

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS FOR *REQUIEM FOR INNOCENCE* BY BV LAWSON

1. How would you describe Scott Drayco? What are the rules he lives by? What do they say about his character? Does his synesthesia help him or hurt him in his professional and personal life? What are his greatest strengths? His greatest weaknesses?
2. We get hints of Drayco's relationships with his parents - his aloof and sometimes disapproving father, his AWOL mother. Do you think this has affected his drive to excel in law enforcement, as a form of validation? Or is his brilliance at solving crimes really another outlet for his creativity left over from his truncated piano career?
3. Drayco continues to be bedeviled and bewildered by his feelings toward Darcie, even while the specters of his former fiancée and of the out-of-reach Deputy Nelia Tyler haunt his psyche. Is this beginning to affect his work or his judgment? Was hooking up with Darcie the right thing to do?
4. Some see the wise-cracking Reece Wable as a form of comic relief to offset the darker aspects of the book. But is that all there is to Reece?
5. Would you say Iris Quintier is a "bad" woman? How does she see herself, and is she truly a victim trapped in a bad marriage or does she share some of the blame for her circumstances?
6. The color gray is used heavily throughout - Lucy's seagull-gray voice, a squeaky chair setting off wavy rectangles of pewter and jute colors in Drayco's brain, Beth Sterling wearing gray linen slacks and an equally gray scooped-neck blouse and "looking like a walking foggy day." What do think is the significance of this color choice? How does it fit the storyline?
7. At one point, Drayco remarks on "Guilt, that necrotizing bacteria of conscience that loves to nibble away at happiness." How does guilt play into the plot, and how do each of the characters deal with the guilt they try to hide?
8. Drayco also notes that Gatewood has a set of books and that "The books were faux antique gold-trimmed sets of classics sold to people who liked the illusion of being well-read rather than the experience of it." Do you know any people like that?
9. During the investigation, various people fall under suspicion. But which suspects seemed to you the most likely to have committed the murders and why?
10. Fire is used extensively throughout the book: Beth's trash can fire, Drayco's dreams of being engulfed in fire, the shack set on fire, Maida using a match to light one of her homemade potpourri candles, fire damage to the forest across from Gatewood house that's pitted with blackened tree stumps, references to Beth's diary having been burned

(referenced at one point when Drayco supposes if it still exists), and of course, the ending. Why is the concept of fire so important to the story? Does it work as symbolism?

11. What do you see as the theme of Requiem? That heartless greed is the real disability, or true strength comes from how we overcome our limitations, or something else?
12. Who is the real “innocent” referred to in the title? The young Virginia, Drayco’s murdered war veteran, or the names in Beth’s ledger? Or is the word choice of “innocence” really a metaphor for all victims of violent crime?