

God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, or, Pearls Before Swine Study Guide

**God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, or, Pearls Before Swine
by Kurt Vonnegut**

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Plot Summary

"A sum of money is a leading character in this tale about people, just as a sum of honey might properly be a leading character in a tale about bees" (Chap. 1, p. 1). This satirical, humorous, book is basically about a sum of money in the amount of over eighty-seven million dollars.

This money sets the stage for the rest of the book. It is the basis of a charitable foundation with a charter that passes the presidency from generation to generation. The only way to unseat the president is if he is found to be insane. The presidency is currently controlled by the Indiana Rosewaters and always has been, but there is another branch of the family, in the character of Fred Rosewater, in Rhode Island that doesn't know that he is a cousin of the Indiana branch.

The situation is further complicated by a shyster attorney who decides that if he can bring about a change in leadership of the Rosewater Foundation, he can claim a sizable sum as his fee. The attorney, Norman Mushari, makes it his business to learn as much as he can about the Rosewaters, since he plans on representing Fred Rosewater against the Indiana branch of the family. He works at the law firm that represents the Indiana Rosewaters. When he has enough evidence to force a sanity hearing of Eliot Rosewater, he quits the law firm and contacts Fred Rosewater.

Eliot Rosewater, the current president of the Rosewater Foundation, has always exhibited erratic and strange behavior. He finally breaks down and is confined to a mental hospital in Indianapolis, where he stays for a year without any recollection of anything that has happened. He is facing a sanity hearing brought on by Mushari. The situation wouldn't be viable if he had any heirs, so he tells his attorney to draw up papers naming every child whose mother claimed Eliot was her child's father in Rosewater County as his heirs. He thinks this will avoid the issue of removing him as the president of the Foundation.

Vonnegut's humor and satire are evident throughout the book as illustrated with Eliot's claiming the paternity of the children to avoid losing the presidency. There are also other situations of humor, such as Eliot at an opera calling out to the actors that they wouldn't waste as much oxygen if they would stop singing. There is also the plan to try to portray his life in Rosewater County as a social experiment thinking that this will help explain his strange behavior.

Vonnegut is a famous author, well-known for his use of satire and humor. His portrayal of the main characters is indicative of his humor, even though some of the main characters like Eliot and Fred are pathetic.

The book is easy and fast reading for anyone.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

"A sum of money is a leading character in this tale about people, just as a sum of honey might properly be a leading character in a tale about bees" (Chap. 1, p. 1). The amount of money involved is quite sizable, \$87,472,033.61 and produces a total of \$3,500,000 interest per year, which is more than \$10,000 per day. This is the amount that was used to found a charitable foundation. It came from the Rosewater fortune, which was the fourteenth largest family fortune in America at the time, and the purpose of the foundation was to keep other people, including the tax agents, from obtaining any of it. The Rosewater Foundation charter requires that the presidency of the foundation be passed through inheritance. The inheritor of the presidency has to be the closest and oldest heir to Senator Lister Ames Rosewater, who created the foundation. Their children will be officers for life when they reach the age of twenty-one and can draw as much income as they want from the foundation income.

The heirs of Rosewater are also prohibited from being involved in the management of the foundation and its capital. Rosewater created The Rosewater Corporation for the purpose of managing the assets of the Rosewater Foundation. Their well-paid employees are interested in maintaining a profitable business and foundation. Their main activity is trading the stock of various other entities. They also manage farms, coal mines, a bank, motel, bowling alley, and saw factory. The corporation's headquarters are in New York City with offices in London, Kenosha Aires, Tokyo, and Rosewater County.

These facts are learned by Norman Mushari when he goes to work for McAllister, Robjert, Reed and McGee after graduating Cornell Law School. He is hired to work under Thurmond McAllister because his partners felt the seventy-six-year-old needed some assistance. Mushari is basically a loner, eating lunch at cheap cafes instead of with other colleagues. He basically wants the Rosewater Foundation eliminated and wants a part of the legal fees when the money changes hands. He spends his time going through the files and pouring over the wording of the charter and finds that it calls for expelling any officer who is deemed to be insane, and they feel that this applies to the president, Eliot Rosewater.

Mushari has found several documents which he feels support his case. One is a letter to be given to the next president when Eliot dies. In it, he explains how the fortune came into being from the Civil War. He discusses some of the philosophy of the forbearer's and how they held wages to a minimum level but spent millions on artwork which they donated to museums for the betterment of the poor. Eliot says his father, Lister, spent his life in politics, preaching morals and ethics. Eliot, although married and in the process of being divorced from Sylvia, does not have any heirs. McAllister is the attorney for Eliot in the divorce proceedings. Mushari, considering the letter to the next



Foundation president to be indicative of Eliot's incompetence, requests any letters that Sylvia might have. She sends him fifty-three letters.

Chapter 1 Analysis

Like many wealthy people, the Rosewaters put their fortune into a foundation as a way of protecting it from taxes and squandering by others. Passing the presidency through inheritance with the children of the president serving as officers is a guaranteed way of keeping outsiders out of the foundation and its business. Allowing them to draw their compensation from the foundation's income means that the principle stays intact and that it cannot be squandered away by careless spenders. The charter prohibits the Foundation from interfering with the Corporation, and visa-versa. The Corporation make smoney for the Foundation for the relatives to spend.

It is made clear from the beginning that Mushari's intentions are to see the Rosewater Foundation destroyed. He wants a share of it for legal fees when the fortune changes hands. He finds a clause in the Foundation charter that allows for the expulsion of insane officers and figures he will use this to oust the current president. He plans on representing the relative next in line for the presidency. Eliot is in the process of being divorced by his wife, Sylvia, and Mushari's boss, McAllister, is representing Eliot. Mushari considers Eliot's letter to the next Foundation president to be a crucial piece of evidence in showing Eliot's insanity, and receives fifty-three more letters from Sylvia when he if she has any.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter focuses on the character of Eliot Rosewater. He was born in 1918 in Washington D.C. and spent his life on the East Coast and in Europe. He left Harvard Law to serve in the Army in World War II and met his wife Sylvia in Paris when he was recuperating from battle fatigue. He returned to the States, finished law school, and became the president of the Rosewater Foundation. He opened a townhouse in New York and an office in the Empire State Building because of his work with the Foundation. He was serious about his work with the Foundation, even though he was a very heavy drinker. In the six year period from 1947 to 1953, he disbursed over fourteen million dollars for various projects, trying to improve the lot of mankind. He funded projects for birth control clinics, fighting cancer, fighting racial prejudice, alcoholism, and many others. At times he was so drunk that Sylvia had to come and pick him up and take him home in a cab. He disappeared for a week after this episode and McAllister hired a detective to trace him to see if any of his activities would embarrass the Foundation.

