

# **A Study in Charlotte Study Guide**

**A Study in Charlotte by Brittany Cavallaro**

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# Plot Summary

A Study in Charlotte is Brittany Cavallaro's first novel in a series featuring Charlotte Holmes and Jamie Watson, the descendants of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. Through some machinations of Jamie's estranged father, the pair end up attending the same boarding school in rural Connecticut. Both teens struggle with isolation and loneliness. Though their friendship has a rocky beginning, they find common ground in their distaste for sophomore bully Lee Dobson. Ironically, Jamie ends up in a fistfight after the rugby player says ugly things about Charlotte.

When Lee turns up dead a few days later, Jamie and Charlotte are the chief subjects, particularly because the murderer staged the killing to resemble a classic Sherlock Holmes story. Their friendship grows over their combined efforts to clear their name. For a while they are working against a local policeman, Detective Shepard. One night, after a late night run to a local diner, the teens emerge from the building to find that they were being tailed by a man that resembled the local drug dealer. A car chase ensues through the country roads, and eventually his car flips. At that point, the man takes off running into the woods. They lose him, but not before Charlotte notes that the man is not local; he is too well trained and well-dressed to be anyone but an employee of a powerful European family.

Eventually, another student is attacked during the homecoming dance. The second victim's attack is likewise made to look like a Sherlock Holmes story, and the detective is almost ready to arrest the pair. In the crowd that gathers around the victim, Jamie and Charlotte see the mysterious figure again. With the local police at their heels, they chase him to a room underground where someone has assembled information on the victims. Indeed, it looks precisely like a killer's lair, complete with notes written in Charlotte's handwriting.

It would be convincing, if Charlotte Holmes were not too intelligent to have such an obvious room. The teens are arrested anyway. After Charlotte confesses to her intermittent drug use, the police are forced to let the teens go home with Jamie's father. The next day, the detective comes over to arrest them again, but they are saved by a report that Charlotte's roommate is attacked. The attack is again similar to a Sherlock Holmes story. However, it is familiar enough that once the detective leaves, Jamie is certain that Charlotte staged the attack to prove to the police that they are innocent.

Detective Shepard gives the pair a month to come up with evidence of their own. For several weeks Jamie and Charlotte investigate. Jamie is certain they should be paying attention to the Moriarty family—a family with a longstanding feud against the Holmeses. Moreover, there is a hint of a scandal involving Charlotte and the youngest Moriarty, a brilliant maths student named August. However, Charlotte refuses to speak about it, and Jamie promises not to pry. Their digging takes them in the way of an over-curious English teacher and a too-friendly nurse.



The climax arrives when Charlotte and Jamie get into a terrible fight. When Jamie returns to his dorm, he finds that his room has been bugged. Driven by rage, he nearly destroys his room in the search for the camera and recording device. By the time he is successful, he hears a commotion outside. A bomb has erupted in the science building, exactly where Charlotte's lab is located. Jamie runs across campus to try to find her safe; eventually, he does find her alive, and his father takes them back to his house.

By now, the students know their lives are in danger. The school decides to close for the remainder of the semester, promising to briefly open the next day so that students can claim their belongings from their dorms.

In the interim, Jamie feels forced by Charlotte's reticence to use his father's store of information; he learns about the scandal involving August. August, who was hired by the Holmes family to tutor Charlotte in math, eventually became close enough to Charlotte that she developed a crush on him. When he rejects her—he is quite older and has a fiancée—she arranges for him to get caught buying her drugs. As a result, he is expelled from school and forced to work a shadowy job in Europe. Jamie is more convinced than ever that they should be looking at him.

When Charlotte realizes that Jamie snooped, she runs off and takes oxycodone. Jamie finds her high and bitter and fearful about their friendship. She talks about August, and Jamie listens patiently until he makes the connection between August's fiancée and their school nurse.

Charlotte's brother Milo, a powerful and wealthy government agent, is on his way to them. He confirms that August's fiancée was named Bryony—the same name as the nurse. They make plans to inspect her apartment the next morning.

When they arrive, they are met by Charlotte's brother Milo. Jamie goes back to his room to get his things and falls prey to a trap the nurse set: a spring-loaded dart that is infected with a deadly virus. She gives Charlotte and Milo twenty-four hours to give her immunity and a suitcase of cash, in exchange for the antidote.

Jamie falls very ill. When it appears he will die, Charlotte kisses him and promises to try to love him. Bryony comes over the next morning, and Charlotte and Milo expose her employer—August's brother Lucien—and find where Bryony has hidden the antidote. Jamie is saved. The teens make plans to stay together.



# Chapter 1

## Summary

Jamie looks back on when he first met Charlotte Holmes. The school they attend—Sherringford, in Connecticut—pays full tuition for him on a rugby scholarship. He actually hates both rugby and Sherringford because they are too closely connected to his estranged father.

Jamie's roommate, Tom Bradford, is dating a girl named Lena, whose roommate is Charlotte Holmes. Both Jamie (Watson) and Charlotte are descended from the long-ago literary giants. Tom invites Jamie to a party at Lena's and Charlotte's dorm. At the party, Tom points out Sherringford's most famous students: the town dealer, some Governor's son, and Charlotte Holmes. Tom points out that he and Jamie are poor compared to most of the student body. The first time Jamie sees Charlotte, she's playing poker. He finds her pretty, and he is drawn to her English accent.

Jamie leaves early; Tom arrives home later, saying that Charlotte cleaned him out. The poker game runs weekly. For weeks he does not see her again. He overhears that all of her money goes to cocaine. One day he literally runs into her on campus, and he introduces himself. Her manner makes Jamie nervous, and he starts babbling a bit. Holmes finally shakes his hand.

Jamie reminisces about knowing Charlotte's history. She has been solving cases since childhood. Jamie's mother is not excited about her son attending school with a Holmes—she has heard that Charlotte was sent to America as punishment. Jamie likes to write, but he does not want anyone to know.

After meeting Charlotte, Jamie and Tom sit on the grass to eat their lunch. A rude boy nobody likes, Lee Dobson, goads Jamie about seeing him talking to Charlotte. Dobson implies that he has had sex with her and she would like to repeat it; Jamie gets angry and threatens Dobson. Inwardly, he insinuates that he has an anger problem and rugby was supposed to be the solution. He and Dobson get into a fight. Holmes appears and stops the boys from fighting. She is not impressed.

## Analysis

In the opening chapter of *A Study in Charlotte*, author Brittany Cavallaro puts a new spin on classic characters, Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. In this novel, they are not works of fiction from Conan Doyle's mind. Instead, they are real men who used Conan Doyle as a literary agent. Holmes and Watson are dead and gone, but their great-great-grandchildren are attending boarding school together in Connecticut. Cavallaro handles the transition from fiction to fact cleverly by adding fabricated family members and tracing both men's personalities and proclivities back through a century of family history. The legacy of these infamous characters is a strong theme throughout the novel, with



Charlotte and Jamie struggling to both live up to—and break from—the mold their families made. The first mention of this legacy is in Chapter 1 when Jamie recalls his father’s comment that his mother “is only a Watson by marriage” (5).

Another common theme in this novel is Jamie’s extreme loneliness. Chapter 1 is filled with references to this, such as Jamie’s yearning for a best friend to his ear aching for the sounds of London. Different from his peers, as evidenced by the first conversations with Tom Bradford and Lee Dobson, Jamie admits that his heart is being pulled toward Charlotte Holmes. The pull is not for romantic reasons but because he is in need of connecting to someone. It is obvious that he hopes the history that he and Charlotte share will provide the connection.

One of the reasons for Jamie’s loneliness is his separated life. With divorced parents living on two separate continents, Jamie does not feel like his family is whole. On the first page, he mentions that Sherringford is close to his father’s home—his childhood home. Rather than being a source of joy, this fact causes anxiety. Jamie wants to know his father, but he does not want to forgive his father. Fitting into a family is another prominent theme in this novel.

A fourth theme that is introduced in the first chapter is devotion; specifically, one’s ability to devote him or herself totally to another person, in spite of challenges or difficulties in the relationship. Jamie will struggle with Charlotte for the length of the novel. Charlotte will be intractable and hard, but Jamie will remain devoted to her. Jamie’s mother mentions the entire family line of Holmes and Watsons when she says, “But it never seemed to be that their friendship ran both ways” (7). One of the crucial statements of the novel is that love and devotion does not have to run both ways, nor is it always based on circumstances.

Money is a recurrent symbol; Sherringford is a wealthy boarding school. This is evident when Tom mentions that he is poor in comparison to the rest of the student body. Writing is another symbol. With both Charlotte’s and Jamie’s family history claiming literary giants as members, both should have a proclivity for writing.

At the end of Chapter 1, Jamie starts a fight with bully Lee Dobson because he pulled Charlotte out of the realm of Jamie’s imagination and placed her in the world of the known. “That line where reality and friction jugged up against each other” (8). This is a primary reason for Jamie’s anger. Another very common theme in this novel is drugs. The original Sherlock Holmes was a habitual drug user, and Cavallaro has implanted this literary fact into this novel. In Chapter 1, Jamie overhears a girl say that all of Charlotte’s money goes to cocaine.

## Discussion Question 1

How does the author effectively wrangle fictional characters into a real-life, yet fictional setting?



## Discussion Question 2

In what ways is Jamie different from his peers?

## Discussion Question 3

How has the author made it impossible for Jamie and Charlotte not to be friends?

## Vocabulary

scrimmage, voraciously, maul, enunciating, spindly, shouldering, autocratic, taxidermist, mulishly, etiquette, epitome, counterpart



## Chapter 2

### Summary

Jamie's status at the school skyrockets after the fight with Dobson. Suddenly, he is known. He hears whispers when he walks by, and a girl asks him to the homecoming dance. As punishment for the fight, he is suspended from school functions for a month. Jamie continues to feel isolated, and does not see Charlotte Holmes for days.

