

# **Tooth & Nail: An Inspector Rebus Novel Study Guide**

**Tooth & Nail: An Inspector Rebus Novel by Ian Rankin**

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# Plot Summary

Tooth and Nail is the third novel by Ian Rankin featuring Inspector John Rebus. In this novel, Rebus is sent to London to help detectives hunt a serial killer dubbed the Wolfman by the press. Rebus feels out of place and like a fraud as the detectives and reporters call him a serial killer expert. Rebus has only hunted one serial killer and that case was personal. Rebus investigates the Wolfman in his own fashion, drawing help from a psychologist who claims she can profile the killer based on his victims, while at the same time dealing with a family crisis involving his sixteen year old daughter. Tooth and Nail is an old fashioned detective story from an award winning author that will keep readers spellbound until the final sentence.

Rebus arrives in London just as news of a new victim of the Wolfman serial killer begins broadcasting over the airwaves. Rebus goes directly to the scene of the crime and is shocked to see the brutality first hand of a case he has only read about. Rebus attends the autopsy and spends some time with the lead detective, uncomfortably aware that this detective seems to think he is some sort of expert based on one case Rebus worked several years before. Rebus is not an expert, that case was personal. However, Rebus has committed to helping the London detective, so he decides to do his best.

The next day, George Flight, the lead detective, takes Rebus on a tour of the crime scenes. Rebus asks questions and learns that the husband of the first victim, Tommy Watkiss, was initially a suspect because of his past sexual assault convictions. Rebus decides he would like to speak to the husband as well as the dental pathologist working the case. Flight promises to take him the next day. That night, Rebus goes to visit his ex-wife and daughter who moved to London after the divorce. The meeting is awkward and full of tension, especially when his daughter Sammy's boyfriend arrives. Rebus dislikes Kenny Watkiss on sight.

The following day, Flight takes Rebus to the Old Bailey, the courthouse, where Tommy Watkiss is on trial for rape. When the trial ends in a mistrial, someone calls out from the balcony. Rebus looks and sees that the spectator is Kenny Watkiss, his daughter's boyfriend. A moment later, Rebus is introduced to Malcolm Chambers, the barrister trying the case. Chambers is angry that the cop who arrested Watkiss introduced a bias into his testimony and chews Flight out over it.

Flight takes Rebus to speak to Anthony Morrison next, the dental pathologist. Morrison tells Rebus and Flight that the person making the bite marks on the victims has an oddly shaped jaw, showing them a re-creation he made based on the bite marks. Morrison also suggests that the suspect is using artificial teeth, that he might actually be wearing dentures.

That night, Rebus goes to dinner with Lisa Frazer, a psychologist who came to see him at his office and convinced him she could come up with a profile of the killer based on his victims. Frazer gives Rebus the beginning of her report over dinner, introducing some information Rebus had not considered before, such as the possibility that the killer



is female and the idea that the killer knows police procedure and might be a cop. Afterward, Rebus walks Frazer home and she invites him upstairs, beginning a romantic affair.

The next day, Rebus is called to Glasgow to give testimony in a case he worked. While there, Rebus walks through a market and finds a stand selling mismatched dentures. Rebus thinks nothing of this at the time, but when he returns to London and someone puts a pair of chattering teeth on his desk, Rebus begins to wonder if the killer might not have bought a pair of mismatched dentures at a similar market to use on his victims. Before this, another murder is discovered. Rebus arrives at the crime scene and discovers Lisa there as well. The victim turns out to be a copycat done by a burglar who was surprised in the act by the home owner. However, Rebus tells the press that the victim is one of the Wolfman's victims and that the Wolfman has been caught.

Rebus is chastised by both Flight and the press liaison officer for speaking to the press without permission, but Rebus promises the lie will flush the killer out of hiding. Instead, the press coverage and the pictures of Lisa with Rebus prompt the killer to reach out to Lisa. The killer sends Lisa a letter that warns she will be the next victim if she does not retract the lies told to the police. Lisa is placed into police custody, but insists on going to the Old Bailey to conduct some interviews she had scheduled weeks before. While this is taking place, Rebus receives a call from his daughter informing her that her boyfriend has disappeared. Rebus promises to look into the matter and asks Flight for his help.

Rebus begins to think that the Wolfman is a cop and that Lisa could be in danger. Rebus goes to the university where Lisa works and learns that Lisa has lied to him, that she is not a psychologist, but a research student. Rebus also learns that Lisa is at the Old Bailey instead of the safe house Flight was supposed to send her to. On the way to the Old Bailey, Rebus realizes that the note sent to Lisa uses some slang common among Americans. It is also slang that Rebus heard Malcolm Chambers, schooled in America, use. It dawns on Rebus that Malcolm Chambers could be the Wolfman and he is supposed to meet with Lisa at that very moment.

Rebus rushes to the Old Bailey only to discover that Chambers has already disappeared with Lisa. Rebus steals a car and chases after them, managing to get a confession out of Chambers over the car phone. When Flight gets up a road block, Chambers leaves his car and runs into the National Gallery. Rebus follows and a knife fight ensues. Chambers is killed, leaving the police with no motive for the killings. Rebus prepares to return to Scotland, but before he does, he goes to see Kenny Watkiss. Kenny has been hiding from his uncle because he has been skimming money from the stolen goods racket Watkiss has been running. Kenny tells Rebus that not only is his uncle involved in the scam, but a cop is as well. Rebus gives Kenny money to get out of town under the condition that Kenny not see Sammy ever again.



# Prologue and The Chamber of Horrors

## Prologue and The Chamber of Horrors Summary

Inspector John Rebus is a detective from Scotland who is requested to come to London to help with the hunt for a serial killer based on his experience in a prior case. Rebus is uncomfortable with the idea that he is an expert in finding serial killers and hopes only to be of assistance.

In the prologue, Rebus is on a train for London, happily listening to a group of sports fans grieve over their team's loss to the Scots in the Calcutta Cup. Rebus is headed to London at the request of the Metropolitan Police to help hunt a serial killer the press has dubbed the Wolfman. Rebus is glad for the break because he recently offended his boss in a moment of drunken thoughtlessness and has been riding a desk every since, as well as attending psychology courses that are useless in police work. When Rebus arrives at the London station, he hears on the radio that another Wolfman victim has been found. Rebus immediately heads to the scene.

In *The Chamber of Horrors*, George Flight leaves the comfort of his home to oversee the crime scene of the latest Wolfman victim. The scene is a towpath beside the river where the victim had been walking from her job to the home of her sister. Phillip Cousins and his assistant Isobel Penny arrive immediately after Flight. Flight greets the coroner and Isobel, an old friend from school. As they inspect the body together, Rebus arrives. Rebus is sickened by the sight of the murdered woman, realizing how more vivid and tragic the scene is in real life compared to pictures. After carefully documenting the body's position and the wounds, Cousins orders the body removed to the morgue. As they wait, Flight's supervisor arrives and Rebus listens as he is brought up to date on the case. When Rebus is introduced he once more becomes aware that these people think he is some kind of expert in serial killers when in reality he only solved one serial killer case. That case was personal.

