

Love or Money?

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Introduction

This ungraded summary is for the teacher's use only and should not be given to students.

The story

Jackie Clarkson lives with her mother, Molly, in a big house. Jackie says that a young man called Peter Hobbs is angry with her, because she made him lose his job.

Molly's younger daughter, Diane, her son, Roger, and her brother-in-law, Albert, gather to celebrate her fiftieth birthday. At dinner, they talk about Tom Briggs who wants to buy some of Molly's garden. She doesn't want to sell. They talk about money: everyone except Jackie wants money from Molly. She gets angry and goes upstairs. The others go to the kitchen to drink coffee.

Next morning, Diane finds Molly dead in bed. The doctor says Molly has been given an overdose of sleeping tablets.

Albert tells the police that each family member saw Molly in her bedroom that evening: he went first. He asked for money for his sick wife, but she said no. Jackie tells them that Peter Hobbs wanted to kill Molly.

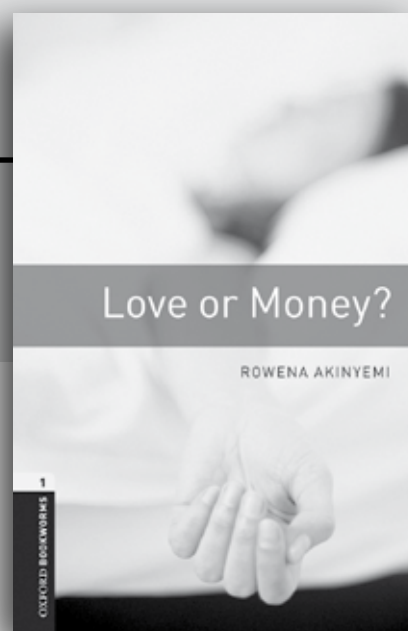
Roger says he asked her for money to build houses in her garden. She said no. When the police tell Diane that they found the empty bottle of sleeping pills in her room, she says she doesn't know how it got there.

Peter Hobbs tells them that Jackie told him to go to the house last night. Tom Briggs, the poor farmer, was in the kitchen too. Detective Inspector Walsh sees a picture of a young woman in Briggs' farmhouse.

Walsh meets the whole family. He knows that Peter has lost his job and needs money, and that Molly had given Diane a lot of money but told her on Saturday that she would not give her any more. But the murderer is Jackie: Molly would not let her marry Tom Briggs. Jackie killed her mother to marry Tom.

Background to the story

This is a detective story with all the characteristics of the genre, including clues, red herrings, and lots of people with different motives for committing the murder. The setting is contemporary, British, middle class and rural, and the plot develops out of what we gradually learn about the tensions which exist within



the Clarkson family. But the themes are age-old and the perennial ones of crime fiction – greed (Roger and Diane), thwarted love (Jackie and Tom Briggs), disputes over money and property (all of them except Jackie), individuals trapped in unequal power relationships (Jackie and Tom), loveless family relationships (all of them) and even a dash of social injustice (Tom and Peter Hobbs).

Careful readers may spot the clue which reveals the murderer's identity (Walsh tells Jackie on page 21 that the police had found the empty bottle of sleeping tablets in Diane's room, but on page 23 she says that Diane must be a suspect because the bottle was found in her bag) but most will have to wait until the detective inspector reveals all in the final chapter. The enjoyment lies in trying to follow the trail left by the author and so it is particularly useful with this genre to ask students to review what they have learnt about the characters and to hypothesize about what will happen next, at the end of every chapter.

Before Reading

Here are some ways to help your students approach the story:

- 1 Give students the title of the book and show them the picture on the cover. Ask them to try and guess what kind of the story it is.
- 2 Give students a copy of the text on the back cover of the book, and of the story introduction on the first page. When they have read the texts, ask them a few questions about the story, or use the Before Reading Activities in the back of each Bookworm.
- 3 Use the pre-reading activity in this worksheet.
- 4 If there is a recording of this title, play the first few pages and stop at an interesting point.

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Pre-reading activity

Match the words with the pictures



- 'Now I know the true story . . .'
- A lot of police arrived very quickly.
- The Clarkson family had a big, old house with a beautiful garden.
- 'She's dead,' Roger said slowly. 'Mother is dead.'
- 'We found the empty bottle of sleeping tablets in Diane's room.'
- 'Mother,' Jackie said, 'Diane phoned. She wants money . . .'
- 'Sergeant Foster is going to write it all down.'
- 'The table looks nice, Jackie. What wonderful flowers!' Diane said.
- Tom Briggs' farm was not big and the house was old and dirty.