One night he hears sounds of panic in the hall outside his dorm room. When he goes out to investigate, he finds a crowd of students and hears that Lee Dobson is dead. Out of the assembled crowd a policeman breaks free and asks to talk to Jamie, but he cannot talk to Jamie without a parent present. They make arrangements to talk the next day. The crowd dissipates, and Jamie decides to talk to Charlotte. He sneaks out and makes for her dorm, almost running into her in the trees before he reaches her building. She is dressed in black, like a cat burglar. They discuss Dobson and how they are both suspected of being involved in his death. Charlotte recounts that Dobson has hit on her often in very disgusting ways. They decide to examine his room.

Inside Dobson's room, Jamie watches while Charlotte methodically sifts through the crime scene. She takes evidence of various things and packs them into specimen jars. They leave the room just as they hear the police outside. They decide to meet in her lab- a glorified supply closet in the science building. The lab boasts a chemistry set on a small table, tons of books, and a lopsided couch, as well as tons of odds and ends that portray her interest in crime. Charlotte announces that Dobson was poisoned. She tells Jamie all of the investigative tactics in which her family drilled her from a young age. Jamie falls asleep for a few hours; he awakens to a few messages from the local policeman, Detective Shepard, as well as his father.

They leave to meet with the police and Jamie's father. On the walk across campus, Charlotte points out the things about Jamie that she has observed. One thing she says is that Jamie still misses his father, a fact that he buries under dislike.

### Analysis

In Chapter 2, Cavallaro ramps up the plot by dropping the newfound acquaintances into a mystery. An unspecified amount of time after Jamie and Lee Dobson get into a fight on the quad, Dobson turns up dead in his dorm room. Jamie immediately realizes people will suspect him, so he goes looking for Charlotte. Jamie discerns his fellow students see him as an "outsider," and thus he is even more suspicious as Dobson's murderer.

Cavallaro uses Jamie's extreme loneliness to create an unusual situation. The fact that the main character is so emotionally isolated renders him almost dependent on the girl he barely knows; yet he feels connected to her through her shared history. He even





says that his loneliness leads him to focus on her rather on finding friends. One of the reasons he is lonely is that most of his classmates are wealthy—money is a recurring symbol in this novel. Sherringford is a New England prep school, and therefore a classic setting for teenage wealth and privilege.

An interesting side effect to a slew of wealthy teens away from their parents is the prevalent drug use—another symbol that is oft mentioned. Drug use is a word that is often attributed to any Sherlock Holmes-type character, but Cavallaro has made it a more widespread problem in her novel. Thus far, both chapters have mentioned “the blonde townie drug dealer” that appears to be a constant fixture on campus. Drugs are often a means to escape or boredom—for the teens at Sherringford, especially Charlotte Holmes, those reasons are one and the same. Although Charlotte’s drug use was only alluded to in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2 Jamie actually sees the ghost of track marks on her arm.

After Jamie and Charlotte search Dobson’s room—a classic reprint of an original Doyle story—they go back to Charlotte’s “lab.” The lab is a special place in the novel. It is a place where the characters can be alone and be themselves. It is also the place where the distinct methodology of detective work comes to pass. It is a classic symbol of the investigative process. Jamie describes it at length in Chapter 2. One of the accessories he notes is the array of original Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle. The stories are also a recurrent symbol, as a nod to the teens and their family legacies. Indeed, when Jamie sees the books in Charlotte’s lab, he feels a sense of belonging, a feeling very scarce for him in this time.

Another strong theme in this novel is family, specifically Jamie’s relationship with his father. Early in Chapter 1, Jamie mentions their estrangement. When Charlotte performs her famous Holmesian “parlor trick,” she tells Jamie all that she’s observed about him. His yearning for his father tops the list. She notes that Jamie does not hate his father, but he misses him. With that proclamation, the stage is set to meet Mr. Watson in the next chapter.

## **Discussion Question 1**

In what ways are Jamie and Charlotte alike?

## **Discussion Question 2**

How does the author use Jamie's relationship with his father to make him vulnerable?

## **Discussion Question 3**

What are some signs that Charlotte is not as cold and calculating as she likes to portray?



## Vocabulary

nonplussed, notorious, currency, functions, prowled, ratcheted, ubiquitous, rampage, dissipated, sputtering, quicksilver, persuasion, methodically, passable, lurking, tampering, absolved, specimen, grizzled, scandalous, fervently, scrutiny



# Chapter 3

## Summary

Jamie's father is there to help him through his police interview. Their first meeting in years is awkward. His father is overjoyed to meet Charlotte, and tries to connect the teens' shared past. Detective Shepard admits that Charlotte and Jamie have alibis for the hours before Dobson was found dead, although he may have been killed much earlier. They rehash the details of the fight.

Jamie and Charlotte each tell their side of the story. Detective Shepard reveals that Dobson was holding a copy of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Conan Doyle from the school library. He also reveals that Charlotte was reported to have had sex with Dobson. This was news to Jamie. Charlotte confirms that she did; but she was high at the time and that Dobson had threatened her. It was not consensual, she reports. Jamie is angry and upset. Shepard and Mr. Watson leave, agreeing to meet Sunday at the farmhouse for dinner. The adults leave, and Charlotte announces to Jamie that someone is framing them.

The teens return to the Lab to discuss the case. Jamie is still thinking about what occurred between her and Dobson, and she tells Jamie to stop pitying her. There is too much emotion there for such a young friendship. Charlotte encourages Jamie to theorize the how of the murder rather on the who or the why. She says, "You can't theorize in advance of facts" (19). She announces that Dobson had had issues with both of them, and that he was poisoned gradually by arsenic, and that Dobson also was bitten by a rattlesnake postmortem. It becomes clear that the murderer was recreating *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*, a story in which a poisonous snake is let in through a vent to kill the victim. The murderer seems to know that the teens would pair up and make such a discovery.

After a few minutes of discussion, Charlotte announces that she is finished talking to Jamie about the case. She pulls out her violin and begins to play. Jamie stands and listens, thinking of his mother.

## Analysis

Chapter 3 introduces Jamie's father, who is an important part of the story for two reasons. It is obvious from the beginning that Jamie has an issue with his father leaving him as a boy; he struggles with the tension between wanting a relationship with him and wanting to stay angry at him. However, Jamie's and Charlotte's status as Detective Shepard's suspects require him to enter the story. The scene is awkward and a little sad. Jamie's father is also important because he is a Watson, which is a link between Jamie and a long line of curious Watson writers. Jamie quotes his father's favorite



saying, “Watsons might be stubborn, but we temper it with a love of adventure” (16). The mystery at Jamie’s doorstep is a way for the young man to step into this legacy.

Surely Jamie’s yearning for a father is part of his acute loneliness at Sherringford. He refers to the feeling of isolation that pervades his daily life as “trappings of my American exile” (20).

This chapter also holds several references to drugs, which is a recurrent symbol in the novel as a whole. Jamie recounts the original Sherlock Holmes’ tendency to use a 7% solution of cocaine. Charlotte confesses—under duress—that the murder victim Lee Dobson took advantage of her sexually while he was high on OxyContin. Using drugs for escape and stimulation can have dire consequences. Charlotte’s experience with Dobson is an example. Charlotte’s tendency to use drugs is also an example of her stepping into the legacy of being a Holmes.

For the first of many times, Cavallaro nods to the original Conan Doyle stories in Chapter 3 by staging Dobson’s murder as one of Doyle’s classic Holmes stories, *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*. Furthermore, the boy was clutching the first book of stories while he was dying. It is a fun twist on a murder scene, but it is also a constant reminder of Jamie’s and Charlotte’s famous relations.

Jamie and Charlotte return to their lab-sanctuary in Chapter 3. This is their place of refuge, but it is also where the hard work of deduction is completed. Charlotte also mentions to Jamie how Sherringford offered her the lab in exchange for her famous name on their roll-books. Also, any work she did in the lab would be counted as independent study. The importance of the lab carries weight in the story.

Another theme in the novel is that of devotion, specifically to a person that is difficult to love. Throughout a plot filled with Charlotte’s erratic and often cruel behavior, Jamie will have to decide whether or not it is worthwhile to devote himself to her. When pondering Charlotte, he recalls his mother’s opinion of the girl. His mother believes that Charlotte will only hurt him in the end.

## Discussion Question 1

Why is Jamie readily eager to involve himself in Charlotte’s behind-the-scenes investigation?

## Discussion Question 2

How is it clear that Dobson’s murderer is chiefly interested in Charlotte and Jamie?



## Discussion Question 3

In what ways does the author effectively tie a very modern setting to the original Sherlock Holmes stories?

## Vocabulary

misogynist, estranged, hovered, eavesdropping, alibi, interrogate, bemused, corroborate



# Chapter 4

## Summary

Jamie is forced to finally speak to his mother. A strange silence descends over campus during the time that stretches in between the flurry of activity that surrounds a suspicious death and the long weeks of investigation. Reporters appear on campus; one in particular starts following Jamie around. He is English and always asking about Charlotte. Jamie recognizes him as the campus drug dealer. Eventually, Sherringford closes the campus to the press.

With morale low, the school goes on with its plans for homecoming. Jamie and Charlotte meanwhile spend all of their spare time together in the lab, and their friendship grows. They argue about nonsense and also about important matters, like Charlotte's drug use. With their peculiar brand of friendship growing, Jamie finds it hard to participate in the real world, such as class and homecoming. The bulk of the school still treats Jamie and Charlotte as suspects. Detective Shepard has not let up on his investigation of the pair.