Rebus and Flight do not talk much on the way to the morgue, except to share details on the victim. At the morgue Rebus meets a few more of Flight's colleagues, including D.C. Lamb, a man who clearly dislikes Rebus from first sight, most likely because Rebus' arrival suggests that the Metro cops need help with this case. Rebus watches the autopsy, finding himself growing more and more nauseated by the brutality perpetrated on the poor woman. Cousins determines from the initial examination that the woman is clearly another of the Wolfman's victims based on the wound patterns and the bite marks. Afterward, Flight begins to take Rebus to his hotel, but the nausea will no longer be ignored. Rebus asks to be let out a few blocks from the hotel. Rebus begins to walk and is confronted by a couple of beat cops who think he is loitering. Rebus tells them who he is and gets them to drive him the rest of the way to the hotel.

Across town, the Wolfman returns home and cleans up after the kill. The killer refers to himself as she. The killer looks at art in a special room of his home, many of the



paintings damaged beyond repair. The killer focuses on one painting that features a person who could be male or female. The killer suddenly becomes enraged and begins slashing the painting with a knife.

## Prologue and The Chamber of Horrors Analysis

The prologue introduces the main character, John Rebus, and his reason for coming to London. John Rebus is a mild mannered detective who finds joy in other people's disappointments, at least when it comes to sports. This could also be an example of Rebus' pride in his country, a trait that is honorable and understandable. Rebus is on his way to London because the Metro police believe he is some kind of expert on serial killers and they have a serial killer active in their streets. Rebus is annoyed by this because he does not feel as though he is an expert. This reveals humility on Rebus' part and further illuminates who he is as a man.

The case involves a killer, the Wolfman, who is killing woman in the streets of London and mutilating their bodies both by stabbing them and biting them. The killer has killed four people they know of at this point. The London police are no closer to finding the killer than they were when they found the first victim, but they hope that a fresh pair of eyes will help. Rebus, a seasoned detective, is disgusted by what he sees in the victim, telling the reader just how bad the brutality must be. However, few clues have been gathered at this point to help Rebus make a reasonable judgment about who the killer might be.

The Wolfman narrates the final paragraphs of this first chapter. The Wolfman refers to himself as she, but does so in the third person view point leaving the reader unclear if the Wolfman actually is a woman or if the Wolfman's mental illness is so distorting his perception that he is talking about someone outside of himself. The Wolfman focuses on some paintings, ripped and damaged, in a special room in his home, then damages another himself. This leaves the reader wondering if the paintings were done by the Wolfman or by someone close to him and why the Wolfman is so angry at this person.



# Underground

## Underground Summary

Flight takes Rebus on a tour of the crime scenes the next morning. Rebus learns the first victim was found on Wolf Street, explaining the name the press has given the killer. The first victim was a prostitute killed in a dark alley. Afterward the killer attempted to hide the body with trash from a nearby trash can. Flight tells Rebus that the prostitute was married to a man who often beat her. This man, Tommy Watkiss, has also been arrested for sexual assault on a number of occasions. Rebus wonders aloud if Watkiss was ever considered a suspect and is told he was, but dismissed almost immediately because his teeth did not match the bite marks on the victims.

The second victim died several miles away from the first, suggesting the killer is mobile. On the way to the scene Rebus and Flight make small talk. Rebus confesses that he is uncomfortable being called a serial killer expert, but Flight brushes off his statements. At the scene, Rebus learns this victim, an office manager, was killed on her way home from work. The third victim was an unemployed black woman, the only victim of color, who died in an isolated area near some train tracks. There is nothing common between the crime scenes, they are far apart and appear to be chosen at random, and little to go on in regards to the timing of the crimes. There seems to be no pattern at all. Back at the Murder Room, Rebus sits at his borrowed desk and thinks over what he knows. Rebus makes suggestions to Flight about the direction of the investigation, but Flight has already considered almost everything Rebus suggests.

Late in the afternoon, Rebus is alone in the office when an officer comes in to inform Rebus that a woman has requested to see a senior detective and Rebus is the only one available. Rebus agrees to see the woman even though he suspects it is a joke being played on him by the resentful junior detectives. The woman turns out to be Lisa Frazer, a beautiful psychologist who wants to create a profile of the killer. Rebus is inclined to refuse the request, but Lisa provides him with reading material that he finds impressive. Not only that, but Lisa is very attractive and Rebus is reluctant to see her go. Flight joins them and Rebus decides it would not hurt to allow Lisa to look at the case files. Lisa gives Rebus a couple of books on psychology to read, causing Flight to tease him about his bedtime reading material.

That night Rebus goes to visit his ex-wife and daughter who moved to London after the divorce. The meeting is tense and awkward, growing more so when Sammy, Rebus' daughter, receives a visit from her boyfriend. Rebus dislikes the boy on sight and goes out of his way to make the boy appear like an immature fool. It is clear that Sammy and Rhona, Rebus' wife, both like this young man a great deal, leaving Rebus feeling pushed out. However, he regrets his actions later.

The Wolfman has only just made a kill the night before, but the urge has already returned. The Wolfman has kidnapped a young person and brought them to his home,



locking the person in the secret room. The Wolfman takes pictures of the victim before using scissors to trim the person's nose hairs. The Wolfman then writes on the wall with spray paint, writing slogans about art. Finally the Wolfman forces the victim to look at the writing, while chanting a phrase about nose hair being unbecoming over and over again.

## Underground Analysis

Rebus takes a tour of the crime scenes, but all he really learns is that there is no pattern to the crimes. Normally a killer does things in a specific order, picking locations based on something familiar or important to the killer, but this one seems to make it a point not to create a pattern. At this point, Rebus finds this confusing, but does not see anything significant about it.

A psychologist requests a chance to see the case files and create a profile about the killer. This woman comes to the police voluntarily, asking for a right to see highly confidential and explosive files. Rebus gives her a chance because he likes what she has done in a case that has already been solved and because she is beautiful. However, the reader notices that the woman gives Rebus a book with essays in it including one she wrote, but the essay does not include her credentials, something that is highly unusual for a person with a PhD. Rebus does not think there is anything wrong with this woman, but in light of the fact that the Wolfman calls himself she, the reader suspects that perhaps this woman might be the Wolfman and might want to see the files to see how close the police are to catching her.

Rebus visits his wife and daughter and the meeting is understandably awkward. At the same time, Rebus meets his daughter's boyfriend and finds the boy disrespectful. Rebus goes out of his way to put this boy in his place when the boy really did nothing wrong except to belittle Rebus in an innocent, off-handed way. Rebus is simply a father who has realized that his daughter has grown up and he is not happy with that thought. However, this does inject some tension into the plot and suggests that Rebus might not be done with this boy yet.

The killer once again takes over the narration, again referring to himself as a she. The killer has kidnapped a person and locked that person in his house to play with him. Of importance here is the escalation of the urge to kill and the killer's decision to hold on to the victim, suggesting a desire to do more than the already brutal, horrible acts he has perpetrated on his previous victims. Also of importance in this section, the killer refers to his home as belonging to someone else, once again suggesting that the killer is the victim of some sort of multiple personality disorder or perhaps working with someone else.





