

Shakespeare's Champion Study Guide

Shakespeare's Champion by Charlaine Harris

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Plot Summary

Shakespeare's Champion by Charlaine Harris revolves around the character Lily Bard, and the small Arkansas town of Shakespeare. Lily Bard moved to Shakespeare four years ago, searching for peace after a brutal rape and mutilation that had obviously changed her life forever. Though Lily does not focus on her past, it is obvious it affects her every day, from the relationships she forms to the constant trips to the gym to strengthen her body. Body Time is where Lily works out and take karate class, and is owned by her sometimes lover, Marshall Sedaka. Marshall's illness requires Lily to open the gym one morning, which is how Lily comes to find the body of Del Packard, his neck crushed under the weight of a barbell.

Though the death looks like an accident at first, it is clear that there are some questions, as voiced by Claude Friedrich, the chief of police. Claude is Lily's friend, though he wants to be more. Lily is unwilling to give up the true friendship and risk losing Claude all-together. Their relationship is also overshadowed by the death of Darnell Glass, a young black man that had been beaten to death on the edge of town months ago. Lily had come to Darnell's aide one night at the Burger Tycoon, defending him after he was jumped by several young white men. Lily had jumped into the thick of things while two of Claude's deputies had stood on the fringes, one afraid to become involved, the other, Tom David Meicklejohn, had watched with obvious pleasure. The mother of the dead boy considers suing the police department, and Lily would be called as a witness.

As a cleaning lady in the small town, Lily is able to see people at their best and worst, living under the radar, unnoticed by the people she works for, for the most part. An undercurrent of racism is moving through the town, and Lily sees it, dismayed that the haven she had found is turning into a den for ugliness. Small things begin to occur, from black members at Body Time feeling uncomfortable and unwelcome, to racial slurs being painted on the cars of people known to associate with blacks. The blacks in the town meet to discuss the situation and a bomb goes off in the church where the meeting takes place, killing some and wounding many, including Lily and Claude.

Strangers arrive in town, a dark pony-tailed man named Jared Fletcher, hired by Winthrop's Sporting Goods to replace Del, and Mookie Preston, a young woman of mixed race who claims to be a genealogist working for an on-line company. Lily senses that neither are who they say they are, and she comes to find out this is true as the novel progresses. Drawn to the dark haired stranger, Lily realizes that Jared is in fact Jack Leeds, a former police detective from Little Rock who had been embroiled in a love triangle that had ended in the death of his lover and her husband. Jack has been hired by Howell Winthrop Jr. to discover which of his employees in involved in a scheme involving guns from the store. Working undercover in the store, Jack has discovered that several men are trying to form a white militia and bring whites back to power. Though Jack knows which people are involved, Howell Jr. is strangely reluctant to call the police in, seemingly waiting for something else to happen and sure that, despite his knowledge, his family will be safe.



Lily also discovers that Mookie Preston is the half-sister of the dead Darnell Glass, and has come to town to help her mother Lanette Glass. Lily tries to warn Mookie to leave town, but Preston is unwilling, as Lily knows she would be herself. Instead, Lily can only hope that Mookie stays safe and under the radar.

Events in the small town boil over when the men trying to organize the militia discover Jack's involvement, and take him to the store and try to discover who hired him. Lily knows that he is in danger and comes to his aide with the help of Mookie Preston. Darcy Orchard, the seemingly normal "good ole boy," is in reality an angry, bitter man, willing to kill in order to achieve his goal. Working with Tom David Meicklejohn and others, Darcy tortures Jack until Mookie steps forward with a gun and threatens them. A battle ensues, during which Lily learns that Howell Winthrop Sr. has been the mastermind of the white men, encouraging the violence against blacks in the area. Jack is injured as is Lily, but the two struggle to overcome the men, finally winning, but not without tragic consequences. Mookie is fatally wounded, living only long enough to absolve Lily of her responsibility in her death. Preston had, in her mind, done what she had set out to do, make the men who had killed her brother pay for his death.

Lily moves on with her life, unsure how at first, and also unsure about her relationship with Jack Leeds. In the end Jack returns to Shakespeare, apparently willing to do what it takes to have the relationship with Lily that the two seem to need more than anything, something that will help them recover from their pasts and move on toward the future.



Prologue

Prologue Summary

Del Packard is at the Body Time gym, working out with his eye on winning the Marvel's Gym competition. Del came in second last year, and has been working every second available to be ready for the upcoming contest.

Del unlocks the door and lets his spotter in so that he can continue working out safely. The two discuss the competition, and Del comments that his girlfriend, Lindy, is not happy about him working out so much or shaving all of his body hair. The spotter laughs while Del continues to chatter, remarking that he is proud to represent the town in the competition. Del is the only entry from Shakespeare, though Marshall Sedaka, the gym owner had tried to convince Lily Bard to enter in the women's category. Del comments that he thinks Lily is weird, despite the fact that she has good chest and arm development.

Del prepares to lift, telling his spotter that he wants to do ten repetitions, and only to help him if he really seems to need it. Ready to lift, Del comments that he is no longer worried, as Mr. Winthrop has told him that everything is okay. Packard is clearly relieved.

The spotter lifts the bar and Del grips the bar. The spotter pulls the bar back and drops the 290 pounds of weights onto Del's throat, then grips the bar and pulls down until Del stops struggling. Gloves and long sleeves protect the killer's hands and arms from Del's scrambling hands. Determining that Del is dead, the man unlocks the gym door to leave, then wonders what to do with the key. Locking the door would alert the authorities to the fact that Del had not been alone. The man returns the key to Del's pocket, then leaves, leaving the door unlocked behind him and shutting off the lights. On his way, the man wonders if at last he will be able to get a date with Lindy Roland.

Prologue Analysis

The novel begins with an introduction to the victim, Del Packard. Del trains for a bodybuilding competition, planning on winning. Del has a spotter, someone who is present to make sure that Del is safe and does not get inadvertently injured while training. Ironically, the mysterious spotter kills Del with the very piece of equipment that Del had requested his help with.

A few bits of information are provided in the short prologue. Del comments that the gym's owner had encouraged Lily Bard to compete at Marvel's Gym, but that she had not wanted to spend the time just to spend the day greased up and being stared at. Del's opinion that Lily is weird, and quiet, gives the reader an impression of Lily, though at this point it is difficult to tell if it is accurate. The reader also learns that Del had been worried while speaking to the spotter the week before, but has been reassured by Mr.



Winthrop. This tells the reader that the two men have some type of relationship outside the gym. One is left to wonder if the worry from the previous week might have something to do with Dell's death. In addition, as the killer decides what to do with the gym key, he thinks to himself that the job is not as easy as he had imagined, but that his boss will be happy that he has handled the situation. Thus, the reader knows that Dell's death has been planned by more than one person.



Chapter One

Chapter One Summary

Lily Bard, a cleaning lady in Shakespeare, Arkansas, arrives at Body Time, the gym owned by her sometimes lover and karate instructor, Marshall Sedaka. Marshall, down with the flu, has asked Lily to open the gym for him until he can get someone else in. Lily agrees, though she is not happy about it. Arriving, Lily sees an empty car in the parking lot and heads toward the door to open up. Bobo Winthrop, the eighteen year old son of one of the wealthiest families in town arrives, and shows Lily which key will unlock the front door. Bobo works at Body Time while attending the University of Arkansas even though he has no need to work for a living.

Lily discovers the front door unlocked and a sense of unease settles in. Bobo tells Lily that the car in the parking lot belongs to Del Packard. Marshall has given Del a key to the gym so that Del could work out for an upcoming body-building competition. Bobo comments that Del is supposed to lock the door when he is alone at the gym and that Marshall will not be happy.

The two enter the dark gym. Bobo heads to the locker area and Lily turns the lights on. Lily sees a body sprawled on a weight bench, a barbell across the man's throat. Bobo returns and says that it is Del, wearing the same clothing he had on the night before. Lily questions why Bobo would have left Del alone in the gym and the boy responds defensively that Del had been waiting for a spotter to help him with his weight lifting. Lily calls Claude Friedrich, the local police chief and reports Del's death.

Lily heads to her first job of the day at the home of Helen and Mel Drinkwater. Lily recalls how Helen has seemed leery of her since Lily had been involved in an altercation at the Burger Tycoon last fall. Things seem to be getting back to normal now, and Helen has left a note asking Lily to set aside a Wednesday to do the windows. Wednesday is the day Lily sets aside to do special jobs. She leaves a few dates for the Drinkwater's and heads home for lunch.

At home, Lily finds Claude waiting. The police chief lives next door and the two often have lunch together. Claude attempts to kiss Lily but she rebuffs him as gently as possible, unwilling to lose a friend. Claude asks if Lily's reason is her relationship with Marshall Sedaka, but Lily has no easy answers. Lily fingers her scars subconsciously, and Claude tells her to stop, that he knows what she has been through and admires her strength.

Claude turns the conversation to the death of Del Packard. Lily explains some of the details of competitive body-building to Claude, trying to give the chief a better idea of what Del was hoping to accomplish. Lily explains that while Del was working to build muscle definition, she lifts weights for strength. Claude wonders if Lily knew Del and she tells him that she did, but not well, as they had nothing in common.



Lily gets ready to return to work, putting her make-up on. Claude readies to leave, telling Lily that there were no fingerprints on the weight bar, just smudges, and wonders how Del could have turned the lights off in the gym. The police chief also tells Lily that putting her make-up on in front of him signals to him that she is not interested in being more than friends.

Lily heads to Marshall Sedaka's house to return the key to the gym. The two discuss Del's death and wonder if it was an accident or murder. Lily does not believe that Del's girlfriend could have killed him; Lindy was not strong enough. Marshall suggests that Del might have been involved in an illicit affair, like Len Elgin, who had been shot months before. Lily is unsure. Marshall comments that Lily is cold, and she is upset by his claim.