Jamie and Charlotte return to the infirmary. While Jamie occupies the nurse, Charlotte tries to find out if Lee Dobson had visited there with complaints resembling arsenic poisoning. However, the nurse keeps her eyes on both students the entire time. Charlotte learns from Detective Shepard that Dobson had visited the nurse for an illness, but the evidence was not useful. Jamie tries to get Charlotte to consider all possible enemies, as they feel they are being framed. Charlotte mentions August Moriarty, great-great-grandson of Sherlock Holmes's most famous adversary. She does not give Jamie many details on him, only promises to give Jamie more information later.

That night, Jamie attends the weekly poker game in Charlotte's dorm. Charlotte's roommate Lena mentions August and the pains Charlotte has taken to get over him. Jamie chats with Lena for a moment and then goes upstairs to look for Charlotte. He finds her asleep in her room. She had dressed as a new student to ask some of the male students about Dobson, but she had found little information. They go out to a local diner so Jamie can force Charlotte to eat. He asks her why Scotland Yard is not helping them investigate, as the Holmes family has been connected to the Yard for a century or more. They discuss how and why Charlotte was sent to America for school. Her parents were punishing her. She will not really say why, and she asks Jamie not to search it out online.

They discuss the next steps to take. As a snake was found in Lee Dobson's room, Charlotte suggests they search the area for who would have a rattlesnake in their possession. As they leave the restaurant, a black sedan quickly pulls out of the parking lot. Jamie and Charlotte chase the car. Charlotte uses binoculars and discerns that the driver is the reporter/town drug dealer they have been seeing around campus. The chase continues at high speeds down the dark country roads. Suddenly, the car ahead tries to turn and flips. Jamie brakes, and the students fly from the car. Charlotte chases



the man across a dark field. Eventually, they lose him. They hear police in the distance and hide their car behind an abandoned gas station nearby. They discuss the man they were chasing. He was expensively dressed and a very fast runner. The question arises, why is he dressed that way? Charlotte feels he is neither a local drug dealer nor a reporter, but one of her brother's men.

## Analysis

Chapter 4 does little to move the mystery along; however, it moves Charlotte's and Jamie's friendship along quickly. Early in the chapter Jamie mentions how much time he spends in the lab (Science 442) with his friend. There they volley about the case and other things. They list suspects and fret about who may be trying to frame them. In these exchanges the reader sees two very lonely, "fish out of water" types of teenager finding comfort and solace in one another's quirkiness. Although belonging is a common and broad theme in teen novels, it is more acute in this one, because Jamie and Charlotte are fighting not only the tide of adolescence and their parents' expectations, but the long legacy of famous and well-known ancestors. Charlotte says of her parents, "They cut me off because I wasn't fit to be their daughter. My vices got in the way of my studies" (29). This is alluding to a scandal in England involving the Holmes family name. Charlotte refuses to tell Jamie about it—yet—but the author is laying the groundwork for a rather involved story.

The story in question probably revolves around August Moriarty. Once again Cavallaro finds a way to bring Holmes-lore into an updated setting. Moriarty was Sherlock Holmes's greatest enemy, and so the reader can assume that August will play a similar role in this novel. However, Charlotte does not speak of August as an enemy; actually, Charlotte's roommate Lena speaks of him more like an ex-boyfriend. When Jamie presses Charlotte for more information on August, she is tight-lipped, but the nod to the original Holmes stories, and the legacy of fitting this plot into a Conan-Doyle template, is firm. Jamie says, "Professor Moriarty still has fans, Holmes" (24). Charlotte's response is, "I'd prefer to think that we aren't all so mercilessly bound to our pasts." This idea is a prevalent theme throughout the novel.

Money and drugs are also oft-referenced symbols, common in stories involving wealthy teens. At the weekly poker game, Jamie watches as his classmates throw money around like it is nothing, while his own checking account suffers. He finds likewise that Charlotte has been all but cut off by her family, and hosts the poker games as a way of making extra money. Jamie and Charlotte argue about her drug use; she eventually promises to stop using oxy in exchange for nicotine.

As their friendship grows, Jamie finds himself devoted to Charlotte despite her being a difficult person to know and love. He says, "The way we were with each other wouldn't have made sense to anyone else if I'd tried to explain it" (22).



## **Discussion Question 1**

Why does Charlotte eat so little?

## **Discussion Question 2**

How does Cavallaro effectively use the original Doyle characters without making the plot transparent?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Discuss how Jamie and Charlotte compliment one another.

## **Vocabulary**

panicked, histrionics, bizarre, strident, plummy, haughty, lurking, pageantry, irradiated





# Chapter 5

## Summary

Everyone else at Sherringford is gearing up for the homecoming dance, but Jamie is staying in to do homework. He had spent the afternoon with Charlotte, finding no new information. They are both in a terrible mood. Jamie is just sitting down to writing a poem when Charlotte appears in his doorway, dressed for the dance. They dance, and then they stop. A blonde girl who had asked Jamie to be her date appears and looks upset that Jamie is there with Charlotte. At the punch bowl, Jamie speaks briefly with his writing teacher Mr. Wheatley.

He is obviously very interested in the details of the case, uncomfortably so. The dance wears on; Jamie sees Dobson's roommate dancing with the blonde girl he had turned down.

Jamie finds Charlotte sitting outside; she has just left a conversation with a few students and the school nurse. The nurse is particularly boring and insulting, but Charlotte feels she has to stay on the nurse's good side. In her lap is a notebook that she retrieved from the black sedan that flipped during the car chase the week before. On its pages are written the same phrase, Charlotte Holmes is a Murderer, in various types of handwriting, as if someone was practicing at disguising their handwriting.

Jamie is appalled; Charlotte is confused. The notebook is commonplace. The license plate on the black sedan is a fake. There is no pattern and she is confronted with the novelty of not knowing the answer. In a roundabout way, she asks Jamie if he believes what the notebook says. He knows she did not kill Dobson, but also asks what happened to August Moriarty? Charlotte runs off, and he follows. When he catches her, they argue, and stumble upon the body of the blonde girl from the dance.

## Analysis

Chapter 5 is a short chapter that moves the mystery part of the story to the next level. The very end of the chapter is a cliffhanger, dangling a new victim for Jamie and Charlotte to investigate. The homecoming dance is the setting for Chapter 5, during which Jamie and Charlotte deal with the normal amount of teen angst while still trying to observe their classmates.

They had not made plans to attend the dance, and yet Charlotte appears dressed and ready to fetch Jamie without warning. His devotion to her grows in this chapter, and yet her secrecy and reticence provides a level of conflict for him. As she expresses frustration at the case, at the exquisite pain of not knowing what is going on, he understands not because of the case, but because he feels he is in the dark about her character and her past. Indeed, Chapter 5 hinges on both characters confronting the possibility that one of them is guilty.



With the discovery of the forger's notebook, and the author tying its existence to the original evil Moriarty, the reader is transported into a classic Holmes story, reminding the reader of the layers of history and legacy that underscore these characters.

Cavallaro brings forth two minor characters in Chapter 5, both of which will be presented as suspects in the course of the mystery. Mr. Wheatley, the writing teacher, is suspicious due to his heightened interest in the details of the investigation. The nameless nurse from the infirmary also makes an appearance; she is transparent and obvious and dull. The author pays particular attention to Charlotte's impatience with the nurse, which the reader should note in the development of the mystery.

## Discussion Question 1

What role do the roommates Tom and Lena play in the plot development?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the balance the author must strike between developing the mystery and paying attention to the growing relationship between Jamie and Charlotte.

## Discussion Question 3

For all of her coldness and disdain, what are some indications of Charlotte's vulnerable side?

## Vocabulary

deranged, shoddy, amateur, misanthropy, dotty, specimen, myriad, telepathic



# Chapter 6

## Summary

Jamie checks the body of the blonde girl and finds she still has a weak pulse. Students begin to congregate around the body; they automatically suspect Jamie and Charlotte. The noise shocks Charlotte into action. They find a plastic diamond jammed into the girl's airway. It is reminiscent of a classic Holmes story, *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*.

The nurse—Bryony—appears to tend to the victim (Elizabeth). Jamie spots the drug dealer/reporter hovering at the edge of the crowd, and he runs off. They chase him across campus. He heads into the access tunnels that run beneath the school, and Jamie and Charlotte follow. They explore the long tunnels, which are marked by small rooms along the way. Charlotte can see the trail by the man's expensive shoes. The prints end at a closed door. Behind them they can hear the police, led by Detective Shepard. They enter the door; the man is not there. However, the room is made to look like a secret killer's lair, with photos of Lee Dobson and Elizabeth and notes written in Charlotte's hand.

The police arrive and take Charlotte and Jamie to the station. They stow the students in separate interview rooms and turn the speakers on so that Jamie can hear Charlotte's interview. He hears Charlotte admit to buying drugs from a young man in the room in the tunnels, which would explain her prints there. Jamie hears Charlotte and Detective Shepard argue about the carefully planned and (she says) staged scene in the tunnels; she claims to be too smart for such a thing. Jamie cannot help but feel suspicious of Charlotte. Jamie's father arrives to take both students to his house.

Jamie's father's new family is gone; Detective Shepard is set to arrive for dinner later that day, so Mr. Watson suggests Jamie and Charlotte sleep. The teens wake up in the late evening. Mr. Watson prepares them for their conversation with the police. Charlotte wants to not only clear their name but get Shepard to allow them to help. As they talk to Mr. Watson, Charlotte surmises that Jamie's father and her uncle contrived a plan to get the two teens to Sherringford together. Mr. Watson is thrilled not only that they are friends, but that they have a murder to solve.