# Catching a Bite

## Catching a Bite Summary

Lisa Frazer calls Rebus before he is out of bed and arranges to meet him for dinner to discuss her findings to that point. Rebus readily agrees. Over breakfast, Rebus and Flight discuss psychology in police work. Flight makes it very clear that he does not believe in psychology and that he thinks Rebus is wasting his time with Lisa Frazer. After breakfast, Rebus and Flight go to the Old Bailey, the courthouse, so Rebus can speak to Tommy Watkiss, the first victim's husband. Watkiss is on trial for rape. Lamb is there, watching closely, hoping Watkiss will finally get what he deserves. However, Watkiss is released because the cop who arrested him testified that he called him by name the day he arrested him, suggesting that Watkiss was known by the police. This introduces a bias to the jury, causing a mistrial. Lamb is angered by this as is the prosecuting barrister, Malcolm Chambers, who warns Flight not to allow it to happen again. Before leaving the courtroom, Rebus hears someone call out to Watkiss and realizes it is Kenny, Sammy's boyfriend.

After leaving the Old Bailey, Rebus and Flight go to the office of Anthony Morrison, the dental pathologist. Morrison tells Rebus and Flight that the bite marks were made by someone with a misshapen jaw who more than likely wears some sort of dentures. Morrison also shows them a cast of the person's jaws, revealing a badly misshapen face that would stand out in a crowd. Morrison also suggests that the killer is escalating because the depth of the bites has increased. Finally Morrison also suggests that from the size of the bottom jaw, the killer could be a woman.

Back at the office, Rebus begins making suggestions as to patterns in the case. Flight shows Rebus a large file full of research he has done into moon patterns and other patterns he thought might shed some light on the case. None of it resulted in anything. That night, Lisa Frazer takes Rebus out to a Chinese dinner in Chinatown. They discuss the case at the end of the meal, lingering over drinks. Lisa has come up with some clear suggestions about the case, such as the idea that the killer does not feel a need to control his victims, that he is non-confrontational in his working life, and that the killings are an attempt by the killer to take revenge on one person in his or her life over and over again. Rebus finds all this information helpful, opening new avenues of thought to him.

After dinner Rebus walks Lisa back to her apartment. Lisa invites Rebus upstairs and they make love. Afterward they share a bottle of wine and make love again. All the while Rebus continues to consider the idea that the Wolfman might in fact be a woman. Across town, the Wolfman has just left a formal dinner and goes walking through a known area where prostitutes work. The Wolfman picks up a prostitute, brings her back to his apartment, and kills her in the secret room. Afterward the Wolfman considers hanging a mirror so he can see if the victim is aware of what is about to happen as he brings the knife around their throat. Afterward the killer thinks of a time when she



begged her mother to stop something her father was doing, but does not reveal what that is.

## Catching a Bite Analysis

Rebus meets Malcolm Chambers, a character who appears rather minor at this point in the novel. Chambers is a barrister who is the London equivalent of the American prosecutor. Chambers is angry that he has lost a case due to a mistake by a cop and he takes his anger out on Flight. Flight accepts this because Chambers is good at his job and he often makes convictions in even the most circumstantial cases. Chambers, Rebus learns, was educated in America. This is not significant at this point, but might be later on.

Rebus meets with the dental pathologist and learns that the killer is not only escalating, but if the teeth that are inflicting the bites on the victims belong to the killer, then his face must be badly misshapen. The killer could also be a woman based on the size of the lower jaw. However, the pathologist also suggests that the teeth are not real, but some kind of dentures. Again, this is not significant at this point in the novel, except to introduce the idea that the killer could be a woman, something hinted at by the Wolfman himself as he continues to refer to himself as she. However, this information could prove useful later as Rebus continues to investigate.

Rebus begins a relationship with Lisa Frazer. This seems dangerous to the reader because Lisa could be a suspect, based on her unsolicited interest in the case and the possibility that she is lying about her credentials. However, Lisa also appears to have come up with some useful information about the killer, including the idea that the killer might be killing his victims in order to exact revenge on someone in his life over and over again, an idea also supported by the Wolfman's obsession with the strange paintings in his house and the strange comments that float through his head, such as the cry to his mother to make his father stop something. It is possible the killer is killing his mother over and over again for some kind of childhood neglect or abuse. The killer is escalating, having killed two people that the reader now knows about, but the police do not. This escalation suggests to the reader that the killer is losing control of his sanity and is most likely going to be caught soon because of the sloppiness of the recent kills and their proximity to his home.



# Fibs

## Fibs Summary

Rebus is awoken early in the morning by a phone call insisting he return to Scotland. A case in which Rebus is involved has gone to trial and they need him in Glasgow to testify. Rebus rushes to the airport and does not have time to inform Flight about this change in plans. Once there, Rebus has several hours to waste before he is needed at the courthouse, so he goes for a walk through the streets of the city. Rebus comes across an open air market where he finds booths selling almost anything one can think of. At one booth Rebus even sees a vendor selling mismatched dentures.

Flight is at the Old Bailey, attempting to not become angry with Rebus for disappearing without a word. Lamb annoys him as he shows his glee that Rebus is not around. Flight gets a visit from Cath Farraday, the press liaison officer, who informs Flight that she has given the press some false information about the Wolfman that Rebus suggested they circulate, such as the idea that the Wolfman is homosexual. Chambers joins them briefly, smiling at the headlines about the Wolfman that had been in the morning paper. Cath, however, is clearly not happy with the whole situation, making it clear she does not believe Rebus' rouse will work.

When Rebus returns to his hotel, he gets a phone call from Flight telling him there has been another murder. This time they made an arrest. Rebus goes to the crime scene and is surprised to find Lisa there. Rebus takes Lisa into the home with him where Cousins and Penny are looking at the body. Cousins makes the determination in minutes that this is a copycat and that the person in custody most likely killed the woman to cover up the fact that he was robbing the place. Rebus goes out to the press who have gathered outside and announces that it is another Wolfman murder and that the Wolfman has been arrested, much to the surprise of Cousins, Penny, and Lisa, who are standing behind him as he makes the announcement.

Flight is extremely angry with Rebus for lying to the press without talking to him first. All information is supposed to go through Cath and by doing what he did, Rebus broke several rules and placed Flight in danger of losing his job. Rebus insists that what he did will help flush out the killer, but Flight does not want to hear it. Flight tells Rebus to go home. Rebus returns to his office where he finds a pair of chattering teeth on the desk. The teeth make Rebus think of the vendor at the market and he begins to wonder if the killer bought some teeth at a similar booth in London. Rebus goes back out to run the idea past Flight. Flight agrees it is plausible, but they will have to wait till the weekend when the market opens to check it out. Rebus returns to the office where Cath Farraday yells at him for lying to the press. The next morning, the Wolfman cuts pictures of Lisa out of the newspaper and begins to compose a letter.



## Fibs Analysis

Rebus returns to Scotland for the afternoon, angering Flight because he does not tell him he is leaving. Flight is very concerned about Rebus' whereabouts and actions, suggesting to the reader that there is more at stake for Flight than just help on a case as far as Rebus is concerned. In London, the press begins printing lies that Rebus has fed to them through Cath Farraday, lies that he hopes will anger the killer and bring him out into the open. Rebus continues this campaign by lying to the press at the site of a copycat, angering both Flight and Farraday. Rebus is beginning to run this case like he would in Scotland, playing the cowboy, and stepping on toes as he goes. Rebus is drawn in now and he wants to solve the case at all costs, setting up a situation in which Rebus may lose the few friends he has, not to mention his career.

