

Loving Frank: A Novel Study Guide

Loving Frank: A Novel by Nancy Horan

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Plot Summary

Loving Frank is the story of Mamah Borthwick and her love affair with a famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Mamah is a highly educated woman who is feeling stifled by her loveless marriage. She married out of convenience rather than for love. Her husband is not on the same intellectual level.

When Mamah meets Frank Lloyd Wright, she finds a man who stimulates her intellectually as well as physically. She must weigh her love for her children and her love for Wright. Mamah runs away with Wright to Europe leaving her children behind. She loves her children, but she needs to have a life of her own. She wants to discover who she is and what she needs to do with her life.

Choosing Frank Lloyd Wright over her family causes a scandal in their Chicago suburb. Reporters attempt to follow the two and write stories of how they have abandoned their families. The couple's actions affect them and the families that they have left behind. Mamah's children do not understand why she has left. It takes years for her to attempt to repair the damage that her leaving has done to her family.

Mamah risks much to have a life with Frank Lloyd Wright. She divorces her husband and loses custody of her children. She is only allowed to see her children a few months of the year, but she is happy to have them even then. Mamah is able to achieve the life that she dreamed was possible, a love that consists of physical and intellectual stimulation and the ability to have an identity of her own.

Mamah lives her life for her own happiness. She wants more out of life than to be just a wife and mother. She takes a chance on her love for Frank Lloyd Wright. This brings scandal on herself and her family. Mamah travels a hard road while searching for her identity and happiness. In the end, a madman destroys her life, her family, and her home. Ultimately, she loses her life.



Part I, Prelude, Chapters 1-4

Summary

In the Prelude, Mamah Borthwick reconstructs previous events in her life. Mamah married at the age of thirty after a life of study and solitude. She and her new husband moved into the house she grew up in to watch over her widowed father. . Not long after they moved in, her father died in his sleep. A year later, her sister Jessie died in childbirth. Mamah, Edwin, and Mamah's sister Lizzie assumed responsibility for the orphaned infant.

Edwin did not like disorder, and the house on Oak Park was cluttered. He wanted a new house. So, he took Mamah to see Arthur Huertley's. It had been designed by Frank Lloyd Wright whose trademark was open designs.. Edwin was president of Wagner Electric so he could afford to have a house built by Wright. Since he really wanted a new, uncluttered house, he was persistent in his attempt to convince Mamah. That same persistence is what had made Mamah marry him. He kept coming to Port Huron from Chicago to see her. Also, most of her friends were all married. She eventually accepted his proposal. She said yes to the new house in the same way because of his persistence.

The two were charmed by Frank Lloyd Wright. He was seen as eccentric. The trees on the lot were given lots of attention in the design of the house. The trees gave a sense of connection to nature. After the initial visit with Wright, Mamah took on the job of working with Frank on the new home. The Wrights became Mamah and Edwin's friends. Mamah explains that she is writing down the story of her life to try and understand what happened.

In Chapter 1, Mamah Cheney goes to a Woman's Club meeting where Frank Lloyd Wright is giving a talk. She is excited about seeing him. Hoping that he will notice her, she lingers after the meeting. He greets her, and she tells him that she and Edwin have been meaning to call him about starting on their garage. He makes an appointment to come to her house the next day. He tells her that he misses their talks.

Mamah regrets her hasty actions in racing to see Frank. She vows to call Frank to cancel in the morning. Then, the very next moment she chastises herself saying that it is just a garage.

In Chapter 2, Edwin leaves for his day trip to Milwaukee. It is a Saturday morning. Their son John comes to Mamah's room. She happily plays with him before getting her daughter out of her crib. Lizzie, Mamah's sister is in the kitchen reading the morning paper. Her niece Jessica is eating her breakfast. Louise, the housekeeper and nanny, offers to take the children out for the day. Lizzie agrees to go with them.



In Chapter 3, Mamah prepares herself for Frank's visit. She remembers how the two couples had socialized after the house was built, but that has cooled. Frank's reputation as a designer has grown since he built their house. During the building, Mamah and Frank had many discussions. Frank challenged her with intellectual conversations that she could not have with her husband. She shared insights with Frank that she would never share with her husband. When she saw how close she and Frank were becoming, she turned to Catherine. Mamah cultivated a closeness with Catherine. She used that friendship as a buffer to draw her away from the danger she sensed with Frank.

In 1904, when the house was almost finished, Frank shows up at the house. They begin to talk, and Mamah takes out a box showing him portraits while detailing her life to him. She shows him her master's thesis and tells him of her time in Port Huron teaching English and French with her friend Mattie. She shows him family portraits and her birth certificate. He tells her that he was also born in June of 1869. Mamah views this revelation as a sign that they are meant to be together.

Frank wonders what it would have been like to have run into Mamah twenty years earlier. He tells her that he married young and that the marriage should not have been permitted. He tells her that she is the loveliest woman he has ever known and kisses her on the cheek.

During his subsequent visits, he tells her that he had become interested in organic architecture while working on his uncle's farm. His ideas about architecture were not taught in school; so, he left and became an apprentice to learn his trade. Mamah tells him to continue to pursue his dream of organic architecture. Frank finds it easy to talk to Mamah. He tells her that he cannot talk to his wife. She is focused on the children, and he doesn't think that his marriage can be fixed. Mamah tells him that she and Edwin are mismatched. She used her head rather than her heart when choosing a husband. She and Frank share furtive caresses and nothing more. When she discovers she is pregnant, she refuses to see Frank any more. She tells him that she and Ed are expecting a baby. It has been two years since that day.

Mamah wonders if he talks to other clients as he does to her. This makes her jealous. She finishes getting ready for Frank's arrival.

In Chapter 4, Frank arrives. They begin talking about when they first met. Frank tells her that he saw her as a beautiful woman who was articulate and gifted. He asks if he was the only one feeling that wonder. She tells him that she had witnessed how he and a designer, Marion Mahony interacted during a workday and that she wanted to be Marion. She wanted to begin every morning making him laugh. She longed to be someone he counted on and still does.

Frank runs his hand down her face. She asks if he always falls in love with his clients and he tells her only once. He stands and leads her to the sofa. They lay together with her head on his chest. He then begins to move his hands over her and the passion takes hold of her as they make love.



Analysis

Mamah Borthwick has lived an uneventful life and the presence of Frank Lloyd Wright in her life brought something that she did not expect. Frank is a passionate man who loves architecture and this love comes across in how he describes houses. This opens up something in Mamah that she has repressed for many years—a need for passion for anything.

Their friendship begins honestly, but Mamah knows they both want more. She needs someone who can challenge her intellectually and Frank fills the void that she has felt since her marriage to Edwin. Edwin is a kind man, but he is not as intelligent as Mamah and she finds this a hindrance. She married out of convenience and did not think of the consequences of choosing a man that she did not see as an equal.

They are able to talk to each other about anything and feel a special bond. This leads them to succumb to their passion.

Discussion Question 1

When did Mamah's affair with Frank Lloyd Wright begin? How did it begin?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Edwin want a new house? Why does he choose Frank Lloyd Wright to build it?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Mamah jealous of Marion Mahoney? What is Marion's relationship with Frank?

Vocabulary

invulnerable, laden, aberration, superfluous, ambivalent, infectious, reflective, eccentric, cantilevered, burlesque, potent, repose, iridescent, ablutions, feign, foibles, trilobites, introvert, edification, preordained, essence, extricate, stultify, impasse, pinnacle, patronize, repartee



Part I, Chapters 5-9

Summary

In Chapter 5, Frank and Mamah use the pretense of building the garage to carry on their affair. It makes Mamah feel out of control, but she cannot think of ending it. When Frank takes up office space in downtown Chicago, their trysts become easier. Mamah uses the excuse of an afternoon class to get out of the house and goes to see Frank at his office. She wears a large bonnet with a scarf to hide her identity. They long to go out together. They go to see a movie and arrive separately and sit several rows apart and meet up after the movie.

They go on picnics where he reads Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" to her. They understand one another perfectly. He shows her some of his prints he bought while in Japan. He gives her one of the prints that she admires. When Catherine invites Mamah and Edwin to dinner, she feels she must go. When the women are alone Catherine reminisces about the time early in her marriage. Mamah asks Catherine how she met Frank. It was at a costume party at his Uncle Jenk's church. Everyone was dancing the reel and when everyone changed partners Frank and Catherine slammed into each other knowing each other to the floor.

Mamah examines the house and sees no trace of Catherine's influence. Catherine wants Mamah to read a poem that she likes. It is called "Togetherness." It was written by a woman who only had eleven years with her husband before he died. Mamah believes it to be tripe, but the sentiment of it and how Catherine feels toward her husband makes Mamah sick to her stomach for what she has done. She and Edwin leave with her pleading illness. She feels guilty and questions her morals.

Mamah had been depressed the previous winter and spent much of her time in bed. She has always felt an emptiness inside and has yet to find anything that can fill it. She had ambitions of being a writer or translator when she was in college, but married life put those dreams to rest. She had children, but the children were mostly cared for by the nanny. So, Mamah was left to her own devices. She used the time to read and study. During her depression, she chastised herself for being an unfit mother one moment and doing nothing except being a mother the next. One of her first outings after recovering from her depression was to see Frank's talk.

The joy she feels with Frank makes her appreciate life more. She plays with her kids and delivers food to people who are ill or have had new babies. Mamah wants this one perfect thing in her life. It cannot be wrong if no one finds out about it. She admits to Frank that she loves him. He makes her feel alive and cherished. He reminds her of her father with his eccentricity.

In Chapter 6, Frank tells Mamah that Catherine knows. He does not know how she found out. He has told her the truth and asked for a divorce. Catherine will keep quiet.



She is too proud to tell anyone. Mamah cringes thinking of how she betrayed her friend. She reasons that their marriage was bad and that she did not steal Frank. She says that she will tell Edwin. She and Frank had talked about telling their spouses and asking for divorces. They want to live honestly. She wants to have her children live with her.

Frank tells her that Catherine wants a year to repair their marriage. If it does not work, she will give him a divorce. Frank has agreed. Mamah is confused and angry that he would agree. She goes home and waits for him to contact her, but he doesn't. She begins to drive around to his building sites hoping to get glimpses of him. As the weeks pass and no word comes, she is confused. Her desire for him is almost too much for her. She does not know how he can keep away. She fears he has returned to Catherine.

Mamah had agreed to give a presentation on *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Nineteenth Century Woman's Club. She plans to read Kate's speech on a wife's obedience to her husband with a flamboyant, ironic flair and then talk about the changing role of women. She returns to two classes at the University of Chicago. One is a course on writing novels. She misses Frank. She wonders why she was so ready to leave her husband, while Frank is willing to give his wife a year. She is thankful that she has not told Edwin.

In Chapter 7, Mamah receives a letter from Mattie, her college friend. Mattie is inviting Mamah and her family to spend part of the summer with her in Boulder, Colorado. Mamah is jubilant. She is excited about the prospect of seeing her friend. Frank comes to the house with a visiting scholar in tow. He is showing the man the houses that he has designed and asks if they can tour her house. Mr. Francke is trying to convince Frank that he needs to go to Germany to practice. Frank asks her to meet him in the field at nine that night.

Mamah meets Frank in a field outside of town. He tells her that Catherine is not going to abide by the agreement. She is in her own world. Frank is losing clients because he cannot garner up enthusiasm for his work. He feels a sense of doom. He wants to see the world as he did when he was twenty. He needs a change. There is a printer in Germany who wants to publish a monograph of Frank's work. It could generate commissions. He plans to go in August and could be gone a year. He asks Mamah to go with him. She admits that it is not as easy for her as it is for him. She has not told Edwin.

Mamah tells him that she is going to Colorado for awhile. Her friend is pregnant again and due in September. She needs company. Mamah needs to get away from everything. She needs to sort things out.

In Chapter 8, Mamah and Edwin wake up to the sound of hammering. The Belknap's next door are having a workman board up a second floor window. Edwin thinks it odd since it is a bedroom closet window. Mamah wonders what the neighbor girls could have seen from that window. She knows she has to tell Edwin before someone else does.



Mamah starts by telling Lizzie, but she already knows. She asks if Edwin knows and Lizzie says that she does not know how he could miss it. She feels that she is being smothered being with Edwin. Frank has made her remember who she is. She has never been able to talk to Edwin the way she does to Frank. Lizzie suggests that she just needs a vacation. Lizzie thinks she will see things differently with a little distance. Mamah thinks of how lucky she is to have Lizzie. She has always been there as her support. Many people wonder why Lizzie has not married. She likes her independence. Everyone loves Lizzie. Mamah thinks that Lizzie is the one who should have married Edwin. Mamah writes to Mattie to tell her that she has decided to stay longer than two weeks in Boulder and asks if there is a place for her and the children to stay.

In Chapter 9, Mamah and the children are at the station ready to leave for Colorado. Mamah has told Edwin about her affair with Frank. He is very upset. It does not make sense to him. When he asked her to marry him, he wanted to bring her to the city and give her everything that she deserved. He asks if he gave her the wrong things. She assures him that it is not his fault. He tells her that she can take the children to Colorado, but she will never get custody of them.

Mamah travels on the train with Martha and John to Boulder. She finds tending to the children on her own to be taxing. She tells them stories about her childhood in Iowa. Mamah thinks of her father when she rides trains. He worked for North Western for forty years. Her father and Edwin had been good friends. She wonders what he would think of what was happening. She fights back her tears.

Analysis

Mamah and Frank throw caution to the wind and begin their affair in earnest. Mamah knows it is not right, but she cannot stop herself. She feels a passion that her marriage does not have. She takes risks to see Frank. It is exhilarating and scary for her at the same time. She is worried about getting caught, but it also provides an element of excitement to their relationship.

Mamah craves more out of life she just does not know what it is. She feels stifled by her marriage and has been dogged by depression. Her role as a mother is to have children and to take care of them, yet she has a nanny for this so her life is left without a purpose. She feels useless. Frank makes her feel alive and able to do anything. He reenters her life at a time when she is just recovering from depression and is looking for something to satisfy her life. Frank's infectious passion sweeps her up and brings her back to life.

When Mamah is separated from Frank, she is still not there for her family. She thinks about him and wonders what he is doing. She stalks him just to get a glimpse of him. She has become obsessed with Frank. This is not healthy for her or her family, but she cannot see this because she is so consumed. Mamah sees the invitation from her friend Mattie as a way to escape from all of the men in her life and to take time to reconnect with her children. Frank is also looking for a change of scenery and wants Mamah to go



with him to Germany. She needs time to think about her future and believes she needs the trip to Colorado.

Mamah is surprised to learn that Lizzie already knows of her affair with Frank. She thought she was being so cunning, but her feelings are obviously transparent. This makes her resolved in telling Edwin before he learns about the affair from someone else. He does not take it well. Edwin loves Mamah and does not want to lose her no matter what her faults. He also will not lose his children and does not trust her taking them to Colorado, but does not keep her from it. It is a trip to form a bond with her children, but she finds taking care of them by herself rather annoying. She likes the idea of being a mother, but she does not enjoy the reality.

Discussion Question 1

Why is Mamah upset with Frank when he tells her that Catherine knows of their affair? What are Catherine's terms for a divorce?

Discussion Question 2

Why is Mamah going to Colorado? Why does she not take the children's nanny with her?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Mamah tell Edwin about her affair with Frank Lloyed Wright? What does she fear?

