

# **Smokescreen Study Guide**

## **Smokescreen by Dick Francis**

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# Plot Summary

Smokescreen is a novel by mystery writer and former steeplechase rider, Dick Francis. In this novel, Edward Lincoln, or Link, is an actor who has gone to South Africa to check on some horses for a friend. Link goes to Johannesburg under the guise of attending a premiere of one of his movies. While attending press conferences and fending off requests for more public appearances, Link finds himself drawn into a mystery that appears to include attempts on his own life. As Link gets closer to the truth, he finds himself in more danger than ever. Smokescreen is another exciting mystery, filled with horses, that will entertain Dick Francis fans and newcomers alike.

Edward Lincoln, or Link, is filming his latest movie in Spain when he learns that the director has died. The new director is one Link is familiar with, one that he has indicated in his contracts that he will not work with. A bet has been placed on when Link will lose his temper with the demanding director. When the director decides to change the scope of the movie and increase filming by two weeks, everyone thinks Link will blow immediately. However, Link manages to hang on to his temper, helping his friend Conrad, Director of Photography, win the bet.

Link goes home to his family in England when filming is done. A good friend calls a few days later to tell Link and his wife that she is dying. This friend, Nerissa, also asks Link if he will go to South Africa to check on eleven race horses she inherited when her sister Portia died a few months before. Link agrees, arranging to appear at a premiere of one of his movies in Johannesburg so no one will know the true reason for his visit. This leads to some complications with Clifford Wenkins, the representative from his movie company. The company, Worldic, wants Link to make multiple promotional appearances, but he refuses. When Clifford pushes the issue, Link reluctantly agrees to a press conference and a reception before or after the premiere.

Link goes to the race track immediately after he arrives at the hotel. Link meets Danilo, Nerissa's nephew and heir, there. They watch one of Nerissa's horses run its race. Link's experiences tells him that someone is wearing the horse out before its race, suggesting it is the trainer's fault. However, upon meeting the trainer and speaking with him, Link begins to think this is unlikely. It does seem that Danilo might have a motive, giving Link something to explore.

Link goes to the press conference the next day. During an interview with a young woman who does a women's radio show, a mic causes the woman to be electrocuted. Link is the only one in the room who knows CPR, so he finds himself saving her life. It is not until later that Link realizes he should have been the one holding the mic, therefore he should be the one who died or nearly died. This episode ends up on the front page of nearly every paper in the world, creating publicity for the premiere.

A short time later, Link is invited to have dinner with the brother-in-law of Nerissa's sister. This family, the van Hurens, seems to go out of their way to prove they are not impressed with Link's stardom, so he makes it clear he does not care that they own a



gold mine. They end up becoming good friends and the family invites Link to visit their gold mine. This invitation becomes a party when Danilo is invited, and then Evan and Conrad get themselves invited. The visit to the gold mine includes a trip into the mine itself. While there, Link is separated from the rest of the group and then is hit over the head with a rock. When Link wakes, he finds himself in the dark.

Link makes his way out of the side tunnels and is rescued when he meets the main tunnel. Link downplays the whole incident. However, when he is back at his hotel he remembers that someone else was in the tunnel when he was hurt. Link begins to wonder if someone is attempting to kill him. Link calls his wife and asks her to take a look at Nerissa's will so he can determine who might be behind both the sabotaging of the horses and the attempts on Link's life. In the meantime, Link goes to Kruger Park with his friend, Conrad, and Evan.

When they reach Kruger Park, Link follows along as Conrad and Evan attempt to videotape elephants for a new movie they are working on. On the second night, Link calls his wife and learns that Nerissa has willed him her share in van Huren's gold mine. This gives Danilo reason to kill Link because the estate duty on the gold mine would be enormous, leaving Danilo with less of the residue. Before Link can do anything with this information, he is kidnapped out of his room and left handcuffed to his car's steering wheel on an abandoned road.

Link spends three days handcuffed to the car and is beginning to lose hope when Evan and Conrad find him. Link tells them his story about Danilo and they agree to help him catch Danilo. Evan calls Quentin van Huren and tells him Link's theories, asking him to come to Kruger Park with the police. Van Huren agrees. The following morning, Evan calls Danilo and convinces him that Link has the means to write out an accusation, hoping he will come to the park to incriminate himself.

Conrad sets up a video camera and tape recorder near the car. Danilo comes and burns the accusation Link wrote during his original three days in the car. As soon as Danilo drives away, Conrad, Evan, and van Huren show up with the police. Danilo is arrested and Link is rescued once more.

# Chapters 1-2

## Chapters 1-2 Summary

Edward Lincoln, or Link, is an actor who has become very famous. Link prefers not to make public appearances, but is willing to do just about anything for his friends. It is this willingness that causes Link to find himself in danger.

In chapter 1, Link is filming a movie in Spain. The film is about a man who is handcuffed to the steering wheel of a luxury sports car and is left in the middle of the desert. The film has a laid back director, but that director passes away. The movie company replaces the director with Evan Pentelow, a director Link worked with once and disliked so much that he had it put in his contract that he would never work with him again. This causes Evan to lose out on several blockbuster movies. Now Evan is getting revenge by making Link reshoot over and over again some very uncomfortable scenes. The crew has a bet on when Link will lose his temper. Everyone expects it to happen that night at dinner when Evan announces that he has decided to change the scope of the movie, requiring several more weeks of filming in the hot car. However, Link manages to keep his temper until shooting is over, helping his friend, the Director of Photography, Conrad win the bet.

In chapter 2, Link returns home to his family. Link has three children. His youngest child, Libby, suffers from meningitis as a baby after her five year old brother drops her, causing a fracture in her skull. This leaves Libby with mental disabilities. This tragedy brings Link and his wife, Charlie, closer together, strengthening a marriage that was beginning to suffer from Link's growing popularity as an actor. A few days after his return home, Link comes back from riding his steeplechaser and learns that a good friend has called, insisting that he and Charlie come for lunch. When they arrive at Nerissa Cavesey's home, they discover that their kind, old friend is dying of Hodgkin's Disease. Nerissa tells them what a great time she has had preparing her will, leaving many gifts to her dear friends while giving eleven race horses left to her by her sister Portia to her nephew along with the bulk of her fortune after estate duty. However, Nerissa tells Link that her race horses have stopped winning their races and that she is deeply troubled by this. The horses are in South Africa and due to certain laws cannot be brought to England. Nerissa wants Link to travel to South Africa to find out what the trouble is. Link reluctantly agrees.