Lisa Frazer shows up at the crime scene of the copycat killing, again suggesting to the reader that she could be the killer. Cath Farraday's behavior is also suspect, suggesting as well that she could be the killer. Both have knowledge of police procedure and both are exhibiting strange behavior. However, the gender of the killer is still in question, therefore it is hard for the reader to guess for sure who the killer might be. The Wolfman, though, is responding to the press the way Rebus had hoped, beginning to write a letter that the reader assumes will go to the police. This could help the police identify the killer, so it seems like a hopeful sign at this point in the investigation.

Finally, Rebus has made a leap of logic about the bites on the victims. The dental pathologist suggested the bites might be made by false teeth. It is possible that the killer bought two sets of teeth, an upper and bottom, that he did not try on and did not know would not match, suggesting an explanation for the odd shaped jaw this person would have to have to make the bites he makes. This would also explain the small bottom jaw the dental pathologist mentions. It seems Rebus is getting closer to the killer, increasing the tension in the plot and adding to the suspense.



# Churchill

## Churchill Summary

Rebus goes to the office early after attempting to reach Lisa and having no luck. A woman comes to the office and tells Rebus that she was attacked by the Wolfman before the murders began but managed to escape. Rebus believes her story and is anxious to get a description out of the killer, whom this woman insists was a man, as well as having the woman go public with the story. Flight is not as ready to believe her story, however, and insists that they do a background check on her before releasing anything.

Rebus continues to attempt to find Lisa with no success. Rebus goes to the university to see her, but the secretary, who does not seem to know who he is talking about at first, says that she is not there, but gives him a few ideas as to where he might find her. Rebus goes to a bookstore the secretary mentions, does not find Lisa, but walks out with a bag full of books. Rebus then attempts to go to the library, but cannot get in so he goes to the National Gallery and walks around, nearly running into his ex-wife as she conducts an art class. Rebus quietly slips away without being seen. From there, Rebus goes to Lisa's apartment where he finds her clipping her picture out of the paper. They spend the afternoon making love before Rebus slips away.

Rebus goes to his wife's apartment to get information on Kenny. Rebus sneaks a peek at their address book while he supposed to be using the bathroom and steals the boy's phone number. Rebus calls the police department from a bar and has the number checked, claiming it is a lead on the Wolfman case. Rebus gets an address in Churchill Estate, a bad part of the city. Rebus is warned not to go there alone, but does anyway. No one is home, but as Rebus leaves, he is attacked by a group of kids on skateboards. A man comes to Rebus' rescue and takes him to a pub where the locals buy him a great many drinks.

The Wolfman recalls a fight he saw between his parents when he was young. It was a fight that would be repeated many times throughout his childhood. The Wolfman's father would become drunk and make fun of his mother's paintings. They would argue, the mother claiming that her art was beautiful even though in reality it was not. The mother would belittle the father as well, making fun of his long nose hairs. The Wolfman also recalls how his parents homeschooled him, often dressing him up like the little girl they had wanted him to be. The Wolfman recalls all this as he walks a new victim into the secret room, the Butcher's Gallery.

## Churchill Analysis

A woman comes forward, claiming to be the Wolfman's first victim, the only victim to survive. Rebus believes her immediately, partially because of the scar on her neck and



partially because he needs a break like this. Flight does not believe her, however, showing the reader how much more cautious he is than Flight. Rebus is a rogue cop who will do almost anything to catch the criminals, but Flight is more a by the books kind of guy.

Rebus has trouble locating Lisa all day, finally finding her home alone. There is also something odd about Lisa's job if the reader takes into consideration that the secretary seemed to not know who Rebus was asking about when he went to her office. The secretary acted very weird, suggesting that Lisa is hiding something. Again this suggests to the reader that she could be the killer even though the witness believes the killer is a man. The Wolfman continues to refer to a she, therefore it could be two people, or it could be Lisa suffering some sort of psychotic break. Either way, Rebus continues to be oblivious to this idea, perhaps blinded by his affection for Lisa.

Rebus turns his attention from the Wolfman case for a time and begins investigating Sammy's boyfriend. Rebus does not make much headway, but finds himself mugged and alone in a rough part of town. The kind people in the area buy him many drinks, cheering him up and showing him how considerate English people can really be, even the poor ones who live in the most dangerous part of town.



# Know This, Womin

## Know This, Womin Summary

Rebus wakes in his hotel room badly hung-over and bruised. Rebus struggles up and through breakfast before going to the office. Rebus is there only a few minutes when a frightened Lisa shows up. Lisa has received a letter from the Wolfman at her home address threatening to kill her if she does not retract the lies that have been told to the press about the Wolfman. Rebus immediately takes the letter to the lab and has it tested for fingerprints. Flight has a couple of cops come to take Lisa to a safe house. Before they leave, Cousins shows up and asks if he can get a ride to the Old Bailey where he is due to testify. Lisa insists on going to the Old Bailey as well because she has a couple of interviews scheduled there that she cannot miss. Flight agrees as long as the cops stay with her.

While waiting for the lab results, Rebus tells Flight about Kenny Watkiss and why he was in Churchill Estates where he was mugged. Flight agrees to help him as best as he can. A short time later, Rebus gets a phone call from Sammy telling him she needs his help. It seems that Kenny has disappeared and Sammy is frantic that something bad has happened to him. Rebus agrees to look for him. Sammy gives Rebus a list of friends she knows Kenny associates with. Rebus recognizes one of the names as a child molester who is a snitch for Flight. Rebus returns to the murder room where he and Flight discuss everything the lab got from the letter, which is basically nothing but a few paint flecks. Rebus then tells Flight about Kenny and the things Sammy told him. Flight suggests they go speak to his snitch.

## Know This, Womin Analysis

Lisa gets a letter from the killer threatening her life. This letter could have been sent from the real killer, or it could have been sent by Lisa herself. However, now that a witness has come forward claiming the killer is male, it is most likely that the killer sent the letter to Lisa. The reader notes, just the same, that there is still something strange about Lisa that Rebus is sure to learn about sooner rather than later.

The letter is tested, but nothing comes from it but a few flecks of paint, which tell Rebus and Flight nothing. The reader knows where the paint comes from, but this does not help to discover the identity of the killer. When Cousins shows up and is so insistent on riding to the Old Bailey with Lisa, it seems to suggest he might be up to no good. Cousins is a pompous man that Rebus does not like, but he does not appear to be a killer. However, the reader cannot rule him out at this point.

Rebus' daughter, Sammy, arrives at the police station insistent that Rebus find Kenny Watkiss, her missing boyfriend. While Rebus wants to help Sammy, he is not very interested in finding Kenny until Sammy mentions the name of a snitch of Flight's who is



a know child molester. This connection is interesting, suggesting to both Rebus and the reader that Kenny is not the innocent person he appears to be at the beginning of the novel. Perhaps now Rebus will be able to do something to protect his daughter rather than continue to feel as useless as he has felt up to this point.