The week goes by and Lily settles into her routine, but does not go home with Marshall at night after working out at the gym any longer. Marshall seems upset, but also somewhat relieved. A client of Lily's moves away and she goes through her waiting list, finally making arrangements with Mookie Preston, a relatively new woman in town, to clean her house on Fridays.

At the gym, Lily runs into Bobo, who tells her he has been questioned by the police twice since Del's death. Bobo tells Lily that Detective Jinks thinks Del might have seen something while working for Bobo's father that put Bobo in a position to wish him dead. Bobo believes that if Del had seen something at work, he would have asked Mr. Winthrop about it. Lily agrees.

Lily speaks to Raphael Roundtree, her friend, but he is very upset. Raphael tells Lily that he cannot work out in a gym where people are not tolerant of blacks. Roundtree glances at two men across the gym. Lily recognizes Darcy Orchard, but not the other man. Roundtree leaves the gym, and leaves Lily wondering if she can tolerate staying in a gym where racism is a problem.

The usual morning group begins to arrive. Lily waits for Darcy to finish working out on a machine and then takes his place. Darcy talks to Lily about finding Del's body, and what a nice guy he was. He also tells her that the man he had been with had been hired as Del's replacement. Darcy asks Lily if she has stopped dating Marshall as rumors have said. Lily tells Darcy that she does not want to date anyone at the moment and Darcy wonders if she is gay. Bard ignores him and Darcy stalks away, angry.

Lily approaches Janet Shook and asks her if Del had ever had Janet act as his spotter. Janet tells Lily that Del looked on women who worked out as freaks, preferring his women tiny and weak, like his girlfriend, Lindy. Lily agrees. Janet also asks Lily if she is still with Marshall. Janet has had a crush on Marshall for ages. Lily tells her that they are no longer together.

Lily wonders why she cares so much about what happened to Del. She realizes that the fact that Bobo is a suspect upsets her. The other thing that bothers Lily is that Body



Time is one of the places she had felt at home and safe. The murder of Del has changed that.

Chapter One Analysis

The reader is introduced to Lily Bard, the main character in Shakespeare's Champion. Lily is a strong woman, both physically and in character. Bard studies karate, works out daily at Body Time, the local gym. The fact that she has been through some sort of personal tragedy is hinted at, but no more details are revealed.

Lily and Bobo Winthrop discover the body of Del Packard at Body Time when Lily opens the gym as a favor to her sometimes lover, Marshall Sedaka. At first the two believe that the death might have been accidental, however Lily's conversation with Claude, the police chief, makes her think otherwise. The fact that there are no fingerprints where there should be on the weight bar, and that the lights in the gym are off, lead a person to question how Del's death could possibly be accidental. Del's death at the gym is something that Lily takes personally, as Body Time is one of the few places where Lily has felt safe and at home.

Several other characters that will factor into the novel are introduced as well. Bobo Winthrop, and 18 year old college student finds Del's body with Lily. Bobo is the son of Howell and Beanie Winthrop, a prominent and wealthy family in Shakespeare. The Winthrops own several businesses in town, including the sports store where Del worked. It appears from several seemingly innocent comments that Bobo makes that he might have a crush on Lily, one that will provide her with opportunity later in the novel.

Bobo is questioned several times about the death of Del after Lily makes an innocent comment to the chief of police regarding weight lifting, and Lily feels guilty for involving the boy. This is another reason why Lily feels compelled to discover the truth about Del's death.

Claude Friedrich, the local chief of police seems a competent officer, who is interested in being more than friends with Lily. Claude does not push the relationship, but he is clearly jealous of Lily's relationship with Marshall Sedaka. This bothers Lily, as she is not even sure if she is happy with the relationship, and does not want to be pushed into a situation that would end their friendship.

Marshall Sedaka, the gym owner and Lily's Sensei, is her lover, though the relationship is not really what either want. Lily is not willing to change to please anyone, and Marshall seems to think that having a man in her life should fix all of Lily's problems. Marshall comments that Lily is "cold" several times, and this comment bothers Lily. Bard does not think of herself as cold, she simply survives the best way she can. If this means that she cannot have a steady relationship, she is happy with that.

Darcy Orchard, an employee at Winthrop's sports store is also briefly introduced, though he will factor into the novel significantly. Orchard is a work-out fanatic who clearly thinks more of himself than Lily, and is angered by her polite dismissal of his questions about

her relationship status. The man that is at the gym with Orchard is not introduced by name, but he will also factor into things in a very important way later in the novel.

The reader learns that there is an undertone of racism in Shakespeare, one that seems to be brewing more and more. Raphael Roundtree, a friend of Lily's, refuses to stay at Body Time, commenting on the intolerance of people there. Roundtree makes this comment while looking at Darcy Orchard. Lily does not like racism, and wonders if she should leave the gym as well.

The past of Shakespeare is mentioned in an almost casual manner several times. As the novel is part of a series, the reader will learn about events that have taken place during conversations between characters as well as in Lily's thoughts. A fight at the Burger Tycoon is mentioned, and Lily seems to have been involved in some way. The deaths of two other members of the town are also mentioned, seemingly in passing, but will also factor into the current situation in Shakespeare.



Chapter Two

Chapter Two Summary

As the days go by, Lily realizes that she misses Claude and their easy friendship. Lily also realizes that she does not miss the dating relationship she had with Marshall, and has easily fallen back into the routine of karate teacher and student.

Lily showers and considers going to Claude's, but stops herself. Lily values control in her life over everything, and is not willing to give that up for anyone. Going to Claude's would make him happy for a while, but in the end a relationship between the two would never work. Instead, Lily takes a walk, strolling through Shakespeare in the dark. Along the way she realizes someone else is on the street and recognizes the man that had been working out with Darcy Orchard. Lily continues on her way, unafraid, but curious.

The next morning Lily arrives to clean Deedra Dean's apartment and hears arguing behind the door. Deedra's step-father, Jerrell Knopp, is angry and yelling. Lily warns the man that the police chief is nearby, then continues about her business. As Lily cleans the bedroom, she sees Deedra's car through the window. Someone has painted "she fucks niggers" across the red paint. Lily is angry at whoever has done such a thing, but also at Deedra for putting herself in such a situation. Deedra has been sleeping with Marcus Jefferson, a black man in the building. Marcus works with Jerrell, and his life is not going to be any easier that Deedra's from this point. Lily knows that acting in such a way is not the smartest thing to do in a small southern town.

Lily moves onto her new client, Mookie Preston. Arriving at the house, Lily is a bit surprised to find that Mookie is of mixed race. It seems that Mookie is just as shocked that Lily is white. Mookie flutters around the house at first, finally settling in after Lily tells her that she does not need to clean for the cleaning lady. Lily cleans the very dirty house, and wonders about the young woman. It seems odd to Lily that a young woman of mixed race would move to a small southern town where she has no family or friends. Lily also does not believe that Mookie is a genealogist, as she has told her. Mookie arranges for Lily to clean each Friday, and asks casual questions about the wealth families in the area, such as the Winthrops. Lily refuses to answer.

After Mookie's, Lily stops home for lunch and is surprised by a flower delivery from Claude. Lily is touched, actually cries a bit, but really does not know how to feel about the flowers and the card from Claude that says simply, "I miss you." Rather than think about it, Lily heads to the Winthrop's house. The house is occupied by Howell Jr., his wife Beanie, and the three children, Howell Three, Amber Jean, and Bobo. Lily is happy to discover that no one is at home and sets about her business. Not long after, Howell Jr. arrives with the stranger in town. Lily once again wonders about the man, especially as Howell is acting so strangely. The two men carry bags into the study and shut the door. Lily is curious about what is going on, and hopes to leave before the men emerge, but they arrive in the kitchen as she is mopping up. Howell asks Lily about finding Del's



body as well as other questions, but she nicely changes the subject and continues to clean. The men leave and Lily considers the situation. Bard is not happy to discover that after four years of working for the Winthrops she has loyalty to them.

Chapter Two Analysis

The personal life of Lily is mentioned again. The reader learns that though Lily cares for Claude, she knows that she is not the right woman for him, and does not wish to hurt him. Lily's desire to have control over her life is mentioned again, a fact that will come up repeatedly in the novel. The reader will eventually learn why Lily desires to have such control, and why she is unwilling to give any type of control to a man.

Racism is once again a main focus of the novel when Lily arrives at the apartment of Deedra Dean and hears the conversation that takes place between Deedra and Jerrell. Dating a black man in a southern town is not a good idea in Lily's opinion, not if you are not willing to deal with people who have issues with mixed race relationships. While Lily has no issues with race, there are many in the area that do. Notes have been found around town urging whites to take back their jobs and such. Leaving notes is not against the law, but Lily wonders what might happen when things escalate. This is evident by the paint on Deedra's car.

Lily is concerned when she hears Jerrell mention Darnell Glass, the young black man that had been beaten to death a few months ago. Lily had known Darnell, but her relationship with him is not clear at this point.

Meeting Mookie Preston brings up race again, when Lily discovers that the young woman is of mixed race. Mookie is taken aback by the fact that Lily is white and actually questions whether they can have a working relationship. Lily clearly is not as bothered by race as some, choosing to judge people for who they are, rather than what color their skin is.

At the Winthrop home Lily is a bit confused by the odd behavior of Howell Jr. Having worked for the family for four years, Lily has never seen Howell act so self-consciously. Unsure if Howell is uncomfortable because of the stranger that is with him, Lily goes about her business as the two men carry black bags into the study, then return without them. These seemingly innocent bags will factor into the plot later in the novel, as will the stranger that keeps turning up.



Chapter Three

Chapter Three Summary

Lily arrives home, tired from a day's work to find Claude sleeping in his car. Lily wakes him, and removes a sheet of paper from his window. The paper encourages white men to push back against the loss of jobs and such. Clearly a racist group is trying to incite problems in Shakespeare. Lily and Claude both think there is trouble brewing.

