

# **Night Fall Study Guide**

## **Night Fall by Nelson Demille**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">Night Fall Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 1.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 2.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 3.....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 4.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 5.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 6.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 7.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 8.....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 9.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 10.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 11.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 12.....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 13.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 14.....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 15.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 16.....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 17.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 18.....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 19.....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 20.....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 21.....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 22.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>



[Chapter 23..... 29](#)

[Chapter 24..... 30](#)

[Chapter 25..... 32](#)

[Chapter 26..... 33](#)

[Chapter 27..... 34](#)

[Chapter 28..... 35](#)

[Chapter 29..... 36](#)

[Chapter 30..... 37](#)

[Chapter 31..... 38](#)

[Chapter 32..... 39](#)

[Chapter 33..... 40](#)

[Chapter 34..... 41](#)

[Chapter 35..... 42](#)

[Chapter 36..... 43](#)

[Chapter 37..... 44](#)

[Chapter 38..... 45](#)

[Chapter 39..... 46](#)

[Chapter 40..... 47](#)

[Chapter 41..... 48](#)

[Chapter 42..... 49](#)

[Chapter 43..... 50](#)

[Chapter 44..... 51](#)

[Chapter 45..... 52](#)

[Chapter 46..... 54](#)

[Chapter 47..... 55](#)

[Chapter 48..... 57](#)



[Chapter 49..... 59](#)

[Chapter 50..... 61](#)

[Chapter 51..... 63](#)

[Chapter 52..... 64](#)

[Chapter 53..... 66](#)

[Chapter 54..... 67](#)

[Characters..... 68](#)

[Objects/Places..... 73](#)

[Themes..... 75](#)

[Style..... 78](#)

[Quotes..... 80](#)

[Topics for Discussion..... 82](#)



## Plot Summary

On the night of July 19, 1996, shortly after taking off from New York's JFK airport en route to Paris, TWA Flight 800 exploded over the Atlantic Ocean, killing all 230 people on board. After the crash, hundreds of witnesses came forward to say that they saw a light rising in the sky just before the explosion. This led many people to speculate that perhaps a missile hit the plane and caused the explosion. One theory was that it was friendly fire from military exercises that night. Other speculated that it was a terrorist act. Government officials later determined that the crash was caused by a mechanical malfunction and not by a missile. Author Nelson DeMille bases his novel on the theory that a missile did in fact cause the explosion and that the government, for a reason that is not known, has engaged in a huge cover-up.

The novel begins on the night of July 19, 1996, on a secluded beach on a state park on Long Island. Lovers Bud Mitchell and Jill Winslow are married to other people and are having an affair. They drive out to the beach, where they find a sand dune, lay a blanket down on the beach and videotape themselves having sex. At some point, they go to the water to swim and point the camera towards themselves. At around 8:30, as Jill and Bud are at the water's edge, again having sex, Jill notices a light rising from some point in the ocean into the air. At the same time, a commercial airplane is moving through the night air. Jill gets Bud to look up, and they both watch as the light rising in the air heads directly towards the plane and then hits it, causing it to explode into a massive fireball over the ocean. Knowing that people will soon be coming to see what happened, and not wanting to get caught in their extramarital affair, Bud and Jill run back to the beach blanket, grab the videotape and take off in Bud's Ford Explorer. As they flee the scene, the videotape is still running, and Jill and Bud talk about what they have just seen.

The story next jumps to July 2001, exactly five years after the crash of TWA Flight 800, and the protagonist, ATTF agent John Corey, and his second wife, FBI lawyer Kate Mayfield, are arriving at the annual memorial service held on the beach for the victims and their families. The NTSB and federal agents have all officially determined that the crash was caused by a mechanical malfunction, but five years later, many people still believe that a missile took the plane down, either from friendly fire or terrorism, and that there has been a massive government cover-up. Kate worked on the investigation, and she is convinced that the crash was not caused by a mechanical malfunction. She persuades John to dig around about the case. At the memorial service, one of John's enemies, FBI agent Liam Griffith, walks up to John, tells him there was no missile and warns him not to get involved in the investigation. Another one of John's enemies is Ted Nash, but John and Kate both believe that Nash has been murdered by an Islamic terrorist.

John begins digging into the crash investigation. Kate leads him to several witnesses, who tell him about seeing a missile rising towards the plane before the plane exploded. A week into the investigation, however, the higher-ups at the FBI and John's NYPD bosses find out that he's snooping around about the TWA crash, when he clearly is not authorized to do so. As punishment for investigating the crash on their own without



official authorization, John is sent to Yemen to conduct investigations into the USS Cole bombing, and Kate is sent to Tanzania to investigate the U.S. embassy bombing, which has been linked to the Al Qaeda terrorist organization run by Osama Bin Laden.

The story leaves off on the day that John and Kate leave for Yemen and Tanzania, and it picks up again on Friday, September 7, 2001, when John arrives back at the airport after his Yemen trip. That very night, John immediately continues his investigation into the crash. Through his NYPD cop friend Dom Fanelli, he is able to track down a woman who used to work as a maid at the Bayview Hotel, and through talking to her, he learns that the couple in the hotel rented out a videotape that they did not return. He figures out that the woman copied the videotape of the crash before the original tape was destroyed, and he goes looking for the woman and the tape. John eventually tracks down Jill Winslow, and she confesses that she in fact did make a copy of the videotape before Bud destroyed the original. John knows now that the FBI and other government agents have been lying to him and that they restored the videotape that Bud destroyed. They know that a missile hit the plane.

John whisks Jill to the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan, where Jill puts the videotape in the hotel safe. John and Jill hide out in the Plaza Hotel while waiting for Kate to return from Tanzania. John sets up a meeting with Liam Griffith and the other agents for the morning at the Windows on the World restaurant in the North Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. On that morning, John, Kate and Jill all go in separate cars to the Trade Center. John is just walking into the plaza of the North Tower when the first plane hits the North Tower. John wanders through the rest of the day looking for Kate and finally stumbles back to his apartment, where he finds her alive. The next day, they go to the Plaza Hotel to retrieve the videotape, but they are told that there is nothing in the safe.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

On July 19, 1996, Bud Mitchell and Jill Winslow drive down a beach road on Long Island, New York. The two lovers, who are both married to other people and are having an affair, are looking for a secluded spot on the beach where they can videotape themselves having sex. Bud drives his Explorer onto an isolated dune, where the two lovers set up a tripod and video camera. Bud and Jill perform sexual acts on each other and then, with the camera still rolling, run down to the ocean, where they swim and then have sex again on the beach. After they have sex, Jill looks up into the sky. She gets Bud's attention, and they both see a streak of light going from the ocean to the sky. Next, they see a huge fireball in the sky, and they watch the fireball as it crashes into the ocean. Knowing that something big has happened and worried about getting caught in the act together, Bud and Jill run back to the beach, grab the camera and take off in the Explorer. In their haste, they leave behind the camera lens and a blanket from the hotel where they are staying together. On the tense ride back from the beach, Jill tells Bud that they just saw a missile explode into a plane.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

In the first chapter, even before the plane explodes over the Atlantic Ocean, the sense of danger and deceit that pervades the novel is introduced through Jill and Bud's tryst on the beach. Just as the government will be found to have deceived the American people, Jill and Bud are deceiving their spouses when they meet at the Bayview Hotel for their romantic interlude. There is also a distinct sense that the two lovers are not truly in love. They are both having this affair for their own, perhaps selfish, reasons, and their dangerous liaison is not going to end happily.



## Chapter 2

### Chapter 2 Summary

On July 19, 2001, exactly five years after TWA Flight 800 exploded over the Atlantic Ocean, killing all onboard the plane, the families and friends of the dead have gathered on the fifth year anniversary of the crash to pay their respects. John Corey, who used to be a New York City detective and who is now employed by the Federal Anti-Terrorist Task Force, drives out to Long Island for the yearly beachside memorial service with his second wife Kate Mayfield, who is a lawyer and FBI agent. Kate has investigated the crash by primarily interviewing witnesses who saw the explosion, and she goes back to this service every year. As they arrive at the service, John thinks to himself that it's too bad that no one caught the crash on tape.

### Chapter 2 Analysis

John Corey is introduced here as a tough-talking New York ex-cop turned ATTF agent, with his second wife Kate Mayfield, whom John clearly loves and respects as his intellectual equal. Kate is an FBI lawyer, works with John and has an idealism that John admires but does not share.





# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3 Summary

People gather under a tent at the memorial service for the 230 people who died on Flight 800. A chaplain and several other people speak, and Kate cries. When the service ends, the victim's families walk to the ocean's edge and light a candle for each victim. Kate sees a couple she knows and leaves John to go talk to them. FBI Special Agent Liam Griffith walks up to Corey. The two men have a brief, hostile conversation in which Griffith warns John not to go digging into the crash. Griffith walks away. Kate walks back over to Corey and asks him what he and Griffith were talking about. Corey says he can't tell her but then discloses that Griffith told him that Kate was never satisfied with the government's official explanation for the crash. Kate comments that she never said that to anyone. Kate and John then talk about whether the crash was an accident due to mechanical failure or whether a missile could have caused it. Kate and John get back in the car and leave the memorial service. They start driving back towards their home in Manhattan. As they talk about the crash, John suspects that Kate has something on her mind. She tells him that they could make one stop before going home, and John agrees.

## Chapter 3 Analysis

Liam Griffith is clearly established as an enemy to John Corey, and Griffith's menacing threat, warning John not to go snooping around into the crash, hints to the reader that people are hiding something about the crash. The reader also learns that John Corey is somewhat of a troublemaking renegade who has a natural aversion to authority figures, as Griffith's warning only piques John's interest even more.



# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

Kate and John drive to the deserted beach area where Jill Winslow and Bud Mitchell videotaped the crash. Kate tells John that police reports indicate that on the night of the crash, a police officer drove past a Ford Explorer as he made his way to the beach near the crash site. Kate explains that the police officer found a beach blanket, an empty wine bottle, glasses and a corkscrew. John theorizes that the two people were not married and that they were eyewitnesses to the crash. He then asks Jill why these two people are important, given that there were several hundred other witnesses. Kate informs him that the police officer also found a lens caps to a video camera.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

Through reconstructing what happened that night, John gets clues about who the two people on the beach were. He also realizes that, since they left a lens cap behind, the crash was videotaped, and these two people did not want to be discovered.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

John and Kate drive back through the Village of Westhampton. Kate tells John that she wants to make two stops before going home. Kate explains that as a career FBI lawyer she can't get involved in reinvestigating the crash, but John can. She thinks that justice has not been done. They drive to a Coast Guard Station in Moriches, New York. As they drive onto the Coast Guard station grounds, Kate explains that this station became a command post after the crash as well as the place where bodies were brought before going on to the morgue. She tells John that she wants him to conduct his own investigation of the crash to find out whether it was murder. She and John then talk about how there is a threat out there that the government and most people are not even aware of. Kate says she has a feeling that there's some far greater threat than the one posed by Asad Khalil, the man who tried to kill John.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

The reader is given a sense of the horrific tragedy of the crash. At the end of the chapter, there is also some foreshadowing, as Kate and John talk about a threat that most people are not aware of and discuss Osama Bin Laden. Throughout the book, there are intentional references to this lurking threat.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Kate tells John that she has a witness that she wants him to interview, and she directs him to go to the lookout tower on the top floor of the Coast Guard station, where someone will be waiting for him. When John gets to the lookout tower, he is met by Tom Spruck, a former navy officer and pilot who flew missions in Vietnam. Tom tells John that the night of the crash he was out sailing around in his Sunfish. At 8:30 that night, he noticed a streak of light rising rapidly from the ocean at a steep angle. Tom tells John that he knows what he saw was a surface-to-air missile. He explains that he saw many of these in combat and definitely knows what they look like. Tom relates that he was first interviewed by Kate just after the crash, but later two men identifying themselves as FBI agents told him that they were going to do a follow-up interview. They never did. The two men were Liam Griffith and Ted Nash. Tom tells John that he is thinking about contacting Griffith and Nash, and John informs Tom that Nash is dead. John tells Tom that he's going to walk outside and that Tom can leave now or follow him outside.

## Chapter 6 Analysis

Tom Spruck is established as a reliable and credible witness to the crash. He has perfect vision and was a combat fighter pilot, so he knows what surface-to-air missiles look like. He is absolutely convinced that what he saw was a missile. In the conversation with Spruck, the name of CIA agent Ted Nash is raised, and the reader learns that John believes that Nash is dead.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

Tom follows John outside, and the two men discuss Tom's theory of what happened to the plane. Tom first explains that he does not believe the conspiracy theory that the plane was hit by a U.S. military missile. As Tom explains, there would be no way that it could remain a secret if that many people know about it. Tom goes on to say that he doesn't believe that the crash was caused by a hand-held surface-to-air missile because the range of a hand-held missile is too short to have hit the plane. Tom also says he does not believe that a radar-guided missile was used because nothing showed up on the radar that night except for one blip, which was later determined to be a glitch. Tom also rules out the possibility of an infrared missile, since there was no explosive residue found in the crash. As Tom explains, the missile would not have completely disintegrated, so there should have been some debris.