The detective finds he has crashed a science-fiction writers' convention and gave a speech to the writers while drunk. Mushari has the speech in the files. He talks about life being like a space voyage and tells the writers that they are the only ones that care about the future. He later says that they couldn't write at all but that it didn't matter. Since he mentions writer Kilgore Trout, Mushari goes to a used bookstore and finds some of Trout's books. He also picks up a copy of The Kama Sutra of Vitsayana, which he isn't impressed with.

After leaving the convention, Eliot hitchhikes to Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, walks into a bar, and tells the people that anyone who is a volunteer fireman could drink for free, claiming he used to be a fireman. He babbles about science fiction books as if they were real stories and eventually ends up in jail for drunk and disorderly behavior. He returns home the next day after the police call his wife. He takes off again in a month and goes to West Virginia and then New Jersey, hobnobbing with firemen. He trades his expensive clothing for the cheap clothing of others. His wife wants to burn what she finds in his closet.

Nobody thinks of Eliot's behavior as a reason to put him away. The rich don't typically act that way. It also wouldn't have helped his father's political career. It is concluded that Eliot is just experimenting. Eliot didn't have any friends who could help him since he drove them all away with his insults. He eventually enters into psychoanalysis, making his wife happy until the therapist calls her and said that he quit because Eliot's problem is incurable. Eliot feels he is cured, but his erratic behavior proves that he isn't.



Chapter 2 Analysis

Eliot was a heavy drinker as a young man, even though no one paid much attention to this fact. He began as very serious about his work for the foundation with many things that he wanted to do for humanity. He undertook many good projects for funding such as alcoholism, mental illness, prejudice, birth control, etc., but he exhibited erratic behavior from all of his drinking. He would disappear for days at a time. He traded all of his expensive clothes for the cheap clothes of people he met. He didn't receive the help that he needed because his European wife wouldn't do anything and his father's political career meant that he chalked it up to experimentation. When he entered into psychoanalysis, the therapist quit after a year saying that Eliot's problem was incurable. That night at a performance of Aida, he called out to the performers that the oxygen would last longer if they didn't sing.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Mushari reads of Eliot's antics in his file at the law firm. He finds that after Aida, Eliot was on his way home in a cab with his wife when he jumped out of the cab and disappeared. He was missing for ten days before Sylvia received a letter from him. The letter, from California, was written on the stationery of the Elsinore Volunteer Fire Department and in it he compared himself to Hamlet and addressed Sylvia as Ophelia. Before he jumped out of the cab, Sylvia told him they should consider divorce. He says he knows that he is an alcoholic but that he isn't nuts and doesn't hear voices. After he left California, he went to Texas where he was arrested.

He calls Sylvia on the phone from Ohio. He babbles to her and calls her Ophelia, but he is in the area of some of the Rosewater Foundation's coal mines and he tells her that in his babbling. He tells Sylvia about the saw factory that is there that is owned by the Foundation. Eliot has gone to Rosewater County in Indiana and tells Sylvia that he is home and he plans to stay there and take care of the people. He is going to become an artist, he tells his wife.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Mushari is still looking for evidence of Eliot's insanity and reads the letter that he sent from Elsinore, California. He looks for and finds plenty of evidence about Eliot's erratic behavior. As Eliot roams around, he eventually ends up in Rosewater County, Indiana, where he decides to remain. He has Sylvia move there with him, telling her that there is plenty of work for him to do there. He feels that he can really make a contribution helping people.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Eliot isn't the only Rosewater who was interested in Rosewater County. His great-grandfather had invested in a canal that was to join Indianapolis, Chicago, Rosewater and the Ohio, and the canal is now a great fishing place. This means that there are night-crawler sellers in the area, many of whom have ancestors who had invested in the Rosewater Inter-State Canal. Many local investors lost their holding and a lot of money in the canal investment. Many of them were gone, but the Rosewater Golden Lager Ambrosia Beer brewery is still there.

The town of Rosewater is in the center of the country with the canal and railroad tracks running nearby. There is a red brick Parthenon in the center of the town. There are other red brick buildings as well as a park. The high school football team is called the Fighting Sawmakers. The Rosewater Saw Company is headquartered in a yellow brick building located between Rosewater and New Ambrosia. A motel and bowling alley are located nearby, along with grain elevators and animal pens. A spur of the New York Central Railroad services the area. There is also a subdivision called Avondale.

Eliot and Sylvia move into the Rosewater Mansion. They are the elite of the area and are treated as royalty by the local population. They decline most invitations for socialization with the local executives in the population. "Interestingly, the social-climbing technocrats of Avondale were able to bear the theory that the Rosewaters snubbed them because the Rosewaters felt superior to them. They even enjoyed the theory as they discussed it again and again. They were avid for lessons in authentic, upper-class snobbery, and Eliot and Sylvia seemed to be giving those" (Chap. 4, p. 50).

After opening the mansion, they begin to hold parties for various kinds of misfits, who they give money to. Their social life revolves around the Rosewater Volunteer Fire Department, where Eliot is a Fire Lieutenant and Sylvia is the president of the Ladies' Auxiliary. The local population eventually turns against them and becomes quite vicious. Five years later, Sylvia, suffering from nervous collapse, burns down the firehouse and is hospitalized in Indianapolis. Her doctor eventually writes a paper on her case, which Mushari reads in the file at the law firm. In it he describes both of the Rosewaters as being sick.

When Sylvia is released from the hospital, she leaves Rosewater and returns to Paris to become a member of the International Jet Set. In July of 1964, she has another breakdown and is hospitalized for six months in Switzerland. Her doctor recommends a divorce from Eliot and that she stay in Europe, so she begins the divorce proceedings. She has to fly to America for the proceedings and attends a June meeting at the Washington D.C. apartment of the Senator. Eliot does not attend.



At the meeting, the Senator expresses his opinion that his son does not really care for the people in Rosewater and that the problem is his drinking. If his drinking could be stopped, he wouldn't want to spend his time with the people he associates with. The Senator laments the fact that there are no children and is told that there are other Rosewaters. He doesn't like the family branch in Piquette, Rhode Island, not knowing that Mushari plans to represent them at some point in the future.

