

Pattern Recognition Study Guide

Pattern Recognition by William Gibson

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Plot Summary

Cayce Pollard is a self employed cool hunter. She makes her living by contracting out her unique ability to determine ahead of time which logos, products and advertising campaigns will work and which won't. Hubertus Bigend runs a multinational company called Blue Ant and hires Cayce's services, requiring her to go to London - a place she refers to as mirror world. This contract will keep her from her New York apartment for some time since it will lead to an investigation of an entirely different nature. Bigend wants Cayce to find the author and creator of the 'footage' that is rapidly gaining a cult like following on line. With 135 postings so far, the footage is unique, insightful and provocative. None of the segments have audio, and yet each seems to contain a lifetime of emotion, desire, and hope. There are no discernible features, landmarks or trademarks that can be seen in any of them, and they are as likely to have been taken in 1914 as in 1980.

Cayce has been following the footage with a dedication that qualifies her as a 'footagehead' for some time. Together with a group of mostly like minded people, she posts her observations and speculations on a site called Fetish Footage Forum where she is a well known and regular contributor. She is on the site so often that other regular contributors like Parkaboy, Mama Anarchia, and Musashi are as comfortable as family are to some. Cayce enjoys her time logged into that site as much as she would if she gathered the group into her living room. Of all of the contributors, Cayce has formed a friendship of sorts with Parkaboy, trusting him more than she does some of the people in her life. When she begins to hunt down the author of the footage, it is Parkaboy to whom she turns for help and advice. Like her, he is a purist, seeking only to find the source of the footage for the same reasons as an explorer might seek the headwaters of the Nile River. Parkaboy and Musashi create a character they name Keiko to lure information from the Osaka version of F:F:F. They attract the attention of a fellow footagehead in Japan named Taki who mentions the existence of watermarks. Further investigation and rather suggestive innuendo from the imaginary Keiko nets them a map of the 135 segments and their corresponding watermark numbers. It is an exciting leap forward in their search. Cayce manages to get an email address for the footage creator and sends a message. The response sets off a series of dramatic events that almost costs Cayce her life as she pursues the author of this imaginative work.

Before the whole truth is revealed, Cayce is mugged in Japan, and drugged in Russia. She persists, meeting those responsible for the magical footage they have long enjoyed but will she reveal their identity to Bigend? A dramatic finish includes revelations about Cayce's own father who disappeared when the World Trade Center bombing occurred. Rescued by Parkaboy, she is given a new lease on life.



Chapters 1 - 3

Chapters 1 - 3 Summary

Cayce Pollard is a self employed cool hunter. She makes her living by contracting out her unique ability to determine ahead of time which logos, products and advertising campaigns will work and which won't. Hubertus Bigend runs a multinational company called Blue Ant and hires Cayce's services, requiring her to go to London - a place she refers to as mirror world. This contract will keep her from her New York apartment for some time since it will lead to an investigation of an entirely different nature. Bigend wants Cayce to find the author and creator of the 'footage' that is rapidly gaining a cult like following on line. With 135 postings so far, the footage is unique, insightful and provocative. None of the segments has audio, and yet each seems to contain a lifetime of emotion, desire, and hope. There are no discernible features, landmarks or trademarks that can be seen in any of them, and they are as likely to have been taken in 1914 as in 1980.

She makes her way quickly to the elevator in the Harvey Nichols store after an encounter with a Tommy Hilfiger display and takes it to the fifth floor in an effort to regain control. She finds herself in a bar where the bartender recognizes her from a coolhunter thing she'd done on her last trip into town, and comments on the fact that she follows 'the footage'. Now the rest of the world fades and there is only Cayce and the bartender who tells her that a new segment is on line as of that morning. She knows the forum will be active, and orders an espresso which the bartender gives her on the house. She finishes and, on auto pilot, works her way back to Damien's flat where she looks at the new segment. Parkaboy has already sent it to her email without any accompanying comment of any kind, labeling it only #135. It is the number of segments linked so far to this particular creator. She watches, noting an absence of styling cues that she recognizes as masterful in its timelessness. She watches while on the screen the couple comes together in a kiss that is both elegant and erotic. She watches it twice before getting undressed and, exhausted, climbs into bed.

Chapters 1 - 3 Analysis

Cayce is suffering from jet lag, and everything on this side of the ocean feels like mirror world to her. Here at the behest of Blue Ant, and on their dime, she is the gauge used to determine whether or not a new product or product approach will have success in the market. Cayce is a self described cool hunter. Her life is largely connected to a site called F:F:F where she is one of several regular post identities. She has a definite aversion to anything that could be considered a 'style' of recognizable name brand, preferring that everything she wears be as acceptable today as it would have been in 1950 and in fact indistinguishable by label or design. She is also a follower of 'the footage', and is recently informed of the newest offering - number 135 of the series of clips now followed by a growing group of 'footageheads'.



Blue Ant is looking for a new logo to be the firm's launch into the new century and just the fact that Dorotea Benedetti has arrived in person rather than teleconferencing sparks Cayce's curiosity. Bernard apologizes for having to fly Cayce in, but it is her job. Cayce delivers a negative response to Blue Ant regarding their newest logo, created by Dorotea from the graphics design company Heinz & Plaff, and as such is asked if she will be around for any amount of time (ostensibly so Dorotea can have the opportunity to rework the design to which Cayce gave a thumbs down). Her contract is strictly one of consultation and she isn't required to critique or provide creativity of any kind. She is merely the human litmus paper that decides the future of this sample logo.

Cayce suffers from a form of style seizures that occur when she is confronted by the simulacra of style poisoning. Her only way to combat the onset of psyche attacks is to immediately remove herself from the offensive area and decompress somewhere neutral. Her most recent attack is suffered as a result of a confrontation with a Tommy Hilfiger display in a Harvey Nichols store. Her foray into the Harvey Nichols store sets off a psychic sensitivity in her that is similar to that which an epileptic gets around strobe lights. Hilfiger does it to her every time. She considers his 'style' to be the black hole of black holes.



Chapters 4 - 6

Chapters 4 - 6 Summary

Cayce wakes with a migraine and after a quick breakfast heads out into mirror world. She winds up near the Saturday market looking for coffee when she sees three men hunched over an open trunk. She admits she isn't the one for whom they are looking, and one of the three men follows her down the street asking if he can walk with her. He introduces himself as Voytek Biroshak. The other two men and he had been waiting for a Japanese collector, he admits. He takes her for a coffee, and, in her field of vision, is one of the first trademarks to have caused an adverse reaction in her. At the age of six she had a phobic reaction to the Michelin man. She cites a mantra that sometimes helps and looks around a stall in another direction to distract herself. Voytek leaves when the market gets crowded after they have exchanged email addresses.

Feeling less than motivated, she heads for the fruit and vegetable market on Aberdeen Street to stock up on supplies before returning to Damien's flat. When she gets there, she heads for his 'cube' to check the traffic on F:F:F to see what her fellow footageheads think of the latest offering. Going into the browser history to retrieve the site, she finds instead a more recent bookmark for a site she has never visited. She faces the frightening thought that someone has been in the flat while she was gone. Looking around, she sees the roll of tape she carefully placed on the table, now on the floor. She grabs a kitchen knife and checks the flat, but the intruder is gone.

She remembers her father telling her about security as a child, and follows the instructions he used to give her in lieu of a bedtime story. Secure the perimeter. She blockades the door, makes a pot of tea, and settles down in front of F:F:F. Parkaboy, who favors the progressive theory, and Mama Anarchia, who favors the completists, are in debate as usual over the latest footage offering. Bernard calls with an invite for dinner she is unable to turn down. Bigend is there as is Bernard's wife Helena, and they discuss the future and how they collectively might think of them. Hub takes her home in his Hummer but not before taking her for a drink in Clerkenwell.

Chapters 4 - 6 Analysis

Cayce goes out the next morning early and is mistaken for someone three men staring into a trunk are supposed to meet. They are trying to sell the Curta calculators they have and one man launches into his sales pitch thinking she is their buyer. The Curta is the smallest mechanical calculating machine ever constructed and the invention of Curt Herzstark, who developed it while a prisoner in Buchenwald, she is told, and only 800 pounds a piece. Voytek Biroshak follows her when she leaves. He shows her a ZX 81 computer with one K of ram and describes its historical importance in the personal computing world. It was the first computer for personal use by a British inventor who



was right about the coming trend, but wrong about the market. These computers required that the user learn programming.

When Cayce returns to Damien's flat, all she wants to do is go on to the Fetish Footage Forum and discuss the latest offering with her fellow footageheads, but when she opens the browser to go to the last page she had accessed, another one is in its place. This one has a title that suggests that Asians who have loose morals get what they deserve. It is more than just unnerving and Damien's flat loses its sense of refuge for her. She is reminded of an old boyfriend, Donny, whom she inadvertently discovered slept with a gun under his pillow. Their relationship had ended abruptly directly afterward. Her immediate concern is to verify that whoever had been in the flat was now actually gone. She does so, and can hear her father's words echoing in her mind. He had spent many evenings when she was a child, telling her 'bedtime stories' about his job in security and describing his procedure for securing a scene and maintaining control. Now the list comes to her automatically. She begins by ensuring she is alone, and takes note of any other evidence that someone else has been there. On impulse, she picks up the phone beside the computer and hits redial only to be connected with Dorotea's voice mail. She stifles a scream. Win Pollard had been an evaluator of physical security for American embassies world wide. He had always drilled into her the basic litany. 'First priority - secure the perimeter.' She has. 'Maintain routine and get on with ordinary business' would have been next on his list, and she makes herself tea and settles in with Damien's cube once more. Footageheads had been discussing and disseminating the fragments of footage offerings since the earliest connections had been made, and she finds comfort in the ordinary now. As she is discussing the latest with Parkaboy, Bernard calls to invite her to dinner and simply won't take no for an answer.

