

# **The Vig Study Guide**

**The Vig by John Lescroart**

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## Plot Summary

The Vig is the second novel by John Lescroart that features former district attorney Dismas Hardy. In this novel, Hardy is working as a bartender at the Little Shamrock when his former office mate, Rusty Ingraham walks in. It seems that a criminal who threatened to kill them both is scheduled for release from a federal prison. Ingraham is concerned and sets up a calling schedule with Hardy, but misses the first scheduled call. Hardy goes to his barge and finds a bloody crime scene, convincing him that the ex-con has stayed true to his threats. The Vig is a suspenseful novel filled with twists and turns that will keep the reader guessing until the final page.

Dismas Hardy is tending bar at the Little Shamrock. This is a bar that he earned a quarter percent stake in when he solved the mystery of the murder of his partner's brother-in-law. The previous case has left Hardy with a new outlook on life and a sense of purpose that had been missing since his son's death nine years before. This sense of purpose is put to the test when Rusty Ingraham, Hardy's office mate from his days in the district attorney's office, makes a surprise visit to the Little Shamrock. Louis Baker, a hardened criminal that Ingraham and Hardy put away nine years ago has just been released from federal prison. Ingraham is frightened because Baker promised to kill both him and Hardy upon his release.

Hardy advises Ingraham on the type of gun he should purchase for protection and then agrees to a schedule of phone calls between the two of them. However, when Ingraham does not call at the appointed time that night, Hardy becomes concerned. Hardy goes to Ingraham's barge and finds a bloody crime scene and a murdered woman. Hardy's friend, Abe Glitsky, arrives to investigate the scene. Hardy tries to convince him that Ingraham is dead despite the fact that there is no body, and that Baker killed him. Glitsky, however, does not see a connection between this crime scene and Baker, so he decides to follow his instincts and investigate the woman's soon to be ex-husband instead.

Hardy lives in fear for several days, hiding out at Frannie's, his partner's little sister. At the same time, Baker finds himself in the middle of a turf war with the young drug dealer who has staked out his side yard as his personal territory. Baker wants to clean up his home and make it a safe haven after his time in prison, but Dido, the drug dealer, feels threatened by Baker. They have a confrontation that ends with Baker humiliating Dido with a single hit. Later that night Dido breaks a window in Baker's house. Dido is shot and killed a few minutes later, leaving everyone believing Baker did it, especially when Baker runs.

Baker steals a gun and goes in search of Hardy. Baker breaks into the home Hardy once shared with his ex-wife, discovering Hardy's new address in Jane's phone book. Unfortunately, the police are waiting for Baker as he leaves the house. Baker opens fire and the police fire back, severely injuring Baker. Baker is placed under arrested and admitted to a local hospital under constant guard, bringing Hardy some relief at the idea that his life is no longer in danger.



Hardy goes to see Baker and discovers that Baker knew nothing about the woman killed on Ingraham's barge. This catches Hardy off guard and encourages him to begin looking closer at Ingraham's disappearance. Hardy visits an ex-cop who had a grudge against Ingraham because of a charge of police brutality and murder. At the same time, Glitsky focuses on Johnny LaGuardia, an enforcer for a local mobster. Glitsky learns that Ingraham had a gambling habit that left him deep in debt with the mobster, therefore LaGuardia had been coming to him weekly to collect the vig, or interest, on the debt.

Hardy and Glitsky compare notes and begin to wonder if Ingraham might not have faked his death in order to avoid paying the vig. As they consider this, LaGuardia is found dead, shot in the head twice. A day later, the ex-cop is also found dead. Glitsky thinks this ends the case, but Hardy continues to be convinced that Ingraham is alive. After hearing that Ingraham had intended to move to Acapulco with the young woman found dead on his barge, he decides to go there to search for him.

Hardy drives to Acapulco, but realizes right away that it may be near impossible to find Ingraham in the crowded city without some help. However, Hardy knows what car Ingraham is more than likely driving and finally finds the car in the parking lot of a jai alai stadium. Hardy pretends that he came to Mexico the night Ingraham failed to call out of fear for his life. He and Ingraham spend the evening together along with a young tourist Ingraham picked up. However, while alone with Ingraham, Hardy is thrown off a cliff, barely surviving the enormous drop into the ocean.

Hardy returns to his hotel room, injured but mobile, and calls Glitsky. After Glitsky promises to come to Mexico, Hardy tracks down Ingraham and forces him to go with him back to his hotel. Hardy ties Ingraham up and waits for Glitsky. When Glitsky comes, Hardy discusses with him the dilemma of what to do with Ingraham. Glitsky cannot arrest Ingraham because there is no warrant for him in the United States. However, they can have the local police arrest him. This is what they plan to do. However, Ingraham attempts to get Hardy in trouble by telling the police he has an illegal gun. Fortunately, Hardy saw this coming and got rid of the gun. Ingraham runs, causing the local police to shoot and kill him. Afterward, Hardy returns to San Francisco and asks Frannie to marry him.



# Chapters 1-3

## Chapters 1-3 Summary

This is the second in a series of multiple novels that features the main character Dismas Hardy. Hardy was formerly a cop who went to law school and became a district attorney. However, the accidental death of his seven-month-old son causes Hardy to quit his professional life and drift aimlessly. Five months prior to the opening of this novel, he returns to criminal investigation when he investigates the murder of the husband of Frannie who is the little sister of his friend Moses McGuire. As payment for this case, Hardy receives a fourth of the ownership of McGuire's bar, the Little Shamrock.

In Chapter 1, Dismas Hardy is alone in the Little Shamrock bar where he works when Rusty Ingraham gets off a bus and comes inside. Ingraham was once Hardy's office mate when they both worked for the district attorney's office. Ingraham reminds Hardy of a criminal they once worked together to put away. This man, Louis Baker, threatened to kill them both after his sentencing. Baker is getting out of jail that afternoon and Ingraham is afraid for his life. Ingraham and Hardy agree to call each other twice a day as a form of protection against Baker. However, Ingraham does not call that night.

In Chapter 2, Hardy is awakened in the middle of the night by a call from his ex-wife and current lover, Jane. Jane is in Hong Kong on a purchasing trip for the department store where she works. Jane tells Hardy that she will not return for another week or more. That same morning, the lieutenant of homicide at the San Francisco Police Department worries about the production level of his detectives since the brass is refusing overtime. Two officers also come under investigation for police brutality. On top of this, one of his best detectives, Abe Glitsky, is considering applying to the Los Angeles Police Department. Later in the morning, Hardy goes to Ingraham's barge to check on his friend's welfare. When Hardy walks on to the barge, he discovers a dead woman in the hallway leading to the bedroom. Police arrive moments later, apparently called by neighbors.

