

CHOCOLAT

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Chapter 1

- 1 What event was taking place when Vianne and Anouk reached Lansquenet-sous-Tannes?
- 2 What is Vianne's first impression of the priest on p.14?
- 3 On p.16 Vianne says "On the lease document I am Vianne Rocher, the signature a hieroglyph which might mean anything." What is the significance of this sentence?
- 4 What is the first indication of magic in this book (p.16/17)?

Chapter 2

- 5 On p.19 we get the first indication that Vianne is not what she seems. What reference does she make to magic here?
- 6 On p.20 is the first official meeting with the priest. How does Vianne unwittingly insult him?

Chapter 3

- 7 Who is Reynaud talking to in this chapter (read the whole chapter before you answer)?
- 8 "*But you must know how heavy it is for one man to carry their petty concerns, their dissatisfactions, their foolishness, their thousand trivial problems.*" (p.23) How does Reynaud view his job and his parishioners?
- 9 "*All I want is to guide them, mon pere, to free them from their sin. But they fight me at every turn, like children refusing wholesome fare in order to continue eating what sickens them.*" (p.23) Write out another 2 quotes from this chapter that show how Reynaud believes he is superior to all the other people in the town.
- 10 What impression does Reynaud have of Vianne (pp.24-26)?

Chapter 4

- 11 Why is Vianne not bothered by the fact that she has few customers on opening day?
- 12 What does Josephine Muscat do on her first visit to the shop? How does Vianne react to this?

Chapter 5

- 13 What is the name of the chocolate shop?
- 14 Reynaud takes the opening of the shop as a deliberate insult to him at the beginning of Lent. What happens during this time in the Christian festival?
- 15 On p.34 what do we find out about Reynaud's character and commitment to his work as a priest?
- 16 "*Try me, test me, taste me*" becomes an important phrase in this book. It is first mentioned on p.35.

Chapter 6

- 17 What impression of Reynaud does Vianne receive from the locals? (p.38)
- 18 Who or what is Pantoufle?
- 19 What do we find out about Armande Voizin in Chapter 6?
- 20 "*Does he know you're a witch?*"
"*...Witch, witch. It's the wrong word, but I know what she meant.*" What does Armande mean here? (p.41)
- 21 "*In a place like Lansquenet it sometimes happens that one person – schoolteacher, café proprietor, or priest – forms the lynchpin of the community. That this single individual is the essential core of the machinery which runs lives, like the central pin of a clock mechanism...*" (p.43) What does Harris mean by this?

Chapter 7

- 22 What do we find out about Vianne's mother and her childhood here?
- 23 What do we find out about Anouk's father?
- 24 Vianne is at the stage where she wants to change her life. What exactly does she want?
- 25 Who is the "Black Man" and why is he so important in Vianne's life?
- 26 What kind of chocolates symbolize Reynaud according to Vianne?

Chapter 8

- 27 What else do we find out about Vianne's magic here? (p.56)
- 28 "*I sell dreams, small comforts, sweet harmless temptations to bring down a multitude of saints.. ..Is that so bad?*" (p.56)

- 29 What is wrong with Charley? Guillaume says, “*When the time comes, I’ll know...I’ll know what to do. I won’t be afraid.*” What event does this foreshadow in the book?
- 30 Vianne is afraid she will lose Anouk if she doesn’t find “The Place”. What does she mean? (p.58)
- 31 Anouk finds out about prejudice today. What happens?
- 32 Vianne is tempted to leave at the end of this chapter. Why does she decide to stay?

Chapter 9

- 33 Cookery is often described as the art of sorcery in this book, especially making chocolate. It is a sensual experience, as is the eating of chocolate (a joy to the senses!)
- 34 When scrying with chocolate Vianne discovers two important secrets (or images) of Reynaud – what are they?