Shepard arrives and asks the teens to accompany him back to the station. Charlotte calls a lawyer, and Mr. Watson asks if they can at least eat dinner. Shepard reports that the nurse reported Charlotte's odd behavior and that a man bearing a close resemblance to the dealer/reporter turned himself in and reported that Charlotte has been dealing drugs on Sherringford's campus for a year. Sherringford's confirmed dealer supports Charlotte's claim that he sold her drugs in the tunnel, and further says that she is not patient enough to have her own set of buyers. Shepard is ready to take the kids in when he receives a call that an attempt has been made on Lena's life in the past half-hour, while he has been sitting with Charlotte and Jamie.



Lena had attempted to open a package made out to Charlotte. She'd fallen asleep, and upon awakening was threatened by a man in a ski mask. Jamie realizes that Charlotte had set up the fake attempt on Lena's life to give them credibility with Detective Shepard. The entire setup is reminiscent of a Holmes story, *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, in which Holmes pretends to be the victim of a biological attack to sweat out the killer. Charlotte convinces Shepard to let them help him investigate for a month.

## Analysis

Chapter 6 is another quite long chapter, in which the teens must deal with several hurdles, both in the mystery they are solving and in their growing trust in one another.

The deeper Charlotte and Jamie grow entangled in the violence on campus, the more clearly the author's pattern emerges. Because the violent acts have thus far resembled Sherlock Holmes stories, there is pressure, both in the story and from the author, for Jamie to Charlotte to act according to their family names. At the police station, when Shepard refers to the too-neat assembly of evidence in the tunnels that supposedly points to Charlotte as the killer, she says, "I won't insult your intelligence by reminding you who my family is. Not to trade on my blood, but on my training. I am not an idiot" (127). For all of her trying to distinguish herself for her own skills at deduction, at the end of the day she is a Holmes. For a moment, Jamie even wonders if Charlotte has staged the entire project as a means to relive the classic Holmes stories in her lifetime.

Finally, over dinner at Jamie's father's house, Charlotte forces Mr. Watson to admit that he and her uncle Leander are behind the arrangements to get Jamie and Charlotte there at the same time. "You've met! You're friends! You've found yourself a murder! I couldn't ask for more" (132). There is a sense of clear devotion in Mr. Watson to the legacy of Holmes and Watson, even at the expense of good parenting and good sense. The stress on Jamie is clear to the reader, although not to Charlotte or his father.

With Jamie's father on the scene, the reader is reminded of how conflicted Jamie feels towards him. He is both angry at her father for not being a part of his life, and yearning for him to take care of him. The ride to his childhood home is only eclipsed by the stress of Charlotte and the case. Jamie mentions the toys in the car that probably belong to his father's children, half-brothers that Jamie does not know, but have obviously replaced him. He vents his anger to Mr. Watson for toying with his life, after being absent from it for so many years. In the midst of a cold investigative case and suspenseful drama, the reader is reminded that Jamie is a young man in need of a loving parent.

In the midst of all of this, Jamie deals with doubt about his friend, and whether she is a crazy, guilty fiend. One of the things that add to his struggle is that she will not confide in him, so he does not know what to think. His devotion to her only contributes to the mess. He says of her, "God help me. I couldn't stay mad at her, even if she did turn out to be a cold-blooded killer. I was in way, way too deep" (130). For better or worse, he feels like he belongs with Charlotte in some way.



## **Discussion Question 1**

What do the police say that triggers Jamie's distrust in Charlotte?

## **Discussion Question 2**

What clues does the reader have so far that the actual killer is very clever?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Discuss how Cavallaro continually reminds the reader that teenagers are at the heart of this story.

## **Vocabulary**

agonized, rasp, distress, mirthless, quicksilver, vespers, incriminate, wince, haggard, leverage



# Chapter 7

## Summary

They sit in the lab the day after the near-arrest; Jamie is still trying to complete his poem. Charlotte gives him details of the fake-crime she concocted with Lena to get them off the hook. Jamie goes to the hospital to see Elizabeth, the girl that was attacked at the dance. Elizabeth does not remember who hurt her, except that he said, "Give my regards to Charlotte Holmes."

The teens talk to Shepard about next steps. For days they find nothing. Jamie tries to investigate on his own and comes up short. A week goes by in this manner. Jamie finally convinces Shepard to let him speak to "John Smith"--the supposed drug dealer who refuses to say anything except that which may incriminate Charlotte. The night before the planned interview, John Smith hangs himself. The teens sneak in and lie to the medical examiner to view the corpse. The body is hard to identify from the hanging. They find a tattoo on his arm—a compass with the word 'navigator' written underneath. They also note the man has done manual labor, and from comparing that with what they know about the mystery man, they deduce the dead man is not the same. Charlotte is sure that the mystery man is one of Moriarty's men, because the name means 'seaworthy' and is related to the tattoo.

Jamie is caught between the idea that the Moriarty family has staged a conspiracy against him and Charlotte, and the possibility that he is overreacting. But the tenacity of the violence, and the ties back to the old Holmes stories, are convincing. Jamie investigates which members of the family are currently unaccounted for. He learns about August: a brilliant math tutor, age twenty. There are no recent mentions of him; the newest internet entry is two years old. He keeps track of his research on the wall of the lab, and it produces tension between him and Charlotte, who will not admit that the Moriarty family would be suspects.

Charlotte finds that "John Smith" was a servant for the Moriarty family and becomes manic in her investigations. She does not sleep or eat. Jamie asks his father if he has written any tips on keeping a Holmes intact, and his father responds with a long list of instructions. Jamie has to walk the line between taking care of Charlotte and keeping to his school and rugby. Charlotte trains Jamie on how to detect a lie, so that he can interview Dobson's friends. Through Dobson's roommate, Jamie finds that Dobson was using a special protein powder that he got from Nurse Bryony. He texts the news to Charlotte, just before taking a bump on the head at rugby practice. When he wakes he is taken to the infirmary for a concussion. Bryony is there, and Jamie and Charlotte watch her closely. Jamie spends the night in the infirmary.

They found nothing suspicious in the infirmary. Back in Jamie's room, Tom is very curious about the case, but Jamie does not want to talk about it. When Holmes shows up Jamie notices that Tom is keen to listen; and so he and Holmes text one another



while having a fake conversation. She reports that Mr. Wheatley, the literature teacher, has a brother that keeps snakes. The next day, Jamie visits Mr. Wheatley to try to ask him about it. They discuss poetry and writing. The teacher confesses that his brother's snakes frighten him. The teacher asks him about Charlotte, and Jamie finds himself confessing the drama and tension of the case while Mr. Wheatley takes notes on a legal pad. After they talk, he tears off the page and gives it to Jamie. He returns to the lab; he and Charlotte are both tense and angry, and they get into a huge fight.

## Analysis

Chapter 7 is another quite long chapter during which the teens go through many tedious levels of investigation. Like a science experiment in Charlotte's hidden lab, there are piles of possible evidence to sift through slowly and methodically with no guaranteed result. Jamie notes the effect the research is having on Charlotte: she is becoming unkempt and unreasonable, and at the end of the chapter, she tests his devotion to her by acting as nasty as she has the entire novel. Just pages before, she was pretending devotion to him as he sat in the infirmary with a concussion. Although the ruse is helpful in investigating Nurse Bryony, Jamie deals with the tension and conflict between the fake-Holmes and the real-Holmes.

During his phase of the investigation, he ponders the Moriarty family, and once more the ghost of the original Holmes and Watson come into focus. Jamie recalls how someone has taken great pains to reconstruct those men's great feats, only to make them threatening and harmful in the process. It is, to Jamie, a great perversion of the stories of which he and Charlotte are both so fond. It does point to the family that would be so set on ruining the Holmes name.

Another interesting exchange takes place with Jamie's English teacher, Mr. Wheatley. The conversation is staged because Charlotte found that Wheatley's brother has his own snakes. However, what occurs in Wheatley's office is a long conversation about how real life affects writing—something Jamie, and Cavallaro, are keen to explore. Throughout the novel, Jamie struggles to finish one simple poem, although he fashions himself a fiction writer. His struggle mirrors the tension in the novel to investigate the case.

As a writing exercise, Jamie tells the teacher all about the issues with Charlotte. Wheatley is an obvious red herring, but his interest in Charlotte renders him not completely innocent. However, many characters in this plot share the distinction of a nature that cannot be 100% characterized as good or bad.

Cavallaro mentions money often enough—particularly in conjunction with Charlotte's roommate Lena—that the reader should know it is an important facet of student life. Lena has a lot, and Tom, Charlotte, and Jamie have a little. That truth is established repeatedly.



## **Discussion Question 1**

How does Cavallaro use August Moriarty as a character?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Discuss the author's use of red herrings in the form of the literature teacher and the nurse.

## **Discussion Question 3**

How has Cavallaro used Tom and Lena so far in the narrative? What function do they serve?

## **Vocabulary**

brawler, scratchy, frothy, imprecise, commotion, seized, vigorous, unfettered, forensics





# Chapter 8

## Summary

After their fight, Jamie returns to his room. He and Tom talk about being 'the sidekick' in a friendship. Tom leaves and Jamie sits at his roommate's desk chair, eventually noticing that there was a camera behind Tom's mirror. Using his anger for strength, Jamie pulls the mirror from the wall, shattering it and cutting himself thoroughly in the process. The discovery enrages him. The camera leads him to assume there must also be an audio device, so he literally tears the room to shreds looking for it.

Noises congregate outside of his room, but Jamie assumes it is simply the hall mother asking about the noise he is making. He realizes how much he has given away to Tom, in his room, where someone was watching and listening. Deciding he must get to Holmes as soon as possible, he finally pulls open the door. Mrs. Dunham, the hall mother, is sitting on the floor by Jamie's door, crying. She tells him that a bomb had exploded in the science building, where Holmes's lab is located.

