



The Silkworm by Robert Galbraith

About the author:

Robert Galbraith is a pseudonym for J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series. When asked why she chose to write under a pseudonym and as a man, J.K. Rowling answered: “To begin with I was yearning to go back to the beginning of a writing career in this new genre, to work without hype or expectation and to receive totally unvarnished feedback. It was a fantastic experience and I only wish it could have gone on a little longer than it did. I was grateful at the time for all the feedback from publishers and readers, and for some great reviews. Being Robert Galbraith was all about the work, which is my favourite part of being a writer. Now my cover has been blown, I plan to continue to write as Robert to keep the distinction from other writing. I certainly wanted to take my writing persona as far away as possible from me, so a male pseudonym seemed a good idea. I chose Robert because it is one of my favourite men’s names, because Robert F. Kennedy is my hero and because, mercifully, I hadn’t used it for any of the characters in the Potter series or *The Casual Vacancy*. Galbraith came about for a slightly odd reason. When I was a child, I really wanted to be called ‘Ella Galbraith’, and I’ve no idea why. I don’t even know how I knew that the surname existed, because I can’t remember ever meeting anyone with it. Be that as it may, the name had a fascination for me.”

Source: Author’s website (<http://robert-galbraith.com/>)

About this book:

A compulsively readable crime novel with twists at every turn, *The Silkworm* is the second in the highly acclaimed series featuring Cormoran Strike and his

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determined young assistant, Robin Ellacott.

When novelist Owen Quine goes missing, his wife calls in private detective Cormoran Strike. At first, Mrs. Quine just thinks her husband has gone off by himself for a few days--as he has done before--and she wants Strike to find him and bring him home. But as Strike investigates, it becomes clear that there is more to Quine's disappearance than his wife realizes. The novelist has just completed a manuscript featuring poisonous pen-portraits of almost everyone he knows. If the novel were to be published, it would ruin lives--meaning that there are a lot of people who might want him silenced. When Quine is found brutally murdered under bizarre circumstances, it becomes a race against time to understand the motivation of a ruthless killer, a killer unlike any Strike has encountered before...

Source: Hachette Book Group (<http://www.hachettebookgroup.com/>)

Discussion Questions:

1. Who did you most suspect? Were you surprised when the killer was revealed? Why or why not?
2. What did you think about Michael Fancourt? What are your thoughts on his unconventional opinions about love, etc. given during his televised interview? Did you suspect him at any point?
3. At the time, did you find convincing the explanation Liz Tassel gave to Strike regarding her money transfers to Quine?



4. Once Strike begins to have a suspect in mind, information is obviously held from the reader. Was this a frustrating or annoyingly abrupt to you? Why or why not?

5. For Harry Potter readers, did the house in Talgath Road remind you of anything? Was there anything else in *The Silkworm* that directly or indirectly reminded you of the Potter series?

6. How do you feel about Matthew? Do you think he and Robin will end up married? Are you hoping Robin and Strike end up together? How would you imagine that happening?

7. Did you ever suspect that the *Bombyx Mori* manuscript circulated was indeed different from the one Quine wrote? When did you begin to suspect?

8. What are your opinions on the observations Rowling makes through her characters concerning the literary landscape - that content is king, that we need more readers and fewer writers, that the internet and e-publishing has given us dross? What are some other opinions expressed on the subject by the characters?

Source: *About Entertainment* (<http://bestsellers.about.com/>)

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