## Chapters 1-2 Analysis

Edward Lincoln, or Link, is an actor who has certain quirks like any other actor. Link refuses to work with Evan Pentelow because he is too demanding and does not give actors space to use their own instincts and knowledge in their performances. This creates a difficult situation when Evan takes over for a director who dies in the middle of a film Link is making. It seems Link has a very short temper and everyone on the set

expects him to blow, but Link shows how controlled he can be when he wants to and manages to keep his temper until the film is finished. Link is clearly a man who knows what he wants and is used to getting it. However, Link is also a man with a strong sense of family that is only made stronger when his youngest child suffers a life threatening illness that leaves her mentally damaged. This situation tells the reader a lot about Link as a person, creating not only the impression of a spoiled movie star, but a strong family man who values those close to him and his privacy. This impression continues when Link goes to visit his friend, Nerissa, and learns that she needs his help. Despite only having just returned home, Link agrees to help out his dying friend. This promise is to take Link to South Africa, foreshadowing a mystery that will keep Link busy for quite some time.

# Chapters 3-4

## Chapters 3-4 Summary

In chapter 3, Link calls his agent to find out if any of his films are about to premiere in Johannesburg. The agent is shocked because Link never wants to do promotional appearances, but Link insists this time in order to hide his real reason for flying to Johannesburg. Before leaving, Link reads all the trainer reports on the horses and finds himself troubled. Five days later, Link arrives in Johannesburg and is met at the airport by Clifford Wenkins, a representative from the movie company, Worldic. Worldic wants Link to do a whole list of personal appearances, but Link refuses. When Link sees how distressed Clifford is by this, he agrees to one press conference and a reception the day of the premiere. However, Link makes it clear that he intends to pay for everything himself and he has no intention of doing any other appearances.

In chapter 4, Link goes to the races after settling in at the hotel. Almost immediately Link runs into Danilo Cavesey, Nerissa's nephew. Danilo appears to be well acquainted with Nerissa's trainer, Greville Arknold, in Johannesburg and offers to introduce Link after the next race. Link sits back and quietly observes, watching as Arknold speaks to the owner of one of his horses. Link is impressed with Arknold's attitude around the horses, but dislikes the man's brusque behaviors with humans. Link is introduced to one of Nerissa's horses who is there to race. Link notices that the horse appears healthy and strong. However, the horse appears to lose its stamina toward the end of the race, slowing down rather than speeding up during the final stretch. Link begins to suspect that the trainer is over exercising the horses too soon before their races, making them too tired to complete the race. However, Link has no idea why an experienced trainer would do this. Link hopes to find out when he visits Arknold's stables.

## Chapters 3-4 Analysis

Link uses a premiere of one of his movies in order to disguise his reasons for being in South Africa. This causes quite a stir because Link rarely makes public appearances. Link does not fully explain his reluctance for making these appearances, but suspects it might have something to do with his desire to keep his personal life personal. Link makes it clear to Clifford Wenkins, the Worldic representative, that he will not be making personal appearances, but Clifford is so distraught over this proclamation that Link relents and allows for two appearances. This shows the reader what a kind heart Link has. However, the reader suspects that Link will not be so kind if Clifford were to push the issue further.

Link goes to the races to check out Nerissa's trainer and her horses. When Link arrives, Danilo, Nerissa's nephew by marriage, is there. This is suspicious to the reader because Danilo is the one to whom Nerissa has left her horses in her will. The reader and Link both are unclear if Danilo knows he is to inherit the horses or if he knows that

Nerissa is dying, but to the reader, his presence seems somewhat suspicious. Link meets the trainer and watches one of the horses race. Link immediately begins to think the trainer, Greville Arknold, is sabotaging the horses for some unknown reason. Perhaps to lower their selling price so he can buy them and profit from their potential. This seems reasonable to the reader, making it appear that Link has the mystery solved before he has even really begun to investigate.



# Chapters 5-6

## Chapters 5-6 Summary

In chapter 5, Link attends a press conference at a local Johannesburg hotel. Link creates a casual atmosphere in which each reporter is allowed several minutes of one on one time with him. Toward the end of the conference, Link is to be interviewed by a young woman who does a women's program on the radio. However, there is some trouble with her microphone, so Link is interviewed by another reporter first. About this time, Conrad shows up. Finally the problem is fixed when Link is handed an old fashioned mic that someone has found. Just before the young reporter, Katya, is ready to begin, she takes the mic from Link, suggesting that it would be better if she holds it to prevent background noises. Just as Katya's sound man activates the mic, Katya begins to shake and falls to the ground. Link immediately realizes she has been electrocuted and kneels beside her. No one else seems to know what to do, so Link begins CPR. Another reporter, Roderick Hodge, rushes over. He is clearly Katya's boyfriend. Slowly Katya comes to. Most of the reporters rush out of the room to report what they have seen to their papers. Roderick visibly struggles between his job and his loyalty to his girlfriend, finally choosing his job. As Link leaves the hotel, he spots Clifford on the phone, assuming he is attempting to explain the situation to Worldic.

In chapter 6, Link goes with Danilo to Arknold's stables after a long lunch with Conrad. On the way, Danilo talks about the area, making it clear he knows it quite well although he insists he has only been to South Africa once before. At the stables, Link finds everything just as it should be with Nerissa's horses, nothing sticking out as a cause of their inability to win races. The only thing Link dislikes about the stables is the head lad, aware that he is a domineering type who likes to bully people. At the house, Link asks Arknold outright if he is sabotaging the horses in order to lower their selling price, assuming Nerissa will eventually give up and sell. Arknold becomes angry at the suggestion, insisting that the horses behaving as they are is harming his reputation and his ability to make a living. Link continues to believe Arknold is behind the trouble. Back at his hotel, Link finds a less than enthusiastic invitation to dinner from the brother-in-law of Nerissa's sister, Portia. Link accepts the invitation. Quentin van Huren and his wife, Vivi, are hospitable, but make it clear they are not impressed by Link's movie star status. When their children, Sally and Jonathan, join them later and let slip that the family owns a gold mine, Link implies that he is not impressed. This loosens van Huren's attitude and they soon find themselves good friends. In fact, van Huren invites Link to visit his gold mine early the following week.

## Chapters 5-6 Analysis

Link proves himself to be a hero despite his insistence that he is nothing like the characters he plays in the movies. Link revives a young reporter who is electrocuted by an old mic during an interview. Link should have been holding the mic, but Katya, the

reporter, took it at the last minute. If Link had been holding it, chances are good he would not have been revived because it appeared there was no one else in the room who knew CPR. However, this idea does not occur to Link until his friend, Conrad, points it out. Conrad's sudden appearance in Johannesburg is curious, but welcome to Link who is happy to have a friend around.

Link visits the stables and finds nothing wrong with them. The horses all appear healthy and happy, well cared for in the proper stables. The only thing Link does not like is Bart, the head lad, but this is because he is a bully, not because he has done anything clearly wrong. Link confronts Arknold with his suspicions and finds outrage, but this still does not convince him that Arknold is not responsible for the problem. Link continues to struggle to find something he can report to Nerissa.

Link has dinner with the van Huren family that night. Quentin van Huren is brother to Portia's, Nerissa's sister, husband. The van Hurens are very rich and not impressed with Link's career, telling him several times that they do not go to the movies. In turn, Link is not impressed by their gold mine. This breaks through van Huren's reserve and soon they are all good friends, planning a trip to the gold mine. This episode gives insight to Link's personality, showing that he is not impressed by his own stardom or by the wealth of others. Link is overall a very humble man and this helps him make friends easily.