Tom tells John that he believes that most likely explanation for the crash is that a kinetic missile was used. Tom explains that a kinetic missile goes right through its target rather than detonating. This would explain why the authorities found no residue from a missile with the crash. A kinetic missile would have gone completely through the plane and then sunk into the ocean far from the crash site. Tom tells John that he has never gone public with this information because the FBI agents specifically asked him not to talk about it with anyone, but the case has always bothered him.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

The character of Tom Spruck serves several useful purposes in furthering the plot. The first is to establish a credible witness to the crash who can support the possibility of a missile as the cause of the explosion. Spruck also serves as a tool to provide important technical information to the reader on the likely explanations for the crash. Finally, the fact that Spruck is extremely troubled about the crash and the government's behavior towards him in the resulting investigation contributes to the sense of foreboding in the novel.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

John goes back to the Jeep where Kate is waiting for him, and they drive out to an old airport hangar where the plane was reconstructed. They go into the hangar and look at the plane. They are talking about the possibility of a missile being the cause of the explosion when they hear a voice say, "There was no missile." They turn to see a man walking towards them.

## Chapter 8 Analysis

The author's extremely detailed description of the reconstructed plane further reveals the horrific nature of the explosion and illuminates the sudden death of all those aboard the plane.



## Chapter 9

### Chapter 9 Summary

The man walking towards John and Kate is Sidney R. Siben, an investigator with the National Transportation Safety Board and one of the authors of the final report on the crash. Sidney tells John and Kate that there was no residue from an exploded missile found anywhere in the pieces of the center fuel tank, nor was there any evidence of a high-velocity explosion. Sidney explains that there was also no evidence that a missile went through the plane. He tells them that there is a very low probability that entry and exit holes could have been made by a kinetic missile without the researchers finding any evidence of them in the reconstructed center fuel tank. Sidney says that the explosion was most likely caused by a short circuit somewhere that mixed with fuel vapors and ignited a spark, and there is no reason to believe any conspiracy theories about missiles, from either friendly fire or terrorism. He turns and walks away from them. As he gets to the door, however, he turns around and asks John if he can explain the flash of light that people saw just before the plane exploded. John says that he cannot, and Sidney says it must have been an optical illusion. Then, just as Sidney reaches the door to the hangar, John and Kate hear him say, "No, that's not it. Damn it."

### Chapter 9 Analysis

In the beginning chapters, offering conflicting eyewitness accounts of the moments leading up to the crash, the reader experiences the same ambivalence that John Corey experiences. When Tom Spruck tells John what he saw, it appears as if a missile did cause the explosion. Siben's initial explanation, however, about why there could not have been a missile, raises doubt about the missile theory. Siben's last statement reveals that he does not really believe the theory. The reader learns that even the person who authored the final report on the cause of the crash doubts whether it was a mechanical failure. Just as John's interest in the mystery grows, so does the reader's.



# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

John and Kate walk through the reconstructed fuselage as they talk about the various eyewitness accounts of a flame rising from the ocean just before the explosion. Kate explains that the CIA has made a movie reenacting the explosion and that the CIA believes that instead of seeing a rising flame, the eyewitnesses instead saw the burning fuselage descending. John asks Kate about the couple that may have videotaped the explosion and the hotel where they stayed. Kate explains that she was not involved in investigating the hotel. When she did some investigating of her own, she was quickly shut down. John and Kate agree to go forward with the investigation, and they start heading back towards their apartment in Manhattan.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

Kate and John's conversation as they walk through the fuselage offers more important background information for the reader, including the CIA's theory that the apparent flame rising through the air was in fact an optical illusion.





# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

John and Kate are driving back towards home. As Kate begins to fall asleep, John asks her to explain the seven theories of why the plane crashed. The first theory is friendly fire from military training exercises. An electromagnetic field that engulfed the plane is the second theory. Third, a missile may have launched from a foreign submarine. A meteorite or space junk is fourth, and a methane gas bubble is the fifth theory. The sixth idea is a plasma death ray, and the final theory is that the cargo door blew open and started a chain of events that led to the explosion. Kate explains that the remaining theory - a terrorist attack - is in a category by itself. Kate falls asleep, and John thinks about everything he has seen and heard. He realizes that it is very dangerous for him to get wrapped up in this investigation, but he thinks about the 230 dead people and their grieving loved ones. He resolves to figure out what happened.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

As in the preceding chapter, Chapter 11 offers significant background information about the crash, including the various theories of the cause. By the end of Chapter 11, John is thoroughly sucked in by the mystery and is resolved to try to solve it.



# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

At two a.m., John stands on his balcony in Manhattan, drinking scotch. He looks down towards the World Trade Center, where in 1993 terrorists planted a bomb in the parking lot of the North Tower. He walks back into his apartment, sits down and watches a videotape documentary about the TWA crash made by a conspiracy theory group, which attempts to rebut the explanation of an electrical malfunction. The tape also contains the CIA's animated footage showing how the eyewitnesses mistook the rising, burning fuselage after the explosion for a streak of light rising from the ocean before the explosion. Several eyewitnesses then refute the CIA's animation, saying that it looks nothing like what they saw. While John watches the videotape, Kate walks out from the bedroom and watches it with him. Kate confirms that she does not believe the CIA's theory that the hundreds of witnesses merely saw an optical illusion.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

Chapter 12 contains important foreshadowing by recounting John's thoughts and memories of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. This foreshadows the historic attack of 2001 that will occur later in the novel.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

John and Kate wake up the next morning and read the paper over breakfast. They talk about the investigation. Kate tells John that the name of the hotel on the blanket that was found near the crash site is the Bayview Hotel. She explains that she was not supposed to know, but she called around to different hotels after the crash. She spoke to the manager at the Bayview, Leslie Rosenthal, who told her about the missing blanket. She was then called into the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility and agents informed her that she had overreached in her investigation. John and Kate leave their apartment.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

John learns two key pieces of evidence that will eventually lead him to the videotape of the explosion of the plane - the name of the Bayview Hotel and the name of Leslie Rosenthal, the manager at the hotel.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

John and Kate get into a cab and head to their office at 26 Federal Plaza in lower Manhattan. The cab driver is Arab, and John asks him questions about the TWA crash. John baits the driver by suggesting to him that the Jews took down the plane just to blame Muslims and that the same was true of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and other terrorist acts. Kate tells John to shut up. They arrive at their office building. Kate and John walk up to their offices, first agreeing that they will tell the truth about their snooping into the crash if anyone asks.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

John is revealed here as a politically incorrect smart aleck, and Kate is his counterpart. She is more sophisticated and reserved, and she handles the flak that John gives her well.



# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

John sits down at his desk and catches up on emails and phone messages. He chats with his coworker Harry Muller, who tells John that he has been investigating an Islamic charity that is believed to be a front for terrorism. John tells Harry that he is going out for a while. John leaves the office, goes to a nearby phone and calls Dick Kearns, an old friend and former coworker at the New York Police Department. John tells Dick to meet him at a local Chinese restaurant. John then walks back up to his office. On his way, he notices the wanted posters for Arab terrorist Osama Bin Laden. John is surprised that no one has turned Bin Laden for the \$5 million reward the government has offered. John also notes to himself how Bin Laden has never taken credit for the terrorist attacks he was accused of masterminding. John sits down at his desk and gets on the Internet to find information about the TWA crash. After a while, he goes to Kate's desk and tells her he's going out to meet someone. Kate and John make plans to meet at a local restaurant for lunch, and John leaves. John walks down to the Chinese restaurant, sits down in a booth and waits for Dick Kearns.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

Here again, allusions to Bin Laden and the terrorist attacks before 9/11 appear, clearly foreshadowing the climax of the story.

# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

Dick Kearns comes to the restaurant. John tells him that he wants information about the crash. Kearns warns John to leave it alone, explaining to him that all of the various agencies who were involved in the investigation were all mad at each other and shifting blame. Dick tells John that he really does believe that the cause of the crash was an electrical malfunction and not a terrorist attack, but he thinks that John should still stay out of it because careers have been ruined over the investigation. John tells Kearns he "needs a name," meaning someone who knows something about the investigation. Kearns gives him the name of Marie Gubitosi, a former task force agent.

## Chapter 16 Analysis

Dick Kearns is one of John's sources for information, and he is clearly one of John's allies. Kearns helps John track down Marie Gubitosi, a former New York cop who helped with the investigation.



# Chapter 17

## Chapter 17 Summary

Kate and John meet for lunch and talk about the crash. During lunch, Kate tells John that she believes that the missing videotape could be the key piece of evidence that could crack the case wide open, but John suggests to her that it might not turn out to make a difference. He points out, for instance, that the Kennedy assassination was filmed, but witnesses interpreted the film in many different ways. Kate agrees, but she points out that they won't know until they find the tape.

## Chapter 17 Analysis

By this time in the story, John's heavy drinking becomes apparent, as he drinks two beers during lunch, while Kate drinks only seltzer water. The investigation continues to systematically move forward, but the conversation during lunch brings up the possibility that the mystery may prove unsolvable.



# Chapter 18

## Chapter 18 Summary

John walks Kate back to 26 Federal Plaza and tells her that he needs to make some more phone calls. They say goodbye. John goes to a pay phone and calls his former partner Dom Fanelli. He tells Fanelli that he needs to track down Marie Gubitosi Lentini. Fanelli tells John that Marie is no longer at the task force. She's now married with children and living in Staten Island, and Fanelli gives John her telephone number. John calls Marie and tells her he wants to talk to her. Marie tells him to come on over to Staten Island and to buy some diapers for her on the way. John hails a cab, which takes him to the Staten Island ferry, and John gets on the ferry.

## Chapter 18 Analysis

By the tone of John and Fanelli's banter, from telling each wisecracking jokes to leveling with each other about their lives, John and Fanelli are clearly close friends. In fact, Fanelli saved John's life when terrorist Asad Khalil tried to kill John, and Fanelli was the person responsible for bringing John into the office where Kate worked.





# Chapter 19

## Chapter 19 Summary

The ferry arrives at Staten Island. John goes to a store and buys diapers. Then, he goes to Marie's house, where he and Marie sit and discuss the investigation over coffee. Marie's eleven-month-old is drinking a bottle in a playpen. Her other child is asleep, and Marie informs John that she is pregnant with her third child. Marie and John then talk about the crash. Marie tells John that she was initially involved in the crash investigation and that she was one of the officers who investigated the couple at the Bayview Hotel. John realizes quickly that the FBI agents didn't tell Marie about finding the videotape. While they talk, John calls his coworker Harry Muller and asks him if anyone at work has been looking for John. Muller tells John that the FBI head Jack Koenig asked where John was.

## Chapter 19 Analysis

John's conversation with Marie Gubitosi is further evidence of the government's cover-up and conspiracy over the TWA crash. For instance, FBI agents did not share their information about the videotape with Marie, and she is clearly a little resentful over being treated as an outsider during the investigation.



# Chapter 20

## Chapter 20 Summary

Marie tells John that she does not understand why Griffith and the other FBI agents were so intent on finding the couple who took the blanket from the Bayview Hotel. John can tell that Marie is not happy with the way the FBI treated her in the investigation. Marie tells John that she interviewed a woman she believed was an illegal immigrant named Lucita Gonzalez Perez. Lucita told Marie that she saw a man and a woman leaving Room 203 of the Bayview Hotel with a blanket on the evening of the crash. John tells Marie about the police finding the lens cap, and then he asks if she remembers anything else about her investigation to let him know. John leaves Marie's house.

## Chapter 20 Analysis

By now, John is beginning to suspect that FBI agents such as Griffith were hiding something from everyone else involved in the investigation. John learns an important piece of information from Marie - that Lucita saw a man and a woman leaving Room 203 with a blanket before the crash.



# Chapter 21

## Chapter 21 Summary

John takes the ferry back over to Manhattan and goes to a restaurant where Kate is waiting for him at the bar. He sits down with her, and he starts telling her about his conversation with Marie. John tells Kate that the three federal agents in charge of the investigation did not share any information with the NYPD police. John asks Kate how she found out about the Westhampton police report describing the beach blanket, and Kate explains that Ted Nash told her about the blanket when they were having drinks together one night. John points out that he has never heard about her having drinks with Ted Nash before, and he asks Kate why she lied to him. Kate responds that she knew it would make John mad. She then says that one night when Nash had had too much to drink, he mentioned the local police report from Westhampton and that maybe the couple on the beach had taped the crash. Nash told her the next day that they had found the couple, that it was an older couple and that the lens caps was from a regular camera, not a video camera.

Kate tells John that she went to Westhampton to look at the local police report, but the police department there told her that the FBI has taken the report and had not returned it. She then talked to the police officer who wrote up the report, and the officer told her that he had mentioned to the FBI that the blanket may have come from a local hotel. A few days later, Kate contacted Leslie Rosenthal, the manager of the Bayview Hotel, who told her that he had already talked to the FBI about the blanket. The FBI agent in charge, Liam Griffith, told Rosenthal not to talk to anyone else about it. John is furious at Kate for lying to him about Ted Nash, and he is suspicious that maybe Nash gave Kate this information in a hotel room rather than in a bar. John gets up from the table and leaves.

## Chapter 21 Analysis

The author leaves it uncertain whether anything romantic ever happened between Kate and Ted Nash, but John suspects that it has. His jealousy turns to rage when Kate admits to him that Nash told her about the videotape "over drinks." John is revealed as a volatile character. Not only is he a drinker and a quick wit, but he is also a jealous and hotheaded man.



# Chapter 22

## Chapter 22 Summary

John wakes up on his couch in his apartment the next morning with a bad hangover after spending the rest of the night drinking at one of his neighborhood bars. Kate has left him a terse note saying she has gone to work. John calls in sick and then starts heading out to the Bayview Hotel in Westhampton. On his way, he turns off his cell phone and beeper, which is against ATTF regulations. He listens to a talk radio show in which the host is hammering away at a State Department spokesperson. The discussion is about the fact that after the USS Cole bombing in Yemen, the State Department barred terrorist expert John O'Neill from returning to Yemen to continue his investigation. John thinks that the current administration does not seem to be doing much in the face of what is a growing threat to the United States. John arrives at the Bayview Hotel and walks inside.