Chapter 10

- 35 “*There is something unwholesome about such a concentration of sweetness. A promise, half-fulfilled, of the forbidden*” (p.66) What does Reynaud compare La Celeste Praline with?
- 36 We get a physical description of Vianne here for the first time, even though it is through Reynaud’s unfriendly eyes. What exactly does she look like?
- 37 The use of colour is frequently used as a symbol in this book. What image does Reynaud think Vianne presents in her clothes here?
- 38 What attitude does Reynaud have towards the gypsies?
- 39 What is Reynaud’s attitude toward Lent?
- 40 How is Reynaud’s arrogance emphasized at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 11

- 41 Josephine Muscat prove st be a misfit in the village and is desperately unhappy. What does she say that tells us this?
- 42 The innocence of children is emphasized in this text. What does Lucie say that Monsieur Muscat’s favourite chocolate would be? What does this seem to suggest about him?
- 43 What first impression do we gain of Muscat?

Chapter 12

- 44 What do we find out about the family triangle between Armande Voizin, Caroline Clairmont and Luc?
- 45 “*I knew it. I knew it. But I never thought to see you here, in this town.*” (p.85) What exactly does Armande know?
- 46 The Tarot cards support what Armande has said. What does the Death card stand for here?
- 47 This is where Vianne makes a conscious stand to be different from her mother. What line at the end of the chapter tells us this?

Chapter 13

- 48 Reynaud offends the laws of nature. How is this shown on pp.88/9?
- 49 Read the passage that begins, “*If only I could be more worthy...* and ends “*unworthy of you.*” What does this tell us about Reynaud? (p.89)
- 50 Reynaud’s total rejection of any luxury is in direct contrast to everything that Vianne stands for.
- 51 Reynaud is so suspicious he suspects Vianne of ingratiating herself in the town – being “wily”. (p.90) He is so mean spirited himself he cannot detect goodness and generosity in others.
- 52 What example of prejudice against the gypsies does Reynaud display here? (pp.91/92)
- 53 “*I am still someone in the village. My good opinion counts for something.*” How is Reynaud intending to deal with the problem of the gypsies? (p.95)
- 54 *Why does Reynaud think that expelling the gypsies will also get rid of Vianne?* (p.96)

Chapter 14

- 55 How does Vianne show her support for the gypsies? Find a line on p. 99 that supports your answer.
- 56 What do we find out about Luc Clairmont in this chapter?
- 57 What plant does Armande compare Caro to?
- 58 What do we find out about the relationship between Josephine Muscat and her husband?

Chapter 15

- 59 What is the Easter story that Vianne tells the children? Why will it be so offensive to Reynaud?

- 60 What example of Vianne's magic do we see on p. 117?
- 61 Vianne has caused positive change in the village already. What happens in Chapter 15? On p.123/4 Armande recognizes that Vianne is behind it, and makes another reference to the wind and the clock imagery. What does she say?
- 62 Armande sees the clock imagery as good. How does Vianne see it?

Chapter 16

- 63 Another change, this time with the gypsies. What happens?
- 64 What do we learn about Roux in this chapter?
- 65 Vianne tells Roux what she thinks Reynaud's opinion of her is on p.127. What does she say?
- 66 More evidence of Reynaud's contempt for animals on p.130. What does he say?
- 67 What is Vianne's attitude to getting Charley put down? How does this relate to her experiences with her mother?

Chapter 17

- 68 What comparison with the natural world does Reynaud make about Vianne's shop on p.133?
- 69 Reynaud continues his belief that the world revolves around him on pp.133/4. "*Of course it is to spite me that she acts in this way.*" He continues this line of thought on p.135. What does he say? What are Vianne's words on this subject on p.137?
- 70 What action does Reynaud plan to take against Vianne and the gypsies on p.139?

Chapter 18

- 71 Where is this chapter set? What is the atmosphere of this scene?

Chapter 19

- 72 What three things does Vianne say about a March wind?
- 73 What warning does Josephine give Vianne?
- 74 What does Armande reveal about the younger Reynaud?
- 75 On p.154 Vianne makes a comparison between her mother and Armande. What is it?
- 76 On p.156 Vianne says "*who rings the changes?*" What is the answer to her question, and what does it mean?

