Not Above the Law  Richard MacAndrew

Before reading

1. Look at the picture on the front cover of the book. What does it show? What do you think it means?
2. What does the title mean? Can anyone be ‘above the law’?
3. Read the blurb on the back cover. What do you think has happened in George’s bedroom? How is it possible that he cannot explain all the blood? What significance do you think George’s profession has to what has happened?
4. Look at the list of characters on Page 4. How do you think they might be connected? Can you relate the picture on the cover to one of the characters?
5. If you have the recording, listen to Chapter 1.

Check your reading

Chapter 1

1. How does George feel when he wakes up?
2. What is strange about what he is wearing?
3. What does he find in his bed and around the flat?
4. What does he do with his clothes?
5. Which two people does he telephone?
6. Does he remember what he did the night before?
7. Can you think of an explanation for your answers to 1 and 6?
8. What do you think he will do next?

Chapter 2

1. Who says or thinks the following?
   a) Get over to Grattan Bridge … They’re pulling a body out of the water.
   b) What do we know?
   c) The killer used a knife. And not just once.
   d) A crime of hate or madness.
   e) It’s almost certainly Orla Quinn.
   f) Let’s hope somebody knows where she was last night.
2. What do we find out about Orla’s blood?

Chapter 3

1. Which of the following statements is true?
   a) George called the police.
   b) George cleaned his flat carefully.
   c) George spoke to Orla on the phone.
   d) George sent Orla an email.
   e) George’s head hurt badly.
   f) On the news George saw some people had set some mink free.
   g) The people had also burnt down the farmer’s house.
   h) The body of a young woman in a red dress had been found in the river.
   i) George remembered that Orla had worn a red dress the night before.
   j) The police came and took George away.
2. What do you think happens next?

Chapter 4

1. Match the beginnings and endings.
   1) Murphy and Lynch
   2) Two other policemen
   3) One of the policemen first finds
   4) They also find
   5) Inspector Murphy wonders
   6) The policemen take
   a) a kitchen knife and piece of red material.
   b) search George’s flat.
   c) George to the police station.
   d) go and talk to George at his flat.
   e) if George is acting when he feels bad.
   f) a blue handkerchief with chloroform on it.
2. Do the police believe that George can’t remember anything?

Chapter 5

1. Where does the action in this chapter take place?
2. The two police officers behave differently towards George. In what way?
3. How many times did they ask George the same questions?
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4. What does Murphy ask him that gives him a feeling of hope?
5. Who does George suggest might not like him?
6. What is the coincidence between what was on the news and one of the people George mentions?
7. Why does George feel happier at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 6
1. Who are they talking about?
   a) Lynch: He’s our best hope at the moment.
   b) Murphy: That lawyer…
   c) Murphy: For him, crime is a profession…
   d) Murphy: Angry and a bit wild.
   e) Keane: He doesn’t get home till two usually.
   f) Keane: He’s a snake…
2. What do the police notice and then find out about Geraldine Keane’s hand?

Chapter 7
1. What opinion does Keane have of the two police officers?
2. Does Keane have a criminal past apart from with FLAIR?
3. What makes Keane surprised?
4. What had Keane studied earlier?
5. Why do you think the officers let Keane go?
6. What do you think about Geraldine Keane?

Chapter 8
1. Put the following events in the order in which they occurred:
   a) George breaks into Orla’s office.
   b) George breaks into Orla’s flat.
   c) George hides in a cupboard when the police come in.
   d) George is allowed to leave the police station.
   e) George escapes when the police are in another room.
   f) George finds papers related to the FLAIR break-in.
   g) George sees some half-dead flowers in the waste paper basket.
   h) Michael Sullivan leaves George.

Chapter 9
1. What did Tara Lynch hear and then do at the start of the chapter?
2. What is the only strange thing Sean finds in the room?
3. What is Tara’s explanation for the flowers being in the basket?
4. What did Tara find in the bottom of the basket?
5. Why did Sean move the pieces of card with a key and a pencil?
6. Whom did Tara telephone?
7. Where were Tara and Sean going at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 10
1. Are the following statements True or False?
   a) The police saw George leaving Orla’s flat.
   b) George took a taxi home.
   c) George telephoned Michael Sullivan.
   d) Michael explains why he couldn’t work on the FLAIR case.
   e) Michael offers to go round to George’s flat.
   f) Michael doesn’t think George should have gone to Orla’s office and flat.
2. What do you think is important about what Michael said?
3. Where do you think George is going at the end of the chapter and why?

Chapter 11
1. Who/Whom
   a) goes to Fergal’s Flowers?
   b) is the person the police talk to first?
   c) owns the flower shop?
   d) ordered the flowers for Orla, according to McBride?
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e) lives in Fleet Street, according to Murphy? 
f) has a sleep in the car?  
g) phoned Tara Lynch?  
h) did Geraldine Keane go out with earlier?  
i) owns the credit card that the flowers were bought with?  

2. Where are Lynch and Murphy going at the end of the chapter? 

Chapter 12

1. Put the following events in the order in which they occurred:  
a) Geraldine Keane picks up a knife.  
b) George goes inside and sees Keane and Sullivan.  
c) Sullivan moves round the kitchen while George talks.  
d) George asks Sullivan two questions.  
e) Geraldine Keane goes to Michael Sullivan's house.  
f) George makes Keane drop the knife.  
g) Sullivan gets a gun from a cupboard.  
h) Keane and Sullivan have an argument.  
i) George arrives at Michael's house.  

2. What do you think happens next? 

Chapter 13

Choose the correct answer to complete each of the following sentences: 

1. When the police officers get to Sullivan's house  
a) Murphy goes into the kitchen alone.  
b) both Murphy and Lynch go into the kitchen.  

2. Murphy says that Sullivan killed Orla Quinn because  
a) he loved Geraldine Keane, and Orla was on her case.  
b) she refused to go out with him.  

3. Sullivan  
a) kills himself.  
b) kills Geraldine Keane.  

4. Tara Lynch quotes from a poem by  
a) W. B. Yeats.  
b) Oscar Wilde.  

After reading

Choose some of the following activities to do:  

1. Write a summary (in 100 words) of Michael Sullivan's actions relating to Orla Quinn.  
2. Think of another title for Not Above the Law and explain why it is good.  
3. Write a newspaper report about the case.  
4. Make up a quiz about the story for other students, including some true/false questions and correct/incorrect sentences.  
5. If you were making a film for this story, who would you choose for the main roles and why?  
6. Write about the importance of flowers through the story.  
7. Imagine you are George at the start of the story and how you would have reacted in his position. Explain what you would have done and why?  
8. Write an email to the author, Richard MacAndrew, and tell him what you like / don't like about the story, and why.  
9. What do you imagine might happen to George after the story has finished? Write about the next year in his life.