## Chapter 22 Analysis

Again, Chapter 22 contains a reference to Al Qaeda and the attacks on the U.S. that preceded the attacks of September 11, 2001, and John's thoughts about the government not doing enough "in the face of a growing threat" foreshadow the novel's ending.



# Chapter 23

## Chapter 23 Summary

John walks to the check-in counter and tells the young man at the counter that he wants to get a room and that he wants to pay for it in cash. He tells the man he will give him a \$500 deposit and his business card. When the young man starts giving him a hard time, John shoves two \$20 bills in the man's face, and the man takes the money. John then tells the hotel clerk that he is with the FBI and that he does not really want a room. He wants to talk to the manager Leslie Rosenthal.

The man calls for Leslie Rosenthal's assistant, Susan Corva, who arrives quickly and takes John to Rosenthal's office. John meets Rosenthal, introduces himself as an FBI agent and tells him that he is conducting follow-up on the TWA crash. Rosenthal tells John that several FBI agents showed up the Friday after the crash with a blanket and asked Rosenthal to identify whether the blanket came from the hotel. John asks Rosenthal about the desk clerk who was working on the night of the crash. Rosenthal informs John that the desk clerk's name was Christopher Brock. Brock quit one or two days after the crash, after Rosenthal reprimanded him for letting a customer check in without giving proper identification, and Rosenthal does not know where Brock is now.

John also asks about Lucita Perez, the maid who saw a man and woman leaving Room 203 with a blanket on the night of the crash. Rosenthal tells John that he does not know where Lucita is either. Then, John asks about the maid who cleaned Room 203, and Rosenthal informs him that the maid was a young woman named Roxanne Scarangelo. Roxanne was a college student when she worked at the hotel, and Rosenthal doesn't know where she is now. John asks Rosenthal the name of the head housekeeper who was working on the night of the crash, and Rosenthal informs John that her name is Anita Morales. John then asks to see the hotel's employee files. Rosenthal and John walk out of Rosenthal's office and down towards the lobby. Meanwhile, John has checked for messages on his phone, and no one has tried to reach him.

## Chapter 23 Analysis

When John walks into the Bayview Hotel and tries to pay with cash without giving identification, he is clearly trying to copy what Bud Mitchell would have done when he checked into the hotel with cash on the night of the crash. John wants to find out about the hotel's policies and try to understand how the cash transaction occurred on the night of the crash.

In talking to Leslie Rosenthal about the employees working at the hotel on the night of the crash, John learns the name of former maid Roxanne Scarangelo, who will prove to be an invaluable tool in finding the videotape and Jill Winslow.



# Chapter 24

## Chapter 24 Summary

John and Leslie Rosenthal walk to the basement where the personnel records are stored. Rosenthal goes to retrieve the personnel files on Christopher Brock, Roxanne Scarangelo and Lucita Perez, but the files are missing. Rosenthal tells John that the FBI must not have returned the files. John asks Rosenthal if he can get Anita Morales to come down there, and Rosenthal calls for Anita over a two-way radio. While they are waiting for Morales to show up, John thumbs through some of the other personnel files and sees that there are many with Hispanic names. They do not have social security information or green cards attached to them. To make sure he has something to hang over Rosenthal's head, John mentions that fact to Rosenthal, and Rosenthal remarks that accounting must have those documents.

Anita Morales then walks in, and John asks Rosenthal to give him some time alone with her. Rosenthal leaves, and John starts questioning Morales about Lucita Perez's work status. Rosenthal informs John that Lucita overstayed her work visa and was therefore working illegally on the day of the crash. Morales tells John that the police investigating the crash promised Lucita they would help her out with her work status, but Lucita did not come to work the next day. Morales did not see her again. John then asks Morales about Roxanne Scarangelo, and she informs him that Roxanne worked with the Bayview Hotel for many summers before the crash, but she also did not return to work the day after the crash. Morales does not know where Roxanne is now. John thanks Morales and asks her to bring Rosenthal back.

Morales leaves, and Rosenthal returns. John asks Rosenthal about Roxanne, and Rosenthal informs him that Roxanne did leave early the summer of the crash. John asks Rosenthal whether they have kept records of the FBI agents who rented rooms during the investigation after the crash. Rosenthal tells John that they did not keep paper records and that after the investigation was concluded an FBI agent had purged all of the hotel's computer records regarding the agents for national security purposes. John asks to see Room 203. Rosenthal tells John that there might be guests in Room 203, and he asks John to explain again the purpose of his visit. John warns Rosenthal that the purpose of his visit is not to investigate the legal status of the hotel employees but that he can make it his purpose if he wants to. John again tells Rosenthal to take him to Room 203.

## Chapter 24 Analysis

To get the information John needs, and to try to keep Rosenthal from questioning his motives and authority, John threatens not so subtly to turn Rosenthal in for hiring illegal aliens. By keeping this pressure on Rosenthal, John is able to collect important evidence that will lead him to the videotape. John's pushy demeanor with Rosenthal



reveals John's personality more fully. He is extroverted, makes quick decisions, will sacrifice maintaining good personal relationships if that is necessary to obtain his goals and does not worry too much about what others think of him. John is clearly interested in the truth more than making friends, and this is evident in his interactions with Rosenthal and the hotel clerk.

The FBI's behavior is also becoming illuminated. The FBI has tried to cover its tracks by taking the personnel files of Brock, Perez and Scarangelo, who were all potential witnesses of the couple who made the videotape and who could hold valuable information. The FBI has also purged the hotel's computer records in a further attempt to destroy any possible evidence that could lead to the videotape.



# Chapter 25

## Chapter 25 Summary

Rosenthal and John go to the front desk, where Rosenthal instructs the desk clerk to call the guests in Room 203 and tell them to vacate their room for a while. Rosenthal and John then go to Room 203. John looks through the room and then asks Rosenthal again for the full names for Christopher Brock and Roxanne Scarangelo. John then thanks Rosenthal for his time and assures Rosenthal that he will look for the missing personnel files on Brock, Scarangelo and Perez. Rosenthal asks John if the FBI is going to find out what happened to the plane. John tells Rosenthal that the FBI knows what happened to the plane and that it was an accidental explosion in the fuel tank. Rosenthal says he doesn't believe that. John responds by telling Rosenthal that he needs to make photocopies of green cards and obtain social security numbers for all of the hotel's employees. Then, John leaves.

John drives to Cupsogue Beach County Park and drives over the dune trail to the spot where the two lovers set up the video camera. John calculates that it is about a twenty-minute drive from the hotel, so that would put the two lovers there by around 7:20 p.m. on the night of the crash. John imagines the scenario of that night and what the two lovers would have done. He takes off his shoes and walks down to the beach, wondering whether the two lovers had sex on the beach. As he walks back to the car, he knows he has missed something. It has to do with the time gap between 4:30, when the lovers checked into the hotel, and 7:00, when they left for the beach. He wonders what they were doing during those two and a half hours, and he suspects that whatever they did may have left some sort of a paper trail.

## Chapter 25 Analysis

Because the reader already knows exactly what transpired with Bud and Jill on the night of the crash, watching the process that John goes through in figuring this out on his own is interesting. The reader is able to become an omniscient observer and is pulled emotionally into John's struggle to figure out what happened on the night of the crash. John cleverly thinks through the night, and by realizing that there is a several-hour time gap between Jill and Bud's arrival at the hotel and when they left for the beach, he is able ultimately to track down a paper trail to the videotape.





# Chapter 26

## Chapter 26 Summary

John arrives back at his apartment at 7:00 p.m. Kate is there, and John apologizes for his behavior the night before. Kate tells him that it's okay, and they make up. Kate asks John where he was during the day, and he simply tells her he "took a ride out east." Kate tells John that Captain Stein, who is the senior person on the NYPD's Federal Anti-Terrorist Task Force, wants to see John in his office at 9:00 a.m. the next morning. John asks Kate why Stein is sending him a message through his wife. Kate responds that maybe Stein could not contact John since John had turned both his cell phone and beeper off so that he could not be tracked, which she reminds John is against department regulations.

Kate then tells John that "They are on to us." She explains that Jack Koenig, the man in charge of her FBI unit, wants to see her at 9:00 a.m. the following morning. John and Kate agree that they might be in big trouble, and they plan to tell the truth about snooping into the crash if they are asked about it. Kate goes over to John, sits on his lap, puts her arms around him and tells him that no matter what happens to them, they can deal with it because they have each other. She tells him that she does not feel so alone knowing that.

## Chapter 26 Analysis

John and Kate make up after their big fight over Ted Nash, and their conversation about being called in by their bosses reveals their deep affection and love for each other. These two both have a good sense of humor, and even in the midst of wondering what will happen to them, they joke around with each other. Kate clearly has deep affection and love for John, as shown by her statement to him that they can deal with anything that comes their way because they have each other.

By this point, the reader realizes that the government is, as Kate says, "on to" Kate and John. By turning off his cell phone and beeper, John has violated FBI regulations, the government knows, and time is running out for John and Kate. The impending meetings with John and Kate's bosses step up the suspense as the first part of the novel is nearing its end.



# Chapter 27

## Chapter 27 Summary

At 9:00 a.m. the next morning, John walks into David Stein's office at work. Stein tells John that he is in big trouble with Jack Koenig, and he asks John what he has done. John says he doesn't know. Stein asks John why he turned his cell phone and beeper off the day before, and John informs him truthfully that he did not want to be tracked. John then tells Stein that he was doing some investigating into the TWA crash on his own time. Stein then reprimands John, asking him, "Corey, why do you stick your nose where it doesn't belong?" Stein calls John a "loose cannon" and warns him that he is putting his job at risk. Stein then tells John that under Koenig's orders, John is being sent to Aden, the port city of Yemen, for a few months. Stein tells John that Kate is being sent to Africa. John refuses to take an assignment to Yemen, but Stein says that if he doesn't Kate's career could suffer. Stein explains that Koenig wants John out of the country. John threatens to resign, and Stein responds that it's his decision but that he should talk to Kate first. As John leaves Stein's office, Stein tells John to be careful and to watch his back.

## Chapter 27 Analysis

Koenig and others at the FBI clearly have something big to hide if they want so badly to send John to Yemen. Kate's bosses are also obviously in tune with the fierce love and loyalty that John has for Kate, and they use that to their advantage in trying to get John out of the country by threatening harm to her career if John is not willing to go. Stein is tough, but he is clearly an ally of John's. He is revealed as one of the "good guys" in the novel.



# Chapter 28

## Chapter 28 Summary

John walks to Kate's desk. Kate is not there, and her cube-mate tells John that Kate is in Koenig's office. John walks to his desk and sees a message from the travel office at the FBI telling him to contact the office as soon as possible about Yemen. John's coworker Harry Muller asks John where he has been and asks if he is in some kind of trouble. John tells Muller that when Kate gets out of her meeting with Koenig to tell her to come meet John at the Greek coffee shop down the street. John goes to the coffee shop, orders coffee and waits for Kate.

Kate comes to the coffee shop to meet John. She tells John that Koenig has warned her to stay out of the TWA investigation and that she has been given two assignments that she must choose from. She can either take an assignment somewhere in the continental United States, or she can go to Africa for a few months to investigate the U.S. embassy bombing in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Kate explains to John that if she takes the Africa assignment she will be guaranteed two more years in New York, whereas if she takes the other assignment, it could take her and John years to get reassigned to the same city. She made Koenig promise that John would get two more years in New York if she took the Africa assignment. Kate asks John to let her go to Africa, and she pleads with John not to resign from his job. John reveals that he has been assigned to go to Yemen, and Kate responds that the investigation is closed and tells him to let it go. John agrees, but he knows that he is not going to let it go. Kate and John then talk about the embassy bombing in Kenya and Tanzania and the likely link to Al Qaeda. John and Kate agree to wrap up their things at the office and go home early. Kate gets up to leave and tells John not to "get into a pissing match" with Jack Koenig. John tells her that he won't, but he is infuriated over what has been done to them and vows to get revenge.

## Chapter 28 Analysis

John senses that his time is running out, and he knows that he must speak to Kate privately before the government shuts them both down. The government conspirators are trying to punish Kate and John for getting involved in the crash investigation by sending them to Yemen and Tanzania. The government also clearly wants to get them both out of the country so they cannot continue to investigate the crash.

John and Kate both clearly value their relationship above all things. They decide to take the Yemen and Africa assignments because they know this will allow them to stay in New York together when they're done. By the end of their conversation, John has made Kate believe that he is going to drop the investigation, but the government's actions have only made him thirst for retribution. The reader knows that John is not going to let it go.



## Chapter 29

### Chapter 29 Summary

John walks to a pay phone and calls Don Fanelli's cell phone. John tells Fanelli that he needs Fanelli to find out the whereabouts of Roxanne Scarangelo, Christopher Brock and Lucita Gonzalez Perez. Fanelli tells John that Harry Muller told him that John had been acting strangely, and Fanelli asks John if he has been snooping into the TWA crash investigation. Fanelli tells John he figured out that John was getting involved in the case. He knew John asked Harry Muller about the TWA case and told Muller that he had gone to the memorial service. Also, Fanelli knew that Kate worked on the crash case. John tells Fanelli that he needs the three people's names and that he is going to Yemen for a few months, while Kate is going to Africa. John tells Fanelli that he will leave him a key to his apartment. Fanelli tells John that he should probably let go of the crash investigation, but John makes clear that he has no intention of doing that. Fanelli tells John that they should go get a beer, but John says he can't. John thanks Fanelli, hangs up and walks back to 26 Federal Plaza.