High Street is just as she remembers it - busy and packed with lemming-like individuals. Bernard sends a car for her when she can't gracefully get out of his persistent dinner invitation, and when she arrives, she discovers that Bigend is also there. He asks Cayce how she thinks the future will think of them but Cayce doesn't believe they will. They finish and Bigend insists on taking her home in his Hummer, but not before stopping for a drink.



Chapters 7 - 9

Chapters 7 - 9 Summary

Bigend parks in Clerkenwell, and they have no trouble getting a table. They discuss Dorotea and Blue Ant, and then out of nowhere, Hub asks her what she thinks of the latest footage offering. He wants to know how significant she thinks it is in terms of previous uploads. He makes reference to her friend in Korea, telling her he has people who monitor all the sites and he considers her contributions to be among the most useful. He wants to hire her to find the maker and treats her as though her acceptance is already fait accomplis. She asks what he would do with the maker but can't get a straight answer. He tells her to sleep on it before making a decision. She checks her email and finds one from Damien and one from Parkaboy. Damien tells her about his latest exploits and Parkaboy tells her about a watermark that he and another footagehead believe is on the footage. Parkaboy and Musashi create a character they call Keiko and begin posting on the Osaka site. They shortly lure in a persona named Takaycuhi or Taki as he prefers to be called. It is through him that they learn of the watermark on #78. She finally calls it a night.

The next morning she heads for a restaurant she remembers from her last visit, and entering finds Voytek sitting at a table with Billy Prion. She sits down by herself and orders a coffee and breakfast, and when she is finished, Voytek asks to join her. She asks him what he knows about watermarking, and whether it could be detected or extracted. He takes her to meet his sister Magda, and they go to a pub. Cayce is stunned when Magda brings up the footage. She goes to a payphone and calls Bernard, but he is unavailable. Cayce asks Helena if Blue Ant has a subsidiary called Trans and discovers that it is one of Hub's pet projects. She surmises that Magda is employed by Bigend in a roundabout way. She goes back to Damien's flat and thinks about the circle of Trans, Blue Ant and Bigend. The following day she is scheduled to meet with Stonestreet and Dorotea again.

Chapters 7 - 9 Analysis

After their drinks arrive, Hub comments on Cayce's dislike for Dorotea and reveals that she can be difficult if she believes that someone is after something she covets, telling her that Dorotea thinks he is going to offer Cayce a position to run his London office. Cayce simply isn't that kind of person. She is a freelancer - someone contracted to accomplish a specific task, not someone you would hire and put on a salary - and she says so. Bernard tells her that Dorotea wants to take over Bernard's position in the Blue Ant. Hub agrees that she would be a disaster and adds that she may not make it through the narrowing of their business. He also confides that Dorotea once worked in industrial espionage. When Hub asks her what she thought of the footage 'kiss', Cayce can hardly make the shift mentally to include Hub as a footagehead. She hardly knows how to respond, so she stalls. He admits monitoring relevant sites, and she asks what



his interest in it is. When he smiles, he is undeniably good looking, she decides. When he asks her to look for the author of the footage, she is reluctant. He senses that, but tells her to sleep on it before making up her mind. Somehow the idea of 'outing' the author seems almost sacrilegious to her.

She gets back to Damien's and checks her email. Damien writes to her about his latest exploits, admitting that despite many hardships and discomforts, he is totally in his element and enjoying himself. Parkaboy sends a contribution that alludes to a watermark possibly being secreted on the footage clips. This information comes via an alias he and another footagehead create to glean information from the Osaka site.

The next morning, Cayce runs into Voytek and discusses watermarks with him. He takes her to meet his sister Magda. She is employed by a company called Trans and her job is to go out at night and to subtly promote products by injecting them into innocent conversation. It is a form of passive marketing, she explains. When she mentions the footage, Cayce gets suspicious. She calls Helena to thank her for the previous evening's dinner, and inadvertently discovers that one of Hub's pet projects is the company Trans. The circle closes on Cayce and she can't help but feel as though she is being steered.



Chapters 10 - 12

Chapters 10 - 12 Summary

Cayce makes it to Blue Ant early, and Bernard asks her how her ride home with Hub went. She tells him that they didn't talk shop, but instead discussed the footage, watching his face for any sign of complicity. She sees none. Dorotea arrives and claims that Heinzl has worked his magic with the logo in Frankfurt. She pulls out the square of art board to reveal an earlier version of the Michelin Man called Bibendum. "He took a duck in the face at two hundred and fifty knots," Cayce says. As Bernard looks like he is going to panic, Cayce tells him that the design is fine. She says goodbye to Bernard and Dorotea, asks for a car, and leaves. When she gets back to Damien's flat, she finds a Michelin Man garroted to the knob of the door with a thick black cord. She almost screams, but catches herself, and repeats her mantra. She goes in and locks and chains the door behind her, avoiding even looking at it. The phone rings, and Bigend asks if she's made a decision about the footage. She still isn't able to speak. He changes gears, congratulating her on signing off on Heinzl's logo. She tells him she's packing for the first flight home but she tells him she is considering Paris instead. Bigend wants her to meet with a man named Boone Chu who is already on his way to her and offers her a vacation on Blue Ant, telling her he'll have a hotel arranged as a bonus for vetting the H & P job. Of course, he adds that they'll need her in the spring for the implementation of the logo. Finally she gives in, agreeing to meet Boone and when he arrives, they compare work histories, and Boone tells her that Bigend has offered him partnership. He is a Chinese-American white hat hacker and claims that his job is to facilitate her ideas, whatever they are. She asks him if he wants to do it, and he is as undecided as she is. Both see Bigend's involvement as the downside, but the upside is that it's an interesting problem, and there is no problem with being paid. The contents of his briefcase show her he is serious as he pulls out a titanium laptop, multiple phones and cables. He tells her he has worked on the footage already but has not been very successful. They go out to eat, still discussing the footage, and after eating Boone retrieves an email from a friend that claims there is something encrypted in each of the 135 segments. She tells him it's a watermark but can't confirm it and she knows that to do so would require a plane ticket and for her to pretend to be Keiko.

She decides that she and Boone will go to Tokyo. The decision has hardly been made when Pamela Mainwaring calls Cayce and tells her that on Bigend's behalf she has secured first class tickets for the following morning as well as a laptop and phone. She will drop them all off shortly. She ignores her mother's third email and Pamela arrives with additional arrangements for them to stay in the rooftop Park Hyatt in Shinjuku. The Tokyo office of Blue Ant is at their disposal, and a return ticket to anywhere is at their disposal. Then she gives her a Platinum Visa and tells Cayce to email her if she needs anything. She decides to leave Damien's new keys with Voytek.



Chapters 10 - 12 Analysis

Cayce doesn't trust either Bernard or Bigend enough to tell them about what Dorotea has done. She has no idea what Bigend's capabilities might be and her instincts tell her to finish the job and get out. Still, Dorotea is supposed to have connections and Cayce isn't sure what motivates her to put Cayce on her hate list. Does she really think Cayce is angling for the London office job, or does she think that Cayce is interested in Bigend on a personal level? Part of her wants to get back at Dorotea by just saying no to the next attempt at a logo too, even if it is okay. It would be the first time she's ever lied to a client firm and she really doesn't want to do that just for the sake of getting even with Dorotea, even if it would be temporarily very satisfying. She feels as though she is on the brink of change. Even her relationship to the footage is changing. She gets to Blue Ant and when Dorotea arrives, she manages to take the rug right out from under Cayce. Bernard can't see the art board, but Cayce is ready to scream. Dorotea has shown her an older version of the Michelin Man and then casually puts Bibendum, as it was called back then, in the envelope and pulls out the real art board, but Cayce can't get past how Dorotea could possibly have known. Cayce had seen Bibendum for the first time when she was six, and had thrown up. Dorotea is smirking and knows she has won. All Cayce wants is to get out of there. She can't even look at Dorotea. When she gets back to Damien's flat, she finds a gift garroted to the door. Dorotea definitely knows the effect of this particular figure. When the telephone rings, Cayce jumps. Her nerves are raw and jangling and she isn't able to function yet. Bigend's voice asks her if she's slept on his proposal and congratulates her on a job well done, but she still can't formulate words to answer him. When she finally manages language skills again, her first communication to him is that she won't do it, although he's already two subjects past that one. He wants her to meet someone who is apparently on his way to her now, and she can't muster the ability to get out of it so she finally agrees and hangs up. Bigend has promised her a vacation, and airline tickets to anywhere she wants. He is like sticky tape with which she has somehow become entangled, and at every turn his influence is asserting itself so that she will bend to his will. She wonders, not for the first time, if anyone has ever said no to him and had it work.

When Boone Chu arrives minutes later, she is surprised to recognize him. She had seen him in the tube before her meeting with Blue Ant briefly. After introductions are made, and they get basic work history out of the way, Cayce learns that Boone is actually well suited to helping her should she decide to take Bigend up on this endeavor to track the footage. He has already tried, he admits, but his lack of success only fuels his desire to learn even more. Perhaps seeing something of herself in his personality, they continue to discuss the footage over a meal, and he tells her that a friend good in math has uncovered some type of encryption which Cayce further reveals is a watermark. Now, already working off of each other, it seems inevitable that they will see it through. She has hardly made the leap to the next step, which involves a flight to Tokyo and her pretending to be the creation Keiko so that she can obtain further information, when Bigend is already issuing tickets, providing a laptop and cell phone. The contact who arrives with these shortly after even has a Platinum Visa and accommodation arrangements. It all happens so fast that it is unlikely she could have

stuck to no if she wanted to do so. Everything in this universe propels her to search for those who post the footage. It has become her purpose in life for the time being.



