

**** T.K. character study ****

What are TK's compelling needs?

To overcome his guilt for his father's death.

To be able to trust someone; to find someone he can trust completely (particularly a woman, since the lack of trust is due to his mother's betrayal).

Does he pursue his compelling needs?

On a deeper level, he recognizes he can't go through his entire life without ever trusting anyone or ever connecting with anyone, but on the surface he's jaded, he thinks trusting people (especially women) is just setting yourself up for betrayal later. Other than Liz, his sister, the closest he has come to trusting anyone is Hank (whom he unconsciously sees as a father figure) and Father Murphy (whom he unconsciously treats as his conscience), but even with the two of them he still withholds a huge part of himself.

He doesn't fully recognize his need to overcome his guilt, so he pursues that need in a backward way. Instead of trying to overcome it, he accepts being a killer as his fate. He figures he should take on the task of killing others so someone else doesn't have to take on that task, especially since he's already guilty of one death.

Does he flee his compelling needs?

He flees his need to trust someone. He instead isolates himself, builds psychological walls around himself, shuts down his emotions whenever they try to surface.

He flees his need to overcome his guilt. Instead, he wears the guilt like a mantle (i.e., I'm already guilty of that much so I might as well take on more guilt to spare others from having to do it; it's my fate, etc.)

Is he more motivated to avoid pain or to achieve pleasure?

He's more motivated to avoid pain. He avoids forming relationships because he fears the pain of being betrayed. He's been so successful at walling off his emotions that he's not even sure he can let go enough to achieve real joy anyway. On a subconscious level, he realizes overcoming his guilt will require facing it, accepting the incident for the accident it really was, accepting himself as being human and as being worthy. Since he doesn't know how to do that, he accepts the guilt instead of trying to overcome it. He lives with it always in the back of his mind. It underlies the core of who he is, and he's afraid that

without it he won't know who he really is; i.e., when the guilt is gone, what's left? Who will remain? What will take its place?

Who knows about this need?

Liz knows about it. She recognizes what caused it and she sees how it manifests in him. But she doesn't push him. He believes she's the only person who accepts him for who he really is. She's the only person he has ever fully trusted. But, he isolates himself from her because he's afraid he'll taint her somehow just by being around her, and because he's worried he'll inadvertently put her in danger due to the nature of his work.

His mother doesn't understand what the guilt has done to him over the years, nor does she understand why he feels betrayed by her. She still blames him for his father's death and treats TK as if it was he who abandoned her instead of her who threw him out and abandoned him.

Father Murphy and Hank both are aware of the circumstances of TK's father's death and what it has done to TK, but they approach it from different directions. Father Murphy treats it as something TK needs to forgive himself for instead of carrying around the guilt for the rest of his life, and Hank sees it as something TK can channel productively into his work.

How did he acquire his job?

Hank recruited TK while TK was living in the church after his mother threw him out. Hank and Father Murphy are old friends.

With whom does he work?

Hank is TK's handler, but TK works alone. He doesn't like to work with others (partly because he's worried he'll get them hurt or killed, and partly because he doesn't trust other people enough to rely on them). When he finds himself having to work with Alexandra, it's unsettling for him because he's not used to relying on anyone else.

How does his work benefit him?

It gives him a way to feel less guilt about his father's death because he can convince himself killing people is his fate, his purpose in life. Many of his jobs require killing truly despicable people, and in a way he feels like by killing them himself he's sparing someone else the task of killing them and therefore sparing someone else the burden of that guilt.

His job also allows him to remain anonymous. It allows him to work on his own. It allows him to continue living without having to form connections to anyone, without having to build long-term relationships with anyone.

What did he learn in order to do his job?

He had to learn how to fight (something he'd already had a head-start on due to having to live on the street for a while as a teenager after his mother threw him out). The year he spent on the street made him into even more of a loner, but it also made him streetwise.

He had to learn how to use weapons, though he usually prefers to work without them. It's too difficult to get weapons through security in most places nowadays, so he feels it's better to know how to take someone out without having to rely on a weapon.

He had to refine his people-reading/body language skills and psychology/manipulation skills, which he originally picked up as a kid by watching his father. He has become extremely skilled at reading people.

How does his work extract a price from him?

As long as he continues to kill people and continues to treat murder as a job, he'll never really be able to fully forgive himself for causing his father's death. Part of him hopes someday he fails and someone kills him instead, because he thinks that's what it will really take for justice to be done. And if someone kills him, he'll finally experience relief from the guilt.

What are his private interests/hobbies?

He enjoys swimming, especially underwater and especially at night with the lights out, because it gives him a chance to feel like he's floating in a void, with no sense of space or time, no pressures, no responsibilities, no guilt, just dark nothingness stretching in every direction.

His other hobby is photography. The camera is another layer of protection for him, a wall he can put up between himself and other people. It also gives him an excuse to travel. He enjoys going overseas to take photos in dangerous locations, places where he has to push himself harder and harder.

What does he believe his future holds for him?

Probably more of the same. He takes things day-by-day, one day at a time. He's not sure how much more of a future he has, because nearly all his jobs are dangerous and could

result in his death. Right now, he's focused on his work because he feels like he's making a difference.

He'd like to think someday he'll be capable of opening up to someone, trusting someone enough to have a real relationship, etc., though he usually considers that possibility in more of a dreamy "well that would be nice but it'll never happen" sort of way. He's afraid he'll connect with someone and then be betrayed and end up hurt and alone. He doesn't realize by avoiding relationships and avoiding forming any true connections with anyone, he's going to end up alone anyway. He has essentially created a self-fulfilling prophecy without realizing it.

What is the best thing happening to him currently?

He's been assigned to protect Alexandra and to uncover information about what happened with the murders and the research study. It's good for him (even though he doesn't realize it) because it's forcing him to work closely with someone else, to connect with someone else. In working with her, he's also able to see her situation (having a father around but not being able to enjoy it because her father has Alzheimer's) and realizes losing his father was not the end of the world and the grass isn't always greener on the other side.

What is the worst thing happening to him currently?

Liz is missing and he has to hunt down the people who took her before it's too late.