### Chapter 29 Analysis

Although John tells Kate in the beginning of the novel that he is not a person who believes in "causes" like Kate, his actions clearly show that this is not true. In fact, John highly values truth and justice. He also is extremely loyal to his friends, but he shares an intense vehemence for those who are willing to cross him. His sense of pride is strong and ensures that his sense of being treated unjustly only fuels his convictions.



# Chapter 30

## Chapter 30 Summary

John goes to Jack Koenig's office. Koenig says that he knows that John has been snooping around in the TWA crash. Koenig declares that he is not to get involved in the case and then briefs John on his mission in Yemen, which is to investigate the USS Cole bombing. Koenig then asks John what he was doing the day before. John tells Koenig he went to the beach. When Koenig asks John why his cell phone and beeper were turned off, John replies that he needed a "mental health day." Koenig tells John not to turn off his beeper again. Koenig then asks John if he has learned anything new about the TWA crash, and John responds that Koenig would be the first to know if he did. Koenig tells John that there is nothing to the rumor about a videotape.

Koenig starts talking about the Khalil case. He comments to John that he knows John is still dealing with that and with Ted Nash's death. Koenig specifically mentions that Ted and Kate were close before Ted died. John knows that Koenig is trying to get under his skin and tells Koenig that it did not take long at all to get over Ted Nash's death. Koenig tells John that they will get geared back up on the Khalil case when John gets back from Yemen. Finally, Jack tells John that many Europeans have gone missing in Yemen and that John's mission in Yemen is to find out what happened to them and not to go missing himself. John leaves Jack's office.

## Chapter 30 Analysis

Jack Koenig is revealed here as a stereotypical FBI bureaucrat, a person who gets a power trip from his authority and who uses his position to push other people around. Jack and John clash in part because they actually have similar personalities in that they both use machismo to further their agendas. The difference between the two men is that Jack's motives are bad, whereas John's motives are good. Koenig understands how to manipulate people psychologically, and he specifically knows how to push John's buttons, as he tries to get under John's skin by insinuating some sort of romantic interest between Kate and Ted Nash.



# Chapter 31

## Chapter 31 Summary

John and Kate spend the rest of the day at 26 Federal Plaza getting ready for their trips. John meets Kate at a bar called Ecco at around 6:00. Some people from their office - both FBI and ATTF agents - show up, so it turns into a bon voyage party for Kate and John. John's ex-wife Robin is there. She and John exchange pleasantries, and Robin and Kate meet and are genuinely friendly towards each other. Jack Koenig gives a short send-off speech for John and Kate. David Stein approaches John and tells him that his snooping into the crash investigation has scared a lot of people. During the night Liam Griffith also approaches John. The two men exchange insults, and Griffith specifically mentions Kate spending a month at the Bayview Hotel with Ted Nash during the investigation after the crash. This makes John mad, and John tells Griffith to get out of his sight. John and Kate leave around 7:30 and go home.

John and Kate spend the next day making all of their final preparations for leaving, including going shopping for clothes for their trips. They separate for a while and agree to meet up at the Windows on the World restaurant in the North Tower of the World Trade Center. They spend their last night together having drinks, eating dinner and dancing. The next day, they both leave for their destinations, Yemen and Tanzania.

## Chapter 31 Analysis

The second book ends with John and Kate leaving for Yemen and Tanzania. One week has passed since the Flight TWA memorial service. The ending of this portion of the book at the Window on the World restaurant sets the stage for the remaining half of the story and particularly foreshadows the climax.



# Chapter 32

## Chapter 32 Summary

The date is September 7, 2001, the Friday after Labor Day, and John arrives at the JFK Airport, back from his Yemen trip. John has been in Yemen for six weeks, working with Yemeni intelligence agents trying to get leads on the U.S.S. Cole attack. John has recently learned that John O'Neill has left the FBI and is now working in security for the World Trade Center. John goes to an airport bar, orders a beer and calls Dom Fanelli. John asks Dom about the three people he told Dom to look into. Dom tells him to forget about Lucita Gonzalez Perez. There are two Christopher Brocks - one in Daytona Beach and one in San Francisco, and Dom gives John their addresses. He then tells John that he has tracked down Roxanne Scarangelo and explains that she is in her third year of a Ph.D. program at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Dom asks John to meet him for a drink, but John declines. Dom knows John is going to Philadelphia to track down Roxanne. John finishes his drink, leaves the bar and goes to the rental counter, where he rents a car and then starts driving to Philadelphia to find Roxanne Scarangelo.

## Chapter 32 Analysis

Chapter 32 is the opening of the third book. The month is September 2001, and John and Kate are both back from their trips to Yemen and Tanzania. As soon as John is off the plane and back in New York, he is back on the TWA investigation and calling his friend Fanelli for more leads on the videotape. The reader gets the sense that John has been ruminating and plotting over his next step the entire time that he was in Yemen, and he is now back on the case with even more dedication.



# Chapter 33

## Chapter 33 Summary

John drives to Roxanne's address in Philadelphia and calls her on his cell phone. He introduces himself as an FBI agent and tells her that he wants to talk to her about the TWA crash. Roxanne tells John that she's meeting her boyfriend Sam for dinner, and John says that's fine because he is meeting someone, too. He won't keep her long. Roxanne walks down to meet John, and they walk to a nearby restaurant, where they order drinks and talk about her cleaning job at the Bayview Hotel and the day of the crash.

Roxanne tells John that Liam Griffith interviewed her, along with another man who she describes as good-looking, and John suspects she's talking about Ted Nash. Roxanne says that when she went in to clean Room 203 after the crash, it looked like the couple had been lying on top of the sheets of the bed, perhaps watching television. Roxanne tells John that she quit her job at the hotel because the FBI told her it would be best not to keep working there after the crash since she might be barraged by the media. The FBI also offered to pay her the rest of her salary if she would leave and keep quiet about everything. Roxanne tells John that the FBI also helped her with her scholarship for graduate school.

While John and Roxanne are talking, Roxanne's boyfriend Sam calls her on her cell phone. Roxanne tells Sam that she ran into one of her old professors at the restaurant and to come meet them there, and she hangs up the phone. She tells John that it looked like someone had taken a shower the night before, because they had used some towels. She also says that she didn't see anything else out of the ordinary, but she mentions that she found a Band-Aid wrapper with no blood on it in the room's ashtray. She also noticed lipstick on one of the wine glasses. She asks John to stick around and meet her boyfriend Sam. John agrees to remain for a while to drink some coffee and sober up before driving back to New York.

## Chapter 33 Analysis

Through Roxanne Scarangelo, John has uncovered a clue that will prove to be vital to tracking down the videotape and figuring out what happened on the night of the crash. The clue is Roxanne's finding a Band-Aid wrapper without blood on it in the hotel ashtray. In this type of mystery/thriller, every fact is important to furthering the plot, and the Band-Aid wrapper without blood on it does exactly this.





# Chapter 34

## Chapter 34 Summary

Roxanne is quickly getting drunk as John continues to ask her questions about the room. He asks her what the couple could have been doing during those two and a half hours before they went to the beach. Roxanne tells John that the television was off when she came in the room, but she turned it on so that she could watch coverage of the crash. John asks Roxanne about the fact that the couple checked in at 4:30 that day and didn't leave the room until around 7:00 p.m. He asks Roxanne whether she suspects what they might have been doing during that time. She tells him that they could have had sex, napped or popped in a videotape. John points out that there isn't a VCR in the room, and Roxanne tells him that there used to be one in there. The VCR was turned on when she went in the room, and she turned it off. When she pushed the eject button, though, no videotape came out. She tells him that she usually checked to see if a guest forgot to return a videotape to the front desk or the library.

Roxanne goes on to explain that there is a library room at the Bayview Hotel where guests can check out books and videotapes. She tells John that this did not come up when she was talking to the FBI during their investigation. Roxanne explains that people would normally sign out for a tape, and then she tells John that this must have been what the couple was doing during those several hours between check-in and when they left the hotel to go to the beach. The signed loan-out slip would be on a pink carbon copy. Roxanne's boyfriend Sam shows up at the restaurant, and Roxanne introduces John as one of her philosophy professors. John leaves the restaurant and tells Roxanne to contact him if she has any more information.

## Chapter 34 Analysis

John discovers more clues from Roxanne that help him solve the mystery of the videotape. These clues include the fact that the hotel used to loan out videotapes and used to have VCRs in the rooms, as well as the fact that the hotel recorded the loans on pink carbon copy slips. The pink carbon copy slips will prove to be the vital paper trail that John has been looking for and which will eventually lead him to the videotape and Jill Winslow.



# Chapter 35

## Chapter 35 Summary

John drives to the Bayview Hotel. He arrives there after midnight and walks inside, where a desk clerk named Peter greets him. John tells Peter that he needs to see Mr. Rosenthal. Peter calls Rosenthal, who heads over. John asks Peter to show him how books are checked out of the library, and Peter takes him to the library and shows him the receipts for the loaned books. He explains that Rosenthal keeps the records for at least seven years. Peter explains that the guests usually don't have to show identification, but they simply sign their names and room numbers to the loan ticket. John asks Peter if anyone has come to the hotel since John's last visit, and Peter tells him no. Peter checks John into Room 203, and John waits for Rosenthal to show up.

## Chapter 35 Analysis

John senses that he is on to something big with the evidence of the receipts, and his sense of urgency is so strong that he cannot wait until the morning to pursue it. This also increases the audience's sense of curiosity and tension, as John comes closer to uncovering vital information.

# Chapter 36

## Chapter 36 Summary

Rosenthal arrives at the hotel. He is clearly annoyed at having been dragged out of bed in the middle of the night. John tells him that he wants to see the receipt books for the videotape lending library. Rosenthal tells John that they got rid of the lending library several years ago but that they have kept the receipts. Rosenthal takes John to a storage room, where John finds receipts dating from June 12 to July 25 1996. A page has been razored out of the books, and John knows that the FBI agents have already gotten to the book.

As John and Rosenthal are about to leave the room, John remembers what Roxanne said about the pink carbon copies. John asks Rosenthal what happens to the pink receipts. Rosenthal explains that they are given back to the guests when the books or videotapes are returned. Rosenthal explains that if guests do not return the books or videotapes, the receipts stay in the receipt book, and the unreturned items are listed in the monthly inventory as missing property. Rosenthal explains that if the item is never returned, then the receipts are archived with all other records for tax purposes. John tells Rosenthal to show him where they are, and Rosenthal takes him to a file cabinet with a manila envelope marked "Library Receipts - Missing, Lost, or Stolen."

John finds a receipt in the stack showing that on July 17, 1996, a movie titled *A Man and a Woman* was checked out for Room 203. The only name on the receipt is "Reynolds," the name that Bud Mitchell used when he checked into the hotel. There is also, however, a scrawled signature on the receipt. John and Rosenthal go upstairs, where Rosenthal finds a magnifying glass for John. With the magnifying glass, John can see that the signature says Jill Winslow. John takes the receipt and goes to Room 203.

## Chapter 36 Analysis

By tracking down Roxanne Scarangelo and getting important information from her about the receipts, John has now figured out that the woman staying in Room 203 was named Jill Winslow. The pieces are starting to come together for John. He is also figuring out that the FBI has been careful to cover its tracks by razoring out the hotel's receipts, so he is beginning to become convinced of a government cover-up. Fortunately for John, the FBI agents, however, did not know about the pink carbon copies, so they have left behind important evidence.



# Chapter 37

## Chapter 37 Summary

John goes to Room 203, calls Dom Fanelli and asks him to run down the information on Jill Winslow. John takes a shower and thinks about the case, realizing that Griffith and the others took the page showing that the videotape that was checked out, but they overlooked the pink receipt. John also wonders why Jill and her lover took the time to swipe the videotape when they were in such a hurry to leave the hotel room after getting back from the beach.

## Chapter 37 Analysis

John is beginning to suspect now that Jill or her lover copied the videotape of the plane exploding over the movie *A Man and a Woman* and that is why one of them took the time to swipe the videotape when leaving the room. John mentions at the end of Chapter 37 that something Roxanne told him has also led him to suspect this. Although he does not explain to the reader exactly what Roxanne told him, he is referring to her comment that she found a Band-Aid wrapper in the ashtray. John figures out that the Band-Aid could be used to cover a slot on the videotape of *A Man and a Woman* so that it could be recorded over.



# Chapter 38

## Chapter 38 Summary

The desk clerk Peter calls and wakes John up at 7:00 a.m. the next morning. John goes to the book lending library and tells a woman there that he wants to check out a book. She slides the receipt book to John, and he signs it Giuseppe Verdi. The woman asks for a room key, and John tells her that he doesn't have one. She looks up Room 203 and informs him that there the name is under John Corey. John tells her that this is his boyfriend's name. She writes "Corey" on the slip. John asks her if he gets a receipt, and she tells him that he gets a pink receipt when he returns the book, but he can just leave the book in the room when he checks out if he does not need a return receipt.

John goes back to his room and checks his messages. There is an email from Kate saying that she'll be back from Africa on Monday. John goes into town, gets a haircut, puts on some beach trunks and goes down to the beach where Jill and Bud watched the plane crash. He then goes back to the hotel, where there is a message from Dom Fanelli. John calls Fanelli, who tells him that he has found a thirty-nine-year-old woman named Jill Penelope Winslow, who is married to Mark Randall Winslow and lives at Number 12 Quail Hollow Lane, Old Brookville, Long Island. John tells Dom that he's going to where Jill lives to see if she's the right one.

John takes a shower and hears the phone ringing as he is drying off. He answers the phone, and a female voice tells him that she wants to speak to him about Flight TWA. The voice tells John that she might have a videotape. The woman on the phone also tells John to meet her at 8:00 p.m. that night at Cupsogue Beach County Park. The woman hangs up, and John decides that he is not going to meet the woman.