Jamie runs across campus to the science building. He can see that the corner of the building is blown clean away, like she could have never survived. Police and fire trucks are all around him; someone grabs him and puts him into an ambulance to hustle him out of danger. Mr. Watson appears to take Jamie to his house; Jamie freaks out, desperate to see if Holmes is alive. As they are leaving campus in the car, they see Holmes dart out of the woods, alive. She had been in the bathroom when the bomb exploded, but ran back to get her violin.

At Mr. Watson's house, Sherringford reports that a gas leak caused the explosion and that the school was shut down until Christmas. Students were to return to campus to fetch their things from their dorm rooms. Jamie tells his father the entire story, frustrated that the trail on August stops two years before. Mr. Watson says he has all of the information on August in a file in his office, if Jamie wants to read it. Jamie is torn between wanting to know the truth, and wanting to trust Charlotte.

He goes to the guest room where Charlotte is sleeping, to lie down on the spare mattress. She wakes for a moment, long enough to apologize and say "the note said you'd be killed if you stayed, so I fixed it." Jamie wakes to his toddler half-brother standing in his room. He finds Charlotte, who shows him the note that threatens his life if she does not leave him out of things. Charlotte theorizes that the author is a woman, specifically the school Nurse, Bryony. Jamie feels like Charlotte is grasping at the nurse, when the real culprit is August Moriarty. Jamie goes straight to his father's study to read his file on August.



## Analysis

Chapter 8 gives the reader and Jamie plenty of time to ponder his complicated relationship with Charlotte, while also beginning the descent to the lowest part of the narrative, where it will appear that all hope is lost. Cavallaro begins this descent with the fight between Jamie and Charlotte, and it continues when he realizes that his room has been bugged.

Before that, though, he has an enlightening conversation with Tom, in which Tom shares the dangers of being someone's sidekick. "It's not worth it being the sidekick," Tom says, because you never get any credit for doing anything on your own, and your friend can dump on you anytime (217). Tom's sensitivity on the subject is very ironic, considering that Tom has allowed the room to be fitted with a camera and recording device.

Jamie's fight with Charlotte puts him in the depths of loneliness, a sensation he has not felt for a while because he has been caught up with her and the investigation. "Ever since I'd come to Sherringford, I'd existed in a state of constant loneliness without every actually being alone" (211). He feels as if his friendship with Charlotte has made him a part of something bigger. This idea of belonging to something is prevalent in teen novels and is particularly relevant in this novel.

The bomb in the science building serves to bring Jamie and Charlotte back together, where she reveals that the killer threatened her with Jamie's life. The bomb furthermore serves to shut campus down, forcing the teens to take refuge with Mr. Watson. At the house, Jamie finally meets his stepmother and half-brothers, which for him have been a symbol of his father's abandonment and a reminder that his father chose to leave him behind. However, far from causing Jamie pain, his first impression of Abbie and the little boys is a good one. This is proof that as the narrative moves along, redemption is coming to Jamie's relationship with his dad.

Chapter 8 ends on a low note; Charlotte's refusal to consider that August Moriarty could be involved in the killings, taken with her refusal to share why she is so convinced, leads Jamie to go back on his word to her. The last paragraph finds him locked in his father's study, reading the real story of August and Charlotte. It is a low point in their friendship, because she will not share something that could be relevant; on the other hand, Jamie's motivation to know the truth is not purely based on the case itself. There is an undercurrent of trust and deceit running through the narrative, and often shows itself in Charlotte, who is too scared to trust anyone.

## Discussion Question 1

In reading his father's file on August Moriarty, did Jamie do the right thing? Why or why not?



## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the author's ability to make Jamie feel lonely in a crowd and loved and accepted only with Charlotte.

## Discussion Question 3

Has Jamie changed throughout the course of the narrative? How?

## Vocabulary

composure, dissipate, invincible, dispelling, fugue, adamantly, woozily, conduit, feral



# Chapter 9

## Summary

Jamie sits in his father's office, reading the thick file that he has compiled on the Holmes family. He finally gets to an article detailing that August Moriarty, who was Charlotte's live-in math tutor, was arrested for feeding Charlotte's drug addiction. Jamie sees this as a clear motive for why the Moriarty family would want to harm Charlotte.

He leaves the study and sneaks downstairs. Charlotte is distracted by her violin, so Jamie takes up her phone and texts her brother Milo, asking him to come and help Charlotte right away. In the meantime, his father sends his wife and younger children away in case the killer targets the house. Detective Shepard has arrived, and when Jamie joins everyone in the kitchen, Charlotte can immediately tell that he had snooped. She disappears. He figures he will give her an hour and then find her; however, he recalls his father's list detailing 'how to care for a Holmes' includes keeping an eye out for opiates. Suddenly Jamie is afraid that Charlotte has taken drugs and rushes outside to find her.

After a long search he finds her underneath the porch, very high on oxy. She is very unreasonable. In her stupor she tells him the details of the drama with August: he was older, and her math tutor. Her parents hired him for good publicity, and eventually Charlotte developed a crush on him. He was too old and did not reciprocate her feelings, so she set him up by asking him to buy cocaine for her and then telling on him. Charlotte goes on to say that her parents sent her away to get herself together, not because of the drugs, but because she was too sentimental. The Moriartys forgave her, and August works for Milo in Germany. His family had disowned him, and his fiancée had to drop him.

They argue about trust. Jamie broke her trust, but Charlotte would not trust Jamie to begin with. She tells him to go, that she is not a good person and will only be bad for him. He refuses. The argument reaches a standstill, when Jamie realizes that Charlotte had mentioned that August had had a fiancée, and reasons that Nurse Bryony must be that fiancée. His revelation snaps them out of their argument. They rush inside and call Milo, who is already on his way. He confirms that August's fiancée was named Bryony.

The next morning, they drive to the Bryony's apartment, working out the details of Bryony's guilt along the way. They wait for her to drive to her appointment at the police station, and then make their way to her apartment door. They find the door locked, and her brother Milo inside.

## Analysis

Chapter 9 continues the descent into the point in Jamie's and Charlotte's friendship where they are confronted the worst of each other, and must decide if they will carry



through their devotion towards one another. The argument is based on the undercurrent of mistrust and deceit that runs throughout Charlotte's actions—she did not want to confess the mess with August Moriarty to Jamie, so he found out on his own. In their own way, they are each culpable.

When Jamie goes to apologize, he finds her high on oxy. This is significant for several reasons. The original Sherlock Holmes had a famous drug problem, and Jamie's father had noted in his Holmes Care Guide to always search out the existence of opiates. The plot detail is a thorough parallel to Charlotte's great-great-grandfather.

Thus, Jamie must see his friend high on drugs, and also deal with her when she is at her very lowest. She is dealing with guilt at her own drug use, guilt over the affair with August, and fear that she has disappointed Jamie. This, she cloaks in false guilt and sarcasm: "Take your coat, it smells like guilt" (254).

During her more thorough confession about August and the fallout from it, Charlotte catalogues why she uses drugs, and the effect each type had on her. Using drugs as a means of escape from one's life or oneself is a common theme in teen novels, yet it is still heartbreaking to read the young girl's reasons for using. Her family is interested in her fitting into the long line of effective Holmes--excellent at solving crimes and above becoming emotionally entangled. This fact reflects the theme of Legacy that runs through the novel.

After the climactic conversation which is both the low and high point of their friendship, the teens continue on to the climax of the actual mystery, having realized that Nurse Bryony is their culprit. At the end of the chapter, they are confronted with Charlotte's brother Milo, an obvious copy of Mycroft Holmes and another effective nod to the stories.

## Discussion Question 1

Jamie and Charlotte argue in circles about trust. Who is right?

## Discussion Question 2

Why are Charlotte's parents more concerned about her 'sentimentality' than about her repeated drug use?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the significance of Jamie's repeated monologue: "James Watson. He didn't."

## Vocabulary

chronologically, adaptations, categorically, pyrite, disparity, massive, remiss, languorous, scour



# Chapter 10

## Summary

Bryony's living room is empty except for a man sitting in a velvet armchair. He is a well-dressed nerd smoking a cigarette. This is obviously Charlotte's brother Milo, the very intelligent a powerful young man. The two siblings immediately start bickering. Milo suggests that Bryony may be working for August, and Charlotte disagrees. Milo tells the teens he has moved Bryony's things and will look for evidence there, but Charlotte convinces them to put everything back as it had been. There is a GPS on Bryony's car and everything seems to be in order, so Jamie returns to campus to collect his belongings.

Back at the dorm, a policeman escorts Tom and Jamie to their dorm room, which is still a huge mess from when Jamie tore it to shreds searching for the tapping devices. When Tom sees the mess it becomes obvious that he was the one who installed the devices; Mr. Wheatley was behind it. He talked Tom into bugging the room so he could write a book about Charlotte and Jamie. Tom's simple excuse is the money: Lena has it, and he does not. The boys argue. In the midst of walking out, Jamie yanks open his closet door and feels something prick his skin. The closet wall displays a message: "You have twenty-four hours to live unless she gives me what I want."

It is The Adventure of the Dying Detective again. Jamie realizes he has been infected with something. Bryony had rigged his closet door with an infected spring that buried itself in his hand when he opened the door. He barely makes it out of the room before he is overcome with fever. He is worried that he will infect other students. Jamie passes out before Charlotte finds him and packs him into Milo's car. He is in and out of awareness as he burns with fever.

When he fully wakes, he is in a hospital bed in Bryony's apartment. Charlotte appears, along with a doctor that helps with his IV. The doctor tells him they are managing his pain and fever. Charlotte tells Jamie that they think Bryony gave him a created virus that they are trying to figure out how to contain. Charlotte reveals that Bryony had texted her a list of demands, timed perfectly with Jamie's appointment in his dorm room. They are to avoid the police and meet her demands in exchange for the antiviral medication. The demands are three million dollars, extradition to Russia, and for Charlotte to confess to the crimes. She is about to fetch the doctor; Before she leaves, she kisses Jamie and tells him she will try to be normal person for him.