# Chapters 7-8

## Chapters 7-8 Summary

In chapter 7, Link discovers that the story of his saving Katya is all over the papers, in some it appears on the front page. Link decides to spend the day riding and arranges for a horse at the front desk. Link rides all over the countryside in the company of a young stable hand sent along to keep him from getting lost. When Link returns to the hotel, Conrad is waiting for him so they can go to dinner. Conrad goes to the room with Link and they talk about Man in a Car as Link changes. Link learns that he has shown more of himself in this role than any other before it, leaving him feeling vulnerable.

The following day, Link goes to the races as van Huren's guest. Over lunch, Link meets the Chairman of the Race Club. Link asks some carefully worded questions about Arknold, learning he is not well liked, but that he is a well respected trainer. Danilo joins them and Link introduces him to van Huren. Clifford Wenkins also shows up and tries to get Link to agree to a whole list of public appearances. Link comes close to losing his temper as he insists that he would only do what he has already agreed to and no more. Later, Conrad and Evan Pentelow also join the group. Conrad and Evan are in Johannesburg to begin pre-production on a movie about elephants. The group begins to talk about movies. Link learns that Conrad and Evan are about to go to Kruger Park and the lead actor on the film was supposed to go with them, but has been delayed. Link agrees that he would like to go in his place.

In chapter 8, just as van Huren invites Conrad and Evan to join them at the gold mine the following Monday, Danilo wrangles an invitation. Roderick Hodge, the reporter, also manages to get himself invited along. Roderick then tells Link that the mic that electrocuted Katya was attached to the sound equipment wrong. It appears that someone intended for Link to be electrocuted, but whether it was for a publicity stunt or something more sinister is unclear. Later in the day, Link manages to get a tour of the stables at the race track. Link is able to corner Arknold's jockey and ask him a few questions. Link learns that the last time Danilo visited South Africa was about the same time the horses began losing their races.

That night, Link calls Charlie back in England. Link asks Charlie to visit Nerissa and try to find out how much Danilo knows about her illness and her will and when he knew it. Link admits that he is beginning to think that Danilo is behind the horses losing their races Link believes that Danilo has paid Barty to cause the horses to get thirsty, perhaps holding back water and adding salt to their feed, then over-watering them before their races, which causes them to become uncomfortable and slow at the end of a race. Link believes Danilo is doing this so he will not have to pay a large amount of estate duty on them, leaving him with less residue from her cash assets.

## Chapters 7-8 Analysis

Link is confronted by Clifford again, pressured into doing more publicity appearances. Link refuses outright, causing Clifford to claim his job is in jeopardy. Link has no patience for Clifford, annoyed that the man cannot take no for an answer. This reveals Link's short temper. It also sets up a situation where a desperate man, Clifford, might do almost anything to get what he needs to save his job. The reader wonders if this includes plugging in a microphone incorrectly so that it will electrocute someone. When Roderick tells Link about the microphone that electrocuted Katya, the reader begins to wonder if Link's life is in danger and if it is Clifford who is setting him up.

The trip to the gold mine has become a large party, including Link's enemy, Evan Pentelow, as well as Conrad, Roderick the reporter, and Danilo. This comes about at the same time Link begins to wonder if Danilo is attempting to sabotage the horses so he will not have to pay a large estate duty on them. The idea that someone tried to electrocute Link seems to spell trouble as Link prepares to go into a dark, dangerous gold mine with the number one suspect in the horse troubles. However, the reader is unsure if the one is connected to the other at this point. Perhaps the mic incident was not supposed to become so serious and was indeed just a publicity stunt on Clifford's part.

# Chapters 9-11

## Chapters 9-11 Summary

In chapter 9, Link flies to the gold mine with Quentin van Huren, Conrad, Evan, Roderick, and Danilo. Link and his group are immediately taken into the mine while van Huren goes to attend a meeting. The tour takes the group into the shaft of the mine currently being excavated in the search for minute amounts of gold. They ride a truck into the heart of the mine and then walk down a shaft where they are preparing an explosion to loosen the rock. Then the group is divided into three small groups in order to see where the workers collect the debris to be taken to the service and crushed to find gold. Link finds himself alone in a tight tunnel with a guide. The guide leaves Link alone to return to the main shaft. As Link turns in the tight space to go back, he finds someone coming toward him. Link stops to let the man pass, but is hit on the head and blacks out.

In chapter 10, Link wakes confused and in total darkness. Link manages to find his way out of the tiny, tight tunnel by tossing tiny rocks and listening to the sound of them falling. Once in the larger shaft, Link uses memory to feel his way back to the main shaft. Just as Link reaches the main shaft, he is rescued by a group of men who came in search of him when the liftman insisted that Link had not returned to the surface with the rest of the visitors. It is lucky he did, too, because the mine had been evacuated in preparation for the explosion. Link surely would have died if he had been left down there. Link gives his rescuers an autograph each and rejoins the rest of the group. Over lunch, Link is impressed by Danilo's quick, mathematical mind as he asks numerous questions about the mine. Later, Link and his group visit the rest of the area, including the hostel where the workers live. Here Link is able to meet the liftman who insisted he never came out of the mine. Link signs a poster from a magazine for the man. That night, as Link flies back to Johannesburg, he remembers there was another man in the tight tunnel with him.

In chapter 11, Link spends much of the night trying to figure out whether the other man in the tunnel was responsible for his head injury, or if the man simply did not see him in the dark. Link is beginning to wonder if his life is in danger and if so, by whom. The phone rings off the hook the next morning. Roderick invites him to dinner, Conrad calls to find out if he plans to take his own car to Kruger Park, and Arknold wants to see him about Nerissa's horses. Link goes down to breakfast and is almost immediately joined by Sally van Huren. A few minutes later, Danilo joins them for a date to play tennis with Sally. Link gets the impression that Danilo is courting Sally. Arknold arrives and insists on speaking in Link's room. There Arknold insists that he is doing nothing wrong with the horses, but gives Link the idea that he knows what is going on. Arknold begs Link not to counsel Nerissa to fire him as her trainer. Link agrees as long as Arknold fires Barty. Back downstairs, Link runs into Clifford. Clifford again wants Link to do a bunch of public appearances. Link refuses once more. This time Link is more forceful, leaving Clifford frightened for his job. Finally, Evan and Conrad appear. Danilo and Sally join them as

they discuss the trip to Kruger Park. Evan and Conrad ask Link to carry some of the supplies they will need in his car. They also agree to fax Clifford their schedule so he can reach Link.