In Chapter 3, Louis Baker wakes up on the first morning of his freedom and has coffee with Mama. She is a woman who is not related to Baker but who has raised him. Baker tells Mama that he intends to spend the next few days fixing up her small house. Across town however, Glitsky arrives at Ingraham's barge and speaks to Hardy about his phone arrangement with Ingraham. Together they walk through the crime scene. Hardy insists that Ingraham must be dead even though they cannot find a body. Hardy asks Glitsky to at least speak to Baker and Glitsky agrees even though he is reluctant to investigate Baker based on threats made more than nine years ago.



## Chapters 1-3 Analysis

These early chapters introduce Dismas Hardy, Rusty Ingraham, and Abe Glitsky as three of the major characters of the novel. Dismas Hardy was once a cop and a prosecutor, but now he is a bartender. The reader learns that Hardy quit his professional career when his seven-month-old son died. However, Hardy is now getting his life back on track, even getting back together with his ex-wife. Then Ingraham walks in and changes things. Ingraham is a lawyer who once shared an office with Hardy. Ingraham too appears to have dropped out of his previous life, but the reader is unclear at this point why Ingraham stopped working in the prosecutor's office and is working accident cases rather than criminal law. It does not seem important at this point in the novel. What is important is that Ingraham believes a criminal that he and Hardy put away is out of jail and intent on killing them. This sets up the conflict that will propel the main plot of the novel.

Abe Glitsky is a bi-racial cop who works hard and does a good job. Glitsky stands out among the rest of his colleagues because he is not protesting the decision made by the brass to not pay overtime. They are too busy playing golf when there are murders to solve. Glitsky however does not pass any judgment. Glitsky also stands out because he is dealing with the bureaucracy by applying to a different law enforcement agency and not by acting like a rebellious child. It does not seem to be coincidence that Glitsky, a friend of Hardy's, gets the call to Ingraham's barge. However, it is clear that Glitsky has no intention of arresting Baker because of old threats and his past history. Glitsky is a fair man who is also honest.



# Chapters 4-6

## Chapters 4-6 Summary

In Chapter 4, Glitsky goes to speak to Baker's parole officer and finds him to be disrespectful, overworked, and unconcerned. However, Baker does check in with him when he is supposed to, showing that Baker is following his parole rules. Instead of going to interview Baker, Glitsky decides to talk to the husband of Maxine Weir, the woman who was killed on Ingraham's barge.

Hardy goes downtown to retrieve his confiscated gun. While waiting for the paperwork to go through, Hardy visits the DA's offices. Hardy speaks to an old friend, Art Drysdale, who tells him to speak to Tony Feeney if he wants to talk to someone who disliked Ingraham. Feeney tells Hardy that Ingraham once made accusations against a cop over the killing of a criminal that the same cop had been cleared on once before. Feeney received the case and it nearly ruined his career. Feeney suggests that Hardy should speak to Hector Medina who is the cop in question. That afternoon, Louis Baker replaces the windows at Mama's house that have been broken and repaints the side of the house to cover the gang graffiti. A couple of kids who work for the drug dealer Dido come over to help but Dido makes them leave.

In Chapter 5, Johnny LaGuardia goes to the apartment of Bram Smyth to collect his "vig." Vig is the interest people pay on loans that they accept from Angelo Tortoni, the local mobster and loanshark. LaGuardia is in a hurry because he has a date. When Smyth does not have the money, LaGuardia breaks his arm and doubles the amount owed. On the other side of town, Glitsky speaks with Ray Weir about his wife. Glitsky learns that Maxine, an actress, had been in an accident some months before and hired Ingraham to help her get the insurance settlement. An affair had ensued and Maxine left Ray, who was a screenwriter. Glitsky also learns that Ray gave Maxine his gun, a .22, for protection after she left him.

At the Little Shamrock, Hardy is having trouble keeping his mind on the job. Hardy works his shift, but closes early. When Hardy goes out to his car, he discovers that someone has rifled through his glove box. This makes Hardy even more nervous than before. Hardy decides that he is not safe at home. Hardy leaves but he has no destination in mind.

In Chapter 6, Hardy ends up at Frannie Cochran's. Frannie is the sister of Hardy's friend and partner, Moses McGuire. Frannie's husband was killed a little over four months ago and Hardy earned a twenty-five percent stake in the ownership of the bar Little Shamrock by investigating his death. Frannie and Hardy discuss the current situation and Frannie urges Hardy to be careful. On the other side of town, Glitsky arrives at work to learn that someone locked several chickens in the chief's office, ruining his expensive furnishings. The lieutenant pulls Glitsky aside and asks him if he did it. At the same time, Hardy visits Hector Medina and learns that he tried to call Ingraham a few days



before his death because the accusations against Clarence Raines and his partner bring back the accusations Ingraham make that essentially ruin Medina's career. However, he hangs up because he feels that it is too late to do or say anything.

## Chapters 4-6 Analysis

As Glitsky begins the investigation into Maxine Weir's death and Ingraham's disappearance, he finds himself focusing on Baker at Hardy's insistence. However, Glitsky quickly realizes that the evidence does not point in Baker's direction. He should therefore be concentrating on the evidence. Glitsky decides not to interview Baker but to instead interview Ray Weir, a screenwriter who has more reason to kill his wife and her lover than Baker does. This touches on the idea of racial profiling that comes into the novel as Glitsky and Hardy both question their motives in targeting Baker from the beginning.

Hardy investigates on his own as Glitsky runs his investigation. Hardy's investigation focuses more on Ingraham. Hardy learns that Ingraham accused a cop of killing a criminal and then placing a gun on him to avoid murder charges. His investigation spawned a second investigation that eventually cleared Hector Medina. However, it ruins Medina's career, giving him a motive for murder. Medina has an alibi but does admit that he called Ingraham shortly before his death.

Johnny LaGuardia is introduced in these chapters. Johnny is a vig collector for Angelo Tortoni. Johnny is cruel and the reader quickly understands that crossing Johnny is not an option. This leaves the reader wondering how Johnny is connected to Ingraham and the murder of Maxine Weir. At the same time, the reader sees Louis Baker attempting to clean up Mama's house and make a life for himself. Baker has gone straight, leaving the reader wondering if Ingraham's accusations against him are false.





# Chapters 7-9

## Chapters 7-9 Summary

In Chapter 7, Louis Baker wakes up late in the morning and immediately receives a visit from Abe Glitsky. Baker denies having killed Ingraham and insists that he has not seen him in nine years. Glitsky warns Baker to stay clean and leaves. Glitsky talks to Hardy and tells him that there is no evidence to charge Baker. Hardy decides to prove to Glitsky that Ingraham is dead and that his body fell off the barge and floated out into the bay. Shortly before this, a beat cop returns to the barge and offers to help in hopes of impressing Glitsky. The cop finds a glass in the galley that was not checked for prints, bags it, and turns it in to the supervising sergeant.