The two share a snack and Lily heads to karate class, leaving Claude at her house so that the two can go to dinner in Montrose when she returns. At class Lily sees the usual group of people including Janet Shook, and Carlton Cockroft. The stranger with the dark ponytail is there, as well as a new woman that has gotten the attention of the single men in the room. Class begins and ends in the usual fashion and afterward Marshall introduces Lily to Becca Whitley. Becca is the niece of Pardon Albee, the deceased owner of the Shakespeare Garden Apartments. Becca tells Lily that she will be living in her uncle's old apartment, having moved from Texas after a divorce. Marshall preens in front of the woman and Janet Shook is clearly disgusted, having waited for Marshall to notice her for months. Lily reassures Janet that the woman probably will not last in Shakespeare.

Returning home Lily changes and heads to Montrose with Claude. While waiting for dinner Claude tells Lily that Lanette Glass, Darnell's mother, is considering suing the police department. Lily wonders aloud why she is not suing Tom David Meicklejohn and Todd Picard, as they were present at "The Fight." Claude asks Lily to review the night again and she does.

Lily recalls a night a few months back in the parking lot of the Burger Tycoon. Darnell and his girlfriend had been in his car when a white boy pulled in, tapping the bumper of Darnell's new car. Darnell had been angry and the boy had taunted him, leading to a fight. Darnell struck first, but the boy's friends had jumped Darnell. Lily had stepped in, disabling the boys. While fighting, Lily had seen Tom David Meicklejohn, a police officer on duty, standing at the edge of the crowd, holding them back. Todd Pickard, an off duty officer had been there as well and done nothing. The only assistance that Lily had received had been from a marine on leave.

After the fight Claude had arrived and helped Lily. All of the parties had gone to the police station to take statements. Lily had been angry at having to do the work of the police and she tells Claude this again over dinner. She also tells him that she should have saved herself the trouble, as Darnell had been beaten to death weeks later outside of town.

Claude asks the same questions he had the night of the fight and tells Lily that she might be called as a witness for Lanette Glass. Lily tells Claude that if her friendship with Claude is going to cause problems perhaps they should not see each other.



Shocked Claude wonders if that is what Lily wants. Bard tells Claude that she values his friendship but cannot see things going further than that. If Claude wants more he should find someone else. The police chief is clearly unhappy and the two drive home in silence.

Unable to sleep, Lily walks that night again. Lily considers the death of Darnell and the death a few weeks later of a white farmer, Len Elgin. Elgin had been found shot in his truck. Some members of the town believed that his death was payback for the murder of Darnell. Others believe that Elgin was killed because he was having an affair. Regardless of who had killed either man, Lily is worried that racism is becoming more prevalent in the area.

While walking, Lily is a bit shocked to see Lanette Glass leave the house of Mookie Preston. Wondering what the two women could possibly have in common, Lily continues walking for almost an hour before she is tired enough to sleep.

Chapter Three Analysis

The relationship between Lily and Claude becomes more complicated when Claude informs Lily that the mother of Darnell Glass is considering a lawsuit against the Shakespeare police department and that Lily might be called as a witness. Lily is unsure how to feel, wondering if the reason Claude sent her flowers was to broach the subject gently. Regardless, Lily suggests that the two should stop seeing each other if it will cause problems for Claude. The chief is upset by this, and asks Lily if that is what she wants. Lily wants to remain friends with Claude, but can see the relationship going no further. Claude disagrees, but sees the futility in arguing the point. Claude mildly rebukes Lily, telling her that nothing better will come along for him. There may be something different, but not better.

The reader learns a bit more about the town of Shakespeare and the racial tensions that have been brewing when Lily recaps the night she helped Darnell in the parking lot of the Burger Tycoon. Though the young man had been known as a hot head around town, Lily had helped him in an unfair fight against four white boys. As Lily fought, the town, including two police officers had watched. Tensions had been high that night, and evidently continue to be, judging by the note found on Claude's car.

Lily had believed that progress had been made in the area of race, and had thought that others were as pleased as she to see the changes that had taken place in the south. This is apparently not the case, as Darnell Glass is beaten to death a few weeks later. Lily is still sick about Glass' death, worried that whatever is brewing in Shakespeare will get worse as time passes.

A few new characters are introduced, including the two police officers at the scene of the fight, Tom David Meicklejohn and Todd Picard. Meicklejohn will factor in a greater capacity later in the novel. The stranger with the dark ponytail is mentioned again and

the sense that he keeps appearing in the most innocuous places will also factor into the storyline.

The fact that Lanette Glass is at the home of Mookie Preston in the middle of the night is also a key point, one that at the very least confirms Lily suspicions that Mookie is not what she seems.



Chapter Four

Chapter Four Summary

Lily heads to the Shakespeare Clinic where she cleans for Carrie Thrush, the town doctor. The two women share the gossip of the week and Lily tells Carrie about Claude. Carrie wonders if Lily can maintain her friendship with Claude if a lawsuit is brought against the police department. Lily barely comments and Carrie remarks that being Lily's confidant is tricky when she does not speak. Lily answers that after she was raped she had learned to be cautious since the people she trusted had taken her confidences to the press.

Lily moves onto the apartment of Marie Hofstettler, one of her favorite people. Distressingly, Marie is dying and begs Lily not to call for help. Torn, Lily sits with her until the end is near and then calls Carrie, telling her that Marie would like to die at home. Carrie tells Lily she is on her way and to call 911 to cover her back. Lily does and by the time all arrive Marie has died. Becca calls Marie's son for Lily and wonders aloud if Lily is in Marie's will. Lily tells her that she hopes not, then sits on the stairs, saddened by the passing of such a fine woman. The stranger with the black ponytail stops, wondering if Lily is alright since she has been crying. Lily says she is fine.

In the following days, Lily attends Marie's funeral, surprised to see the stranger with the Winthrop family. The relationship is strange to Lily, but she cannot waste time worrying about it. She does reflect that the stranger seems to be everywhere. He is at the gym the next day when Lily is attempting to do chin-ups, and when assistance is offered she is surprised when it is from the stranger, rather than Bobo, whom Lily had thought was helping her.

Wednesday morning Lily's car will not start and she walks to the Winthrop home to clean Beanie's closet. Arriving with supplies Lily opens the door and is grabbed and dragged inside. A struggle takes place until Lily winds up on the floor with her assailant. The person asks Lily who she is and she does the same. Surprise floods her when the person answers that he is the detective, and that the person is the stranger with the ponytail. The stranger tells Lily that someone is breaking in and they will kill them if they discover them in the closet. He tells Lily to wait three minutes and then scream after he is behind the house and can get the license number from their car. Instead, Lily turns the vacuum on, startling the men into fleeing. Calling the police, Lily is answering questions when Howell arrives, frightened that Lily is hurt and telling her that he had no idea she would be there today. Lily now knows that Howell knew about the man in his closet and had knowledge of the break-in.

Howell wonders where Lily's car is and she tells him that she had walked as her car would not start. An officer at the scene gives Lily a ride home and she asks him about the flyers that have been popping up in town. The officer comments that the flyers are



not illegal, and neither is the gathering that will take place that night at the Golgotha AME Church.

Chapter Four Analysis

The reader learns that Lily has been the victim of rape. This fact explains Lily's reluctance to become involved in a relationship, as well as the "cold" nature that Marshall has commented on. It is clear that Lily has issues from her past that prevent her from opening up to people in her life. Lily has commented about the scars that are on her body, fingering them without realizing it while thinking. Claude has commented about her tendency to do so, and about his admiration about overcoming her past. The reader can assume that Lily's desire for strength is also a result of whatever she has dealt with in her past.

Lily's compassion is evident when she finds her favorite client dying. Marie Hofstettler is an old woman, intent on dying her way. It is clear that though Lily is torn about calling for help, she admires Marie's desire to end things her way. The reader learns that Lily, considered cold by some, has spent more than her allotted cleaning time at Marie's, caring for the woman. Lily stays with the old woman, debating the entire time whether she should call someone, but deciding in the end to do as her friend wishes. When the end is near, Lily calls Carrie Thrush, the local doctor, and it is also clear that, despite Lily's tendency to be alone, she trusts the doctor. The pony tailed stranger makes yet another appearance, one noted by Lily as well as the reader. The stranger seems to be everywhere, and Lily searches in her mind for why the man seems to be familiar. This is significant, as the reader will learn that the stranger has a past that is as infamous at Lily's.

It has been mentioned that Lily saves Wednesday mornings for special jobs, and she plans on spending the day cleaning out Beanie Winthrop's closet. The twice-yearly job turns out not to be mundane when Lily winds up in the closet with the pony tailed stranger, who she discovers is a detective. The two struggle at first, but the knowledge that men are in the house that would not have a problem killing the two is enough to get Lily to cooperate. Even then, Lily wonders why she believes the man. After the break-in, Lily is confronted with Howell Winthrop, obviously concerned about her well-being, but making comments that lead Lily to believe that he knew the robbery was going to take place.

Lily discovers on the way home that there is going to a meeting at the black church that evening. This seemingly insignificant fact will prove to be a catalyst in the novel, one that spurs Lily toward her destiny.



Chapter Five

Chapter Five Summary

After days of seeing the pony tailed stranger everywhere, the man seems to vanish. Out of boredom, Lily attends the meeting at the Golgotha Church. Most present are black, but Lily sees Mookie Preston as well as Claude and Sheriff Marty Schuster with the minister. The meeting is unorganized with several speaking including Lanette Glass. Lanette states that her son is dead, and his death most likely lead to the death of Len Elgin and maybe Del Packard. Lanette also asks Claude and the sheriff about the rumors that an armed white militia is active in Shakespeare. Lily wonders about this news.

The meeting runs late and as they exit the building Lanette thanks Lily for helping her son. Lily states that she was simply doing what was right. As the crowd moves an explosion rocks the building. Dazed, Lily struggles from under debris, confused and unable to hear. Lily remembers Claude and climbs over more debris and bodies to reach him. A light has fallen, killing the sheriff. Claude is seriously injured but alive.