## Analysis

Cavallaro has fun with Milo Holmes's entrance into the plot. He is every bit the high-level government official of the original stories, but he is transported into the modern age as a nerdy computer hacker. The siblings bicker and behave as one would expect



Holmes to do, and it seems as if the mystery is wrapped up: Bryony is on her way to the police and Milo and his men are sifting through her things for evidence. In terms of a mystery, it is almost anti-climactic, without even a confrontation with Bryony or a great reveal, for which Sherlock Holmes is generally well-known. Charlotte and her brother fit neatly into the Holmes legacy as they attempt to wrap up the case.

However, it is a feint. When Jamie returns to his dorm, he finds his roommate Tom, who confesses to bugging their room. The man behind the bugs is not Moriarty, or Nurse Bryony, but their English teacher, who wants to write a novel on Holmes and Watson. Mr. Wheatley was an effective red herring, as the reader knew he was not completely honest. During the ensuing argument, Tom reveals that he did it for the money; dating Lena requires more money than he has, and he is worried what she will think of him being poor.

Jamie is unfazed by this argument. For one, he argues that Tom should be liked for who he is; an argument that Cavallaro makes via Jamie and Charlotte's odd friendship. Further, he decries the idea that everyone at Sherringford is wealthy: "Everyone at this school acts like they're so rich and half of them aren't, not even close" (284). Instead, Jamie suggests, Tom should try being himself. Lena will still like him. It is a pleasant bookend to the pages of drama he and Charlotte have suffered to find acceptance in one another.

Cavallaro foreshadowed *The Adventure of the Dying Detective* earlier in the novel, when Charlotte uses that story's plot as a ruse to distract Shepard from their tail. However, the story comes back again in the form of Nurse Bryony, who rigs an infected dart to spring from Jamie's closet door and infects him with a mysterious virus. By the end of Chapter 10, Jamie is desperately ill with no cure in sight. This is the second low point in the novel, where it appears that Bryony will get away with the whole scheme; she has demanded money, immunity, and Charlotte's confession of her crimes in exchange for the antidote to Jamie's illness. At the chapter's close, Jamie and Charlotte are sealing their feelings with a kiss and practically saying goodbye, just as Watson does with Holmes in the original story.

## Discussion Question 1

What clues did Cavallaro leave that pointed to Mr. Wheatley's combination of guilt and innocence?

## Discussion Question 2

What evidence does the reader have that Jamie has learned something about friendship and being yourself?





## Discussion Question 3

Discuss Cavallaro's use of foreshadowing with "The Adventure of the Dying Detective."

## Vocabulary

elaborate, sonorous, inexorable, dervish, gelatinous, evacuated, detritus, cavalcade



# Chapter 11

## Summary

Jamie's condition worsens over the night. When he wakes he can hear Bryony meeting with Charlotte and Milo in the next room. He tries to get off the bed and ends up making a big noise in the process, bringing Charlotte to his bedside. Bryony calls for Jamie to join them. When Charlotte pulls him upright, she tells him to "play his last card," when she blinks twice. He is not certain of his last card.

Bryony is gloating about how she got away with everything. She starts with Dobson, how she steered him towards getting Charlotte high so he could take advantage of her. Bryony calls Charlotte a catalogue of names. She added arsenic to his protein powder. Bryony turns on Charlotte, telling her how she had been with August for years, and how Charlotte ruined her life when she ruined August's. Bryony also insinuates that August killed himself after the scandal broke. This means that he had faked his death to avoid going to jail and was currently alive and well and hidden somewhere in Europe.

Charlotte finds out from Bryony that Bryony is working for August's older brother, Lucien. He set up everything Bryony needed to move to Connecticut and put her plan into motion. Bryony leans close to Charlotte to gloat, and Charlotte looks at Jamie and blinks twice. It takes him a minute to figure out what she wants him to do, and he realizes he needs to fake his death. When Bryony leans over Jamie to check on him, Charlotte pulls a gun on her.

Bryony is wearing a wire; Charlotte says 'hello' to Lucien Moriarty. She takes Bryony's gun from her holster. It is Charlotte's turn to reveal her hand—Milo's men are currently retrieving the antiviral from Jamie's dorm room, where Bryony hid it before coming to the apartment. In the midst of the conversation, Lucien calls Milo on his phone and, through the loudspeaker, he says hello to the room. Lucien says he never meant for Charlotte to fail and go to jail.. He meant to find her weak place, which is obviously Jamie. He threatens her with future drama and hangs up. Milo's man rushes in at the last minute and injects the medicine into Jamie's arm.

## Analysis

Chapter 11 is the climax of the story, where it seems that Bryony will get her way and Jamie will die. It is classic detective story fodder, in which Bryony is given time to crow about her intelligence and tell Charlotte why she staged such a huge drama.

In the final confrontation, before the tables turn and Charlotte gains the upper hand, the reader sees the reason that deceit and mistrust is a common thread in this novel. Jamie's reactions remain ever more convincing to Bryony because Charlotte has kept him in the dark. This is also the classic Holmes/Watson dynamic from the original stories, which Bryony points out in Chapter 11. "Isn't that how all those stories always



end? The hero explaining everything to his hapless confidant? You are a Watson after all, so let's stick with tradition" (304).

In what is possibly the greatest irony, Bryony reveals that she still thinks August Moriarty is dead, when everyone else in the room knows he is alive. In effect, the Moriartys have used Bryony and kept her in the dark as well.

In Bryony's final insult against Charlotte, she throws the Holmes legacy in her face. Throughout the novel, Charlotte has striven to reach her family standards and step into the role her great-great-grandfather originated years ago. However, Bryony verbally dashes Charlotte's attempts, making them seem useless: "It's a reminder. They're stories. They're stories, and this is real life. You are not Sherlock Holmes, and you won't ever be" (314). Bryony's cruel comment makes Charlotte's entire existence seem small and worthless. The stories, the tradition, and the fondness with which a century of Watsons and Holmeses have looked on their history, is dismissed by a criminal.

A journey toward self-discovery is a common thread throughout this novel. Charlotte rounds out the journey when she tells the truth about herself to Bryony: "I may simply be a terrible person at heart, but the difference between you and me is that I fight it. With every single atom of my being I fight against it. I might be an amateur detective but you are a bloody psychopath" (321).

In keeping with Conan Doyle tradition, Charlotte had the upper hand all along. By the end of Chapter 11, Jamie is saved from certain death.

## Discussion Question 1

What function does Lucien Moriarty serve in Chapter 11?

## Discussion Question 2

What role does self-discovery play in Chapters 10 and 11?

## Discussion Question 3

Does Cavallaro give the reader any indication that Charlotte and Milo had the situation under control the whole time?

## Vocabulary

deteriorates, dosage, fitful, sodden, tufted, brazen, pealed



# Chapter 12 and Epilogue

## Summary

It is five days later; Sherringford is closed for the semester. Jamie and Charlotte are ready to head back to England. Jamie's father struggled with his near-death experience, and he hopes that Jamie will return after the holiday break.

Aside from a few lingering symptoms, Jamie is over the viral illness after a few days at his father's house. A few visitors come by to see Jamie. Detective Shepard laments the loss of Bryony, while Charlotte apologizes that her brother Milo 'disappeared'. She did record Bryony's confession for the local detective.

Charlotte apologizes that she was trying to be "too clever" and that she should have come clean about August at the beginning. They decide their next case should be something easy and somewhere warm.

Charlotte is going back to England the next day, and Jamie will join her soon.

The Epilogue, written from Charlotte's perspective, seeks to point out the flaws in Jamie's discussion of the case. She tells about everything that is difficult, though worthwhile, about Jamie. She shares that Mr. Wheatley was fired for his snooping on Jamie and that Bryony is probably dead. Finally, she mentions that August Moriarty had sent her a birthday card.

Lucien Moriarty is at large in Thailand, and Milo expects him to appear in Charlotte's life before too long. According to Charlotte, she and Jamie plan to return to Sherringford after the holiday.

## Analysis

Chapter 12 and the Epilogue are short sections, where the author dispenses a few relevant details about the loose ends of the case.

What is very interesting about both of them is how much the tone changes from the earlier chapters of the book. Since Jamie and Charlotte have been through a traumatic ordeal filled with the tangled emotions of teenagers, they have come to feel comfortable in themselves. The journey of self-discovery is complete for the time, and they are both satisfied with themselves and with their newly found devotion to one another.

They have admirably filled the shoes of their famous ancestors by successfully solving the case. The Epilogue drops a hint about who will be behind whatever drama awaits in the second book.



## Discussion Question 1

What role does Jamie's father fill, as one who has an interest in crime but does not enjoy the details?

## Discussion Question 2

Where does the author leave the reader, in regards to August Moriarty?

## Discussion Question 3

Why would the teens return to Sherringford after the holiday break?

## Vocabulary

penance, laughable, interrogation, flagellates



# Characters

## James "Jamie" Watson

Narrator Jamie Watson is the great-great-grandson of John Watson, Sherlock Holmes's best friend and faithful chronicler. In this novel's world, Holmes and Watson were not fictional characters but actual people. Over a century later, he is a lonely sixteen-year-old boy at boarding school in Connecticut. His loneliness is palpable, oft-mentioned by the author. His solitude drives him into a friendship with his would-be counterpart, Charlotte Holmes.

Jamie is motivated by belonging to a family, by finding himself, and by allowing himself to be pulled into something bigger than himself. His friendship with Charlotte is characterized by all of these things, and he devotes himself to her despite her difficult manner.