In Chapter 8, Fred Treadwell is alone in his apartment with his poodle, Poppy. Treadwell rests his broken ankle, sustained when he jumped out his apartment window to avoid arrest for the murder of his lover and his lover's new man. Treadwell accuses the cops who arrest him of brutality and gay bashing, claiming that they broke his ankle and blamed it on a fall. Treadwell believes that these accusations will keep him from going to jail for murder. As he sits there, Medina arrives and begins telling Treadwell what it is like to face such accusations. Treadwell is overconfident, however, and is determined not to drop the charges against the cops. Medina picks up Treadwell's dog and breaks its neck. That same night, Glitsky returns to the barge and goes over the details of the murder with his wife, Flo.

In Chapter 9, Doreen Biaggi suffers through Johnny's attentions. Johnny has been forcing Doreen to have sex with him in exchange for Doreen not paying the vig she owes Angelo Tortoni. Afterwards, Johnny goes to meet with Angelo Tortoni. Tortoni catches a mistake that Johnny made, telling him that Ingraham did not pay his six-hundred vig because he was missing. Ingraham only pays five-hundred vig and the other hundred is an increase that Johnny placed on him to pay Doreen's vig.

Angelo Tortoni warns Johnny not to take the vig in any form other than the money owed. On the other side of town, Frannie expresses concern for Hardy's safety as he plans to prove Ingraham's body could have washed out into the bay. In Holly Park, Dido is angry over a fight he got into with Baker over the graffiti on the side of his house. Dido breaks out one of Baker's new windows. Moments later, Dido is shot. Baker hears the shots and panics, taking Mama's car and leaving the area.

## Chapters 7-9 Analysis

Glitsky visits Baker and feels that there is no reason to think Baker killed Ingraham. In fact, Glitsky is bothered by several details, such as how Baker found Ingraham so quickly and where he got the gun. Glitsky visits the barge and goes over the details with his wife, trying to convince himself to follow his instincts and not be swayed by Hardy's



fear. Hardy is deeply afraid, causing those around him to be concerned. However, Hardy is determined to prove that Baker killed Ingraham despite the fact that a body has not been found yet.

At the same time, Glitsky and Hardy fight over whether Baker killed Ingraham. Baker finds himself in a turf war with a local drug dealer. Baker wants the kid to stop painting graffiti on his house but Dido is determined to protect his turf. They fight and Baker wins. However, when Dido is killed after breaking a window in Baker's house, Baker knows that everyone will believe he did it, so he runs. This action can only make Baker look guilty.

Johnny LaGuardia is taking sex for the vig from one of his customers, forcing Ingraham to pay the shortfall. However, when Ingraham disappears, LaGuardia's scam is revealed to his mobster boss. This leaves the reader wondering what the vig has to do with Ingraham's disappearance and what LaGuardia's actions have to do with the overall plot of the novel.



# Chapters 10-12

## Chapters 10-12 Summary

In Chapter 10, Glitsky and Hardy go to the scene of Dido's murder and discuss the possibility that Baker did it. Even though the circumstantial evidence seems to point in Baker's direction, Glitsky continues to be skeptical, suggesting Baker only ran out of fear. At that same time, Baker parks his car behind a church and goes looking for a gun. Hardy and Glitsky once again fight over the suspect in Ingraham's death and argue whether or not Ingraham is even dead. Hardy insists the body floated out into the bay and is determined to prove it.

In Chapter 11, Hardy has a picnic with Frannie and a friend of hers. Hardy feels happy and safe with Frannie. Afterwards, Hardy visits a friend at an aquarium and borrows a wet suit after deciding the best way to see how a body would float in China Bay is with a body. Hardy tests his theory at about the same time Ingraham is thought to have died. He thus proves that Ingraham's body would have washed out to the bay.

On the other side of town, Glitsky checks in with the lab, but learns nothing has been finished for the Weir case. Glitsky goes to interview Medina on Hardy's suggestion and learns that he has a mentally disabled daughter for whom he is the sole support. Glitsky finds Medina to be angry and bitter toward Ingraham, but does not think he would place his daughter in jeopardy by attempting to kill Ingraham after so many years. Glitsky continues to think Ray Weir is his best suspect. Later, Glitsky becomes so angry that the lab has been instructed to give the chief's evidence from the chicken prank that he mails off his application to Los Angeles. At the same time, Baker knocks out a liquor store clerk, steals his gun, and some cash.

In Chapter 12, Treadwell visits his lawyer and insists that something must be done to Medina for killing his dog. On the other side of town, Baker goes to the address where Hardy lived nine years before. Baker breaks into the house and comes to believe that Hardy no longer lives there, but he finds Hardy's address in a private phone book. Glitsky gets a call from the lab and learns that Baker's fingerprints are on a glass taken from Ingraham's kitchen. Glitsky goes to Frannie's house to tell Hardy and is almost shot when Hardy nearly mistakes him for Baker. However, by this time, Baker has been taken to the hospital for gunshots received when he walked out of Jane's house and began firing at the police who were waiting for him. Hardy stays up late that night looking over Glitsky's notes on the case.

## Chapters 10-12 Analysis

On the run after Dido is killed, Baker steals a gun and goes looking for Hardy. The reader has no idea why Baker might be looking for Hardy, but begins to suspect that



Baker has no intention of killing Hardy. In fact, the reader is left with the impression that Baker is looking for help.

Hardy proves that Ingraham's body could have floated out into the bay. Glitsky still refuses to believe that Ingraham is dead until his body is found. Glitsky wants to be sure that he arrests the right person when he arrests someone for Maxine Weir's murder. However, Glitsky becomes so enraged with the bureaucracy that moves the evidence of a prank above a murder case. He decides to quit SFPD and join LAPD, dragging his family away from the only home that they have ever known. This leaves the reader wondering what this will mean for Glitsky and his future.

Hardy is so frightened of Baker that he nearly shoots Glitsky. This causes Hardy to step back and take a good look not only at himself, but at the case. The reader sees Hardy coming to his senses in a way and wonders what direction this new viewpoint will take him.



# Chapters 13-15

## Chapters 13-15 Summary

In Chapter 13, Lace talks to Mama and tells her he believes that Baker killed Dido because he ran. Mama tells Lace that Baker ran out of fear and not guilt. At Frannie's, Hardy wakes from a night of lovemaking and finds himself confused by his feelings for Frannie as well as his feelings for Jane. Frannie assures him that their relationship does not necessarily have to be forever. Hardy leaves Frannie and goes to see Baker in the hospital. Hardy is thrown for a loop when Baker claims to have been taken to Ingraham's by Ingraham himself, but did not ever see a woman there.