## Chapter 38 Analysis

Just as John is on course to finding the videotape and Jill Winslow, there is a surprising plot twist with the anonymous phone call. The mysterious phone call is too convenient and too serendipitous. John knows that the conspirators have been tracking him and that they are catching up with him.



# Chapter 39

## Chapter 39 Summary

John changes his mind and decides to go the Cupsogue Beach County Park after all. At 7:00 p.m., rather than park his car at Cupsogue Beach County Part, John pulls over on another road and finds a beach access path between two houses. John walks down to the beach and climbs up onto a grassy dune where he waits for the person coming to meet him. Eventually, the park closes. Everyone else leaves, and he is there alone. By 8:20, the person is still not there. Five minutes later, John hears a cough and then another cough. He realizes that someone is moving around in the area. Suddenly, a male voice says, "Where are you?" John tells the man to stand where he can see him. The figure rises up and slowly comes towards John. The man lights a cigarette. John tells the man that he's got a gun and to get down. The man reminds John that the man is the only one of them who has a gun, and John suddenly realizes that the man is his old nemesis, Ted Nash, who John had thought was dead.

## Chapter 39 Analysis

Ted Nash's character is revealed early in the story, but his importance to the plot is only now beginning to be revealed. John learns that Nash is not dead and also that he is clearly part of the government's cover-up of the crash investigation.



# Chapter 40

## Chapter 40 Summary

The two men exchange insults, and then they walk down the beach talking. Nash tells John that he realizes John wants to know whether Nash slept with Kate but that he's too afraid to ask. Nash tells John that he's not like John and all of his other cop buddies, who go around sleeping with women and talking about it, especially Dom Fanelli. Nash then tells John that he wanted to meet him there at the beach to warn him that he is snooping around into business that he has no right to be snooping into. Nash warns John that he is causing problems in his organization and that Yemen apparently did not teach John anything.

Nash then asks John what he was doing at the Bayview Hotel. John tells Nash that he was on vacation. Nash warns John to leave the case closed, or he could come to an "unhappy end." Nash tells John to keep walking with him, but John turns to leave, flipping Nash a bird. Nash asks John whether he wants to know what happened to the couple. He also tells John that John better talk to him now, or else he can Kate could be questioned in hearings. John turns back around and heads straight towards Nash, who warns him again that he has a gun. John tells Nash to unload the gun so that they can talk, which Nash does. Nash then punches John, and the two men struggle in the sand for a few minutes, punching each other. During the struggle, they roll down toward the surf and continue their struggle in the water. Nash finally stops struggling, and he crawls out of the water. John then scrambles up on the beach and sits a few yards away from Nash, breathless. They seem to call a momentary truce, and Nash tells John that he is going to tell him what happened on the night of July 17, 1996.

## Chapter 40 Analysis

Ted Nash is revealed as a key player in the cover-up and conspiracy over the videotape of the crash, and it is clear now that the government has indeed been tracking John's moves since he returned from Yemen. Nash and John clearly detest each other, and Nash will stop at nothing to keep John from getting more involved in the crash investigation. After the men's physical struggle on the beach, however, it appears that Nash is going to tell John what happened on the night of the crash.



# Chapter 41

## Chapter 41 Summary

Nash tells John that the couple had sex on the beach that night and videotaped the crash. Nash has talked to the couple about what happened that night. He tells John that as the couple was having sex, they did not notice anything in the sky. He contends that by the time they heard the explosion, the airport had already partially disintegrated, and the nose section had already fallen into the ocean. Nash tells John that the couple thought they saw a streak of light moving up towards the aircraft when they were really seeing the main fuselage rising. Nash explains that the couple ran back to the dune, got dressed quickly, grabbed the tripod and camera and headed back to the hotel. Nash tells John that the videotape makes clear that there was no streak of light rising toward the aircraft before the explosion. John tells Nash that he wants to see the videotape and the couple, but Nash tells him that the man destroyed it that same night. Nash tells John that the couple both passed lie detector tests. John tells Nash that he wants the couple's information, and Nash warns John not to track them down, explaining that the CIA has promised them anonymity. Finally, Nash leaves John, telling him to tell Kate when she gets back that Nash is still alive and that he'll see her soon.

## Chapter 41 Analysis

After getting into a physical struggle with John, Nash seems to change his strategy, as he pretends to level with John about what happened on the night of the crash. John's responses to Nash's account of what happened on the night of the crash reveal that John doubts that Nash is telling him the truth. At the end of their conversation, Nash uses Kate as his last dig to make John even madder. Like the other FBI agents, Nash knows that John suspects that something went on with him and Kate and that John is extremely jealous over it.





# Chapter 42

## Chapter 42 Summary

John goes back to the Bayview Hotel, where he showers, changes clothes and then checks out. He drives towards Old Brookville to find Jill Winslow. He arrives at Old Brookville around 12:15 p.m., drives directly to the Old Brookville Police Department and goes inside.

## Chapter 42 Analysis

Despite Nash's threats, John is committed to continuing his investigation, and that leads him straight to Jill Winslow.



# Chapter 43

## Chapter 43 Summary

John walks into the Old Brookville Police Department, where he talks to the person on duty, Sergeant Roberts. John tells Roberts that he is investigating a witness to a crime and asks him whether he knows the Winslows. Sergeant Roberts says he does know them and that Mr. Winslow is an investment banker at Morgan Stanley and travels a lot for business. John asks Sergeant Roberts if he can do something to get Mr. Winslow out of the house. Sergeant Roberts calls the Winslow's house and tells Mark Winslow that there have been reports of a prowler in the neighborhood. John gets on the phone, introduces himself as a cop and asks Winslow whether he will home in the morning. Winslow tells him that he will be playing golf but that his wife will be home until she goes to church at 10:00. John tells Winslow to tell his wife to be aware that he might come by sometime in the morning. John tells Sergeant Roberts that Jill Winslow might be in danger as a witness to a crime, so John is going to stake out her house during the night. Sergeant Roberts gives John the directions to the Winslows' house.

## Chapter 43 Analysis

John learns that Jill Winslow is the apparently wealthy wife of an investment banker and that they live in a high-end neighborhood with its own police force. The Village of Westhampton is a beautiful neighborhood, with big houses, manicured lawns and its own security force, and it is a symbol in the book for how often things are not as they appear on the surface. After all, John learns in subsequent chapters that despite all of her material advantages, Jill Winslow is an unhappily married woman who has had two extramarital affairs and who thinks of her life and all of its country club trappings as a prison. She has basically become a "golf widow," as she is planning to head out to church on a Sunday morning while her husband will be teeing off for a round of golf. Meanwhile, their sons are away at boarding school.



## Chapter 44

### Chapter 44 Summary

John drives to the Winslows' house. He parks his car there at 2:17 a.m. and waits there until the next morning, Sunday September 9, 2001. At 5:29 a.m., John calls Sergeant Roberts. He instructs him to call Mark Winslow at 6:30 and tell him that the prowler has been caught, so Winslow can feel free to go golfing. At 6:45, Mark Winslow's Mercedes pulls out of his driveway and drives past where John's car is parked. John waits until 7:32 and then walks up to the Winslow house and rings the doorbell.

### Chapter 44 Analysis

John is finally going to get some answers about the night of the crash from Jill Winslow. The reader's curiosity builds, and the use of short chapters that end just at the brink of an important event continues to build suspense.



# Chapter 45

## Chapter 45 Summary

Jill Winslow answers the intercom, and John introduces himself. He tells her that he spoke with her husband the night before. Jill tells him that her husband is not home, and John says he wants to talk to her. She lets him inside and serves him a cup of coffee, and they sit down to talk. John explains to Jill that he is with the FBI and that he has been speaking recently with Liam Griffith and Ted Nash. Jill says that she remembers Ted Nash and that another man named Mr. Brown from the National Transportation Board also came to talk to her. John asks Jill about her current relationship with the man she had an affair with in 1996. She tells him that she hasn't been involved with Bud since the night of the crash. She runs into him at social events sometimes, and it's awkward. Jill says that she doesn't know why she had an affair with Bud because it wasn't worth it. Jill has some animosity for Bud now, and she calls him a "wimp," a "coward" and "not a gentleman." She explains that she wanted to come forward and contact the FBI about what they saw that night and that Bud initially refused to. Jill says that Bud later told authorities that Jill didn't want to come forward.

John asks Jill about what happened to the videotape, and she tells him that they erased the tape and left the hotel. John asks Jill if it's true, as Ted Nash told John, that when they left the Bayview Hotel, they pulled over on the side of the road and Bud physically destroyed the tape. Jill says that they erased the videotape while they were still in the room. John asks Jill to take him through everything that happened in detail. She explains that as she and Bud were driving away from the beach, she looked through the viewfinder on the video camera and saw the plane exploding. She told Bud to pull over to see the tape. Jill tells John that she saw a streak of light rising toward the aircraft and that it was definitely not a reflection of a stream of burning fuel. She also tells John that she not only saw the streak of light on the videotape, but she also saw it in person while she was sitting on the beach. She explains to John that she and Bud both looked up and saw the streak of light rise towards the plane. They saw the plane explode and then heard the explosion. She explains that after the explosion, she and Bud ran back to the sand dune, got dressed, grabbed the tripod and camera and ran to Bud's Ford Explorer.

Jill explains that she wanted to go back to see if she could help, but Bud said no. Bud immediately wanted to erase the tape, but they decided to play it on the television in the hotel room and then decide what to do. Jill explains that they went back to the room and played the tape. They clearly saw the streak of light rising again. She explains that the camera remained on while it was in the Explorer when they were heading back to the hotel, and it recorded their conversation while Jill was trying to convince Bud to go back. John asks Jill whether it's true that Bud destroyed the tape by running the Explorer over it and burning it. Jill says no, that they erased the tape in the motel room.

John asks whether the FBI asked to see the tape, and Jill responds that they did ask for it and that she gave them the erased tape. Jill explains that the FBI informed her that



she had destroyed evidence, and they asked her if she would be willing to take a polygraph. Jill asks if there is anything else, and John starts asking her more questions about watching the tape back at the Bayview Hotel before Bud erased it. Jill explains that Bud called his wife and that she had a message from her husband Mark about the crash.

Jill tells John that she needs to get ready for church. John asks Jill about the movie that she and Bud watched before going to the beach, and he tells her he's like to see it. By now, Jill has realized that John knows that she copied the videotape of the crash over the *A Man and a Woman* video. At first, she tells him that she doesn't know what he's talking about, but she then admits that she did tape it. She asks him if he would like to see it. John says yes, and Jill goes to get the videotape.

## Chapter 45 Analysis

John clearly knows that the FBI restored the tape and was merely trying to destroy evidence, but Jill has no idea that the FBI restored the tape. Jill is a decent person who wanted to do the right thing by turning over the tape, and she feels remorse over having the affair with Bud. John admits that in a way he feels sorry for Jill Winslow, even though she is a privileged, high society wife. In this chapter, John learns several important facts, including that Bud did not destroy the tape as the FBI told John, that the FBI most certainly restored the tape and that Jill, as John had suspected, copied the tape before Bud erased it.



# Chapter 46

## Chapter 46 Summary

Jill leads John into the family room, where she inserts the videotape into the VCR and plays it. John and Jill watch the tape all the way through together. As the video gets to the part where Jill and Bud begin having sex, John wants to fast-forward the tape, but Jill insists that John watch it so that he will understand why she did not want to turn the tape in to the police. John and Jill continue to watch the tape. Jill makes comments about how foolish she looks naked and asks John what he thinks, which makes John very uncomfortable. They continue to watch the tape, and it arrives at the part where Jill and Bud are out in the ocean. Then they go back to the beach, where Bud lies down, and they start having sex. Jill asks John whether her husband will ever see that part of the tape. John says he will see it only if Jill wants him to see it. The videotape finally gets to the point where the plane comes into view. At that point, Jill tells John that she cannot watch that part of the video, and she leaves the room. John watches the rest of the video and clearly sees what the hundreds of witnesses all claimed to have seen. A bright, red-orange light rises into the sky and explodes into the plane, and John knows that Jack Koenig, Liam Griffith and Ted Nash have all lied to him. John stands up, walks to the bar and pours himself a Scotch.

## Chapter 46 Analysis

John finally learns that all of his hunches have been correct. A missile clearly hit the plane and caused the explosion. The government knew about it and has tried desperately to cover up the truth of what happened. John still does not know why the government would go to so much trouble to cover it up. For instance, he does not know whether it was a missile from friendly fire, terrorism or something else. He at least knows by now, however, that the government has a strong reason for concealing the fact of the missile from the American public.

Jill's personality is further revealed through her comments about the videotape. She is clearly ashamed of and regrets what she did with Bud. Furthermore, although she is a beautiful woman, she is insecure about her looks and thinks that she looks extremely silly in the videotape. She also has a bit of a sense of humor, as shown by her self-deprecating remarks about herself and Bud.



# Chapter 47

## Chapter 47 Summary

John sees that Jill is sitting on the patio. He walks out onto the patio and sits in a chair beside her. Jill asks him if he took the videotape, and he tells her that he wants her to give it to him. She asks him if she has a choice, and he says no. Jill tells him that he can have it. Then, she tells John he is very clever for figuring everything out. She says that she was very scared when the FBI first started asking her about the videotape, and she's worried about what's going to happen once the videotape is released and how it's going to affect Bud, Mark and her two teenage boys.