Eliot, who did not attend the meeting or know of what was discussed, maintains his office on Main Street in Rosewater. He is a Notary Public. He is actually asleep in Rosewater when the meeting takes place.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Since Eliot decides to stay in Rosewater, he and Sylvia move into the Rosewater Mansion. They are the elite of the area and are treated as such. They make it clear that they do not want to socialize with the local executive population by rejecting any offers to do so. They have a social life that revolves around the Rosewater Volunteer Fire Department. Within five years, Sylvia experiences a nervous collapse and burns down the firehouse. She is hospitalized in Indianapolis.

Sylvia decides that her problems are due to her life with Eliot and leaves him, returning to Paris. After another breakdown and hospitalization in Switzerland, her doctor recommends that she divorce Eliot, and she begins the divorce proceedings. She travels to America for a meeting with the legal staff at the Senator's Washington DC apartment. At this meeting, the Senator expresses his disappointment in his son and attributes much of his behavior to alcohol.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Eliot is sleeping in his office. He has a medicine chest stuffed with various items like headache remedies, laxatives, hemorrhoid remedies, sedatives, and vitamins which he imbibes himself and gives to others. There are papers and forms stacked around the office and there are magazine pictures thumb-tacked to the wall. Lines from a William Blake poem adorn the walls of the stairway.

While Eliot sleeps, his father is at the Washington DC meeting, wishing that both he and his son were dead. McAllister suggests that Eliot and Sylvia try a reconciliation, but Sylvia refuses. "So it was with self-conscious, medically-prescribed, superficial opposition to total sacrifice that she said again, 'No'" (Chap. 5, p. 67). The Senator apologizes to Sylvia for his comments and actions. They discuss Eliot. Sylvia does not think of him in the same way as his father does. He is not a drunken gypsy to her. She defends Eliot's work in Rosewater, saying that he is trying to help the people. Her father-in-law presses her for details and she runs into the bathroom, crying.

As Eliot sleeps in the Rosewater office, a lightning and thunderstorm begins. He rarely leaves the office unless it is to fight a fire. He had bought the fire department six new fire engines and other equipment. There are two phones in the office: a red one for fire calls and a black one for foundation calls. He finally awakens when the black phone rings with a call from Diana Moon Glampers. She is frightened by the storm. Eliot tries to calm her and build her self-esteem. When the storm ends, she thanks him and calls him a good man for giving up so much to help ordinary people.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Sylvia is concerned with her own health and situation when she refuses to attempt a reconciliation with Eliot. She has learned from her mistakes, and after two breakdowns and hospitalization she follows the advice of her doctor and wants the divorce to proceed. She does not want to put herself back into the same situation that led to her collapse. In spite of this, she still defends Eliot's work in Rosewater on the grounds that he is trying to help the people. She doesn't see what he is trying to do as bad, as his father does. In Rosewater, a phone call to Eliot from Diana Moon Glampers indicates the same thing. She views Eliot as being self-sacrificing in that he gives up so much to help people like her.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

In Washington DC, at the meeting in the Senator's apartment, Eliot's father asks how he could have missed all of the danger signals. Eliot is his only son and his father feels that he has failed him. McAllister tries to console the Senator by telling him that it isn't his fault. The Senator blames some of Eliot's problems on his being a Fire Department mascot when he was a child. McAllister says if he wants to do that, then he should be sure to blame himself for Eliot's nervous breakdown during World War II. Eliot attacked a building in Bavaria and killed three firemen, thinking they were Germans. This is the incident that led to his breakdown and hospitalization in Paris, where he met Sylvia.

Sylvia explains to the Senator how she met Eliot. Her father, a cellist, had arranged for a concert at the hospital. Her father talked with Eliot and liked him and introduced him to his daughter, Sylvia. She says that she loved him from the beginning but that Eliot has ruined the meaning of the word love for her. The Senator asks if she realized then that Eliot had problems and she acknowledges the fact that he was a heavy drinker. She relates how Eliot wrote a check to a poet at a Foundation party and told him to write about the truth.

Sylvia also relates that Eliot writes poetry, which is news to the Senator. She also tells them that she was told that Eliot would write non-obscene messages on the walls of men's rooms when they lived in New York. While they are talking, Eliot is reading a book sent to him by the poet who he had given a check to fourteen years before.

Back in Washington DC, the Senator continues to lament the fact that Sylvia and Eliot did not produce a child. He asks Sylvia if she thinks that Eliot will ever have a child. She tells them that their lovemaking wasn't the best. The Senator says that he should have paid more attention to Eliot and done more for him. During all of this, Mushari is eating up the details and urges the Senator to keep talking. The Senator, finding out who Mushari is, wants to discuss the law firm and what he calls Rosewater Law. The law concerns obscenity and provides for stiff fines and prison penalties for the possession of obscenity. Mushari tries to shift the conversation back to the psychoanalyst and what he said about Eliot. The Senator says that the doctor told him that Eliot wouldn't talk about anything significant and that he couldn't treat him.

Chapter 6 Analysis

The Senator, like most parents, blames himself for Eliot's problems. McAllister tells the old man that it isn't his fault. When the Senator continues, he resorts to sarcasm, telling him that he can blame himself for Eliot's nervous breakdown during the war. Further discussion with Sylvia reveal many facts about Eliot that the Senator did not know. They

discovered that Eliot would leaves messages on men's rooms walls in New York. The message was "If you would be unloved and forgotten, be reasonable' (Chap. 6, p. 91).

The group continues to discuss Eliot, much to Mushari's delight. He wants all of the details he can get from them. He is thinking about the future, when he plans to represent the Rhode Island branch of the family against Eliot.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Eliot continues reading the book that Ulm sent him until he falls asleep. He is awakened by the Rosewater Foundation phone. The call is from a man who obtained the number from the wall of a phone booth that had a Foundation sticker with the phone number. "There is this big black and yellow sticker in the phone booth. Says, 'Don't kill Yourself. Call the Rosewater Foundation,' and its got your number". Part of Eliot's work seems to be with suicide prevention. The man tells him that he is the government and Eliot tells him to stop wasting time, that there might be someone who is seriously suicidal that can't get through. He ends up inviting the man to visit him.

Eliot keeps records of his clients in what he calls his Doomsday Book. He writes down the names and the purpose of the contact and whatever money he gave them. Several selections of his coding are discussed. "AW" means take an aspirin with wine. "FH" means Fly Hunt. Eliot's unfinished novel is at the end of the ledger. Another call comes in on the Foundation line, this time from Stella Wakeby. She is invited to visit him tomorrow to discuss her problems.