## **Chapters 9-11 Analysis**

Link goes to the gold mine for what he thinks will be a fun tour of something unique. Instead, it turns into a nightmare when he is knocked out and nearly blown up during excavations in the mine. Link thinks nothing of this accident until he recalls there was someone else in the tunnel with him. Now it appears that someone is out to get Link. There appear at this point to be several possible suspects, including the members of Link's group, van Huren, Conrad, Evan, Roderick, and Danilo. There are also hundreds of workers at the mine who could have been paid off to hurt him. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to tell at this point who the culprit is. However, the reader should keep in mind that Link has reason to believe Danilo is sabotaging Nerissa's horses, suggesting Danilo might have reason to want to prevent Link from reporting back to Nerissa.

Link returns to Johannesburg and finds himself very popular with all his recent friends and acquaintances. Arknold is clearly concerned for his job, which seems to further clear him from wrongdoing. This conversation also implies that Arknold knows Danilo paid off Barty to sabotage the horses. Link also meets with Clifford Wenkins, once again forced to lay down the law with him about public appearances. This creates some tension in the plot, suggesting Clifford is desperate enough to continue pushing the issue. Then Link meets with Conrad and Evan to plan their trip to Kruger Park, a wildlife reserve outside of Johannesburg. Danilo is present for this conversation and Conrad promises to send Clifford a schedule of their stay, making it clear to the reader that both Clifford and Danilo will know exactly where Link is at all times. If either of these men are the one trying to hurt or kill Link, it is possible that this foreshadows some big attempt that could leave Link in terrible trouble.

# Chapters 12-13

## Chapters 12-13 Summary

In chapter 12, Link goes to have dinner at Roderick and Katya's apartment for what is supposed to be an off the record bit of fun. Unfortunately, Link can see that he has been set up the moment Katya comes home with a beautiful girl. Over dinner, Link is careful about everything he says, assuming there is a tape recorder hidden somewhere in the room. Even when the conversation turns to politics and Katya's beautiful friend offers some strong opinions, Link stays quiet. At the end of the evening, as Link is leaving, Roderick insists he give the girl a ride home. Link agrees. However, as the elevator opens on the lobby, Link says he forgot something upstairs. Link leaves the girl in the lobby and gets off the elevator on the second floor, taking a back exit out of the building. Link peeks around the front of the building where his car is parked and finds photographers waiting to catch him in a seemingly compromising position with the pretty girl. Link takes a taxi back to his hotel and calls Roderick to scold him for his action. Roderick confesses that Clifford Wenkins put him up to it to blackmail him into doing some public appearances.

In chapter 13, Link drives over to Conrad and Evan's hotel where they spend several hours packing the huge amount of gear Evan insists they will need, including film, cameras, and beer. It takes them several hours to drive to Kruger Park where they pass through the Numbi gate, showing proof of permission to stay on the grounds. They check into one of the camps scattered throughout the park, fenced in areas with rondavels in which guests may stay. They barely stop to check in before going in search of Evan's elusive elephants. The following day they set off for the next camp where they have arranged to have a park ranger show them around. The ranger takes them where he believes they will find elephants, but is annoyed with Evan's insistence on getting out of the car. The ranger continuously reminds them of the dangers of the park, relating stories of how park employees have been attacked by animals. The ranger tells them to never get out of their cars and to stay on the main roads, ignoring the smaller, unmarked dirt roads. Those roads are for park employees only.

Back at camp, Link makes a call to Charlie. Charlie tells him that Nerissa told Danilo about her cancer during their visit in the spring, implying he knew she was dying before the horses began losing their races. Nerissa also said that Danilo knew he was to inherit the horses and the residue of her fortune. Charlie says that Danilo came back to visit Nerissa and during that time she showed him her will, which includes a gift to Link of the gold mine in Rojedda. Finally, Charlie says it was Danilo's idea that Link come to South Africa to investigate the horses. After a quick call to learn how large Nerissa's share in the gold mine is, Link realizes that Danilo is the culprit and that his life could be in serious danger.

## Chapters 12-13 Analysis

Link is set up by Roderick the reporter and nearly photographed coming out of an apartment building with a strange woman. This situation could have been bad for Link, especially in light of his past difficulties in his marriage. However, Link once again proves that he is too clever to fall for these sorts of scams. Later, Link begins his journey to Kruger Park with Conrad and Evan. Despite Link's dislike of Evan, the three men get on well. The reader can see why Evan and Link do not get along as they visit the park and Evan shows his disregard for everyone's opinion but his own, even when that opinion can place his life in danger. Link is a good guy, but not above finding amusement in Evan's silly behaviors.

Link calls his wife and learns that Danilo knew that Nerissa was dying, that he was to inherit the horses, and that he would get the bulk of her fortune after estate duty. This money will be quite a fortune if Danilo can find a way to limit the estate duty, which is why he has been sabotaging the horses. However, Danilo has also learned that Link is to inherit Portia's shares in the gold mine that Nerissa inherited upon her death. Based on Danilo's questions about the gold mine during the visit there, Link knows that Danilo is aware of how much those shares are worth and therefore how much estate duty will have to be paid on them. This leaves Link and the reader wondering if Danilo might not be behind Link's two near death experiences. This also suggests another attack on Link in the near future.



# Chapters 14-15

## Chapters 14-15 Summary

In chapter 14, Link wakes to find himself handcuffed to the steering wheel of his car, just like in the movie he just finished filming. When it is clear he will not be able to free himself, Link begins thinking through the possibilities of how he got there. Clearly he was chloroformed because the affects linger for several hours. Link suspects Danilo did it, but thinks he had to have had an accomplice in order to leave the area by car since it is too dangerous to walk. Link believes Danilo has done this to make it look like a publicity stunt gone wrong in order to inherit the gold mine himself when Nerissa dies. This will not only make Danilo rich, but will reduce the amount of estate duty he will have to pay. Danilo's motives are clear, but not those of his possible accomplice. Link goes through the possibilities, thinking of Clifford but quickly dismissing him because a dead actor cannot do public appearances. Link thinks of Conrad and Evan, his only hope at rescue, but also the most obvious accomplices since they were already in Kruger Park and knew about these dirt roads down which Link finds himself now.

The day goes on and Link becomes angrier at Danilo and frightened he will not be found. Link manages to remember some facts about humidity and he keeps the windows rolled up to keep his body from losing too much moisture too fast. Link also finds a plastic bag in his pocket that he uses to collect moisture during the night. Link then finds a pencil that he uses to write out his suspicions about Danilo for whoever might find him.

In chapter 15, Link continues to think out the puzzle of who Danilo's accomplice is as the days pass. Three days and Link is still locked in the hot car, thinking of how wrong they were when they filmed the movie. They dismissed the physical parts of the situation and under thought the way the body would react. Soon Link comes to a place where he is convinced he will not survive.

## Chapters 14-15 Analysis

Link finds himself trapped in his hired car much the same way his character in the movie *Man in a Car* is trapped. Link knows that Danilo has done this for Nerissa's money, hoping that killing Link will leave the gold mine for him. However, Link has no idea who might have been Danilo's accomplice. Link thinks over the options, Roderick, Clifford Wenkins, Evan and Conrad, but cannot settle on one. The difficult part of this is that Evan and Conrad seem like the most obvious candidates, but they are also his best chance of being found. This causes a dilemma for Link as he struggles to hold on to hope.