Lily wakes in the hospital and discovers that she has an injury to her leg that will require stitches. Her ear is also injured. Lily is released and spends a few days recovering before returning to work. Bard stops at the hospital to see Claude who is still seriously injured but getting better slowly. Lily suggests that he move to the vacant apartment on the first level of the building and Carrie thinks this will help tremendously. Leaving the hospital, Lily is weary, and for the first time considers calling her family for help, but quickly dismisses the idea.

A call comes from Arnita Winthrop asking Lily to come to her house. Lily does, curious. Arriving Lily meets Arnita and Howell Sr. Howell Jr. is also there, and seems to be very nervous. Howell Sr. asks Lily how she is and comments that it is odd that she was present at the bombing and in his son's home when it was broken into. Lily reacts calmly, downplaying the break-in, which seems to calm Howell Jr. The older man asks Lily if she has any idea if the burglars were "niggers" or whites, which bothers Lily.

At last Arnita takes Lily to her sitting room and give her a ring, supposedly from Marie, as thanks for caring for her over the years. Lily is touched, but realizes that she has never seen the ring at Marie's before. Commenting on this, Lily is a bit relieved when Arnita tells her that Marie has not worn the ring for years. Lily thanks the old woman and leaves, stopping to say goodbye to Howell Sr. and Jr. Howell Jr. sees the ring box in Lily's hand and becomes very pale, but does not ask about it.

Lily stops at Winthrop Sporting Goods to buy new workout gloves. Darcy Orchard greets her and leads her to the exercise area. Once there Darcy introduces Lily to Jared Fletcher, the man hired to take Del's place. Jared, the pony tailed stranger, greets Lily but wisely acts as if it is the first time he has seen her outside of Body Time. Lily finally



realizes where she has seen the stranger before. Jared Fletcher's real name is Jack Leeds, and she recalls that he has a past as interesting as her own. Lily buys the gloves and leaves, but Jack follows her out of the store. Bard quietly lets the man know that she is aware of his real name and who he is. Lily remains quiet as Jack tells Lily that he wants her, and that once the job in Shakespeare is over he would like to see her again. He tells her that he has been divorced twice, a fact that she might have read in the papers. Jack touches Lily, and there is an obvious attraction between them, however Lily is not sure what to do about it. Bard quietly tells the man to go back to work, calling him Jared to remind him of who is supposed to be.

Arriving home Lily settles into a quiet routine, preparing dinner for herself and Carrie. The doctor comes to dinner and Lily is able to forget the troubles of the past few weeks and simply enjoy her friend's company.

Chapter Five Analysis

A night of boredom provides Lily with an opportunity to see things from the black residents of Shakespeare's point of view. Lily learns that the black community has been hearing rumors of an armed white militia in town. Though Lily is not surprised to hear that people are armed, the militia comment is news to her. Guns are common around Shakespeare, as are other weapons, such as cross bows. Hunting is a common past time in the area. Lily considers that weapons are available for purchase at any number of places, including Winthrop's Sporting Goods. This seemingly insignificant aside is will be very important later in the novel.

After the bomb explodes in the church, the reader is once again shown the deep character that Lily possesses. Despite the fact that Lily is injured, she struggles to her feet and goes to the aide of her friend Claude. Afterward, Lily is hospitalized for evaluation along with some of the other injured. Carrie takes care of Lily, and informs her that the number of dead would have been much greater had the bomb gone off any earlier. This seems unimportant, however Lily remembers that the meeting had run late. If the crowd had left the building on time, it is highly likely that no one would have been injured or killed.

The strange call from Arnita Winthrop has Lily curious, so despite being tired Bard heads to the estate of the senior Winthrop's. At their home, Lily meets Howell Sr. and a decidedly nervous Howell Jr. Lily discovers that Howell Sr. is a racist, asking if Lily was able to tell if the men that broke into his son's house were "niggers" or whites. When questioned about the break-in by Howell Sr., Lily purposely states that a singular man had been in the home. This minor fact tells the reader that Howell Sr. must know something about the robbery.

Arnita gives Lily a ring that had supposedly belonged to Marie Hofstettler. Arnita explains that Marie had wanted to give Lily something as a thank you for caring for her over the years. Though Lily is grateful for the thought, she is aware that Marie had not had the ring in her possession as long as Lily has known her. Bard questions Arnita



about this, but the old woman brushes aside her concerns. The reaction that Howell Jr. has to the ring box tells Lily that there is something going on that she is unaware of.

Lily finally realizes that the mysterious stranger is Jack Leeds, a man with a past. The reader is not informed what that past is, it is evidently newsworthy, as Jack refers to the fact that Lily might have read about him in the papers. Lily makes this discovery as she is introduced formally to Leeds while shopping for new workout gloves at Winthrop's Sporting Goods. Darcy Orchard introduces Leeds as Jared Fletcher, the man hired to replace Del Packard. Lily wisely acts as if she has no idea of Leeds's real identity until out of the store. Once outside Lily is a bit startled with Leeds's confession that he wants her, and would like to call her when his job is over.



Chapter Six

Chapter Six Summary

Lily is awakened from a nightmare by a banging on her door. Jack Leeds is outside, begging entry as he is being chased. Lily opens the door and the detective falls in. Lily has not turned on the light at Jack's request so she uses her hands to check him and discovers a bullet wound in his shoulder. Lily helps Jack to her room to hide and hears voices outside. Darcy Orchard yells for Lily to open her door so that they can be sure she is alright as they are chasing a burglar from the sporting goods store. Lily angrily steps onto her porch and confronts the group telling them that she is fine. Bard recognizes Darcy, Jim Box and a few others, including Tom David Meicklejohn. The men tell Lily they have been doing inventory at the store and chased a man in this direction. Lily sends them on their way and returns to her room to tend to Leeds.

Jack makes it to the bathroom and Lily cleans and tends to his wounds. The detective tells her afterward that the only way he got through the cleaning is by staring at her breasts while she worked. Lily sends Jack to her bed, does his laundry and climbs in beside him to sleep.

The next morning Lily awakens and is startled when Jack starts to caress her. Deciding to go with her feelings Lily turns to him and the two make passionate love. Afterwards Jack discusses his past, one that coincides a bit with Lily's. Both have come from Memphis, and both had made news there. Jack had been a detective, who had an affair with another police officer's wife. The officer, Walter Kingsland, received a note detailing the affair. Leaving the note behind, Kingsland left the office and another officer had called and warned Jack. Jack drove to the Kingsland's apartment immediately, only to find Walter locked in the bedroom with his wife, Karen. Jack offered himself as a hostage in exchange, knowing that Karen was pregnant, a fact that the note had not revealed. Walter accepted his offer and said to meet him on the back porch. Jack waited until Walter appeared with Karen for the exchange but was horrified when Walter shot his wife in the head and pushed her body onto Jack. The other officers on the scene were forced to shoot Walter. Jack tells Lily that Karen had been the one to send the note to Walter, and he never understood why.

After comforting Jack as much as she is able, Lily rises for work. In an effort not to appear "cold" as Marshall has called her, Lily kisses him before she rises. Walking across the room to dress, Lily can sense the scars on her body. As if reading her mind Jack tells her that he would kill all of them if he could. Lily reminds him that at least she had killed one. They are referring to the rape and mutilation Lily had suffered while she lived in Memphis.

Lily dresses for work in brightly colored clothing, down to her pink socks and shoes. Bard tells Jack not to tell her what he is involved in as he has hidden in her house. The



less she knows the better. Jack asks Lily what she will do if the men come for him again and Lily responds with a smile that she will fight.

Chapter Six Analysis

The arrival of Jack Leeds at Lily's door will provide the reader with more information about the two, and the action in the novel will begin to move at a much faster pace.

Jack arrives wounded and being chased by a group of men. Lily is unsure at first who the men are but quickly discovers their identity when they turn up at her door. Lily discovers Darcy Orchard and several other employees of Winthrop's Sporting Goods as well as Tom David Meicklejohn, the Shakespeare police officer. Lily is forced to stand on her porch in her nightgown to convince the men that she is fine and not being held against her will. Though the men seem to accept her word, Lily does this in order to distract the group from a small blood stain that Jack has left on the porch.

After the men leave, Lily cares for Jack, cleansing his wound and bandaging it as best she can. Jack makes it clear that he wants Lily, commenting that her body is what enabled him to deal with the work on his wound. Jack will not let Lily take him to the hospital so she allows him to stay at her home, in her bed.

The following morning the two make love and the secrets of their past are revealed to the reader. Jack had been involved with another man's wife; an affair that had led to the death of his lover as well as their unborn child. Lily had been the victim of rape and mutilation by multiple attackers. The reader learns that even then Lily had shown strength, killing one of her attackers. The reader now knows the source of the scars that Lily bears, both on her body and on her spirit, explaining her reluctance to give herself over to another.

The difference in Lily is visible to the reader after she makes love with Jack Leeds. Where before Lily had seemed to be self-contained and reluctant to express herself, she now dresses for work in bright colors, thinking herself the brightest cleaning lady in Shakespeare. Lily's mood is obviously brighter, and there seems to be joy in her life, something that has been visibly missing from the character to this point.

Another brief but important revelation is made which foreshadows things to come for Lily and Jack. When Jack wonders what Lily would do if the group of men returned for him, Bard states simply that she would fight. Lily is a fighter, and does not hesitate in her answer, even though it is delivered with a smile.



Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven Summary

Lily takes Jack to his apartment, sneaking in and being very careful not to be seen. Parking, Lily follows Jack up the stairs, expecting that Jack has already entered his apartment. Instead Lily finds Jack in a confrontation with Darcy Orchard and another man who want to know where "Jared" was the night before. Darcy tell Jack that they had called him after the burglary and he had not answered. Though Jack does not want anyone to make the connection between himself and Lily, Bard walks up and puts her arm around Jack, telling the men that she was with Jack the night before. Darcy backs down, accepting the explanation at face value, and leaves. Jack is angry at Lily for making herself known and the two argue before Lily heads to Deedra's apartment for its weekly cleaning.

