

# **Sudden Prey Study Guide**

## **Sudden Prey by John Sandford**

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## Plot Summary

In a suspenseful tale of crime, revenge and punishment, author John Sandford introduces an array of characters, conflicts, and emotions, as he leads the reader through intricate and treacherous incidents and events. Lucas Davenport has, along with fellow police officers, participated in an attempted capture of two female bank robbers, an event that ends with the deaths of both women in a shootout on the bank steps. The women are the wife and sister of convicted felon Dick LaChaise, who, enraged by this incident, plots his prison escape and revenge. With the assistance of two crazed friends and the involuntary help of his wife's sister, Sandy Darling, LaChaise embarks upon a crime spree intended to kill loved ones of all officers involved in the bank robbery killings, following the Biblical "eye for an eye" approach. Following two successful murders and the wounding of another officer's wife, Lucas Davenport quickly discerns the killers' motivations and begins his frantic efforts to provide for the safety of all potential victims, including his fiance Weather. His efforts are jeopardized throughout by the actions of a corrupt colleague, who keeps the killers apprised of police activity and who, at the same time, plots the deaths of the criminals in order to avoid detection. Davenport is continually frustrated as he attempts to analyze and predict the next movements of LaChaise and secure the identity of the traitor within their midst. Woven into this plot are serious contemporary issues of crime and punishment, to include insanity as a cause of criminal activity, the efficacy of rehabilitation of violent criminals, law enforcement's willingness to "bend" the rules in pursuit of criminals, and a criminal justice system that may, indeed, make mistakes in its zeal to gain convictions.

Fatal human flaws emerge as undercurrents in the work. In the characters of LaChaise, Butters, and Martin, the reader sees obsession, impulsivity, and wholesale rage, emotional states that can result in nothing less than their own deaths, which, ultimately, they accept as a natural consequence of both their actions and the "system" which they loathe. Greed and amorality, depicted in the corrupt police officer Andy Stadic, cause actions that are both despicable and predictors of his own destruction, much like that of a tragic hero in a Shakespearean play. Despite the successful murders of two officers' family members, justice is served in perhaps the most efficient manner, with the deaths of the criminals and the vindication of Sandy Darling, who may now return to her former peaceful life. Davenport and fiance surgeon Weather at least temporarily resolve their somewhat conflicting beliefs about the relative value of human life, and the tale ends predictably.



# Chapters 1-3

## Chapters 1-3 Summary

Candy LaChaise is a woman on a mission but does not realize that she is the subject of police surveillance in Minneapolis, as she steals the car keys of a clerk who has just arrived for work. In the parking lot, she steals the employee's white van and meets up with her sister-in-law Georgie and another accomplice, Duane. The goal is a credit union heist, a crime she has committed before, quite successfully. Leaving Duane at the wheel, Candy and Ginger don nylon masks, enter with guns, and complete the robbery, Candy shooting one customer in the face. As they leave, several cops wait in ambush. During the shootout, Candy, Ginger and Duane are all killed.

Rose Marie Roux, the Minneapolis police chief, is concerned about potential media fallout. The incident looks like a setup, and perhaps the crooks could have been taken alive. Lucas Davenport, lead detective assures her, however, that they called in the stolen car before carnage, in order to cover their tracks a bit, knowing that the other police officers were not arrive in time and that the robbery would go down. The injured customer will survive, but there are six bullet holes in Candy, and that may raise eyebrows.

From his prison cell, Dick LaChaise is in a rage over the deaths of his wife and sister and quickly begins his revenge and escape plan, with the help of two friends - Ansel Butters and Bill Martin, two low-life friends in Wisconsin. Butters and Martin travel to Minneapolis in search of a "dirty" cop who can assist the master plan. Daymon Harp, a drug dealer, is eventually convinced to reveal the name of a police friend "on the take," after Butters and Martin slice off his girlfriend's finger.

Dick LaChaise is escorted to his wife's funeral by a tough guard. At the funeral are Amy LaChaise, Dick's mother, and Sandy Darling, Candy's sister. Butters is hiding in the back room and assists LaChaise in his escape, an escape that results in death to the guard. Butters drives LaChaise to an isolated trailer, actually owned by Sandy Darling's father-in-law. Sandy is suspicious and worried that she and husband Elmore may be caught up in the coming "reign of terror."

## Chapters 1-3 Analysis

In these first three chapters, the reader is introduced to a wide variety of characters and may find it a bit difficult to keep them straight among the flurry of activity. On the other hand, the conflict is set very clearly. A group of criminals, apparently rural survivalist types, and certainly loyal to one another, are enraged, impulsive, and willing to engage in extreme violence to accomplish revenge, not only for the deaths of Candy and Georgie but for the perceived injustice perpetrated against them by law enforcement. LaChaise, Butters and Martin are introduced as members of a subculture in America

that believes in an almost anarchic way of life in which the individual must be free from the constraints of societal law. The other side of the conflict, law enforcement, is introduced as a community of individuals who, charged with fighting crime, may, at times, bend the rules a bit in order to achieve its ends. Sprinkled into this conflict is the politics inherent within any urban police and political administration, attempting to appease the public and influence media responses. The foreshadowing is evident - there will be continued violence and a lengthy "war" between these two groups.



## Chapters 4-6

### Chapters 4-6 Summary

Once Lucas Davenport has been informed of LaChaise's escape, he insists upon traveling over the border to Wisconsin to speak with the local police and relatives. From the local sheriff, he gains an understanding of the LaChaise family history - a drinking, abusive father, an inept mother, and children who all turned out damaged and a bit crazy. Mother Amy informs Lucas that Dick will seek revenge on the police who killed Candy and Georgie and that he will not cease this mission until he is dead. Sandy Darling is attempting to profess complete ignorance of Dick's activities or location but does reveal that LaChaise is a drunk, a bit crazy, and holds a great deal of rage over his conviction on a murder conspiracy charge. In truth, LaChaise was rather "railroaded," with little direct evidence, and what he believes to have been a "frame" by the police.

Worried, Sandy arrives at her father-in-law's trailer, finding LaChaise, Butters and Bill Martin. She demands that they leave immediately before her entire family is entangled in their murder. They tell her they are leaving for Mexico the next day, but she is not convinced. Back in Minneapolis, moreover, Lucas Davenport, at home with his fiancée, surgeon Weather Karkinnen, explaining that Dick LaChaise may well attempt to seek revenge on all officers at the scene of the bank robbery. Sandy Darling has also revealed that LaChaise is a member of a White supremacist organization known as SEED.