Jill asks John whether she's going to prison. He tells her no but that Bud might be in trouble for erasing the tape. John tells her that both she and Bud can cut a deal with the authorities and that the most trouble Bud will likely encounter will be with his wife. Jill looks out over her landscaped grounds and pool and tells John that her life was a "prison with a life sentence." They then walk back inside, and Jill makes a copy of the tape for John. She tells John that it will take about forty-five minutes to tape, so John tells her to skip over the beginning of the tape. Jill starts recording at the point where Jill and Bud go skinny-dipping.

Jill says she doesn't want to watch the plane exploding and that she is going back out onto the patio. John asks her to get dressed and come with him. She asks him if she is under arrest, and he tells her no. John leads Jill into the kitchen, where he tells her that she is in danger and that she needs to get out of her house. He tells her that the federal agents most likely took the erased tape and restored it. They probably know what is on the tape, but they do not want anyone else to know. Jill wants to call the police, but John tells her not to because some of those same people are part of the conspiracy. Jill agrees to go with John. He tells her to get dressed, pack an overnight bag and take as much cash as she can. Jill goes to get ready, and John continues to watch the tape.

The phone rings five times, and the caller I.D. says "Private." John looks out the window to make sure no one is out there. He goes back to watch the videotape of the missile hitting the plane. The phone rings again, again showing "Private" on the caller I.D., and John lets it ring. Jill walks into the room and tells John that she's ready to go. They take the copy of the videotape with them. John gives Jill the copy of the videotape and tells her to follow him in her BMW. Jill asks if she can leave Mark a note, and when John says no, she tells him she's been waiting for ten years to leave him a note on the kitchen table. John tells Jill that he needs a place to get rid of his car. She tells him to follow her to SUNY College of Old Westbury, and he can leave his car there. He gives her a copy of the videotape and tells her that if they get separated to take it to a safe place. John and Jill leave the house in their cars, with John following Jill.



## Chapter 47 Analysis

Jill realizes at this point that her secrets about Bud and the videotape are now going to be revealed and that her life is about to change dramatically. She worries about her two teenage boys, but she appears to feel a sense of relief that all of the secrets and lying are going to finally be over. It is also clear that she is not going to miss her marriage with Mark, and she is resolved to help John get the videotape to the right people. The sense of danger rises with the incoming phone calls to Jill's house, as it appears that someone might be trying to track down Jill, John or both of them.





# Chapter 48

## Chapter 48 Summary

John follows Jill to SUNY College of Old Westbury, where they leave John's car, and John drives Jill's car back towards Manhattan. John drives wildly to evade anyone who might be following them. As they drive, John tells Jill that she is on the right side of truth and justice now. Jill asks why they cannot just call the police, and John tells her it is because he is not sure who is on the wrong side. He tells Jill that they're going to need to put her up in a hotel room in Manhattan, and Jill suggests the Plaza Hotel. She calls the Plaza and reserves a two-room suite, and then John tells Jill to turn off her cell phone because she could be detected through cell phone triangulation.

John explains to Jill that she's going to stay at the Plaza for about two days, and then she'll have to go to another hotel. He explains that she's going to have to hide out in hotels until he can figure out who is behind the conspiracy. Jill asks John what she should do about her husband Mark. John tells her to call him and tell him that everything is fine and that she needs some time for herself. John and Jill arrive at the Plaza Hotel, and John tells the management there that he is with the FBI, that they are traveling incognito and that if anyone inquires about Jill to let them know.

John and Jill go up to the two-bedroom suite, where Jill calls Mark and leaves him a message saying that she has gone to the Hamptons to visit a girlfriend. Jill tells John that she wants to go to church and for a walk. John tells her to go out but to be back by five. He also tells her to take her copy of the videotape down to the safe in the lobby, get the receipt with the safe number and have it sent up to the room. John goes into the bedroom and calls Dom Fanelli. When he tells Dom what's going on, Dom tells John that he will pick Kate up at the airport when she arrives at 5:00 the next day. Dom will have some police escorts just in case the feds are waiting for Kate at the airport. Dom also suggests going to John's apartment to get his gun for him, but John warns him not to.

When John gets off the phone with Dom, Jill has left to go out. The hotel staff brings up the safe receipt to John, and John memorizes the safe number and then burns it. Jill comes back late from shopping, and she has bought John a new shirt from Barney's. John puts the shirt on, and he and Jill have dinner together. During dinner, Jill gets tipsy, and she confides to John that she had another affair after Bud but that it only lasted a few months. After dinner, John says goodnight to Jill, goes into his bedroom and watches his copy of the videotape again before going to sleep. That night, he dreams that he and Kate, rather than Jill and Bud, are on the beach watching the missile hit the plane and that Kate is telling John that she told him it was a missile she saw.



## Chapter 48 Analysis

John and Jill arrive back in Manhattan at the swanky Plaza Hotel near Central Park. The date is now Sunday, September 9, 2001, just two days before the terrorist attacks of September 11 and one day before Kate will arrive home back from her trip to Tanzania. John knows that the government is closing in on him, and he has to keep Jill safe while he figures out what to do. The video is secure now in the hotel safe. Only Jill and John know about it, and John is the only person who knows the combination to the safe.



# Chapter 49

## Chapter 49 Summary

John gets up the next morning at 6:45 a.m. The date is Monday, September 10. He walks into the living room area, where Jill is sitting in a robe drinking coffee. Jill and John eat breakfast together, and then Jill goes out for a walk. John tells her to get him some toothpaste and to look for a copy of *A Man and a Woman* if she can find it. Jill leaves. John calls Dom Fanelli, and Dom tells him that he has everything set up for picking up Kate at the airport. Dom promises to call John when he has Kate in the car and is heading to the Plaza. Meanwhile, Jill calls to check in with John several times while she is out. She tells him that Mark has been calling her, and John tells her to call Mark back to try to figure out whether he knows what is going on. She also tells John that she has found a copy of *A Man and a Woman*.

John checks his cell phone, and there is a message from Ted Nash. He calls Nash, and they talk about setting up a meeting. John suggests that they meet the following morning at 8:30 at Windows on the World restaurant in the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Nash agrees, and they hang up. Jill calls and tells John that she called Mark and that the FBI came to her office inquiring into her whereabouts. She told Mark all about Bud and the videotape, and Mark did not take it well, "[b]ut his five minutes were up, and I hung up on him." John tells her to come back to the Plaza and to turn off her cell phone.

John then checks his cell phone messages, and Ted Nash has called back. He calls Nash, and Nash tells him that he wants to confirm their meeting. John realizes that Nash now knows that John has found Jill and that Nash is nervous. Nash tells John that if he has any witnesses that might reopen the case to bring them to the meeting the next morning. John tells Nash that he is going to need some audio-video equipment for the meeting, and he instructs Nash to bring a VCR. Nash tells John that he is bluffing and that the tape is destroyed. John tells Nash that he is lying and asks him if he has ever seen the movie *A Man and a Woman*. Nash now knows that John has a copy of the videotape. He tells John that there was a good reason for the secrecy and asks if John and Kate are willing to make a deal to keep it a secret. John tells him there will be no deal, that the American people deserve an honest answer about the crash and that he will see Ted tomorrow at the meeting. John hangs up.

## Chapter 49 Analysis

By now, Nash has realized that he has lost control, and he is beginning to panic. He vacillates between threatening John and trying to persuade John that keeping the videotape secret was the right thing to do. Whereas up until this point, the FBI agents seemed to have the upper-hand in this game, John is clearly now in control, and the government is scared. Dom Fanelli further reveals himself as a true and loyal friend to



John, as he is willing to risk his own safety to get Jill from the airport to the Plaza without harm. Although Jill Winslow's secret is out and the FBI agents have found Mark, Jill has a sense of humor about Mark and seems to be relieved and even a little excited by her new adventure with John.

Finally, the reader now knows that the meeting is set for the following morning at 8:30 at the Windows on the World restaurant. The reader, of course, also knows that the first plane on 9/11 struck the North Tower at 8:44 a.m., killing everyone who was in the restaurant. This creates an element of classical suspense, where the reader is aware of an imminent danger that the characters do not know about. The question in the reader's mind is whether John and the others are going to be in the restaurant when the plane hits the tower.



# Chapter 50

## Chapter 50 Summary

Jill returns with some shopping bags, which contain some toothpaste and a videotape of *A Man and a Woman*. John tells Jill about his meeting at Windows on the World the next morning. He tells her that Bud Mitchell will be there, and he wants her to be there, too. John explains to Jill that Ted Nash, Liam Griffith, Mr. Brown, Jack Koenig and a police captain named David Stein will be there, along with someone from the attorney general's office who John has asked to attend. John explains that the person will be the "referee," and the videotape will be "the game ball."

Jill tells John that she does not understand who is keeping the tape a secret and why, and John says he does not know either. John explains to Jill that the videotape will be shown, but she does not have to be there while it is playing. The meeting will be at Windows on the World, but they will go somewhere else to watch the videotape. John tells Jill that she needs to be very careful between now and the meeting tomorrow morning. She should stay alert and stay close to John or to Kate.

John then calls Jack Koenig on his cell phone and asks Koenig if he has heard from Ted Nash. Koenig tells John that Nash is dead, and John responds that he's not dead and that Koenig knows it. Koenig asks John where he is. John again asks Koenig if he has heard from Nash. When Koenig says yes, John asks Koenig if he is going to be at the meeting tomorrow and whether he is in on the cover-up. Koenig tells him that he is not in on any cover-up and says that he will be there tomorrow. John tells him to bring David Stein with him.

Koenig then threatens John that there is a 50/50 chance that John won't make the meeting, or if he does, there is a 50/50 chance he won't get to his next destination. John assures Koenig that his odds are much better than that and says to Koenig that "[t]here was a fucking videotape, and there was a fucking rocket." Koenig merely responds by welcoming John home, and the two men hang up.

By now it is mid-afternoon, and Jill and John are having tea in the hotel room. Jill checks her cell phone, and there are two messages - one from Ted Nash urging her to call him and one from Bud. Bud begs Jill not to talk to anyone about the videotape, tells her to destroy it if she has a copy and asks her to call him immediately. Jill goes into her bedroom.

## Chapter 50 Analysis

The stage is now set for the Tuesday morning meeting, and John is clearly in charge. He has also learned that Koenig is most likely also part of the conspiracy, since Koenig has now threatened to have John killed if John goes forward with releasing the

videotape. The government has also clearly found Bud Mitchell and convinced him to implore Jill to destroy the videotape.



# Chapter 51

## Chapter 51 Summary

The time is 4:32, and John is sitting in the Plaza suite, waiting to hear from Dom Fanelli. John is starting to get worried about what Nash might have done to Kate. Finally, at about 4:45, Dom calls and puts Kate on the phone with John. Kate tells John that Nash is alive, and John tells her he knows. Dom gets back on the phone and explains to John that Nash and the other federal agents tried to apprehend Kate at the airport. Fanelli got his cops to protect her, though, and she got through. Dom tells John that they are being followed, but they are on their way to the Plaza. Dom and John hang up. Jill goes over to hug John. Jill tells John that she is going to give him some private time with Kate, and she leaves to go into the other room in the suite.

## Chapter 51 Analysis

Kate has arrived safely at the airport, thanks to Dom Fanelli, and it seems as if John's plans for the meeting the next morning are all coming together.



# Chapter 52

## Chapter 52 Summary

Kate arrives at John's room, and he lets her in. They hug and kiss, and then John picks her up and carries her into the living room, where they make out on the couch until John tells Kate that someone else is in the other room. Kate asks John what's going on. John makes her a drink and then tells her that he went to Westhampton Beach looking into the crash again. He found the couple who videotaped the crash. John tells Kate that they're in trouble and asks where Dom is. Kate tells him that Dom has left but that there are two cops outside their door guarding it.

John tells Kate that Ted Nash would like see John, Kate and Jill Winslow dead. Kate asks who Jill Winslow is and what is going on, and John tells her all about Jill Winslow, his trip to Philadelphia to talk to Roxanne Scarangelo and his struggle on the beach with Ted Nash. He explains to Kate how he figured out that Jill copied over the tape of a *Man and a Woman* by using a Band-Aid to cover the slot. John tells Jill that he has seen the tape. It is in the next room, and it shows a missile blowing up the plane.

John tells Kate that he believes Jack Koenig knows something but that Jack's on the fence. He tells Kate that he has arranged a meeting at 8:30 the next morning at Windows on the World with Ted Nash, Liam Griffith, Jill Winslow, Jack Koenig and maybe Bud Mitchell and others like David Stein. Kate tells John that the conspiracy could go all the way to the top, and she and John could go down. They agree that she should meet Jill and watch the tape. John knocks on Jill's door. Jill walks out and meets Kate. John opens up a bottle of champagne, and they all toast to Kate's safe return. Jill tells Kate that she wishes that she had come forward with the videotape evidence five years before then. The women start talking about the shirt that Jill bought for John, and John excuses himself to go downstairs to talk to the police officers guarding the hotel room. John talks to an officer named Alvarez. He tells Alvarez that he wants him to be there in the morning to help take John, Kate and Jill to the World Trade Center. John returns to the room, where Kate and Jill are watching the videotape. John suggests that they order room service.

A little while later, John, Kate and Jill sit over dinner talking about Yemen, Tanzania, the USS Cole case and Jill's general boredom with her high-society life. At around 10:00 p.m., Dom Fanelli calls and tells John that he has recruited several police officers to show up at the Plaza the next morning at 8:00 a.m. to take John, Jill and Kate to the World Trade Center. Dom also tells John that he will be at Windows on the World to make sure the meeting goes smoothly. He tells John to be careful, and they hang up. Jill goes to bed, and Kate and John stay awake a little while longer, talking about the next day. They make love and go to sleep.