The next phone call is from Eliot's father, and Eliot doesn't recognize him. He tells Eliot to get a haircut and new clothes. The Senator refers to the fact that Eliot has no heir and mentions the fact that the Rosewater family is dying out. Eliot responds that there is a branch of the family in Rhode Island. The Senator tries to appeal to Eliot by asking him what Harvard would think of him, but that doesn't work either. The Senator tells his son that nothing will improve as long as he continues drinking. He puts Sylvia on the phone. They discuss the Moody twins and that their divorce is on the advice of Sylvia's doctor. Eliot is going to attend the baptism and Mushari listens to the details and thinks of Eliot thinking of himself as the Messiah.

Chapter 7 Analysis

This chapter looks at some of Eliot's work in Rosewater. He keeps records in a ledger and some of the coding is discussed. He also has an unfinished novel that is written in the ledger, which he calls his Doomsday Book. The excerpts from his book are philosophical and babbling.

The Senator calls Eliot and they have a discussion about the fact that Eliot has no children. The fact doesn't bother Eliot as much as it bothers the Senator. Mushari listens to all of the details, trying get what he can for future evidence in court.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

Eliot and Sylvia agree to meet at the Marott Hotel in Indianapolis. This is supposed to be their final farewell. Mushari eavesdropped on the phone call and doesn't like the fact that they are planning to meet. Mushari's plans would be defeated if Sylvia became pregnant. Then there would be an heir to the Foundation presidency and Mushari wouldn't be able to push Fred Rosewater, the Rhode Island relative, for the position. Fred knows nothing of his relationship to the Foundation Rosewaters, or that Mushari is planning to place him on the board, taking a share of the money as his fee. Fred is known to the Indiana Rosewater's because of the detective work of McAllister's law firm.

While Eliot and Sylvia are meeting in Indianapolis, Fred is shopping at the Pisquontuit Drug Store and News Store. Pisquontuit is a village of two hundred wealthy families and a thousand other families. Fred belongs to the latter. He sells insurance to the working class. Fred doesn't know for sure if he is related to Senator Rosewater. The book then relates how the Rhode Island branch of the family is related to the Indiana branch.

Chapter 8 Analysis

This chapter introduces Fred Rosewater, the Rhode Island Rosewater that can take over the presidency of the Foundation if anything happens to Eliot. He is known to the law firm and the Indiana branch of the family, but he himself doesn't know for sure that he is a relative of the Senator. He also doesn't know of the plans of Mushari. Fred is an insurance salesman which allows him to eke out a living for him, his wife Carolina, and their son Franklin.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Fred is still sitting at the News Store having coffee and reading the paper. He read the personals section and thought of placing his own ad but he doesn't have the courage to do more than just read *The Investigator*. "Since he was the son of a suicide, it was hardly surprising that his secret hankerings were embarrassing and small" (Chap. 9, p. 150). Fred is joined by his friend Harry Pena, and they spend a few minutes discussing the tabloid. Next Caroline Rosewater arrives. She needs money to have lunch with her friend, Amanita Buntline, a lesbian. Fred gives her the money and she leaves in Amaita's blue Mercedes.

Amanita's daughter Lila is in the News Store. She is thirteen years old and deals in smut and fireworks. After Harry leaves, Fred goes to the area where Lila is to look at the dirty magazines.

Chapter 9 Analysis

More of Fred's character is revealed in this chapter. He likes to read a racy tabloid called *The Investigator*, particularly the personals section, but he doesn't have the courage to place an ad himself. Fred's wife Carolina is introduced when she comes into the News Store for money for a luncheon date. She married Fred thinking that he was rich. She sees money as the solution to all problems.

More of Fred's character is revealed as he wants to look at the girly magazines but doesn't. Lila, Amanita's daughter, is in the store and can predict his every move. Fred's frustrations are obvious.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Lila and Amanita live on the waterfront in an exclusive part of the town. She says hello to her father as she enters her house, but he is sleeping. He is wealthy from having inherited a tobacco fortune from his father. He doesn't know much or care much about business since his bank handles his trust fund. His law firm was McAllister, Robjert, Reed and McGee, the same firm that represents Senator Rosewater. McAllister is also the partner that handles his affairs.

In his youth, Stuart had been against the free-enterprise system. Even though he had changed his views, McAllister always includes pro-free-enterprise literature in his correspondence with Stuart. Stuart had wanted to give much of his money away to the poor when he was younger, but he was prevented from doing so by McAllister.

As Lila is glancing out at the harbor, a plane flies over. On board is Norman Mushari, who is arriving in Pisquontuit. At the same time, Carolina and Amanita are shopping at The Jolly Whaler, the gift shop owned by Bunny Weeks. He warmly greets Amanita, who finds she has to introduce Carolina to him again. He never remembers Caroline's name. He asks if Carolina is related to the Senator and she responds that he always asks her that. Bunny tells her that the Senator is going to retire.

Chapter 10 Analysis

This chapter introduces Stuart Buntline as the husband of Amanita and father of Lila. The reader learns that Stuart is a tobacco heir and his affairs are handled by the same attorney that handles the Indiana Rosewaters. The reader also learns more about Carolina and Amanita as they shop in the store of Bunny Weeks, who is also introduced in this chapter. While this is taking place, Norman Mushari is arriving in Pisquontuit.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

Mushari rents a red convertible when he arrives at the Providence Airport. He plans on finding Fred Rosewater in Pisquontuit and drives the eighteen miles to the town. The law firm does not know that Mushari flew to Rhode Island; they think he is sick in bed. When he arrives in Pisquontuit, Fred is sleeping on his sailboat and can't be found. The Buntline's maid knows where Fred hid out because she can see his boat from the window of her room.

The maid, Selena, is not happy with the Buntlines. She is from an orphanage funded by the Buntlines and is supposed to stay with them for a year. She writes the orphanage that placed her with the Buntlines and says she wants her stay terminated. The letter tells of her life at the Buntlines.

Mushari, in the meantime, is sightseeing at Newport.

Fred returns home to find Carolina drunkenly asleep with the record player blasting. Fred is depressed and considers taking sleeping pills, but thinks of his son. He finds a pornographic picture that Franklin purchased from Lila. He begins to read a family history book written by his father. When Carolina awakes, Fred tells her to look at the family history book. He says the book proves that he isn't a nobody as she treats him. They read the book together.