Vocabulary

trysts, recourse, gumption, tripe, inchoate, incendiary, provocation, melancholy, attune, nonconformists, kindred, solace, resolute, interminable, integrity, peruse, confinement, domesticity, traipse, happenstance, sacrosanct, suffrage, deference, clarity, penitent, baleful, empathetic, bereft



Part 1, Chapters 10-14

Summary

In Chapter 10, Alden Brown, a mining engineer, meets them at the station. He and Mattie have been married for seven years. Mamah had believed that Mattie was crazy to marry a younger man who seemed all wrong. He lived in tents and on mining sites, while Mattie had traveled to Paris and New York. She married him at thirty-two. Alden tells her that Mattie is on doctor's orders to rest in the afternoons. Mamah introduces Mattie to the children.

The next morning Mamah admires the landscapes Mattie has hanging on the staircase landing. She takes one of the pictures to Mattie and asks her to explain it to her. It appears to be a black and white painting on first glance. Mattie explains that she studied photography in New York with a man who used the method. You print a picture then paint it with a gummy mixture to make it grainy, dreamlike. She loves her photography, but has not had time since she had her children. Mamah wishes she had some art of her own to occupy her. She wants to tell her friend about Frank. She lies in her bed that night wondering how her friend will react. She worries that she will lose her friend.

In Chapter 11, Mamah tells Mattie. She peppers her with questions. She tells her that their friendship just evolved. Mamah admits that she is in a mess, but that it was easy to fall into. Frank is a visionary and is going to be famous someday. She explains Frank's architecture to Mattie and how he incorporates nature in all of his designs.

Mattie asks how long Mamah and Frank have been intimate. Mamah assures her friend that Martha is Edwin's child. Mattie admits that Mamah terrifies her. She has always been reckless. In college, Mamah was infatuated with someone new every week. She feels that she is obsessed with feeling in love again. It is the power of being desired by someone other than her husband. Mamah assures her that she loves Frank deeply.

Mattie questions if she has moved to Boulder without telling her. Mamah is not sure of her plans. She can get a divorce after two years of separation. She needs to figure out what to do. Mattie questions what will happen if she leaves Edwin, but Frank does not leave his wife. She responds that at least she will be living honestly. She is worried about what will happen with the children. Mattie tells her to pull herself away from it and then look at it. After a few weeks, she will wonder what she was thinking. Mamah claims that she does not love Edwin. Mattie questions her about duty and honor.

In Chapter 12, Mamah and the children move into a boardinghouse in Boulder. Mamah has given herself until July to clear her head. She volunteers at the local library for two mornings a week. She and the children go to see Mattie and her family in the afternoon. Mattie tells her to stop ruminating so much and to just go out and do new things.



In Chapter 13, Mamah receives letters from Edwin telling her that he forgives her and that they can overcome anything. After dinner one night, Mamah talks to Alden and he tells her that Columbia is the next frontier for gold mining. She can see that he is serious and wonders about her friend's marriage. Having heard the conversation, Mattie assures Mamah the next day that her husband will not go to Columbia. He could not stand to leave them for so long.

Mamah says that she thinks her mother was disappointed in her. She had thought that having an education would help her daughters make good marriages. She came to think that education made them unsuited for marriage. Mamah sometimes agrees with that sentiment. She feels that women are stifled by marriage and she cannot understand how they have not acquired the right to vote yet.

Mamah is serious about leaving Edwin, but she does not know how she will support herself. As soon as she becomes a divorcee, she will be shunned and lose any prospects of work. Mattie tells her about an opening at the University of Colorado in their German language and literature department. She and Alden know the president of the university. She could at least try. She thinks that Mamah has lived a privileged life with Edwin and it will be hard for her and give her perspective.

Mamah receives a letter from Frank. He wants her to go to Germany with him and tells her that Europe is a great inspiration for a writer, if that is what she aspires to be. She can join him for a month or two on her own spiritual journey and not his follower. He plans to leave in late September or early October. He wants to proceed with his life for himself, divorce or no. She carries the letter around with her the rest of the day tucked in her waist. She wires him a message that Mattie is due September 25.

In Chapter 14, John questions when they will be going home and is told soon. Edwin questions when they will be returning. John will need to return to school. A tension is building as she tries to decide what to do. Mamah asks Mattie how she can know if she wants to be with Frank if she does not take the chance to go with him. She does not have a happy marriage and wants a chance for happiness. Mattie knows that she has made up her mind to go. She will be gone a couple months. She will tell Edwin to come for the children. Mattie tells her to leave the children with her until Edwin comes to collect them. Alden's mother and the nanny will be there.

Mattie goes into labor. She has a girl. Mamah tells her that the baby looks just like her. Mattie asks her if Mamah has told Edwin that she is leaving. She will be leaving on Monday. Mattie tells her to go live with Frank and see if he is as enthralling in two months as he is now. She tells her to do right by Edwin and the children. Allow a decent amount of time to pass and do a divorce properly.

Mamah goes to the telegraph office to send a telegram. The clerk tells her that her husband is coming on Wednesday. She is upset that he commented on her private message. She sends a message to Frank telling him that she is leaving tomorrow. She feels that the man is judging her as he sends the message.



Mamah composes a letter to Edwin. She tells the children that their father is coming in couple days and she will be leaving tomorrow to go on a trip to Europe. She is going on a small vacation. John begins crying. She tells him that she will not be gone long. At dawn, she packs her bags stumbling around trying not to make any noise. She looks back to make certain that they are asleep and slips out.

Analysis

Mamah is a happy to see her friend again. She likes to reminisce about the things that they used to do in college and when they were out on their own. Mattie differs from Mamah because she is happy with her life. She loves her husband and being a mother. She does not crave for something more. Mamah wishes she were more like her, but also tries to get Mattie to take up photography, which she gave up when her children were born.

Mattie worries about Mamah's relationship with Frank. She knew Mamah in college as a girl who could never be satisfied and was always looking for the next best thing. Mamah was reckless in her love life then and Mattie believes she is doing so now. What Mamah wants is the thrill of being in love and having Frank desire her is intoxicating to her. Mattie is concerned that she has left Edwin without telling anyone. Mamah assures her that she just needs time to think, but her actions feel like someone preparing to start a new life.

Her time in Boulder bolsters her into leaving Edwin. She just needs to figure out how to support herself. Mattie sees Mamah as having had everything given to her and does not see her adjusting well to taking care of herself. When she receives a message from Frank, her thoughts of staying in Boulder seem to fade. He wants her to go to Germany with him and she can spend a month or two figuring out who she is and what she is meant to do. His words quickly change any thoughts she had of life in Boulder.

Mamah tells Mattie that her marriage is not happy and she wants a chance for happiness. Her children are only mentioned in the conversation when she wonders what to do with them until their father can come get them. She does not talk about how they will be affected and what they will think when their mother is gone suddenly. Mamah thinks only of her own happiness and what she wants to do.

Discussion Question 1

Why is Mamah so interested in Mattie's photography? Why does she insist that her friend must take up photography again?

Discussion Question 2

Why is Mattie concerned about Mamah's relationship with Frank? How has Mamah acted in the past around men?



Discussion Question 3

What affects Mamah's plans of building a life in Boulder? Why does Mattie think it will be difficult for her on her own?

Vocabulary

diversions, culmination, imperious, unpretentious, prerogative, lascivious, ruminate, indispensable, fantastical, complicit, inviolate



Part II, Chapters 15-18

Summary

In Chapter 15, Mamah lies apart from Frank writing in her diary. Before their voyage to Europe she and Frank had not slept together through the night. Looking at him while he sleeps makes Mamah panic. She wonders if she truly knows him. A smile comes across his face with a familiarity that calms her. Mamah likes the quiet of their cabin and does not like leaving it.

Mamah sees their living together as a test, but there are things that she does not want to reveal. She sneaks her makeup so that Frank will not see her without it. She is also seized with remorse of having left her children. The people on board the ship assume that Mamah is Frank's wife and they do not dissuade them from the thought. Frank tells her to let go of what people think.

In Chapter 16, Mamah and Frank are in Berlin. Mamah is stunned by the opulence of the hotel. She sees a woman sitting in the lobby with a parrot on her shoulder. She reflects on how no one pays any attention, but in America she would have been thought freakish. They both find the opulence of the hotel a bit much. Frank rearranges their room to try and let a bit of nature in.

Frank goes off to his meetings leaving Mamah to herself for the day. She unpacks and then heads to the dining room for lunch. She sees the Kaiser taking his lunch with his officers. She wishes Mattie or Lizzie were there to enjoy the moment with her.

In Chapter 17, Frank is feeling the pressure of working on the projects with Wasmuth and having money to fund them. He is working on a monograph of perspective drawings of all the buildings he has designed and a photo book that Frank has completed.

Mamah heads out into the streets of Berlin to get away from the voices of Edwin and Mattie in her head. The conversations around her take away the voices. She sets out each day to explore a new piece of Berlin. During one excursion, she finds a small volume by Goethe and buys it. She is very excited to show it to Frank. She believes it has not been translated into English and she wants them to translate it together. He agrees.

Mamah and Frank go to the opera with Wasmuth and his wife. He has agreed to the social engagement so that Mamah can make some sense of what Wasmuth has been telling him. He has a man who translates, but he thinks he is missing a lot. Mamah is worried by the opera they will see. It is *Mefistofele*, a version of the Faust tale. She thinks it is a bad idea for them to have come. It is a play where the devil tempts Faust. The only thing that can tempt him is to reveal his true self and the truth of the world. Mamah begins to cry. Faust is made young again and seduces Marguerita then deserts her to go off on an adventure with *Mefistofele*. When he returns the girl is in prison for



poisoning her mother. Faust had given her a potion to make her mother sleep so that they could be alone and the potion has killed her mother. Marguerita has gone insane and drowned the baby she had with Faust.

It makes her think what madness is waiting for her and Frank outside of the circle that they have drawn around themselves. How could anyone condemn Faust for wanting to be happy and truly alive for one moment? Frank is oblivious to her torment because the opera is in Italian and German and he does not understand.

After the opera they go for drinks. Wasmuth's wife sees that Mamah has been crying. She tells her that she was moved, too. She asks Mamah to tell Frank that her husband enjoys working with her. She calls her Mrs. Wright. After Mamah's reply, the woman pales and speaks privately to her husband. He says his wife is ill and they must go. Frank wonders if he said something wrong, but Mamah assures him that it was she who said the wrong thing. She told the woman that she was not Mrs. Wright.

In Chapter 18, Mamah and Frank begin their translation of the Goethe poem. When she goes to the office with Frank the next morning, Wasmuth is flustered now that he knows that she is not married to Frank. After their meeting, they stop at the reception desk where mail is waiting for Frank. Mamah asks if there is any mail for a Mrs. Cheney. They had some, but it may have been sent back because they did not know who it was for. Frank goes with the receptionist to look for it. The letters are from Edwin and Lizzie.

The reception tells them that there was a man in the other day asking after a Mrs. Cheney. He was an American. She describes him, and Mamah believes it was Edwin. He asked after Mr. Wright, too. Frank tells Mamah to go ahead with her plans for the day. He will try to find out if the woman told the man where they are staying.

Mamah finds a café in which to read her letters. Edwin's letter admonishes her for leaving her children in Boulder. He cannot fathom what would make her do such a thing. He believes she is under mental distress. The children miss her. He will do whatever needs to be done to make them a family again. Lizzie's letter tells Mamah that Mattie has died. Her heart began to give out just after Mamah left and she was dead before Edwin got to Boulder. She includes Mattie's obituary with the letter. Mamah begins to moan putting her hands to her face. A woman sitting next to her asks if she can help.

Analysis

Mamah has left everything behind to get to know Frank intimately, yet she cannot be completely comfortable around him. She makes sure that he never sees her without makeup. She has remorse for leaving her children, but she does not consider going back. The people on the ship assume that she is Frank's wife. He tells her to let go of what people think. However, if they truly did not care about other people's thoughts, they would tell them that she is not his wife.

In Berlin, Mamah distracts herself from her guilt of leaving her family by buying a book of poetry to translate. If she has something to do, it will keep her mind from thinking



about what she has left behind. She cannot help, but think of sin as she and Frank watch the opera Mefistofele. The devil tempts Faust and he succumbs to the desire of being happy and truly alive. Mamah sees how this mirrors her and Frank's relationship and is deeply affected by it. Frank is oblivious because he cannot understand what they are saying. This moment of weakness leads Mamah to admit that she is not Frank's wife to the wife of Frank's business partner. This news is not taken well.

The confusion of who Mamah is also causes problems with her receiving her mail. Frank does not think of telling the receptionist Mamah's name and that she will be receiving mail. It is as if he does not want to openly admit who she is. He preaches not caring what others think, yet he does not adhere to his own advice. Mamah learns of Mattie's death weeks after it happened because she ran away the night it happened and never thought of checking on her children and their welfare. Her heart gave out soon after Mamah left. Mamah does not think about how she left her friend to face the wrath of Edwin and the heartbreak of her children. Mattie is the one who would have been left behind to take care of her mess. This along with the strain of giving birth at an advanced age could have contributed to her friend's death. Mamah does not consider this nor did she when she left. Her own happiness was all that she had in mind.

Discussion Question 1

Why is Mamah so affected by the Opera that she, Frank and the Wasmuth's go to see? How is it similar to her situation? Why does she tell Mrs. Wasmuth that she is not Mrs. Wright?

Discussion Question 2

How does Mamah view her time spent with Frank? Why is she concerned so much with her appearance around him?

Discussion Question 3

What are the circumstances around Mattie's death? Was Mamah to blame in anyway Mattie's sudden bad turn? Why or Why not?

Vocabulary

garrulous, pallid, opulence, absurdity, alchemy, caveat, feeble, euphoria, inexplicable, malarkey, dervish, solicitous, compunctions, fathom



Part II, Chapters 19-22

Summary

In Chapter 19, Mamah will not talk about her friend's death with Frank. She goes to St. Hedwig's Church. After the woman in the café had put her in a taxi, Frank had been at the hotel to receive her. He tried to comfort her, but he did not know Mattie. Frank was already worried because his project was moving so slowly. This was not the spiritual adventure that they had imagined. Mamah needed a silent space to say goodbye to her friend. She wonders if she was too wrapped up in herself to see that Mattie was failing.

Mamah remembers when the two of them traveled to Colorado to pass out literature to help pass the Women's Suffrage Bill. Several men begin arguing with Mamah about the suffrage movement. Mattie keeps quiet at first and then asks the men what will happen to their wives and children if they die. Their wives will be powerless and be classed together politically with the idiots, criminals and the insane. They will work for less money than a man would earn and the children would depend on this money to eat. Do they want their children to have to work? Mattie spoke from her heart and made the men understand their plight.

Mamah wonders what it was like for her children in this house of death. She has known death before and how to deal with it. She knows she will grieve and then one day will feel better and go on with her life.

In Chapter 20, Frank asks Mamah how long it would take her to pack. He is agitated when he walks in the hotel room. Reporters have been snooping around in Oak Park looking for gossip. He thinks the Tribune has put their Berlin reporter on them and that was who was at Wasmuth's office asking questions. They have to leave the hotel in case someone has told where they are staying. Mamah says she will go to some places she has seen to secure them a place to stay. Frank assures her that Catherine will not talk. The reporters have been to his house and his mother's.

Mamah takes a seat in the lobby, while Frank checks out. He loudly proclaims that they are headed to Japan. Mamah believes that two men in the bar are reporters. They stop at Wasmuth's office on the way to their new hotel. He is not there, but Frank returns with a stack of mail. The hotel is a residential hotel in a suburb of the city that rents rooms by the night.

Frank wonders why he thought he could escape. His mother has sent him clippings from the Chicago papers. One headline proclaims that Frank and Mamah have eloped to Europe. Catherine spoke to the reporters defending her husband and placing the blame on Mamah. Mamah's picture is included with the article. She feels the cries pushing up from her chest into her throat like the screams of an injured animal.



In Chapter 21, Mamah laments that she can never go back home. She will not eat. She drinks cough syrup. When Frank is gone, she reads the newspaper articles and they tear at her soul. Catherine claims that her husband will return to her and her children. He has fallen victim to Mrs. Cheney.