In Chapter 14, Angelo Tortoni returns home from church with his family and learns that a young woman is waiting to speak to him. Angelo goes into his office and finds Doreen Biaggi waiting for him, her face badly beaten. Angelo looks at her and becomes irate with Johnny LaGuardia, not only for beating her and taking her vig in sex, but for not introducing her to Angelo months before. Angelo imagines Doreen would make a perfect wife for one of his sons. On the other side of town, Frannie and Hardy are having a barbecue with Glitsky and his family. Hardy tries to sell Glitsky on the idea that Baker did not kill Ingraham, but Glitsky refuses to look at the case again because he has decided to quit the SFPD.

In Chapter 15, Hardy goes to Ray Weir's apartment during a party for the just completed version of a movie Weir wrote and Maxine starred in. Hardy speaks with Courtenay, a friend of Weir's, and learns that Weir was obsessed with Maxine. Later, Courtenay's boyfriend, Warren, accuses Weir of killing Maxine and placing the brace on her neck as a symbolic way of telling his friends he had done it. Warren even claims that he sat outside Weir's apartment that night waiting for him to come home, but he never did. Weir tells Warren he was home that night, he simply did not answer the door because he had a prostitute inside with him. Hardy also learns that with Maxine dead, Weir would have gotten the entire eighty-five thousand dollar settlement from her car accident.

## Chapters 13-15 Analysis

Hardy visits Baker and learns that Baker had no clue that a woman was killed on Ingraham's barge. Hardy believes Baker is telling the truth and begins to think Baker is innocent. In fact, Hardy wants Glitsky to reopen the investigation. However, Glitsky has decided to wash his hands of the case because of the bureaucracy going on at the police department. For this reason, Hardy begins investigating on his own. Hardy's first stop is Ray Weir's. Hardy learns that Weir has a motive not only in the affair that Maxine was having with Ingraham, but in the insurance money he will now inherit. However, Weir appears to have a strong alibi. The case is growing more challenging with everything Hardy learns.



Lace visits Mama and tells his opinion of Baker's disappearing act. This makes Mama angry. The reader understands Mama's anger and sees her as a sympathetic character at this point. However, the reader is unclear what Lace's role is in this plot at this point. In this same vein, Doreen visits Angelo Tortoni and tells him about Johnny's abuses against her. This makes Tortoni angry, but the reader is unclear how any harm coming to Johnny might impact the plot. The reader waits impatiently for these subplots to reach their climax and connect to the main plot.



# Chapters 16-18

## Chapters 16-18 Summary

In Chapter 16, Treadwell's attorney calls him to inform him the DA's office wants to give him a lie detector test. The attorney believes it is a bad idea, but Treadwell sees it as a way to get justice for Poppy and insists. At Holly Park, Samson, another drug dealer, begins taking over Dido's cut. On the other side of town, Glitsky has lunch with his father. Nat Glitsky tells his son that quitting his job over bureaucracy is not smart because there will be bureaucracy everywhere he goes. Nat encourages his son to stay and do his job to the best of his abilities. Glitsky sees Johnny LaGuardia come into the restaurant and sees it as an opportunity to put some unanswered questions to rest. LaGuardia tells Glitsky that he went to Ingraham's barge that night but Maxine Weir was already dead. In a fit of anger, LaGuardia throws a lamp onto the ground, leaving his fingerprints.

In Chapter 17, Hardy goes back to Feeney and learns the name of the girl with Ingraham on the night that he made his accusations against Medina. Ingraham goes to the police station and works on the suspect computer while he waits for the girl, Karen Moore, to meet him. Moore tells Hardy that Ingraham has a terrible gambling problem and that it ruined their relationship. Moore also tells Hardy that Ingraham always has to be on top and that he is a bragger, always having to tell everyone how great he is.

In Chapter 18, Ray Weir begins attempting to track down the insurance money that his wife was scheduled to receive. On the other side of town, Glitsky learns that the gun that killed Maxine Weir, Ray's gun, had Armor All on it to prevent leaving fingerprints. This suggests to Glitsky that her killer was a professional, ruling out Ray Weir. At the DA's office, Treadwell goes in for the lie detector test. At first Treadwell is careful to only answer questions related to Poppy's death. However, when Treadwell becomes emotional about the dog, Drysdale sneaks in a question in which Treadwell admits to lying about the other two cops, Raines and Valenti, beating him. At Holly Park, Samson approaches Lace and makes it clear that he killed Dido for the cut.

## Chapters 16-18 Analysis

Treadwell insists on having a lie detector test to prove that he is telling the truth about the death of his dog. It never occurs to Treadwell that this test could reveal his lies in regards to the beating he claims to have suffered at the hands of Raines and Valenti and the murders he committed. However, the test does reveal these things, offering a moment of triumph for the DA's office.

Hardy continues the investigation, learning that Ingraham was not the person he believed him to be. Instead, he turns out to be a gambler who always had to be the best at everything. This causes Hardy to begin wondering if Ingraham was paying vig to

LaGuardia and what this might have to do with Ingraham's disappearance. At the same time, Glitsky speaks with LaGuardia and learns he was at the barge that night, but that he got there after the murder. This makes it appear that all the suspects have an alibi or plausible excuse, leaving the reader searching for another possible killer.





# Chapters 19-21

## Chapters 19-21 Summary

In Chapter 19, Frannie begins feeling guilty about her relationship with Hardy since her husband has only been dead a few months. Hardy leaves Frannie's house and returns to his own, struggling with his own feelings for both Frannie and Jane. Glitsky learns that the charges against Valenti and Raines have been dropped. His lieutenant asks Glitsky to please remain with the SFPD, suggesting this victory shows things are changing. Louis Baker attempts to kill himself to avoid returning to prison.

In Chapter 20, Ray Weir goes to the bank and learns that Maxine and Ingraham cashed the insurance check together. Hardy begins thinking about Ingraham's car and is bothered by the fact that Ingraham made a big show of coming to the Little Shamrock on the bus. Baker claims however that he had a car that day. Hardy is also bothered by how Ingraham knows so much about Baker's release that day. Hardy calls the prison and speaks to the warden, learning that the warden assured Ingraham that Baker would not hurt a fly upon his release. Hardy also realizes that Ingraham reported his car stolen just a few days after his first call to the prison.

In Chapter 21, Hardy meets with Glitsky and fills him in on his suspicions. They go to see Ray Weir where they establish for the final time that Ray was home the night of the murder. Ray Weir was with Courtenay and not a prostitute, and that was why he refused to open the door for Warren. After Weir's, Hardy and Glitsky go to see Medina, accusing him of hiring Johnny LaGuardia to kill Ingraham. However, Medina sticks to his story, claiming he had not seen Ingraham in years and he hung up the only time that Ingraham tried to call. Finally they go to see Baker. Hardy asks what color car Ingraham was driving the day Baker got released from prison. Baker tells him blue, which fits the car Ingraham reported stolen. Hardy begins to think the car was never stolen.