Fred climbs up on a stool, putting a noose around his neck. He tells Carolina it is time to die. Just then, his son comes down the stairs with Norman Mushari. Mushari tells him he is being swindled by the Indiana Rosewaters.

Chapter 11 Analysis

The maid Selena is not happy with her position with the Buntlines. She writes a letter telling of how Amanita plays 33 rpm Beethoven records on 78 rpm and doesn't know the difference. She complains about the language that Amanita uses.

Fred, who comes home from work and is depressed, begins to read the family history book that his father has written. He is so impressed with what he reads that he tells Carolina to look at the book when she wakes up.

Mushari appears and tells Fred that he is being swindled out of millions of dollars. He is a relative of the Indiana Rosewaters. Fred responds by fainting.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Back in Indiana, Eliot plans to travel to Indianapolis for his meeting with Sylvia. He plans on riding on a Greyhound Bus and prepares for his meeting with Sylvia in the Bluebird Room. He was up all night with calls and visits from his clients, who were sure that he was leaving them forever. Before he can leave, a chauffeur-driven limousine appears, carrying his father, the Senator.

The Senator tells Eliot about Mushari, that he has quit the law firm and is now representing the Rhode Island Rosewaters. He tells Eliot that they plan to go to court and prove that Eliot is insane. Eliot replies that he has doubts about his own sanity and he had hoped that it would never come to a court case. He tells Eliot that he must return to the East Coast. He can't defend his sanity with a backdrop like Rosewater and the kind of life he leads there. "The Senator moved his feet slightly apart, making a firmer base for the blow he was about to deliver. 'That may be, boy, but it's time you go now - and never come back'" (Chap. 1, p. 219)

Eliot bathes while his father tries not to watch. He is offended by nudity and pubic hair. The Senator finally explodes and wants to know why Eliot hates him so much. He says Eliot's every action is intended to hurt him. The Senator finally leaves in a rage.

Chapter 12 Analysis

The Senator appears in Rosewater to tell Eliot about Mushari quitting the law firm and representing the Rhode Island Rosewaters. Eliot, he says, must return to the East Coast to defend his sanity. The Senator is there while Eliot takes a bath. He is offended by Eliot's actions and finally shouts at Eliot, demanding to know why he hates him so much. The Senator leaves in a rage. After he leaves, Eliot dresses. When the phone rings, he freezes.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Eliot remains in a frozen position for ten minutes, after which he has no memory of the fight with his father. "Something there was in Eliot, though, that watched the clock. Ten minutes before his bus was due at the Saw City Kandy Kitchen, he thawed, arose, pursed his lips, picked some lint from his suit, went out his office door. He had no surface memory of the fight with his father. His step was jaunty, that of a Chaplinesque boulevardier" (Chap. 13, p. 231). He doesn't recognize his friends when he walks out of the office and goes to the firehouse. They recognize that he isn't well. He congratulates his friend on having won an award and is told that that was three years ago. Eliot replies that he has forgotten. He tries unsuccessfully to break a broomstick, then says he feels as if a new phase of his life is beginning.

Eliot walks around the town, not recognizing most of the people who stop and talk with him. He buys a one-way ticket to Indianapolis. He is reading a science-fiction book when the bus leaves, and doesn't even notice that the bus is moving. He arrives in an Indianapolis that is consumed with a firestorm.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Eliot apparently snaps mentally after the fight with his father. He doesn't remember the fight. He wanders around town and doesn't recognize any of the people. He buys a one-way ticket to Indianapolis and then is reading a science-fiction book and doesn't notice the bus is moving.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

"Everything went black for Eliot, as black as what lay beyond the ultimate rim of the universe. And then he awoke to find himself sitting on the flat rim of a dry fountain" (Chap. 14, p. 255). Eliot recognizes his surroundings. It is the garden of the private mental hospital when he used to visit Sylvia. He accepts the fact that there had been no firestorm as he had imagined when he arrived in Indianapolis.

Across from him, seated on a bench, are four men in business suits. Eliot recognizes his father. He also recognizes the doctor, Dr. Brown, and McAllister. He doesn't recognize the fourth man. He later learns that the man is Kilgore Trout. They are trying to find something that they can use in the court case regarding Eliot's sanity.

He looks at a paper that tells of his sanity hearing and about Fred Rosewater being represented by Norman Mushari, who is complaining that the court cases keeps being delayed while Eliot is in a mental institution. Mushari says that the Rhode Island Rosewaters are gambling everything they own on the court case.

The Senator informs Eliot that Kilgore Trout is there at Eliot's request. Eliot had told the Senator that Trout could explain everything that Eliot did in Rosewater and the reason for his existence there. Eliot then notices the date on the newspaper and realizes that he has been hospitalized for one year. Eliot has no recollection of the time or what he and Trout worked out to say at the hearing that is scheduled for the next day. They tell him that Rosewater County was supposed to be portrayed as a social experiment.

Eliot asks if he is still the Foundation president and can he write checks. They tell him that he can. He writes a check for three and one-half millions dollars to Fred Rosewater. The Senator tells him that Fred has already refused a settlement. They tell him the amount is too high so he tears up the checks and write one for a smaller amount. He tells the attorney to write a document claiming that all of the children in Rosewater County are his and have the full right of inheritance regardless of blood type.

"Let their names be Rosewater from this moment on. And tell them that their father loves them, no matter what they may turn out to be. And tell them -" Eliot fell silent, raised his tennis racket as through it were a magic wand.

'And tell them,' he began again, 'to be fruitful and multiply'" (Chap. 14, p. 275).

Chapter 14 Analysis

Eliot realizes that he is in a mental hospital since it is the one where he used to visit Sylvia. He is relieved to realize that there had been no firestorm that consumed Indianapolis. He looks at the newspaper and the story about him and his sanity hearing.

He learns about Fred Rosewater and Norman Mushari. He also finds that Sylvia has entered a Belgian nunnery.

Trout goes over the story with him that his life in Rosewater County was a social experiment. This is the story they plan on presenting to the court. He also learns that fifty-seven women in Rosewater County claim that he is the father of their children. The book ends with Eliot instructing his lawyer to draw up papers stating that every child in Rosewater County is his irregardless of blood type and has the full right of inheritance.