Chapters 13 - 15

Chapters 13 - 15 Summary

A first class flight to Tokyo on BA is a luxury. She is unable to find a movie she likes, but then remembers the laptop complete with iBook installed and opens it. Inside is a disc with a database of all of the footage postings from the beginning along with a searchable database of F:F:F. She looks through her earlier posts, including her first and Parkaboy's first, and rediscovers the Filmy and Maurice edit which is one of her favorites. She watches the segment as though for the first time, falling asleep wondering anew how that can be all of it. When she wakes, it is dark and she works her way to the bathroom, discovering Billy Prion accompanied by the singer from Velcro Kitty of whom the music press had made such a big deal.

Though Pamela Mainwaring had assured her a car would be waiting, she takes the JR Express from Narita. Her room in the Tokyo Hyatt is as grand as it is high. She unpacks and logs on to find two emails from Parkaboy. The first has a photoshop picture of the girl they created named Keiko and the second informs her that 'Keiko' has already told Taki that a friend of hers is coming, and he'll let her know what he says in response. She tries to walk off the jet lag, but it only makes it worse, and she navigates back to the hotel to sleep. She turns on the television and is surprised to see an advertisement that features Billy Prion.

She lies there in bed in the morning with a vivid memory of the morning her father disappeared along with the World Trade Center. The memory is as strong and as vivid as though it had happened only yesterday. She remembers looking at the televised footage and thinking that it resembled the kinds of dreams she sometimes had. She is supposed to have a breakfast meeting with a German designer, and they are both unable to turn away from the screen. Finally, Cayce gets up and opens the curtains to reveal a blue sky. She can see down into the woods that surround the Imperial Palace and tries to judge her current degree of jet lag or soul delay as she preferred to think of it, but she detects nothing at all. She orders breakfast.

Chapters 13 - 15 Analysis

First class is a novelty and Cayce finds herself enjoying the luxury immensely. She lounges in the reclining seat with more room than she could have imagined, and scrolls through the searchable database of F:F:F, marveling at the details that Bigend's people have managed to assemble for her on short notice. Later, a trip to the washroom reveals that Billy Prion and a singer to whom the music press had linked him are on the same flight, and the coincidence is just too much. Her father's words ring in her ears as she remembers him saying that even paranoid people have enemies.



She takes the JR Express from Narita and then a taxi to minimize her contact with Blue Ant in Tokyo, but as soon as she is in the cab, her cell phone rings and a Blue Ant representative welcomes her and offers her services. It appears there is no escaping them. The Hyatt in Tokyo is grand and the room is even grander. It is everything as was advertised, and she enjoys the unaccustomed luxury. Emails from Parkaboy give her some indications as to how Keiko looks. She unpacks and walks the streets in the area, but jet lag comes on hard, and she returns to her suite to sleep.

She is accosted by the memory of her father's disappearance. She remembers that on that day the world itself had taken a duck in the face. At the exact moment of impact, Cayce stood outside a shop in Soho and watched a single rose petal fall from a dead rose in what felt like a symbolic micro event announcing the disaster.



Chapters 16 - 18

Chapters 16 - 18 Summary

Cayce puts Blue Ant to the test, asking them to replace the retro Ricksons jacket in which Dorotea had burned a hole. She also wants her hair cut immediately, and buys a wardrobe to better suit the new style. She has Parkaboy's photo of Keiko printed and signed by the girl with the kanji Darryl included. A message from Parkaboy confirms 'Keiko' has heard back from Taki who agrees to meet her friend from the states that night in Roppongi. A map is to follow. 'Keiko' has implied that her friend has something for him, and their relationship will prosper if Taki conveys the number of the watermark to her friend - a footagehead like her. Her cell phone rings soon afterward and Parkaboy tells her the meeting's time and place, citing a map is in her email.

Her meeting with Taki is uncomfortable, and his English is barely passable. She tries to converse, but barely manages to get across that she is Keiko's friend and that Keiko wants the number he and his group discovered in return for which Keiko wishes him to have the 8x10 glossy she printed earlier. He takes it from her, writing down three four-digit numbers, his eyes wet with gratitude. She goes to the bathroom, and while she is gone, he leaves. She leaves soon after and is accosted by two Italian men who try to take her laptop. She defends herself the way her father had educated her, and runs right into a man on a scooter who turns out to be Boone Chu. She realizes suddenly she has seen him several times that day, and climbs on behind him to be taken to safety. They pull into an alley where they give their jackets and helmets to two other men who take the scooter and leave. When she asks, he admits to having been watching her being watched by the two men for a while already, and assures her she is safe now, asking if she's managed to get the number.

He takes her to a pre-war apartment that belongs to his ex who is out of town and tells her they have been watched and/or followed since they first met, but isn't sure if it is by Blue Ant or someone else. She tells him about Dorotea, and her unusually intimate knowledge of her personal phobias, and even finds herself telling Boone about them in barest details. He thanks her for being able to share this with him, and asks to see the laptop given to her by Blue Ant. He wants to be sure that her every keystroke isn't being sent to someone else. She shows him the watermark number and he is glad she hasn't entered it. While he works, she sips her tea and thinks about the woman in whose apartment they are sitting.

Chapters 16 - 18 Analysis

Cayce decides to take full advantage of Blue Ant's offer of 'anything she needs' and so far, despite making some seemingly unusual requests, they have come through. Parkaboy contacts her first by email to convey that Taki is willing to meet, and then by phone with the where and when. He admits that they've made it sound as though Keiko



is ready to bed him as soon as she returns to Tokyo, providing of course that he impart the details of the watermark for which Cayce is looking. Cayce is somewhat uncomfortable with the way that they are going about this, but can't come up with a better option. She realizes that throughout her travels, the constant exposure to Hello Kitty logos and paraphernalia haven't generated the need to invoke the duck in face mantra once, and wonders about that inconsistency.

Taki is sweating profusely and obviously nervous and uncomfortable throughout their entire meeting, which lasts only minutes. He gives her the number she wants and takes the photograph of Keiko, disappearing while she is in the bathroom. Cayce leaves as well and is immediately set upon by two Italian men. One tries to grab her and the other her laptop, but Cayce had been educated by a friend of her father's in how to deal with unwanted aggression like this. She butts the first one in the face, breaking his nose with her forehead, and stomps on the foot of the second, giving her enough room to leave them. As she does, a scooter stops in front of her, and the rider removes his helmet revealing Boone Chu. Equally relieved and surprised, she climbs on the back and he takes her safely out of the area. They exchange jackets with a decoy pair who double back to check on the two Italians. Boone checks in with them as he gets into a cab with her.

They coordinate to ensure Boone and Cayce are not being followed before Boone takes her to an apartment belonging to his ex. Then he examines her laptop for signs of someone monitoring her keystrokes and tells her how he came to be in Japan. The fact that they've been watched and followed since the States unnerves her a little and she relates the incidents that occurred with Dorotea including her knowledge of Cayce's phobias. This new information makes it less likely that their followers are Blue Ant employees. She is uncomfortably aware that being in Boone's ex's apartment bothers her on a personal level for reasons she hasn't had time to sort out.



Chapters 19 - 21

Chapters 19 - 21 Summary

Cayce has a hotel staff member take her to her room, and barricades the door behind him. She notes that Blue Ant has managed to acquire the rare black Rickson's MA-1 jacket she had requested. Showered, she opens an email from Parkaboy with an attached jpg from Taki, sent after emailing her from two separate cafes on the way home. It is another offering from the group Mystic. Amazingly, there are 135 numbers on it, each containing three groups of four numbers that are shown in red, superimposed on a pale blue background of avenues, squares, circles and a long rectangular park-like object making up a T-city. He closes telling her Darryl is searching for a map that corresponds to this one. Her last phone call is to Pamela Mainwaring.

In the morning, she is booked on a flight out of Narita just after noon. Boone calls to tell her that they are on the same flight and he will meet her in the lobby. She works out, and Boone escorts her to their flight. She tells him she has more information and shows it to him on the flight, but he is unable to discern its significance immediately either. She makes the decision to go back to Damien's place, despite the potential for danger and Blue Ant's willingness to pay the bill. Bigend is waiting at the airport for them, and Boone fills him in but with two omissions. He neglects to mention the jpeg from Taki or the way Cayce head-butted the man outside the pub who accosted her. He does mention that Cayce had been followed, however, and Bigend says he will look into whether a corporate leak may be the cause.

Arriving at Damien's, she finds that he is home, and is in the company of Voytek, and Marina Chtcheglova who is Damien's Russian producer, and his accountant, Fergal Collins. She speaks briefly to Fergal and Damien, and then calls Boone to assure him she is fine. He asks her for the jpeg, and she sends it, and opens the last email from her mother. In it, she insists that her father is trying to contact her from the 'other side', and relays several partial transcripts that she and her friends are unable to decipher. The email reminds her of the time surrounding the World Trade Center disaster, and how she looked for her father who seemed to have vanished into thin air. It is almost impossible to prove he had been there and was part of the dead.

Chapters 19 - 21 Analysis

Cayce is nervous and won't go back into her room without an escort after what happened at the bar when Taki left. Hyper-sensitive after Boone tells her someone has been watching them, she checks the room before locking herself in to shower and check mail. Another offering from Taki to Keiko has Darryl and Parkaboy convinced that Taki is not part of the inner circle of the group Mystic which they believe may be either a cell of info-theorists, or junkies perhaps employed by one of the larger corporations. Neither is sure how Taki is coming by this information, but he has managed to secure



their latest find of 135 twelve-digit numbers that are superimposed on a map. Each number is watermarked into a segment which corresponds to a location which provides a formal order of sorts. She calls Pamela Mainwaring and has her book a flight out of Narita.