# The Gallery

## The Gallery Summary

Flight and Rebus find the child molester sitting in a park watching children play. Flight begins interviewing him about Kenny Watkiss, threatening him to such a degree that the man finally tells them what they want to know. However, the reader is not allowed to know what it is at this point. Flight warns Rebus to stay away from Watkiss until he has a chance to do something about the situation. Rebus decides to leave the station anyway, causing Flight threaten him with the loss of his job. However, Rebus is no longer thinking of Watkiss, but is focused on the odd behavior of Lisa's secretary the day before. Rebus decides to visit her again.

The secretary confesses under Rebus' interrogation that Lisa is not a professor at the school, but a research student working on a project about criminal profiling. Rebus is angry at this lie and decides he will confront Lisa. However, Rebus learns that Lisa is not at the safe room as she is supposed to be, but called the secretary and told her she was at the Old Bailey meeting with Malcolm Chambers. As Rebus leaves the school, he overhears a couple of American students use a slang phrase that was written in the letter to Lisa. Rebus also recalls that the postmark on the letter was downtown, near the Old Bailey. It occurs to Rebus that the killer could be Malcolm Chambers, the barrister who was educated in America and works at the Old Bailey.

Rebus rushes downtown and discovers that Lisa has been alone with Chambers in a courtroom for several minutes. Rebus also finds that Chambers has taken Lisa to the parking garage where he has a car parked. Rebus goes out the front of the Old Bailey and commandeers a car that is sitting outside, unaware that a judge is still sitting in the backseat. Rebus explains the situation to the judge who helps Rebus figure out how to use the car phone to call Flight. Rebus again explains everything to Flight, begging him to set up some sort of road block ahead of them. The phone rings when Flight hangs up and it is Chambers on the other end. Chambers can see them following him and wants to know what is going on. When Rebus tells him, Chambers confesses to the crimes and threatens to kill Lisa. Rebus stays on his tail, attempting to overtake him at a red light. Finally Chambers comes to a roadblock that Flight has set up outside the National Gallery.

Rebus follows Chambers into the National Gallery where he finds Chambers' destroying priceless works of art. They struggle and Chambers stabs Rebus in the chest. Rebus manages to get control of the knife and he kills Chambers. Later, Rebus joins Flight at Chambers' home where they have found multiple dead bodies and the destroyed paintings. Flight cannot understand what Chambers' motive was. Afterward, Rebus has dinner at Flight's house. Flight gives Rebus an address where he can find Kenny Watkiss.



## The Gallery Analysis

Rebus and Flight interview the child molester about Kenny Watkiss and clearly get some kind of information, but the reader is not allowed to know what it is at this point. However, at the end of the chapter Flight gives Rebus an address, foreshadowing a confrontation between Rebus and Watkiss in the final chapter.

Rebus finally becomes aware of the oddity surrounding his visit with Lisa's secretary, so he goes to find out what is going on. The reader feels as though Rebus might have finally made the leap of logic to the idea that Lisa might be the Wolfman. However, it turns out that Lisa only lied about her credentials, as was suggested in an earlier chapter. Unfortunately, in her quest to get her PhD, Lisa has placed herself in danger by having a meeting with Malcolm Chambers whom Rebus finally realizes, thanks to American slang and a postmark, is the Wolfman.

Rebus plays the hero, chasing Chambers through the streets of London and ending in a knife fight that results in Chambers' death. No one understands the motive behind the killings, but the reader has established enough from the Wolfman's rambling thoughts to know he was badly abused by his parents, that he was forced to dress as a girl, and these things combined to cause him to lose his grip on sanity.



# Family

## Family Summary

Rebus goes to the address Flight gave him and finds Kenny Watkiss hiding from his uncle. The child molester told Flight and Rebus that Kenny is moving stolen goods for his uncle, but is skimming money off the top. Tommy Watkiss finds out and threatens to kill Kenny, so he is hiding out. Rebus gives Kenny money and makes him promise to leave town. Rebus also makes Kenny promise to stay away from Sammy. Rebus is not sure he can trust Kenny, but feels he has no choice. Kenny then tells Rebus that a cop is helping Tommy Watkiss with his stolen goods scam.

Rebus leaves the building and sees a couple of guys watching it. Rebus knows they are thugs working for Watkiss, so he scares them away. A minute later, Rebus sees Kenny leave the building and hopes he does the right things. Rebus returns to his hotel and is packing when Lisa comes into the room. Lisa is upset that Rebus is leaving, but he is honest and tells her he cannot be with someone who would lie to him. Lisa claims she only lied because she knew Rebus would not let her look at the case files if she did not. Rebus agrees, but insists they cannot be together. Downstairs Rebus finds Flight dealing with the bill. On the way to the train station, Rebus tells Flight what he did and that the cop Kenny named was Lamb. Flight promises to take care of it. Rebus gets on his train and looks forward to returning home.

## Family Analysis

Rebus does his fatherly duty by Sammy. Rebus does not hurt Kenny, but warns him and gives him the means to leave town. In return, Kenny gives Rebus the name of a bad cop. This seems like ironic justice because the name is a cop that Rebus has disliked since arriving in London. Rebus does nothing about it himself, however, but gives the information to Flight instead. Once more, Rebus proves that although his methods might be unconventional, he is a good, honest man.

Lisa apologizes to Rebus and explains herself, but Rebus cannot look past her lies. The relationship is over before it even begins. It is a sad situation, but Rebus once again proves that he is an honest man who expects the same of those around him. Rebus and Flight leave on friendly terms, which also shows some more of Flight's character, suggesting to the reader he is also an honest, hardworking cop at heart.



# Characters

## Inspector John Rebus

John Rebus is a detective from Edinburgh, Scotland. Rebus has solved multiple homicide cases in the past, including one serial killer case. Based on this information, the detectives in London working a serial killer case dubbed the Wolfman by the press have asked Rebus to come to London to help on the case. Rebus goes, partially to get away from his boss, who is not happy with him and has relegated him to a desk job, and partially because he wants to help. However, Rebus goes to London with the assumption that he will only be there a few days. The case draws Rebus in and he decides to stay until it is over.

While Rebus is in London working on the Wolfman case, he goes to see his ex-wife and daughter who moved to London after the divorce. Rebus is unhappy to see how grown up his daughter has become in his absence and that she is dating. Rebus also does not like the boy his daughter is dating because he is older and appears to be a disrespectful person. Rebus begins investigating this boy and discovers that he has some connection to a known sexual offender. During this investigation, Rebus's daughter comes to him and tells him the boy is missing. Rebus eventually learns that the boy had been involved in illegal activity and crossed his associates. Rebus helps the boy leave town with the understanding that he will stay away from Rebus' daughter.

At the same time, Rebus meets a woman who claims to be a psychologist and is interested in helping with the case. Rebus talks to her and finds her credible, so he allows her access to the files in order to draw up a psychological profile of the killer. Rebus is also attracted to this woman and is thrilled when she invites him to dinner to discuss the case. After dinner, Rebus and this woman, Lisa Frazer, become romantically involved. It is not until later that Rebus learns Lisa lied to him about her profession. When the case is over, Rebus returns to Edinburgh alone, ending his relationship with Lisa.