Minneapolis officer Andy Stadic arrives at the Black Watch Cafe, meeting with drug dealer Daymon Harp in a back room. Harp informs Stadic that two bad guys visited him and were torturing his girlfriend until he finally gave them Stadic's name as the "dirty" cop who was "on the take" in drug trafficking. Harp informs Stadic that these fellows want the personnel files of the specific policemen involved in the shooting of Candy and Georgie. Stadic is clearly upset but has no choice. Stadic and LaChaise meet in Daymon Harp's Laundromat and, faced with the threat of exposure, Stadic gives LaChaise the requested personnel files.

The meeting was not completely secretive. Sally McDonald, a woman who knew LaChaise many years ago, calls the police to inform them that she has seen him in the laundromat, talking to someone she believes might be a policeman. Lucas Davenport is obviously concerned.

### Chapters 4-6 Analysis

Having the background of Dick LaChaise allows the reader greater perspective on his basic personality. Here is a man who, abused as a child, has come into adulthood with great internal rage. His behavior, naturally, reflects his upbringing, and he is perhaps as much a drinker and abuser as his deceased father. Attaching himself to SEED,



moreover, allows a family identity he never possessed growing up. Now, as an adult, the rage can be channeled toward a justice system which railroaded a murder conspiracy conviction and which murdered his wife and sister. One wonders, however, the value he places on any life, including his own, as he clearly states that he will achieve his revenge and probably die in the process. He does not appear to regret his own death nor does he fear it. His pals, it appears, feel the same.

Gaining the identity of the "dirty" cop so early in the plot sequence removes some of the suspense and yet allows the reader to follow the activities and events with a knowledge that the police do not have. Part of the suspense, then, becomes waiting for Stadic to be uncovered and the results of this discovery. Delivering the personnel files to Harp is an ultimate act of betrayal, and one realizes that Stadic has truly "sealed his fate" with that act. LaChaise will now have addresses, telephone numbers and names of family members, giving him the opportunity to seek revenge on more than just the officers involved.



# Chapters 7 - 9

## Chapters 7 - 9 Summary

Using the newspaper accounts, LaChaise now has the names of the policemen who shot Candy and Georgie, as well as two officers also on the scene. He is determined to seek his revenge by killing not the officers themselves, but their family members. Accordingly, Martin is sent to a car dealership to kill Officer Marcy Sherrill's husband. Feigning interest in a car, he is able to murder the car salesman and stuff him into the car. Butters is dropped off at a mall and proceeds to the TV Toys Store, managing to get Kupicek's wife, Elaine, into a back office and shoot her with a silenced gun. LaChaise goes to Dell Capslock's home and rings the bell. Mrs. Capslock answers, but Dell is close behind. LaChaise manages to shoot her but not fatally. Dell shoots at LaChaise as he runs away, calling him by name. LaChaise is wounded and now realizes that the police know he is in town.

Dell telephones 911 for his wife and then Lucas Davenport, explaining that LaChaise's goal is family members. Lucas in turn organizes the placement of all family members in a hotel, including his fiancée, setting up strong security. Stadic is a part of this security force, a man now attempting to develop a plan to cover his tracks and eliminate anyone who may identify him as "dirty." He will need to eliminate a number of people and must determine how to achieve this goal.

LaChaise has been severely wounded but is able to make it back to the house. There, he is apprised of the success of Martin and Butters and sends them on the one-hour drive over to Wisconsin to pick up Sandy Darling. At one time, she was a nurse, and LaChaise needs her now. Martin and Butters threaten Sandy and husband Elmore, and Sandy is reluctantly taken back to Minneapolis where she treats LaChaise's wounds. They have decided that she will be staying there for a time, a demand that clearly frightens her. She is not, however, the only one frightened at this point.

Stadic is in a panic. He now has a need to devise intricate plans to eliminate LaChaise, his friends, and Daymon Harp. The first stage involves calling LaChaise to inform him of the whereabouts of Lucas Davenport's daughter, living with her mother and stepfather. He then anonymously informs Davenport that LaChaise has targeted the daughter. Lucas responds by moving his daughter and her mother, a television newscaster, to the hotel and setting up a "sting" at the home. It is Stadic's hope, obviously, that Davenport will kill LaChaise in the ensuing conflict, eliminating one problem. As well, Stadic calls Harp and insists that he leave town immediately, so as not to be available for police questioning.

Lucas has also put some of his own plans into place. Part of the plan involves returning to speak with Sandy Darling, cross-checking all potential common associates of LaChaise and Daymon Harp, and offering a \$10,000 reward to any snitch who is willing to "give up" a dirty cop. Lucas is independently wealthy, having made a bundle in





computer game development, and will pay the reward himself. The reward is publicized on all television and radio stations, for maximum publicity.

## Chapters 7 - 9 Analysis

The "war" has begun, with the deaths of two spouses of police officers. Lucas Davenport responds in a predictable and organized fashion by placing all potential targets under heavy guard in a hotel. Clearly, he must also analyze what little information he has and proceed to put the pieces of this puzzle together. The biggest piece, obviously, is the internal hazard within the department, and he is certainly without suspects at this point. It is also obvious to him that Daymon Harp is a big piece of this puzzle, and he will need to squeeze him tightly. Davenport is shown to be far more than a police officer responding to duty and protecting citizens. He is a clear thinker, one who sifts through information carefully, as he plans an organized sequence of investigation. At the same time, he is willing to take quick action, moving to sequester those in danger and dipping into his own personal wealth to achieve his goals.

Stadic can also be seen as one who analyzes carefully, even in the face of crisis. He must now eliminate LaChaise, Martin, and Butters, but, as well, all others who may or may not know his identity. Ultimately, this will have to include those on the periphery, such as the Darlings, Daymon Harp, and his girlfriend, Jasmine. Further, Stadic is clearly relying on his ability to set up circumstances in which others do much of this elimination, specifically, his fellow officers. This is a dangerous game, and Stadic knows this.



# Chapters 10 - 12

## Chapters 10 - 12 Summary

Andy Stadic is beginning the implementation of his plan to eliminate anyone who can "finger" him as the dirty cop. To this end, he decides to first take care of the Darlings and to discover the location of the house in which LaChaise, Butters, and Martin are staying in Minneapolis. He travels to the Darling house in Wisconsin, finding Elmore by himself. Elmore discloses the location of the house in Minneapolis and is then promptly killed by Stadic. One down, several more to go.

Sandy Darling is in the company of LaChaise, Butters, and Martin, being held against her will, and is unable to develop a plan of escape. They are staying in a rented house in Frogtown, a run down section of Minneapolis. Butters, having been given the location of Lucas Davenport's daughter's home, is readying to ambush its residents and murder the daughter. He is, of course, unaware that this event has been set up by Stadic, in an effort to secure the killing of all three men by the police. Butters arrives at the home, only to find a flurry of police activity, and quickly departs, realizing that the police have somehow been forewarned. He returns to the home in Frogtown, to find that LaChaise, Martin, and Sandy have gone out.

