining the very same ingredients (albeit under scientific names) in a climate-controlled vat, in an attempt to replicate the original conditions in which life had first evolved on Earth. It would have further surprised her that if she had turned on a sunlamp in the bathroom (the last element needed), her bath water would have stood up and said 'Howdy,' immediately qualifying her for the Nobel prize and millions in grant money," Chapter 12, pp. 85-86.

"Catch was a demon of the twenty-seventh order. In the hierarchy of hell this put him far below the archdemons like Mammon, master of avarice, but far above the blue-collar demons like Arrrgg, who was responsible for leeching the styrofoam taste into take-out coffee," Chapter 13, p. 100.

"They ordered, and as dinner progressed they found common ground in the awkwardness of the situation. Jenny told Travis about her marriage and her job. Travis made up a history of working as a traveling insurance salesman with no real ties to home or family," Chapter 14, pp. 106-107.

"The monster scuttled forward, reached over Billy's head, and pushed the door shut with one clawed finger. Billy yanked on the door but it was held fast. He collapsed under the



monster with a long, agonizing wail.

'Give me a quarter,' the monster said," Chapter 17, p. 122.

"Rachel could not believe what she was hearing. Accepting that her magic worked was a huge step, yet she was speaking to the evidence. But to be offered the power to rule the world? She wasn't sure her career in exercise instruction had prepared her for this," Chapter 18, p. 130.

"The demonkeeper has lost control of Catch. Otherwise you would not have been able to harm him.'

'Why didn't you tell me that before? Why don't you tell me these things in advance?'

'I forgot.'

'I might have been killed.'

'To die in the service of the great Gian Hen Gian—what an honor. I envy you, Augustus Brine,'" Chapter 24, p. 160.

"Nothing prepares you for something like that. You can spend your life preparing to be the instrument of God. You can read accounts of possession and exorcism and try to imagine yourself in the situation, but when it actually happens, you just shut down. I did, anyway," Chapter 26, p. 173.

"Gian Hen Gian stepped forward and shook a knotted brown finger in Travis's face. 'Tell us where the Seal of Solomon is hidden or we will have your genitals in a nine-speed reverse action blender with a five-year guarantee before you can say shazam!'" Chapter 27, p. 185.

"Jenny had arrived at work a half hour late expecting to find Howard waiting behind the counter to reprimand her in his own erudite way. Strangely enough, she didn't care. Even more strange was the fact that Howard had not shown up at the cafe all morning," Chapter 30, p. 203.

"Travis considered trying to convince her of her folly, then decided against it. The lives of Jenny and the Elliots depended on Catch maintaining his charade as a benevolent Earth spirit until it was too late. He glared at the demon, who grinned back," Chapter 35, p. 227.

"Inside the truck, still hanging from the seat belt, Augustus Brine turned calmly and looked at the demon. Catch drew back his hand to deliver a blow that would rip Brine's head from his shoulders.

Brine smiled at him. The demon paused.

'What are you, some kind of wacko?' Catch said," Chapter 35, p. 236.

Topics for Discussion

By implication, the existence of the demon Catch proves the existence of a Christian God. Why is God as a character mostly absent from the story? How does God influence the story?

What techniques does Christopher Moore use to create humor?

What techniques does Christopher Moore use to create suspense?

Part 2 of Moore's novel is introduced by the quote from Tom Stoppard, "All mystical experience is coincidence; and vice versa, of course." How does this quote relate to the novel?

Why does Moore choose to tell his story by following a large number of characters as they all converge toward the climax of the story instead of following one main character?

The small community of Pine Cove includes a photographer with the equipment to take readable instant photos of the incantations from a distance and a man who knows Greek well enough to quickly translate those incantations. Without these specialized people, the characters could not have stopped Catch. Is their presence in Pine Cove, the location of the Seal of Solomon and the incantations, a coincidence? If not, what caused it and why?

Is the destruction of Catch another "miracle" that has come along to save Robert Masterson at the lowest point in his life?

Why are women so distracting that they allow Catch to escape control of the demonkeepers?

What is the role of faith in the novel?