## Chapters 19-21 Analysis

As Hardy learns more about Ingraham, he begins to suspect that Ingraham used him for cover in some kind of scheme. Hardy also thinks that Ingraham set up Baker to take the fall for a murder that never happened. Hardy believes that Ingraham is still alive somewhere with all of Maxine Weir's insurance money. However, Hardy is having a hard time getting Glitsky to believe him. Instead, Glitsky believes that Medina hired LaGuardia to kill Ingraham in revenge for what Ingraham did to Medina's career nine years ago. The reader is not sure which option is true because it seems both are possible. However, there is one question that remains on everyone's mind, which is where is Ingraham's body.

At the same time that Hardy attempts to solve a murder, he struggles with changes in his love life. Hardy wants to reunite with his former wife Jane and to make things in the



past right. However, Hardy now feels that he is in love with Frannie, although he is afraid of being a father again to Frannie's baby. Hardy cannot decide which path to take, leaving the reader wondering how these two women will take to either being accepted or rejected by Dismas Hardy.



# Chapters 22-24

## Chapters 22-24 Summary

In Chapter 22, Lace searches for and finds Samson's gun under the stoop where he lives. Lace takes the gun to Mama and suggests they go to the police, but Mama tells him the police will only arrest him. On the other side of town, Glitsky and Hardy go to a dumpster where Johnny LaGuardia's body has been found with two bullets in his head. When Angelo Tortoni arrives, Glitsky tells him that he believes LaGuardia was hired by Medina to kill Ingraham and Medina killed LaGuardia to cover up his crime. However, Tortoni had LaGuardia killed to punish him for his treatment of Doreen, something the reader learns from Tortoni's thoughts. After leaving the crime scene, Hardy meets with Courtenay and asks her about Maxine and Ingraham. Hardy learns that Ingraham had talked about going to Acapulco where he could gamble on jai alai.

In Chapter 23, Hardy is in Acapulco to find Ingraham, but has just realized how big the city is and that his chances of finding Ingraham are small. Hardy had thought he could find Ingraham by standing near the betting windows, but there are no betting windows. Hardy returns to his hotel and calls Frannie, letting her know he is safe, leaves a message for Jane who is due home soon, and calls Glitsky. Glitsky is not home, he is in Los Angeles interviewing for a new job. However, Frannie tells him that Glitsky called and said that Medina was dead, apparently from a suicide.

In Chapter 24, Ingraham is living in a cheap house near the beach in Acapulco. Ingraham's shoulder has a bullet hole through it, but it is healing well. Ingraham goes to the jai alai stadium with a tourist he met the day before. In the parking lot, Hardy searches for a Volkswagen Jetta with California plates. When Ingraham leaves with his girl, Hardy catches up with him and convinces him that he left the country the same day Baker was released out of fear for his life. They have dinner together, drop the girl at her hotel, and go back for a nightcap. Hardy believes Ingraham is very drunk and leaves him sitting by the cliff where the divers jump at sunset. However, Hardy is afraid of losing track of him, so he goes back and attempts to drag him to the car. Ingraham, not as drunk as Hardy assumed, pulls Hardy over his own body and pushes him off the cliff.

## Chapters 22-24 Analysis

Lace has found the gun Samson most likely used to kill Dido, but Mama tells him there is nothing he can do with it. The reader's opinion of Mama changes with this statement, helping the reader to realize how Baker found himself in such trouble nine years ago. The question now is what will Lace do with the gun and will it prove Baker innocent.

Johnny LaGuardia is dead. Glitsky believes that Medina killed him to cover up the fact that he hired him to kill Ingraham. However, Hardy thinks that Ingraham is still alive. Once again Hardy and Glitsky reverse themselves on their opinions of Ingraham's fate.



Glitsky believes Johnny LaGuardia's death and Medina's suicide tie things up nicely, leaving Glitsky feeling free of guilt as he prepares to move to Los Angeles.

Hardy arrives in Acapulco where he believes Ingraham has gone. It seems impossible that he might find him, but Hardy is a smart guy and he finally locates him. Hardy pulls Ingraham in, convincing him he knows nothing about Maxine's death. Despite believing Hardy's cover story, Ingraham still believes Hardy is a danger to his newly acquired freedom. Ingraham tries to kill Hardy by throwing him off a cliff. The reader worries about Hardy's fate, but remembers that he is a soldier, a cop, and a survivor.



# Chapters 25-26 and Epilogue

## Chapters 25-26 and Epilogue Summary

In Chapter 25, Rusty thinks that his plan to fake his death to escape making payments is perfect. He drives to the hotel where he dropped off the drunk tourist hours before. Rusty sees himself as a lady's man and someone who needs to be free. This is why Rusty killed Maxine. Rusty could not stand the idea of spending the next few years with Maxine constantly at his side. On the other side of town, Hardy manages to survive his plunge into the ocean, suffering only minor cuts and scratches. Hardy walks back to his hotel and tends his injuries with a first-aid kit. Hardy then calls Glitsky and insists he comes to Mexico to help him with Rusty. Hardy then goes to the hotel where he and Rusty dropped the drunk girl the night before and pushes his way into the room holding a gun.

In Chapter 26, Hardy forces Rusty to dress and return to Hardy's hotel room. Glitsky finds them there several hours later. Glitsky ties Rusty to the bed with rope and secures some antibiotics for Hardy. They discuss their next move in front of a sleeping Rusty, deciding to ask the local police to arrest Rusty. Rusty overhears this and thinks that if they attempt this plan, he will simply accuse Hardy of holding him at gunpoint with a gun brought into the country illegally. Rusty knows that this will lead to Hardy's arrest and not his own. However, when the local cops come and Rusty accuses Hardy of having a gun, Hardy demonstrates that he does not have one. Rusty makes a run for it and is shot to death on the beach without revealing where he hid Maxine's insurance money.

In the epilogue, Glitsky has decided to remain in San Francisco. Hardy speaks with Jane and tells her about his feelings for Frannie. It turns out that Frannie meets someone in Hong Kong herself and is ready to end her relationship with Hardy. Hardy and Frannie are now waiting in the Little Shamrock for Moses so they can tell him that they plan to marry.

## Chapters 25-26 and Epilogue Analysis

Hardy survives his fall and manages to take Ingraham into custody despite the fact that Hardy is no longer a cop. Ingraham believes that he cannot be arrested in Mexico for crimes he committed in Mexico. Glitsky cannot arrest Ingraham because there are no warrants for him in the United States. However, there is the small matter of Ingraham's attempted murder of Hardy. Glitsky arranges for the local cops to arrest Ingraham. Ingraham thinks he can get around this, but Hardy outwits him, causing Ingraham to make a run for it. This concludes the main plot of the novel, leaving Ingraham as dead as he wanted the mob to believe he was.