Mamah wonders what horrors her family is facing. She thinks mostly of John. Martha is too young to understand, but would know something was wrong. She swigs the cough syrup waiting for it to dull the ache in her chest. She reads the article about Edwin. They bushwhacked him at Wagner Electric. He proclaims that his wife is getting the worst end of the deal and it is not fair. She is not to blame. The article goes on to say that friends saw Mrs. Cheney as highly temperamental, capricious and sentimental to a degree. Mrs. Cheney is said to have spent little time with her children.

Frank returns. He throws away the empty cough syrup bottle and makes her eat. He tells her no more crying and helps her to take a bath. She contemplates drowning herself in the tub, but Frank appears as she considers it. Mamah cannot stay away from the articles. She arises early and reads an article quoting a sermon that is about her. Frank takes it from her and tells her that they cannot buckle. She is worried that she has lost her children. He tells her that they deserve happiness. Her children would not be happy if she is unhappy so going back to them would not make their lives better. He plans for them to leave Berlin. They will tour a bit and end up in Paris.

In Chapter 22, Mamah becomes sick in Nancy, France. Frank believes it is the flu, but it is her despair that is making her sick to her stomach. On a walk through Nancy, Mamah discovers that Ellen Key will be speaking there on Wednesday. She is important in the Woman Movement in Europe. She will be talking on the morality of women, love's freedom, free divorce and a new marriage law. Mamah finds one of her books, *Love and Marriage*, in a bookstore near the hotel and buys it.

Mamah spends hours reading the book. What she believes is written out in this book. The woman is conservative and wildly radical at the same time. She believes that women's natures are best suited to raising children, but that they should be paid for it. She champions a woman's freedom to realize her personality. The book is making her feel better. It is telling her what she wants to here like a marriage is not sacred anymore once love leaves a marriage. Mamah wants to stay to hear the woman speak. Frank will go ahead to Paris. They will meet after Mamah hears Ellen Key's talk.

Analysis

Mamah will not talk about Mattie to Frank because he did not know her. She cannot explain to him who Mattie was and how much of a connection they had. She questions if she was too concerned with herself to pay attention to her friend. Yet she does not think about how her problems were thrust upon Mattie when she was not in a condition to deal with them. Mamah worries about how her children were affected. Her self-absorption kept her from thinking any of these thoughts when she was abandoning them in Boulder with people that had only known for the summer. It is a sign of how their



lives would be without their mother. There would be pitying glances and sympathetic words and a big emptiness in their lives.

The news that a reporter is looking for them only adds to the strain on Mamah and Frank. They must flee their hotel and decide what to do. Again their attempt to not care what people think flies in the face of their actions. If they truly were not concerned, they would not care what the reporters write. Mamah is horrified to find her picture in the paper. Her actions are now real to her. She sees how people view her actions and they do not like that she abandoned her children. The stress makes Mamah sick. She and Frank stop to let her rest in Nancy, France, as they flee the press.

Mamah finds a new obsession—Ellen Key. The woman writes about free divorce. She believes that is essential to have love in a marriage. If you have a loveless marriage, it is your duty to leave. These are things that Mamah wants to hear. She needs validation that what she did is right and not selfish. Ellen's words give her this hope and she must hear her speak to help heal her wounds that the press inflicted.

Discussion Question 1

How did Mattie's temperament differ from Mamah's? How did her stance on Woman's Rights affect the men that she and Mamah encountered?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Mamah feel that she can never go home? How do the stories in the press portray her?

Discussion Question 3

Why do the words of Ellen Key affect Mamah? What are her ideals?

Vocabulary

haughty, specter, sojourn, hovel, enfranchisement, affinity, mundane, cuckold, mortification, capricious, gulled, pompous, negate, braggadocio, forsaken, degenerate, magnanimity, subversive, eugenics



Part II, Chapters 23-26

Summary

In Chapter 23, Mamah attends Ellen Key's speech. Ms. Key looks like a nun talking about erotic love. Mamah takes a seat in the front row so that she can hear every word. She feels a deep calm come over her. Women swarm the podium when Ms. Key is finished speaking. Mamah remains seated waiting her turn to talk to the woman. Ellen Key looks at her and tells her to come out with it. Tears come to her eyes and she thanks the woman. Ellen Key invites her to have tea with her before her train.

In Chapter 24, Ellen Key asks Mamah if Frank gives her good sex. She says yes, but it is more than that. She tells Ms. Key everything that has happened. She asks why Mamah has not asked Edwin for a divorce. Her children keep her from it. Ms. Key can tell that Mamah is on a spiritual quest and asks what she is seeking. Mamah is not sure. She thought it was writing. Mamah suggests that she can translate Ellen's books into English. She believes her current translator lacks soul. It is too British, too stiff. Mamah understands many languages, but not Swedish.

Ellen Key tells Mamah that she is going to be giving up her life of traveling. She is building a home on land the Swedish government has given her. She wants her next project to be America and she believes that Mamah can help her get her work published there. She gives her three essays to translate to test her to see if she can be her American translator. She will have to learn Swedish to become a regular translator. Ellen will pay her a small stipend to attend the University of Leipzig.

In Chapter 25, Mamah has put off going to Paris to stay up in the hotel translating Ellen's essays. When she attempts to go to Paris, she finds that it is flooded and no trains can get there. The hotel that Frank is staying in is near the river. Five days later it is still raining. Mamah is trapped in Nancy. When word comes that the flood waters have receded, Mamah rushes to buy a train ticket.

Mamah sees the devastation that the flood has caused the land and sees her love as something to cling to. Why should she not be happy when life is so fleeting. In Paris, she races to his hotel and to his room. He takes her up in a sweeping bear hug. He had missed the flooding. He had been out in the country when the river came over the sandbags. He just got back yesterday. She worried what would she would do if something happened to him.

Frank talks about leaving Paris for Italy. He seems too happy that she does not mention Leipzig. She puts it off until tomorrow. The studio in Florence is arranged and his son, Lloyd is coming over to help with the drawings along with Taylor Wooley. He has convinced Catherine that Lloyd will not be near Mamah.



Mamah has a letter from Edwin. His mother is leaving with them trying to help. Lizzie is bearing up and Louise is keeping reporters away. Jessie is leaving to live with her father's family. She goes out for food and when she returns to the hotel she tells Frank that she is not going to Italy with him. She tells him of her plans with Ellen Key and that she will need two to three months to study Swedish.

Frank is upset. She says that she has a mission to fulfill for herself as well. He has been depressed without her and cannot think of two to three months without her with him. He feels that she is running away from their situation. She assures him that she is not. She needs to do this for herself and in the end it will benefit them both. He will have time alone in Italy with his son.

Mamah has decided to write to Edwin officially asking for a divorce. She also writes to Lizzie to help with the children a while longer. She then writes a letter to her children.

In Chapter 26, Mamah begins her studies in Leipzig. In late May, when she has finished and plans to leave for Florence to be with Frank, she receives a letter from Ellen inviting her to visit her in her new home. Mamah is amazed that a woman on her own can have a house like Ellen's. Ellen believes that women need to develop their personalities from within. She tells Mamah to stay the course and give herself some kindness along the way.

Analysis

Mamah is mesmerized by Ellen's speech. The woman says everything that she wants to hear. Ellen can tell that Mamah is hurting and invites her to have tea with her. The meeting is just what Mamah needs. She wants to have a purpose in her life and this woman and her ideals are just what she believes every woman she hear. She wants to bring the voice of Ellen Key to America. She can do this by translating her books into English for the American woman. She is handicapped by her not knowing Swedish. Ellen gives her the opportunity to do something just for her and Mamah is excited by the prospect.

Mamah is nervous about mentioning going to the university to Frank. She knows that he will not like it and wants her to be with him. He cares more about his needs than he does for hers. She needs to be able to find enrichment outside of her relationship or their relationship is due to fail as her s and Edwin's did. This new sense of freedom leads Mamah to write to Edwin to officially ask for a divorce.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Mamah think it is so important to translate Ellen Key's work into English? How does she think it will affect the American public?



Discussion Question 2

Why is Frank against Mamah staying in Germany to study Swedish? Does he feel threatened by Ellen Key? Why or Why not?

Discussion Question 3

What spurs Mamah to ask Edwin for a divorce? How does she view her sister, Lizzie? Why does she expect her to care for her children when she does not do it herself?

Vocabulary

surplice, bohemians, espouse, empathy, supersede, ignoble, harlot, self-reliant, nomad, stipend, allegory, buttress, valiant, panacea, ideology, aesthetic, dogmatic, emancipated, licentious, sordid



Part II, Chapters 27-30

Summary

In Chapter 27, Mamah is in Florence with Frank. Frank has his studio downstairs, and Mamah has taken over one of the two gardens for her work. She and Frank take time out to tour gardens in the area. Lloyd has returned home. Taylor Woolley is still with Frank. Mamah finds him a fit companion for her walk in the hills.

Frank tells her that he wants to build a house for them in Wisconsin. He has written to his mother about buying the land for it. It is near his family's homes in Wisconsin. Mamah says that there is no place for her back there right now not even in Wisconsin. She wants him to design a house for them in Italy. She no longer has a home. She is anonymous in Italy.

In Chapter 28, Mamah goes to Frank's studio and finds him working on a drawing of a house for her in Italy. Frank makes no promises. It was the end of July and his work is nearly finished. His plan is to return to Chicago by September or October. If they are to stay, they will have to find a place quickly or build. Taylor is preparing to leave, and Mamah says that he must come to supper so that they can say goodbye. Mamah pictures a life for her and Frank in Italy with her children spending half the year.

Mamah goes to Frank's studio to look for a book. She finds a letter written by Frank to Walter Griffin. It seems Frank repaid a debt in Japanese prints, but the man was unhappy with the prints. She asks Taylor if he knows anything about a debt between Mr. Wright and Mr. Griffin. Wright borrowed five thousand from Griffin to go to Japan with Mrs. Wright. Griffin was put in charge of the studio while Frank was gone. He paid Griffin back with woodblock prints, but Griffin would rather have had cash. Wright was upset at Griffin for losing a big commission while he was gone and altering some of his plans. She asks if Mr. Wright paid his people on time back in Oak Park. Taylor says that there were times when they were not paid on time. She asks if Frank is difficult to work with. He says that he is demanding.

Frank comes home with beautifully wrapped packages. He has bought himself a new linen suit. He has presents for his children and for Mamah. She tells him that he should not be spending money on her. She tells him that she found the letter to Griffith. She is afraid that he doesn't have money to send to Griffin and that he is in financial trouble. Frank tells her not to worry about money. It always comes. He needs to have beautiful things around him. He is an artist. They inspire him and stimulate him. She unwraps her present to find a beautiful dress that he wants her to wear that night for their dinner with Taylor.

Frank spends the dinner talking about architecture. It is a long night and Taylor enjoys that gifts that they give him. She notices that Frank is drinking more than usual. She sees tears dripping down Frank's face. Mamah bids Taylor good night and helps Frank



to his feet. He slides away from her and stumbles inside without a word. She finds him at the piano. He tells her that he is going back for the children. His practice is in shambles. The people he trained are stealing his work and passing it off as theirs. He needs to build. He cannot stand that he is hurting his children.

Mamah sleeps little. She goes downstairs and finds Frank's first drawing of the simple sketch of the Italian villa. She wants to memorize the room before Frank starts to pack it up. She goes to where she knows he keeps his correspondence. She finds a letter from a minister in Sewance, Tennessee. He seems to be an old friend of Frank's. He talks of how it is wrong for him to go against the social order. Frank's God given-gifts would be used up in his fight with society and that would be a great loss to the world. It would be better to carry on a carnal relationship in secrecy than to try to change society to accommodate the affair.

Mamah did not know of the internal conflict that Frank was facing before now. He was the one who always persisted in their life when she wanted to give in. They have kept their remorse from one another. Mamah knows if she returns she could be sucked back into being Mrs. Edwin Cheney. She longs for her children, but she knows that the work she has would need to be put aside for them. Ellen has told her about a friend in Berlin who can secure her a teaching position if she chooses to stay in Europe. There is no hope in finding employment in the United States after the scandal. She would need employment. It has been fourteen months since she left Boulder. In ten more months, she could get a divorce from Edwin, even if he did not want one.

Frank asks her what she will do. She tells him that she has decided to stay until the spring. He does not like leaving her there to fend for herself. She tells him her plans about teaching. She is not ready to face the yellow press. She needs to be stronger. Frank will take back Mamah's translations of Ellen Key's work to his friend to be published. He tells her how he plans to renovate his studio into living quarters for Catherine and the children. Eventually, he will rent out the other half so they can have a regular income in addition to what he gave them.

Mamah gives the sketch of the Italian villa to Taylor for safekeeping. She says that it is a memento of their time in Italy. She hopes to see him again.

In Chapter 29, Mamah goes to the district police station in Berlin to register with the police. Anyone staying longer than two weeks must do so. She must give the name of her father and his occupation and the name of her husband and his occupation. She must also state why she is there and when she will be leaving. She tells him that she is there to study and will be there three to four months. She has no one to share a conversation with in Berlin. She is all alone. Mamah is staying in a boardinghouse run by Frau Boehm. Ellen knew the woman and helped secure her a room.

Mamah goes to the university to learn Swedish and teaches at a girls' seminary. She passes herself off as an unmarried American scholar. She started her trip off eager to translate Ellen's works so that American women could read them and find the recognition that she felt. She hopes they will cause a revolution in the Woman



Movement in America. The long hours from teaching and studying leave her little time to translate. She also longs for her children. She writes Edwin begging him to let Louise bring the children for a visit, but he refuses. A letter from Lizzie tells her that Frank Lloyd Wright is deep in debt. Catherine Wright is hounded by debt collectors, including the sheriff. Now that he is back the town believes he has returned to Catherine because that is what he is telling people. Yet, from Mamah's letters, Lizzie does not believe that Frank and Mamah have parted ways. She asks how Mamah can believe such a man. She knows Edwin is hurt, but he would probably take Mamah back if she came back.

Mamah writes Lizzie back telling her that Frank has gone back to support his children out of loyalty and obligation. She does not know of his debts. She does not return because she has a need to be alone, with no outside influence, so that she can study and reflect. She thanks Lizzie for all of her help and for looking after her children.

Mamah is enjoying being self-reliant and having a work schedule. She does worry that Frank will return to his wife thinking that what they have is impossible. He could think like she feels sometimes that the price of their relationship is too dear to continue paying. Mamah writes a letter to Ellen telling her how important she has been in her life and that without her she could not find the strength to continue her journey of living freely and openly with the one true love of her life.

In Chapter 30, the headmistress stops Mamah in the hallway and asks her if she belongs to a church. There is a church that could use her service. They send volunteers over to the Doss-house in the Wedding District on Sunday afternoons. They need a translator to write letters for factory workers who have long-lost cousins in America. Mamah spends her Sunday afternoons writing letters because she realizes that the women cannot read and write. The women write letters in hopes of getting their daughters taken on as domestics in America.

Mamah feels better when she comes home from the Doss-house. She gives people hope and sometimes their relatives do reply with an offer to sponsor them. She looks forward to Sundays. She knows now that if Frank does not return to her she can make it on her own. She will survive. As Christmastime nears, she buys presents for her children and vows that one day they will be with her. Frau Boehm puts up a towering Christmas tree in the parlor. She cannot take sitting down to Christmas dinner with the people of the boardinghouse, so she goes out to the Café des Westerns to spend the evening uncelebrated by the Jewish artists.