Boone calls with news that he is booked on the same flight and the lack of autonomy bothers Cayce somewhat. As they are boarding later in the morning, she tells Boone that she has received more from Parkaboy via Taki, and promises to show him later. She isn't sure why she feels the need to hold back information but in a way she finds him a little bit pushy, and doesn't want to examine the way she felt in his ex's apartment too closely yet. She sits on the plane thinking about how her employment by Bigend has skewed her relationship to the other footageheads at F:F:F. It bothers her. When they land, Bigend is waiting for them and for some reason she can't quite fathom, Boone isn't entirely honest with him about what they found out in Tokyo, and all that happened. She resolves to talk to him about it when she isn't so tired, and discern whether his motives have any merit before coming clean with Bigend.

At Damien's door, she sees light and hears voices - one of them Damien's, so she knocks and finds him there with his Russian producer, who takes an immediate dislike to Cayce, and Voytek who is another one of those things Cayce attributes to the Great Whatever which somehow seems multiplied by her jet lag. She talks to everyone but Marina briefly and heads for sleep, but is sidetracked by her promise to call Boone and let him know she is safe. She does so, and asks why he omitted information from his report to Bigend. He suggests that Bigend may already know, and is trying to determine whether or not he is complicit in the recent events in Tokyo. She reluctantly lets it go, and finds herself emailing Boone the jpeg at his request, somewhat perturbed that it seems as though she is doing what he wants instead of him working to facilitate her as was originally suggested by Bigend. She puts that aside and absently opens the latest offering from her mother. In it, Cynthia insists that Cayce's father is trying to contact her from the other side. It brings back memories of the World Trade Center disaster - one of the strongest being of the day that she hung her father's photo with the missing, taking note that respectfully, not one photo had been hung over another. It seemed like a rare glimpse into humanity and finally brought Cayce to tears.



Chapters 22 - 24

Chapters 22 - 24 Summary

Finally, Cayce sleeps briefly, showers and then climbs back into bed and manages to sleep until Damien checks on her the following morning at seven. They slip out for coffee alone. He asks if there is any word about her father and commiserates with her. She explains why she changed the locks, and he admits being careful about who had the keys before. She warns him that his computer might also be compromised, but he isn't angry. They exchange information about current events. She heads for a studio to exercise and to stay out of his way until he leaves again.

Leaving the studio, she goes to a sandwich shop for lunch, and sits remembering the first time she'd come to Covent Garden with her father. Her cell rings and Bigend asks her to come to Blue Ant. The phone rings again. This time it's Parkaboy with a problem. Darryl has been trying to impress the girl whose photo they had used to create Keiko. After reading the messages to Taki she is furious with all of them and wants to contact Taki to make him happy by sending her photos. Cayce tells Parkaboy to allow it, especially if Judy is willing to stay in character. It is the only option they have since she is threatening to involve media attention otherwise. She gets to Blue Ant just as a man is coming out. He ducks and weaves to avoid her, and Cayce asks the receptionist who he is. She learns that Franco works for Dorotea, and the tape on his nose is the result of an accident. She also learns that Dorotea is upstairs.

Cayce runs into Bernard on the way up, who tells her Dorotea has been hired by Bigend to act as client liaison. She goes into the meeting room to find Boone there as well. When Bigend begins to talk, she tells him to shut up. She asks him if Dorotea has just been hired and Bigend pleads with her to sit down and listen at least. Bigend reveals that Cayce is right about all of Dorotea's involvement. Bigend hired Dorotea to ensure her aid and loyalty to her own career, buying her allegiance. In turn, Dorotea tells Cayce that she has been approached by a Russian who has a great deal of information about Cayce and wants her made uncomfortable to the degree that she would leave London and Blue Ant. Dorotea had done as she was asked, but had never known the identity of the person responsible. Now, Boone is left to fill in the blanks.

Chapters 22 - 24 Analysis

Cayce and Damien go for coffee after she's slept and she tells him about Dorotea and the Michelin man experience, leading into Bigend and his interest in the maker of the footage. He takes it all in. She outlines the Japan experience without too much detail. He tells her about his film, the time left, and the financing issues that he has. He's hoping to come out of it all still owning his film, and is returning to St. Petersburg on a flight that afternoon. He assures her he is glad she is at his place, and kisses her cheek goodbye as she promises to stay out of his way.



Cayce is on an emotional roller coaster. Even Damien can see that all of the recent events are having an effect on her. More surprises are in store. She arrives at Blue Ant after being summoned by Bigend to run into one of her muggers on his way out. Upstairs, she learns that Bigend has hired Dorotea, and Cayce is furious. The only thing that keeps her in the meeting, which also includes Boone, is a curiosity. She wants to know what Dorotea knows. She learns that Dorotea had been approached by a Russian and hired to make Cayce uncomfortable. The Russian had wanted Cayce to leave Blue Ant and London, so Dorotea had done it all, from burning her jacket to having Damien's flat broken into and software installed on his computer. What surprises Cayce is the degree of information that the Russian has about Cayce including her phobias which had been attained by securing the files from one of her therapists. When the Russian discovered that Cayce had been on her way to Tokyo, he had become very agitated and asked Dorotea to intervene. She couldn't go herself, but had been able to send the two men who subsequently attempted to relieve her of her computer. All that is left now is for Boone to hunt down and identify the Russian at the controls and help her to understand why. Then Bigend takes Dorotea out, leaving Boone and Cayce together.



Chapters 25 - 27

Chapters 25 - 27 Summary

Cayce and Boone go for coffee at a nearby Starbucks. Boone admits to having driven by Damien's and having seen Franco and Max - Cayce's muggers - sitting outside his apartment. He had then called Bigend and waited until a meeting with Dorotea was also set up. Boone explains things to Cayce in a manner that helps her to understand the situation and the fact that there are no other options. He asks if she still trusts him enough to work with him, and Cayce wants his assurances that he will keep her more informed. He will, but only face to face because there are dangers to other forms of communication. Boone's next step is to get a suit from Selfridges and head for Ohio where he will approach Sigil Technologies, a watermarking company that has some very big clients and a particular and distinctive method. He squeezes her hand warmly and kisses her cheek as she blushes.

Cayce cleans Damien's flat. After the downstairs is done, she falls asleep still fighting jet lag and its effects. Magda calls and wakes her, asking her out to dinner. Voytek and the African man, Ngemi, who was originally with Voytek when Cayce met him, is there with her. He has sold his ZX-81's but part of the deal involves creating an interface which is complicated and requires financing. It is a complicated deal involving the third man from their original meeting as well, Hobbs Baranov, a cryptographer. The dinner seems aimed at approaching her or through her, Bigend, for financing.

Cayce returns to Damien's and goes on line to F:F:F which now feels like unfamiliar territory somehow. She leaves the site without posting, and opens email instead, answering one from Boone assuring him she is okay, one from Parkaboy which discusses Judy's increasing involvement both in communication and emotions and one from Ivy (F:F:F's founder), who asks if she is still in Japan - a detail about which she shouldn't be aware but is. Ivy had received this tidbit of information from Mama Anarchia - another footage follower with whom Parkaboy and she by association with him are frequently at odds. The last email she opens is from her friend Margot who is watching her New York flat for her while she is gone. She is sure that someone has been inside and wants to know if Cayce left her keys with anyone else. She's had enough, and climbs into bed. Her sleep is filled with disturbing images that end with a vision of her father who tells her the dead can't help her. She wakes, wishing Damien were there.

Chapters 25 - 27 Analysis

Boone doesn't understand why Cayce is angry with him. She explains how little she appreciates his barging ahead with information that concerns her. Boone explains himself, and she realizes that he still hasn't even slept. It is also beginning to sink in that if her confidence had been compromised by him, it was only out of genuine concern. She still doesn't trust Dorotea, but Boone reminds her that Cypriot Russians like the



ones who have hired her generally tend towards the violent end of reactionary, and if she enjoys breathing she has to play ball with them to a degree. As such, a threat from Bigend would not have worked as opposed to an offer of employment. One ensures a certain loyalty while the other guarantees her animosity. Bigend had no choice and Cayce is starting to understand that. The depth of deception by the Russians is impressive - even Mainwaring turns out to be one of theirs and is terminated, making everything she had issued to Cayce suspect. Boone is headed to buy a suit, and Cayce finds herself thinking he might look exceptionally good in one. The thought makes her blush. He promises to be in touch, sealing the promise with a squeeze of her hand and a kiss on her cheek.

Magda invites Cayce to dinner where she discovers Voytek and Ngemi are with her. They all discuss Voytek's sale of the ZX-81's and his struggle to finance the alterations that are part of the deal. The interfaces are expensive and it appears as though the dinner invitation had been orchestrated in the hopes that Cayce could help. She resolves to involve the Visa issued by Mainwaring if Voytek is unsuccessful elsewhere, and let the Russians mull that one over.

Cayce seems to be the focus of scrutiny lately and she doesn't like it. In fact, she resents the invasion of her privacy. It seems as though she has no private life anymore. There are people breaking into her home, into the places she is staying, bugging her phones, putting spyware on her computer, and it's all adding up. Everything is at stake, from her job to her sanity and she is teetering on the edge of tears when she goes to sleep. The dreams that plague her are not much better, and she wakes with her father's voice and image still reverberating in her head, telling her that the dead can't help, followed by the cryptic message that the boy's no good.



Chapters 28 - 30

Chapters 28 - 30 Summary

An inspiration hits her and she emails Voytek to ask him when Ngemi is going to visit Baranov. She needs to talk to Baranov and needs to take the mapped printout of the numbers with her, although she doesn't know why. She meets Ngemi under the clock at the Waterloo station, and the two hour trip to Bournemouth is both pleasant and comforting. In Bournemouth, Ngemi secures a car and they continue towards their meeting with Baranov who lives in a caravan he rents from the Gypsies who own them. A sign at the entrance warns against unauthorized entry.