While cleaning Lily considers the things that have been going on in Shakespeare. A strange meeting at Winthrop's Sporting Goods, the blue fliers that have been seen all over town, the robbery at Howell Jr.'s home and the three murders. Lily is worried about the changes that are taking place. Considering Darcy Orchard, Lily now knows that Orchard has concealed his true personality as a hunter. Lily has no doubt that if the pack of men had caught up with Jack the night before they would have killed him.

At Mookie's house, Lily cleans and considers the anger that Mookie displays about the bombing at the church. Bard asks Mookie about her work as a genealogist, but really wants to ask her why she is in Shakespeare. While looking at Mookie, Lily realizes why the girl looks familiar. Mookie has the same facial structure as Lanette Glass. Realizing that Mookie is from Chicago and Lanette had moved there years ago, Lily realizes that Mookie is Lanette's daughter, and Darnell's half sister. Bard wonders if Lanette had left Shakespeare pregnant years ago and if Mookie's father still lives in town. Before leaving, Lily is unable to stop herself from telling Mookie she should leave. Mookie asks Lily if she would leave and Lily admits that she would not.

At home that night, Lily once again worries about how Shakespeare is changing. A knock at the door announces the arrival of Bobo who tells Lily that he missed her at karate class, and asks if she has been crying. She has, but Lily does not like to admit weakness. Bobo hands her a handkerchief and before she realizes it, he kisses her. Shocked, Lily gently pushes the young man away and tells him she is flattered, but seeing someone. Bobo simply kisses her hand as he leaves.

Jack witnesses the scene and remarks that Lily must have given him a wonderful night. Reacting in anger, Lily strikes him twice and Jack reacts as well, restraining her. The two argue, and Jack apologizes for his behavior. Their chemistry is hard to deny and they wind up in bed again.



Afterward, Jack tells Lily what he knows about the events in the town. Jack has been hired by Howell Jr. because someone had been ordering extra guns in his store. Del discovered the discrepancy and had brought it to his boss's attention. Though Howell had told Del not to say anything, Packard obviously had, and had been murdered for his knowledge. Several employees of Winthrop's are involved in the events that are taking place, including Darcy Orchard. Tom David Meicklejohn is also involved. Jack tells Lily that Howell Jr. wants to find out what is going on before he involves the police, as they might not be able to be trusted. Lily cannot help but worry about what Jack is involved in, and is unsure of her place in the picture. Bard asks him to leave and Jack does, kissing her as he goes.

Chapter Seven Analysis

Events are coming to a head in Shakespeare, and Lily is putting the facts as she knows them together in her mind. The events that have taken place in the town over the past few months have led to hostility between races, and Lily wonders if the place she has chosen as her home is really so different from the places she has lived before.

The supposed robbery at Winthrop's Sporting Goods during a strange meeting quickly disguised as "inventory," and the break-in at Howell Jr's, home, all seemed to be related, but not by any intelligent organized group. Rather, it seems that whoever is behind these events lacks organization or a plan of any kind. This lack of organization is what makes things even more dangerous than they would normally be. The bombing at the church is an example of this. Lily realizes that whoever set the bomb had not intended to kill anyone, they had intended to scare the black community. The meeting had run late, which had resulted in the injured and dead. If someone had wanted to cause harm, they would have set the bomb to go off at the outset of the gathering.

Lily also realizes while talking with Mookie that the mysterious appearance of the woman coincided with the death of Darnell Glass. That, coupled with the meetings of Lanette and Mookie late at night, lead Lily to take another look at things. The physical resemblance between Lanette and Mookie is there once one looks past the obvious difference. That, along with the fact that they both lived in the same area when away from Shakespeare tells Lily that Mookie is Lanette's daughter, and that Mookie has come to Shakespeare to find out who is behind her half-brother's murder.

The relationship with Jack is intense, and Lily has been awakened from what seems like a long time of being alone and relying on only herself. After taking Jack to his apartment Lily finds herself in the mix of things faster than she imagined when she is forced to tell Darcy Orchard and his friends that Jack spent the night with her in order to stop Darcy from thinking Jack the guilty party. While Darcy accepts the explanation at face value, Jack is angry at Lily for revealing their relationship. Lily is not happy with Jack's reaction, and questions whether she has done the right thing. Rather than argue, Lily walks away, leaving Jack to think things through.



Bobo arrives at Lily's home and reveals the crush that he has on her. Though Lily is surprised and touched, there is obviously no future in a relationship between the two and she gently tells this to Bobo. Jack witnesses Bobo's goodbye to Lily and takes things out of context, starting a fight between himself and Lily. Afterward, the two make love again and Jack tells Lily what he has been doing in Shakespeare.

Howell Jr. hired Jack to find out about the guns that had been ordered for the sporting goods store; guns that were obviously ordered for a purpose. The guns had been hidden in the storage area, and Del Packard had brought them to Howell's attention. Howell had warned Del not to tell anyone, but he clearly had, and had been murdered as a result. Howell and Jack had taken the excess guns to Howell's home to see who would steal them back.

Jack also tells Lily that the men involved seem to have a kind of respect for her, after the fight at the Burger Tycoon. The group had not mentioned being responsible for the death of Darnell, but seemed to think that the black man had gotten what he deserved.

Oddly, Jack tells Lily that Howell Jr. does not want him to do anything at this point but to find out who is behind the mischief at Winthrop's, but not act. Jack tells Lily that Howell has been acting strangely about the entire affair, afraid of what has been going on at his store, but also unafraid of the situation. This is an important fact, as it seems that though Howell wants proof of the events taking place, he either knows, or has an idea of who is responsible for the way things have been going in the town.



Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight Summary

Lily arrives to clean Carrie's clinic and finds it empty. A note tells her that Carrie has taken the day off to help Claude move to the apartment on the first floor at the apartment complex. Lily is a bit disconcerted by the developing relationship between Carrie and Claude, but happy for them at the same time.

After finishing up for the day Lily heads into the area of Shakespeare that surrounds the bombed church. Lily arrives at the home of Callie Gandy, the housekeeper and shows her the ring that Arnita Winthrop had given her. The maid wants to know why Lily has Mrs. Winthrop's ring, which tells Lily that the older woman had lied to her about the ring being Marie Hofstettler's.

Lily takes food to Claude's, finding him there with a few policemen, including Tom David. Lily is annoyed at the man, helping his chief move into a new apartment after being involved in the bombing that has caused Claude's injuries. Carrie and Lily retire to the kitchen and unpack, and Jack arrives with a bottle of bourbon for the chief. Carrie invites Jack and Lily to dinner and Jack agrees, seemingly happy for the invitation. Carrie senses some tension and asks Lily about it, but Bard brushes it aside and tells Lily that things are fine. The two women continue unpacking for Claude until later and Lily heads to leave. Jack is the only guest left, and he kisses Lily, then tells her he needs to listen to the day's tape, from a hidden recorder in Winthrop's employee lounge. Lily begs Jack to be careful and he promises to speak to Howell Jr. the following day about calling the police into the investigation.

Lily heads home, taking a brisk walk to calm her along the way. As she is about to enter her house Bobo speeds up, frantic. Bobo warns her that she has been seen too many places and people do not trust her. Lily asks the young man to explain but instead he shoves her toward her door, warning her to stay inside, then jumps back in his jeep and speeds off. Rather than head indoors, Lily runs for the apartments and to Jack's door. The door is unlocked and Lily enters, finding an empty tape player and a cold soda. The chair at the table is knocked over, and Lily realizes that Jack has been taken.

Lily calls Mookie, the only person she can think of that can help her. Mookie agrees to meet Lily with her rifle at the back of Winthrop's. Mookie uses wire cutters to cut the fence and the two women sneak through. Lily disables the guard that is stationed on the loading dock and Mookie binds him.

Once inside Lily hears voices and laughter, as well as a yelp from Jack. The two women make their way quietly toward the noises where they find Jim Box, Darcy Orchard, Tom David Meicklejohn and Cleve Ragland torturing Jack. With a knife Darcy is alternately cutting Jack and prodding his wound. Cleve Ragland is heating an arrowhead and burning him. Lily sees Bobo who is being questioned by Darcy. Orchard wants to know



where Bobo had gone. Cleve comments that if Lily arrives, the men can re-enact her worst nightmare and let Jack watch.

Mookie comments that taking care of these men will be a pleasure. Lily is shocked to find out that after Darnell's death, Lanette had received calls from the store detailing Darnell's last night. The men that thought they were so clever had not considered the fact that Lanette had caller ID. After imparting this information, Mookie stands up, announces her presence and tells the men to get down on the floor.

Like lightening, everyone reacts at once. Darcy throws his knife at Mookie but misses her and hits Lily. Mookie fires her rifle and shoots Jim Box. Everyone splits up, some headed into the store, and some into the shadows. Lily concentrates on cutting Jack loose and helping him. Jim Box hits Lily from behind, but Jack comes to her aide and knocks Jim unconscious.

Lily is dazed, and shocked when she sees Howell Winthrop Sr. holding a gun in the doorway. Bobo appears as well, simply picking his grandfather up and carrying him away. Lily understands that Howell Sr.'s involvement with these men is the reason that Howell Jr. had not wanted Jack to go to the police with his information.

Lily wonders where Mookie is and Jack tells her that she has gone into the store after Darcy and possibly Tom David, but the police officer announces his presence. Tom David is on the floor by the door, having been shot in the leg. He apologizes to Lily, telling her that he did not approve of what the others had done to Jack, or of what they had suggested doing to Lily. Lily wonders if Tom David had killed Darnell and he admits he was there, but the culprits had been Darcy and Jim, as well as Howell Sr. Tom David, still a racist, does not care about the nigger, but does tell Lily that he regrets the death of Del Packard. The police officer tells Lily that Darcy had killed Del before falling silent.