Like his great-great-grandfather before him, Jamie longs to write so that he can construct a world separate from the one he inhabits. He would prefer a world where his father did not leave him and his mother at a young age, a world where his father did not have an entirely new family in the United States.

The fact that Jamie is pulled into a murder mystery rarely seems to affect him, because he is pulled into the drama with Charlotte. There is a feeling of invincibility with her, even though he clearly sees her as the brains and himself as the sidekick.

## Charlotte Holmes

Charlotte is a near copy of her classic counterpart, Sherlock Holmes. While Cavallaro has added a bit more dimension to Jamie Watson in order to use him as a narrator and bring him into the twenty-first century, Charlotte for the most part adequately fills the cold, dismissive shoes of her great-great-grandfather. Because Charlotte is a teenage girl however, Cavallaro has given her a slightly softer heart, and eventually she and Jamie declare romantic intentions towards one another.

For the purpose of the mystery, Charlotte is sharp and clever and always a step ahead of everyone else in the story. She uses disguises and travels where she does not belong and is great fun as a teen copy of Sherlock. However, because her character is so much like the original, she herself is not very original.

One interesting facet of Charlotte's personality is the weekly poker game she organizes in the dorm. Whether the impetus of the game is a steady stream of income or an opportunity to study her classmates, the poker game is a useful plot device.



## Mr. Watson

Mr. Watson is Jamie's estranged father. The Watsons were living in Connecticut when Jamie's father left his mother for another woman. Jamie and his mother fled to London when he was eleven years old. Like the rest of the Watsons, he is a writer and an expert on Sherlock Holmes. This story gives him a chance to reconnect with his son.

## Milo Holmes

Milo Holmes is the image of Sherlock's famous brother, Mycroft. Out of all of Conan Doyle's characters, Milo is the most interesting update. Mycroft occupied a high and secret position in the British government; Milo is similar, although younger, and fills a number of modern character traits that render him great fun. He is a computer hacker, a nerd, and a fashionista. Charlotte's random mention of her brother throughout the story comes with a sense of fear and mystery. When he finally shows up in the story, he does not disappoint.

## Detective Shepard

Detective Ben Shepard is the poor policeman who is tasked with dealing with the murder on Sherringford's campus. When Jamie first meets him, he thinks Ben looks more like a kind dad than a hard-boiled cop, a man who "plays video games with his kids and does the dishes without being asked" (10). He never really seems to think that Jamie and Charlotte are guilty of murder. He is a faithful policeman, impressed with Charlotte's intelligence. He is constantly wary of her tricks--similar to Conan Doyle's Inspector Lestrade.

## Tom

Tom is Jamie's roommate, and a very colorful character. He is neither all good nor all bad. Since he is dating Lena, Charlotte's very wealthy roommate, he trades in on Jamie's privacy by spying on him for money. It is bad judgement, but not awful. Aside from that error, he is the picture of a sixteen-year-old boy: goofy, irreverent, and doing his best to be a good friend.

## Lena

Lena is a very entertaining character. She is Charlotte's roommate, and their close relationship paints Charlotte in a more favorable light. In the 'gender swapping' of Sherlock Holmes, it is suitable for a teenage girl to have a girlfriend that she is close to. Although she and Lena are complete opposites, Lena provides some stability and support to Charlotte.



## **Nurse Bryony**

Nurse Bryony is the criminal in the 'whodunit.' The author does a very effective job at throwing red herrings about and keeping the truth of Bryony's identity under wraps throughout the investigation. Bryony herself is a brilliant actress and a wicked adversary. In the end when her character is revealed, she is shown to be clever enough to win a few points against Charlotte, but just crazy enough to commit murder and attempt to kill two other teenagers.

## **August Moriarty**

August Moriarty, a descendant of the original Professor James Moriarty, Sherlock Holmes's arch enemy, is the dark hand behind Nurse Bryony's criminal activities. As the world requires, August fits the parallel of his famous forbearers. He is a brilliant math professor who is sent to tutor the younger Charlotte Holmes. A schoolgirl crush leads to Charlotte's drug use and her blaming August for her introduction to drugs. The final result is that August fakes his suicide and is exiled to Germany. This cumbersome back story is Nurse Bryony's motive for targeting Charlotte and Jamie in the story. However, it is also a means of establishing Moriarty as the shadowy evil hand behind the criminal activities, just as in the original Conan Doyle stories.

## **Mr. Wheatley**

Mr. Wheatley is Jamie's English teacher. The author uses him as a red herring, because he is always intrigued by the facts of the case. Furthermore, he is unduly interested in Charlotte and Jamie. Later, it comes to light that he is planning to write a novel about them.





# Symbols and Symbolism

## Stories

Much of the underlying meaning in this novel focuses on a teenager's need for connection. For Jamie, the original Sherlock Holmes stories, written by his "great-great-grandfather," are a way for him to feel connected to a family, to a legacy, and to a talent.

## Drugs

Drugs are Charlotte Holmes's means of escape. The conventional theory on why the various Holmes characters engage in drug use is that they need constant mental stimulation in order to feed their voracious intelligence. However, Charlotte is a sixteen-year-old girl, not the full adult male of the classic stories. Charlotte's character actually inhabits a world of loneliness and stifling family expectations. Drugs are a symbol of her need to escape.

## Poker

The students at Sherringford have a standing Friday night poker game, hosted in the basement of Charlotte Holmes's dorm. Poker is a game of lies and bluffing. It symbolizes "the Game" of a classic mystery-solving by Holmes and Watson. As the students lie and bluff their way through a harmless Friday night game, the story is a journey through layers of lies and deceit at the hands of most of the main characters. !

## Writing

Writing is a symbol for Jamie's need to distinguish himself. With famous relations, much of the plot is wrapped in legacy and accomplishment, of cashing in on one's family name. Although Jamie's talent is a hereditary one, he is drawn to writing and applauded for it. For a young man who feels only 'okay' at sports and academics, writing is his place to shine.

## Money

For the teens at Sherringford, money is a measuring stick. To characters like Jamie and Tom, there is a very obvious dividing line between who has money and who does not. The author makes repeated references especially to Tom's reduced financial state: his secondhand uniform pants, his threadbare sweater to name two. Tom feels so pressured by this that he agrees to spy on Jamie in exchange for money.



## The Lab

The Lab, or the small closet where Jamie and Charlotte spend much of their time working, is a symbol for the deductive process for which Sherlock Holmes is so well known. In the Lab, the reader sees the two teens working through facts and discussing the twists and turns in their case. As an aside, it is the one place the two of them are really and truly comfortable.

## Jamie's Stepfamily

Jamie's dad left him and his mother when he was a young boy; they left for London while Mr. Watson stayed behind. Eight years later, Mr. Watson has a new wife and new children. To Jamie, the stepfamily feels like a replacement. They stand in his place, in the house in Connecticut, with his father. Cavallaro makes mention of them early, when Charlotte sees an inscription on Jamie's wrist watch of all of their initials.

## Mistrust/Deceit

There is an undercurrent of mistrust running through Charlotte's personality. It is her means of self-protection, and it leads to her holding her cards close, which is to say that her actions and words tend to carry a hint of deceit. Ironically, the conflict in Jamie's and her relationship comes down to trust and mistrust. At the same time, telling half-truths is second nature to her.

## Moriarty, the Name

The name Moriarty actually means 'seaworthy.' However, for the purpose of this novel, it is symbolic for the ever-present evil lurking over your shoulder. As the constant, century-old sworn enemy of the Holmes family, the Moriartys naturally have the demise of the Holmes family in mind. The novel is left with the promise that Lucien Moriarty will be lurking from his place in Russia, ready to pull strings and threaten the teens once again.

## Sherringford

The school is a symbol for the microcosm of teenage life. There are hundreds of people around Jamie and Charlotte. Yet, they feel alone. They are lonely, even though every detail of each of their lives is known. It is as if they are living in a fishbowl.



# Settings

## Jamie's dormitory

Jamie's dorm room is significant because he shares it with his roommate Tom, who has been bribed by Bryony to eavesdrop and install a recording device behind the mirror. Charlotte occasionally comes to Jamie's room, and they occasionally discuss the case there. It is deep into the plot before Jamie realizes that Tom is listening. However, at first, he thinks that Tom is just nosy. It is only at the end that Jamie finds that Tom is reporting what he hears to Bryony.

## The Lab

The Lab is a special place for both Jamie and Charlotte. It is special for Charlotte because it is a place where she is able to be herself and do what she does best. The original Holmes was not an academic, even though he was brilliant. Likewise, Charlotte seems to have little interest in her classes, but she does have a vast devotion to the academics of crime. Thus, at the Lab she is able to study freely that which interests her. For Jamie, The Lab is special because he is able to devote himself to Charlotte. With her more than anyone, he feels like he can be himself.

## The Watson Farmhouse

The surrounding Connecticut farmland is the place of Jamie's childhood. The house where his father lives is the same one Jamie lived in as a baby. A few times in the story Mr. Watson takes Jamie and Charlotte back to the house. During those visits, Jamie is forced to confront the powerful tension between the resentment toward his father for leaving him and the welcome memories of belonging.

## The Infirmary

The infirmary is important because James is a frequent visitor there for his repeated loss of temper and composure. It is also Nurse Bryony's domain. During Jamie's visits to the infirmary, she has had the opportunity to study him and influence him.

## Bryony's Apartment

Jamie and Charlotte think they are trapping Bryony at the police station, giving them an opportunity to search her apartment. However, Bryony has the advantage. Jamie is infected with a deadly disease. During the following forty-eight hours, Charlotte's brother Milo installs Jamie in the apartment so he will not infect other people in a hospital. It is a

significant place because Jamie feels he is living his last hours there. The bleak situation also induces Charlotte to confess her feelings for him.



