**Spiritual setting notes**

“Chaffinches fluttered round him, ignoring his brother; now and then one would alight his head or shoulder”

He is at one with nature and relates to Norman McCaig’s ST Francis of Assisi. This creates the illusion that this place is like the spiritual place Christians believe to be called Eden which is supposed to be like paradise

“He hung therefore in twisted fashion, and kept swinging. His arms were loose and dangled in macabre gestures of supplication. Though he smiled, he was dead. From his bag dropped a cone, and then another, There might have been more but other drops, but faster and faster, distracted her: those were of blood.”

This is relevant to the spiritual setting as Christians believe, of course, the crucifixion is not a death without hope but was intended to happen, and mankind would be saved by the means of it. Like Christ, Calum is innocent and his death therefore a sacrifice which in some way is to help men. The other elements at hope are the cones which drip down with the blood and are symbols of renewal and regeneration.

Apart from the central struggle between good and evil to which we have referred, there are other religious references to which attention might be drawn. Firstly, the idyllic nature of the wood might remind us of the Garden of Eden into which evil is introduced to destroy the innocent.

“No harm will come to you, laddie” she said “if God looks after his own. If,”

In the mind and soul of lady Runcie Campbell there is a struggle between her feudal ideas of rank and her Christianity. She tries to act in accordance with her Christian ideals by, for instance, visiting Duror’s wife even though she finds her revolting. But at the same time her Christian ideals are undermined by the burden of her aristocratic beliefs. She acts by her instinctive ideas of rank when she forces Calum into the deer hunt and cannot understand how he can have impudence and refuses.

“There’s nothing known to their discredit, if that’s what you mean, John. It’s true the small ones not as God meant a man to be; but that’s Gods business, not ours”

We might gather from this that Mrs Morton is a believer who is willing to leave the conduct of the world to God, except for the little remark she makes to Roderick.

“He hung (…) in twisted fashion, and kept swinging. His arms were loose and dangled in macabre gestures of supplication.”

According to Christian belief, of course, the crucifixions not a death without hope, but were intended to happen, and mankind would be saved by means of it. Like Christ, Calum is innocent and his death is, therefore, a sacrifice which in some way is to help the men. The other elements of hope are the cones which drip down with blood and are symbols of renewal and regeneration