A scream from the store alerts Lily to trouble for Mookie and she heads to the door. An arrow pierces the door over Lily's head and she remembers that Darcy is an avid bow hunter. Darcy calls out that Mookie is dead, but Lily is unsure. Weak, Bard has trouble moving and confusion is setting in from a blow to the head she had received in the warehouse. Darcy is upon her before she realizes it and Lily is forced to act, launching herself on the man. The lights in the store go on and Lily sees Mookie, impaled by an arrow on the wall behind the display counter. Darcy is trying to get Lily off him, stabbing her with an arrow when Jack charges in, clubbing Darcy with the stock of the rifle he carries.

The next thing Lily remembers is being awakened by Carrie, while the doctor tends to her injuries. In the hospital the next day Lily learns that the men had found the bug in Winthrop's. The men were unsure who had hired Jack, some thinking it was Howell, some thinking he was a federal investigator. The men had also believed that Mookie was some type of federal investigator, unsure of why she was in town and continually going to the sporting goods store. Lily explains Mookie's reason for being in town without revealing her secrets to Jack. Jack tell Lily that Tom David and Jim Box are dead, though Darcy is not. Mookie is barely hanging on and wants to see Lily.



At Mookie's bedside, Lily learns that Mookie is not sorry about dying because she had gotten to kill some of the men that had killed her brother. Mookie had also killed Len Elgin. Elgin had been there the night that Darnell had been killed, he was Mookie's father as well. Mookie calls for her mother and Lanette comes to her bedside as the woman dies.

Lily returns home a few days later, tired and hurt. Jack fills her in on the end of the investigation and she keeps quiet about what she knows. Howell Jr. promises to take care of any medical bills she will have, and that Bobo had nothing to do with what went on. Lily realizes that Howell had believed that Arnita had given her old ring to Lily as a bribe to keep quiet about what was going on. Lily explains the excuse that Arnita had give Lily in order to get her to take the ring.

Jack makes the papers and the publicity is good for his business, and he returns to Little Rock to handle things there. Lily is sure that Jack is happy to have the distance between them and that he is trying to forget the entire episode. Three weeks later Lily returns home to find Jack waiting with flowers. Pleased, Lily takes the flowers and invites him in, carrying the flowers to her bedroom. The two banter and flirt, and Lily realizes that for the first time she can be open about the relationship without having to be careful, and she is happy to give it a try.

Chapter Eight Analysis

Events come to a head after Lily spends a quiet day with Claude and his off-duty police officers moving him to his new apartment. Carrie Thrush is there, evidently the new woman in Claude's life and after some soul-searching, Lily realizes that she is happy for the two of them. Jack shows up, as Jared, to welcome his neighbor home and Carrie is pleased to meet the man that Lily is now involved with. Lily is not sure how to feel, unsure of where the relationship is headed, or if there is a relationship at all.

Afterward, the strange arrival of Bobo with his warning to stay indoors confirms two things. The crush that Bobo has on Lily has made him choose between his family and Bard, and that something is going on in town that involves the Winthrops in some way. Though Bobo wants Lily to stay inside, she realizes that whatever Jack is involved in has come to a head and she rushes to him, only to find him gone, evidently after a struggle. Unable to call the police for fear of officer involvement, Lily calls the only person in town that she is sure is not involved, Mookie Preston.

Mookie is more than willing to help Lily, sure that whatever they are heading into will involve the problems in the town. Mookie knows that the men behind her brother's murder will be wherever the trouble is.

At Winthrop's, Mookie and Lily find Jack being tortured by the men that have been trying to organize the white militia in Shakespeare. Darcy Orchard, always so nice at the gym, seems to be the ringleader and has shed his nice guy persona for the evil man that he truly is. With Darcy are his friends, Jim Box and Cleve, along with Tom David and Bobo,



though Bobo is clearly not a willing member of the group. Darcy's taunting of Bobo about possibly warning Lily is the final straw for Mookie, who is now willing to kill the group happily for the veiled threats toward Lily.

The struggle begins in earnest and many are wounded, with Tom David dying after confessing his involvement to Lily. The officer apologizes, not for his inaction in the murder of Darnell, but for the things that had been done to Jack and threatened toward Lily. The reader can assume that Tom David was more than happy to be involved in the group of white supremacists, but was only sorry that the group was disorganized and run by men not capable of doing much more than causing minor problems. Tom David is sorry about the death of Del, though it is unclear if he is sorry that Darcy killed Packard, or if he is sorry that he had not killed him himself.

Lily's shock that Howell Sr. is the ring-leader of the group is followed by her shock when Bobo takes his grandfather away. Though Lily had known that Howell was a racist after his comment at his home the night she met with Arnita, she had no idea that the old man would go so far in his hatred. Lily had assumed, falsely, that he was simply a leftover of the old days in the south.

Mookie dies, though she does not regret her actions or the fact that they kill her in the end. Lily once again is surprised to find that Mookie had killed Len Elgin, the man found dead in his truck months ago. Len had admitted to Mookie that he had been there the night her brother was killed. The fact that Len was her father did not stop her from killing him.

Life after all that has gone on in Shakespeare is a question for Lily, as she is unsure if Jack will return or if he is happy to be free of the problems and the poison in the town. Their relationship had been odd from the beginning, hidden behind the lies about Jack's true identity and the job he has for Howell Jr. Lily is resigned that the relationship is over, unsure if it is really something that she wanted to begin with. After years of being on her own and taking care of herself, Bard feels she might be unable to allow someone into her life at all. Her happiness when Jack returns reveals that Lily is ready for a relationship and that her life is moving forward, despite the fact that she thought she was happy as she was.



Characters

Lily Bard

Lily Bard is a cleaning woman in Shakespeare, Arkansas, living a quiet life in a small southern town. Lily moves to Shakespeare four years earlier, after being brutally raped and mutilated by several men. After moving around for a bit, Lily finally settles in Shakespeare, the small town atmosphere what she needs to build her life again. In between cleaning homes and businesses, Lily works out faithfully at Body Time, the local gym owned by her sometimes lover Marshall Sedaka. Building her strength and practicing karate, Lily also builds her emotional strength, though she is slow to let anyone close to her, and unwilling to share all of herself with anyone.

Lily's own tragedies make it difficult for her to accept injustice or unfairness anywhere, and as a result she became involved several months ago when a young black man had been in an unfair fight with several white teens. Lily had not paused in her actions because she was outnumbered by young men much larger than she, Lily just does what needs doing,

Lily is straightforward and uncompromising, unwilling to do anything that does not fit into what she wants in life. When the relationship she has with Marshall Sedaka becomes too intense, Lily ends it without fanfare, simply going on with her quiet life. When Claude, the police chief expresses his desire to take their friendship in a more romantic direction, Lily is honest, knowing that though she hurts Claude at the time, he will be hurt more when he realizes they will not be happy together.

Lily is drawn to Jack Leeds, the undercover detective posing as Jared Fletcher, an employee of Winthrop's Sporting Goods. Whether it is their shared history of tragedy or their shared sense of right and wrong, Lily and Jack awaken a passion in each other, one that Lily has not felt in a long time. Though the happiness she feels is overshadowed by the events in Shakespeare, Lily proves that she is strong and resilient, willing to try again for happiness, rather than let it pass her by out of fear.

Jack Leeds/Jared Fletcher

Lily's love interest, Jack Leeds is an undercover investigator, hired by Howell Winthrop Jr. to discover which of his employees is participating in a scheme involving guns at Winthrop's Sporting Goods. Jack has a past that haunts him, like Lily. Jack became involved with the wife of another police officer while working in Little Rock. The husband found out about the affair and killed his wife in front of Jack, throwing her body at him. The husband was then killed by the other police officers on the scene. The resulting backlash left Jack without a job, and devastated by the loss of the woman he loved.

After training with another detective, Jack becomes a private investigator. Hired by Howell Winthrop Jr., Jack moves to Shakespeare and takes the place of Del Packard at



the sporting goods store. By listening to the men discuss the town and by planting a bug in the employee lounge, Jack is able to determine who is responsible for the gun theft, as well as the racial incidents that have been taking place around town.

Jack is drawn to Lily, perhaps sensing another soul in pain. Though Leeds does not want to endanger Lily, and wishes to wait until the case is over to start seeing each other, the physical attraction between the two is too strong to resist. Their relationship is intense and immediate, beginning the night that Jack turns up at Lily's door on the run from the mob at Winthrop's.

In the end it is important that Jack did not try and distance himself from Lily, as she is the one who comes to the rescue and saves him when he is taken prisoner and tortured by Darcy Orchard and the other men trying to form the white militia.

Claude Friedrich

The chief of police in Shakespeare, Arkansas, Claude is a good friend of Lily's who would like to be more. Though Claude wishes that Lily would take the step that would make them more than friends, he is also a gentleman, and is willing to wait for her to make the decision to do so. Claude is even willing to step aside if Lily is in a committed relationship with Marshall Sedaka, the owner of Body Time. There are times that Claude grows frustrated with Lily, believing that her reluctance to enter into a relationship with him lies in her past and her inability to trust, however he gets past this and rekindles their friendship.

Claude has a personal problem in dealing with Lily in Shakespeare's Champion. It is clear in the novel that the two are friends, and Lily recollects within the novel that Claude has been there for her in the past, taking care of her when she was injured. Despite their comfortable relationship, Claude is forced to address the possibility of Lily's involvement in a lawsuit against the Shakespeare police department by Lanette Glass, the mother of Darnell Glass. The tension between the friends is evident, as Lily believes that the police on the force did not do in their duty in protecting the young man.

Events in Shakespeare eventually return the friends to their proper setting, when a bomb in a church results in Lily saving the chief's life. As a result the pair considers all favors paid, and resume their lives. In addition, Claude meets the local doctor, Carrie Thrush, and the two appear to be developing a personal relationship. At first Lily is unsure of how to feel about this, but realizes that friendship is all she wants from Claude, and his happiness is more important to her than being pursued.

Bobo Winthrop

The youngest son of Howell Winthrop Jr., Bobo is an average young man, interested in girls and working out while in college. Bobo discovers the body of Del Packard when he opens the gym with Lily. Bobo has a crush on Lily, the innocent crush of a younger



male, but it causes him to warn her of the danger in the town and alerts Lily to the danger that Jack Leeds is in.