To the teacher

Aim: To familiarize students with the setting

Time: 10–20 minutes

Organization: Give one copy of the worksheet to each student or to each pair of students. When they have matched the pictures and the captions, ask the following questions.

- How many different people appear altogether in the pictures?
- Who are they or what are the relationships between them?

It is possible to identify from the pictures and captions: Jackie, Mother (Molly), Diane, Roger, Sergeant Foster and another policeman (Walsh), Peter Hobbs and Tom Briggs; and to guess that there

are four main members of the family / suspects besides Molly.

Key: 1c, 2e, 3g, 4i, 5d, 6f, 7b, 8a, 9h.

Once you have gone through the answers to the first activity, ask the students to look again at the pictures and put them in the order as they think they occur in the story (picture number 1 is also first in the sequence). Ask them to predict, in general terms, the story from the pictures. There is no right or wrong answer to this exercise. Students may suggest sequences of pictures which are different from the book's. This does not matter as long as the stories they suggest are also plausible.

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While reading activity

Get it right

The police arrived very ~~slowly~~ ^{quickly}. There were not many of them. Some of them with pens went downstairs to Molly's room. A detective talked to Mr Pratt in the front room. The family waited in the kitchen. It was a cold day again and the windows were closed. The cats sat noisily at Jackie's feet. Everybody talked. Jackie had some wine. They didn't wait very long. Slowly the door opened and the detective came in.

'Good evening. I am Detective Inspector Foster.' The Inspector smiled. He was a small man in a new blue suit and a green hat and coat. 'This morning someone put sleeping tablets in Mr Clarkson's coffee. I need a room, please.'

Roger sat down. 'I'm Roger Clarkson. You

can have my mother's old bedroom. Go with me, it's through there.'

The bedroom was a very big room. There was a bed and three or four televisions. Roger closed a door.

'I would like first to talk to your grandfather,' Inspector Foster said. He took off his shoes and sat down on the bed.

'Of course,' said Roger and left the house.



To the teacher

Where: After page 18 or at the end of Chapter 4

Aim: To summarize

Time: 10–15 minutes

Organization: Give each student, or pair of students,

a copy of the summary and ask them to write in their corrections. Later, they can create their own versions of subsequent chapters containing mistakes for other students to correct.

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After reading activity

Order the events

EVENT	ORDER	
a	Albert went to see Molly in her bedroom.	
b	The police talked to Jackie.	
c	Jackie went away in a police car.	
d	Roger went to see Molly in her bedroom.	
e	The doctor called the police.	
f	Molly wrote a letter so that Peter Hobbs lost his job.	
g	The police talked to Roger.	
h	Molly went to see Dr Pratt.	
i	Diane found her mother dead in bed.	
j	Peter Hobbs went to the village for Molly's sleeping tablets.	
k	The others went to the kitchen to have some coffee.	
l	Inspector Walsh told them who killed Molly.	
m	Diane phoned to ask for money for a train ticket.	
n	Jackie Clarkson and Tom Briggs fell in love when he was a gardener at the Clarkson's house	
o	Molly got angry and went upstairs to her room.	
p	The police talked to Tom Briggs.	
q	The family had dinner together on Molly's birthday.	
r	Jackie went to see Molly in her bedroom.	
s	The police talked to Peter Hobbs.	
t	Molly's husband died in a car accident.	
u	Diane called the doctor.	
v	The police talked to Albert.	
w	Diane went to see Molly in her bedroom.	
x	Roger Clarkson lost his job.	
y	The police talked to Diane.	

To the teacher

Aim: To help with summarizing and revision of reading

Time: 20 minutes

Organization: Give each student or pair of students a copy of the jumbled events, and ask them to put the events in the correct order. When they have

finished, ask students to retell the story in the actual order it took place, starting with Jackie falling in love with the gardener.

Key: 1n, 2t, 3x, 4f, 5h, 6j, 7m, 8q, 9o, 10k, 11a, 12d, 13w, 14r, 15i, 16u, 17e, 18v, 19b, 20g, 21y, 22s, 23p, 24l, 25c.