Cayce notices a distinct lack of birds singing or dogs barking. Ngemi admits he has never heard them either. He knocks on Baranov's door and tells him that he has someone with him. Cayce introduces herself and he is more than a bit wary of her presence. She tells him she is looking for information, and in return for information about the author of the footage, she will go to Lucian Greenaway who just outbid him for a ZX-81 and buy it for him. Though it is four-and-a-half thousand pounds, she knows the Visa from Mainwaring can take it. She warns him that if she senses any effort at cheating her, or not giving her the email address she wants, she will throw the calculator that he wants into the canal. She leaves, telling him to contact Ngemi when he has her information.

Cayce and Ngemi leave and briefly discuss how Hobbs became who he now represents himself to be. She asks Ngemi for just a little bit more help with the purchase of the Curta calculator from Greenaway, to check its provenance and to help her to deliver it to Hobbs again. He agrees. It is Sunday evening, and with Ngemi's advice, Cayce emails Greenaway to announce her intention to come for the Curta prototype, asking it be put on hold until her arrival. Ngemi confirms that had Cayce offered Hobbs the money to purchase it himself, he likely would have turned her down, being unwilling to give a rival so much money for the Curta he covets. They go their separate ways for the night, and Ngemi promises to call her in the morning. Cayce answers a few emails, learning from Parkaboy that Judy is still at Darryl's and still in contact with Taki and that Boone is making slow progress with inroads to Sigil employees. The last is an all numerical hotmail address that tells her simply to observe the protocol. The .ru ending and H-B sign off tell her it is from Hobbs, but little more.

Chapters 28 - 30 Analysis

Ngemi explains how by buying the Curta calculators on line, a price is being established for them much like is done for rare coins and stamps. Hobbs Baranov is passionate about collecting them, appreciating the provenance. He accompanies her to Bournemouth where he borrows a car and drives straight through to the caravan Hobbs rents from the Gypsies which is located on a site once used by MI5.



The site, when they arrive, is distinctly military in appearance and the lack of birds or dog noises are immediately evident to Cayce. Ngemi completes his business with Hobbs first, exchanging some Curta calculators for a sum brokered by Voytek for a Japanese collector. Hobbs is loudly vocal about his displeasure that Ngemi has chosen to bring Cayce with him, but hears her out. He is outwardly disbelieving when she tells him she can get the Curta he covets from Greenaway, but listens to the other half of her proposition. He makes no promises, but Cayce is quick to warn him that she will tolerate no attempt to double cross her with either false or non-existent information.

Cayce and Ngemi leave and go their own ways until morning. It is Sunday and little can be accomplished other than announcing the intention of purchase to Greenaway via his internet account, so she does so. She reads emails from both Parkaboy and Boone. Parkaboy is concerned with the rate of escalation that Judy is using with Taki to keep him happy from Darryl's home, and questions whether it is worth it. Cayce admits she doesn't know, but it is possible that more information will be forthcoming so she tells him not to discourage this as yet. Boone isn't making any swift progress, and expresses his concern for her well being. She assures him she is fine. A brief and confusing email from Hobbs tells her to 'observe the protocol' - whatever that means.



Chapters 31 - 32

Chapters 31 - 32 Summary

Cayce works out on Monday morning, keeping the cell phone from Blue Ant close. It rings and Ngemi tells her Hobbs has called with what she needs. Now it is up to her. Greenaway's business opens at eleven and they agree to meet there then. After looking them over, Greenaway's first question is whether or not Cayce is serious, while looking at her flight jacket and sizing up her 'class' and status. She tells him her father is a collector. Ngemi immediately goes about verifying the provenance of the Curta, and Greenaway assures him that he has extensive documentation and photos that prove it is a legitimate number four in the line. Greenaway claims it was manufactured in 1947 and Cayce asks to see it. After asking again whether or not Cayce can truly afford the Curta, he finally puts it on the counter. Ngemi examines it, and ensures its authenticity before telling Greenaway they'll take it. A block away, Hobb's accepts both the box and the documents proving its provenance and gives Cayce a business card with the 'Light of India Curry House. Poole.' on it. On the reverse is a Russian email address.

Taking a cab to Kensington High Street, she goes into the park and sitting on her jacket she begins to compose an email of introduction and inquiry. She explains how she came across the initial footage, F:F:F, and the interest she and others from that site have surrounding each segment. She calls themselves adventurers and asks who and where they are, and whether they are dreaming like she is. She doesn't intend to send the email, but somehow her hand does anyway. She eats, and uses her iBook to look up the name and address of the person who has the domain name attached to the email turning up A. N. Polakov. She calls Boone and Marisa answers, so when she gets him on the phone she doesn't tell him anything - only that she is checking in. She calls Bigend and asks the name of the Cypriot with whom Dorotea supposedly had contact and who had initiated the campaign to discourage her. He tells her it is Andreas Polakov. She wants to know if Dorotea knew he was recording her conversation but he avoids the question. She disconnects, and checking for incoming mail finds a response to her email. She almost chokes on her tea. The author asks how she got his address and questions who the other people are she mentioned in her email. She calls Bigend again to see who is handling travel now, and tells him she is going to Paris and that she'll explain the following day. Then she calls the agent and arranges to get a rush visa for Russia. Sylvie Jeppson meets her, telling her that she has been told to take extremely good care of Cayce. She does, getting her visa ready for travel to Russia. Then Cayce books a flight to Paris, telling Sylvie she just wanted to be ready. She calls Voytek to pick up Damien's keys again, telling him she will buy him the interface scaffolding he needs thinking she'll do that with Bigend's card, but pay for the flight to Russia with her own.



Chapters 31 - 32 Analysis

Greenaway is one of those people in England who observe and give importance to the 'class' system. He immediately sizes Ngemi up, beginning with his footwear, and forms a less than favorable opinion of him. Ngemi knows enough about the history of the Curtas to inquire intelligently after Greenaway's copy and its provenance. Herzstark was known to have kept three prototypes in his home in Nendeln Liechtenstein until his death in 1988, which were then sold to a private collector and this one is number four, a fact which Greenaway delivers with what Cayce can only describe as loathing. They examine and purchase it, meeting with Hobbs a block away to make the exchange. Hobbs gives Cayce a business card and an email address 'stellanor@armaz.ru' which is Russian, and is somewhat surprised by her lack of interest and enthusiasm in the Baltic oil company. Cayce is unsure of the importance herself.

Cayce feels a certain lack of direction now. She emails the address on the card with inquiries as to who they are and what they are doing. She looks up the name attached to the email site, and then calls Boone. Marisa answers, and Cayce is immediately angry with herself for setting herself up to feel the way she does now. She calls Bigend to get the name of the man who had contacted Dorotea from Russia and Bigend gives her Andreas Polakov before he begins to duck her questions. She is beginning to feel like Alice down the rabbit hole. Deeper and deeper she goes. She readies a visa for Russian travel, and books a flight to Paris using Bigend's new travel agent, Sylvie Jeppson. She declines the offer of a ticket to Russia, resolving to pay for that herself and keep Bigend out of the loop for now.



Chapters 33 - 34

Chapters 33 - 34 Summary

Cayce gets on a plane to Russia after emailing her mother and Parkaboy and telling Magda who picked up Damien's keys from her instead of Voytek. Her email to Parkaboy lets him know that she is on to something, and may have actually communicated with the author of the footage. She promises that she will call him from Moscow, and tell him everything. She also emails Stellanor and tells him she will be in Russia the following day on business and asks if they can meet. When she gets to the airport, she exchanges some money for a supply of rubles, and takes a cab to her hotel. Her room is on the twelfth floor and has a bay window that looks out onto the Moscow river. She checks email and finds one from Parkaboy and one from Stellanor. Parkaboy tells her that Judy has gone to Japan to see Taki. Now, without distractions, Darryl has found the key to the map with the numbers encoded. It is not a city. It is actually an exact replication of a part of the manual arming mechanism of the Army's M18A1 Claymore mine. The match was found by a search bot and after sharing this with her, he again pleads for full disclosure.

Cayce puts on makeup and goes out for a walk. When her phone rings, she answers it without thinking and Parkaboy is on the other end. He asks if she's met him, and after a negative response, asks when. She comes clean, telling him that she has been working for Bigend and that's how she's been able to afford to travel to Japan. When she hangs up, her next call leaves voice mail for Sylvia to get Peter a ticket. She realizes how tired she is and retraces her steps to the hotel to sleep. The next call is from Boone and wakes her. He tells her he has discovered the domain name Armaz.ru. He's discovered that the capital of the Republic of Ingushetia is an 'ofshornaya zona'. He explains that this is Russia's own offshore tax haven and that Dorotea's Cypriot and the footage both originate there. He goes on to tell her that Russian oil is becoming the world's stable source and huge global capital changes will likely follow. She asks who answered the phone the last time she called and he claims it was an accounting employee from Sigil. Through her, he is gleaning the information they need. She makes a snide comment about another date being the key to the whole internet address and Boone isn't happy.

Chapters 33 - 34 Analysis

Cayce tells her mother about the dream she had of her father and that she followed the advice he gave her in it. She also talks about how her mother's email citing communication from her gave her the creeps. She glosses over her reasons for going to Moscow, rightfully claiming it is part of a job she is on. Parkaboy definitely wants to know everything and tells her that Darryl is pleased to be rid of Judy. He gets back to work almost immediately, to the immense relief of Parkaboy who had begun to worry that they were losing him. Instead, he employs a search bot, finding a rather unusual



match for the 'map' that holds the watermark numbers. It is a match to a particular piece of a Claymore mine.

Cayce is much too excited to call Parkaboy but when he calls her, guilt finally has her coming clean with him about her employer, but he doesn't care. As long as she keeps him in the loop, it doesn't matter, he assures her. Right now, the most important thing on his agenda is to get to Russia to be with her. She tells him she can help with that end of things and asks for his real name so that she can call Sylvie Jeppson and arrange for his ticket. She's less than thrilled when Boone calls, and is much less forthcoming with him. In fact, she lets him give her all the new information he has, which includes the Russian domain name of Armaz.ru, the new interest in Russian oil and the fact that Nazran, the capital of the Republic of Ingushetia is a Russian offshore tax haven without filling him in on any of the details of her current adventure in Moscow, including the fact that she is there at all. Since the phone call she had made to him that was answered by a woman he claims to have seduced from Sigil, she is feeling betrayed. She doesn't like feeling foolish, and lets him know it. When they hang up, she is left wondering why she bothered to snap at him the way she did.