Analysis

Mamah loves Florence. No one knows who she is or what she has left behind. She wants to build a house there so that they can live in peace. Frank wants to build a house in Wisconsin so that he will be near his family and people who will have his back. During this time, Mamah becomes aware of Frank's lack of financial awareness. He does not take his debts seriously and expects people to be happy with gifts of art rather than the money he owes. It is foreshadowing of a trait that could hinder Frank and



Mamah's relationship. Frank likes to buy nice things and to be surrounded by nice things no matter how much money he may have.

Frank admits that he misses his children and will be returning home. He needs to be building and designing that is what makes him happy. Mamah must decide what she is to do. She does not want to return to life as Mrs. Edwin Cheney. She wants to see her children, but does not want to give up her work with Ellen and she knows that to go back means she will not be able to keep translating. She has found her purpose and she does not want to lose it. Mamah decides to stay in Europe when Frank returns home.

Mamah finds it lonely in Germany on her own. To make it easier, she says that she is an unmarried American scholar. She wants her children to visit, but Edwin will not allow it. Lizzie tries to make her sister see reason and return home. She says that Frank is going around telling people that he has returned to Catherine, yet Lizzie knows that he is still with Mamah. She worries about what kind of man her sister is mixed up with.

Mamah slowly becomes immersed in the community. She volunteers to write letters for people who want to write to their relatives in America. She enjoys being able to help people. She also happens into a café that is frequented by the city's artists and becomes part of the artist community.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Frank want to return home to Chicago? Why does he feel that it is his duty to his family?

Discussion Question 2

How does Mamah immerse herself into the community in Germany? Why is she accepted by the artist community?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Lizzie concerned for Mamah? What rumors does she find disturbing?

Vocabulary

culminate, satiety, precipices, agog, happenstance, gaiety, forays, partaken, ludicrous, furor, dissipate, dirigible, essence



Part II, Chapters 31-32

Summary

In Chapter 31, Mamah goes to the Café des Westens. When she sees no table available, she turns to leave. A waiter appears and escorts her to an empty chair. The four men stand when she sits down and the women nod. The man next to her asks if she would like wine. She accepts. She is unsure what the costumes of the performers are supposed to portray. The woman on stage looks familiar to Mamah. The man next to her points to the woman and says that she is his wife and a poet. The intimacy of the performance so clearly directed at her husband makes Mamah want to leave the room. She makes her way through the crowd and out onto the sidewalk.

A woman appears beside her. It is the woman who helped her at the same café when she heard that Mattie had died. She thanks her for her help. She says to call her Else and asks why a well-dressed American woman is running loose on the streets of Berlin on Christmas. She tells her that she is studying Swedish and waiting to obtain a divorce. She takes Mamah back inside and introduces her to the people at the table she had occupied. The people are part of the German art community.

Mamah returns to the café days later. People acknowledged her when she walked through the door. Else's friendship seem to give her a stamp of approval among the artists. Else confides in Mamah that she came from a village. She had married a doctor and had a fine home and fine things. She woke up one day and asked what had she done with her gifts and here she is with practically no furniture and since Herwarth is leaving unsure of how she will pay the rent.

Mamah goes to the café every day during the week of her holiday. Hedwig tells her that Herwarth left Else for a Swedish woman. Mamah listens to the conversations around her in the café. They talked of politics, war, magic and socialism. They believe that artists can redeem the world.

Mamah finds a letter in her box from a Chicago law firm that she knew to be used by Wagner Electric. Inside are divorce papers from Edwin. The grounds for the suit are desertion. She sends a letter to Frank telling him that she got her divorce notice.

In Chapter 32, Frau Boehm comes to Mamah's room to tell her that there is a man downstairs to see her. Mamah rushes past her and down the stairs. Frank is standing in the parlor. She packs a bag and goes to his hotel with him. He has come to Berlin to talk to Wasmuth who has stopped printing the portfolio because of a disagreement between them. In Chicago, he is a pariah and no one will hire him. His children hate him. She tells him that Edwin agreed to a divorce and she will meet him in August to settle the details. She feels that she can go back now. Frank came to tell her about the house in Wisconsin. His mother has agreed to buy the land in her name for him. He can get a loan to begin construction. She agrees to live in Wisconsin with him.



Analysis

Mamah meets Else. She is the woman who helped Mamah into the cab after she learned about Mattie's death. Else is a kindred spirit. She is a poet who used to be married to a doctor. She once had a nice house and nice clothes, but she gave it up to follow her dream. The café is a place where she is accepted for who she is. Mamah is happy to receive her divorce notice. She is finally free.

Frank returns to Germany. He is finding life in Chicago difficult. His children hate him, and no one wants to work with him. Mamah decides that she can finally go home. She has her divorce and it is time to stop hiding.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Else accept Mamah into her circle of friends? How are the two women similar?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Mamah decide that it is time to go home? What has given her the courage?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Frank return to Germany? How has his life been affected by his time in Europe?

Vocabulary

irreverent, antediluvian, salvation, pariah, tawdry, tarry, litany, ecstatic



Part III, Chapters 33-36

Summary

In Chapter 33, Mamah is spending the summer at a camp in Canada with her daughter Martha and son John. They do not seem to remember her. John allows her to hug him and shows her a spider he found in the cabin. Martha stays behind her father. Edwin and Mamah work out their agreement for the children. He says he will see if the children will agree to four weeks with her in the summers. They are afraid of things. He told her how John went looking for her after she left Boulder and got lost. They found him that night wandering around Boulder miles from the house. She will be allowed two days visitation at Oak Park before the Christmas holiday. Martha has to be pried from Edwin's leg when he leaves the next morning.

John wants to please her and will put himself in her proximity so that she can hug him, but he will not initiate hugs. He runs off to play if she attempts to talk to him about being gone. Mamah thinks about how she and John were exceptionally close before her relationship with Frank began. Martha took the full brunt of her desertion. She has been mentally gone since Martha was born—first with depression and then with Frank. She had been thinking of Frank even when she was with her children. She wants to make it all up to her children, but she does not know how.

A dog strays into the camp and the children want to keep it. Mamah half-heartedly attempts to find the owner. She is glad when no one claims him, and she lets them keep it. She knows that Edwin will not allow the dog at Oak Park and she will have to keep him in Wisconsin. Mamah sees it as a way to get the children to visit her.

In Chapter 34, Frank takes Mamah to Wisconsin. She is afraid of living near his mother, sister, and cousins. Frank assures her that his mother will adjust to her. She is fiercely loyal. His aunts will be nervous about their school's reputation with the couple moving near them. Her new home is called Taliesin. It is nestled into the hill and wraps itself around the area. It is like nothing else she has ever seen. It looks modern, but harmonious with the hills. It is like an Italian villa.

Frank points out the houses of family members in the area. As they pull into the drive of her new home, she sees a private courtyard. Workmen are working on the house. Frank calls for the foreman, Billy. He introduces him to Mamah and says that she is the lady of the house and will be the person to go to when Frank is not there. Frank walks Mamah through the unfinished house. They will sleep at Jennie's until it is finished. They will spend the first night in the unfinished house.

In Chapter 35, Mamah overhears the workers talking about her. Billy does not like having to take orders from a woman. She asks Frank not to say anything to them. They do not know that she and Frank are in the house.



There are thirty-six workmen. They sleep in shacks during the week and go home on weekends. Frank hired a woman to cook, but it is too much for one woman. Someone has to get the meal half started for her so that the big meal can go on around one. Jennie had been doing it, but now it falls to Mamah. She knows almost nothing about cooking. The men have breakfast, consisting of oatmeal and lots of coffee. The midday meal is stew with biscuits. In the evening, a big meal of chicken, mashed potatoes, and something green plus dessert is prepared. Lil, the Spring Green cook, arrives from town each day with fresh supplies from the grocer. A married woman in Mamah's circle needed to master only one dish to serve at dinner parties or to deliver to ailing friends. Everything else was done by a cook or a house girl.

Lil teaches Mamah how to make a pie crust. At first, the workmen hardly speak to Mamah. Finally, the desserts win the men over to speak to her. Mamah hears one of the workmen talking about how his preacher warned against consorting with people who live in sin. People are talking. Mamah had not been introduced to anyone in the area except Frank's family, but they all knew about her. She avoids trips into Spring Green so as not to alert anyone to her presence. Frank's mother avoids Mamah as much as possible. She calls her Mrs. Cheney when Frank is out of earshot. She informed her that she has legally changed her name to Borthwick. Frank is obviously her favorite child. Mamah wonders how she will be able to share a house with the woman. Frank has earmarked one of the bedrooms for his mother.

Anna Wright snaps at Lil about the groceries she brings for the workmen's meals one morning. Anna refuses to pay for the groceries and Lil leaves. Anna takes over the making of the meals. Mamah remembers Catherine Wright speaking of her wedding day. Anna had treated it like a funeral, fainting during the ceremony. She had been at constant odds with her daughter-in-law. Anna had married a widowed preacher and after having her own children with William Wright, she sent his children to live with their dead mother's family. William turned out to be a rambling man, skipping across the country from one low-paying congregation to the next. Anna cut William out of her life and banished him to an attic bed and stopped taking care of him. This prompted him to file for divorce. Anna was left to go back to the handouts of her brothers, who owned the land. She followed Frank to Chicago and now had to follow him back to Wisconsin. Mamah realizes that Anna will be a very present fact in her life when Taliesin is finished. Mamah tries to be friendly with Anna and she tells her that Frank was born in 1867. Mamah thinks she must be going senile for Frank told her he was born in 1869, the same year that Mamah was born.

In Chapter 36, Frank is in the kitchen swatting flies giving them the names of people who have wronged him. Mamah informs him that she is going into town to give Lil the five dollars that they owe her. She does not want to do the cooking by herself. He tells her that Lil lives above the general store and asks her to pick up a few things for him. Mamah talks to Lil and she agrees to return the next day. She goes into the general store and gives the man the list Frank has given her. She asks to charge the purchase to the account of Frank Lloyd Wright. She is told that Mr. Wright owes money on his account. He paid half of his balance in June and has not paid the rest since. He owes fifty-eight dollars. Mamah says she will get the supplies another day and gives what



money she has to pay some on the debt. She tells the man that he will get the remaining money promptly.

Mamah is very angry with Frank. She was humiliated. She tells him that she will not live this way. He has to pay his bills or pay cash. If he cannot afford it, then do not buy it. He offers to let her take over the bill paying. While she has Frank listening to her, she asks him what year he was born. He tells her 1867. He lied because he was a man in love. He did not think about it before he said it. She was so happy about it that he could not take it back. Mamah thinks that Frank romanticizes things. He loves to imbue everything with drama. She cannot stay mad at him.

Analysis

Mamah gets to see her children. It is a bittersweet reunion. The children have not seen her in two years. Her daughter Martha does not remember her. She was quite young when Mamah left. She is not keen on being left alone with a stranger, even though the stranger is her mother. John remembers his mother, but does not initiate any contact himself. He has been abandoned so there is probably trust issues involved. He does not want to get hurt like that again; so, he keeps an emotional distance.

Mamah is surprised that she will be living with Frank's sister until their house is finished. She does not think that Frank realizes the awkwardness of the situation. He is consumed with seeing that the house is built and working on reviving his practice. Mamah is left to deal with his family and feel the wrath of his mother. Anna Wright believes that her son can do no wrong and Mamah must be the cause of his problems. The workmen also view her as an intrusion and do not like taking orders from her. They eventually come around, but it is a difficult time for Mamah.

Mamah once again is faced with Frank's inability to pay his bills. She is embarrassed that he owes money to people and does not seem to think anything about it. It is hard for her to get him to realize that he needs to live within his means. He lives in a fantasy world that his mother has created for him. She always placed him above everyone else. Consequently, he believes he is better and deserves to be treated differently.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Martha shy away from her mother? How does this make Mamah feel?

Discussion Question 2

How does Anna Wright treat Mamah? What is her relationship like with Frank?



Discussion Question 3

Why does Mamah become angry when she learns that Frank has not paid his grocer bill? Why is she embarrassed?

Vocabulary

inundated, paltry, abstract, umbrage, formidable, sanctimonious, victuals, frivolity, consort, anecdote, caustic, contretemps, sully, passel, heretic, glean, senility, sashay, inconsequential, gallant



Part III, Chapters 37-40

Summary

In Chapter 37, Mamah receives a letter from a Mr. Huebsch from New York telling her that Ellen Keys has given him the exclusive rights to publish *Love and Ethic* in America. Mamah goes to the shed to get her belongings so she can settle into Taliesin, while Frank is in Chicago. Raccoons have gotten into the boxes. She feels ill as she carries the remains of her possessions into the house. She aches over the loss of the portrait of her family. She is elated to find the translations unharmed.

The close call makes her return to the translations at once. She writes to Ellen detailing what she plans to do. Billy tells her that Josiah has come back. Josiah is a young carpenter's apprentice who has considerable talent, but a weakness for drink. He has failed to show up on the occasional Monday. He has started missing two in five workdays. Mamah talks to him telling him that they need him to work. He is one of the best carpenter apprentices Mr. Wright has had the pleasure of working with. He promises to do better.

Taliesin makes her feel sheltered and free at the same time. It is the democratic architecture Frank has been attempting to achieve. The men who worked on Taliesin are immensely proud of it. They are devoted to Frank. The men would gather in the living room in the evenings and talk and joke after the workday. Mamah took a picture of the group. She is compiling a series of them for a photo album for Frank for Christmas. They will tell the story of Taliesin.

Mamah receives a letter from Ellen Keys. She asks Mamah many questions about business. She then writes about her concern for Mamah's choices. Ellen believes maternal love should come first and she urges Mamah to return to her children. Anger wells in Mama hast the woman's words. Ellen's ideas are contradictory. She does not understand how she could urge her to return when Ellen had written that staying in an unloving marriage is tantamount to prostitution.

Frank feels that they have lost a friend after hearing of Ellen's letter. Mamah feels that Ellen feels they are making money off her books and not reporting it to her. She wonders if she did give Huebsch the translation rights. Ellen never seems to remember what she has given Mamah permission to do. Mamah writes to Ellen. She details the business aspects and reminds Ellen that she named her sole authorized English translator in America. She then tells Ellen that she obtained a divorce from Edwin and is living happily with Frank. It is a house founded upon Ellen Key's ideal of love.

In Chapter 38, Mamah had an early Christmas with her children in Chicago. It was uncomfortable in the hotel room. Edwin tells her that he plans to remarry. Elinor Millor is one of Lizzie's best friends. Mamah feels betrayed and replaced. Frank had a day with



Catherine and the children eating sliced turkey and going shopping. He will not spend Christmas day with them. It will be a quiet Christmas of just the two of them at Taliesin.

Two days before Christmas a reporter comes from the Chicago Journal. Not knowing who he is Mamah lets him in the house. He has come to confirm a report that Mrs. Cheney is living at Taliesin. Frank throws him out. Reporters begin to come to the house. They show Frank the latest paper, which reads Mrs. Cheney and Wright Elope Again. The reporters have quotes from Catherine and Frank's daughter who are surprised to learn that the two are living together.

Mamah and Frank decide to have a press conference to tell their side of the story. Frank will be the one to speak. She wants him to stick to the script that they have written, but he goes off on a tangent about the laws being for the average man. Mamah tries to get his attention to stop him, but he keeps talking. Mamah had told him that nothing made better copy than someone thinking they are more important than the common man. When she finally catches his eye, he tells the men they are done and he would be happy to show them around Taliesin. Mamah hears the men snickering about her. She tells Frank to get rid of them.

In Chapter 39, Reporters are outside Taliesin. They try to get rid of the reporters, but the press only moves to the road to the entrance of Taliesin. Jennie calls to say that reporters are at her house and to Hillside School to besiege Frank's aunts before classes. They are begging Frank to come to the school. When he returns, he is angry. Some parents are threatening to pull their children out of the school. His aunts' finances are shaky so it would ruin the school. The reporters tell him that somebody has filed a complaint with the sheriff and that he is coming to arrest him. The couple is fodder in the circulation wars of the papers. They are using their story to sell papers.