Davenport receives a "hit" on his \$10,000 reward offer. Proceeding to the home, he is met with the information that the man of the house has rented a home in Frogtown to the three criminals. Armed with the address, Lucas prepares an assault on the home. Unfortunately, Butters is the only one present, and he sees the police setting themselves in place. Climbing out a window, Butters runs, and, in the course of a gun battle with police, is eventually killed. The police now have access to the house, however, and are able to confiscate the arsenal of weapons, as well as take fingerprints. The truck Butters has been driving is identified as belonging to Elmore Darling in Wisconsin, and the local police there are asked to proceed to the Darling home to gather information. Davenport is subsequently informed that Elmore Darling has been found dead.

Sandy, LaChaise and Martin are driving around Minneapolis in Sandy's truck when they hear of Butters's death on the radio. Realizing that they obviously cannot return to the Frogtown home, they must now devise another plan. Sandy requests to be set free, explaining that she will tell the police that they are headed for Alaska. In reality, they should head for Mexico. Instead, LaChaise decides to go to the apartment of Daymon Harp for assistance. Finding no one at home, they break in and discover that Harp has obviously left town. They now have a place to stay while continuing to implement their revenge plan. Calling Stadic, LaChaise discovers that the women being housed at the hotel are readying to leave for their jobs. Weather, fiancée of Davenport, is a surgeon and will be returning to the hospital. The mother of Davenport's child, Jennifer Snow, will be returning to her position as a broadcaster for TV3, a station that has just broken the



news that Butters is dead. Sandy also learns of the death of her husband, found by Wisconsin police.

## Chapters 10 - 12 Analysis

Desperation appears to be the theme of these two chapters. Lucas Davenport is desperate to locate the potential murderers of his fiancée and daughter; Andy Stadig is desperate to achieve the death of all involved, in order to prevent discovery; Sandy Darling is desperate to break free from these "crazies" and cooperate with the police, in order to secure her release and return to Wisconsin; LaChaise and Martin are desperate to avoid capture and find a safe place at which they may regroup and revise plans, given the death of Butters. The other emotional theme is guilt. Lucas obviously regrets that his fiancée and daughter have been exposed to the potential of violence and death, and Sandy feels horrible that her husband, Elmore, whom she does not truly love, has, nevertheless, been an innocent victim of the entire episode. During the storming of the Frogtown house, and the aftermath of Butters's death, news helicopters have taken pictures from above, and, catching Lucas and another cop laughing, have used their film to portray police officers as uncaring and, perhaps, sociopathic. The reader gains some insight here into the nature of modern newsgathering, in which even small details of behavior can be captured and broadcast to viewers, possibly portraying a message very different from reality.



# Chapters 13-16

## Chapters 13-16 Summary

LaChaise and Martin have two short-term goals - change their appearances and obtain some new guns. To this end, Martin takes Sandy to Snyder's Drugstore to purchase hair coloring. While there, indicating that she is going to call LaChaise, Sandy uses the drugstore telephone to call 911 and get patched through to Lucas Davenport. She explains that she has been kidnapped, wants to be rescued, and that there is a police officer involved in the treachery. Unfortunately, the police are unable to get to Snyder's in time, and Sandy returns to the apartment with Martin. Lucas is attempting to put pieces together and is getting some good information. He receives a call from Reginald "Buster" Brown, a disabled individual who spends most of his time "picking up" calls from cell phones, has overheard a one-way conversation between LaChaise and someone, discussing the next moves, including an attack on fiance Weather. He relates the information to Davenport, who calls a meeting with Chief Roux and the mayor. Davenport informs Roux and the mayor that there is a cop involved. He has also discovered that personnel insurance records were accessed the previous day before six in the morning, a time at which no employee would have been in the personnel department.

To achieve the second goal, Martin takes Sandy to the home of a former acquaintance, a gun dealer named Dave. Here, Martin buys two 45's which will suffice for protection until they can get their hands on more efficient weaponry. Back at the apartment, Sandy uses the hair colorings to give both men gray hair and shorter beards. The transformation is quite dramatic, and all are convinced that they will not now be recognized. To prove their point, both men insist that they have some time out of the apartment. After scoping out the hospitals where the victims are recovering and where Weather works, they proceed to the Mall of America and, ultimately, to a bar, where both men become drunk. Sandy continues to look for an avenue of escape, but her plan is foiled when LaChaise attacks another man who has asked Sandy to dance. LaChaise's level of violence and brutality frightens all other patrons, and the three leave threatening anyone who attempts to leave the bar for the next ten minutes. They return to Harp's apartment, but the night is not yet over.

Davenport has determined that the only method of locating the criminals is to find the police traitor and squeeze him. With this in mind, he gathers a group of cops, and they proceed to Daymon Harp's apartment in the hopes of convincing him to give up the name. Unfortunately, LaChaise and Martin see the cars pull up and manage to hide in the garage until they leave. Lucas then finds one of Harp's dealers, Sell-More, who tells him that Harp has left town for an undetermined amount of time. Sell-More is given one hundred dollars as a down payment to gather whatever information he is able about dirty cops. Stadic is present during this conversation and realizes that he has a way to throw suspicion off of himself. Later, he locates Sell-More, directs him to call Davenport



and name Arne Palin, a fellow officer, as the traitor, and then kills him, leaving him in the street to be found.

## Chapters 13-16 Analysis

These four chapters move the plot along quite well. Lucas Davenport is uncovering more information but is certainly frustrated that he cannot put all of the puzzle pieces together, particularly in uncovering the name of the police officer who has betrayed his colleagues. The level of Stadic's willingness to protect himself also becomes apparent. He has accepted the fact that he will have to kill anyone who may be a threat and appears to have no trouble doing so, as the murder of Sell-More clearly demonstrates.

The characters of LaChaise and Martin are expanded and enriched during these four chapters. Bill Martin is now seen as an individual whose psyche is warped. The reader is allowed into his thoughts about killing, and it becomes clear that Martin does not distinguish between killing animals for food and killing human beings. He muses about his childhood killings of all types of animals, graduating to his first murder as a favor for LaChaise, and feeling nothing of regret or guilt. Martin is also paranoid, as demonstrated in his conversation with Sandy about local, state, and national government's goal to rid society of all independent survivalist types who believe in living without any restraint. He has resigned himself to his own death, moreover, but will go out fighting. The bar fight is perhaps the most horrific event in the entire work and gives the reader what he/she has suspected all along - insight into the brutality of Dick LaChaise when he is angered. His continued beating of a man after he was clearly the loser and lying in unconsciousness on the floor, shows a man who cannot reign in his emotions and whose penchant for violence and revenge is unchecked. This is a dangerous man. It appears that author Stanford may be developing these aspects of LaChaise's and Martin's personalities and behaviors so that there will be no pity should they die violently, as they have lived.