Chapters 35 - 37

Chapters 35 - 37 Summary

Cayce finds the coffee shop via the map sent to her and after walking by once to scope out the busy site, she talks herself into entering. Though it's crowded, the one table at which she had been asked to sit in order to identify herself is curiously empty. The waiter manages to understand her English attempt to order coffee and she is quickly approached by a woman asking if she is the one who writes. She introduces herself as Stella Volkova and claims to be the distributor of the footage which is created by her twin sister Nora. Stella tells Cayce about herself and her sister, and the circumstances that led to the first and the subsequent footage offerings, telling Cayce she is the first to have tracked them down. She agrees to allow Cayce to meet Nora and sends her back to her hotel in the safety and care of a car and driver, telling her she'll contact her.

The next morning Cayce wakes, showers and has breakfast. Going back upstairs, she calls Peter whose message seems to indicate he is already on his way. She thinks about the Russian connections with Dorotea, Hobbs and even Damien, but can't quite make all of the pieces fit together. She remembers an old posting she made on F:F:F and searches the CD-ROM containing the history of the site from where she originally speculated wildly that the author could even be a Russian kingpin. Bigend calls her shortly after noon. She lies about her location. Then Stella phones and tells her a car will be out front in thirty minutes. Cayce dresses and quickly checks her email to find one from Damien who is deeply disturbed by the direction his film has taken. Still in Russia, he tells her they have located an entire Stuka plane that for some reason became embedded in four feet of muck. In the process of excavation, he managed to maintain the integrity of his documentary by restricting access. When a pilot is discovered still in his seat, there is a moment of sheer madness. The Russian excavation crew literally tears the bones limb from limb as Damien's crew films, in an effort to relieve the corpse of all valuables. The entire incident has him deeply distressed and isolated from reality.

Stella's driver takes Cayce to an old building located across from the former Kremlin and the Duma. The building is in terrible disrepair but Stella and Nora occupy the area upstairs that once was a famous squat in the 1980s. Cayce watches as Nora works on a piece, oblivious to her presence and Cayce is awed by the process, watching until her eyes feel pitted. Cayce asks and learns that the couple in the footage resembles their parents in younger years. She tells Stella that Nora's art has become very valuable and confesses her association with Bigend, but promises she won't reveal who they are or that she has found them. She has Stella dismiss the waiting driver, feeling the need to walk.



Chapters 35 - 37 Analysis

Cayce is excited, but also fearful and nervous of the meeting that is about to take place. After months of searching and speculation, and hours of on-line discussions regarding the footage, she is now poised to meet the person responsible. It is almost overwhelming, but she manages to talk herself through her own fears and into the coffee shop. When Stella approaches her and introduces herself, identifying herself as one half of the two responsible for the footage, Cayce is surprised. For some reason, she had expected the author and the person meeting her to be a man. Her fear evaporates and is replaced by fascination, commiseration, and a sense of deep personal loss as she listens to the story that is the history of the footage's creation.

As Cayce is eating her breakfast the following morning, she feels as though she is on the brink of something huge. Something she can't begin to define. It is as though her old life ended with the meeting with Stella and a new life began and somehow she no longer fits into her old life. One thing is for certain. Stella trusts her, and she is desperate not to betray her. She knows Peter would understand, but isn't sure Boone would. She feels that in his own way, Bigend might, but she is still reluctant to be forthcoming with him either. Sorting through all of the facts feels like working through braille. Feeling stressed, she heads for the hotel's gym and works out while waiting for Stella's call. Damien emails her with a modern day horror story that has him questioning humanity. He has witnessed the desecration of a body found in the plane whose excavation their crew was documenting. It is so deeply disturbing to Damien that he feels the need to tell someone who will understand, finishing his email with 'I love you'. She returns the sentiment, promising to fill him in on her presence in Moscow soon.

Cayce has the opportunity to watch Nora at work. The process makes her feel like she is standing at the headwaters of the Nile, awed and amazed by the sheer genius of the woman who is oblivious to all else. She wonders if she will ever manage to convey the experience to anyone else - even Peter. She sees her genius unfolding to encompass the piece of T-shaped metal that is lodged in Nora's brain, and now forms the anchor to which she attaches the segments of footage. Stella finds her with tears streaming down her face in the hallway. Despite the value of Nora's work, and the growing interest in it, she resolves to keep their secret and privacy even from Bigend, and tells Stella so.



Chapters 38 - 40

Chapters 38 - 40 Summary

Cayce rides the underground randomly until finally settling into a cafe. Peter emails her from the Charles de Gaulle Airport, still waiting to be cleared for take off. She tells him she's seen the creator at work and adds that she is glad he is almost there, including the email address for Stella. Back in the lobby of The President Hotel, she asks for her passport. She turns to find herself face to face with Dorotea who knows she has found Stella and Nora, but has yet to inform Bigend. She asks Cayce to join her in the lounge, and then drugs Cayce's drink. When she realizes it, Cayce screams.

The next conscious moment she has is waking in a hospital bed. A gray haired woman brings her a bowl of hot chowder and she eats it. A gray beverage with it tastes similar to Bikkle and she consumes it as well, although suspicious. She discovers her carry-on under the bed, and dresses in the clothes she finds. The door is unlocked and she quietly makes her escape, using her Rickson's jacket to scale the fence with razor wire top. She has been walking through the wasteland for three hours when she finally stops with nothing but a single mint toothpick to sustain her. Her feet hurt so badly that she tears strips from her already torn jacket to wrap them. Darkness is closing in, and with it comes the cold. She sees two towers in the distance and suddenly realizes her father is there with her. He talks to her briefly, tells her he loves her and then tells her he has to go after telling her to listen. A helicopter is searching the ground.

Finally it lands and someone walks up to her, addressing her by name. She asks who he is, and he introduces himself as Parkaboy. Reluctant to believe it is him, she quizzes him about site postings. He has no trouble answering, and hands her a card that introduces him as Peter Gilbert - Middle Aged White Guy since 1967. He helps her to the helicopter where a medic is waiting, and explains that she escaped from the Dream Academy where Volkov's people had taken her after she had been drugged by Dorotea. He fills her in on the details she missed, while a medic removes her boots and bandages her feet. Peter has learned how and where the footage is rendered, and the ride is enlightening and confusing at the same time. When they land, she still isn't sure what is going on.

Chapters 38 - 40 Analysis

Cayce is so overwhelmed by what she has seen that she rides the underground randomly trying to put all of the details into perspective. Emerging finally, she goes to a cafe and sends Peter an email that includes the email address for Stella. He is the only one with whom she has entrusted it. He is the only one she believes will truly understand. When she returns to her hotel, she stops to pick up her passport and finds Dorotea waiting for her. She can't put together how it is possible, but knows this is no coincidence. Dorotea knows about her contact with the Volkov creators, and invites her



to have a drink under the guise that she is trying to help Cayce. She tells her she is in great danger, and that Stella and Nora's uncle will not permit her contact or knowledge. She warns her that she may have to run at a moment's notice, and all of this is to distract her from the fact that she has heavily laced Cayce's drink with a drug to make her more compliant. She wants information. What she doesn't count on is the paradoxical reaction that Cayce has, first screaming and then going on the offensive instead.

Cayce wakes in a hospital of some kind, she thinks. An old woman feeds her something and gives her a drink, and Cayce consumes both, although she is still fearful that drugs may be in either. When the woman is gone, she finds her bag, and clothing, and makes her escape. Once outside for a while, however, she begins to wonder if she is in Siberia. There doesn't seem to be anything. She walks for hours, her footwear blistering her feet so badly that finally she can hardly stand. Dark, cold and still feeling some of the drug's effects, she has a conversation with her father about the likelihood that she may die out there. When he tells her he has to go, she is reluctant to let him, but he tells her to listen. A helicopter approaches, making sweeping patterns and she realizes that they are looking for her, but can't decide whether she should try to hide. Even if she wanted to hide, there is no cover, so she simply waits.

The helicopter lands and to her great surprise, Parkaboy greets her. She is reluctant to believe it, even quizzing him about postings in F:F:F that only he would remember verbatim. He does, and she gratefully gets into the helicopter with him as he explains some of what has been going on. The hospital from which she escaped is actually one under Volkov's control. He had her taken there after the ambulance and police had been summoned to the hotel. She had fought Dorotea, giving her a bloody nose and swelling one eye shut. When Dorotea had tried to tell the authorities that she would look after Cayce in her room, they had not believed her. It had been at that time that Peter arrived. He had heard her name mentioned, and remembered pictures posted though Cayce didn't look much like them at the time. When three men in leather had arrived, Dorotea backed down entirely, he tells her, and Cayce had simply been removed. Peter had then checked his email and found Stella's address, contacting it to tell the creator what had happened to Cayce. A car had been sent, and Peter found himself with Bigend, Volkov's men and Boone who had been hacking her email and relaying information to Bigend from the start.



Chapters 41 - 43

Chapters 41 - 43 Summary

Cayce and Peter enter a dining room after Cayce has been properly seen to by physicians, and cleaned up. She meets Volkov, who doesn't stay for dinner, and is told that Boone has also left. The group slowly explains how Cayce had been monitored since her original posting that surmised the maker could even be Russian Mafia for example, which struck a nerve with Volkov's people. Her suppositions hit a little too close to home for them and her father's reputation had also played a role. They explain how she had been monitored, who had been involved, and offer apologies for the mishandling in some cases of the information they had. She also learns how much her father had influenced history in Russia and Volkov's path through it. They are anxious to know how she learned of the Sigil information, but she claims no knowledge. They rightly guess that Echelon was involved, but not who wielded its power. After dinner, she is given an envelope and a gift.