Hardy returns home, injured but alive. Hardy has not yet made a decision between Jane and Frannie even though the reader knows he loves Frannie. Eventually Hardy chooses

Frannie. This leaves the reader with the impression that Hardy is finally leaving the past behind him and looking to a happy future with Frannie. However, the reader remains concerned about Hardy's ability to settle down and be a father to Frannie's baby.



# Characters

## Dismas Hardy

Dismas Hardy was a soldier in Vietnam who became a cop upon his return. After working with the SFPD for several years as a homicide detective, Hardy went back to school and became a lawyer. Hardy worked with the district attorney's office for several years, eager to make a difference and make sure the right people went to jail. Hardy's life appeared to be a perfect one. Hardy was married, had an infant son, and his career was taking off. Then one night Hardy did not raise the side of his son's crib high enough and the child, who had just learned to pull up, fell out of the crib and landed on his head. The death of his son hit Hardy hard, causing a divorce and influencing Hardy's decision to leave the DA's office.

Five months prior to the commencement of the novel's beginning, after nearly a decade of coasting through life, Hardy investigates the death of his best friend's brother-in-law. The successful conclusion of this investigation helps Hardy find purpose in life again. It also gives Hardy a quarter interest in his friend's bar, the Little Shamrock. Hardy is tending bar at the Little Shamrock when his old office mate from the DA's office comes in out of the blue and tells him Louis Baker, a criminal they put away together, has gotten out of prison. Baker threatens to kill both Hardy and his office mate, Ingraham, at his sentencing. Ingraham is frightened, afraid Baker will fulfill his promise. This makes Hardy worried for his own life, especially when he goes to Ingraham's barge and finds a bloody crime scene, including the body of Maxine Weir, one of Ingraham's clients.

Hardy spends a week hiding from Baker. This clouds Hardy's perceptions and leaves him more vulnerable than he has been in years. The situation also brings Hardy back into the world of criminal investigation, once again giving him a purpose. Hardy investigates Ingraham and eventually proves that the crime scene at Ingraham's barge was a set up to help Ingraham escape paying his vig to the mob. This also helps Hardy to let go of the past and look to the future with renewed optimism.

## Abe Glitsky

Abe Glitsky is a cop with the SFPD. Glitsky is part-black and part-Jewish. This heritage causes Glitsky a great deal of confusion throughout his life as he tries to avoid racism and understand his own identity. Deep down, Glitsky is a good man who is frustrated by the bureaucracy of the police department. This frustration leads Glitsky to apply to the Los Angeles police department in the hopes of finding a job that is less difficult to do. However, Glitsky eventually comes to the conclusion that San Francisco is his home and he does not belong anywhere else.

Glitsky and Hardy are good friends who once worked together in the police department and again when Hardy was a prosecutor. When Glitsky learns that Hardy is in possible



danger, he tries his best to help him. However, Glitsky is not happy with the evidence against Baker and refuses to believe that Baker is responsible for Ingraham's disappearance until he is found inside the home of Hardy's ex-wife. Glitsky arrests Baker, but continues to believe there is an overwhelming amount of evidence that points in other directions. In the end, Glitsky is happy to find that Baker was innocent as he believed and will not be charged with the murder of Maxine Weir.

## **Rusty Ingraham**

Rusty Ingraham was once a lawyer with the District Attorney's office. Ingraham and Hardy shared an office in the DA's office, but were not close friends. However, Ingraham shows up and tells Hardy that a criminal who threatened to kill them both when they successfully prosecuted him nine years ago is getting out. Hardy senses his fear and allows it to overtake his natural instincts when he finds a dead woman on Ingraham's barge.

As Hardy investigates what he believes is Ingraham's murder, he learns things about Ingraham he never knew, such as Ingraham's gambling habit. Hardy digs deeper into Ingraham and learns that his old colleague owes a great deal of money to local mobster. Ingraham had grown tired of paying the vig or the interest, and planned his own murder to escape. However, Maxine Weir arrived at the wrong moment and Ingraham felt that he had no option but to kill her. Ingraham ran away to Acapulco where he could gamble on human beings rather than horses. Hardy follows him here and brings him to justice despite Ingraham's belief that his legal knowledge can save him from anything.

## **Louis Baker**

Louis Baker is a young black man who grew up in poverty without a family. Baker was a tough young man who committed multiple crimes in his attempts to survive in a dark and difficult world. Hardy and Ingraham tried multiple times to put Baker in jail for his crimes, finally building a strong enough case to convict Baker and send him to prison for thirteen years. Baker gets out of jail after nine years based on good behavior.

Upon his conviction and sentencing, Baker threatens to kill Hardy and Ingraham. However, during his time in prison, Baker learns to channel his anger into more positive actions. Baker goes home with the desire to clean up his life and get a good job. Unfortunately, the social structure of the projects leaves Baker in a position in which he must enter into a conflict with a local drug dealer. When this drug dealer ends up dead, Baker runs out of fear. Baker tries to turn to Hardy, but is caught breaking into the home of Hardy's ex-wife and shot. Everyone believes Baker is responsible for killing the drug dealer near his home as well as Ingraham and his girlfriend. However, Hardy comes to believe Baker is innocent and in the end is able to prove it.





## Johnny LaGuardia

Johnny LaGuardia is a lieutenant for mobster Angelo Tortoni. Johnny is responsible for collecting the vig or the interest on loans that Tortoni has made to people in the community. As part of his job, Johnny often breaks arms and legs. Johnny works alone. Therefore as long as he has the proper amount of money, no one cares where it comes from. Johnny uses his position to force a girl named Doreen to have sex with him while forcing Ingraham to pay extra to cover Doreen's vig. When word of this gets to Tortoni, Tortoni has Johnny killed, setting up an ex-cop to take the fall.

## Angelo Tortoni

Angelo Tortoni is a mobster who lends money to people in the community and collects a vig or interest on the money until the people can pay the money back in full. Tortoni uses Johnny LaGuardia to collect the money, but is unhappy when Johnny does not introduce him to Doreen. Johnny rapes Doreen repeatedly in exchange for her not having to pay the vig. However, Angelo sees Doreen and believes she would be a good wife for one of his boys. This makes Angelo even angrier with Johnny, resulting in Johnny's murder. When Angelo visits the scene of Johnny's death, Glitsky tells him he believes an ex-cop hired Johnny to kill Ingraham. To cover up his own involvement in Johnny's death, Angelo has the ex-cop killed as well.