Characters

Norman Mushari

Norman Mushari is introduced as a boy shyster. He is the son of a Lebanese Brooklyn rug merchant. He was six in 1947 when the Rosewater fortune was used to found their foundation. Mushari graduated at the top of his class from Cornell Law School and went to work for McAllister, Robjent, Reed and McGee, which was the firm that designed and did the paperwork for the establishment of both the Rosewater Corporation and the Rosewater Foundation. Over a number of years Mushari slowly builds his case against Eliot and obtains as much information as he can. When Eliot is confined to a mental institution, he quits the law firm and contacts Fred Rosewater, who he informs is the heir to the fortune. Mushari represents Fred, hoping to claim a share of the money as his fee.

Eliot Rosewater

Rosewater is the president of the Foundation and is considered to be a lunatic. According to the Foundation charter, an officer can be expelled if he is considered to be insane. Eliot became the president in 1947 and has held the post for seventeen years. He is forty-six years old when Mushari begins his investigation. He was born in 1918 in Washington DC. He spent his life on the East Coast and Europe. He was educated at Loomis and Harvard and was a skier and sailor. Eliot served in the Army in World War II, leaving Harvard Law School to do so. When he was hospitalized in Paris for fatigue, he met Sylvia, who became his wife. After the war, he finished law school and then eventually became the president of the Rosewater Foundation after his father's death, even in spite of his overly erratic behavior. Eliot's behavior becomes more and more erratic throughout the book, and ends with him confined to an Indianapolis mental hospital.

Fred Rosewater

Fred Rosewater is the Rhode Island relative that would be in line for the Foundation presidency if Eliot were displaced without any heirs. This is the man that Mushari plans to represent in his attempt to unseat Eliot. Fred did not know that he was Eliot's second cousin or that he was in line for the presidency. Fred attended Princeton for a year but did not graduate and was not one of the wealthy two hundred in Piquonit. He finds out that he is related to the Indiana Rosewaters from Mushari who he hires to represent him.



Senator Lister Ames Rosewater

Senator Lister Ames Rosewater is the creator of the Rosewater Foundation and the one who determined the rules in its charter. He is a senator from Indiana. As the story unfolds, the Senator comes to question his son and why he hates him. He tries to help him at the end before the sanity hearing.

Arthur Garvey Ulm

Ulm is a poet who Eliot meets at a party. He gives the man a check and tells him to write about the truth. Eliot doesn't even remember his name at the time. Fourteen years later, Ulm sends him a book that he wrote that is soon to be published. He reminds Eliot of the check and the advice.

Sylvia Du Vrais Zetterling

Sylvia is the wife of Eliot Rosewater. She is from Paris and a descendant of the Rothschilds and DuPonts. She hates Eliot and is divorcing him and sends Mushari fifty-three letters when he requestes any letters she might have.

Caroline Rosewater

Caroline is the wife of Fred Rosewater. They have a son named Franklin. Caroline is Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Dillon University. She thought that Fred was rich when she married him.

Harry Pena

Harry Pena is a professional fisherman in Pisquontuit and the Chief of the Volunteer Fire Department. He is a friend of Fred Rosewater.

Stuart Buntline

Stuart Buntline is the husband of Amanita. He is wealthy, having inherited a fourteen million dollar tobacco fortune from his father.

Lila Buntline

Lila Buntline is the thirteen-year-old daughter of Amanita and Stuart. Even though she is the daughter of well-to-do parents, she has a lucrative business in smut and fireworks.



Bunny Weeks

Bunny Weeks, a homosexual, is the owner of the gift shop called The Jolly Whaler and the restaurant called The Weir.

Diana Moon Glampers

Diana Moon Glampers is one of the people that Eliot helps in Rosewater. She lives above the Rosewater Garage and is frightened by electrical storms.



Objects/Places

Indiana

Indiana is the home of Senator Lister Ames Rosewater, the founder of the Rosewater Foundation.

New York City

The Rosewater Corporation has main offices at 500 Fifth Avenue in New York City.

There are also branch offices in London, Tokyo, Buenos Aires and Rosewater County.

Rosewater County

Rosewater County is the county in Indiana where the Rosewater holdings are. It is the place where Eliot announces he is going to stay and become an artist.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Indianapolis is the location of the mental hospital where Sylvia was confined and treated. It is also the place where Eliot saw his wife off to Paris from.

Washington, DC

Washington, DC is where Eliot grew up and where the Senator lived. His apartment is the site of the meeting between the law firm and Sylvia during the divorce proceedings.

Pisquontuit, Rhode Island

Pisquontuit is the Rhode Island location of a branch of the Rosewater family, the branch that Mushari plans to represent to change the leadership of the Foundation.

Paris, France

Paris is where Eliot was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown during World War II. It is also where he met Sylvia.

London, England

London is a site of one of the Rosewater Corporation offices.

Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo is the site of one of the Rosewater Corporation offices.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

Buenos Aires is the site of one of the Rosewater Corporation offices.

Themes

Self-Destructive Behavior

One of the overriding themes of the book is the self-destructive behavior of Eliot and Sylvia Rosewater. The reader is introduced to Eliot's antics early on in the book, which is one of the reasons why Mushari is looking for documented evidence to unseat him from the presidency of the Foundation.

Eliot is not able to obtain help for his problem. His psychoanalyst quits after a year and says he is incurable. When Sylvia has a mental collapse, she is hospitalized in Indianapolis, where the doctor writes a paper calling both Sylvia and Eliot sick. Sylvia files for divorce on the advice of her doctor in Switzerland.

Eliot's frequent disappearances and his drinking are documented by detectives working for the Foundation's law firm. His erratic behavior includes things like calling out comments to the opera singers to stop singing to save oxygen, which indicates he isn't able to distinguish between reality and fantasy. He would disappear for days and weeks. He is a heavy drinker and has a fascination with fireman, which stems from his accidental killing of three of them during the war, thinking they were Germans. He trades all of his expensive clothes for the cheap clothing of the people he meets. When his father arrives in Rosewater County, he finds that Eliot owns one outfit of clothing. His self-destructive behavior continues because no one is willing to help him and no one relates it to his experiences during the war. He ends up confined to the same mental hospital in Indianapolis that Sylvia had been in.

Eccentricity

The theme of eccentric and erratic behavior characterizes most of the book. Most of the characters have eccentricities or peculiarities that are emphasized by the author. The most obvious erratic behavior is conducted by Eliot, the main character. His behavior at the opera, calling out to the actors to conserve oxygen by stopping singing, is evident of his behavior. He trades all of his expensive clothes for the cheap clothes of the people he meets, even though his wife wants to burn the clothes. Eliot disappears for days and weeks at a time, calling his wife from different places, until he finally settles in Rosewater County. He has a fascination with fireman which stems from his accidental killing of three fireman during the war, thinking they were Germans. This led to his breakdown and hospitalization in Paris. None of the people in Rosewater County think his behavior is strange and nobody realizes that it is related to his experiences during the war.