Link claims many times at the beginning of the novel that he is nothing like the men he plays in the movies. However, he has saved a woman's life, run a successful

investigation, and outsmarted a group of witty reporters. Now he is surviving in a hot car because he is smart enough to know that preserving moisture is more important than comfort. Not only that, but he is also writing out his accusations against Danilo so that he will be caught even if Link dies. All of this proves that Link is a strong, intelligent, heroic man who has a good chance of surviving this ordeal.

# Chapters 16-17

## Chapters 16-17 Summary

In chapter 16, Conrad and Evan find Link. Evan quickly gives Link some beer to drink before making him a bed in the back of their station wagon. Evan wants to take Link to the doctor, but he insists on going back to the camp instead. Link shows Conrad and Evan what he has written, and explains to them in writing what he wants to do in order to catch Danilo. At this point, Link learns that Clifford Wenkins died in a fishing accident. Link knows then that Wenkins was the accomplice and that Danilo killed him to make Link's death look like a publicity stunt gone wrong. They begin back to the camp. When they stop for lunch, Conrad tells Link that it was Evan's idea to look for him. They had found a note that said he went back to Johannesburg, so they did not worry at first. However, when Evan realized Link still had some of their things in his car, he began calling around trying to find him. Soon they realized Link never left the park. They searched all the dirt tracks and abandoned roads, finally finding him. Back at the camp, Link has Evan call van Huren and tell him what is going on. Evan is to ask van Huren to come to Kruger Park with the police the following morning. The next morning, Evan calls Danilo and tells him that Link has a gold pen that is important to Conrad that they want back.

In chapter 17, Conrad and Evan take Link back to the car, still wearing the same clothes, and handcuff him to the steering wheel once more. They leave to watch for both van Huren and Danilo. Link begins to worry that Danilo will not come, but eventually he does. Danilo burns the accusations Link wrote out, telling him he will never let him go because he is worth more dead. After Danilo drives off, four cars approach Link's car. Inside are van Huren, Conrad, Evan, the police, and Danilo. Danilo denies leaving Link there to die, but insists he was going for help. However, Link tells the police that Danilo has the key to the car in his pocket. Evan and Conrad then show the police that they caught Danilo's visit to the car on both camera and tape recorder.

## Chapters 16-17 Analysis

Link is finally rescued. Despite being unable to talk from severe dehydration and swollen to the point he cannot walk, Link insists on staying in the area until they can stop Danilo. Three days trapped in a hot car has left Link a lot of time to think and he has come up with a perfect scheme to catch Danilo. Conrad and Evan are more than eager to help. In fact, it turns out that Evan was instrumental in saving Link's life, changing the face of their relationship for ever.

Link is placed back in the car and Danilo returns, too determined to become a millionaire to allow Link to do anything to change that. Danilo is caught on tape and arrested. Link is now free to return home to his family. Unfortunately, Link must tell Nerissa what a terrible person her nephew turned out to be, the only thing that worries

him. It does not matter he nearly died, Link is more concerned for his friend, proving once more what a good man he is.

# Characters

## Edward Lincoln

Edward Lincoln is an actor who lives in England. Link, as his friends call him, began his work in movies riding horses after growing too tall to live his dream of being a jockey. One afternoon, a director gave him a part in a movie because he liked the way he looked, and that turned into more roles until he became a popular leading man. Link is married and has three children. Link's marriage struggled when his career first took off, but when his daughter became ill and was left with a mental disability, Link and his wife pulled back together. Now the family lives in a quiet country home in England near the race track where Link's father was once a stable hand.

Link visits a friend of his, an elderly lady who took an interest in him when they met at the stable where she kept her horses. This friend asks Link to go to South Africa to find out why her horses there, eleven race horses, are not winning their races. Link travels to South Africa under the guise of attending a movie premiere of one of his movies in order to inspect the horses. This inspection goes well, the horses are all healthy and appear to be well cared for. Link's only conclusion is that the trainer or someone working for him is causing the horses to become exhausted in their races either by running them too hard too close to the start of the race or over watering them.

As Link's visit progresses, he makes the acquaintance of relatives of his friend. Link also learns that some of his movie industry friends are also in the area. Link is pestered by the movie company representative to do more publicity, but he constantly turns it down because Link is by nature a very private man. This leads to the movie company representative attempting to find secretive ways in which to develop publicity for the premiere, using some of Link's acquaintances. At the same time, Link suffers an accident in a gold mine and watches as a woman is nearly electrocuted holding a mic that he should have been holding. This causes Link to realize that the same person sabotaging the horses is attempting to kill him. It all leads to a dramatic attempt on Link's life and his own scheme to catch the responsible person.

## Charlotte 'Charlie' Lincoln

Charlie is Link's wife. Charlie is a very down to earth, simple woman who loves her family deeply. Charlie jokes that, when she reads in advice columns women being instructed to think of her husband while sleeping with their own husbands, she should write for advice about who she should think of. Charlie feels that she is married to two separate men, Edward Lincoln, the actor, and Link, her simple husband. Charlie and Link once had difficulties in their marriage at the beginning of his career when he was often away from home, but tragedy has brought them back together and Charlie would do almost anything for her husband.

## **Nerissa Cavesey**

Nerissa Cavesey is a wealthy widow who befriended Link when he was a child hanging around the stables where his father worked. Nerissa has recently become ill and knows that she will die soon. Nerissa has drawn up a new will with which she had a great deal of fun finding things to bequeath to her friends and one remaining relative. Nerissa wills her horses and the remainder of her fortune to her nephew, the son of her husband's brother and the only living relative she has left. This will, however, causes her nephew to become greedy and not only sabotage the horses to lower their worth at the time of Nerissa's death, but to attempt to kill Link in order to keep him from inheriting a large share in a gold mine. It is Nerissa who sends Link to South Africa and begins this story of attempted murder.

## **Danilo Cavesey**

Danilo Cavesey is Nerissa's nephew, the son of Nerissa's husband's brother. Danilo was born in England but raised in California. In the late spring Danilo came to visit Nerissa and learned that she was dying. At that time he also learned that Nerissa was going to leave him eleven race horses she inherited from her sister, Portia, and the remainder of her fortune after estate duty is taken out. At a later visit, Nerissa shows Danilo her entire will and he learns that Link is to inherit Nerissa's share in a gold mine. Danilo has already taken action to reduce the value of the horses in order to keep from paying a large amount of estate duty. Danilo has paid the trainer's top stable boy to overwater the horses before their races. However, the estate duty on the gold mine will far outweigh the duty on the horses. Therefore, Danilo enlists the help of the movie representative to kill Link in what should look like an accident. Fortunately for Link, this scheme does not work and Danilo is arrested.