## Maxine Weir

Maxine Weir is an actress who hires Ingraham to help her recover insurance money after a car accident that left her with a severe neck sprain. Maxine and Ingraham become lovers and Ingraham convinces Maxine to give up acting and to run away with him once they receive the insurance payoff. However, instead of running off with Maxine, Ingraham takes his share of the money and plans to fake his death and run off to Mexico. However, Maxine shows up at his barge the night he plans to fake his death. Ingraham kills Maxine so that he can take her share of the money too and escape without her.

## Ray Weir

Ray Weir is a screenwriter and Maxine's husband. Ray is obsessed with Maxine and devastated when she leaves him for Ingraham. Ray becomes the number one suspect when Maxine is found dead on Ingraham's barge, especially when it turns out that Ray should have received half the insurance money but Maxine failed to give it to him. Hardy visits Ray one night and learns that the night of Maxine's murder, a friend waited outside his apartment for hours for Ray to return. Ray claims he was in the apartment the whole time and it later turns out he was with his friend's girlfriend.



## Hector Medina

Hector Medina was a cop for many years. However, when Medina killed a suspect, he was investigated by the department on accusations that he killed the man without cause and planted a weapon on him. Medina survived the first investigation, but was investigated a second time when Rusty Ingraham told the DA that everyone knew Medina murdered the suspect on purpose and planted the gun. This second investigation was also dropped, but Medina's colleagues no longer trusted him and he ended up leaving the police department. Medina's marriage failed and he was left to raise his mentally disabled daughter on his own on a private security guard's salary.

When Medina learns that two cops in the department are being accused of police brutality, Medina goes to the alleged victim to try to talk him out of pressing charges. When the man refuses to listen, Medina kills his dog. This leads to a lie detector test that proves the charges against the two cops are false. Afterwards, Medina is questioned in connection to Ingraham's disappearance. A short time later, Medina is found after a fall from the top of the hotel where he worked. At first the death appears to be suicide, but Glitsky later suspects Tortoni had him thrown off the hotel to make it appear he died out of guilt for killing Ingraham and Johnny LaGuardia.

## Lace

Lace is a kid who lives in the projects and works for Dido. Lace is convinced that Louis Baker killed Dido until a new drug dealer approaches him about staying quiet about the murder. Lace thinks that this new drug dealer, Samson, killed Dido and he goes in search of Samson's gun. When Lace finds it, he takes it to Mama who is the woman that Baker lives with. However, she tells Lace that there is nothing anyone can do. Lace takes the gun and shoots Samson with it, clearing Baker's name, but getting sent to jail himself.



## Objects/Places

### Ingraham's Barge

Ingraham lives on a barge moored at China Basin in San Francisco.

### Ingraham's Volkswagen Jetta

Ingraham tells Hardy that his Jetta was stolen before Baker's release, but Baker claims Ingraham picked him up at the bus station in a blue car. Later, Hardy uses Ingraham's car to find him in Acapulco.

### Hardy's Suzuki Samurai

Hardy drives a Suzuki Samurai, a car that resembles a small jeep. The car is uncovered and Hardy discovers at one point that someone has rifled through his glove box. When going to Mexico, Hardy hides his gun by taping it under the bumper of the car.

### Samson's Gun

Lace finds Samson's gun hidden under his porch. Lace wants to give the gun to the police to prove Baker did not kill Dido, but the Mama convinces him the police would only arrest him. Lace then uses the gun to shoot Samson, clearing Baker's name anyway.

### Weir's Gun

Ray Weir's gun is proven to be the murder weapon in the death of Maxine Weir, making it appear that Ray is the killer. However, the use of Armor All to hide fingerprints leaves Glitsky convinced Ray could not be the killer.

### Frannie's House

Hardy stays at Frannie's house for several days while he believes Baker is attempting to kill him. Hardy and Frannie begin an affair during this time.

### Jane's House

Jane lives in the house she and Hardy shared during their marriage. Baker breaks into the house in search of Hardy. He is shot as he opens fire on the police upon leaving the house.



## **The Little Shamrock**

The Little Shamrock is the bar owned by Moses McGuire. Moses gives Hardy a quarter ownership in the bar after he solves the murder of Moses' brother-in-law, Eddie.

## **The Cut**

The cut is a section of lawn between houses where the drug dealers ply their trade.

## **Holly Park**

Holly Park is a 1950s style residential area that now has become the projects or an area where the poor live. Drug dealers flourish in this area. This is where Baker lives.

## **San Francisco**

The novel is set in San Francisco.

## **Acapulco**

Ingraham disappears to Acapulco after faking his own death.



# Themes

## Racial Profiling

Hardy is told that Louis Baker wants to kill him and his ex-office mate, Rusty Ingraham. Hardy becomes obsessed with Baker's grudge against him, especially after Ingraham goes missing amidst a bloody murder scene at his barge. Hardy pushes Glitsky to arrest Baker, sure that Ingraham is dead and that he will be next. However, after Baker is arrested Hardy realizes that his perceptions were clouded by his fear and he might have focused on Baker because he was a black ex-con.

Glitsky worries that he too is unnecessarily focused on Baker. Glitsky knows that he is focused on Baker because of Hardy's concerns, but he is reluctant to charge Baker and wonders if this is because Baker is black. Glitsky does not want to charge a man simply because he has a record and because he is black. When Baker is eventually proven innocent of Ingraham's disappearance, Glitsky feels justified in his reluctance. However, another cop also unnecessarily focuses on Baker for the death of a drug dealer near Baker's home. This causes Glitsky a great deal of concern because he believes Baker is targeted because of his past. Glitsky is again relieved when Baker is proven innocent in this crime.

## Bureaucracy

Glitsky is frustrated when the bosses at the police department tell the homicide detectives they cannot get overtime for working outside of normal business hours. This means that when the policemen serve warrants at people's homes after working hours, they will not be paid for these hours. In protest, many of the detectives begin playing golf during working hours to make up for what they are not being paid for at the end of the day. Later, some detective placed a group of chickens in the police chief's office. The chief uses his power to push aside murder investigations in order to use the lab to analyze evidence from the prank. Glitsky becomes so frustrated by this act that he sends off an application to the Los Angeles police force.

Glitsky is a good cop who plays by the rules. When the powers that be in the police department make his job difficult, Glitsky considers quitting. However, Glitsky sees himself as a cop and decides to move to another city, uprooting his family and leaving behind his father, in order to work in a friendlier situation. Fortunately, Glitsky's father points out that all police departments are basically the same and he should not allow the bosses to dictate how well he does his job. Glitsky takes this advice to heart and decides to stay in San Francisco.



## False Accusations

At the beginning of the novel, two cops are charged with police brutality after a murder suspect jumps out of a window to escape arrest and runs to his lawyer who quickly charges the detectives with police brutality. The two cops face the end of their careers with these false accusations, leaving them possibly without jobs, without their reputations, and without a way to provide for their families.