## Chapter 52 Analysis

The reader knows a few things in this part of the story that John and the others do not know, and this heightens the suspense to its peak. First, the reader knows that the first plane hit the North Tower at 8:46 a.m. on the morning of September 11. The reader also most likely knows that the Windows on the World restaurant was on one of the top floors of the North Tower and took a devastating hit from the first plane. The question that remains, then, is what time John and the others will arrive at Windows on the World and whether they will be killed in the terrorist attacks.



# Chapter 53

## Chapter 53 Summary

On the morning of September 11, 2001, at 8:15 a.m., three patrol cars arrive at the entrance to the Plaza Hotel. They pick up John, Kate and Jill and begin driving them to the twin towers. Kate is in the lead car with Officer Alvarez. Jill is in the middle car, and John is in the last car. Before getting into the car, John gives Officer Alvarez the videotape of *A Man and a Woman* that Jill recorded over, and he tells the officer to guard it with his life. John's car gets slowed by traffic, and he arrives at the North Tower after Jill and Kate. He walks into the entrance of the North Tower at 8:45 a.m. As he crosses the plaza, he begins to hear a distant roar, and then he sees a jet flying over Broadway and straight towards the North Tower. People around him start screaming, and a woman next to him says, "Oh my God."

## Chapter 53 Analysis

Because of blind luck, John is not one of the unfortunate people on the top floors of the North Tower when the plane hits, and it is not clear whether Jill, Kate and the others have made it up to the restaurant and whether they are dead. Because the horrific images of the real 9/11 are by now firmly entrenched in most Americans' memories, it is not necessary for the novel to provide more insight into the attack. With the simple words of a woman saying "Oh my God" as the first plane hits, the reader can envision clearly the image of the first plane hitting the tower.

# Chapter 54

## Chapter 54 Summary

On Wednesday, September 12, John is back in his apartment. He looks out over Ground Zero from his balcony. The time is 7:32 a.m., and he is thinking about the past twenty-four hours. He has returned to his apartment after looking for Kate all night and trying unsuccessfully to reach her on her cell phone. When he gets back to the apartment, he finds her sleeping on the couch. He lets her sleep and walks to the balcony. She walks out onto the balcony, and they hug each other and cry. They sit in the chairs out on the balcony and look out over smoke-filled Manhattan. Kate tells John that she put Jill on the elevator with the police and told her to go on up. John and Kate know that Jill, Dom, Ted Nash and all of the others are dead. On Friday, Corey goes back to the Plaza Hotel to get the things from their suite and to open the safe to get Jill's package. The assistant manager tells John that there is nothing in the safe.

## Chapter 54 Analysis

The story has culminated with the 9/11 attacks, and all of the key players, except for John and Kate, have been killed. It is clear that John is never going to find out more about the cover-up of the videotape. Clearly, some person or persons aside from Jill and John found out about the videotape in the safe, and the fact that they were able to access the combination or otherwise get into the safe suggests that this was a person with great power. Still, although the story ends with certainty that a missile caused the plane to explode, readers still do not know who was behind the missile and why the American government was so intent on keeping it a secret from the American people.



# Characters

## John Corey

A self-described "skeptic, cynic, realist, and bubble-burster," the novel's protagonist John Corey is a former New York City homicide detective who is now working for the Federal Anti-Terrorist Task Force as a homicide specialist. Corey is married to his second wife Kate Mayfield, an FBI lawyer. John Corey is a jaded, politically incorrect, cynical cop with a sarcastic wit. He drinks heavily, likes to watch the X-files, likes to tell jokes about terrorist Arabs and women with PMS and is a self-described troublemaker. Although John is jaded and cynical at the beginning of his investigation into the crash, he rediscovers a sense of purpose throughout the story, as he becomes more determined to find out what happened for the sake of the crash's victims and their families.

## Dick Kearns

A friend and former co-worker of John Corey's, Dick Kearns used to work as a NYPD homicide detective and also worked through the ATTF. Kearns has since then left the ATTF and is now doing security clearance background checks for the government on a private, contractual basis.

## Dom Fanelli

John's former partner at ATTF, Dom Fanelli is a wise-cracking but brilliant detective who John credits for saving his life after being shot by Asad Khalil. Dom Fanelli also brought John into ATTF, where John met his now-wife Kate. Dom is crude, sarcastic and an admitted womanizer, but he is basically a good person. He is fiercely loyal to John Corey and is clearly one of the "good" guys who is more interested in discovering the truth about the TWA investigation than anything else. Fanelli is invaluable in tracking down people for Corey during the investigation and in helping Corey with getting Kate safely from the airport to the Plaza Hotel when she arrives back in the United States from Africa.

## Marie Gubitosi Lentini

A former ATTF task force member, Marie Gubitosi Lentini is an attractive, middle-class former cop who has given up her police career to be a full-time mom and wife. Marie once had an affair with one of the married men at ATTF, but she is now married with children and living in Staten Island. Marie worked on the crash investigation, and she has always suspected that the FBI was hiding something from her. Like John, Marie is a tough-talking, cynical New York cop who does not mince words, so John and Marie get along well. Corey gets the clear impression from talking to her that she was not happy



with the way that the FBI treated her after the crash, and her resentment over that makes her very willing to help John out.

## **Kate Mayfield**

Kate Mayfield is an FBI lawyer and John's second wife. She is a no-nonsense person who, like John, is not overly sentimental, but the TWA crash has clearly gotten to her. Kate has a strong sense of justice, loyalty and duty, and she is moved out of passion for the victims of the crash to find out what really happened. Kate is stable and intelligent, and she serves to ground John. However, she also shares his sarcastic wit and is not afraid to tell him to shut up when he has gone too far. In many ways, Kate and John are different. Kate is a health nut who does Bikram yoga and drinks sparkling water at meals, whereas John prefers to play with his Glock and drink Scotch.

## **Jill Winslow**

Jill Winslow is an upper-middle class, well-bred, attractive woman who is married to investment banker Mark Winslow. In 1996, Jill had an affair with one of her and Mark's social acquaintances Bud Mitchell. During one of their trysts at the Bayview Hotel in Westhampton, New York, they drive out to a state park, where they set up a videotape camera and tripod to videotape themselves having sex on the beach. While running the tape, they inadvertently videotape the TWA crash and become unwitting participants in the mystery surrounding the cause of the crash. Jill Winslow is a well-heeled woman with a sarcastic wit. She has a deep sense of regret and shame for having had an affair with Bud Mitchell and most importantly for making the embarrassing videotape of them having sex on the beach. Jill is basically a good person who has been haunted by her affair with Bud, the videotape of the crash and her role in hiding it.

## **Liam Griffith**

An FBI agent, Liam Griffith is, like Ted Nash, an enemy of John Corey, and he makes an appearance early in the book when he threatens John not to get involved in the TWA crash investigation. Liam, a hard-nosed bully, is fully involved in the cover-up of the crash, and he will go to any lengths to keep John from reopening the case.

## **Lucita Gonzalez Perez**

Lucita was working as a maid at the Bayview Hotel on the day of the crash. John never meets Lucita while he's investigating the crash, but he learns that around 7:00 that night, she saw a man and woman leaving Room 203 of the hotel and noticed that they were carrying a blanket with them. Lucita was working illegally when the crash happened, and the FBI used this fact to keep her quiet about what she saw after the crash. She also disappeared after the crash, and John Corey is unable to track her down to interview her about what she saw. John holds the fact of Lucita's immigrant



status as a bargaining tool to get Leslie Rosenthal, the manager of the Bayview Hotel, to cooperate.

## Ted Nash

John's nemesis, Ted Nash is a CIA agent who sometimes identifies himself as an FBI agent. John hates Nash and describes him as "snotty," "pretentious" and "a prick." When the book begins in July 2001, John believes that Nash is dead and that terrorist Asad Khalil has killed Nash by shooting him with a sniper rifle. Nash is a tall, good-looking man, with salt-and-pepper hair, who most women find attractive. Ted and John are professional rivals and clearly hate each other. John describes Nash as "like a vampire - sometimes charming, mostly scary, and always evil." John learns towards the end that Nash is very much alive and well. Nash is also involved in the crash cover-up, and he would like to see John dead before he lets John find out about the missing videotape.

## Asad Khalil

An Arab terrorist wanted by federal agencies, Asad Khalil is of Libyan descent and is accused of murdering several American and European nationals, including John Corey's old nemesis Ted Nash. Not much more is revealed about Khalil, except that he also shot and tried to kill Corey. The Khalil character is a reminder of the ever-present and rapidly growing threat of Islamic terrorism to the United States. Both John and Kate mention at times during the book that they have a feeling that there is something or someone lurking out there posing a much greater risk to the United States than the Khalil threat.

## Tom Spruck

A witness to the TWA crash, Tom Spruck is a former naval officer, combat fighter pilot and Annapolis graduate who retired with the rank of captain. Spruck tells John that the night of the crash he was in his one-man sailboat, and he saw a flash of light coming up from the water before the plane exploded. Spruck is presented as a highly credible witness, and he is absolutely convinced that what he saw was a missile rising into the air just before the plane exploded. Spruck suspects that the officials investigating the crash are hiding something, and he is very bothered by the official explanation that the explosion was caused by an electronic malfunction. Spruck is a patriotic, straight-shooting military man who values honesty and truth and who is clearly very bothered by the TWA crash.

## David Stein

The senior person on the NYPD's Federal Anti-Terrorist Task Force, David Stein is described by John as "a tough old Jew who doesn't take much crap from anyone." Stein is a tough-talking cop who still smokes cigars in his office even though smoking has



been banned now for a long time. Stein has a law degree, so he knows how to speak the FBI's language. It is apparent to John Corey that Stein does not appreciate having to "play second fiddle" to FBI head Jack Koenig. When the FBI learns that John is digging into the crash, they inform Stein, and Stein calls John into his office to talk to him about it. Stein informs John that he is sending him to Yemen for three months. Stein does not like being told what to do by the FBI, so he sympathizes with John's plight and is truly his ally even though he has to go along with the FBI's plan to send John to Yemen. Stein also warns John to watch his back.

## Jack Koenig

Jack Koenig is the head of the FBI office. He is a "tall, thin guy with close-cropped gray hair and gray eyes, and he wears gray suits." Koenig is serious, matter-of-fact and a natural government bureaucrat who enjoys the power of his position. As John says about Koenig, "I think you're supposed to get the impression of steel, but I think of pencil lead. Maybe concrete." It is clear that John Corey and Jack Koenig do not like each other, and Koenig makes it clear to John towards the end of the book that he is not above having John killed to prevent John from revealing the secret videotape to the public.

## Leslie Rosenthal

Leslie Rosenthal is the manager of the Bayview Hotel where Jill and Bud stayed for their tryst before videotaping the crash. Rosenthal is a well-bred, preppy, Cornell graduate in his forties, and he is militant about keeping records for the hotel. Rosenthal's penchant for organizing and retaining all sort of files helps John find important clues about what happened on the night of the crash, and the records ultimately lead to Jill Winslow, Bud Mitchell and the videotape. Rosenthal is somewhat of a nervous type, and John Corey uses this to Corey's advantage by threatening Rosenthal that he could turn him in for hiring illegal immigrants to work at the hotel.

## Christopher Brock

Christopher Brock is the young man who was working at the check-out counter of the Bayview Hotel on the day that Jill and Bud checked in. John learns that Brock let Bud pay in cash without showing his driver's license. John also learns that when federal agents later interviewed the manager Leslie Rosenthal, Rosenthal learned that Christopher let Bud register without showing his driver's license or a credit card. Then, Rosenthal talked to Christopher to reiterate the procedures. A few days after the crash, Brock quit his employment at the Bayview Hotel, and his whereabouts are unknown. While investigating the crash, John Corey gets leads about where Brock might be now, but he never meets with or interviews him.

## Roxanne Scarangelo

A former maid at the Bayview Hotel, Roxanne Scarangelo was working at the hotel during the summer of the crash, and she cleaned Room 203 the day after Jill and Bud stayed there. Roxanne is now attending graduate school. She is an attractive woman in her mid-twenties, and she gives John revealing leads about what happened the night of the crash at the hotel. She tells John, for instance, about finding a Band-Aid wrapper in the trash can in the room where Jill and Bud stayed. John is able to figure out that Jill used the Band-Aid to cover the marker on the tape of *A Man and a Woman* so that it could be copied over. The FBI has told Roxanne not to talk to anyone about what she knows, and the government has paid for part of her graduate school costs. Until John meets with her, she has talked to no one about it, not even her boyfriend Sam. Indeed, when Sam arrives at the restaurant where Corey and Roxanne are talking about the crash, Roxanne tells Sam that John Corey is one of her graduate school professors.





## Objects/Places

### Cupsogue Beach County Park

Cupsogue Beach County Park is the public park where Jill and Bud drive to tape themselves committing sexual acts with each other and where they inadvertently record the TWA explosion.

### The Village of Westhampton

The Village of Westhampton is a wealthy neighborhood on Long Island where Jill Winslow lives with her investment-banker husband Mark Winslow. The Village of Westhampton is a gated community with its own "police" force, and it contrasts greatly with the small apartment that Kate and John share in Manhattan. Although the Village of Westhampton is beautiful, John learns that Jill views her privileged, country club life as a prison and that she is living in an unhappy marriage.

### The Bayview Hotel

The Bayview Hotel is a high-end hotel where Jill Winslow and Bud Mitchell booked a room on the night of the TWA crash. John Corey learns through old records from the hotel that Jill and Bud checked out a movie from the hotel's library the day they arrived and watched it in their room before driving to the beach that night. John ultimately figures out that Jill made a copy of the videotape of the crash over the movie. The Bayview Hotel is also where the FBI stayed in the weeks and months after the crash while conducting their investigation.