## **Evan Pentelow**

Evan Pentelow is a director who likes to give detailed direction to his actors in order to force them to portray their scenes in the way he sees them rather than trusting the actors to use their own instincts. Link worked with Evan on an early movie in his career and was so unhappy with the experience that he had it put in all his contracts that he was never to work with Evan again. Unfortunately, while filming *Man in a Car*, the director dies. Evan is chosen as the replacement. In revenge for causing him to lose out on several blockbuster films, Evan makes Link film a particularly uncomfortable scene over and over again. Then Evan decides to change the scope of the film, requiring several more weeks of work. Link keeps his temper, however, and ends up giving his best performance ever.

When Link is in South Africa, he learns that Evan is there to do pre-production work on his next film. At first Link avoids Evan, but when Evan gets himself invited to the gold mine with Link and a group of friends, they slowly begin to forge a truce. Link is invited to join Evan and Conrad on a trip to Kruger Park. Link goes because he wants to see



the park and is amused by the way Evan gets along with the park ranger. When Link is kidnapped from his cabin, it is Evan that insists on looking for him and refuses to give up. Evan is the main reason Link is alive and is able to capture the criminal.

## **Conrad**

Conrad is the head of photography on *Man in a Car*. Conrad has worked with Link many times and knows his personality. When a bet is placed on whether or not Link will lose his temper with Evan, Conrad bets that Link will never lose it. Conrad wins. Later, when Conrad learns that Link is in South Africa, he comes to visit him and is present at all three of the attacks on Link's life. Link briefly thinks that Conrad might be involved in the attacks, but rules him out. Conrad is with Evan when they find him. Conrad helps care for Link and he also rigs the video and sound that is used to catch Danilo.

## **Greville Arknold**

Greville Arknold is a horse trainer in Johannesburg, South Africa. Greville has a great reputation as a trainer, but the failure of Nerissa's horses is beginning to look bad for him. Many people jump to the conclusion that Greville is purposely sabotaging the horses so that when Nerissa decides to sell them, he can get them cheap and then allow them to begin winning again. Link asks Greville this outright, but Greville denies it. Later, Link decides that Greville is too honest to do such a thing, but his head stable boy is not.

## **Clifford Wenkins**

Clifford Wenkins is the Johannesburg, South Africa representative for Worldic, the movie company that produced Link's movie, *Rock*. Clifford Wenkins is a nervous, flustered little man who often stutters when he is talking to Link. When Link first arrives in Johannesburg, he explains to Clifford that he will pay for everything so that Worldic cannot force him into making publicity appearances. Clifford pushes the issue, so Link agrees to a press conference and a reception either before or after the premiere. Clifford sets up the press conference and Link is nearly electrocuted during it when a mic is hooked up to the sound machine improperly. Later, Clifford attempts to get Link to go to several other appearances, but Link brushes him off. That is when Clifford works with a couple of reporters to attempt to catch Link in a compromising position with a woman so that they can force him into the publicity. This does not work either. After Link is rescued from the car where he has been handcuffed for three days, he learns that Clifford drowned while fishing. It is then that Link knows that Clifford was the one who helped Danilo set up the mic electrocution and kidnapped him from his room to handcuff him to the steering wheel of his car.

## **Roderick Hodge and Katya**

Roderick Hodge is a reporter with the Rand Daily Star. Roderick interviews Link during his press conference in the moments before Link joins Katya for a radio interview for her women's program. It is Katya who is holding the faulty mic when it shorts out and she is the one electrocuted. Roderick is Katya's boyfriend and is frightened by her injuries. However, the moment Link saves her life with CPR, Roderick runs off to inform his newspaper of the incident.

Later, Roderick accompanies Link and the others to the van Huren's gold mine. Link is forced to ask Roderick to keep his accident in the mine out of the papers. A few days later, Roderick invites Link over for dinner, promising that it will be all off the record. Unfortunately, Roderick and Katya have set Link up, hoping to catch him in a compromising position with a woman they have invited to join them for dinner. Link outsmarts them and later learns that Clifford put them up to it.

## **Quentin, Vivi, Sally, and Jonathan van Huren**

Quentin van Huren is the brother of Portia van Huren's husband. Portia is Nerissa's sister. The van Huren's invite Link over for dinner during his stay in Johannesburg because Nerissa has asked them too. The whole family, except for fifteen year old Sally, try to prove that they are not impressed by his movie star status. However, they are eventually drawn in by his charm and they all become good friends. In fact, the van Hurens invite Link to visit their gold mine. Later, when Link realizes that Danilo is attempting to kill him because of Nerissa's share in that same gold mine, it is Quentin van Huren Link turns to for help.



# Objects/Places

## Special

At the beginning of the novel, Link is filming a movie in which he is handcuffed to the steering wheel of a sports car known as a Special.

## Hired Car

Link hires, or rents, a car in order to drive to Kruger Park with Evan and Conrad. Link wakes up his third morning in the park to find himself handcuffed to the steering wheel, much like his character in *Man in a Car*.

## Written Accusation

While handcuffed in his hired car, Link writes out his accusation against Danilo for his murder. This is later used to both convince friends of Danilo's guilt and to lure Danilo back into Kruger Park.

## Nerissa's Will

Nerissa, Link's old friend, is dying of Hodgkin's Disease. Nerissa has created a will giving all her friends a gift and leaving the bulk of her money, after estate duty, to her nephew. It is this will that inspires Nerissa's nephew to kill Link.

## Nerissa's Horses

Nerissa inherits eleven race horses from her sister, Portia. These horses are in South Africa and cannot be brought to England where Nerissa lives. Therefore Nerissa cannot oversee their training and her illness keeps her from traveling to South Africa. Nerissa sends Link to find out why the horses are not winning. Link learns that Danilo is sabotaging the horses so that he will not have to pay as much estate duty on them.

## Rocks

Rocks is the name of a movie Link stars in that will premiere in Johannesburg during Link's visit there. Link uses a premiere for the movie as an excuse to check out Nerissa's horses.

## **Man in a Car**

Man in a Car is a movie Link films with Evan and Conrad at the beginning of the book. The premise of the film is that a man is handcuffed to the steering wheel of a sports car and left to die. The movie follows the man as he attempts to escape, then comes to accept his situation. The film ends without the man being rescued, leaving the viewer wondering if he will live or die.

## **Worldic**

Worldic is the name of the movie company that produces and distributes Link's movies.

## **Iguana Rock**

Iguana Rock is the name of the hotel where Link stays while in Johannesburg.

## **Rojedda Gold Mine**

The Rojedda Gold Mine is a gold mine owned by the van Huren family. Due to the fact that Portia was married to Quentin van Huren's brother, Portia inherited his share in the gold mine. Upon Portia's death, the shares in the gold mine went to Nerissa. Nerissa has given the gold mine shares to Link in her will, but this causes Danilo to become concerned about the amount of estate duty he will have to pay on the gold mine. However, if Link dies before Nerissa, Danilo will inherit the gold mine and will not have to pay duty.