# Chapters 17-20

## Chapters 17-20 Summary

This section of four chapters begins with Davenport and others proceeding to Arne Palin's home for an arrest, but Palin's complicity does not "feel" right to either Lucas or Police Chief Roux. In fact, once Palin is brought in, a taped phone call for the purported crooked cop is demonstrated not to be Palin's voice. He is immediately cleared. Unhappy about this turn of events, Stadic continues to plan the elimination of LaChaise and Martin, setting them up this time by sending them to the home of another cop, Franklin, who is on his way home. Stadic's plan is to ambush them at Franklin's home. He has finally remembered that his cell phone number is in LaChaise's cell phone memory, and he must destroy it. This plan is interrupted when Davenport insists that Stadic accompany him in the investigation of the murder of Sell-More. LaChaise and Martin, however, are on the move.

Chaining Sandy in Harp's garage, LaChaise and Martin arrive at Franklin's home, ambushing him in his garage. Believing that he is dead, they quickly leave. Franklin, however, is wearing a vest and is only wounded in the arm and leg. He is taken to the hospital. Meanwhile, back at Harp's, LaChaise is manic, thrilled to have shot a cop. He and Martin are proceeding to become thoroughly inebriated, only to hear on the news that Franklin is not, indeed dead. LaChaise goes ballistic, destroying property in the apartment in a fiery rage. Believing she may have an opportunity to escape, Sandy actually manages to get out onto the windowsill, but the drop is too far. The drunks finally sleep.

Martin is up early the next morning, pushing LaChaise and Sandy to ready themselves. The new plan is to secure heavier artillery in order to attack the hospital at which Franklin and the other wounded are recovering. The drive is lengthy and ends at the home of a gun collector and dealer Martin has previously known. Frank Winter is surprised and nervous to see Martin, but, realizing that Martin is probably armed, he allows him to purchase automatic weapons and ammunition. Given another opportunity to keep the police force apprised, Sandy deliberately spills ammunition on the basement floor, remains to retrieve it, and calls 911 from a nearby telephone, leaving the phone off the hook, so that the call may be traced.

Surrounded by police, Frank Martin is more than willing to give as much information as possible, including the exact types of weapons purchased. Davenport is certain that they are planning an assault on the hospital. Unfortunately, Stadic is present, and he realizes, from Winter's description of Harp's car, that they are staying Daymon's apartment. He quickly telephones LaChaise, informs him that the police are on to their plot, have the new physical descriptions, and urges him to leave town at once.



## Chapters 17-20 Analysis

The character of LaChaise is further developed during these four chapters. It is obvious that his obsession with revenge and his determination to complete his murderous plans are singular focuses, irrespective of the risks involved. There is, as well, a second incident of his drunken violence, and one comes to realize that Sandy is perhaps in grave danger herself. Martin is clearer of thought, and his motivation is not so much revenge for the deaths of LaChaise's wife and sister as it is the importance of his making a statement about his rage toward authority of any kind. Both men appear to be willing to incur their own deaths, if they can achieve their goals. In fact, Martin speaks of the realization that this will be his final "stand," and is almost welcoming it. This fervor and willingness to die make these two far more dangerous than Davenport and fellow officers probably realize. Sandy realizes it, however, and is willing to take great risk herself in an attempt to save her own life.

Stadic's plans have fallen apart, as he is unable to put everyone in the correct place in order to eliminate them. His only hope now is that he can convince LaChaise and Martin to head for Mexico, in the hopes that they will never be captured and his career and life salvaged. He is hopping from crisis to crisis, in an attempt to "cover his tracks," but, in all of this mental rushing about, is largely ineffective.



# Chapters 21-26

## Chapters 21-26 Summary

These six chapters are filled with a flurry of activity and violence, moving the reader further along toward the climax. LaChaise, Martin and Sandy are on the move, ostensibly to Mexico. Stopping in Kansas City to rob another credit union, they then decide to return to Minneapolis, hoping to outwit the police and accomplish their goals of revenge. Lucas, unlike the other police, is not convinced that the enemies have truly given up their quest, given that they have obtained automatic weapons and vests, and given their obsession with achieving their goals of revenge. His supposition is proved correct, after he takes Weather to work the next morning and proceeds to his office.

LaChaise and Martin have returned, chaining Sandy once again in Harp's garage and proceeding to the Hennepin County Medical Center, to finish the earlier attempted murders of Franklin and relatives of other police officers. Taking the guard, they demand the room numbers of their victims and head for the surgical care floor. A bright teen in the lobby, however, pulls the fire alarm, setting the entire hospital into a furor of activity. LaChaise and Martin arrive on the surgical floor, to face Franklin with his gun and Del, who is visiting his wife. Martin is hit as he and LaChaise make their escape. By this time, however, Lucas has arrived, and manages to hit LaChaise as he runs out the emergency room door. Del has been hit, but not seriously.

LaChaise and Martin arrive at Harp's, insisting that Sandy patch them up so that they may proceed to the University of Minnesota Hospital to kill Weather. Sandy does her best and, as she prepares some breakfast for them, calls 911 again and discloses their location. As the 911 call is patched through to Lucas, Stadic, who is present, realizes that he must act quickly. He takes off for Harp's apartment and informs LaChaise and Martin that the police are on their way, leaving quickly in order to arrive with the police.

As the police arrive, LaChaise opens the garage door and begins shooting. He and Sandy take off on foot in opposite directions, Sandy hoping to make it to the Metrodome and call Davenport from a telephone there. Injured Martin is unable to run and attempts to hide, taking shots at cops with his bow and arrow, hitting Stadic and one other. No one is seriously hurt, however, and Lucas manages to pick off Martin. As he stands over the dead man, moreover, he discovers the cell phone and realizes he has an opportunity to discover the identity of the dirty cop through phone records. Stadic is in a panic over the telephone but can do nothing at this point. His only hope is to somehow pick off Davenport during the ensuing chase and take possession of it.

Sandy continues to the Metrodome, while LaChaise hijacks a car and orders the teenage driver to head for the University of Minnesota Hospital.