They all make their way to guest quarters, and Cayce notes that no prison uniforms are worn by those who are chosen to participate in Volkov's program. Bigend insists on speaking with her privately, and fills her in on some of the missing details. She asks about Dorotea, but no one seems willing to answer the question as to where she is now. They are aware that she had been changing sides as often as suited her needs and her last effort that included drugging Cayce had been her way of trying to buy back Volkov's favor. Bigend tells Cayce he's fired Boone for his dishonesty, and bids her goodnight. She sits down to read the contents of the envelope which contains all that is known of her father's last morning. Peter knocks on her door, with bottled water in hand and holds her while she talks about her father and cries. When she's stopped, he asks the question still plaguing him. What is the gift from Volkov? She opens it to find a great deal of money in a Louis Vuitton attache case. She finally climbs into bed after he leaves, saying goodnight to her father in the dark.

Cayce gets email that includes one from Magda that tells her about Voytek's coming opening; one from her mother to thank her for the money she sent her FedEx and for the information about her father that finally helped to have him declared dead; one from Jennifer Brossard at Blue Ant in Tokyo to thank her for the introduction to Judy Tsuzuki and confirm the job they offered her; one from Margot; one from her former therapist Katherine who knows of no known cases where a drug such as the one she ingested would nullify her panic reactions; one from Damien who has met and likes Magda; and one from Stella who tells her the next segment is coming soon. She and Peter are on extended vacation in Paris after having gone to visit Stella and Nora and then to Damien's dig. For now, she is content to lie with Peter, and enjoy life.



Chapters 41 - 43 Analysis

Peter offers her his arm, and she is grateful to take it, feeling a little like she is going to the prom as they go to dinner. She listens to the explanations from both Volkov and his security staff, and Bigend. She learns that she has been on their radar since an early posting where she wildly speculated as to the possibility that the creator of the footage might be a Russian mafia head with a bent towards self expression. Worried that she is a little too close for comfort, Volkov's staff begin to monitor her actions and reactions. They are even more intrigued and concerned when they discover who Cayce's father was, and what his government connections were. They seek to find him, making progress where those hired by Cayce and her mother accomplish nothing. Even the police do not learn the scope of what Volkov's people do. All of the subterfuge is to keep his brother's daughters safe, and when Cayce learns this, she understands.

Tired and unable to keep her eyes open, she asks to be excused and Bigend asks for another few moments of her time in private. He wants to convey his personal apologies for the way Dorotea treated her, and for the questionable behavior of Boone as well. He also wants her to know that he respects her honesty and integrity. Finally, she says goodnight, and opens the package given to her by Volkov's staff. Inside, she finds a detailed accounting of her father's last day. While they are unable to track down his remains, it is reasonable to assume that he perished in the World Trade Center bombing. Peter comes to her room at just the right time, there to comfort her as the full impact of her father's demise hits her yet again. She has never doubted his death, but confirmation is still difficult.

In the days and weeks that follow, Cayce and Peter visit with Stella and watch Nora as she creates. They go to see the site where Damien is shooting his documentary, and Cayce helps to dig out the plane. In a way, it is another link to her father, and she becomes emotional once more as she excavates with a purpose that neither Damien nor Peter interrupt. From there, Cayce and Peter go to Paris where they vacation, enjoying time off to get to know each other even better. Cayce finds a new lease on life as she discovers that somehow the drugs she was given along with their adverse reaction are somehow instrumental in curing her of her trademark aversions. Together, she and Peter look forward to the next segment which Stella promises will be posted soon.



Characters

Cayce Pollard

Cayce is a 32 year old woman who is a self described 'coolhunter' who some have suggested is a sensitive sort, or dowser in the global marketing world. Cayce has gray eyes and a style all her own. She strives to avoid being a slave to fashion in any way. In fact, one could go so far as describing her as being allergic to fashion. As a result, she will only wear white, gray or black clothing that could have been worn without notice anytime from 1945 to 2000 and belong to a design free zone. Her particular style of 'no style' is almost enough to spawn a cult all its own. Cayce got her start working with a design team for a Seattle mountain bike manufacturer straight out of college. From there, she branched out to include skatewear and shoes.

When she travels any distance, she believes that the jet lag she feels is actually the late arrival of her soul, unable to keep up with her transportation. She was named after Edgar Cayce, dubbed the sleeping prophet of Virginia Beach by a mother who is a Virginian eccentric. Cayce misses her father and 'talks' to him often. She hears his comments, and opinions frequently - especially in times of stress. Her 'family' consists of a group on line that is devoted to posting on the site called F:F:F and is mostly concerned with the publication on line of a particular source of footage. Called footageheads, she often feels more at home with this group than anywhere else.

Cayce is determined and intelligent, and has a remarkable talent for seeing the whole picture which enables her to make inroads where many would be stymied. She overcomes obstacle after obstacle, defending herself both physically and mentally, as she searches for the source of the footage on Bigend's behalf and to satisfy her own curiosity. Cayce has an aversion to trademarks, some making her physically ill and others that make her utter verbal ticks. She is mentally assaulted by a rival using the Michelin Man as a prop and drugged by the same adversary in an effort to uncover her resource for the email she attained. Not only does Cayce manage to rise above these challenges, but in the process she is somehow cured of her phobia entirely. Cayce not only rises above her own personal challenges, but meets and stays with one of her friends from F:F:F, after being rescued by him from the Russian wasteland. She and Peter (aka Parkaboy) finally find what each has been looking for in each other.

Hubertus Bigend

Hubertus is a Belgian who is the founder of Blue Ant. He looks like a pale Tom Cruise. Cayce dislikes Bigend, whom she's heard from her friend Margot in New York is a real 'Lombard'. Margot had dated him and as things progressed, she had been increasingly disillusioned and had shared her feelings with Cayce at length. To her, he is florid, bright-eyed and glossy looking. Bernard refers to him as 'Hub'. He drives a Hummer that



is a smaller version of the original. It is almost as uncomfortable, but for the kid glove leather seats. He sometimes wears a chocolate brown stetson.

Hub's passion is marketing. He thrives on media strategy, advertising and how they affect people now and in the future. He reveals himself as a footage-head, claiming it is one of the most brilliant marketing ploys of the young century. He believes it conforms to a standard of excellence to which he not only relates but would like to pursue.

Bigend hires Cayce to find the source of the footage that is being published on line. With 135 segments already released, Hub can see the potential for its exploitation in the marketing game. It never occurs to him that the person responsible for the footage might not care to be exploited in this manner. When Cayce manages to locate the source and discovers the truth, she is ready to hide her findings. Hub has other means of finding out where and what Cayce is doing however, and his involvement at the end likely saves Cayce's life. He manages to contact and make inroads with the influential Uncle of Stella and Nora and becomes instrumental in furthering relationships with Russia, while still maintaining control of the whole situation to a large degree.

Peter Gilbert (Parkaboy)

Fellow F:F:F follower, Peter lives in Chicago and is one of about twenty regulars to the site. He, Cayce and Darryl are attempting to locate the person or group of people who is responsible for the footage. Called 'footageheads' affectionately, they often discuss and assess the possible meanings behind the segments being posted. Peter/Parkaboy is instrumental in helping Cayce as they search for the person or group responsible for the postings.

Parkaboy is the spokesperson for those who lean towards Progressives in that they assume the footage is a group of fragments that are part of a work in progress and is something unfinished - still being created by the sender. He is often at odds with Mama Anarchia who favors the Completist view which believes that the footage is part of a finished work that the creator prefers to issue in a piecemeal manner and non sequential order. Parkaboy is the first on this site to raise the possibility that the footage is being created by a Garage Kubrick or someone who is generating all of the footage at random using all virtual services.

Peter/Parkaboy has reddish hair that is receding and wears it combed straight back. He wears surplus combat trousers and is unpretentious. He is Cayce's friend and comes to her aid when she runs away from the Dream Academy, fearing she is being held by Dorotea against her will. He is a gentleman, and shares many of the same feelings and insights as Cayce does. He is an intelligent man who bills himself as a MAWG (Middle Aged White Guy) since 1967. He works with musicians in the industry in Chicago. He travels with Cayce, and remains by her side in the end.



Dorotea Benedetti (Mama Anarchia)

Dorotea is a fairly highly placed person in the graphics design world and partnership of Heinz & Plaff. She has flown in from Frankfurt to attend a meeting at Blue Ant. She wears her hair scraped back from her forehead.

Dorotea is a woman who takes herself seriously - too seriously at times. She has perfectly manicured fingernails, and her attitude is brittle and abrasive. She is often described as a 'piece of work' or 'difficult' and both could be considered an understatement. Dorotea is out to do what is best for Dorotea, and she has absolutely no problem with stepping on those around her to get to the top if necessary. She has no compassion or conscience which means no feelings of guilt or remorse when her actions or behavior have a negative impact. She is very comfortable with working for two sides at once, playing one off the other for her own personal benefit. She is brisk and impatient, both qualities showing through even on her answering machine message.

In an effort to discourage Cayce from spending any more time in London, or working for Blue Ant and by extension Bigend, Dorotea puts a burn hole in one of the few articles of clothing that Cayce covets, her jacket; she arranges to have Damien's flat broken into and Cayce's former therapist's office, using the information she learns there to visually assault Cayce with the images that she learns will have the strongest negative impact; and she uses others to follow Cayce to Japan and accost her on the street. Later, she resorts to drugging Cayce in an effort to glean information that might buy her favor from the Russian employer she has double crossed.

Dorotea also posts on the F:F:F site as Mama Anarchia - an abrasive and argumentative persona used to monitor and agitate the rest of the footageheads, but particularly Cayce and her friend Parkaboy.