When Frank calls the sheriff, he assures Frank that he is not going to arrest him and that he will shoo the reporters away. The workmen have taken to bringing firearms from home and protecting the property perimeter. In the newspaper stories, Catherine is portrayed as an angel and Mamah as the devil. One of the newspaper stories has quotes supposedly from Mamah's children saying that they pray for her to come home. There is also a quote from her sister in another story. Frank tries to tell her that it is made up, but some of the story is true and only things Lizzie would know. Mamah is worried about the children and the taunts that they must endure for her actions. She wants to go to Chicago and comfort her children, but knows that it will only comfort her and not them.

In Chapter 40, it is February, but Mamah and Frank are still bruised from the memory of Christmas. Clients and prospects have fallen away due to the newspaper stories. Frank has shown her despair he has never shown before. He took out a fifty thousand dollar life insurance policy and named her the beneficiary to protect her. He needs to build, but has nothing to build. He spends his time brooding. Mamah blames herself, she should have listened to her instincts and not opened the door to the reporters.



Mamah finds solace in her books, while Frank finds solace in his Japanese wood prints. She tells him that he should write about Japanese art. He takes on the project. Mamah returns to her translations, but is finding it hard to agree with Ellen's ideas. She remembers Hedwig calling Ellen Keys 'the wise fool of with Woman Movement.' She explained that Ellen is revered in Europe for being the champion of the new morality, but despised by suffragists for giving a speech in 1896 attacking the whole suffrage movement because she thought they placed equal pay and the vote above motherhood, which she stated is the only legitimate work for women. It set the movement back a decade in Germany. The very document that Ellen wants Mamah to translate and communicate to the women of America is the same message that caused the schism in Germany and she worries that it will stifle the movement in America.

Ellen Key has become all the rage in America thanks to. However, without Mamah and Frank, no one would know about her. Frank tells Mamah that she does not have to agree with Ellen on everything. She is her translator and cannot censor her. Mamah worries that her personality is getting tangled up with Ellen's. She does not want to put the essay out to the American public. She considers dragging her heels on the translation or telling Ellen she could not find a publisher for it. She feels conflicted.

Analysis

While the house is being built, Mamah has not been doing any work for herself. She had pushed it aside and now that the house is finished she can settle into the house. The fact that raccoons destroyed many bits of her past shows how Mamah has cut many ties with her past life. She does not have friends from her previous life. Her relationship with her sister has suffered. They use to be so close and now Lizzie is distant and does not approve of Mamah's actions. It symbolizes the desolation Mamah has made of her old life and the cutting of ties with her family.

Mamah is hurt by Ellen's letter. She had told Ellen her story when she was in France, yet the woman has completely turned around on the advice that she gave her then. This contradiction is also seen in her work. She is for equality, but thinks woman should be limited to motherhood. Mamah finds it hard to translate these words and worries how it will affect the American Woman's Right movement. She does not want to do anything that will harm it.

Mamah senses a feeling of loss when she learns that Edwin is remarrying. It shows that she can be easily replaced and that he is going on with his life. She is jealous because she cannot marry Frank because Catherine refuses to give him a divorce. It does not help the situation when reporters camp out on Taliensin's doorstep when they discover that Frank and Mamah are living together. The stories are once again in the paper and Frank's reputation takes another hit. They try to defuse the situation by having a press conference and telling their side, but Frank just comes off as pompous and believing that he is better than the average man and can do what he likes. It is a tense situation.



Discussion Question 1

Why is Mamah jealous that Edwin is remarrying? How does this reflect on her life with Frank?

Discussion Question 2

Why do the reporters camp on Frank and Mamah's doorstep on Christmas? What is so important about them?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Frank's business affected by what he says in the press conference? Why does Mamah try to get his attention to make him stop talking?

Vocabulary

provincial, contrite, enervate, ennoble, bravado, tantamount, invidious, clandestine, feint, hegira, posse, caucus, onslaught, stalwart, suffrage, schism, antithetical, literati, censor



Part III, Chapters 41-44

Summary

In Chapter 41, Frank and Mamah talk about planting because they have thirty-one acres. Frank has consulted his friend Jens Jensen about the orchard and vineyard. Mamah wants flowers not grasses native to the prairie. Frank does not like foundation planting. He allows her to take control of the gardens. The plants come in the middle of May and Frank has hired two trucks to bring the shipment over. Mamah goes to the Barton place to see if their teen boys can help unload the trucks. Dorothea Barton is glad to meet Mamah. She gives her two mason jars of blackberry preserves as a welcome. She also has a six-year old daughter. She asks Mamah if she does not have a daughter around her age. Mamah knows that she has read about her and admits that she does and that she will be there in the summer and would be glad to meet the Barton's daughter.

When the plants arrive the next day, the Barton boys are driven over by their father Samuel. He says that some are rotted, but he can help get the berries and apple trees in the ground. Samuel Barton is able to instruct the men on how to prune the trees before they are planted. They plant trees for three days. Dorothea comes on the second day with boxes of plant dug from her garden. Her husband told her that Mamah had lost some of hers so she brought a few to plug in.

In Chapter 42, Taylor Woolley comes to Taliesin. He pulls a drawing from a cardboard tube and spreads it out. Emil comes to have a look. He says that he can see Taliesin in it. Mamah thanks him for bringing it. She misses the time they had. Mamah puts the print in the vault and shows Taylor the Japanese woodprints that Frank has acquired. They have returned from a six-month trip to Japan. The Spaulding brothers in Boston offered Frank a commission to buy Japanese woodprints for them. They had been planning to go to Japan to talk to the government about designing the Imperial Hotel. They are waiting to hear about the hotel. Frank enjoyed himself looking of the prints.

Taylor asks how she is doing and she says fine that there are people who speak with her. Her children have visited and Martha has struck up a friendship with Emma Barton. They ended up caring very much for Frank by the end of the summer. They had many visitors who wanted to see the house. People just passing on the highway and organized groups—school groups and a Sunday school class.

Mamah had confronted Mr. Huebsch in New York when Frank went to see the Spaulding brothers in Boston. He had published the pirated translation of *Love and Ethics*. The man produced a check from Ellen Key that proved that she had not only authorized the translation, but paid for it. Ellen had lied to her. Huebsch's assistant tells Mamah that he has an associate at Putnam who says that Ellen Key prefers Huesbch translation of her work and the Putnam office in London feels the same way. Distraught, Mamah buys a copy of his translation and compares it to her own. She admits in some



places his is better, but hers is better in others. She traveled to Japan intent on not thinking of Ellen Keys for six months. She does not see much of Frank in Japan. He is busy trying to find the woodprints and talking to the government about the hotel. She worries about having to spend a year in Japan if he gets the contract for the hotel. She worries about not seeing her children. They already miss her and are strangers to her.

In Chapter 43, Frank and Mamah take Taylor on a picnic before he leaves. Emil joins them. Frank talks about architecture. Emil asks about Walter Griffin winning the contest to design Canberra, to design the capitol of an entire country. He and Marion Mahony have already moved to Australia. Frank says that Griffin was a student of his briefly who has been sucking his eggs ever since and that Marion was an illustrator more than an architect. Mamah flinches at his dismissal of Marion. She has an architectural degree from MIT. She takes up for the woman saying that she was every inch an architect.

Back at the house, she walks in while Frank is gutting the fish he caught. When she approaches him, he stops what he is doing. When she steps away, he continues what he is doing. She assumes he is upset with her for contradicting him in front of the draftsmen, but it is not the first time he cannot bear her near him. He needs his space at times.

In Chapter 44, Mamah goes out to see the blooming of the wildflowers. She thinks about Mattie. She had written Alden a year ago and discovered that he had left the children with Mattie's brother, Lincoln to raise in Iowa and went to Columbia. He passed his children off to a relative's home where there was an able-bodied woman. Mamah used to hear Mattie's voice in her head and she has not heard it in a long time.

When she returns home, she finds a delivery truck in the driveway. It is a delivery from Marshall Fields. He hands her the bill. It has been paid in full by Mr. Wright. It is furniture. Mr. Wright had a sketch of where to put what. She goes in to find a large Chinese carpet covering the middle of the floor. Another is under the dining room table where six new chairs surround it. Another six chairs are scattered around the room. In the corner, is a gleaming grand piano. There are nine to ten rugs rolled up of varying sizes. Billy says that drawing did not show where to put those. The cost of the goods is not shown on the bill.

She can see what he envisioned for every piece. She cannot imagine how he paid for them. Josiah comes to see Mr. Wright. She tells him that he is in Chicago until tomorrow and asks if she can help. He tells her that he has not been paid for the bookcases he made for her study. It was a year ago and he has not been paid anything. He has spoken to Mr. Wright about it three times. The first two time he said he just forgot and the last time he said Josiah should feel privileged to work for him to add his creativity to Taliesin and he thank him for his contribution. Mamah promises him his money.

Mamah wakes in a panic. She does not know how much or how little money they have. Frank told her their finances were in good shape since the trip to Japan. She realizes now that she cannot trust him. She had set up an account for him, for the Taliesin studio and the household. She kept tabs on groceries and studio expenses, but there had



been little business coming in. They had spent six months in Japan and she has no idea how much that cost. She is overwhelmed by all the expenses that they have. She wonders about Billy and the men at Taliesin and if they have been paid.

Mamah gets up and goes through the boxes in Frank's studio looking for any outstanding bills. She finds bills from neighboring towns. She suspects that he is sending the men further and further to buy lumber because he has not paid his suppliers in nearby towns. The scale of the debt takes her breath away. She feels culpable because she is living this privileged life while their creditors are stuck holding the bag. Many of the betrayed lenders are his friends. She found a letter from the Japanese guide asking for more money because he had been shortchanged.

Mamah talks to Billy when he arrives the next morning. She asks if Frank is not paying his bills. He tells her that he is always paid on time. Billy will not tell her. He says that it is not his place. She sits and waits for Frank to arrive from Chicago. He knows he is in trouble when he enters the house. He tells her that it is all paid for. The grand piano helps him work. She goes to the studio and returns with a fistful of unpaid bills and throws them on the floor. She picks them up and says why don't we invite Mr. Howard Fuller in for a party after all you owe him two hundred dollars so he is an investor in it. She tells him that he will fix this starting with Josiah.

Mamah says that Catherine will not divorce him because she knows he does not pay any one. She is afraid that once you're free you she will not get anything. She asks how he can show such contempt for the little man and cheat him whenever he gets the chance. She turns and leaves the room lies down on the bed and sobs. When he comes in, she tells him to go sleep at Jeannie's and that she will be gone in the morning.

In the morning, Mamah packs a bag. She is going to the coach house in Chicago where he slept when he was working there. She has nowhere else to go. She has no friends to whom she can turn. Frank wants to talk and she says they can talk in the car on the way to the train station. She asks where he got the money from. He owned back rent at Orchestra Hall. The sheriff was brought in and William Spaulding came through the door so John kept the sheriff busy while Frank sold William a set of woodblock prints. He got ten thousand for the prints. He paid fifteen hundred for back rent and he and John paid off more bills. They poked around Lyon and Healy and he bought the pianos. He bought three. He spent the rest of the money at Marshall Fields. There will be big money coming in soon. He will be doing a huge hurry-up job in Chicago. It will be an enormous concert garden—Midway Gardens.

Frank says he has a desire to buy things. Mamah calls it a sickness. She says that it is more than the spending. There are so many things that she does not think he can change. He calls after her as she walks to the station house.



Analysis

Mamah starts making friends in the community. The planting of the flower gardens and the orchards bring neighbors together and Mamah gets a sense of the community. Mamah and Frank spent six months in Japan, which she felt benefited Frank, but not her. She lost time in seeing her children and had nothing to do in Japan. She does not want to return if Frank wins the bid to build the Imperial Hotel. She feels everything was neglected with their time away.

Mamah is worried how much of a grievance that Frank holds against his former students who took his work as their own and have become successful. He downgrades the work of Marion Mahoney whose only flaw is to have married his arch nemesis, Walter Griffin. Mamah is appalled that he can talk so poorly of a woman who did such marvelous work for him. She connected him to his clients. She could put his ideas on paper so that potential clients could see his genius. Mamah sees more flaws in Frank's character and is concerned by it.

Mamah is further dismayed by Frank's spending habits. He has bought expensive furniture and rugs for the house without telling her. She also discovers that he is not paying his bills and has told one worker that his payment is having the satisfaction of working with the genius Frank Lloyd Wright. This is that last straw. She has to make Frank understand they he cannot treat people as worthless. They are good people and need to be treated with respect and to be paid for their services. She leaves him because she does not want to be brought down by his financial obligations and his destructive behavior. Mamah sees now why Catherine is reluctant to divorce him because she fears that she will get no more money out of him. Mamah is frightened by this and does not want to rely on a man who cannot pay his bills.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Mamah get so angry when she sees the furniture and rugs that Frank has bought? Why will she not invite members of the community to the house?

Discussion Question 2

How does Mamah come to understand why Catherine is so against divorce? Why does she understand her resolution?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Mamah decide to leave Frank? Why is she frightened by his behavior?



Vocabulary

vernacular, debacle, permeate, ascetic, finesse, ensconced, coup, apprentice, witticism, tumid, crude, contemptuous, collateral, capitulation, culpable, squander, hypocrite, insatiable, affliction



Part III, Chapters 45-48

Summary

In Chapter 45, Mamah arrives in Chicago and buys two boxes of candy. She goes to the house in Oak Park. Lizzie does not answer her apartment door. Mamah summons the courage and knocks on the door of the house. Elinor answers. She tells her that she is looking for Lizzie and is told that she was just there half an hour ago. Martha is with her father and John had a baseball game. Mamah thanks her for how good she has been to the children. She says she has bought candy for them and asks to leave them in their rooms. Elinor says of course. She looks around their rooms seeing how different they are. She hears Lizzie's voice call out to Elinor to help her because her hands are full. Mamah feels like an intruder. She goes out to the kitchen. The corners of Lizzie's mouth fall when she sees her sister.

Mamah wants to apologize to Lizzie. Lizzie says she only did it for John and Martha. Lizzie has never had a chance to have a life of her own. She had to help take care of her mother when she became sick, while Mamah was off at college. Then when Jessie died Mamah was already married. Then Mamah had to go discover her personality once again leaving Lizzie to take care of things. To her Mamah had everything and she is upset that she gave it all away without thinking. Jessie, Jessie's daughter, is with her father's family because Lizzie works all day and she is not Edwin's blood. Louise is not there to take care of her because Elinor did not think she was needed.

Louise is living with her brother and hoping to find another family, but at fifty-one it is doubtful she will. Lizzie will have to leave as well. Elinor deserves her privacy. Mamah asks her to forgive her for not considering her feelings. Lizzie is noncommittal. John returns from his baseball game and reluctantly agrees to get an ice cream with his mother.

Mamah is angry as she returns to Chicago. Elinor Millor has taken over Mamah's old life and it fits her well. It is like she has always been there. Lizzie's words hurt her. She had always wanted to do something big, but what had she done with the ambition. She attached herself to colossal personalities who would have done great things whether she knew them or not.

Frank comes to talk to her. He tells her that he does not know how to be a good friend. He feels that he can take what he wants because he deserves it. He has had people around him who indulged him and propped me up and never allowed him to fall on his face when he should have. He is sorry for failing her as a friend. Mamah says that they are in a corner and she does not see a way out. They have cut themselves off from everyone. He needs to decide what kind of man he wants to be. She will not return home until he thinks about how to fix things. He has to change and be committed to that change if he wants to remain with her.