Bobo defies his grandfather when the older Howell Winthrop plans to shoot Jack and Lily, removing the old man and his weapon from the scene by simply picking him up and taking him away.

Bobo is a Winthrop, but has a good nature, and has nothing to do with the plans for creating a white militia in Shakespeare as his grandfather aspires to. The idea clearly disgusts Bobo, though until Lily is threatened, the young Winthrop kept quiet, perhaps out of respect for the old man.

Mookie Preston

A stranger in Shakespeare, Mookie moves to town, apparently with no friends and family ties. Mookie is a genealogist, and works from home, living in almost squalor as she works and ignores her environment. Mookie meets Lily when she hires her to clean her house, and Lily notices small things about Preston that do not fit the image she projects, such as a rifle under her bed with targets showing she is quite a good shot.

Lily learns that Mookie is in fact the half-sister of Darnell Glass, the murdered black man who was beaten to death outside of town. Mookie has come to Shakespeare in order to find out the truth behind her brother's murder. Preston does well on her own, but is able to exact some revenge when Lily calls Mookie for help when Jack is taken by the guilty men. Mookie brings her rifle and is able to shoot some of the men before she is killed by Darcy Orchard with a cross-bow in Winthrop's Sporting Goods.

Marshall Sedaka

The owner of Body Time, the gym that the residents of Shakespeare frequent, and the sometimes lover of Lily Bard. Lily ends her relationship with Marshall when she realizes that neither will be happy with how things will end up.

Del Packard

The victim who is found by Lily and Bobo at the outset of the novel, Del was employed by Winthrop Sporting Goods. Del stumbled upon the extra guns that had been ordered by Jim Box for the white supremacists, and mentioned them to Darcy Orchard. Darcy killed Del to protect the secrets of the group.

Howell Winthrop Jr.

One of the richest and most powerful men in town, Howell's family owns most of the large businesses in the area, and employs most of the residents in one way or another.



Lily works for Howell and his wife as well, as their cleaning lady. Howell hires Jack Leeds to discover which of his employees is involved in the scheme to buy extra guns at the sporting goods store and what they might be involved in.

Beanie Winthrop

Howell Winthrop Jr's wife, and the mother of his three children, including Bobo Winthrop.

Raphael Roundtree

A black man living in Shakespeare, Raphael is friends with Lily Bard. Raphael reacts strongly to the racial bias that he feels while at the gym, specifically to the attitude of Darcy Orchard. Though Lily is unaware of it at the time, Darcy is involved with several other white men in the town who are trying to form a militia to fight the blacks in the area.

Darcy Orchard

An employee of Winthrop's Sporting Goods as well as a member of Body Time, Darcy seems like a nice enough person to Lily, though they are not what she would consider friends. Darcy hides a very dark side where prejudice and racism rule his personality. Darcy is one of the ring leaders in the group of white supremacists in Shakespeare, as well as being the person who murdered Del Packard.

Jim Box

Another employee of Winthrop's Sporting Goods, Jim Box is the person who ordered extra guns at the store for the men hoping to form the militia. The plan was to store the weapons and then stage a robbery to recover them.

Tom David

A police officer in Shakespeare, Tom David is as openly racist as an officer can be without being thrown off the force. Though he does nothing overt, Tom David simply watches the fight at Burger Tycoon involving Darnell Glass. Lily witnessed his lack of action and this causes her to like him even less.

Tom David is also involved in the group of white supremacists, though even he is disgusted by some of the things they do. Though Tom David has no trouble being prejudice against blacks, he does not like whites being victimized, even if they are on opposite sides.



Cleve Ragland

Another member of the group of white supremacists, Cleve is present when Jack is kidnapped and participates in the fight at Winthrop's Sporting Goods.

Howell Winthrop Sr.

The patriarch of the Winthrop family, Howell Sr. is the ring-leader of the group of white men that wish to form a militia and take back power for white men. Howell makes racist comments in front of Lily that she finds disgusting, but chalks up to his age and being raised in the south during the civil rights movement.

Carrie Thrush

The town doctor and Lily's friend, Carrie takes care of Lily after the bomb explodes in the church. Carrie also cares for Claude, and the two develop a personal relationship. Lily is unsure how she feels about this until she realizes that it is for the best, and that Claude and Carrie will still be her friends.



Objects/Places

Body Time

The gym owned by Marshall Sedaka where the body of Del Packard is found by Lily Bard and Bobo Winthrop.

Burger Tycoon

The fast food restaurant where Lily helped Darnell Glass when he was assaulted by a group of young white men.

Shakespeare Garden Apartments

The apartment complex next door to Lily's home where Jack Leeds is staying. Claude Friedrich, the chief of police is also a resident.

Winthrop's Sporting Goods

The sporting goods store owned by the Winthrop family. The meetings of the white supremacist group take place in the store warehouse.

Montrose

The city outside of Shakespeare where most of the town's residence go to do shopping or have a night on the town. Claude and Lily have dinner in Montrose the night that he informs her of Lanette Glass's possible lawsuit against the police department.

Jackson, Mississippi

The location of Lily's parents home. Lily stayed with them after her rape several years ago.

Catch the Wave

The seafood restaurant where Lily and Claude have dinner in Montrose.



Golgotha A.M.E. Church

The location of the meeting which Lily attends regarding racial tensions in Shakespeare. The church is destroyed by a bomb when the meeting ends.

Shakespeare Clinic

The medical clinic run by Carrie Thrush.

Marvel Gym

The gym in Little Rock, Arkansas where Del Packard had planned on competing in a body-building competition.



Themes

Racism

Racism is prevalent in Shakespeare's *Champion* by Charlaine Harris. In the novel, Lily Bard, the local cleaning woman, discovers the body of Del Packard. Del, a local man aspiring to be a champion body-builder, is found dead in Body Time, the gym owned by Lily's sometimes lover and sensai. Though at first Del's death looks like a horrible accident, in reality Packard was murdered for knowing too much.

Based in Shakespeare, Arkansas, a small town in the south, Lily is aware of an undercurrent of racial prejudice, however she believes that the town is making strides in the dealings between blacks and whites. Though she is not prejudiced in any way, Lily knows that some have been raised differently and need to overcome the deep-seated distrust they have for another race, regardless of their color. The events that take place in her small town, however, lead Lily to believe that no matter how people may present themselves, their inner feelings are their own.

A small group of men in Shakespeare, led by Howell Winthrop Sr., one of the most prominent citizens in Shakespeare, is intent on forming a white militia. These men have been papering the town with fliers, urging the "white man" to fight back against oppression and injustice.

Secrets

There are many secrets in Shakespeare's *Champion*, beginning with the death of Del Packard. The death seems to be an accident at first, though it is revealed that Del is murdered to cover up the fact that several men are conspiring to start a white militia within the town of Shakespeare. Del stumbles across a cache of guns at Winthrop's Sporting Goods and his knowledge causes his death. Lily Bard is determined to find the truth behind Del's death for two reasons. Lily liked Del, an easy-going man, and he was killed at Body Time, the gym where Lily is a member. Body Time is one of the few places where Lily feels safe.

Racism is also a secret in the town. Though there are some that are openly prejudiced, the extent of their hatred for blacks is hidden from most. As the novel progresses there are more overt signs of the tension that escalates within Shakespeare, but the fact that a group of men is trying to organize a militia is news to Lily when she attends a meeting at the church in the black neighborhood. The bomb that rips through the church, injuring and killing many proves the intent of the men behind the act. These men are also responsible for the murder of Darnell Glass, a young black man beaten to death on the edge of town. Lily had helped Darnell one evening when he was involved in an altercation with several white young men and her involvement puts her in danger as well.



Lily Bard has her own secrets, and moved to Shakespeare to leave them behind. The reader learns that Lily had been raped and mutilated by a group of men, killing one before the nightmare ended. Lily's past is the reason she is a very private person now, unwilling to let most people get close to her, and almost fearful of a deep personal relationship. The feelings that Lily has for Claude emphasize this. Lily is not willing to risk her friendship with the chief of police and risk losing him when he tells her that he would like to take things to the next level. It is Lily's tragic past that may be the reason she is willing to take things further with Jack Leeds. Jack has his own tragedies, meaning the death of the woman he believed he loved. The fact that both Lily and Jack share sadness, and are willing to take a chance at love again allows them to share their secrets.

Sex

Sex is key for a few reasons in Shakespeare's *Champion*. At the outset of the novel the reader learns that Lily Bard has been involved with Marshall Sedaka, the owner of Body Time. Lily is not happy with the relationship, not because she wants more from it, but because Marshall expects more from Lily than she is comfortable giving. Lily expresses that Marshall seems to believe that because Lily has a partner she should be able to give up her past and become the "normal" person that she can be. Lily's past, being raped and mutilated, has made her the person that she is, and changing is not something she is willing or able to do. Lily ends the relationship, and though there is some sadness, there is no deep sense of loss and the two are able to return to their previous relationship easily.

Lily's sexual relationship with Jack is completely different. Perhaps because the two have both suffered in their lives because of sex, Lily and Jack fall into a passionate relationship almost immediately, one where they seem to be able to release the inhibitions that have kept them from being close to another. The scars that Lily bears, both visible and internal, are forgotten when she is with Jack, allowing her to be her true self. In this way, sex is freeing, in direct contrast to Lily's rape years ago.



Style

Point of View

Shakespeare's *Champion* by Charlaine Harris is written in the first person, from the point of view of Lily Bard, the main character in the novel. This is helpful to the reader, as it provides a first hand look at the events that take place in the town, and provides insight from Lily's perspective. Knowing the thoughts and feelings of Lily provides the reader with a deeper sense of the events that occur, as well as some perspective of the characters involved. As a cleaning lady, Lily has access to the lives of many of the characters involved in the novel.

The prologue is the only exception to this, as it is written in the third person. As Lily is not present when Del Packard was killed, the author provides the reader with the knowledge that Del's death is not accidental. Though the killer is not revealed, the reader is provided the knowledge that Del's murder involves the Winthrop family in some way.