Hector Medina knows how these cops feel. Medina was twice accused of killing a criminal in cold blood during his own career as a cop. Medina decides to come to the rescue of these two cops by visiting the man making the accusations and killing his dog, a threat against the man's life if he should proceed with his accusations. The man takes a lie detector test to ensure that Medina is charged with killing his dog, accidentally giving away the fact that his accusations against the other two cops are false.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the third-person and omniscient point of view. The narrating characters differ from chapter to chapter and scene to scene. The main narrators are Dismas Hardy, Abe Glitsky, and Louis Baker. These characters are the main focus of much of the plot, giving the reader a well-rounded understanding of the plot from various points of view as well as allowing the reader to understand the motives of these main characters.

The point of view of this novel is coming to the modern bestseller. However, in this novel, it is slightly different because the author is very careful to make it clear who the narrating character is so that there is no confusion or misunderstanding within the plot. The point of view allows the reader to see the plot from multiple points of view. This gives a better understanding not only of the plot itself, but also the motives of the characters who directly impact the direction of the developing plot.

## Setting

The novel is set primarily in San Francisco. The author has a clear understanding of his setting and often uses names of the different sections of the city as well as street names to give the reader a clear view of the city. The story is also set partially in Acapulco. Again the author gives wonderful descriptions of the city, focusing on the cliff divers that are popular in that part of the world as well as the stadium where Ingraham goes to gamble on jai alai.

The setting of this novel is unusual because it is not set in Los Angeles or New York like so many of these novels tend to be. Instead, this novel is set in the slightly smaller city of San Francisco. The author clearly knows his setting and he enhances the setting with street names and the names of certain sections of the city in order to give the reader a more intimate view of this setting. When the setting moves to Acapulco, the author again gives a specific set of details of the city in order to help the reader feel the authenticity of the setting.

## Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English. The novel contains a few words of Italian and Spanish, but they are simple phrases that even those not fluent in these languages are bound to understand. The language also includes some speech that is purposely wrong in its grammar, giving the reader an authentic feel of how the character narrating such speech actually speaks.



The language of the novel gives the reader a sense of authenticity in regards to the characters. Lace and Baker's language tends to be missing articles and often appears in an odd grammar that would make any English teacher cringe. However, this poor grammar is used intentionally to show that these characters have little education and therefore do not speak in perfect English. With Hardy, Glitsky, and Ingraham, the language tends to be more formal, reflecting their higher level of education. In this way, the language of this novel fits its subject and characters exceedingly well.

## Structure

The novel contains twenty-six chapters and an epilogue. The chapters vary in length, some containing only a few pages while others are more than twenty pages long. The novel is told in both exposition and dialogue, with several chapters filled with a great deal of inner monologue as the various characters attempt to figure out the main mystery of the novel or a personal conflict.

The novel contains one main plot and many subplots. The main plot follows the investigation into Rusty Ingraham's disappearance and possible murder. The subplots include an accusation by a murder suspect against several cops. Another subplot is the collection of vig by the lieutenant of a local mobster who acts as a loan shark to the community. Yet another subplot follows Hardy as he attempts to decide if he wants to be with his ex-wife, Jane, or with his new lover, Frannie. All these subplots come to a satisfying conclusion, either before or in the conclusion of the main plot.





## Quotes

"Like a flame trying to catch on a wick, the smile flickered back" (Chapter 1, pg. 3.)

"Someone had once told him that the way to turn water into gold is to go to the middle of a jungle and light a fire and put a pot of water on to boil" (Chapter 1, pg. 9.)

"Hardy looked back to the stateroom. It was painted in blood" (Chapter 2, pg. 20.)

"Some people believed that the solution to the drug and crime problems in the projects was to put a wall around them and let the residents kill each other off. There are all kinds of walls" (Chapter 3, pg. 22.)

"They paid the vig, the vigorish—a reasonable ten points a week—until they could repay the principal" (Chapter , pg. 49.)

"The dreams had been bad, and Louis Baker hadn't slept until nearly dawn" (Chapter 7, pg. 83.)

"Frannie wasn't sure it had been a good idea, letting Dismas stay here. It was stirring things up" (Chapter 9, pg. 115.)

"In the House, see, they kept telling you that things would different on the outside" (Chapter 12, pg. 155.)

"It didn't feel like he'd thought it would-seeing your own images up there on the screen, your words being spoken by people who pretended to care about them" (Chapter 15, pg. 192.)

"Louis Baker wondered for a minute if he were dead" (Chapter 21, pg. 286.)

"Then it was mostly Maxine. Another big dream of hers that didn't come true." (Chapter 22, pg. 308.)

"His face froze in that rictus, and then his eyes, still open, weren't seeing anything" (Chapter 26, pg. 359.)



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Dismas Hardy? What is Hardy's connection with law enforcement? Why does Hardy become involved in the disappearance of Rusty Ingraham? What is Hardy afraid of? What does this fear cause Hardy to do? Is Hardy a racist? Why does he focus on Baker as Ingraham's killer? Why does Hardy care that Ingraham might be dead?

Who is Rusty Ingraham? Why does he come to Dismas Hardy with his fear of Louis Baker? What did Ingraham do to Baker nine years ago? What did he do when Baker got out of jail? What happened on Ingraham's barge? Why does Hardy believe Ingraham is dead? Is he?

Who is Abe Glitsky? What is unusual about Glitsky's racial heritage? How does this cause Glitsky trouble with his own identity? Is Glitsky unusually sensitive to the targeting of black suspects? Why does Glitsky refuse to arrest Baker in Ingraham's disappearance? Why does Glitsky become angry at a fellow cop for assuming Baker killed Dido? Did Baker kill any of these people? Why did the police focus on him?

Who is Dido? Why do he and Baker get into a fight in the cut beside the Mama's house? What kind of a person is Dido? Why does Lace look up to him? Why does Lace attempt to prove who killed Dido? Who killed Dido and for what reason? Did Dido bring his death on himself? How?

Who is Hector Medina? What was his job nine years ago? What is his job now? Why does Medina dislike Ingraham? Did Medina attempt to harm Ingraham? Why does Medina visit Mr. Treadwell? What does Medina do while with Treadwell? For what reason? How does Medina end up dead? Whose fault is Medina's death?

Who is Fred Treadwell? Why did he jump out of his apartment window? Who does Treadwell accuse of throwing him out of the window? Why? What does Treadwell hope will be the result of his accusations? How does Treadwell manage to give his lies away? For what reason? What is the result?

What is vig? What is the purpose of this money? Why do people pay it? Why does Johnny LaGuardia collect this money? Why does LaGuardia stop taking the vig from Doreen? What does he take instead? Does LaGuardia believe Doreen loves him? Does she? What happens when Angelo Tortoni finds out about Doreen? Who is eventually blamed for LaGuardia's death?