

'Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter' – Sum up the story in 20 steps

✂ Summarise the novel's content in 20 sentences.

As an alternative:

✂ Put the following 20 sentences into a correct order to tell the story.

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He lives alone in his parents' house, running his dead father's auto-repair shop.

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As the chapters jump back and forward in time, the past and present of those two characters unfold – elaborating on the on-going events from each of the two characters' points of view.

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When the daughter of an affluent townsman disappears, the story from 25 years ago seems to be repeated.

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As the relation between the two boys in the past are revealed the crimes of the past and present are unfolded too.

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Moreover, searching for a friend he leans on Wallace Stringfellow, who is behaving in a dubious way.

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The opening chapter shows us the white adult Larry.

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Interesting enough, Silas and Larry are closely connected by a shared past.

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Because of slow business he routinely spends his time reading horror stories, caring for his chickens and visiting his mother who is in an inexpensive nursing home and suffering from dementia.

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We also learn that 25 years ago Larry had a date with the girl next door, Cindy.

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The crime investigations around two disappeared girls – one in 1982 and the other in present-day life – build the central stories.

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This is why Larry is not only under constant surveillance by the local police but he is also ostracised by the townspeople.



To conclude, you can say that in allusion to the novel's title not only the letter 'S' in Mississippi is 'crooked', but also the life of the characters in the story.



The local police officer who investigates the girl's disappearance is the African-American Silas Jones.



Besides, the reader is introduced to economic and cultural realities of the Deep South.



When dealing with Silas and following the investigation Larry also realises some truths about his past and figures out how to cope with them.



Tom Franklin's bestselling novel 'Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter', published in 2011, alludes to the way American children learn to spell Mississippi: "M, I, crooked letter, crooked letter, I, crooked letter, crooked letter, I, humpback, humpback, I".



As she disappeared after this date, Larry has been held responsible since then, although the police have never found any evidence of his guilt.



So while searching for the missing girl Silas senses that the past influences the present – both in terms of his relation to Larry and in terms of his identity.



Accordingly, the novel is set in rural and depressing Mississippi telling the story of the two characters “Scary” Larry Ott and Silas “32” Jones.



He is a well-liked but all the same introverted constable who meets Larry after 25 years of no communication.