Chapter 20

- 77 Once again Reynaud is associated with destroying nature, and displaying attitudes that appear anti-Christian. What is described here?
- 78 "*It is the sense of disorder which she brings, pere, which so unnerves me. That wildness.*" P.159
- 79 What obsession does Reynaud show here with the chocolate shop? Is it rational? (pp.159/60)
- 80 Reynaud is becoming and more irrational. What could be one explanation for this on p.161?
- 81 "*Why can't they see what the woman is doing to us? Breaking down our community spirit, our sense of purpose. Playing on what is worst and weakest in the secret heart...while all the time the corruption grows deeper entrenched.*" p.162
- 82 "*Weeds and wheat cannot grow peacefully together.*" p.163) What does Reynaud mean here?
- 83 "*Tell me, Luc, don't you ever feel like rebelling...?*" What change is happening to Luc? Is Vianne responsible?
- 84 Why is Guillaume upset? The church is not helping here. What does Reynaud say about Charley?
- 85 "*Sometimes survival is the worst alternative there is.*" (p.167) What does Armande mean here? What is this foreshadowing?

Chapter 22

- 86 Why are the gypsies leaving? Who was responsible?
- 87 "*Any of them would be welcome in my church if their contrition were sincere. If they need guidance, they know they can come to me.*" (p.174) How true is this statement of Reynaud's?
- 88 What do we find out about the relationship between mon pere and Reynaud? (p.176) What is Reynaud's secret?

Chapter 23

- 89 "*I don't think there is such a thing as a good or bad Christian...only good or bad people.*" (p.183)
- 90 What does Vianne say she believes in on pp.183/84?
- 91 What is Josephine's news in this chapter?

92 Why does Vianne encourage Josephine to stay and face her husband? What parallel does this have with Vianne's life? *"You can't just run away from it all...I know. I've tried it."* (p.186)

Chapter 24

93 Guillaume has changed in this chapter. Describe how? (p.198)

94 Reynaud tells Josephine – *"I know you have been confused. Others have influenced you."* (p.203) To whom is he referring?

95 What imagery does Harris use in the last line to emphasize Reynaud's status as a villain?

Chapter 25

96 In what three areas does Reynaud feel that Vianne is striking out at him? (p.205)

97 What flower does Reynaud keep comparing Vianne to? What is the connection?

98 What impression and information do we get about Muscat here?

99 Why is Reynaud so angry with Muscat on p.208? (*"That he should dare..."*)

100 Read pp.208/09. How is Vianne viewed in the village? What is Reynaud's reaction to this?

Chapter 26

101 How has Josephine changed under Vianne's influence?

102 Describe Roux's attitude here.

Chapter 27

103 Why does Josephine feel so guilty every time she sees Roux?

104 What was Vianne's mother's attitude to death? How does Vianne explain this to Josephine on p.220?

105 Les Mimosa (*Le Mortoir*) is where Caroline wants to put Armande. What is the problem with this? (p.221 and p.226)

106 Why is Roux so afraid of getting help for Armande?

107 The first intimate awareness between Roux and Vianne occurs on p.226. Armande is aware of it.

108 What does Armande have to say about her illness on pp.226/27?

109 Reynaud feels that he has failed Josephine – *"Barely a week of that woman's influence and already I can hear that other's voice through hers."* (p.234)

110 Reynaud is tempted by a number of natural things on p.234. What are they?

111 *"Physical pleasure is the crack into which the devil sends his roots."* (p.235) What does Reynaud mean here? How does this tie in with the images of nature Harris uses?

112 This idea is taken even further with Reynaud's attempt to tame the churchyard. What would Reynaud like to see happen? *"Nature tamed by man"* (p.236) is what Reynaud wants in direct contrast to Vianne who likes weeds. (p.236)

113 In the confrontation between Reynaud and Vianne, Reynaud scores a point. What is it?

114 Vianne says, *"I think there may be room somewhere for both of us."* (p.237) Is this a possibility in this novel?

Chapter 29

115 What is revealed about Armande's illness?

116 On p.241 Armande says, *"After a five-course banquet you'd want coffee and liqueurs, wouldn't you? You wouldn't suddenly decide to round it all off with a bowl of pap, would you? Just so you could have an extra course?"* What does she mean by this? (Her desire to die with dignity is tied in with Charley's dog.