Fred Rosewater also has his problems, which the author attributes to his being the son of a father who committed suicide. As such, he continually thinks of suicide at the end of the day when his blood-sugar is low. This is how Norman Mushari finds him, standing



on a stool with a noose around his neck. He is fascinated with pornography and the personals section of the newspaper, but he is afraid to place an ad.

Even minor characters like Lila exhibit eccentric behavior. Lila is a wealthy thirteen-year-old with a thriving pornography and fireworks business.

The behavior of the characters is how the satire of the book is presented.

Greed

Greed is a third prevalent theme throughout the book. Mushari is totally motivated by greed. He learns of the Foundation and the Rosewaters when he works at their law firm. He spends years trying to find evidence of Eliot's insanity so that he can represent the Rhode Island branch of the family and obtain a share of the Foundation's money. His sole motivation is greed.

The residents of Rosewater County can also be accused of greed. Eliot was known to give away sums of money to people. All they had to do was to claim to need some money. They certainly weren't going to turn against him if there was money in it for them. This is why fifty-seven women claimed that he was the father of their children. Their children would then stand to inherit the Rosewater fortune.

Greed is also evident in Caroline Rosewater's behavior. She married Fred thinking that he was rich. She felt that all problems could be solved by money.

Many of the people surrounding the Rosewaters were motivated by greed or they would have seen something wrong in their behavior.

Style

Point of View

The story of *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater* is told in the third person. The author is the narrator and tells the story of the Rosewaters beginning with the amount of money that the Rosewater Foundation was based on. He explains the motives of each of the characters with Mushari, the main protagonist, being introduced early in the novel.

The well-written book exhibits Vonnegut's sense of humor and use of satire. The satire wouldn't be so evident if the book were written in the first person. There are many quotes in the book attributed to various characters, so the reader obtains their points of view on various subjects. The reader also comes to know the main characters, and their personalities and characters are developed in the various chapters. Many of the chapters focus on a specific character as the story is told.

Vonnegut's tone isn't critical in the book. He more or less lets the story tell itself through the main characters without criticizing them or their behavior.

Setting

There are various settings for the book. Most of the story takes place in Rosewater County, Indiana where Eliot appears one day after one of his disappearances. It is where many of the family businesses are located. He decides that the local people need help and decides to stay and help them. Indianapolis is also the scene of some of the action since it is where the mental hospital is where first Sylvia and later Eliot are confined.

Rhode Island is also the background from several chapters of action since it is where Fred Rosewater resides in the town of Pisquontuit. The Rhode Island characters are introduced and developed in the second half of the book.

There are other locations in the book. New York City and Washington DC are the sites of some of the action. The Senator lives in Washington DC and his apartment is the site of the meeting regarding the divorce of Sylvia and Eliot. New York is where Sylvia and Eliot live when he takes over the presidency of the Foundation. Other sites are mentioned because of Eliot's wanderings.

Language and Meaning

The book is written in an easy to read style. It is written in everyday English, and is fast reading and easy to understand. More sophisticated readers will pick up on the satire and humor of the various situations portrayed throughout the book.



Vonnegut has a very good command and use of the language and expertly uses satire with almost every character in the book. Even though the book is easy to read, his use of language enhances the satire and the humor of some of the situations. Eliot is confined to a mental hospital for a year, and they are waiting for the court hearing to challenge his sanity. His behavior at the opera, telling the singers they wouldn't use as much oxygen if they would stop singing, illustrates his erratic behavior. Vonnegut never comes right out and says that Eliot can't distinguish between fact and fiction. He lets the character prove that point himself. If Vonnegut had to point these things out, it would detract from the style of the book.

Structure

The structure of the book is very simple. There are fourteen chapters. The chapters vary in length from a few pages to twenty or so pages. The first chapter functions as an introduction that sets the stage for the action of the novel. Most of the other chapters are dedicated to developing characters that are mentioned, as the action of the novel progresses. Vonnegut lets the characters tell the story and there are many quotes throughout the book. The action of the novel is basically chronological and there is very little redundancy in the chapters. Each makes its own contribution to the action of the novel.

There is no Table of Contents or Forward to the book. This does not detract from the story in any way. It just means that the reader has to flip through the pages if they want to look up some character or event.



Quotes

"No one ever went out to lunch with Mushari. He took nourishment alone in cheap cafeterias, and plotted the violent overthrow of the Rosewater Foundation. He knew no Rosewaters. What engaged his emotions was the fact that the Rosewater fortune was the largest single money package represented by McAllister, Robjent, Reed and McGee. He recalled what his favorite professor, Leonard Leech, once told him about getting ahead in law. Leech said that, just as a good airplane pilot should always be looking for places to land, so should a lawyer be looking for situations where large amounts of money were about to change hands." Chap. 1, p. 4)

"And Samuel bought newspapers, and preachers, too. He gave them this simple lesson to teach, and they taught it well: Anybody who thought that the United States of America was supposed to be a Utopia was a piggy, lazy, God-damned fool. Samuel thundered that no American factory worker was worth more than eighty cents a day." Chap. 1, p. 10

"Eliot chose to take the Foundation seriously. He bought a town house in New York, with a fountain in the foyer. He put a Bentley and a Jaguar in the garage. He hired a suite of offices in the Empire State Building. He had them painted lime, burnt-orange and oyster white. He proclaimed them the headquarters for all the beautiful, compassionate and scientific things he hoped to do." Chap. 2, p. 16

"Eliot was a flamboyantly sick man, even then, but here was no one to hustle him off for treatment, and no one was as yet entranced by the profits to be made in proving him insane. Little Norman Mushari was only twelve in those troubled days, was assembling plastic model airplanes, masturbating, and papering his room with pictures of Senator Joe McCarthy and Roy Cohn. Eliot Rosewater was the farthest thing from his mind." Chap. 2, p. 26

"Maybe I flatter myself when I think that I have things in common with Hamlet, that I have an important mission, that I'm temporarily mixed up about how it should be done. Hamlet had one big edge on me. Hi father's ghost told him exactly what he had to do, while I am operating without instructions. But from somewhere something is trying to tell me where to go, what to do there, and why to do it. Don't worry, I don't hear voices. But there is this feeling that I have a destiny far away from the shallow and preposterous posing that is our life in New York. And I roam." Chap. 3, p. 36

