

To: Ken Follett  
From: Jackie Farber  
Subject: Follow-up to Thursday, February 25th phone call.

Here's a recapitulation of our discussion this morning. As you know, we are sending you the manuscript, which has many notations on it, some of which will no longer be appropriate if you revise according to our morning's discussions, but some of which will. Please forgive us if some of the comments seem less polite than we had intended and if you don't understand them-- or the handwriting-- we are here to answer your queries.

Something we didn't mention this morning. Hugh is really the character we are rooting for and he does seem a little wimpy. Could you make him a little stronger, a bit more of a presence than he has now? He's good. Make him the best.       ×

Otherwise, nothing to add. As said above, the manuscript is lashed with comments for you to love, spindle or mutilate.

1866 Quarry swimming incident. When you describe it first, there is a boy on the far side. It is not clear who, if anyone, knows he is there, except for the reader. But along the way characters are able to identify him as Turpin. At what point did this become apparent to them? Episode is murky and needs some careful clarifying. From whose point of view is the description on page 13?

Other mentions:

- p. 27 inquest
- p. 33 Micky mentions another boy
- p. 88 How did Hugh know Turpin was there
- p. 114 Lord Liversidge visits       ×

p. 143 Dick Turpin's letter  
p. 152 Samuel tell Augusta Middleton visited him  
p. 158 Augusta worries about Hugh and Tonio  
p. 220 Augusta worries about Middleton and Hugh, but only Samuel has seen her  
p. 375 Middleton speaks to Hugh at ball. You can see there are many mentions that are not clear to the reader, but I don't think they're going to be difficult to clear up.

Augusta-- We talked about her next and felt that her sexuality and sensuousness should be brought up. We did not see her as "attractive" in the girlish, loving, romantic sense, but as that Victorian woman whose severe exterior (clothes, hairstyle etc) belied her seething (too strong?) sexual side. It seems out of character for her to dream of running away with Micky, to leave Joseph or to give up all that she works so hard to achieve by manipulating the partners, her husband and her son. Her feelings toward Edward certainly go beyond a normal mother's reactions. x

Tonio/Solly Greenbournes death/Hugh's reactions etc.

Since Tonio and his revelations and Solly's death are so intertwined, let's start with Tonio's meeting with Hugh and the subsequent beating by Micky's thugs.

1819-- April. Tonio goes to Hugh, gives him the article which is going to go into the Times and Hugh goes to the partners to say his piece. Tonio gets beat up, the papers disappear, we must see Hugh, who right now seems very wimpish, defend himself when the partners would wonder what happened to the so called threat-- what happened to the article in the Times? Hugh goes in search of Tonio. He doesn't find him-- need a scene showing this-- and Hugh must feel like a fool but wonder. Does he follow up afterwards, write to Granada, or is it enough that he's searched for him and he's disappeared? ✓

Now in the manuscript two months later [June] Hugh hears from Tonio and learns about Middleton/Micky. This comes too early chronologically since it is 1879 and Hugh does not use this information until 11 years later. Our suggestion is to move this incident way up-- currently Tonio's episode starts p. 478 in 1879. We suggest moving it to p. 550, not so many pages later but 11 years later. x

But to stay with the chronology:

July 1879-- Solly, furious, tells Micky at club that he knows how Pilasters got the peerage. Micky realizes Greenbourne's will get out of deal and he gets off after Solly, to kill him. BUT we feel that killing Solly is just too much, making Micky a caricature and thus feel he should not murder Solly. Let's say Micky goes after Solly in a murderous rage, and for all we know would have murdered Solly, but Solly, overweight, out of condition, running and excited has a massive coronary and dies. ✓

Now, we move into 1890

1890-- early on here, at p. 550, or possibly earlier, before Maisie tells Hugh about the peerage, Tonio reappears. Whether there is a meeting, or in a letter asking to see him, Tonio reveals the true story of the swimming/drowning incident. Hugh will then go to Edward with two motives: to discredit Micky and his Cordova projects and to tell Edward the truth about the drowning. He did not cause Peter Middleton to drown. x

p. 562 Edward goes to Augusta to tell her what he's learned. He is horrified-- and of course, Augusta believes him because she knows Micky killed old Joel. But she does not tell Edward-- she has a quick flash of the scene in the bedroom-- and again has a frisson of sexual thrills at the thought of Micky. x

Then Edward is visited by Micky-- all proceeds as you've got it now and Micky gets his just desserts as does Edward, poor and reprobate, and Augusta, except for her bad back gets away. It's just a brilliant end.

The one other thing you brought up is for Micky to be chased by the police for the three murders. It's enough he's chased for Tonio's isn't it? No .

xc: Al Zuckerman