## **Kruger Park**

Kruger Park is a large reservation run by the government of South Africa to protect indigenous animals. The park includes many camps in which people can stay overnight during visits to the park. Evan, Link, and Conrad come to Kruger Park in order to get footage of elephants for a movie.

## **Johannesburg, South Africa**

Link goes to Johannesburg, South Africa to find out why Nerissa's horses are not winning any of their races.

## **Spain**

The novel begins in Spain where Link is filming Man in a Car.

# Themes

## Greed

Danilo Cavesey is the son of Nerissa Cavesey's brother-in-law. Danilo was raised in California, therefore Nerissa never met him until a few months after her cancer diagnosis. Danilo came to visit Nerissa and she was so impressed by him that she decided to rewrite her will and leave him everything after her gifts to her numerous friends. This includes her eleven horses in South Africa and all the money left in her estate after the estate duty paid for the gifts she left to her friends. Shortly after Nerissa tells this to Danilo, her horses in South Africa stop winning their races.

Nerissa sends Link to South Africa to find out why her horses are no longer winning even though they are well bred horses and should be winning nearly every race they run. The first thing Link notices about the horses is that they all look perfectly healthy. The second thing Link notices is that the horses appear to be exhausted and unable to finish the races at top speed. Link knows this means that the trainer is pushing the horses too hard in the warm ups before the race or someone is feeding the horses too much water in the moments before the race. Either way, it appears that the trainer or someone on his staff is causing the problem.

As Link continues his investigation, he quickly realizes the only person to benefit from this scheme is Danilo. Link has his wife investigate Danilo's knowledge of Nerissa's will. At the same time, Link has begun to realize that someone is trying to kill him. Link has suffered two different suspicious accidents. When Link learns that he is to inherit Nerissa's shares in a gold mine, he knows that these accidents were murder attempts, attempts that had to look like accidents. The following day Link wakes handcuffed to a steering wheel in his hired car. Link knows without a doubt that Danilo must be the one behind these attempts on his life and that the motive is greed. Danilo is fixing the horses and attempting to kill Link so he will not have to pay a large amount of estate duty and will be able to retain the bulk of Nerissa's money.

## Family

Link is a married man with three children. Link's youngest child, his daughter Libby, was dropped by her older brother when she was an infant and suffered a bout of meningitis. This disease left Libby with some mental disabilities. As a result, Link and his wife, Charlie, reaffirmed their vows to one another. Libby's situation also makes Link very careful about revealing information regarding his personal life. Link rarely makes personal appearances and he never does premieres. It is because of this that his decision to make a premiere in Johannesburg makes the movie company's representative go crazy trying to get Link to do a lot of publicity during his visit.



Family is also a theme of the book because of Nerissa's relationship with her nephew. Nerissa is an older woman whose husband has passed away. Nerissa's only blood relative, her sister Portia, passed away in her home of South Africa, leaving Nerissa her eleven race horses and a share in a gold mine. Therefore, Nerissa's only living relative is the son of her husband's brother, Danilo. Nerissa and Danilo hit it off when Danilo comes to visit her from his home in California. During this visit, Nerissa tells Danilo she plans to leave him the horses in South Africa and the residue of her fortune after all the estate duty is paid. During a later visit, Nerissa shows Danilo her will and he discovers that she has left many small things to her many friends, but has left her share in the gold mine to Link, her good friend. This causes Danilo to worry that after all the estate duty is paid, including the huge amount on the gold mine, will leave him with no cash money. Despite the family connection, Danilo attempts to kill Link in order to get more money from Nerissa's will.

## Fame

Fame is a theme of the novel because Edward Lincoln, or Link, is a successful actor. Link goes to South Africa to find out why his friend Nerissa's horses are no longer winning their races. To cover up the true reason for his visit, Link agrees to appear at a premiere of one of his movies. This appearance leads to a press conference and a reception before the premiere. Link, a very private man, hates these kinds of situations and has never agreed to do publicity before. The situation becomes difficult when the movie company's representative begins pushing Link to do a list of public appearances.

While Link is in South Africa, he has two accidents that turn out to be attempts on his life. The first is an accident with a faulty microphone that should have electrocuted Link, but ended up electrocuting the girl interviewing him. Link becomes the subject of many newspaper articles when he saved the reporters life. Later, Link is nearly killed in a gold mine when he hits his head and passes out moments before a blast is supposed to take place to generate more rubble to use to find gold. These apparent accidents are set up by the representative of the movie company in attempts to help a friend and to make more publicity for the film premiere. The final attack on Link's life is to leave him in the desert handcuffed to the steering wheel of a car. This is a similar situation to the one his character finds himself in in the movie Link has just completed, making it look as though it is a publicity stunt that goes wrong. If it were not for Link's fame, none of these attacks on his life would have been possible, making fame a theme of the novel.

# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is first person. Edward Lincoln, a movie star in England, is the narrator of this novel. Link, as his friends call him, narrates this novel as though writing to a good friend or in a diary and telling of the events that led to three attempts on his life. The first person point of view creates an intimate relationship between reader and character, creating a bond in which the reader deeply cares whether or not Link is going to survive his ordeal. First person point of view is a highly personal point of view and this one allows the reader to follow Link through a linear time line that begins weeks before the first attempt on his life all the way through the final attempt.

The first person point of view works well in this novel because it does not muddy up the story line with a list of non-relevant characters that might confuse the reader. The story follows Link as he visits South Africa and is nearly killed on three occasions. Link does not realize his life is in danger until after the second attempt on his life. By the time Link is attacked a third time, he has finally realized his life is in danger and why. With the first person point of view, the reader has figured out the mystery alongside Link and is rooting for his survival. It is because of this intimate connection with the reader as well that the first person point of view works well in this novel.

## Setting

The novel begins in Spain where Link is filming the final scenes of his movie, *Man in a Car*. The weather is unbearably hot in Spain and Link suffers for his art, causing him to reveal more of himself to the camera than he is used to doing. The novel then shifts to England where Link lives with his wife and three children. This setting reveals the basically normal home life Link has despite his fame. The third setting of the novel is South Africa. Link goes to South Africa to check on some horses for his friend, Narissa. Once here, Link stays in a nice hotel and visits the races, therefore it is almost as if he never left England. However, when Link visits Kruger Park, the true nature of South Africa is revealed to the reader. This setting is just as hot, if not hotter, than Spain was. It is here that Link is supposed to die and the reader can feel the desolation of the situation almost as if they were there with Link.

