

Discussion Questions

- 1 Barbara Havers's great desire is to be trusted by Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley. Why is Lynley's approval so important to her? How does she work against herself in this regard?
- 2 "Do we ever know anyone?" wonders Julian Britton shortly after the murder. Double lives and secrets are a staple of literature—especially murder mysteries. Which characters in this mystery have secrets—professional or personal? What are they hiding and why?
- 3 Compare Detective Inspector Lynley to Detective Inspector Peter Hanken. What are their strengths and flaws? What do you think drives Peter Hanken's suspicions of Lynley? Discuss the issue of class in British society. How much is it a factor in the Hanken-Lynley relationship? What other relationships are driven by class?
- 4 What do you think about Nan Maiden's efforts to protect her daughter after Nicola's death? How does her husband feel about this? Return to the scene in the film when Nan finds Nicola's pager. Why does she keep the pager—and the information on it—from her husband? Would you have done the same?
- 5 The film opens with a scene different from the novel. What impact does this scene have on you? Why? How is the tone set by this scene? What themes are highlighted? Compare this to the novel's opening scene. Which do you prefer? Several episodes from the novel do not appear in the film. What, if any, is the impact of this change?
- 6 What do you think about the filmmaker's decision to remove David King-Ryder and his wife's death from the film? Does this choice add to or detract from the film? Why?
- 7 *In Pursuit of the Proper Sinner* reveals the thoughts of many of the main characters; the film does not. How do the filmmakers convey the characters' internal thoughts and conflicts? Are the characters in the novel more sympathetic or complex because you are privy to their private thoughts? Or are the characters in the film more real to you?

In Pursuit of the Proper Sinner, by Elizabeth George, was published in 1999. For more about the MASTERPIECE film *In Pursuit of the Proper Sinner* and related features, visit <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/lynley/index.html>. For more about the Inspector Lynley mysteries, check out the *Masterpiece Book & Film Club: Lynley* materials at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/bookclub/index.html>.



You can purchase the *In Pursuit of the Proper Sinner* DVD from shoppbs.org. Enter code BOOKANDFILM to receive a 15% discount.

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