Frank returns telling her that he will change, but he needs her there to keep him honest and to tell him the truth. Mamah thinks of how for so long she has waited for Catherine to give him a divorce so that they can be married, but now she does not know if she would marry him. If she goes back, she will have to have separate finances from his or take over all of them. She agrees to go back to him. If she cannot see the good in him and believe that it is possible for him to change, then she cannot expect others to see the good in her and believe that she has changed.

In Chapter 46, John and Martha come for a visit. Martha is a beautiful, solemn child. Edwin had dropped them off to Spring Green. He tells her that Martha has picked out the boots she is wearing. She has a mind of her own when it comes to clothes. She likes fancy. It was a pleasant exchange with him. Mamah gets them some overalls and boots for their stay there. They are in farm country and it can ruin nice shoes.

A squirrel is in the house. Mamah is used to it, but it is alarming the children. They open all the doors. Martha shrieks until the squirrel finds its way out. The children are there out of season. Instead of summer, it is early spring. Mamah questions her decision to have the children up over Easter. There are many new faces at Taliesin. Emil Brodelle is a draftsman who is helping with the Midway Gardens project. David Lindblom, a young Swedish immigrant, is tending the orchard and gardens. Tom Bruncker and Billy Weston are also there. Sometimes Billy brings his son Ernest, with him. Frank has also hired a Japanese cook, but the man is having a hard time getting into the country. In the meantime, Mamah is cooking for a crowd.

Martha and John have changed as well. Martha has begun to have a private, introspective life and John is noticing his appearance more. She feels that she has lost so much time with them. Frank and Mamah take the children to see the cranes. Frank says if they are lucky they will see them dance. When it is time to have babies, they do a dance. In the tall grasses, the cranes begin a kind of minuet—bowing and jumping as they flap their wings.

In Chapter 47, The Japanese cook has written to say that he is not interested in coming to Wisconsin. John Vogelsang, the man who runs the restaurant at Midway Gardens, has told Frank about a wonderful Barbados woman named Gertrude. She has a husband who would come along. It is a small favor to Frank and Mamah that Vogelsang is offering. He can get help easier in Chicago than they can in Wisconsin. He thinks the two would like being out in the country.

Gertrude Carlton is a young woman with a confident manner. She carried a pillowcase full of food with her. Mamah jaw drops at the food she pulls from the pillowcase—guavas, okra and limes. Mr. Carlton has friends who get the food for her.

Julian Carlton seems an odd match for his wife. He has a serious demeanor. His English is clipped and British. At dinnertime, he is dressed in a white jacket and escorts them to the dining room. Mamah thinks the formalities a bit much. The food is delicious. Julian had made desert an exquisite apple pie. He was a Pullman porter and learned to do whatever needed to be done. Her father had been an admirer of the men who



worked the sleeping cars. Julian's formality now has a sense of familiarity and is endearing. They agree to hire the Carltons.

Frank is busy working on Midway Gardens and is rarely home. He regales her with stories of how the construction is coming along. Mamah wonders how the Carltons will get along with no other black people in the area. Frank says that they will make their way. He asks what she will do with her free time. She is stalled in her work for Ellen. She does not like having someone else being authorized to do work in America. Frank tells her that sales of *The Woman Movement* are brisk. Ellen Keys is the new star of the movement in America. Mamah is thinking of doing something of her own. Frank tells her that the owner of the *Weekly Home News* is getting ready to retire. He thinks they should buy it and set Mamah as editor. He tells her to think about it.

Mamah thinks about the newspaper idea. What she really wants to do is write her own novel. She believes that Ellen's books do not have enough real-life examples. She wants to write accounts from actual women who have gotten past their fears and the scorn to find their worth in the world.

In Chapter 48, Mamah prepares to go to Chicago to the grand opening of Midway Gardens. She looks in the mirror and hates what she sees. She is forty-five and the pull of gravity is making her look tired, yet she feels young. The opening is for Frank. She has not seen him for two weeks as he tries to get everything finished.

In Chicago, she goes to the Midway Gardens. It is abuzz with workers as they attempt to finish before tomorrow night's grand opening. She is reminded of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the beer gardens in Berlin and Potsdam and the terraces of Italy. She also gets a feeling of Japan. Frank had fused what he had experienced and made something new. It was a good times place and would delight so many people. John Vogelsang spots her. He asks her how the Carltons are working out. She tells him that they are wonderful, but she thinks Gertrude is lonely out in the country.

The orchestra is rehearsing in the pavilion and it sounds exquisite. Frank has created a symphony hall with the receding terraces and balconies. Cars rumble down the avenue, but the music is as clear as if you were in the first balcony of an opera house.

Mamah goes to a hair salon and has her long hair cut short. The hairstyle is stark, unconventional, and pretty all at once. The hairdresser says it is very European.

Analysis

Mamah realizes that she has no friends to support her after she leaves Frank. She stays in Frank's coach house in Chicago where he stays when he is working in Chicago. She goes to see Lizzie and meets Elinor. Lizzie is not keen on seeing her. Mamah wants to apologize for putting off so much on her. Lizzie is used to feeling put upon. She is always the one who has had to take care of things, while Mamah was able to go out and enjoy life. Lizzie has never been able to have a life of her own and feels that her sister had the perfect life and threw it all away.



Seeing Elinor in her house and interacting with Lizzie and John makes Mamah angry. It is like she was never there. She has been replaced with a nicer model that enjoys being there. Mamah wonders what she has done with her life since leaving her family. She followed Frank to Europe and is translating someone else's work, but she has done nothing on her own.

Frank assures Mamah that he can change. He needs her because she tells him like it is and how he should behave rather than indulging him and letting him get away with anything, which is what others have always done. He needs her in his life because she makes him a better man.. Mamah needs to believe that he can change because she has nothing else in her life. Also, if she cannot believe in him, then how can she expect Lizzie to believe that she is good and she can change for the better?

Mamah sees how the children are changing when they come for a visit to Taliesin. Martha is becoming her own person and she sees how much of their childhood that she lost. She has to cherish the time that they are able to spend together before they are grown.

Mamah and Frank finally obtain a cook through the kindness of John Vogelsang. Along with the cook comes her husband. Gertrude and Julian are from Barbados so there are concerns that they will be lonely in the community of Spring Green. Gertrude is kind and friendly, but her husband Julian is serious and very formal.

Mamah wants to do more than translate Ellen Key's work. She wants to write a book of her own so that women will have real-life examples to look to during the difficult times in their lives. It is something that would have helped her and she wants to tell her story to help others like her.

Discussion Question 1

Why is Lizzie not happy to see Mamah? How has her sister's actions affect her? Why has she never been able to live her own life?

Discussion Question 2

What must Frank do before Mamah agrees to go back to him? How has this situation affected how she sees Frank?

Discussion Question 3

What does Mamah decide to do to make her mark in the world? Why does she need more in her life than Frank and her translating?



Vocabulary

dumbstruck, taciturn, noncommittal, colossal, grandiose, persecution, contrite, discordant, mantra, incandescent, raffish, solemn, palpable, inferior, forbearance, immaculate, fawning, sylphlike, discern, demeanor



Part III, Chapters 49-51

Summary

In Chapter 49, Mamah enjoys the opening of Midway Gardens. Frank stands by her side and introduces her to one person after another. Margaret Anderson, the owner of the Little Review, tells her that Frank has shown her the translation she did of the Goethe poem. She wants to publish it sometime after the New Year because she is booked up for the next six months. Mamah is excited at the prospect. John Wright, Frank's son, walks up to her and talks to her. He ignores the looks that his talking to her attracts. He tells her that his father is happy.

In Chapter 50, Mamah begins writing her book. The children have come to Taliesin, but they spend their time mostly on horseback. When they are not out riding they are in the barn waiting for a foal to be born. Lizzie had brought Martha to Wisconsin. Mamah misses the old familiarity she once shared with her sister. There was an uneasy peace between them by the time Lizzie left. Lizzie moved out of her apartment in deference to the new Mrs. Cheney. Her world had been torn apart when Mamah left.

The foal is born and the children are excited. Mamah leaves them to go to the house and finds Gertrude crying. She thinks that she and Julian should leave. She is homesick. Mamah suggests that they go back to Chicago that weekend. She is doing a wonderful job and they would love for them to stay.

That night Mamah asks Martha and John if they get homesick when they are there. They say yes. John asks if she ever misses Oak Park. She tells him that she misses them every day, but she carries them both around in her heart.

In Chapter 51, Mamah reads of the crisis in Europe and worries for the friends that she made. She wonders if Else has left Berlin. She had wanted to include her in her book. Frank is off to Chicago to finish his work on Midway Gardens. He tells Mamah to take the kids to see the threshers and she says that she plans to. When she sees David Lindblom to talk about cutting back the garden, he tells her that he does not want Julian helping in the garden anymore. He has a bad temper. Julian tells him that he will only take orders from Mr. Wright. Emil has had problems with Julian as well. She tells him to have Julian come talk to her.

Julian tells her that they all pick on him. Emil has turned everyone against him. They order him around and some call him George. She knows that to a Pullman porter the name George is an insult. He says you do not have a name. She tells him that he will have to find a way to make peace and that she will talk to Emil.

Mamah and the children witness an argument between Emil and Julian in the barn. They are frightened by the rage that Julian exhibits. Later in the studio, Emil tells her that Julian blows up at the smallest thing and threatens people. David has been afraid



of him since the day he arrived. Billy later confirms that Julian cannot get along with any of the other men. Mamah decides that she will have to let the Carltons go. The people who work there are like family and she cannot have anyone who causes trouble.

Mamah tells the Carltons that they must leave. Julian questions if Mr. Wright knows and is told that she speaks for Mr. Wright. They can finish the week and someone will drive them to Spring Green on Sunday. Gertrude looks fearfully at Julian and in that one look, Mamah knows that her relationship is not an easy one.

Friday passes without incident. On Saturday morning, Mamah receives a call that the threshermen are at the Barton's. Mamah agrees to be there at one o'clock and stay to dinner. Mamah says good morning to Julian and notices that he is wearing a pair of Frank's linen trousers. She goes out into the courtyard to calm herself then tells Gertrude that she and the children won't be there for breakfast. She hurries to her bedroom to change and awaken John and Martha. In minutes, they are out the door with biscuits and bacon that Gertrude has wrapped in a napkin.

They go fishing and eat their breakfast by the river. Mamah knows that Frank would not have given Julian the trousers because they are the ones he had tailored in Italy. She knows the man has gone into Frank's closet and taken them. He would have had to have been creeping around their bedroom while they were out. Mamah takes the children back to the house. She tells Julian that they can leave that day. Julian says that they will finish up properly. They planned to go to the church in Milwaukee in the morning and then take the train to Chicago. The thought of spending one more night in the same house with Julian frightens her.

Mamah sends a telegraph to Frank saying to come as quickly as you can. You are needed at Taliesin immediately. Charley, the man at the telegraph office, asks if there is some way that he can help. She tells him no, that there are just some strange things happening, but she has a house full of men there. She reasons that Frank should have the telegraph by two and should be home late that night.

The workmen are filing into the house for lunch. Mamah decides to talk to Billy after lunch and ask him to take the Carltons into town this afternoon so they will be gone when she and the children return from the Bartons. Mamah walks to the screen porch where the children are seated for lunch. She is explaining threshing to the children when she looks up to see Julian walking through the dark dining room with a tray held high in one hand and a bucket in the other. As he approaches, she can see that his eyes are wide open and urine soaks the front of his pants. He sets down the tray and lifts a shingling ax. Mamah screams for the children to run. Flames whoosh along the walls of the porch. Julian screams where at her and grabs her throat. Gasoline from the bucket splashes over her head. John clings to the man's leg trying to pull him off. Julian brings the blade down on her head. Mamah staggers backward to the floor. Blood blinds her eyes. She can hear John crying out for her, and she crawls toward the sound.



Analysis

Mamah enjoys being there for Frank at the opening of Midway Gardens. It is a triumph for him, and she loves being able to celebrate it with him. John Wright, who has worked tirelessly on the project, pays Mamah the highest compliment by coming up to her at the party and telling her that his father is happy. He can see the change that she causes in his father and he cannot be upset with her. This means more to Mamah than anything else.

Mamah is working on her book and spending time with the children who have come to Taliesin. Lizzie brings Martha, and the two are able to have peace between them before she leaves. Lizzie has gotten the raw end of the deal because she has lost her sister, her home, and her role of caring for John and Martha. It has caused a radical change in her life.

Mamah learns that there is tension among the men of Taliesin and Julian. He has a bad temper and does not get along well with anyone. When Mamah talks to Julian he feels that everyone is against him. He seems to believe that he answers only to Mr. Wright. He obviously does not like having to take orders from a woman. After witnessing an argument between Julian and Emil that frightens the children, Mamah learns the Julian blows up at the smallest thing and threatens people. Some of the men are afraid of him. If they cannot get along with the other inhabitants on the farm, the Carltons must go.

Julian does not believe she has the right to fire them. He asks if Mr. Wright knows. He does not feel that Mamah has any authority. This lack of respect for her leads him to rifle through their belongings and blatantly walk around the house wearing a pair of Frank's trousers. This infuriates Mamah, but she does not want to confront him and set him off so she takes the children away for their safety. Mamah later tells the Carltons that they can leave that day because she is worried what Julian might do since he has already gone through their house. She sends a telegram to Frank since it seems that Julian will listen only to him.

Julian attacks the family at lunch time setting the house on fire. He attacks Mamah calling her a whore. The fire could be seen as a way of cleansing the house of sin. Julian resented the way that she and the men treated him. He did not show her the respect that she should have been shown as the lady of the house. This could have been because he is a church going man and did not see her as such because she is not Frank's wife.

Discussion Question 1

Why does John Wright speaking to Mamah at the Midway Gardens opening mean so much to her? How would Catherine Wright feel about her son speaking to Mamah?



Discussion Question 2

Why do the men not get along with Julian? How is his temperament toward his wife?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Julian not respect Mamah like the other men do? Why does Julian always ask if Mr. Wright knows what she is telling him?

Vocabulary

ebullient, sobriquet, enfranchisement, comeuppance, deference, irretrievable, conscripted, sojourn, ideal, vigilantes, rancor, baleful



Part III, Chapters 52-54

Summary

In Chapter 52, Frank is at Midway Gardens. He and his son, John, have been working and sleeping at the gardens to get everything done. He is trying to persuade his son to come eat a proper lunch when he is told he has a telephone call. It is Frank Roth in Madison. He asks Frank if anyone has called him. There is a fire going on at his place. He asks what is happening. He is told that something terrible has occurred. Roth asks if Frank has not had a telegram and is told no. Frank says he will be there as fast as he can. He tries to call Mamah, but gets only clicking sounds. He runs through the building telling John that Taliesin is burning.

The two hail a taxi to the station. There is only the local train. It stops at every place along the station line and takes forever. There are many people and Frank does not know if they will be able to board even that. Frank sees Edwin Cheney in the crowd. He asks what he knows. Edwin was told that there is a big fire and his kids are there. The men tell themselves that they were outside probably at the next farm for the threshing. Even if they were in the house there are doors all around. John Wright pushes his way to the front of the line and talks intently with the conductor. He waves the two men forward and they take a seat on the train.

Along in their journey, a man knocks on the compartment door. John cracks the door open. It is a reporter from the Milwaukee Journal. Frank asks him what he knows. The editor has told the reporter that the house has been burning for a couple hours. The Spring Green fire department and a lot of others are trying to put it out. Frank asks if anyone was inside. The man says there are some dead. There were three murdered. The servant bolted the doors shut all around and poured gasoline along the perimeter of the wing where they were all having lunch. When they came running out the only door he did not secure, he axed them. He got away. They are looking for him. Mamah is one of the dead. The boy is missing, and the girl is badly burned.