"When Sylvia got that letter, she immediately had a recording device attached to her telephone, another nice break for Normal Mushari. Sylvia did this because she thought that Eliot had at last gone irrevocably bananas. When he called, she wanted to record every clue as to his whereabouts and condition, so that she could have him picked up." Chap. 3, p. 39



"So, when King Eliot and Queen Sylvia took up residence in the Rosewater Mansion, they were showered by figs from Avondale - invitations, visits, flattering notes and calls. All were deflected. Eliot required Sylvia to receive all prosperous visitors with an air of shallow, absent-minded cordiality. Every Avondale woman left the mansion stiffly, as though, as Eliot observed gleefully, she had a pickle up her ass." Chap. 4, p. 49

"Eliot made of his mouth a Cupid's bow, murmured something sweetly, turned over, snored. He was an athlete gone to lard, a big man, six-feet-three, two hundred thirty pounds, pale, balding on all sides of a wispy scalplock. He was swaddled in the elephant wrinkles of war-surplus long underwear. Written on gold letters no each of his windows, and on his street-level door, too, were these words:
Rosewater Foundation
How Can We Help You?" Chap. 4, p. 62

"This was, of course, a medical decision, and a wise one, too. Her second breakdown and recovery had not turned her back into the old Sylvia of the early Rosewater County days. It had given her a distinctly new personality, the third since her marriage to Eliot. The core of this third personality was a feeling of worthlessness, of shame at being revolted by the poor and by Eliot's personal hygiene, and a suicidal wish to ignore her revulsions, to get back to Rosewater, to very soon die in good cause." Chap. 5, pp. 66-67

"You gave up everything a man is supposed to want, just to help the little people, and the little people know it. God bless you, Mr. Rosewater. Good night." Chap. 5, p. 79

"Eliot couldn't remember who Arthur Garvey Ulm was, and so was even further from knowing what advice he might have given the man. The clues Ulm offered were so nebulous. Eliot was thrilled that he had given someone useful advice, . . ." Chap. 6, pp. 92-93

"Heaven is the bore of bores, Eliot's novel went on, so most wraiths queue up to be reborn - and they live and love and fail and die, and they queue up to be reborn again. They take pot lock, as the saying goes. They don't gibber and squeak to be one race or another, one sex or another, one nationality or another, one class of another. What they want and what they get are three dimensions - and comprehensible little packets of time - and enclosures making possible the crucial distinction between inside and outside." Chap. 7, p. 111

"This conversation was a worry to Norman Mushari, who restored the telephone with which he had been eavesdropping to its cradle. It was crucial to his plans that Sylvia not get pregnant by Eliot. A child in her womb would have an unbreakable claim to control for the Foundation, whether Eliot was crazy or not. And it was Mushari's dream that



control should go to Eliot's second cousin, Fred Rosewater, in Pisquontuit, Rhode Island." Chap. 8, p. 132

"Fred Rosewater was a good sailor and had attended Princeton University, so he was welcomed into the homes of the rich, though, for Pisquontuit, he was gruesomely poor. His home was a sordid little brown-shingle carpenter's special, a mile from the fluttering waterfront." Chap. 8, p. 135

"Lila glanced at Fred with pity - because he was poor, because his wife was no good, because he was fat, because he was a bore. And she strode to the magazine and book racks, put herself out of sight by sitting on the cold cement floor." Chap. 9, p. 150

"Lila and Fred often met between the books and magazines. Fred never asked her what she was reading. And she knew he would do what he always did - would look at sad hunger at the covers of girly magazines, then pick up and open something as fat and domestic as Better Homes and Gardens. This is precisely what he did now." Chap. 9, p. 159

"An airplane came over very low, making its approach to Providence Airport. On board, reading The Conscience of a Conservative, was Norman Mushari." Chap. 10, pp. 172-173

"'They're losing everywhere.' Bunny let go of Amanita. He looked around his restaurant, invited Amanita to do so, too, to help him count the house. He invited them, moreover, to despise his customers as much as he did. Almost all were inheritors. Almost all were beneficiaries of boodles and laws that had nothing to do with wisdom or work." Chap. 10, p. 186

"Sons of suicide often think of killing themselves at the end of a day, when their blood sugar is low. And so it was with Fred Rosewater when he came home from work." Chap. 11, p. 196

"Sir - at this very moment, your Indiana relatives are swindling you and yours out of your birthright of millions upon millions of dollars. I am here to tell you about a relatively cheap and simple court action that will make those millions yours." Chap. 11, p. 207

"A chauffeur-driven black Chrysler Imperial pulled to the curb below Eliot's two windows. The chauffeur opened the back door. His old joints giving him pain, out came Senator Lister Ames Rosewater of Indiana. He was not expected." Chap. 12, p. 214

"I have no idea what I ever did to you that you're paying me back for now, but the debt must surely be settled by now." Chap. 12, p. 28

"There was talk coming from the lunchroom. Eliot listened without showing himself. He



did not recognize any of the voices, although they belonged to friends of his." Chap. 13, p. 231

"Noyes was lot faster than Charley in perceiving that Eliot was far from well. He stopped sweeping, watched acutely. He was a mean voyeur. Charley, enchanted by memories of so many fires at which he and Eliot had behaved so well, did not become suspicious until Eliot congratulated him on having just won an award which he had in fact won three years before." Chap. 13, p. 234

"Eliot looked up at the bird and all the green leaves, understood that this garden in downtown Indianapolis could not have survived the fire he saw. So there had been no fire. He accepted this peacefully." Chap. 14, p. 256

"On Eliot's side of the layout were two pictures of Sylvia. An old one show her twisting with Peter Lawford in Paris. A brand new one showed her entering a Belgian nunnery, where the rule of silence was observed." Chap. 14, p. 262

"Good. I now instruct you to draw up at once papers that will legally acknowledge every child in Rosewater County said to be mine is mine, regardless of blood type. Let them have full rights of inheritance as my sons and daughters." Chap. 14, pp. 273-275

Topics for Discussion

What were the characteristics of the Rosewater Foundation charter?

Why did Eliot and Sylvia move to Rosewater County?

Why and how was Mushari trying to unseat Eliot as president of the Rosewater Foundation?

Who is Fred Rosewater? How does his background differ from Eliot? Why is he a significant character?

Why does Senator Rosewater ravel Rosewater?

How does Eliot respond to the news that the Rhode Island Rosewaters are challenging his sanity?

What is the significance of Eliot declaring that every child in Rosewater County is his?