## Chapters 21-26 Analysis

Clearly, the end is near for the obsessed criminals. Wounded and in disarray, they continue their pursuit, knowing that they will probably die, but hoping to exact their measure of revenge in the process. The futility of Martin's position makes him the first fatality, of course, but the telephone adds a new element of suspense. Lucas can now retrieve call records and determine which police officer is communicating with the criminals. Stadic concludes that his only hope for lack of detection is to stick with Davenport and somehow kill him, as they pursue LaChaise and Sandy. Of course, LaChaise and Sandy will have to die as well. LaChaise, however, has escaped undetected, and one wonders if Stadic can possibly clean up all of the loose ends facing him now. To increase the suspense, only the reader knows at this point that LaChaise is on his way to the hospital at which Weather is currently conducting surgery.



# Chapters 27-31

## Chapters 27-31 Summary

This section begins with Lucas calling for the cell phone records, just before he receives the call that LaChaise is at the hospital and may already have Weather. At the hospital, LaChaise has taken a guard by force and is arriving on the surgical floor. There, he forces two nurses to take him into the operating room, where he retrieves Weather and takes her into a small office at the end of the floor. Weather begins a conversation with LaChaise, as he holds a gun to her head and calls 911, insisting that they patch him through to Davenport.

Lucas has arrived at the hospital, along with a sharpshooter. Both are on the surgical floor but staying out of sight. Weather, hoping to convince LaChaise to surrender, continues to talk with him about their similar backgrounds, both having grown up on farms in Wisconsin. Abruptly, Lucas arrives and begins to talk with LaChaise, who has at least taken the gun away from Weather's head. As they converse, however, the sniper, hiding behind a gurney, is able to get a perfect shot, and LaChaise falls. Weather, covered with the dead man's brain matter, goes into shock, pushes Lucas away, and is taken by hospital staff. Lucas has no time to worry about Weather now.

The cell phone records are revealed to Lucas, and he now knows the identity - Andy Stadic. Unfortunately, Stadic is with the group of officers converging on the Metrodome in search of Sandy Darling, and it is obvious to Lucas that Stadic intends to murder her. Fortunately, he receives a call from Sandy and is able to warn her about Stadic, causing Sandy to hide in a camera booth above the searching officers. Lucas arrives and is immediately the target of gunshots from Stadic. Realizing that she may have a weapon of her own, Sandy removes a large steel cylinder and lobs it out of the booth onto Stadic. The ordeal is finally over.

Returning to the hospital, Lucas is now concerned for Weather and her response to his approval of the sniper shooting of LaChaise. Weather and he do not necessarily always share the same beliefs about crime, punishment, and potential for rehabilitation. As well, he is berating himself for not having discovered Stadic earlier and perhaps avoiding the continued bloodshed altogether. Weather, however, has had opportunity to reflect and realizes that LaChaise truly could not be trusted to surrender. He was, as she described, like a crazy child, unpredictable and doomed for destruction.

## Chapters 27-31 Analysis

The plot has ended as expected, with the typical victory for those on the right side of the law. Those who have died have done so as a consequence for their own actions, and, clearly, this end was the only logical outcome for individuals who were so crazed and obsessed. The death of Stadic, moreover, spares everyone the horror of indicting and



convicting a venomous individual, whose greed, amorality, and ego centrism resulted in thorough betrayal of his colleagues and a willingness to commit multiple murders in order to save himself. The ultimate reconciliation of Lucas and Weather is also as expected, and both seem to have a better understanding of one another's positions on crime and punishment. Weather will continue to believe in saving life whenever possible but understands as well that some cannot be saved. Lucas has some regret about the sniper shooting of LaChaise but certainly not enough to significantly alter his internal rigidity.



# Characters

## Lucas Davenport

Lucas Davenport is a chief detective with the Minneapolis Police Department, apparently assigned to the homicide division. Independently wealthy, he pursues a career in criminal justice as a matter of passion and principle. To Lucas, law enforcement is a black and white issue. There are "bad guys" who commit crimes, and there are "good guys" who must catch and punish them, even if this pursuit involves bending the "rules" a bit. Thus, he is willing to allow a bank robbery to occur, in order to catch the female criminals he knows in advance are the perpetrators. Unfortunately, this decision results in the deaths of two women and put in motion an obsession for revenge on the part of the husband and brother of these two. As Lucas pursues those bent upon revenge, a strong character emerges - one who is able to analyze, anticipate, persevere, and respond quickly, as well as hold deep loyalties to his principles, colleagues and friends. As the plot unfolds, Davenport attempts to be proactive in his pursuit, hoping to anticipate the moves of the criminals and to detect the identity of the crooked colleague, but he fails to accomplish his ends before many are wounded and some are dead. While one might initially think that this carnage does not significantly affect him, it is clear by the end that Lucas blames his own inability to ferret out the culprits and their movements earlier than he did.

## Weather Karkinnen

Dr. Weather Karkinnen is a surgeon at the University of Minnesota Hospital and fiancée of Lucas Davenport. As a physician and surgeon, Weather believes in doing all required to save lives, and conflict between herself and Lucas tends to revolve around the issue of the value placed upon the lives of violent criminals. Weather would like to believe that most can be rehabilitated in some way and that such rehabilitation should at least be attempted. Lucas, on the other hand, believes that certain criminals are completely beyond redemption, particularly those who murder violently. Weather becomes the target of two obsessed criminals whose goals are to cause their enemies pain through the killing of loved ones. As a result, Weather is sequestered, along with family members of other targeted policemen, at a heavily guarded hotel. Committed to her profession and to her responsibilities at the hospital, however, Weather rebels, and continues to go to work despite the repeated pleadings of Lucas to remain hidden. Eventually, Weather is confronted by LaChaise, who holds a gun to her head and with whom she calmly converses in order to secure his surrender. Though she is certainly negatively affected by the ultimate killing of LaChaise at the hands of a police sniper, she rallies and develops a bit more understanding of Davenport's position on crime and punishment.



## Dick LaChaise

Brought up in an environment of poverty and violence, Dick LaChaise is a rough character and member of a white supremacist organization called Seed. After a lifetime of minor skirmishes with authorities, he is finally imprisoned for murder conspiracy, although his sister-in-law, Sandy Darling, insists that he was "railroaded" and convicted on flimsy evidence. When Dick's wife and sister are killed during a bank robbery, he vows revenge, by killing the loved ones of those who killed his. He escapes during the funerals of his wife and sister, cutting the throat of a guard and meeting up with friends Martin and Butters, two individuals only too willing to assist him. LaChaise is a completely tragic figure, almost of Shakespearean nature, his fatal flaw being obsession with revenge. Ultimately, this mentally ill and violent man must meet his death, as any classically tragic hero does, but throughout the work, one understands that LaChaise is willing to accept this fate if he can accomplish his goals.