### The Beach Blanket

After Jill and Bud see the plane explode and crash, they run away from the beach and, in their haste, leave behind a beach blanket, among other things. The beach blanket is traced back to the Bayview Hotel and ultimately to Room 203, which Jill and Bud checked into on the day of the TWA crash.

### The Band-Aid Wrapper

John Corey learns through Roxanne Scarangelo, who worked as a maid at the Bayview Hotel at the time of the plane crash, that she found a Band-Aid wrapper in the room where Jill and Bud stayed while she was cleaning it up. Significantly, Rocanne notes that the Band-Aid had no trace of blood on it, so it was clearly not used to cover a wound. John figures out that Jill used the Band-Aid to cover up the slot in the videotape of *A Man and a Woman* to allow the movie to be recorded over.



## The Plaza Hotel

On Sunday September 9, 2001, just two days before John Corey's meeting with Ted Nash and the others at Windows on the World, John and Jill Winslow check into the expensive Plaza Hotel to hide out. They wait there for Kate to return from Africa in order to keep Jill safe while John is setting up his meeting to expose the videotape cover-up.

## Windows on the World

Windows on the World was a restaurant in the North Tower of the World Trade Center, and it took a direct hit from the 9/11 hijackers, killing everyone inside on the morning of September 11, 2001. In July 2001, on the night before John and Kate are shipped off to Yemen and Tanzania, respectively, they spend the night eating dinner and dancing at Windows on the World. This is also where John decides to meet with Ted Nash and the others at 8:30 on the morning of September 11 to expose their cover-up of the videotape of a missile hitting the TWA plane and causing the explosion.

### *A Man and a Woman*

*A Man and a Woman* is the title of the movie that Bud and Jill checked out of the Bayview Hotel on the day of the TWA crash, and this is the videotape over which Jill secretly makes a copy of the videotape of her and Bud having sex and of the plane exploding.

## 26 Federal Plaza Building

26 Federal Plaza Building is FBI and ATTF headquarters in NYC. This is where both John Corey and Kate Mayfield work.

## The Lens Cap

In Jill and Bud's haste to leave the beach after seeing the plane explode over the ocean, they leave behind, among other things, a lens cap to the video camera that they used to tape themselves having sex and which inadvertently recorded the missile rising into the air and hitting the TWA plane, causing it to explode. The FBI finds out about the lens cap and ultimately figures out that the explosion has been videotaped.



# Themes

## Class Tensions

Throughout the novel, there are constant reminders of class tensions and different stratospheres of American society. For instance, John Corey is a New York cop who appears to come from a solid middle class family, and his life, with his Manhattan apartment that he shares with his wife Kate, starkly contrasts with the lives of the wealthy Winslows and Bud Mitchell. This difference is the most apparent when John goes to the Winslows' posh neighborhood on Long Island. John notes the beautiful house that the Winslows live in, as well as their belongings, which show that they probably come from "old money." John gets a small thrill from driving Jill's expensive BMW, and wearing a pink shirt purchased at Barney's Department Store is clearly a new experience for him.

John, however, has the wisdom throughout the novel to know that money, and even great wealth, cannot buy happiness, and Jill and Mark Winslow's country club life exemplifies this fact. Their apparently beautiful marriage, with the lovely house and the lifestyle of an investment banker's family, is really a sham. Kate thinks of her apparently beautiful life as a "prison with a life sentence," and she is clearly bored by all the trappings of her country club lifestyle.

Finally, along with the theme of class tensions, there is also an undercurrent of hostility that the government agents hold for wealthy people and society's elites. The FBI agents, including Griffith and Nash, seem to have an "us versus them" mentality towards people like the Winslows who have great wealth, and they enjoy using their government authorities to exert some power over people who are in a higher socioeconomic class.

## Tension Between Government Agencies

After the events of 9/11, much focus was directed towards the inherent competition between government agents and the lack of cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Many politicians and pundits attributed the success of the 9/11 attacks, in part, to this lack of cooperation, which led to the formation of the Department of Homeland Security. The novel reinforces this lack of cooperation, as the federal agencies clearly try to conceal information from the NYPD. Of course, in the novel, this secrecy is caused more by the fact that the federal government has something to hide than merely by competition, but the effect is the same. The state authorities are kept out of the loop, and they are clearly resentful towards the federal authorities over this fact. Moreover, throughout the NYPD is a sense that the federal authorities, particularly the FBI agents, clearly believe they are higher in the pecking order than the NYPD people who have joined the ATTF. As a member of ATTF, John is very aware of this hierarchy within



the government agencies, and it fuels his determination to bring down the crooked FBI agents who have been lying to the American people.

## Conspiracies/Cover-ups

The novel gives a clear message about deceit and the consequences of it, first by revealing the extramarital affair between Jill and Bud and then by exposing the federal government's cover-up of the TWA crash. As for Bud and Jill's affair, rather than portraying these two people as victims of unhappy marriages with terrible people who are simply in love, the novel reveals Bud as a jerk. By the end, there is clearly no love lost between Bud and Jill. The message here is that deceit leads to nothing good, and the cover-up after a lie is often worse than the lie itself. For instance, the FBI and CIA agents have gotten so caught up in their lies over the cause of the crash that they have resorted to trying to kill people to protect the secret. Even though Ted Nash tries to convince John at the end that the deceit was somehow for the good of the American public, neither John nor the reader is convinced. Although the reason for the cover-up is never explained, one fact is clear by the end of the book - the deceit was not motivated by altruism or for the good of the American people.

## September 11, 2001

The novel cleverly does not reveal the dates of each event leading up to the 9/11 attacks, so it does not become clear until the very end that the climax of the story is going to coincide with the 9/11 attacks. In other words, in the beginning of the novel, the author explains clearly that it has been five years since the 1996 TWA crash, and it is July. Of course, this means it is July 2001, and the 9/11 attacks are only several months away. The author does not focus on this date, however, so it is not clear in the beginning that this is where the plot is leading. By the end of the first part of the book, however, which is marked by Kate and John's last night together at the Windows on the World restaurant, it becomes more clear that the 9/11 attacks are going to become an important part of the story. That is, the reader knows, when reading about Kate and John dancing at the restaurant, that Windows on the World was in the North Tower and that everyone on that floor was killed when the first plane struck the tower.

Moreover, when John returns from his Yemen trip in the second part of the book, the date is Friday, September 7, 2001, and the 9/11 attacks are only days away. The beginning of the chapter does not focus on the date, though. Instead, readers know only that John has been in Yemen for a couple of months, and it is September.

## Truth-Seeking and Justice

The protagonist John Corey is introduced in the beginning of his investigation into the TWA crash as a cynical, seasoned New York cop, who does not share his wife Kate's idealism and conviction towards finding out the truth. John tells Kate in the beginning that he is just doing his job, and he doesn't care about the high ideals that Kate holds



dear. By the end of the novel, however, John strongly identifies with the crash families and their families, and he is motivated by his clear conviction that the American public has the right to know the truth about what happened on the night of the crash. In this sense, John regains a sense of passion that he lost somewhere in his life as a world-weary New York cop. Unfortunately, the events of 9/11 cut short John's quest for justice, as the videotape is again missing at the end. Although John knows by the end that the government has most definitely been lying to the American people, he never finds out exactly why.



# Style

## Point of View

The narrative is told from the first-person point of view of the protagonist John Corey, although the story also contains omniscient narrative in the first chapter, when Bud and Jill videotape the crash. The story also offers another omniscient perspective to the reader, in that the reader already know exactly what happened at the World Trade Center on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001, but John and the other characters clearly do not. This builds classical suspense. The reader is drawn into trying to figure out exactly when John and the others will arrive at the North Tower on the morning of September 11, 2001, and whether they will be in the Windows on the World restaurant when the first plane hits.

## Setting

The story is set in Manhattan, where John Corey and Kate Mayfield live and work at FBI headquarters. The setting also extends to nearby Long Island and the surrounding area, near where the plane exploded and fell into the Atlantic Ocean and where John conducts most of his investigation in the crash. The beaches off of Long Island also figure prominently in the story, as this is where Jill, Bud and others witnessed the explosion and resulting crash into the ocean. The beach is also where John goes to investigate the crash and where he confronts his nemesis Ted Nash. Therefore, the story takes place in part in the urban setting of Manhattan, but it also highlights the beauty of the natural environment surrounding the city.

## Language and Meaning

The story is told in simple language, with minimal descriptions and imagery. Like most thrillers, it is a fast-paced, quick read. There is an ever-present sense of urgency and danger in John's constant vigilance over whether he is being followed or tracked and in the numerous references to the ever-growing threat of Islamic terrorism.

## Structure

The novel is divided into three sections described as Books One, Two and Three, with consecutively numbered chapters. Book One is the first chapter on the date of the TWA Flight 800 crash, when Jill and Bud are on the beach and inadvertently videotape the crash. The story then jumps to Book Two, exactly five years later on the fifth anniversary of the crash. This is where the story takes off, and the first half of the book occurs over a span of a week, while John is investigating the crash. At the end of Book Two, John and Kate are sent off to Yemen and Tanzania, where they will spend the remaining time leading up to September 2001. The novel jumps from the day that John and Kate leave

in July to the day that John arrives back in the United States on Friday, September 7, 2001. The remainder of the story, Book Three, occurs over the next three days and culminates with the terrorist attacks on the morning of Tuesday, September 11. The story's denouement occurs the day after the attacks, when John finds out that the videotape is gone.



## Quotes

"I have a feeling that there's an imminent threat out there. Something far bigger than Asad Khalil." Chapter 5, pg. 48

"Too often we look at what's in front of us and examine it to death. But sometimes, it's what's missing that can tell you something, like that dog that didn't bark in the night." Chapter 16, pg. 144

"I'm on the Dr. Atkinson diet. Harvey Atkinson is a fat dentist in Brooklyn whose philosophy is, 'Eat what tastes good, and clean your plate.'" Chapter 17, pg. 147

"I do detective work because I like it. It's interesting and it keeps my mind sharp and makes me feel smarter than the idiots I work for. That's the extent of my commitment to truth, justice, and country. I do the right thing for the wrong reasons, but bottom line, truth and justice get done. If you want to do the right thing for the right reasons, go right ahead, but don't expect me to share your idealism." Chapter 17, pg. 153

"It's hard enough to solve an unsolved five-year-old case; it's a lot harder to solve one that's already been solved by someone else who's hidden all the clues and the witnesses." Chapter 20, pg. 180

"That's it. As many people suspected and surmised, there *was* a couple on the beach, they *were* having an affair, and they *did* inadvertently videotape the accident. But there was no smoking gun. No smoking gun. No smoking rocket on that tape." Chapter 41, pg. 342

"Life was a continuing series of compromises, disappointments, betrayals, and what-ifs. Now and then, you get it right the first time, and more rarely, you get a chance, to do it over and get it right the second time. I was going to give Jill Winslow a do-over, and I hoped she took it." Chapter 45, pg. 371

"From where I'd seen the glow, I could now see a tongue of bright, red-orange light rising into the sky. It rose quickly, even in slow motion, and I could now make out a white plume of what looked like smoke, trailing behind it. I glanced at Jill and Bud, but they hadn't seen it yet. It was 8:30 and 5 seconds, and I hit the Pause, slid off the coffee table, and knelt in front of the TV screen, staring at the point of light until my eyes got blurry. I rocked back and on my haunches and continued the tape in slow motion.

"There was no mistake what I was seeing now, and what over two hundred other people had seen, including Captain Spruck, who to be honest, I had doubted. I could see why he was so obsessed with this now that I saw it myself, and I owed him an apology. More important, the American people were owed an apology, but I didn't know from whom." Chapter 46, pg. 397





"I stared at the burning fuel on the horizon, and neither Jill nor Bud could know it then, but 230 men, women, and children had perished in the blink of an eye. But I knew it, and I felt my stomach tighten, my mouth was dry, and my eyes were moist." Chapter 46, pg. 399

"What if we told you what this is all about? Why we had to do some of the things we did? Would you be open to seeing the whole picture and considering the larger issues involved?"

"You know what? I don't give a shit what this is all about, and you can take your moral ambiguities and shove them up your ass. There is not one fucking thing you or your friends could tell me that would make any of this legal, lawful, or right. Friendly fire accident? Terrorist attack? Space alien death ray? Or maybe you just don't know. Whatever it was, the government owes the American people a full and honest answer. That's the result I expect from this meeting." Chapter 49, pg. 442-443

"A low blanket of clouds lay over the city, but the TV weather-man had predicted brilliant sunshine for tomorrow morning. It was odd, I thought, that what had started out as a half day off from work in July to accompany my wife to a memorial service had turned into this. Kate had always had an inkling of where this would go, but I had been clueless. Almost clueless. And for Jill Winslow and Bud Mitchell, what had started out as a tryst on the beach had become a classic case of doing something wrong in the wrong place at the wrong time. And now, a little over five years later, all these paths had converged, and they'd meet tomorrow at the crossroads of the Windows on the World." Chapter 51, pg. 456



## Topics for Discussion

In most novels, the protagonist learns some lesson or is otherwise somehow changed, for better or worse, by the end of the story. What lesson or lessons does John Corey learn in the novel, and how does he change throughout the progression of the story?

Discuss how class and socioeconomic status figure into the story?

What do you think happened to the videotape, and why do you think the government was trying so hard to cover up the fact that a missile hit the plane?

Do you feel that the story is resolved at the end? Is the ending satisfying?

How does integrating real-life events, like the plane crash and the World Trade Center disaster, into the novel affect the story? What possible explanations for the World Trade Center disaster are implied by the story?

Is it ever possible to uncover the whole truth about an event in the past?

Explain why John Corey continues his quest to learn about the plane crash after he comes back from Yemen.