## George Flight

George Flight is the primary detective on the Wolfman case. Flight has done extensive research on the case, as well as research on serial killers. Flight comes across a case Rebus worked on in Edinburgh a few years before and realizes that Rebus could help them with the Wolfman case. Flight convinces his superiors to ask Rebus to come, but once he arrives, Flight feels responsible for all of Rebus's actions on the case. Flight refuses to allow Rebus to work alone and he becomes enraged when Rebus tells a lie to the press without clearing it with the department's press liaison first.

Flight is a good detective who wants to solve the Wolfman case because of the danger it poses to the community, not because solving it would bring notoriety on him. If Flight



had been looking to become a star, he would never have invited Rebus to join the case. Flight is a simple man who only wants to do his job well and go home at night with a clear conscious. In the end, Flight decides that retirement might be the best situation for him, as he could join a security firm and work normal hours.

## **Lisa Frazer**

Lisa Frazer is a research student at the local university in London. Lisa is from Canada. Lisa comes to the police department hoping to look at the files on the Wolfman case so that she might draw up a profile on the killer. Lisa tells Rebus that she is a psychologist in order to seem more professional, but this is a lie. Lisa continues to pretend she is a psychologist as she gets to know Rebus better, even after they become lovers.

At one point in the case, Lisa shows up at a crime scene that originally appears to be another Wolfman victim. Rebus takes her into the room where the victim is and then walks with her outside to speak to the press. As a result, Lisa's picture and name are featured in several newspapers the following morning. The Wolfman, upset by lies Rebus feeds the press, fixates on Lisa. The Wolfman writes Lisa a letter telling her to back off or he will kill her next. Later, Rebus learns that Lisa has an appointment to meet with a barrister that he believes is the Wolfman. Rebus rushes to Lisa's side only to discover she has already been kidnapped by the Wolfman. Rebus chases them down and rescues Lisa when he corners the Wolfman and kills him.

## **Cath Farraday**

Cath Farraday is the press liaison for the London police department. All information given to the press is funneled through Cath. Rebus has several ideas of things that should be told to the press to annoy and hopefully force the Wolfman out of hiding. One of these things is to claim the Wolfman is a homosexual. Cath plays along with Rebus at first, but when Rebus goes to the press on his own and tells them the Wolfman has been caught even though he knows that he has not, Cath becomes very angry with him. Cath threatens to make sure Rebus is fired. Cath is an unhappy, unattractive woman who does not like to be outsmarted. For a short time, the reader might even believe that Cath is the killer based on her reactions to Rebus' suggestions and her clear dislike of all people.

## **Malcolm Chambers**

Malcolm Chambers is a barrister, the London equivalent to an American prosecutor. The police like Chambers because he is ruthless and he almost always gets a conviction. However, most people do not like Chambers on a personal basis because he is tough, arrogant, and unkind. Rebus meets Chambers for the first time when Flight takes him to the Old Bailey to speak to a suspect named Tommy Watkiss. Watkiss is on trial for rape and Chambers is the prosecutor. However, the case is thrown out because the arresting



cop makes a comment on the stand that prejudices the trial. Chambers is angry about this mistake and takes his temper out on Flight.

Chambers was educated in the United States. This information combined with slang from the letter sent to Lisa Frazer, leads Rebus to believe that Chambers is the Wolfman. Rebus goes to the Old Bailey to speak to Lisa and learns that she had an appointment to speak to Chambers. Rebus follows them only to find that Chambers has taken Lisa out of the building and is driving away with her. Rebus chases them down, speaking to Chambers on his car phone and receiving a confession. Later Chambers gets out of his car and runs into the National Gallery where Rebus is able to corner him. Rebus ends up killing Chambers with Chambers' own knife.

## **Rhona and Samantha Rebus**

Rhona is Rebus's ex-wife. Rhona divorced Rebus because she felt like he spent more time married to his job than to her. After the divorce, Rhona took their daughter and moved to London. Rebus goes to visit Rhona and their daughter when he arrives in London, but the visit is tense, leaving Rebus feeling as though he should leave them alone.

Samantha, Sammy, is Rebus's daughter. Sammy is sixteen and nearly full grown, leaving Rebus grieving for the baby she once was. When Rebus visits Sammy, he discovers that she is dating a young motorcycle messenger. Rebus does not like the boy for his conceit and begins looking into his criminal history. Sammy comes to Rebus a few days later and tells him that her boyfriend has disappeared. Sammy calls him dad and uses all her charm to convince him to help. Rebus does help, but he does not return the boyfriend to Sammy, but instead makes him promise not to see her again for her own good.

## **Kenny Watkiss**

Kenny Watkiss is a motorbike messenger who is dating Rebus' daughter. Rebus does not like the boy when he meets him at Sammy's apartment and his dislike for the boy deepens when he sees him calling out to a rape defendant in a courtroom at the Old Bailey. Rebus begins looking into Kenny's past and soon learns that he is the nephew of a known sexual offender, as well as friends with a child molester. Rebus speaks to the child molester and learns that Kenny has been dealing in stolen goods with his uncle. When Rebus locates Kenny after he runs away to hide from his uncle, Kenny tells him that a cop is involved in the stolen goods racket. Rebus gives Kenny money and tells him to disappear. Rebus also tells him to stay away from Sammy.

## **Tommy Watkiss**

Tommy Watkiss is the husband of one of the Wolfman's first victims. Due to his relationship to the victim, Watkiss is a suspect in the murders. However, because



Watkiss is a small time criminal who is more often arrested for petty crimes and sexual assault, he is quickly dismissed as a suspect. Rebus wants to talk to him anyway. Flight takes Rebus to the Old Bailey where Watkiss is on trial for rape and they watch as the case is dismissed. Rebus decides not to speak to Watkiss. Rebus later learns that Watkiss is the uncle of the young man who is dating his daughter. Rebus also learns that Kenny has been stealing from Watkiss and is afraid for his life. Rebus cannot do anything about Watkiss, but he protects Kenny and gets him out of town.

## **Philip Cousins and Isobel Penny**

Philip Cousins is the coroner in London. Cousins is a pale, corpse-like man who has a dry sense of humor. Rebus finds Cousins offensive, especially on account of his humor and his superior attitude toward everyone. However, Cousins is a good coroner who is able to quickly determine when a victim is part of the Wolfman killings and when they are a copycat. Isobel Penny is Cousins' assistant and his lover. Isobel went to school with Flight, so they are fairly good friends. Isobel knows a great deal about police procedure, causing the reader to suspect she is the Wolfman for a small section of the novel.

## **Anthony Morrison**

Anthony Morrison is the dental pathologist who works the Wolfman case. Morrison takes impressions of the bites the Wolfman leaves on his victims and studies them so that he can make a comparison when the police find a suspect. Morrison takes the impressions a step further and creates a facial re-creation that represents the way the killer would look based on the bites. The face is badly distorted because the upper and lower jaw do not line up. Morrison also theorizes that the teeth are not the person's natural teeth but might be dentures of some sort.