## Bill Martin

Bill Martin grew up in much the same manner as Dick LaChaise, but, in addition to being poor and disenfranchised, Martin witnessed the rather wholesale harassment and punishment of his father at the hands of local police. Eventually, his father hanged himself, and Martin moved into adulthood an angry bitter man, full of hatred for government at all levels, and certainly for all law enforcement. He joined Seed, a white supremacist organization, and expanded his hatred to all non-white groups in the United States. He is a survivalist and isolationist of sorts, living without long-term relationships, except for perhaps loyalty to like-minded friends, such as Dick LaChaise. In his willingness to assist LaChaise in his pursuit of revenge, Martin is perhaps making his "last stand," fully aware that he will probably die during the crime spree, and accepting that death as an almost natural consequence of his existence.

## Sandy Darling

Sister of Candy LaChaise, Sandy is not involved in criminal activity. She lives on a horse ranch in Wisconsin, content with her mundane existence, and certainly not willing to become involved in Dick LaChaise's obsession for revenge. Sandy understands Dick's rage, and knows that he was, in fact, wrongfully convicted of murder conspiracy; however, she wants no part of LaChaise and his friends. Sandy becomes embroiled in the crime spree by force, and, throughout the plot, attempts to keep the police informed of the activities of LaChaise and Martin, hoping to escape and to be freed from any conspiracy charges herself. She becomes the target of Andy Stadic, as he attempts to eliminate anyone who might identify him as the corrupt policeman, and manages to kill him, saving herself and Lucas Davenport.



## **Andy Stadic**

Andy Stadic is a cop whose greed becomes his fatal flaw. Divorced and on his own, Stadic becomes embroiled in the drug trade of the Twin Cities, taking pay-offs to line his own pockets. His eventual goal is to accumulate enough wealth to live out his life in relative luxury. When his name is disclosed to LaChaise and Martin, however, Stadic is forced to assist them in order to avoid discovery, and his life becomes a whirlwind of criminal activity. Realizing that his only salvation is in the murders of LaChaise, Martin, and the Darlings, he embarks a series of reactive activities which only serve to place him at greater risk and eventually cause his death. Stadic is a classic tragic figure, a victim of his own fatal flaw of greed, and death is perhaps the best resolution for him.

## **Rose Marie Roux**

Chief of Police Roux is a strong, aggressive woman who insists upon impeccable behavior from her police officers. Ignoring a smoking ban in public places, she lights up as she wishes and is quick to anger if she believes any of her officers have "crossed the line" in pursuit of criminals. Davenport is often one of her targets, but she works hard to diffuse any public criticism of him or fellow officers.

## **Ansel Butters**

Cohort of LaChaise and Martin, Butters goes to Minneapolis to participate in the plot for revenge. For his part, Butters obtains the first house in Minneapolis for the three, but is killed in one of the early skirmishes with the police.

## **Daymon Harp**

A local drug dealer, Harp is in collusion with Andy Stadic. When his girlfriend, Jasmine, is tortured, he reveals Stadic's name to LaChaise, Martin and Butters. As the situation heats up, Harp leaves town, and his apartment becomes the dwelling place of Martin and LaChaise after they abduct Sandy Darling.

## **Jennifer Snow**

A television anchorwoman, Jennifer Snow is the mother of Lucas Davenport's daughter, although they have never married. She is forced to be sequestered in a hotel, as her daughter's life is threatened.



## **Objects/Places**

### **Twin Cities**

The nickname given to Minneapolis-St. Paul, two major cities in Minnesota that border one another.

### **Midland Steel Credit Union**

Site of bank heist of Candy and Georgie LaChaise, during which both women are killed.

### **Black Watch Cafe**

Meeting place for Andy Stadic and Daymon Harp, located in Minneapolis

### **The Sandhurst Hotel**

Hideout for relatives and loved ones of the police officers threatened by the activities of LaChaise, Martin, and Butters

### **University of Minnesota Hospital**

Hospital at which Weather Karkinen, fiance of Lucas Davenport, is a surgeon.

### **Snyder's Drug Store**

Store to which Martin and Sandy Darling to purchase supplies and site of Sandy's first 911 call to the police.

### **Mall of America**

Huge nationally known shopping mall located in Minneapolis

### **ERU**

Letters for Emergency Response Unit, a highly trained police unit in Minneapolis

## **Hennepin County Medical Center**

Hospital to which wounded relative of officers are taken

## **Metrodome**

Large stadium in Minneapolis and site of showdown between Davenport and Stadic

## **Seed**

A white supremacist group to which LaChaise, Butters and Martin belong



# Themes

## Justice

The concept of justice is both complex and abstract and weaves itself through all of the personalities and events of this work. To Lucas Davenport, justice involves punishment of those who break the law, through imprisonment, and, when necessary, lethal force. Rehabilitation is not a significant factor to him, as justice is comprised of black and white issues only. Weather, however, holds the belief that justice must be tempered with rehabilitation and, at times, mercy. As a physician, she is in the business of preserving life, and this guiding principle often clashes with Davenport's apparent rigidity. To LaChaise and Martin, both victims of past injustice, the concept is far more primitive and involves meting out in-kind punishment for perceived wrongs. Thus, LaChaise will kill the loved ones of the officers who killed his wife and sister. Martin is happy to seek revenge for the humiliation and abuse of his father at the hands of law enforcement years earlier. Butters, along with LaChaise and Martin, sees justice as any necessary steps taken to thwart governmental control and regulation of private lives, as well as the promotion of white supremacy within the United States. While the reader certainly sees the justice in the deaths of Butters, Martin and LaChaise, there is, as well, a small part of each of us that pities them and understands the circumstances which led to their behaviors. Justice, in the form of death, is also meted out to Andy Stadick who, because of his greed, set in motion a series of events that injured and killed others. Justice can be simply defined as giving to anyone what is his or her "due;" the problem lies in determining what this "due" is, and both state and federal judicial systems continue to grapple with this issue.

## Psychological Damage

There is an ongoing debate in the field of psychiatry related to the causes of mental illness. Those who adhere to the "nature" argument claim that mental illness is genetic and physiological in nature. The brain is wired incorrectly, and chemical imbalances cause the aberrant behaviors. Proponents of "nurture," however, state that mental illness has its roots in events and experiences from birth into adulthood. Most mental health professionals today believe that both nature and nurture play roles in mental illness. No one disputes, moreover, the fact that one's childhood experiences, both positive and negative, impact adult personality and behavior. Dick LaChaise is a "damaged" individual. He and his sister, Georgie, were parented by an alcoholic abusive father and a mother who lacked both the will and desire to intervene on their behalf. Bill Martin's childhood was traumatic as well, as he witnessed the systematic abuse and humiliation of his father at the hands of local law enforcement. Eventually, his father hanged himself. Both LaChaise and Martin are damaged and angry adults, ready to seek revenge on a society to which they have never truly belonged and which have never accepted them as individuals of value.