# Themes and Motifs

## Loneliness/Belonging

One of the reasons Jamie and Charlotte readily attach to one another is because they are lonely. Each student fills their need for connection in different ways.

Jamie writes and makes attempts at false relationships with girls. His feeling of isolation is not limited to his move to Connecticut. When he looks back on his time in London, it is similarly characterized by surface friendships and relationships, such as an attempt to falsify who he is to please the social hierarchy.

Charlotte is a singular person because she is a Holmes, which is to say, by choice. However, it is also clear that she would welcome friendship and regard from a special person if it was presented to her. The story is not about escaping your heritage as much as stepping boldly into it. The legacy that follows Jamie and Charlotte isolates them around regular people.

## Love/Devotion

The author forms a close tie between love and devotion, and the fact that is is a conscious choice. Devoting oneself to another person is a choice to be made despite circumstances--this is a mature sort of love. It is beyond the kind of love which adolescents are generally capable of achieving.

In their own ways, Jamie and Charlotte are both difficult to love. Nevertheless, as Jamie is the narrator, it is with him that the reader journeys. Part of the narrative is devoted to the process by which Jamie must decide if loving Charlotte Holmes is worth the accompanying difficulties in her personality. The difficulties include intermittent coldness, black moods, high-handed intellect, and her dismissive nature. He must decide if he can take the good with the bad and love her even when she is not lovable.

For Charlotte, the choice is heavy not because Jamie is unlovable, but because she is a singular person who does not wish to align herself with another person. For Charlotte, making the choice to devote herself to Jamie means setting aside her independence and sharing herself with another.

Both students confront these difficulties at various moments in the narrative. By the end, manage to overcome them.

## Self-Discovery

The companion to a teenager's search for belonging is the journey to self-discovery. It is a common theme in most teen novels, and it is prevalent in this one. Perhaps, it is even



more present in this story than usual, considering the unusual family circumstances surrounding the main characters.

As Jamie and Charlotte work together on a case, they are also working toward being happy with who they are. Charlotte deals with feeling that she has failed her family. Her scandal with August Moriarty has rendered her "sentimental," a label she must dispose of in order to be a good detective. At least, this is true in her family's mind. However, by the end of the novel, she has decided she can love Jamie and still be a good investigator. Moreover, she proves it.

Jamie has felt isolated his entire life, despite good schools and a supportive mother. He, too, feels burdened by the weight of his famous name. He wonders if his love for writing is genuine. He enjoys his friendship with Charlotte because he feels that it is a part of something grander than regular life.

By the novel's end, the two have made peace with their own flaws as well as those of the other.

## Family

In their own ways, both of the main characters are searching for a place to fit and belong. Although in many situations, a person can feel the sense of belonging outside of their family, Cavallaro specifically seeks for the students to find themselves at ease in their own family.

Charlotte is overcoming her family's feeling of disgrace during this narrative, and so it is clearly vital for her to achieve this task and regain her family's good opinion. For Jamie, the fit is specific to his father, from whom he has been estranged since his father left his mother several years before.

In addition to the standard adolescent quest of finding oneself, part of the journey of this narrative is for Charlotte and Jamie to step into the 'skin' of being a Holmes and a Watson.

## Legacy

This novel, which recycles established, classic characters and superimposes them in a modern situation, is destined to draw comparison to its inspiration. By making Jamie and Charlotte the descendants of the original Holmes and Watson, Cavallaro has set them up to have a standard to which to compare. Every chapter holds several mentions of their famous great-great-grandfathers. Both children have been raised in the tradition of their famous families. Charlotte is schooled in deductive reasoning, and Jamie is versed in writing.

In Charlotte's case, the pressure appears to be more acute. It appears that she has a firmer requirement to be brilliant as an investigator, so much so that she is 'sent away' to



the United States after the Moriarty scandal. Her great-great-grandfather, Sherlock Holmes, has set a high bar for her.

Jamie's family, by contrast, does not set a rigorous standard for him. Yet, it is clear that being a writer and being a best friend to Charlotte Holmes is the place where he fits the best.

# Styles

## Point of View

This young adult mystery novel is written from the first-person point of view, with Jamie speaking. This particular point of view is an effective choice because James plays the part of the sidekick to the investigative work. Since he is really in the know throughout the novel, the reader is in the dark, learning details bit by bit as Jamie does. Charlotte is the one who actually knows what is going on, so the reader is actually experiencing the action and the emotion of the plot, rather than the details of the investigation.

The short epilogue is written from Charlotte's point of view, which lends a touch of sentimentality and humor to the end of the novel.

## Language and Meaning

Since this novel is written for young adults and the main characters are teenagers, the language is not complex. However, the characters are boarding school students who are supposedly very intelligent. The vocabulary feels like a higher-level, standardized-test fare. There is also rapid-fire witty exchanges and typical teenage humor. It is an effective juxtaposition of old, familiar characters in a new setting.

## Structure

There is a lot of action in this novel, with various shifts in the upper hand, exhilarating chases, and narrow brushes with death. With all of the investigative details that the writer must slowly release, she has chosen to organize the novel into fewer, longer chapters. The novel is lengthy for a young adult (336 pages), but it is divided into twelve chapters with a short epilogue.





## Quotes

I missed London like an arm, or a leg, even if I had only lived there a handful of years, because as much as my mother insisted that my coming to Connecticut would be like coming home, it was more like coming to a manicured jail."

-- Jamie (chapter 1 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** Jamie is characterized by loneliness and isolation, particularly early in the novel, before his friendship with Charlotte grows. This quote explains right away how he feels about going to Sherringtonford.

I belonged here, I thought, with her, as surely as anyone belonged anywhere.

-- Jamie (chapter 2 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** This quote demonstrates how devoted Jamie is willing to be in his relationship with Charlotte, even before he knows her well. Furthermore, the quote reflects Jamie's thoughts in the lab, which is a special, safe place for both of them.

I think I might like him," she said miserably. "Don't feel bad," I told her. "Everyone does, except for me.

-- Charlotte, then Jamie (chapter 3 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** This exchange between Jamie and Charlotte is in reference to Jamie's father. At the beginning of the narrative, Jamie is determined to hate his father, or at least, not forgive him for leaving Jamie and his mother. Jamie's father proves himself to be an indispensable help. He is very devoted to both teens as the story continues.

The way we were with each other wouldn't have made sense to anyone else if I'd tried to explain it.

-- Jamie (chapter 4 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** This quote demonstrates the growing friendship between the two main characters, a friendship that will grow to eclipse all other things of importance by the end of the novel.

I wanted the two of us to be complicated together, to be difficult and engrossing and blindingly brilliant. Sex was a commonplace kind of complicated.

-- Jamie (chapter 5 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** This quote illustrates that Jamie and Charlotte had grown close as friends. Yet, the eventual romantic overtones would intercede and make things difficult. In this quote, Jamie is saying that if they were going to have a complicated friendship, he would prefer it to be complicated by brilliance and drama, not by sex.

She was the one who kept me in the dark.

-- Jamie (chapter 5 paragraph 3)



**Importance:** Jamie struggles constantly with how Charlotte, through mistrust or poor people skills, keeps him at arm's length and shares information on a need-to-know basis. In this quote, he wrestles with feeling in the dark.

Something else is going to happen if our attacker doesn't get what he wants. Someone else is going to get hurt.

-- Charlotte (chapter 7 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** This quote, showing Charlotte's usual cleverness, foreshadows what eventually happens. The killer is after something, and does not stop hurting people until the end.

Charlotte Holmes without the edges, all combed and clean, well loved and loving in return. I knew it would be gone tomorrow, all of it--the gentle way she touched me, the glitter of her undivided attention, the bows and the perfume. It would all go back into her costume box, and she would be the real Holmes again.

-- Jamie (chapter 7 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** In the scene where Jamie puts himself in the infirmary in order to watch Nurse Bryony in action, Charlotte plays the caring girlfriend so she can linger around the room. It is a short scene, but it is very difficult on Jamie's heart. At this point in the story, Jamie wishes the act was the truth.

Tightly, disbelievingly, she shook her head, like I was a man on the street who'd made the mistake of demanding her wallet and PIN number and ten minutes with her in an alley. Like I hadn't seen the knife she'd been carrying in plain view. In that moment, I invented and discarded a hundred things I could have said to her--platitudes, reassurances, accusations--only to have her walk past me and straight out the front door, the tap of her boots the only sound in the silence."

-- Jamie (chapter 9 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** This quote demonstrates, from Jamie's perspective, how important trust and the ability to hold her facts close to her chest are to Charlotte. To be attacked in an alley, Jamie says, would ruffle her less than the fact that he snooped into her past.

I didn't want to imagine her life without me. Maybe it was selfish to think that way, but I couldn't imagine mine without her.

-- Jamie (chapter 10 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** In Chapter 10, Jamie is infected with a deadly virus. For several hours, he feels certain that he is going to die. He thinks this to himself as he worries about the virus taking over his body.

Isn't that how all those stories always end? The hero explaining everything to his hapless confidant? You are a Watson, after all, so let's stick with tradition.

-- Bryony (chapter 11 paragraph 1)



**Importance:** In the climactic scene in Chapter 11, when Jamie is near death and Bryony is set to take her money and flee, Charlotte and Milo sit and ask her 'how she did it.' This quote is her gloating response, especially to Jamie. It also serves as a reminder that Charlotte kept him in the dark during the bulk of the case.

We weren't Sherlock Holmes and John Watson. I was okay with that, I thought. We had things they didn't, too. Like electricity, and refrigerators. And Mario Kart.  
-- 324 (chapter 12 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** This quote is a nice little sentiment by Jamie that touches on the overarching legacy of being a Holmes and a Watson. Although the teens definitely managed to solve a case admirably, Jamie is willing to say that it is acceptable to not completely mirror his ancestors.