The three settings of the novel work well within the plot for three distinct reasons. The first setting, the heat of a desolate area in Spain is a place of misery, of discomfort. While in Spain, Link is shooting a film with a director he does not like. This director is attempting to make Link as miserable as possible, causing him to put forward his best performance ever. The setting reflects Link's discomfort, becoming almost an extension of that discomfort. Similarly, England is a calm, cool place that is a place of comfort. Link lives in England with his family where they attempt to avoid the limelight and live quietly. The setting of England reflects this. Finally, Link travels to South Africa where he



finds his life is in danger. South Africa reflects this danger when Link enters Kruger Park, a wildlife refuge that is filled with dangerous animals, a place where people who are familiar with the area are often killed savagely by these animals. Kruger Park acutely reflects the danger Link is in, once again becoming an extension of Link's situation.

## **Language and Meaning**

The language of the novel is English. The novel is written about an English man in the late sixties, early seventies, therefore some of the phrases in the novel might be unfamiliar to the modern reader. The narrator, Link, often uses phrases that will be familiar to those who hail from Europe, but unfamiliar to some Americans. These phrases are slang words, often meant to express displeasure or excitement. There are also foreign phrases in the novel, most from the Bantu or Afrikaans languages. These words are spoken by people Link comes into contact with in South Africa and are often explained either by how they are used or within the dialogue in which they appear.

The language of this novel reflects the characters who appear within the novel. Due to the fact that the narrator was born in and lives in England, much of his language contains slang and grammar that is common to English speakers from that part of the world. The languages of South Africa are also used in the novel due to the fact that Link travels to South Africa and remains there for a large portion of the plot. It is for these reasons that the language of the novel is appropriate to the characters of the novel and to the plot.

## **Structure**

The novel is divided into seventeen chapters. Each chapter varies in length and contains any number of scenes through which the reader sees the events and activities of the plot and its characters. The novel is written in both exposition and dialogue, telling a story in a linear fashion.

The novel is structured simply with only one plot. The novel follows Link as he finishes up a movie with a director he does not like. Link then travels to South Africa where he has agreed to find out why nearly a dozen of a friend's horses have stopped performing well in their races. While there, Link nearly dies in two separate accidents that leave him convinced someone is trying to kill him. When Link wakes handcuffed to the steering wheel of his hired car, he realizes that the nephew of his friend is trying to kill him to keep from having to pay a large estate duty on a gift his friend plans to give him in her will. Link manages to survive and have the culprit arrested, bringing the plot to a satisfying conclusion.

# Quotes

"Sweating, thirsty, hot, uncomfortable, and tired to the point of explosion. Cynically I counted my woes. Considerable, they were. Considerable, on way and another." Chapter 1, p. 1.

"We were so relieved that she was alive that we scarcely took notice of the cautiously phrased warnings. 'We must not be surprised if she is a little late in developing.' Of course she would be a little late after being so ill. But she would soon catch up, wouldn't she? And we dismissed the dubious expression, and that unfamiliar word 'retarded'." Chapter 2, p. 33.

"It was easy enough for a trainer to make sure a horse of his didn't win, if he had a mind to. He merely had to give it too severe an exercise gallop too soon before a race. Enough races had, in sober fact, been lost that way by accident for it to be impossible to prove that anyone had done it on purpose." Chapter 4, p. 83.

"The ladies and gentlemen of the press (or, in other words, a partially shaven, polo-neck sweated, elaborately casual, and uninformed mob) yawned to their feet when I reached the Dettrick Room in Randfontein House within ticking distance of half past eleven." Chapter 5, p. 85.

"I thought that all, that any of them would know what to do, and do it. But they just stood and knelt around looking at me, as if it were up to me to know, to do, to be the resourceful man in all those films who always took the lead, always." Chapter 5, p. 101.

"There was nothing at all to distinguish Nerissa's horses from their stablemates. They looked as well, had legs as firm, eyes as bright; and they were not all stabled in one block, but were scattered among the rest. Colts in one quadrangle, fillies in another. Everything as it should be, as it normally would be in England." Chapter 6, p. 111.

"Friday turned out to be a meager day for world news, which left a lot too much space for the perils of Katya. Seldom had the press been invited in advance to such a spectacle and in most papers it seemed to have made the front page." Chapter 7, p. 129.

"Stunned, I seemed to feel consciousness ebb away slowly; I fell dizzily down endless mine shafts, with flashing dots before my eyes. I had blacked out completely long before I hit the bottom." Chapter 9, p. 203.

"'I've survived twice. Look at it that way.'  
'Only seven lives left,' Conrad said." Chapter 10, p. 218.

"This had to be some ghastly practical joke. Evan, being malicious.  
This had to be Clifford Wenkins thinking up some frightful publicity stunt.  
This had to be anything but real." Chapter 14, p. 296.

"We had been wrong in the film, I thought. We had focused on the mental state of the man too much, to the neglect of the physical. We hadn't known about legs like lead and ankles swollen to giant puffballs. I had long ago shed my socks, and would have had as much chance of forcing my shoes on again as of flying.  
We hadn't known the abdomen would become agonizingly distended with gas, or that the seat belts would strain across it like hawsers. We hadn't guessed that the eyes would feel like sandpaper when the lachrymal glands dried up. We had underestimated what dehydration did to the throat.  
The overwhelming heat battered all emotion into numbness. There was nothing anywhere but pain, and no prospect that it would stop.  
Except, of course, in death." Chapter 15, p. 326.

"'Cut', he said. 'No retakes today.'" Chapter 17, p. 362.



## Topics for Discussion

Discuss Edward Lincoln. Who is Edward Lincoln? Why is he handcuffed to a car's steering wheel in the beginning of the novel? Who has put him there? How does he get away? How is this episode mimicked at the end of the novel? Why?

Why do people make assumptions about Link that are often untrue? What is the nature of these assumptions? Is Link a hero? Does Link know how to solve large mysteries? Does Link often save women in distress? Why do people think he might do these things? Why does Link have a hard time making even his friends believe he is not this kind of person? Why should he have to convince people of this?

Why does Link agree to go to South Africa? For what purpose? Who is Nerissa? How does Link know Nerissa? What does Link learn while he is in South Africa? Whose idea was it to send Link to South Africa? Why? What will Link tell Nerissa? Will she be happy with this news?

Who is Danilo? Why is it significant to Link that Danilo was in South Africa the previous June, about the time the horses began running slowly? Why is it significant that Danilo saw Nerissa's will? How does Link use this information to accuse Danilo of murder? Whose murder? Why?

Why does Link not like to do publicity for his movies? What does Link tell the movie company representative every time he asks Link to do some sort of promotion? Why? Why is the movie company representative so insistent on these promotions? What might happen if he cannot convince Link to cooperate? What does happen?

What happens during the press conference that makes Link look like a hero? Is Link a hero? Who is injured during this incident? Who should have been injured? Why does this incident, when added to a later incident, begin to make Link think he might be in danger? Was this incident an accident, or was it intentional? If it was intentional, who was behind it?

Who owns the gold mine Link goes to visit? Why does Link go to this gold mine? Who goes with him? Why? What happens to Link on this visit? What is significant about this event? What does Link belatedly remember about the incident? Why does this incident cause Link to begin to think that someone is trying to kill him?