117 How does Vianne's mother die, and why does she feel so much relief rather than grief?

Chapter 30

118 To Reynaud, Vianne is like a weed, a *"living outrage"*.

119 To Vianne, Reynaud has become The Black Man and she is afraid. How did she and her mother deal with this fear in the past? What does Vianne promise herself this time?

Chapter 31

120 What plot does Caroline hatch against Vianne? Why is she so angry with her?

121 Reynaud says on p.251, *"It is with such contemptible tools, pere, that our work is often done."* Who is he referring to here. Why is this ironic?

Chapter 32

122 What is the message contained in the pamphlet that Josephine finds? How does Vianne react to it?

- 123Why does Vianne insist that Josephine tell Roux the truth about the fire? (p.260)
124Another reference to nature and how the sun can coax the plants to bloom (just like Vianne's "sunny" effect on the people around her.)

Chapter 33

- 125Why has the chocolate shop been deserted for the past few days? To what does Reynaud attribute this return of his flock? (p.266)
126Reynaud's childhood secrets are finally revealed on pp.271/72. What are they?
127To what extent has Josephine changed since she left Muscat? (Look at her confrontation with him when she returns to collect her things.)
128Reynaud is forced to back down from his anti-chocolate campaign. Why? (p.277)

Chapter 34

- 129Another huge change to the town. What is it?
130Luc has also changed. How is he different?
131Reynaud has announced that the chocolate festival has his total support. Vianne says, "*I know he means me harm, but somehow his poison has been drawn.*"
132Summer is approaching and part of Vianne wants to do what?
133What interesting incident about Vianne's childhood do we find out here? Do you think that Vianne really was the stolen child?
134Vianne uses her magic again and picks four cards. What are they, and how do they relate to her life?
135How does Vianne deal with the card image of the Black Man?. What does this symbolize?

Chapter 35

- 136What happens when Reynaud finds pere with his mother? Reynaud likens this to Jesus' death on the cross. Explain the connection.
137There is a contrast here between the dark solemnity of Good Friday and the decadence of both chocolate and Armande's party. What does Reynaud say about this on p.290?
138How does Reynaud think Guillaume has changed since his association with Vianne?

Chapter 36

- 139Notice the sumptuous details of the dinner party pp.296/97. This is, in effect, Armande's own Last Supper (to compare with that of Jesus before his death on the cross.)
140The encounter between Vianne and Roux was foreshadowed on p.226. What important event will come out of this affair? "*When I awoke, Roux was gone, and the wind had changed again.*"

Chapter 37

- 141Is Reynaud realistic in his assessment of pere's condition?
142What happened to Armande? Do you agree or disagree with her actions?
143Who does Reynaud blame for Armande's death? What nasty imagery does he use against Vianne?
144What plan does Reynaud come up with to ruin the chocolate festival?

Chapter 38

- 145What animal does Reynaud equate himself with? What other character shared this comparison?
146Explain the irony in Reynaud's downfall.
147Vianne is watching Reynaud's gluttony with a "*tiny smile*". What does she hold in her fingers? What is the significance of this?
148How is Reynaud ultimately defeated and forced to leave town?

Chapter 39

- 149Armande was a kind of witch to. What information in her final letter to Vianne suggests this?
150What does Vianne mean when she says, "*Perhaps it is what I suspected from the first, that Reynaud and I are linked, that one balances the other and that without him I have no purpose here.*"? (p.318)
151On p.319 what has Vianne decided to do now that the wind has changed?
152"*At last we have face down the Black Man...seen him at last for what he is: a fool to himself.*"
What does Vianne mean here? What hope does this give her for the future?
153What do you think Vianne will do – go or stay?