The men are picked up at the station by Frank's family. Edwin buys a Wisconsin State Journal. It states that Mamah had her head "cleft in twain." Her nine-year old daughter is wounded, and her twelve-year old son is missing. Frank's cousin Richard grabs Frank as he buckles. He tells him to brace up because it is bad. Edwin asks after his children and is told that John was in the house and that Martha died that afternoon. The other dead are Ernest Weston and Emil Brodelle.

Frank can see even in the darkness that half the house is missing. Seven hundred people came to help. Men left their tractors and threshers to rush over to Taliesin. Women ran out of their kitchens with pots and buckets to fight the fire. They have found Julian Carlton hiding in the basement furnace. He has drunk muriatic acid. The dead and injured have been carried to Jennie's house. Frank pulls back the cover on Mamah's body. Her skull is split down the middle, her hair burned away, her blistered



flesh hanging from the bone. Tom Bruncker and David Lindblom are unconsciousness and clinging to life.

In Chapter 53, Frank awakens outside. He sees Jennie's house. He has slept in a pasture nearby. He remembers lying in his sister's guestroom. In the night the sound of the suffering from the dining room below came to him. Frank wants to sit with Mamah and Martha, but he feels if he sees her that way again he will never remember her any other way. He thinks of the terror she felt and wonders how it would have turned out if he had been there.

Edwin will carry his children back to Oak Park as soon as a coffin is made. Frank plans to bury Mamah that day. He does not want an undertaker or a traditional wake. He wants no false words from strangers.

Workmen are still dousing the site when Frank arrives. These men helped lay the brick and are grieving close friends. They were here fighting the fire. They do not understand how one man can overpower seven men. One man talked to Herb Fritz and Billy Carpenter before they were taken to the hospital. Julian seated everyone as usual. He then asked Billy if he could clean the carpets. Billy had said all right, so he did not worry when he smells the gasoline. Julian locked all the doors except the window in the workman's dining room. Then, he poured gasoline around the outside walls of the wing where Mamah and the children sat. He lit a match and raced onto the porch and killed Mamah first with the ax and then John. Martha ran away while he was dousing her mother and brother. He caught up with her. It was not only the fire that got her. She had three marks above her ear. Julian then went to where the men were seated and set that wing on fire. He killed them as they come out the door and window. Billy claims Julian had the strength of three men. He stumbled when he came out the door. So, when he hit him it was not enough to kill him. David was cut up, but still standing. The two ran together to the next farm. David fell down and couldn't go anymore. Billy found his son Ernest in the courtyard dead. He picked up a hose and started fighting the fire.

Gertrude was found in her best Sunday clothes walking down the highway. She told the sheriff that Julian had been sleeping with his ax on his pillow for three nights before he snapped. She was scared to death of him.

Edwin digs through the rubble of the porch and finds the bones of his son. Frank's Uncle Enos tells Frank that he can bury Mamah in the family plot near the Lloyd Jones chapel. He thanks him. Edwin and Frank walk together as the coffin with the two children is loaded in the automobile. Edwin holds out his hand and says goodbye. Frank tells him goodbye. They look into one other's eyes and then Edwin is gone.

Frank and John lift Mamah's body into her coffin. Frank goes to Taliesin and cuts down the flowers Mamah loved. John opens the coffin, and Frank fills the coffin with flowers. They load the box into the wagon and fill the wagon with flowers. Once the coffin is in her grave, they throw flowers onto the box until it is covered. Then, Frank asks everyone to leave him there alone. He speaks to Mamah telling her that she was a good woman. He then reads from the Goethe poem that they translated together.



In Chapter 54, Tom and David die from their injuries. In all, seven are dead. Frank cannot sleep without being haunted by the face of Julian Carlton and Mamah's burned body. Rain has poured down since the night he buried her. The papers are calling her death divine retribution. Frank composes a letter to the Weekly Home News. It is addressed to his neighbors. The letter thanks them for their bravery in assisting them and showing Mamah kindness or courtesy. He writes defending her against the tirade of the press.

The numbness that helped him through the funerals and mourning scenes with the men's families has left him. It is two weeks since he came home to the devastation. When he cannot sleep, he sits outside in the darkness. He is thin and listless. He asks why she had to die when they had been through so much and were just beginning to enjoy their life together. Julian dies in prison, and Gertrude is found innocent of any wrongdoing and released. Frank allows no one close to him to come near. He only talks to the workmen who are there to clear the site. His only relief is work.

Billy Weston comes to see Frank. He has heard that Frank is thinking about building again and he wants to be part of it. Frank had collected glass shards and paper scraps to mix into the concrete for the foundation. Billy agrees that they could do that. Frank rolls out his plans so Billy can see. The two pace out the perimeter.

Analysis

Frank is distressed to learn about the fire at Taliesin. He tries to make himself believe that Mamah and the children were not at home when it happened. He knew that she planned to take them to see the threshermen and hopes beyond hope that she is safe. Frank hails Edwin in the crowd hoping he will have more information, but he does not. John Wright is able to get the men on the next available train ahead of others who are waiting. John looks after his father. When the men learn that Mamah has been murdered and that John is missing and Martha badly burned, they slip into despair. They must brace Frank up as he walks through the station.

The community came to the aid of Taliesin. The people put aside whatever thoughts they had about how Frank and Mamah lived and ran to help put out the fire using anything useful they could find. Frank is distressed by how many people are hurt or dead. He cannot understand how it happened. He does not know how he will go on without Mamah. He dwells on how he could have changed things had he been there. Frank buries Mamah in a simple way that he believes she would have liked. He wants to honor her memory by restoring her home and including bits of the old house in the foundation of the new. He will rebuild her house and his soul one brick at a time.

Discussion Question 1

How does Frank react to hearing about the death of Mamah? Why is the reporter reluctant to tell him?



Discussion Question 2

Why does Frank write the letter to the Weekly Home News after Mamah's death? How does he feel about the community in which they chose to live?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Frank want to rebuild Taliesin after such a tragedy? How this help him and the community heal?

Vocabulary

vindication, excursion, muriatic, benediction, hoary, retribution, pestilential, innate, respite



Characters

Mamah Borthwick (Cheney)

Mamah Borthwick is a housewife in Oak Park, Illinois who is bored with her husband and her life in general. She married her husband out of convenience because she was getting older and she wanted children. Edwin is not her intellectual equal and she finds him lacking in many ways. When she meets Frank Lloyd Wright, they form a friendship that turns into something more.

Frank stimulates her intellectually, which is how they form their friendship. She can talk to him like she is unable to talk to Edwin. She is highly educated and has a Master's degree. She responds to Frank's passion for architecture. She wants to be passionate about something in her life.

Mamah makes the choice to leave her family and go to Germany with Frank to test if they can live together. She does not realize that this will cause a fire storm in the media that will affect her children and her sister. She just wants to be happy.

Mamah is racked by guilt for leaving her children, but she feels that she cannot return especially after the horrible stories are written about her in the press. She feels that everyone must hate her and she could not face them. She spirals into a deep depression, but finds relief in the writings of Ellen Key. Ellen writes what Mamah feels. She writes that a marriage without love is not a true marriage and should be void. Mamah goes to her lecture and ends up becoming her translator.

Mamah gets a divorce from Edwin and this makes her feel ready to return to the United States. Frank wants her to live with him in a home he will build for her in Wisconsin near where he grew up. Mamah is able to get custody of her children each summer and slowly attempt to build relationships with them. Just when she is happy in her relationship with Frank and her children and beginning her book to chronicle her difficult journey, she is savagely attacked by a disgruntled worker and killed.

Frank Lloyd Wright

Frank Lloyd Wright is an architect that is at the beginning of his extraordinary career when he meets Mamah Borthwick Cheney. He finds her to be an intelligent, beautiful woman. When his wife learns of their affair, he agrees to give it a year to try and fix their marriage and if that does not work she will give him a divorce. At the end of the year, he learns that Catherine will not keep her promise of a divorce.

Frank asks Mamah to go with him to Germany where he will be preparing a monograph of his work to be published by a German publisher. Frank incorporates nature in his home designs. He believes that nature is as close as man can get God so he embraces



it in his designs even building homes around existing trees on a lot. Many of his students still his designs while he is in Europe working on the monograph project.

Frank elects to return home to his children after spending a year in Europe. He feels bad for how they have been treated. He must return home and get his practice in order. He needs to build to feel alive and he must go home to do that. Frank has the tendency not to pay his bills. He has a sense of entitlement that makes him feel above others. This has always been bolstered by those around him, but Mamah calls him out on it and makes him settle his accounts.

Frank feels that Mamah makes him a better man. When he loses her, he is devastated. He has lost the person who keeps him honest.

Catherine Wright

Catherine Wright is the wife of Frank Lloyd Wright. She refuses to give her husband a divorce. The couple have six children. Catherine speaks out to the press about her husband running off with Mamah. She does not blame Frank, but Mamah. She calls her a vampire. Catherine believes that Frank will return to her. She will not accept that their marriage has not been right for sometime. She has immersed herself in caring for their children so that she will not see the flaws in their marriage. Catherine is in a state of denial and causes Frank and Mamah much pain by not agreeing to a divorce.

Edwin Cheney

Edwin Cheney is the husband of Mamah. He convinces her to have Frank Lloyd Wright build their new home. He never would have guessed how this would change his life. He is a kind man who tries to please Mamah, but he can never seem to do so. He loves her and believes that she loves him. Edwin is surprised and hurt to learn about Mamah's affair with Frank Lloyd Wright. He lets her know at once that she will not take his children from him. When she leaves the children in Boulder to run off with Frank, he is appalled. She does not even have the courage to tell him in person and leaves their children not knowing why their mother left and their father days away from being able to be with them to comfort them.

Edwin defends Mamah to the press. He tries to get her to come back to him. After she's been gone for two years, he agrees to a divorce. He is generous in allowing her to have custody of the children in the summer time each year and to have visits in Chicago year round. He eventually finds happiness with someone else and remarries. Elinor is a friend of Lizzie's. He is obviously happy with her and moves on with his life without Mamah. Edwin is devastated at the death of his children.



Lizzie Borthwick

Lizzie Borthwick is the sister of Mamah. She has made many sacrifices in her life to accommodate Mamah. She finds her sister's leaving to be selfish. Many women would love to be in her shoes with a lovely home, a kind husband and good children. Lizzie has never had the opportunity to have these things and she resents Mamah giving them up for another man. She feels her sister has always wanted to do something big and she has thrown her children aside to try to obtain it. Lizzie is left to pick up the pieces of the world that she left behind. She must be a mother to her children and protect them from the press that hound the family. She must also live in the same house with the man that Mamah jilted. This could not be easy and Mamah does not think of how she has treated her sister and how she just expects her to take on the life she left behind. Lizzie does it for the children, but she has no respect for Mamah and does not enjoy the close relationship that they had before Mamah abandoned her family.

John and Martha Cheney

John and Martha Cheney are the children of Mamah and Edwin Cheney. They are devastated when their mother leaves. They do not understand why she left. When she returns two years later, she is a stranger to them. They do not know what to think of her and are not affectionate because they have been abandoned once and they do not want to be hurt again. They slowly warm up to her and spend summers with her at Taliesin. They die in the fire at Taliesin.

Ellen Key

Ellen Key is an author and speaker. Her book *Love and Marriage* helps Mamah through her depression/ Ellen wants to spread her teachings to America, but she is tired of touring and ready to settle down in her native Sweden. She offers to let Mamah translate her work, but only if she learns Swedish. Mamah is excited by this prospect and agrees. Ellen is forgetful and forgets what she gives Mamah to translate and also gives others the same work to translate as she does Mamah. Ellen's contradictory stance on issues makes Mamah question if she wants to bring the woman's words to America.

Billy Weston

Billy Weston is the foreman of the crew who work on Taliesin. He does not like having to confer with Mamah when Frank is not around. He soon warms to Mamah as all the workmen do and they become like a family at Taliesin. Mamah trusts Billy and relies on him for advice about the men. She also goes to him when she is worried about Frank's financial situation. Billy is loyal to Frank and will not talk to her about it. He is a true friend of the family and loses his son when Julian sets fire to Taliesin and attacks the inhabitants with an ax.



John Wright

John Wright is the eldest son of Frank Lloyd Wright. He works with his father on some of his projects. He helped him build Midway Gardens. John pays Mamah the highest compliment by talking to her in public and telling her that his father is happy. It is his way of showing acceptance of her and his father's relationship. John is with his father when he learns of the fire at Taliesin and takes control getting them and Edwin on the next train headed for Spring Green. He takes care of his father when he learns of Mamah's death. He helps his father pile flowers from Mamah's garden on her coffin and grave.

Else

Else is a kindred spirit to Mamah. She is a poet in Germany. She used to be married to a doctor and had a fine house and a beautiful life, but she had no purpose. Else left her husband to become a poet. She does not have much, but she likes her life better than the false one that she had before.

Else helped Mamah when she received the news about Mattie's death. She was a stranger to her, but she saw she was in distress and helped her to a taxi. They meet again when Mamah is staying in Germany on her own. Else's approval gains her acceptance by the artistic community that frequents the Cafe des Westens. It gives Mamah a sense of belonging while she is in Germany.

Julian Carlton

Julian Carlton is taken on as a servant when his wife is hired as a cook. He has a short temper and does not get along with any of the other men at Taliesin. Some of the men are afraid of him. Mamah fires the Carltons because they are like a family at Taliesin and there cannot be anyone there like Julian who causes trouble. Julian does not take this well. He goes through Frank's clothes. Mamah sees him wearing a pair of Frank's trousers. She does not confront him because she is scared of him. Gertrude, his wife, is also scared of him. She claims that he slept with the ax for three days before attacking Mamah and the workmen.

Julian locks all of the doors in the house, except one. He sets one wing of the house on fire and attacks Mamah and her children. He then sets the wing on fire where the workmen are having their lunch. As the men flee out of the only door that is open, he attacks them with an ax. He then hides in the basement and drinks acid. He dies in jail.

Symbols and Symbolism

Nature

Nature is important to the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. He designs his buildings to capture nature and bring the outdoors indoors and the indoors outdoors. To him nature is religion.

Nineteenth Century Woman's Club

The Nineteenth Century Woman's Club is where Mamah reconnects with Frank Lloyd Wright after he finishes she and Edwin's house. He is giving a talk and she goes to see him. Mamah also gives a talk to the club on the women's roles in *Taming of the Shrew*. The Club is a way of bringing woman together to have an educational discussion.

Divorce

Divorce is seen by Mamah and Frank as freedom. Edwin is reluctant to give Mamah a divorce at first, so she plans to stay away for two years so that he will have to give her a divorce or grounds of desertion. Catherine will not give Frank a divorce. This does not keep him from living with Mamah and attempting to have happiness.

Italy

Italy is a place of solitude for Mamah. She is happiest in Italy and wants to spend more time there. She tries to convince Frank to build a villa there so that she can enjoy the anonymity that she will not have in the United States.

Taliesin

Taliesin is Wright's achievement of 'democratic architecture'. He builds the home for Mamah. It is all open space with lots of windows so one feels that they are outside even when they are inside. It is an achievement and shows Wright's genius.

Unpaid Bills

Unpaid bills lead Mamah to leave Frank Lloyd Wright for a time. She does not like how he treats people. He acts like working with him is all the payment they need. She sees this as stepping on the little people and wants him to change. She will not go back to him until he changes his attitude and realizes that he would not be able to do anything without the people who supply his materials and work for him. Frank's financial habits



lead her to be glad that she cannot marry him. She decides that even if Catherine gave Frank a divorce, she would not marry him.

Architecture

Architecture is discussed throughout the novel. It is Frank Lloyd Wright's life. He lives and breathes architecture. He is happiest when he is working on a project. His enthusiasm for his work is what first attracts Mamah. It makes her see that there is something missing in her life. She wants to be as passionate about something as Frank is for architecture.

