



About the Author

©2009 eNotes.com, Inc. or its Licensors. Please see [copyright information](#) at the end of this document.

Cal Cunningham believes he is destined for fame as a writer. He plans to begin writing “soon.” In the meantime, he suffers as a bookstore stock clerk and diverts himself with one-night sexual conquests among Manhattan’s inexhaustible supply of young career women and college students.

Cal is dismayed when he discovers that his law student roommate, Stewart, has secretly written a page-turning—and very literary—novel. To make matters worse, Stewart’s novel is a thinly fictionalized version of Cal’s own life. When a fatal bicycle accident eliminates Stewart, Cal offers the manuscript to aggressive literary agent Blackie Yaeger, who within days sells the book and movie rights for two million dollars.

The only possible flaw in Cal’s plan is that just before Stewart died he mailed a copy of his manuscript to a former girlfriend. A hasty trip to Vermont, and some lucky breaks, enable Cal to retrieve the manuscript before Janet Greene has a chance to see it. All should be well, except that Cal falls in love with Janet. Indeed, all *is* well for a time. Cal and Janet marry; they are happy together and the famous writer’s life—for a time—exceeds even Cal’s earlier fantasies. Then Cal learns that someone knows his secret and she expects to be paid a very high price not to unmask him.

John Colapinto’s anti-hero narrator is so charmingly self-centered and so blissfully, unabashedly amoral that it’s hard not to sympathize with him in the corner he has painted himself into. How far, he asks himself, should he go to protect his secret and his new life? Colapinto keeps his readers guessing, right through several anti-climactic false endings, and then concludes with a wry smile at the surprising outcome.

Copyright Notice

©2009 eNotes.com, Inc.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage retrieval systems without the written permission of the publisher.

For complete copyright information, please see the online version of this work:

<http://www.enotes.com/about-author-salem>