

Newport, Rhode Island.

I stood at the top of the wooden steps leading down to the beach and watched Kathleen Beavier below.

She was tossing small flat stones into the surf, and I could tell she was athletic by the way she threw the rocks. She had an air of confidence, and it seemed so odd, so sad and wrong, that she'd tried to kill herself not long ago.

I draped an old blue cashmere sweater around my shoulders and walked down toward the girl.

Kathleen seemed to accept me so far. She waved, complimented me on the way I'd twisted up my hair, and told me that the watercolor blue of my sweater was a real "wow."

Kathleen looked like most girls her age, though she was prettier, and pregnant, of course. She wore a tan hooded sweater, wide-legged cargo pants, chunky boots, a wool beanie. I'd been noticing her favorite brands: Roxy, Blue Asphalt, Union Bay. She wore makeup, but not too much.

She gave me an enthusiastic guided tour of the picturesque Beavier estate, which was once a working farm. There were still antique outbuildings dotting the grounds. The cottage was a beautiful structure, with four imposing wings added on to an impressive Victorian shell. The house had twenty-four rooms, eight full baths.

"It's pretty awesome," I said.

"It's not exactly a humble stable in Bethlehem," Kathleen said. She smiled at me. "I thought someone should break the ice."

I laughed. "Consider it broken. You know that I'm a private investigator."

"Do you get to carry a gun?" she asked.

"Everybody asks me that lately. I have a gun, yes."

We walked at the frothy hem of the sea, skirting the foam as it surged toward our sneakers. I said, "Maybe we should talk about what I know about you, and what I don't."

She took a deep breath. "Okay. If we have to."

"We have to," I said, hoping I sounded nonchalant. "All I know for sure is this: You're pregnant, and you say you're a virgin."

"Strange, but true. And you know I tried to kill myself."

I nodded. "I also know that the Archdiocese of Boston is concerned about your condition. I know they're trying to keep the story quiet, which is understandable. But why did they become involved in the first place?"

Kathleen rolled her eyes, which were bright blue and very pretty. "Okay. First of all, though, one minor correction. You said the Church was concerned; I'd say they're terrified. The almighty cardinal came here himself. He couldn't look into my eyes. That's very strange. I think it is, anyway."

"After I tried to end 'IT' and then to end me, my mother finally listened to me. She didn't believe me at first, naturally, but then she got it big-time. I didn't expect her to say, 'Mother of God!' Literally! But that's what she said."

The girl was funny; I had to hand it to her. She was a charmer. "So she called the local church?"

"Yeah. If it had been up to Dad, he would have sent me to Switzerland, put the baby up for adoption..."

James Patterson, *Cradle and All*, 2000

- 1) Where is the location of the scene (not the city)? Quote from the text.
- 2) Name the two main characters. Tell:
 - a) who they are
 - b) what they do
- 5) How old do you think Kathleen is? Justify your answer by quoting from the text.
- 6) The narrator describes many of Kathleen's character traits and physical traits. List 6 adjectives that describe Kathleen. Justify by quoting from the text.
- 7) Circle the two adjectives that best describe the narrator's state of mind. Justify by quoting from the text:
furious / curious / concerned / cheerful / shy
- 8) L22: a) What is "stable in Bethlehem" intended to refer to?
b) Why do you think it is referenced?
- 9) L23: a) Look up and write the definition for the idiom (*idiome*): break the ice.
b) How did Kathleen break the ice in her conversation with the narrator?
- 10) What does the narrator want from Kathleen?
- 11) In less than 10 words, tell what Kathleen's condition is.
- 12) Why is the Church involved with Kathleen?
- 13) L41: a) What does 'IT' refer to?
b) What does "to end me" refer to?
- 14) How do Kathleen's parents feel about Kathleen's condition? Explain in your own words, using elements from the text. (30 words)

BONUS

L1: What is a possible reason for the author to frankly (*franchement*) write the specific city of the scene at the beginning of the text?