News articles

New articles figure heavily in the novel. Mamah and Frank and their families are hounded by the press. The stories make life difficult for the couple. Mamah feels that she cannot return to the United States because of how she is portrayed by the press. It affects Frank's work and is detrimental for all involved. The newspapers write the articles because it sells newspapers. The average person does not get an accurate picture of anyone's situation because the press sensationalizes it to lure readers. When the papers have more readers, they make more money. The press does not care who is harmed along the way. It is an example of yellow journalism that was abundant during this time.

Woman's Movement

The Woman's Movement is a movement for the right to vote for women. It is being fought all over the world. Mamah is a strong supporter of this movement and believes that Ellen Key's books will help the American woman see that there is more to life and love than what she knows. The American women's movement is centered on the vote and equal pay, but Ellen Key thinks it should be expanded to develop a woman's personality. A woman has her own identity just as a man has his own. She should be able to develop it to become the person she is meant to be.

Lucky

Lucky is the dog that Mamah, John, and Martha adopt on their summer in Canada. Lucky is a way for Mamah to bond with her children. By keeping her at her Wisconsin home, the children will visit her to see the dog.

Fire

Julian sets Taliesin on fire as he goes on his murderous killing spree. Fire is used for cleansing to make things new. By dousing Mamah in gasoline, he is attempting to



cleanse her of what he sees as impurities. She is a divorced woman who is living with a married man. The church teaches that this is sinful. Fire can be seen as a means of purifying her soul and the souls of those who are tainted by association.



Settings

Oak Park, Illinois

Oak Park, Illinois is a suburb of Chicago. Mamah Borthwick Cheney lives there with her husband, children, sister, and her niece. She and Edwin moved into her family home when they were married, but Edwin wants a place of his own where there is no clutter. He convinces Mamah to have a house built by Frank Lloyd Wright. Frank Lloyd Wright lives and works from his home in Oak Park. He builds homes that are influenced by nature. It is a small community so that keeping an affair secret is not easy to do. Mamah feels stifled by her life in Oak Park. She dreams of bigger things and Frank encourages these dreams. Oak Park is the beginning of Mamah and Frank's relationship. They meet each other at a time when each is searching for something more in life.

Berlin, Germany

Mamah and Frank go to Berlin, Germany to live together in a test of their relationship. Frank goes to Germany to see a publisher who is interested in publishing a monograph of his work. This gives them the opportunity to be together without anyone knowing. Mamah is assumed to be Frank's wife. They enjoy their time together, but miss their families. When reporters become aware of the couple fleeing to Berlin, they quickly follow. The couple's trip quickly turns to a nightmare as they read the newspaper stories from home. Mamah is horrified by the harassment of her family and how the articles portray her as an unfit mother.

Mamah returns to Berlin after spending time in Italy to continue her studies of Swedish. She lives a lonely existence until she finds friends at the Cafe des Westens. It is a cafe that is frequented by the artists of Berlin. Mamah is invited into the world of the artists. It helps her through her time in Berlin without Frank or her children.

Nancy, France

Nancy, France is a turning point for Mamah. She is sick with despair about the newspaper articles and how they will affect her children and her ability to see her children. She finds solace in the words of Ellen Keys. Listening to the woman speak and hearing the words that she needs to hear at the moment make Mamah recover from her depression. She finds someone who thinks the way that she thinks and she wants to get her ideas to the American public. Ellen gives Mamah the opportunity to fill a hole within her. She gives her something to be passionate about that will affect others.



Italy

In Italy, Mamah enjoys the feeling of anonymity. She has a purpose to her life now that she is translating for Ellen Key. While Frank works on his monograph, she works on her translations. She is no longer following him around Europe. She is fulfilling her own spiritual quest. She feels at home in Italy and tries to talk Frank into building a villa there. She wants to stay where she feels comfortable, while she waits for the stories to die down in America.

Spring Green, Wisconsin

Spring Green, Wisconsin is where Frank Lloyd Wright spent his childhood. His family makes up much of the community. Frank wants to settle in a place where he feels safe and has people who are loyal to him. Mamah is not happy with the thought of Wisconsin at first, but it comes to be her home. Taliesin is an extraordinary house that she cannot help to fall in love with and the community takes a while to warm up for her, but soon becomes welcoming. Wisconsin becomes their sanctuary where their family and friends protect them from the press. When disaster strikes, those same people are there to help.



Themes and Motifs

Infidelity

Infidelity is a theme of the novel. Frank and Mamah risk their marriages to be with one another. They work on designing she and Edwin's house together and become friends. This friendship leads to love. For Mamah, it is a love that is grounded by an intellectual understanding. She married Edwin out of convenience rather than for love. He is not her intellectual equal and cannot give her the cultural nourishment that she needs. In Frank, she finds a kindred spirit.

What starts out as innocent flirtation turns into an affair. Mamah neglects her husband and her children as she attempts to capture what is missing from her life. She struggles with the lies that she tells her family, but she cannot deny the desire that she feels for Frank. This makes her abandon her family to spend time with Frank in Europe where she attempts to find her life's path.

Mamah's and Frank's infidelity to their spouses not only affects their families, but their community. Their affair is known by all. Society will not let them defy the rules because they are in love. Mamah and Frank's disregard for society's rules makes others feel resentment toward them. The effect of their infidelity creates a ripple effect that is felt by many. It shows that infidelity is more than about the two people having the affair.

Women's Rights

Women's rights is a theme of the novel. Historically, women were seen as property. Though they did earn the right to vote, they did not have equal pay and could not work on the same jobs as men. Married women were not expected to work. They were to stay at home and take care of their children. Mamah was an educated woman who had obtained a Master's degree. She felt stifled by this life, but did not know what to do about it.

In *Loving Frank*, Mamah marries in her thirties and becomes severely depressed after the birth of her second child. She feels trapped in a loveless marriage. She has seen what it could be like if one were married to someone who stimulated them intellectually as well as physically. This is something she did not consider when she agreed to marry Edwin.

The Woman's Movement in Europe centers on a woman's right to have love and a personality. It is a quest for an ideal love where a man and woman are equal and one person's needs does not outweigh the other. The philosophy is that marriage is about love and if you do not have love you do not have a marriage.

Mamah wants to bring these ideas and thoughts to the American public. She wants the women to see that Women's Rights is about more than the right to vote. It encompasses



not stifling a person's personality and marriage being among equals. She wants to enlighten American women and love and what they should expect rather than what they are allowed. It is important for Mamah to show women that there is much more out there for them and marriage should not stifle their chance to obtain it.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a theme of the novel. Frank expects loyalty from his employees, but he does not get that from all of them. Some of his students steal his work and pawn it off as their own. He is deeply distressed by this disloyalty. Other employees show their loyalty. The men who work on Taliesin show their loyalty by attempting to protect Frank and Mamah against the onslaught of reporters who descend upon Taliesin.

Frank's family shows their loyalty to Frank when they help him buy the land to build Taliesin and stand behind him as his business suffers. His mother may not like the choices that he has made, but she does not desert him in his hour of need. His sister offers Frank and Mamah a place to stay while their home is finished. This could not have been easy to do since she had impressionable children in her home and explaining who this new woman with Uncle Frank is to them would require delicacy.

The community of Spring Green shows their loyalty to Frank and Mamah when they all turn out to help when Taliesin is on fire. They may not have agreed with how the couple lived, but they accepted them into their community and came to help them at risk to their own lives. Frank acknowledges their bravery and loyalty in his letter to the Weekly Home News. He is heartened by how they rallied to Mamah's aid.

Freedom

Freedom is a theme of the novel. Frank and Mamah seek freedom from their oppressive marriages. They want to live life how they wish without the restraints of their spouses. Catherine and Edwin will not allow them to have their freedom. They both refuse to divorces.

Mamah and Frank's trip to Europe is a quest for freedom. Many people who have been repressed by societal rules in the United States have gone to Europe. It is seen as more progressive. Mamah and Frank are allowed to be together in anonymity for a while enjoying their relationship.

Freedom is seen as not being stifled by the person that they are with. Frank feels that Catherine drains his creative juices. She sucks the life out of him. Mamah helps him to dream of what could be and this nurtures his creativity. Frank helps Mamah feel that anything is possible and brings back the ambition that she had lost since her marriage. She has always wanted to do something big, yet marriage to Edwin had squashed this desire. Frank brings it back to life and gives her the opportunity to pursue the opportunity to figure out what she wants in live.

Frank and Mamah feed the need of each other for freedom. They do not want to be restrained by rules and ideals. This need for freedom is important to them both and leads them to reckless acts such as leaving their families and going against what is thought of as proper by society. They want to live their lives as they see fit and wish for the freedom to do so.

Styles

Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person. It is omniscient because the narrator knows of the actions and events of the past and present. The story is told through the eyes of Mamah Borthwick and in the end Frank Lloyd Wright. Their actions are seen through their eyes so that the reader can get to know them and understand their actions. Mamah is able to tell her story so that the writer has an understanding of what she is going through as the woman who has left her family to be with another man. A reader would be inclined not to be sympathetic to her, but seeing the story from her viewpoint helps one to understand her actions.

The story is told through exposition and dialogue. This allows the reader to become acquainted with the characters. The dialogue shows the emotional turmoil of the characters and the heightened situations in which they are involved. The story is told by a time line set in present time interspersed with events from the past. The viewpoint is through Mamah Borthwick's eyes until the final chapters after her death. The final three chapters are from the viewpoint of Frank Lloyd Wright. It shows how he deals with the death of Mamah.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is complex. The book is intended for a mature and educated audience. The book is peppered with architectural jargon so that the reader becomes immersed in the world of Frank Lloyd Wright. It also deals with the Women's Movement so that the reader becomes familiar with free love and how different cultures have different views on what is important to women.

The language of the novel is on a mature level because the story is told by a highly educated woman who freely gives her opinions and takes pleasure out of life. The reader learns a lot about architecture as viewed by Frank Lloyd Wright and the ideals of society of the time. This gives the reader the information they need to understand how Mamah's and Frank's actions affect those around them and why their behavior was deemed as unacceptable.

The author's style is simple, yet complex. The sentences are simply constructed, but the architectural jargon and the ideals of society make the material weighty. The chapters are short and concise. This makes the book an easy read that is enjoyable. The story is engrossing, and the reader gets a feel for the culture of the time. The book is told mostly in the present with bits from the past sprinkled throughout. The reader becomes immersed in the world of Mamah Borthwick and Frank Lloyd Wright and is with them through their struggles and grief.

Structure

Loving Frank is comprised of fifty-four chapters. The chapters are short between ten to twenty pages. The short chapters give the sense that the story is moving quickly. These chapters are divided into three parts. Part one tells how the affair between Frank and Mamah started. Mamah is with her family and struggling with keeping her affair a secret. Part two begins when she runs off with Frank to Germany. It chronicles her struggle in dealing with leaving her family and really getting to know Frank. She is also attempting to discover her own path and how she can contribute to society. Part Three is Mamah's return to the United States. It chronicles her attempt to reconnect with her children and live a life with Frank.

The plot of the novel is simple. Mamah is not happy in her marriage and has found a man who stimulates her intellectually and physically and must decide what is most important to her—her family or her happiness. She struggles with this throughout the novel not sure if her decisions are correct. She is going against society's ideals and forging her own path. Mamah must decide what is best for her and how her actions affect her family.

The novel is fast paced with the short chapters. It can slow with the attention to detail of architecture, however. The words are complex because the character is highly educated and the characters are dealing with societal ideals and the emergence of a new type of architecture. It is the story of a woman who desires not to be oppressed by societal norms, but who strives to be an individual and to seek happiness in her life.

Quotes

I've never thought of you as some client's wife. Not for a minute.
-- Frank Lloyd Wright (chapter 4 paragraph 9)

Importance: Frank is trying to tell Mamah that he loves her. To him she is more than a fling with a client's wife. What they have is substantial and not fleeting.

In a way , I'm relieved. We won't have to carry on this charade anymore.
-- Mamah Borthwick Cheney (chapter 6 paragraph 14)

Importance: Mamah is commenting on the fact that Catherine has found out about their affair. She is happy that they do not have to keep sneaking around. She believes it means that Frank will get a divorce and that she will ask Edwin for a divorce. They have talked about it many times. She is happy that there will be no more lies.

I need to get away too, Frank, from Edwin and Oak Park. And you. I need to sort things out. I have to find the path that's right for me.
-- Mamah Borthwick Cheney (chapter 7 paragraph 7)

Importance: Mamah needs time to figure out what she wants out of life without the pressures of her daily life. She needs space to listen to her own thoughts and needs.

You cannot have a conversation with Frank about architecture without it turning toward nature. He says nature is the body of God, and it's the closest we're going to get to the Creator in this life.
-- Mamah Borthwick Cheney (chapter 11 paragraph 10)

Importance: This quote shows how Frank sees God. To him nature is a religion and through nature is how you connect with God.

So does that mean we bow to their rules? That we say 'We're no good, we don't deserve happiness?' I don't think we're bad people, Mamah. I hurt like hell for my children. Even for her. But that doesn't mean I'm turning back now.
-- Frank Lloyd Wright (chapter 21 paragraph 4)

Importance: Frank is trying to convince Mamah that what they are doing is right. He wants to be happy and he cannot be happy without her. How can life with her be wrong when it feels so right? He understands the hurt they are causing the ones around them, but staying in their marriages and pretending would cause another kind of hurt to all involved.

It set me free to find you, to think that there was the possibility of something more expansive. You make me want to be a better man. A better artist. I'd be such a sad person if it had never happened.
-- Frank Lloyd Wright (chapter 22 paragraph 2)



Importance: Mamah is Frank's moral compass. She helps him to see what kind of man he can be and to strive to become that man. Without her, he is just an arrogant bully striving to be an artist.

Forgive my bluntness, but leaving a boring man for a stimulating one is only interesting for a while. In time, you are back where you started—still wanting. Better to find your own backbone, the strong thing in you.

-- Ellen Keys (chapter 24 paragraph 7)

Importance: Ellen is telling Mamah that she cannot rely on a man to give her everything that she needs. She must look within and see what she wants to do and needs to do to be happy.

We all have little battles going on inside.

-- Else (chapter 31 paragraph 10)

Importance: No one is perfectly content with their life. There is always an inner struggle of what is right and what is wrong. A person makes choices everyday to do what is right and wrong by their own moral compass.

All your goddamned ideas ruined you, Mamah. Even your children are abstract to you.

-- Edwin Cheney (chapter 33 paragraph 4)

Importance: Edwin believes that Mamah never truly wanted her children. They are an ideal that was expected of her, but she never cared for them like a true mother.

It's ironic that Ellen has never been married or had children, yet she feels free to expound upon motherhood. I think that's rather arrogant.

-- Mamah Borthwick (chapter 40 paragraph 5)

Importance: Mamah believes that to speak on a subject one should have experience of it. She thinks that Ellen is a hypocrite for telling women how to leave their lives when she is not a mother and has never been married. How does she know the love and suffering that Mamah has felt. It is arrogant of Ellen to comment on motherhood without having experienced it. She does not understand the connection and what work goes into a marriage.

My father is happy.

-- John Wright (chapter 49 paragraph 10)

Importance: With this sentence, John Wright gives his approval of Frank and Mamah's relationship. He sees how his father is different around Mamah than when he is around Catherine.

You wives with your certificates for loving—pray that you may love as much or be loved as well as was Mamah Borthwick!



-- Frank Lloyd Wright (chapter 54 paragraph 1)

Importance: This quote shows how much Frank loved Mamah and that he wants people to remember her in a good light. He wants them to know that she did not regret how she lived her life and that she loved and was loved.