

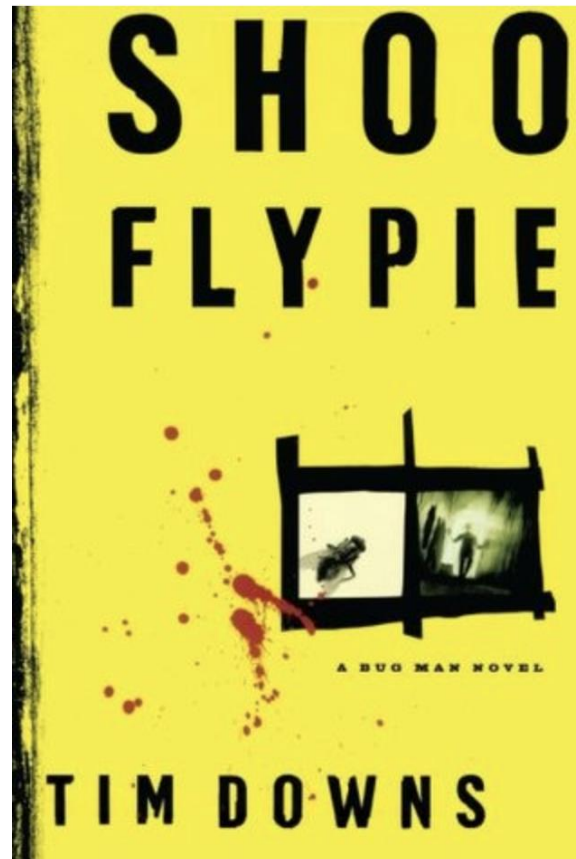
Clarabell Knapp

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Shoo Fly Pie

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You can read more adventures with the Bug Man in *Chop Shop*, *Less than Dead*, *First the Dead*, *Ends of the Earth*, and *Nick of Time*.

Book Summary

Dr. Nick Polchak is a forensic entomologist who has a knack for overstepping in the field of police work. On a summer away for research, he plans to keep his head down and make his research the priority. However, the very trouble he is trying to avoid comes looking for him.

Kathryn Guilford won't accept Jimmy's cause of death. Her gut tells her that something isn't adding up but she's not getting any help from the local police department. Taking matters into her own hands, she decides to find the next best thing and hires Nick, the Bug Man, to take on the unofficial investigation into Jimmy's cause of death. As the pair work together to find the true answers, an unruly weeks' worth of events begin to unfold. The closer they come to the truth, the more dangerous the world around them becomes.

Discussion Questions:

1. Nick claims to be a man "in search of a species" and is adamant that he is not a member of the human species. Why do you think he is able to relate to the world of insects more than he is to the humans around him?
2. Do you think the storyline encourages readers to view the positive side of insects? Did it make you view them positively? If so, how did those feelings come about? If you saw them negatively through the book, why?
3. Throughout the book there are many explanations given by Nick and Teddy over forensic entomology and insects in general. Are these explanations insightful to real forensic

entomology or are they a far stretch for popular culture media in the overall power of the book?

4. Do you think that Nick has trained himself to be insensitive to areas of his job? While describing some of the processes occurring with insects, he comes off as insensitive and blunt. Why do you think this is the way Nick chooses to explain information to others?
5. Dr. Polchak finds himself at odds with Sheriff Peter and Deputy Beanie quite often. The duo continually ignore Nick's advice when it comes to the insects around them. Do you think this ultimately leads to their demise at the end of the book? Was Nick just trying to confuse them with information to be able to utilize the insects to his advantage all along?
6. Do you find it unusual for an individual with such a chronic fear of insects like Kathryn to envelop in such a close friendship with Nick, someone who works with insects for a living? Why do you think they are able to create such a strong friendship?
7. In chapter 20, Nick begins to describe the relationship he sees between Peter and Kathryn as that of an assassin bug and its prey. Do you think that this was a purposeful foreshadowing done by the author into the final chapters and plot twists of the book? How does this connection between the final outcome and this reference make you feel?
8. Kathryn has a severe fear of insects, especially bees, given her traumatic experience as a child. Working to solve the investigation, she must work through this fear. How do you think she was able to overcome the fear? Did you find Nick's methods of tricking her into being in close contact with insects appropriate in trying to help her or was it too abrasive?
9. The book does a good job relating human senses to that of insects and the way they utilize their surroundings to feel and hear. Have you ever thought about actions that you do on a day to day basis that may be implemented in an insect's daily life as well?

10. Dr. Noah Ellison strives to teach his students by leading them to each discovery, rather than telling them the answer. Do you think that Nick inadvertently takes on this same path of teaching, without even realizing it, towards Kathryn throughout the book in regard to the investigation and her fear of insects?