# Objects/Places

## Letter

After becoming enraged over articles in the newspaper about his sexual orientation and other speculations, the Wolfman sends a threatening letter to Lisa Fraser, promising that she will be the next victim.

## False Teeth

The Wolfman uses a set of mismatched false teeth to bite his victims on the stomach.

## Knife

The Wolfman uses a knife to cut the throat of his victims and then to stab them multiple times after they fall to the ground.

## Paintings

The killer has a bunch of paintings his mother made when he was a small child. The killer focuses his anger at his parents at these paintings, slashing them. Paint flakes from these paintings are found in a letter the killer sends to Lisa Fraser.

## Autopsy

Rebus attends the autopsy of the fourth victim of the Wolfman in order to learn all he can about the killer's methods.

## Dental Impressions

The dental pathologist takes impressions of the bite marks in order to compare against suspects.

## Facial Cast

The dental pathologist creates a jaw that approximates the size and shape of the jaw of the person who made the bite marks on the Wolfman's victims. The jaw is wildly deformed, creating a face that would stand out in a crowd.





## **Butcher's Gallery**

Butcher's Gallery is the name the Wolfman gives to the secret room in his apartment where he keeps his mother's paintings and where he kills people.

## **National Gallery**

Rebus visits the National Gallery while in London in the hopes of finding Lisa Frazer. Instead, Rebus nearly runs into his ex-wife. Later, when Rebus chases the killer through the streets of London, the Wolfman goes into the National Gallery and begins destroying priceless works of art. Rebus confronts him and kills him.

## **Old Bailey**

The Old Bailey is the courthouse in downtown London where Malcolm Chambers is a barrister. It is at the Old Bailey where Rebus first meets Chambers and where Chambers is able to kidnap Lisa Frazer.

## **London, England**

London is where Rebus is sent to help police track down a serial killer who has been dubbed the Wolfman by the press because of the name of the street where his first victim was discovered.

## **Edinburgh, Scotland**

Edinburgh is where Rebus lives and works.

## **Glasgow, Scotland**

In the middle of the case, Rebus is called back to Scotland to give testimony in a case in Glasgow. It is during this visit that Rebus realizes the killer is using false teeth that do not match to bite his victims.



# Themes

## Child Abuse

The Wolfman grew up in the home of parents who were alcoholics. The father often became angry and violent toward his wife. The mother often belittled her husband, calling him names and ridiculing his appearance. The mother was an artist, a bad artist, who believed art to be her calling. Whenever someone would attempt to point out that her art was bad, the mother would become abusive, belligerent, and lash out. This included her own husband and her child.

The Wolfman's parents wanted a girl. When the Wolfman was born a boy, the parents decided to dress him up like a girl. The parents kept the Wolfman home from school most of his childhood, preferring to homeschool him rather than allow him out of their sight. This removed all avenues the child had to experience normal adult behavior and all means of escape. The child also became the target of his father's sexual urges. Whenever the parents would fight and the mother would lock the father out of the bedroom, the father would satisfy his needs with his son.

This abuse caused the Wolfman to grow up a deeply disturbed young man. The Wolfman got to the point where he killed his own parents in such a way that it looked like an accident. The Wolfman took his mother's paintings and hung them in a special room in his house where he would stare at them for hours and then slash them with his knife. The Wolfman has become confused about his sexual identity, often calling himself a girl during his killing sprees. The Wolfman is angry, bitter, and compelled to kill in order to help deal with the emotional aftermath of the abuse that ruined his childhood.

## Ambition

Lisa Frazer is ambitious. Lisa is working on her PhD in psychology and she imagines one day working with the police as a profiler. Lisa lies to Rebus and tells him she is already a psychologist in order to get a look at the Wolfman files for a school project. Rebus believes Lisa is a psychologist who hopes to become a profiler, so he not only lets her see the files, but he listens to her ideas and uses some of them in the investigation. This ambition puts Lisa in harms way when the press take a picture of her and label her a police psychologist. The killer focuses on Lisa as the cause of some of the bad press he has been getting and sends her a letter informing her she will be his next victim. In fact, the killer kidnaps Lisa from the Old Bailey, but Rebus figures out the Wolfman's true identity in time to save her.

George Flight is also ambitious. Flight wants to solve the case so that he can retire with a full pension and get into a security job. Flight is the one who finds Rebus and brings him in on the case. Flight knows that fresh eyes can only help and that Rebus has dealt with a serial killer before. Flight wants to do well and to stay in the good graces of his



superiors. This is why Rebus is brought to London. Rebus, on the other hand, has lost his ambition. Rebus aspires to survive the next few years and continue to do what he loves to do. Rebus imagines a time when he will have leisure time to read and see his daughter, but Rebus is married to his job. Rebus loves his job, but he will not allow his superiors to keep him from working it his way. In this way, Rebus is not ambitious enough to play nice, but is happy to remain where he is, doing what he loves.

## Family

Rebus has an ex-wife and daughter who live in London. Rebus is not close to his ex-wife and they often fight when they get together, so he does not imagine spending a great deal of time with her. Rebus makes one visit to his ex-wife's apartment and decides that is good enough. When he runs into his ex-wife later, he turns away before she can see him. His daughter, however, is another story. Rebus loves his daughter and would love to spend a great deal of time with her, but Sammy is a teenager now. Sammy has interests and hobbies that Rebus does not understand. This does not stop him, however, from checking out her boyfriend and sending him on his way when he learns he is involved in criminal activity. Rebus simply does what he thinks is right for his little girl.

Kenny Watkiss is Sammy's boyfriend and he happens to be the nephew of Tommy Watkiss. Tommy Watkiss is a known sexual offender and the husband of one of the Wolfman's first victims. Tommy is a suspect in the Wolfman killings, but is eventually cleared. Watkiss is also involved in stolen goods. Watkiss has Kenny helping transport these goods and when he learns that Kenny has been skimming off the top, Watkiss does not feel any family loyalty. Rebus learns about this situation and gives Kenny money to get out of town with the understanding that he will stay away from Sammy. Rebus also sends away the two thugs Watkiss sends to rough Kenny up. Rebus does all this to help his daughter, but it also offers a side benefit. A cop in the London bureau whom Rebus dislikes turns out to be working with Watkiss.

The Wolfman had a mother and father who loved him. However, they did not love their son, they loved the little girl they attempted to turn him into. The Wolfman was horribly abused by his parents and this abuse led to mental illness that caused the Wolfman to emerge. Family touches the lives of several of the characters in this novel and it is because of this that family is a theme of the novel.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of this novel is third person omniscient. The point of view allows the reader to see and hear the thoughts and emotions of the main characters without the intimacy of a first person point of view. The point of view also allows the writer to take the reader into the minds of multiple characters rather than being restricted to one character. The narrating characters in this novel include the main character, John Rebus, London detective George Flight, and the Wolfman.

The point of view of this novel works well because it allows the reader to both see the events in the novel from the hero's point of view as well as from the killer's point of view. The omniscient view point gives the reader access to the thoughts and emotions of the characters, which is important in allowing the reader to fully understand motive as well as the behaviors of the character. The third person point of view allows the narrator to shift from character to character rather than restricting the narration to one person. This gives the reader a fuller view of the action as well as the motives behind it.

