



## A Dirty Job

By Christopher Moore  
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### Introduction

Charlie Asher is one lucky guy. He owns a building in the heart of San Francisco where he runs a successful secondhand store, and he's married to Rachel, a bright and pretty woman who is about to deliver their first child.

But on the day that Sophie, his daughter, is born, Charlie sees a strange man in a mint-green suit at Rachel's hospital bedside, a man who claims that no one should be able to see him. But see him Charlie does, and from here on out, things get really weird.

People start dropping dead around him, giant ravens perch on his building, and everywhere he goes, a dark presence whispers to him from under the streets. Unfamiliar names start appearing on his nightstand notepad, and before he knows it, those people end up dead, too. It seems that Charlie Asher has been recruited for a new job, an unpleasant but utterly necessary one: Death. It's *A Dirty Job*. But hey, somebody's gotta do it.

### Questions for Discussion

1. How does the opening scene at Rachel's bedside, in which Charlie first encounters Minty Fresh, foreshadow Charlie's reluctant role as Death Merchant?
2. How do the efforts of the Morrigan (Babd, Nemain, and Macha) and Orcus to reclaim the Above with their dark powers come into conflict with Charlie's work as a Death Merchant?
3. A number of characters in *A Dirty Job* are primarily comic, most notably the Hellhounds, Alvin and Mohammed, and Sophie's babysitters, Mrs. Korjev and Mrs. Ling. Why might the author have chosen to incorporate so much humor into a novel about the business of death?
4. Why does Charlie avoid discussing his secret identity with his sister, Jane, who serves as his sounding board and shoulder to cry on throughout the novel?
5. Weird things happen in the San Francisco of *A Dirty Job*. How did you reconcile the impossibly fantastic occurrences in this novel with the more commonplace events?
6. How are Audrey and the squirrel people significant in ending the reign of the Morrigan, and why do Charlie and Audrey fall in love with each other so suddenly?
7. How does Inspector Alphonse Rivera facilitate Charlie's mission against the Morrigan, and in what respects does he impede it?
8. How does the revelation of Sophie as the Luminatus alter the course of the novel, and Charlie's role as hero, and how was Sophie's role foreshadowed early on in *A Dirty Job*?
9. "Heartbreak is the natural habitat of the Beta Male." To what extent do Charlie's heroics in the sewer succeed in elevating him from the Beta Male category in which he classifies himself to an Alpha Male?
10. In what respects does the death of Charlie Asher at the end of *A Dirty Job* seem inevitable? Were you at all surprised that the author decided to kill him off?

### About the Author

Christopher Moore is the author of nine other novels: *You Suck*, *The Stupidest Angel*, *Fluke*, *Lamb*, *The Lust Lizard of Melancholy Cove*, *Island of the Sequined Love Nun*, *Bloodsucking Fiends*, *Coyote Blue*, and *Practical Demonkeeping*. He lives in San Francisco.