**Stone Cold Summary**

Link:  
**Link** is a sixteen-year-old boy. His father left when he was 14 years old. His Mother has a new boyfriend, **Vincent**, who is a drunk. He is violent and a bit dirty minded. He made a pass at **Carole** so **Carole** left. **Vincent** beats up **Link** but **Link’s mum** is so desperate to keep **Vincent** that she takes his side. **Link** decides to leave home.

**Link** is forced to go to London after spending Christmas with **Carole** and **Chris**.  He gets such a slagging for being a sponger from **Vincent** that he feels he has to leave.  When he gets to London he makes the mistake of taking the first room available and pays far more than he should (£50 per week).  He finds out very quickly that there are no jobs to be had and any Social Security money that he might get could take weeks to arrive.  **Link** tries to get work to begin with but he soon discovers that it’s not as easy as he thought to get work. After two weeks he only has nine pounds left and his landlord demands the next weeks rent. **Link** tries to reason with him but the landlord doesn’t care and throws **Link** out. **Link** is now on the streets from here, life can only get worse.

**Link** finds himself a doorway, but more important than that he meets **Ginger** who has been living on the streets for six months. This is important because **Ginger** knows how to survive on the streets.  **Link** has been wakened early by the police and they are moved on because they were on someone’s doorstep and people don’t like to be reminded that others have to sleep in doorways.

They go to an all-night Café and are able to stay there until more customers come in and then they have to leave because the owner does not want them putting off other customers as they are dirty and smelly.

**Ginger** tells **Link** about ”**solcredulists**” who are people who believe anything they read in The Sun or other papers like that. The Sun often had stories about people pretending to be homeless and making lots and lots of money.  These homeless people are made out to be liars.

**Link** learns about begging. Although people often think that begging is very easy and beggars are simply lazy in fact it’s extremely hard going. Most people do not give any money for various reasons. At the end of their afternoon **Link** has managed to get £3.81 and Ginger has collected £2.40. Because they don’t have homes they have nowhere to cook so if they want hot food they need to go to a café where it is a lot more expensive. **Link** also speaks about how dangerous it is having to sleep on the streets. It wasn’t very surprising when **Link** found out the D.S.S. wouldn’t give him the money.

**Ginger** takes **Link** to **Captain Hook**s.  **Captain Hook** has six narrow boats, which for £3.00 a night you can stay on.  He crams 60 people onto each boat.  There are no toilets, no water, and the only light is from a paraffin lamp.  Legally it would not be allowed but because it is just “dossers” nobody cares as long as they are off the streets.

**Ginger** is angry that people waste money “buying crap”, however there are toilets where they can have a good wash.  Later they learn about **Doggy Bag**, who lived off the scraps that people left on their plates in cafes.

**Link** is worried about **Ginger** not coming back. He partly thinks that **Ginger** has simply gone off with somebody else and partly he is worried about him. He discovers that **Ginger** went off with somebody and he also finds out that no one else has seen **Ginger**. At this point he meets **Gail**. Despite deciding to avoid being friendly with anyone he is instantly attracted to her.

**Link** has fallen in love with **Gail**.  He is aware that she has quite a lot of money for a homeless person and seems very good at “tapping”.  He sees her coming out of a phone box about which she makes a very lame excuse.  But **Link** still doesn’t question anything about her.

It is now spring and **Shelter** has seven victims.  The father of a missing girl called **Tanya** (she likes to be called **Toya**) shows **Link** and **Gail** her photograph.  **Link** recognises her and while talking to the man he finds out that she had been reported as going into a house with an older man.  Later he finds out from **Nick** that it was the same man that **Ginger** had gone off with.  They realise that it could be a case of murder but when they go to the police, the police don’t want to hear anything they’re saying, because they’re “dossers”.  The people missing are homeless and **Shelter** is regarded as an upright citizen.

**Link** and **Gail** find out where **Shelter** lives. They go to the house, 9 Mornington Place, to see if anything has happened. **Link** is unaware of how dangerous this could be.  
**Link** has made the mistake of entering **Shelter**’s house.  It is only when he sees his watch, which has been stolen earlier on that he realises the danger he is in but it is too late.  **Shelter** grabs him.  They fight. **Shelter** is about to kill him when the police arrive.  Then Link finds out that **Gail** is really a journalist called **Louise Bain**.  After this you might expect a happy ending where **Gail** takes him to her home and they all live happily ever after but the reality is that like most people **Gail** gives him some money and goes back to her own life.  Ironically **Shelter**, who killed people, is taken to prison where he will have a bed to sleep in, showers, clean clothes, food and a roof over his head, whereas **Link**, who has done nothing wrong, is left to starve and freeze and get diseases on the streets.

Shelter  
Ex Sergeant Major. He is forty-seven years old. He claims to have trained National Servicemen but he would have only been 14 when the last National Service recruits were taken in. He also thinks that the government and even the church are plotting.

He was discharged from the army for being mentally unstable.  He dislikes drug addicts, homeless people etc.  Wants to recruit a “dead” army.  He is a murderer.  Serial killers have a flawed logic - things make sense to them.

**Shelter** gets himself a cat because he wants to appear to be a nice old man who just wants to help and the cat makes him look like a caring person.  The cat is called **Sappho**.

**Shelter** has prepared carefully for the killings and is going to store the bodies beneath the floorboards. He justifies the killing by saying that since a soldier is allowed to kill an enemy and he is killing people he thinks are the country’s enemies then it shouldn’t be murder. Research has shown that only 2% of front line soldiers feel O.K. about killing. These people are unable to see other human beings as having any value. Shelter is able to kill because he doesn’t care about people.  Shelter makes the point that once you have killed one person it becomes easy to kill another but we are also shown that he is very careful about not following a pattern. This time he kills a girl and he finds her in a different part of London.

**Shelter** has killed victim number three. He is really pleased about this because his victim has ‘slagged off’ the army and the people in the army.

**Shelter** gets hold of **Ginger**. He pretends that **Link** has had an accident and that Link is at his house. **Ginger**, because he cares about **Link**, rushes to where he believes **Link** is. **Shelter** kills him.

**Shelter** misses his chance to get **Link** because **Link** is now with **Gail**.  **Shelter** calls his victims, his army – The Camden Horizontals.  He has also bought army boots for them which he has made very shiny because soldiers have to have very shiny boots.  This shows how much **Shelter**’s mental state is becoming worse and worse by the time.

The police come to visit **Shelter** and, at first, he thinks about pretending that he is not home, but he realises that by playing the daft old man and telling them a story about what happened the police will probably believe him. For the police the enquiry is a hassle so they’ll accept what they are told quite easily. The manic laughter at the beginning and end of this chapter show that **Shelter** is becoming really mad.