## Betrayal

While there are many specific reasons for betrayal, the single general cause is selfishness. Stanford portrays this damaging behavior through the character of Andy Stadic. Stadic is perhaps an effective, and certainly respected, police officer, who falls victim to his own greed. He participates in the Minneapolis drug trade for the money, but, in so doing, places himself in the position of being discovered, as events beyond his control threaten to expose his illegal activities. To protect himself, he at first assumes that all he need do is kill any of the criminals who can identify him, to include LaChaise, Martin, Butters, and both Darlings. His plan for Daymon Harp is unclear. In the implementation of his plans, however, he must betray the principles by which police officers swear to operate and divest himself of any guilt or remorse. This divestment comes all too easily as his panic increases and his behaviors become more erratic and impulsive. The worst betrayal, however, is his willingness to place colleagues and their loved ones at risk and, ultimately, to attempt the murder of fellow officer, Lucas Davenport. In these actions, Stadic can be seen as an individual without a conscience, for it does not appear that he has remorse for the deaths and injuries caused. Death for Stadic is the outcome that saves him from both the personal and legal consequences of his actions.



# Style

## Point of View

A third person omniscient point of view is perhaps the only way in which this tale can be told. There are so many characters with such diverse backgrounds and mental/emotional issues, it is absolutely critical to have a full picture of their thoughts and feelings, in order to comprehend their actions. Consider Dick LaChaise and Bill Martin, for example. The reader must be given much more than a cursory description of their backgrounds in order to perceive them as believable. Both men are mentally damaged and, unless the reader is allowed access to their thoughts and feelings, he would have difficulty understanding the excesses of their rages, violence and hatred. Sandy Darling, as well, can only be seen as a believably complex individual through her thoughts. She appears to have loved her sister and yet is certainly unwilling to voluntarily join in revenge for her death. She has empathy for Dick LaChaise in some ways, but is certainly far more concerned with saving herself from potential conspiracy. She is often seen as torn between emotional loyalties and the practicality of her situation, and one is only able to know this through both her actions and her thoughts. This point of view, moreover, allows the reader access to information not known by the characters, serving to enhance the suspense. Through an omniscient point of view, therefore, both the plot and characters are enriched and, most important, drives the reader onward.

## Setting

The bulk of the novel is set in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, commonly known as the Twin Cities. Because LaChaise is from Wisconsin, however, there is a rather continual movement back and forth. Sandy and Elmore Darling live in Wisconsin, and this is the site of LaChaise's escape, as he attends the funerals of his wife and sister. The police, as well, must travel back and forth as they pursue the criminals. The major setting in the Twin cities, however, is necessary, because certainly drug trafficking and police corruption are more believable in a larger urban area. Authors frequently use seasons and weather to create overall mood and tone, and Sandford is no exception. The winter weather contributes in two ways. First, the continual snowfall serves to hamper police efforts in many instances, often disrupting their travel and their visual ability to assault the criminals when they come upon them. Second, the descriptions of the cold, the darkness, and the unending snow serve to symbolically describe the misery of the lives of LaChaise, Martin, Stadic, and, to some degree, Sandy Darling. As well, the rather constant consistent activity that occurs at night or in the darkness of early morning hours enhances the overall mood of the plot.



## Language and Meaning

The use of language is a critical part of this work. There is such a diversity of individual personalities and backgrounds that common language throughout would destroy the credibility of the characters. Thus, Standford must continually shift language styles and vocabulary to fit the speakers. LaChaise, Butters, and Martin are uneducated, "backwoods" individuals whose vocabulary is rather limited and simplistic, as well as grammatically incorrect. Sandy Darling appears to be more educated and certainly more rational, and her conversation reflects this. Police officers move between toughness and practicality in language, releasing anger with strong language but able to depict themselves as calm strategists in several situations. Those not in law enforcement or engaged in criminal activity, such as Weather Karkinnen and Jennifer Snow, are clearly the more educated and civilized of the characters, and their verbiage reflects higher levels of vocabulary and grammatical correctness. Overall, then, language serves to create both impression and mood effectively. Because the work is essentially a tale of crime and punishment, moreover, there is no need for vocabulary of great substance. The value of the work lies not in beautifully written descriptive passages or lengthy discourses, but in the suspense of rapid action, thought and conversation.

## Structure

Sudden Prey is a chronological account of events and circumstances resulting from the deaths of Candy and Georgie LaChaise at the hands of the Minneapolis police. Opening with the stalking of these two female criminals and the shootout that follows, a series of cause-effect relationships is set in motion. The initial section of the work encompasses Dick LaChaise's rage regarding these deaths and the plotting for revenge, with the assistance of two friends, equally consumed with rage of other varieties. Thus, the conflict is established. The second far more lengthy section details the violent revengeful acts and the responses of law enforcement, creating a rising action filled with rapid activity, cat-and-mouse games, and the suspense created by a crooked police officer's attempts to protect himself from detection. The third section provides the reader with the knowledge that the criminals are outnumbered and doomed to failure, but also with the motivation to see how this implementation of final justice is to be played out. The climax occurs with three separate events, each in a separate location, specifically, the death of Martin in the streets of Minneapolis, the killing of Andy Stadic by Sandy Darling, and the tense hospital scene in which LaChaise is eliminated at the hands of a police sharpshooter. The denouncement is perhaps a bit thin in substance. The loose ends are neatly tied, but the reconciliation between Weather and Lucas occurs without significant resolution of their conflicting beliefs about the relative value of human life.



## Quotes

As Sloan took the car through an easy U-turn and the three blocks toward the Midland Steel Federal Credit Union, Lucas looked out the window at the street, and felt the world begin to shift.

The shift always happened before a fight, a suddenly needle-sharp appreciation of image and texture, of the smell of other bodies, of cigarette tar and Juicy Fruit, gun oil, wet leather. If your mind could always work like this, he thought, if it could always operate on this level of realization, you would be a genius. Or mad. Or both. (p. 10)

She felt the bullet go through, several of them, was aware of the noise, of the flash, of the faces like wanted posters, all straining toward her, but no pain, just a jostling feel, like rays of light pushing through her chest...then her vision went, and she felt Georgie falling beside her. She was upside down, her feet on the stoop, her head on the sidewalk, and she waited for the light. The light would come, and behind it....She was gone. (p. 16)

He could remember that one good Christmas when they'd had the tree, he was nine or ten, she was three or four, and somebody had given her pajamas with feet in them. "Feetsies," she called them. "I'm gonna put on my feetsies." Must have been twenty-five years gone by, and here she was, with a head like a football. Again he felt the impulse toward tears; again, nothing happened. (p. 34)

LaChaise, Sandy thought, was at Elmore's daddy's trailer, out at the hill place. Had to be. That whole story about Martin and Butters needing a place to stay - it sounded like bullshit as soon as Elmore had told her about it.