## Setting

The novel is set in London, England. This setting is new to the main character who is a native of Scotland and who works in Edinburgh. The fact that the setting is new to the main character means that the reader gets to tour the city along with the main character and get to know its landmarks as the main character sees them. For those readers who are familiar with the city already, this point of view gives them a look at the city through the eyes of someone unfamiliar with the city who is looking at it through the eyes of a seasoned crime detective.

The setting of this novel is not unfamiliar to many readers. However, the setting is new to the main character of the novel, therefore it is seen through new eyes. Not only this, but the setting is the same location of the famous Jack the Ripper murders in the 19th century, murders that are not unlike the crimes Rebus has come to solve, adding even darker tones to the already sinister crimes. Both for the fact that London is unfamiliar to Rebus and that it is the location of these famous murders, the setting of this novel is highly appropriate and adds to the tone and character of the novel.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is English. The language is fairly simple and easy for most English speaking readers to understand. However, the novel is written by a man who lives in Scotland and his main character is also from Scotland, so the novel includes many phrases that are familiar slang in that part of the world, but might be unfamiliar to Americans or English speakers from other parts of the world. The novel is set in



England, with many English characters, therefore there is also slang from that part of the world that again might not be familiar to some readers. All this slang is explained in the text, however, or is easily deciphered, therefore it does not cause an impediment to the comprehension of the novel.

The language of this novel works well with the characters that inhabit the novel. The characters are from Scotland and England, therefore it would be strange for the reader not to encounter a small amount of slang common in those parts of the world. The language, aside from the slang, is fairly straightforward and simple to understand English. Readers of all ages should have little trouble understanding this novel's language and meaning. For this reason, the language is appropriate to the novel.

## Structure

The novel is divided into eight long chapters and one prologue. The chapters are not numbered but have titles that refer to some action or character featured in the chapter. Many of the chapters begin with Rebus' narration, following him through the course of the investigation on a daily basis and end with a small section in which the Wolfman takes over the narration. The novel is told both with dialogue and exposition, with great sections of inner dialogue in which Rebus attempts to figure out the clues to the case.

The novel has one main plot and several subplots. The main plot follows Rebus and George Flight as they attempt to discover the identity of the man behind the Wolfman killings. Rebus and Flight often disagree about the case, but in the end they become something like friends. One of the subplots follows a budding relationship between Rebus and psychology student Lisa Frazer. Another subplot involves Rebus' relationship with his teenage daughter Sammy. These subplots and several others all come to a satisfactory end when the main plot is concluded.



## Quotes

"And still she feels hungry. It isn't right, isn't usual, but she does. She removes some of the clothing in fact, moves quite a lot of it, removes more, perhaps, than is necessary. And she does what she must do, the knife squirming again. She keeps her eyes screwed tightly shut. She does not like this part. She has never liked this part, not then, not now. But especially not then." Prologue, pg. 1.

"Flipping through the pages of street names at the back, he remembered just how large London really was. Large and populous. Something like ten million, was it? Wasn't that twice the population of Scotland? It didn't bear thinking about. Ten million souls." Prologue, pg. 8.

"There was blood on the body, a lot of blood, staining the small of the back, the buttocks, the tops of the thighs. From the reports in his briefcase, he knew the cause of all this blood, but that didn't make it any easier to face the reality of it, the cold clear horror of it all. He took in more deep breaths. He had never yet vomited at a murder scene and he wasn't about to start now." The Chamber of Horrors, pg. 19.

"Mortuaries were places where the dead stopped being people and turned instead into bags of meat, offal, blood, and bone." The Chamber of Horrors, pg. 27.

"Backside. Chest. Arms. He gazed hard at the words in front of him, but aware of her body resting in his line of peripheral vision, just above the top edge of the paper. He didn't even know her first name. Perhaps he never would." Underground, pg. 66.

"She looked stunning, yet there was no alchemy involved in the process. She was dressed simply and wore no make-up. Her hair had been brushed straight back and tied with a band. Still, casually, elegantly, simply, she was stunning." Catching a Bite, pg. 103.

"But that's the problem, as she knows only too well. Nobody can make it stop, nobody will make it stop. On it must go, night after night now. Night after night. No letting up, no pausing for breath. Night after night after night." Catching a Bite, pg. 120.

"The teeth might be yet another dead end. That was why they had to make the Wolfman come to them." Fibs, pg. 148.

"His. There was that word again. Rebus couldn't help but think of the Wolfman as a man, yet part of him was wary of narrowing the possible identity in this way. There was still nothing to indicate that it could not be a woman. He needed to keep an open mind." Churchill, pg. 151.

"And she's on the streets now, although she knows that really she should do something about the Butcher's Gallery. It needs cleaning badly. There are torn canvases everywhere. Torn and spattered. It doesn't matter: nobody visits. No family, no friends." Churchill, pg. 185.

"He ate two small packets of cereal. A cereal killer." Know This, Womin, pg. 189.

"No clues were being offered up. Chambers' private life seemed as tidy and innocuous as the rest of his home. Just that one room, that one secret corner. That apart, they might have been in any successful barrister's apartment, poring over his books, his desk, his correspondence, his computer files." Gallery, pg. 275.



## Topics for Discussion

Who is John Rebus? Why has Rebus come to London? What is Rebus hoping to do in London? Is it Rebus' choice to come to London? Why or why not? What does Rebus leave behind in Edinburgh? What is the state of Rebus' job in Edinburgh? What impact does this situation have on Rebus' decision to come to London?

Who is George Flight? Why is he working on the Wolfman case? What was Flight's involvement in Rebus joining the case? What does Flight hope will happen when the case is solved? What is Flight's personal stake in the case? Is Flight attempting to make a name for himself? Explain your answer.

Discuss the Wolfman. Who is the Wolfman? What crime does the Wolfman commit? Why is he called the Wolfman? Is the Wolfman a man or woman? What are the paintings the Wolfman is constantly tearing up? Where did they come from? How are they involved in the Wolfman's psychosis?

Discuss the Watkiss family. Who is Tommy Watkiss? How is he involved in the Wolfman killings? Why is he on trial when Rebus goes to talk to him? What happens in that trial? Why? Who is Kenny Watkiss? How does Rebus know him? Why does Rebus begin investigating Kenny? What does Rebus hope his investigation will uncover? What does it uncover?

Who is Sammy Rebus? How is she involved with Kenny Watkiss? Why does she ask Rebus to find Kenny? What does Sammy believe happened to Kenny? Why does Rebus agree to help Sammy? Does Rebus plan to do what Sammy wants or does he have his own plans? How does his relationship with Sammy affect Rebus' decisions?

Who is Lisa Frazer? Why does she become involved in the Wolfman case? Who does Rebus believe she is? What type of relationship develops between Rebus and Frazer? Why? What lie does Rebus discover Lisa told him? Why did she lie to him? What does this lie do to Lisa's safety? What does it do to her relationship with Rebus?

Discuss child abuse. What is child abuse? What kind of abuse did the Wolfman suffer as a child? How does this abuse affect the Wolfman as an adult? Why? Is this abuse an excuse for the Wolfman's actions? Why or why not?