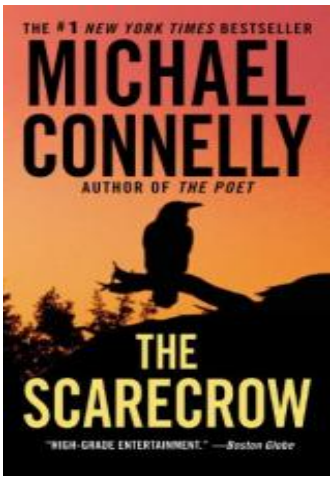
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

The Scarecrow

by Michael Connelly



About the Book

Forced out of the *Los Angeles Times* amid the latest budget cuts, newspaperman Jack McEvoy decides to go out with a bang, using his final days at the paper to write the definitive murder story of his career.

He focuses on Alonzo Winslow, a 16-year-old drug dealer in jail after confessing to a brutal murder. But as he delves into the story, Jack realizes that Winslow's so-called confession is bogus. The kid might actually be innocent.

Jack is soon running with his biggest story since The Poet made his career years ago. He is tracking a killer who operates completely below police radar --- and with perfect knowledge of any move against him. Including Jack's.

Discussion Guide

1. Jack McEvoy had been flying high for a while, after The Poet case. He wrote a bestselling book about that story, was featured on TV shows, and got hired at a premier newspaper. But at the start of **The Scarecrow**, 12 years after The Poet, he is divorced and seemed to be at the end of his career as a journalist. Did you like Jack as a protagonist? Could you relate to him or to his career issues?

2. The layoffs at the Los Angeles Times in this novel are a fictional example of what is really happening in the newspaper industry today. Why are so many newspapers shutting down or going bankrupt? What is the future of the news industry? And what will our communities miss if local daily newspapers are gone?

3. Jack McEvoy and Rachel Walling reunited in **The Scarecrow** and appeared to be in a good relationship at the end. Michael Connelly has also written Rachel in an on-and-off again relationship with LAPD Detective Harry Bosch. Who do you think is a better fit for Rachel, Jack or Harry? Or neither?

4. Rachel seemed lost when she was forced out of the FBI. Can you imagine Rachel in another line of work? Do you think she can ever really have job security with the FBI or will she always be one mistake away from being fired?

5. Wesley Carver, the Scarecrow, was obviously a very smart man who was very dangerous. Do you think if his childhood had been different, he would have lead a healthier, saner life? Or do you think some people are just simply born bad?

6. Carver seemed to have found a home on the Internet, indulging in his twisted sexual fantasies, finding others who shared his tendencies, laying traps, and finding victims. He was able to get information about his victims very easily. Think about Angela Cook and how much information he gathered about her just by visiting a few web pages. Is this book a cautionary tale about our use of the Internet?

7. Did you catch any of the references to **The Wizard of Oz** throughout the book?

Author Bio

Michael Connelly is the author of 43 novels, including #1 *New York Times* bestsellers DESERT STAR, THE DARK HOURS and THE LAW OF INNOCENCE. His books, which include the Harry Bosch series, the *Lincoln Lawyer* series and the Renée Ballard series, have sold more than 80 million copies worldwide. Connelly is a former newspaper reporter who has won numerous awards for his journalism and his novels. He is the executive producer of three television series: "Bosch," "Bosch: Legacy" and "The Lincoln Lawyer." He spends his time in California and Florida.

The Scarecrow
by Michael Connelly

Publication Date: February 1, 2010
Genres: Fiction, Thriller
Mass Market Paperback: 576 pages
Publisher: Grand Central Publishing
ISBN-10: 044640120X
ISBN-13: 9780446401203