

The Scarecrow Reading Guide

SPOILER WARNING! This guide does address the entire book. Do not read it if you have not read the book.

1. Jack McEvoy had been flying high for a while, after *The Poet* case. He wrote a bestselling book about that story, was featured on TV shows, and was hired at a premier newspaper. However, at the start of *The Scarecrow*, 12 years after *The Poet*, he is divorced and seemed to be at the end of his career as a journalist. Did you like Jack as a protagonist? Could you relate to him or to his career issues?

2. The layoffs at the *Los Angeles Times* in this novel are a fictional example of what is really happening in the newspaper industry today. Why are so many newspapers shutting down or going bankrupt? What is the future of the news industry? And what will our communities miss if local daily newspapers are gone?

3. Jack McEvoy and Rachel Walling reunited in *The Scarecrow* and appeared to be in a good relationship at the end. Michael Connelly has also written Rachel in an on-and-off again relationship with LAPD Detective Harry Bosch. Who do you think is a better fit for Rachel, Jack or Harry? Or neither?

4. Rachel seemed lost when she was forced out of the FBI. Can you imagine Rachel in another line of work? Do you think she can ever really have job security with the FBI or will she always be one mistake away from being fired?

5. Wesley Carver, the Scarecrow, was obviously a very smart man who was very dangerous. Do you think if his childhood had been different, he would have leaded a healthier, saner life? Or do you think some people are just simply born bad?

6. Carver seemed to have found a home on the Internet, indulging in his twisted sexual fantasies, finding others who shared his tendencies, laying traps, and finding victims. He was able to get information about his victims very easily. Think about Angela Cook and how much information he gathered about her just by visiting a few web pages. Is this book a cautionary tale about our use of the Internet?

7. Did you catch any of the references to the *The Wizard of Oz* throughout the book?