But the problem was, she was Candy's sister, LaChaises's sister-in-law. She'd been present when LaChaise had escaped and murdered a man. And now LaChaise was up at a trailer owned by her senile father-in-law....She'd seen LaChaise railroaded by the cops for conspiracy to commit murder; they'd do the same to her, and with a lot more evidence...Sandy Darling sat and shivered, but not with the cold; sat and tried to figure a way out. (p. 40)

Still, nightfall was a relief. With night came the sense that the search would slow down, that cops would be going home. He found a stack of army blankets and draped them across the windows to black them out. After turning on the lights, he walked once around the outside of the trailer, to make sure he didn't have any light leaks, came back inside, adjusted one of the blankets, and climbed back to the bed. The silence of the woods had been forgotten, submerged in his years in a cell, and for a while he couldn't sleep. (p. 54)

LaChaise had spent whole days thinking about it, day-dreaming it, when he was locked up; the requirements of the coming wars. Us against Them. They would need a base. In the countryside, somewhere. There'd be a series of log cabins linked with storm sewer pipe, six feet underground and more sewer pipe set into the hills as bunkers. Honda generators for each cabin, with internal wells and septic fields...Weapons: sniper rifles



to keep the attackers off, heavy-duty assault rifles for up close. Hidden land mines with remote triggers. Armor-piercing rockets. He'd close his eyes and see the assaults happening, the attackers falling back as they met the sweeping fire from the web...(p. 61)

He had ten minutes. He closed his eyes, settled in and thought about the other men he'd killed. Martin didn't worry about killing: he simply did it. When he was a kid, there was always something around the farm to be killed. Chickens, hogs, usually a heifer in the fall. And there was the hunting: squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, doves, grouse, deer, bear.

By the time he killed his first man, he didn't much think about it. The man, Harold Carter, was owed money by LaChaise, that LaChaise had borrowed to set up his motorcycle parts store. Carter was talking about going to court. LaChaise wanted him to go away...Martin killed Carter with a knife on the back steps of his own home, carried the body out to his truck and buried the man in the woods. Nothing to it; certainly not as hard as taking down a pig...(p. 83)

Stadic traded his doorman's uniform for street clothes and hurried down the street to his car. The ferocity of the attacks had stunned him. Near panic, he'd spent the evening pacing in and out of the Sandhurst, wondering whether he should run for it. He had almost enough money...But he realized, with a little thought, that it was too late. Cops' families had been attacked. That was worse than killing the cops themselves. If anyone found out that he'd been involved, there'd be no place to hide. If he were to be saved now, salvation would come in one form: the death of LaChaise and all of his friends. Which wasn't impossible...(p. 114)

Stadic thought about it all the way into the Cities. He was exhausted from the day on duty, from the drive, from the killing. Through the thinning snow, he had flashes, almost visionlike in their clarity and intensity, of Elmore Darling sitting at the table in the instant before the gunshot. Darling was smiling, hopeful...afraid. He was alive. Then he wasn't. There was no transition, just a noise, and the smell of gunpowder and raw meat, and Elmore Darling wasn't there anymore...The visions frightened Stadic: What was happening? Was he losing it? At the same time, his cop brain was working out the inevitable progression. He now knew where LaChaise and his friends were hiding. If he worked it right, if he came up with the right story, he could ambush them. He needed to draw them out of their house, unsuspecting. (p. 142)

Lucas said the laughter had been hysterical, or on that order. She only half-believed it. She'd lived with him long enough to feel the satisfaction he got from confrontation, and the dealier the confrontation, the better. A death wish, maybe; sometimes when he talked about his world, she could barely recognize it as the same place she lived. They would drive across town, and she'd see good houses and nice gardens and kids on bikes. He'd see whores and dopers and pedophiles and retired cat burglars. (p. 178)

Martin didn't relate well, but for the first time since she'd known him, he started to talk. "I'm like Buters," he said. "Running out of time. All the people like us are: they're coming to get us, there's no way we can win. We just make a stand, and go."



"Who's they?"

He shrugged. "The government - all of the government, the cops, the game wardens, the FBI, the ATF, all of them. And the media, the banks, liberals, whatever you want to call them. The Jews...They're all in it together. City people. They don't all want to do us harm - they just do." (p. 195)

Sandy nodded. She could feel her heart thumping. The cops had hit the Frogtown house the day after the first shootings. She didn't know how they'd done it, but they'd killed Butters and they would have killed all of them, probably. Now they were knocking on the door of the new place. The whole thing was coming apart, just like Elmore had said it would. Elmore had never been bright: now he was looking like a prophet. (p. 216)

Lucas headed out to TV3 in a city car, monitoring the radio, his cell phone in his pocket. This was like nothing he'd ever heard of: this was like a war. He didn't have the usual intervals of quiet, when he could sit and think about patterns, and the way the opponents were working. Puzzle pieces were slipping past him; he could feel it. Maybe if he got some sleep...(p. 239)



## Topics for Discussion

One cause of Dick LaChaise's anger is his conviction for a crime which it appears he did not commit. Sandy Darling attempts to justify LaChaise's actions to Davenport based somewhat upon this event. What is Davenport's reaction?

Lucas Davenport has a rigidity with respect to crime and punishment which is typically portrayed as that of all police officers. "Bending" the rules in order to get "bad guys" off the streets is commonly reported by news media. Is this practice justifiable? Why or why not?

Mental illness is a significant factor in the lives and actions of LaChaise, Martin and Butters. All three have apparently had deprived and traumatic childhoods, leading to their willingness to accept violence as an acceptable method of achieving goals. Should the condition of mental illness temper society's response to their violence?

Rehabilitation of criminals is a controversial topic. Lucas Davenport obviously disagrees with its premise, while fiance Weather believes it should always be attempted. What is your belief?

Identify and describe the fatal flaws in the characters of LaChaise and Martin.

Greed and corruption are not isolated to an occasional member of a police force. Identify and describe a current news issue in which greed and corruption on the part of a leader or leaders has injured others.

Lucas Davenport is independently wealthy, having made a fortune in technology. Why does he choose to place his life in jeopardy by joining a police force?