

Detective Rob Miller

The Marlow Murders

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Discussion Topics

The Detective Rob Miller Mysteries Follow DCI Rob Miller and his team as they investigate murders across London and beyond. Choose your book below to download the accompanying discussion guide.

Be warned! There are spoilers in the guides, so make sure you've finished reading the book first.

The Marlow Murders (Book 7)

- **The Mask of Charity:** How did Dame Constance Blanchard use the Lifegiving Foundation as a front to embezzle charity funds for personal gain?
- **Misguided Gratitude:** What drove Zeke Hamlin to murder Chloe Brooke on behalf of Dame Constance, and does his sense of debt excuse his actions?
- **Colonial Mining Scandals:** How did Debby Morris's discovery of British mining company AngloCore's cover-up in Kinshasa lead to her murder?

- **Small-Town Secrets:** How does the picturesque, affluent town of Marlow contrast with the dark web of illicit arms deals, blackmail, and political affairs uncovered by police?
- **The Rise of PC Victor Trent:** How does Victor Trent's initiative as a Thames Valley officer earn him a permanent spot on Rob Miller's Major Investigation Team?

Discussion Guide

The Marlow Murders (Book 7) — Discussion Guide Answers

1. The Mask of Charity

- **The Embezzlement Scheme:** Dame Constance Blanchard used the Lifegiving Foundation, an apparently noble charity based in Marlow, as a respectable front for financial fraud.
- **Fake Organizations:** She created non-existent outreach projects, such as the fictitious "South London Blood Donation Group," to funnel charity funds directly into her personal accounts.
- **Maintaining the Facade:** While projecting the image of a generous local philanthropist, she systematically siphoned off donations meant for community causes to fund her personal lifestyle.

2. Misguided Gratitude

- **Exploiting Loyalty:** Zeke Hamlin was a young university student and protégé who felt immensely indebted to Dame Constance for funding his education and giving him opportunities.
- **The Execution of the Murder:** When event planner Chloe Brooke uncovered Dame Constance's embezzlement scheme, Dame Constance manipulated Zeke's intense gratitude and obligation to silence Chloe permanently.
- **Tragic Consequences:** Driven by a misplaced sense of duty, Zeke prioritized his loyalty to his benefactor over human life, ultimately confessing to the police after his arrest.

3. Colonial Mining Scandals

- **Uncovering the Truth:** Debby Morris originally believed her late parents were simple tea importers, but she discovered through Roman Petrovic that her father actually worked for British mining conglomerate AngloCore in Africa.
- **Threatening Exposure:** After learning about the corporate cover-up and illicit arms dealings in Kinshasa, Debby threatened to lodge a formal complaint with MP Lord Ainsworth.
- **The Fatal Silence:** To prevent her from exposing the high-level international corruption, Roman Petrovic murdered Debby by forcibly drowning her in the River Thames.

4. Small-Town Secrets

- **The Picturesque Veneer:** Marlow is portrayed as an affluent, picturesque town in the Thames Valley where violent crime is virtually non-existent.
- **Hidden Scandals:** Beneath this respectable surface, the murder investigation exposes a dark network of corporate embezzlement, foreign arms deals, and extramarital affairs.
- **Protecting Reputations:** Prominent figures—including Assistant Commissioner Matthew Gray and MP Lord Ainsworth—attempt to hide secrets and affairs to preserve their social and political standing.

5. The Rise of PC Victor Trent

- **First Responder Initiative:** As a junior officer with Thames Valley Police, PC Victor Trent demonstrates quick thinking and professionalism when responding to the discovery of Debby Morris's body.
- **Rob Miller's Mentorship:** Impressed by Trent's work ethic and sharp instincts, DCI Rob Miller requests that Trent be seconded to the Putney Major Investigation Team for the duration of the case.
- **Earning a Permanent Spot:** Trent plays an active role in interviewing witnesses, managing crime scene logistics, and helping apprehend the culprits, leading Rob to offer him a permanent position on the MIT.