There is quite a bit of dialogue throughout the novel, which gives one the sense of each character and how they relate to Lily. The dialogue also allows one to get a sense of how Lily feels about the people in her life, and where they fit into the storyline. The descriptive passages in the novel give the reader a sense of the town of Shakespeare and the way those that live there interact. Though the town is clearly colored by the opinions of Lily Bard, one is able to better understand life in a small southern town and how the people that live there interact.

Setting

The novel takes place in Shakespeare, Arkansas, a small southern town. The town itself is described in some detail by the main character, Lily Bard, as she goes about her life as a cleaning lady. Lily's job gives her more access to the town and its people than most, simply because most people tend to forget the cleaning lady is even present. This is evident when Howell Winthrop Jr. and Jack Leeds store the gun cache found at the sporting goods store at the Winthrop home. Howell Jr. had simply forgotten that Lily would be there.

Lily visits many of the key locations in the novel while going about her daily routines, including Body Time, the gym where she is a member and where Del Packard is murdered. Lily also cleans the medical clinic where Carrie Thrush operates as the town doctor, the Shakespeare Garden Apartments, where Claude and Jack live, and the Winthrop home, where Lily is witness to a break-in. Though the town is small, Lily's access to the different businesses and homes gives the reader a sense of life in a small town.



Lily and Claude travel to Montrose Arkansas, a larger town where most of Shakespeare's residents go for their shopping and entertainment. Montrose provides the smaller neighboring towns with access to movie theaters and shopping malls. Lily does not like Montrose much, feeling more comfortable at home.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is relaxed and modern, as the novel takes place in current times. The reader is able to easily follow any dialogue that takes place, as well as easily imagine the town and its residents from the descriptive passages. Written from the point of view of Lily Bard, one is swayed by her opinions of the people and places that surround her, however Lily has an open mind so this is not a deterrent. Lily is also very observant which allows the reader to get an early sense of the personalities she encounters without revealing too much of the plot early on.

The novel takes place in Arkansas in the small town of Shakespeare. The class of characters varies from blue collar southern boys to well educated successful businessmen. Though intelligence cannot really be measured by the way the residence interact, prejudice can. The author provides insight for the reader about which characters are openly racist by the use of derogatory racial slurs. Though Lily Bard does not approve, she is aware that in a small southern town the advances that have taken place in racial relations happen more slowly. The reader is also able to get a sense of which characters are more likely involved in the escalating racial tensions in the novel.

Structure

The novel consists of a prologue and eight numbered chapters that range in length from ten to thirty pages. The chapters tend to be long and many days may pass within each. The novel takes place over the course of several weeks. Though the chapters are lengthy, they move quickly so that the reader does not get bogged down in detail. Instead the important factors are presented with the smaller details which allow one to better understand what is taking place.

The plot is fairly straightforward, centering on racism in a small southern town. Though there are a few subplots, including the death of Darnell Glass and the arrival of Mookie Preston, they are resolved in the end, and directly relate to the white supremacists that wish to start a white militia in Shakespeare. The personal life of Lily Bard is presented to the reader as well, though there is no sense of being overwhelmed with detail that detracts from the storyline.

Shakespeare's Champion is an enjoyable read which moves at a fairly fast pace. The lengthy chapters can sometimes be a bit overwhelming as events are not always clearly defined. There are times when this makes it a bit difficult for the reader to differentiate between important factors in the plot and descriptive passages meant to give one a better sense of the town and its residents. Overall the novel is entertaining, and as it is

part of a series, the reader can choose to continue forward and learn more about Lily Bard and those she deals with daily.



Quotes

"Del lay back on the bench and looked up at the face of his spotter, who was bent over him, gloved hands resting casually on the bar. His spotter lifted his eyebrows in query. "You remember, I was kind of worried after we had that conversation last week?" Del asked.

"Yep." the spotter said with a dash of impatience in his voice.

"Well, Mr. Winthrop says everything is okay. Just not talk about it to anyone."

"That's a relief. You gonna lift this, or just look at it?"

Del nodded his blond head sharply. "Okay, I'm ready. After this set, I'm quitting for the night. I'm dead beat."

The spotter smiled down at him. With a grunt, the spotter lifted the bar, now weighted with two hundred ninety pounds. He moved the bar into position above Del's open hands and began lowering it.

Just as Del's fingers were about to close around the bar, the spotter pulled it toward himself a little, till it was right over Del's neck. With great control, the spotter positioned it exactly over Del's Adam's apple.

Just as Del opened his mouth to ask what the hell was going on, the spotter dropped the bar."

Prologue, p. 3.

"I hated being backed into a corner. And there wasn't a simple answer to the question. He touched my hair with gentle fingers.

"Claude." I enjoyed saying his name, unlovely as it was. I wanted to lay my hands on each side of his face and return his kiss. I wanted him to walk out and never come back. I wanted him not to want me. I had liked having a friend. "

Chapter One, p. 12.

"The police were working to discover how Del had met his death, and that should be enough to satisfy me. I certainly hadn't felt any urge to seek personal knowledge after the beating death of Darnell Glass early in the fall, or the shooting death of Len Elgin weeks afterward, both of which cases remained unsolved.

An answer came to me as i was getting in the car to go to my first job. I cared about Del's death for two more reasons. Firstly, Bobo Winthrop was implicated, partly because of something I'd told Claude. Secondly, I was upset because Del had been killed in the gym, one of the few places I felt at home. So I cared about Del's death, and I cared about payment for it."

Chapter One, pp. 32-33.

"Deedra and Jerrell cleared out without speaking to me, which was just fine. I finished my work in peace, or in the little peace they'd left behind them. The apartment still echoed with various gradations of anger and fear. It seemed to me that currents of bad feeling were drifting like smog through Shakespeare. My little adopted town had generally been quiet and predictable and pokey. I liked it like that. I loaded my arsenal of cleaning aids back into my car, trying to stave away a gnawing worry."

Chapter Two, p. 41.



"The white male is an endangered species. Due to government interference, white males cannot get the jobs they want or defend their families. ACT NOW!! BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!!! Join us in this struggle. We'll be calling you. TAKE BACK YOUR OWN. We've been shoved around enough. PUSH BACK!"
Chapter Three, p. 53.

"As we waited on our order in the seafood restaurant, Claude said, "I think Darnell Glass's mother is going to bring a civil suit against the Shakespeare Police Department."

"Against the department?" I asked sharply. "That's unfair. It should be against Tom David." Tom David Meicklejohn, one of Claude's patrolmen, had long been on my black list, and after the Darnell Glass incident, he'd moved to the number-one spot."
Chapter Three, p. 63.

"As I knelt by the bed and held Mrs. Hofstettler's hand, I thought of all the people in this apartment building I'd seen come and go from its eight units. Pardon Albee had died, the O'Hagens had moved, the Yorks were gone, and Norvel Whitbread was in jail for forging a check: this, out of the tenants that had been in the Garden Apartments this time last year. And now Marie Hofstettler."
Chapter Four, p. 80.

"He bent back so his mouth was by my ear, his newly shaven cheek again resting against mine. "It's gonna take them a while. They don't know shit about breaking and entering," he said in a voice so low it seemed to come from somewhere inside my own head. "Now who the fuck are you?"

Through my clenched teeth I said, "I am the fucking maid." Every muscle in my body was tensed, and the shivering would not stop no matter how I willed myself to be still. I began to make myself relax, knowing that if I didn't, I would remain weak and disadvantaged."

Chapter Four, p. 95.

"I was pushed from behind by a powerful wind and I saw the head of the woman beside me separate from her body as a collection plate clove through her neck. I was sprayed with her blood as her body crumpled and her head and I went flying forward. My thick coat and scarf helped absorb some pressure. So did the bodies of the people behind me. The wooden pews also blocked some of the blast, but they splintered, of course, and those splinters were deadly...some of them were as big as spears, just as lethal."
Chapter five, p. 106.

"A few hours later, a hospital volunteer gave me a ride back to my car, still parked a couple of blocks away from ruins of Golgotha Church. She was civil enough, but I could tell she thought I'd mostly deserved what happened to me because I'd gone to a meeting in a black church. I was not surprised at her attitude, and I didn't care a whole lot. "

Chapter 5, p. 115.



"Howell Sr. found my last remark quite amusing. "You got any idea what they were after, young lady? You even know if they were niggers or whites?"

I was used to taking people in their context, but I felt my back stiffen and probably my face, too. I felt Howell Sr.'s tone was contemptuous and hectoring. But if I'd been tempted to upbraid the old man, the temptation passed from me when I saw the anxiety in my hostess's face."

Chapter 5, pp. 124-125.

"Jack turned, and old Mr. Winthrop raised a hand. To my bewilderment, it held a gun. I opened my mouth to yell something, I don't know what, when two strong arms wrapped around the old man and lifted him from the ground.

"No, Grandfather," Bobo said. The expression on the wizened old rat terrier's face had to be seen to be believed. Howell Sr. struggled and wriggled in his grandson's grasp, but it was a futile effort. If I'd had any inclination toward humor, it would have been funny. Bobo walked through the storeroom and out onto the loading dock carrying the old man, who called him names I'd never heard an elderly person use.

Bobo's face was tragic. He didn't look at me, at Jack. He was alone with the bitterest betrayal of his short life."

Chapter Eight, p. 202.



Topics for Discussion

Why is Lily living in Shakespeare?

What relationship does Lily have with the chief of police, Claude Friedrich? Why is she unwilling to take the relationship to the next level?

What happened to Lily when she attended the meeting at the church? Why was she at the meeting?

Who is Jack Leeds working for? What is Jack's mission in Shakespeare?

Who is Mookie Preston? Why is Mookie in Shakespeare? What happens to Mookie?

Why does Lily feel a deep connection to Jack Leeds? How are their pasts similar? Different?

At the outset of the novel, Lily Bard is reserved, almost a loner. Is Lily changed by the end of the novel? Why?