Win Pollard

Win has been missing since September 11, 2001 when he got into a cab in New York City from the Mayflower. Though he lived in Tennessee, neither Cayce or her mother had known he was in town at the time and his reason for being there is still unknown to them. At the time he disappeared, he had been working on obtaining patents related to humane crowd control barricades for concerts. The company he'd worked with was located on Fifth Avenue, but they hadn't been aware of his presence in the city either. Cayce's mother, Cynthia, had been convinced he was a victim of the World Trade Center from the beginning. Later, they learned that the CIA had a branch office in one of the neighboring buildings and they supposed he was visiting an old friend or associate from before.

His voice is heard by Cayce throughout some of the more difficult challenges she faces, usually giving sound advice or encouragement. After she locates the creator of the footage, she is given a folder that takes her through the movements on his last day.



Hobbs Baranov

Hobbs is a man who took his mother's maiden name from birth (Hobbs) as his first name with an effort to eliminate the hyphenated last name that occurred when she married a Soviet diplomat (Hobbs-Baranov). His father defected to America sometime in the 1950s where he met and married Hobbs' mother who was an Englishwoman of some wealth. While he managed to rid himself of the hyphenated last name, when he drinks to excess he still rails against it. He is tall and gray faced. His nails are black edged and his long fingers are stained with nicotine.

Hobbs worked as a mathematician / cryptographer for American Intelligence after being recruited directly from Harvard. Now, his resources include access to an American intelligence system called Echelon which allows for the monitoring of all Net traffic. It could be said that Hobbs is the grandfather of its creation. These are also facts that he mentions only after having consumed excessive amounts of alcohol. He has a bad attitude, a foul mouth when he's been drinking, and it seems as though drinking is his favorite pastime these days. He lives in a Caravan rented from Gypsies that is small and is located on a former training facility for either MI5 or MI6 where now, according to Hobbs, they are training police dogs (although no barking dogs can be heard).

Hobbs covets and collects the Curta calculators in which Voytek is dealing. He appreciates the provenance which he considers to be more important than the artifact itself. The creator of the Curta calculators, Herzstark did so when he was confined to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Surrounded by death and the certain fate that he himself also faced, he continued to work until the camp and its detainees were liberated without ever having given up on his dream of this creation. It is this triumph and escape into his work that Hobbs honors by collecting the earlier versions. It could be said that Hobbs is seeking the same kind of escape from himself.

Timing, when visiting Hobbs can be a crucial factor. He has no phone, and can only be reached at his local where he is usually drunk. It is best to get to him before he has had a chance to begin again. Hobbs is one of the three men whom Cayce meets on the street near Portobello briefly with Ngemi and Voytek while they are waiting for a representative from a Japanese dealer to arrive and examine his Curta calculators.

Voytek Biroshak

One of three men Cayce meets while in the market early one morning, Voytek Biroshak is interested in collecting ZX 81's which are an obscure version of one of the first computers, requiring that the owner learn how to program. His sister's name is Magda. Voytek was born in Poland, but his father was a Moscow civil engineer, so he speaks fluid Russian.

Voytek has close cropped blond hair and has cheekbones that have a Slavic look. His accent is the kind that comes with some English education, but not a thorough one. His grammar is not correct but his ability to communicate is not impaired by it. Voytek wears



what can be described as orphaned skateboard gear and is an artist. He is trying to find funding for a new project. He is hoping to find the space to show a display for a ZX 81project on which he has been working.

Stella Volkova

Stella is a young woman with a soft, pale white face and angular features. She has dark eyes, and unfashionably long hair that she wears parted in the center. She speaks with only a slight accent, clearly but softly and with perfect enunciation. Stella is half of the Volkova twins, orphaned when a Claymore mine exploded outside of her house as she and the rest of her family were on their way to a funeral for their grandmother. Their mother was a great admirer of English literature, particularly fond of Tennessee Williams and James Joyce. Her father was employed by his brother and as such became a target for those who were financially envious. Her uncle took both girls under his wing and provided them with everything they needed afterward, seeing to the best of care, stimulation and security that his money could buy, determined that what happened to her parents not be repeated with the girls who had already suffered enough as a result of their association with him. Their uncle is a very wealthy man, big in business and importance. Stella and Nora are educated in Paris where she studies business.

She takes her coffee black, and is part of the elite Russian class which is treated with deference, allowed to ignore road signs and given preferential treatment most everywhere they go. She travels with a driver and body guards to ensure that what happened to her parents is not repeated with her. Stella tells her story to Cayce, explaining how it is that her sister has come to author the footage that is seen and appreciated world wide. The story is troubling, sad and deeply disturbing to both Stella and to Cayce as she listens to it. When Cayce tells Stella that her father was lost to the 9/11 twin towers bombing, Stella senses a kinship. The event was deeply troubling to Nora as well.

Nora Volkova

Nora is the creator of the footage. She is the twin to Stella and while they grew up in Paris, she studied film. The radio activated Claymore bomb that killed her parents on the way to their grandmother's funeral injured her to an almost fatal degree. Her parents were killed instantly, but she would suffer through a long and impossible rehabilitation beginning with her first transfusion in Russia which had no ill effects to their great relief. In the beginning, after the explosion, Nora could not talk and did not recognize even Stella. When she finally did begin to speak, it was in the language that the twins enjoyed exclusively as children. Slowly, her other language skills returned, as did her interest in film.

Their uncle, determined to help in any way he could, had an editing suite built in the clinic. They showed Nora the film shorts she herself created, but Nora didn't seem to recognize them. Then she began to edit them. For three months, and through five



operations, it seems the only thing that brings her to life. Eventually, she reduces the film to a single frame. It is a bird in flight, unfocused, with its wings against a gray cloud. Shortly afterward, she retreats inward again, first losing the ability to speak, then to respond and finally to eat. The last fragment is finally discovered, lodged between the lobes in her brain, and inoperable since the risk is simply too great. The only thing she seems to notice is the monitor in the hallway which shows the reception area of her private ward. When they discover her watching it, one doctor with foresight and intelligence has them put in a line from that camera to her editing suite. Looking at it is the only time Nora focuses on anything. She begins cutting the images, isolating a single frame of a man, but when they bring him to her, she is oblivious to his presence. She continues to work, editing him in Photoshop. This is the beginning. While hugely talented, Nora has no interest in an audience of any kind.

Keiko (aka Judy Tsuzuki)

Keiko is a character creation of Darryl and Parkaboy who posts on the Osaka site regarding the footage, trolling for new information. When Cayce tells Parkaboy that she is headed to Tokyo and asks how best to use Keiko to get more information about the watermark, Parkaboy and Darryl find Judy Tsuzuki. She is five foot eleven, 27 years old and works as a bartender. Darryl and Parkaboy take a photo of her, and using Photoshop they enlarge her eyes, change her clothing, and cut and paste until they have the desired effect. The result is a schoolgirl style vixen. She has large, dark eyes and wears her hair in pigtails.

Damien

Damien is a 30 year old man who is a director of music videos and commercials. He is a good friend of Cayce's and is currently working on making a documentary in Russia that surrounds the excavation of a plane. He is sorely disillusioned when his team of Russian excavators discover that the body of the pilot is still in the cockpit. In an effort to relieve him of anything of value, they literally tear him limb from limb to Damien's disgust and horror. His crew catches all of it on film, but his revulsion is so great that he requires contact with Cayce to ground him to people who are not so ruthless. Damien is a good man, and a constant and loyal friend who offers his apartment and home to Cayce without reservation.

Darryl (Musashi)

A fellow footage-head who is fluent in Japanese, Darryl helps Parkaboy create Keiko as a persona to work the site in Osaka. They successfully manage to lure a fellow footagehead who reveals critical information that eventually leads to the identity of the author of the footage. In the process, Darryl finds himself involved with the real life model for Keiko (Judy) who upon discovering their deception seeks to make things right.



She contacts the Osaka footagehead, Taki, and after much suggestive emailing back and forth, Judy moves to Japan to be with Taki.

Magda

Magda sells hats in Camden Lock on Sunday and in Portobello on Saturday. She speaks excellent English, and works for a firm called Trans. Her job is to go out to various clubs at night and casually mention certain products. It is a type of promotion without direct sales or sales pitch. The job is beginning to devalue her social interaction however, and she finds herself second guessing the motivations behind anything anyone tells her. It is almost enough to make her quit.

Taki

Taki is in his mid 20s, and is slightly on the overweight side. His hair is cut short and sticks up at several odd random angles. He wears black framed glasses that look cheap, and a checked sport coat. Taki designs a frame for mobile phones and is somewhat of a social misfit. He perspires heavily when nervous.

Marina Chtcheglova

Damien's Russian line producer, Marina takes an immediate dislike to Cayce. She wears Prada everything - in black, and if her breasts were slightly larger, she could model for any role playing game for adolescent boys. She has typical Slavic cheekbones, with a somewhat primordial look. She has a default setting of permanently pissed off.

Fergal Collins

Fergal is Damien's accountant and has been since Cayce has known Damien.

Cynthia Pollard

Cynthia lives in Hawaii, and has been divorced from Wingrove Pollard for some time. They had lived in separate states, and had little contact, but it hasn't stopped Cynthia from wanting to know what happened to him. Cynthia has a variety of friends who dabble in the fringes of life after death, and frequently insists that the dead remember, although Cayce can't understand what they remember or how. Cynthia is convinced that Wingrove is trying to contact his daughter and that he has a message of some sort for her. She emails Cayce several partial transcripts of EVP's that they have discovered.



Ngemi

Ngemi is a large, bald black man who carries himself with confidence and poise. He is intelligent and has impeccable manners. He has a comforting presence, and a professorial gravitas. Ngemi has a deep and mellifluous voice. He has large fingers that extend out from large hands that are gentle and use a soft control.

Bernard Stonestreet

Bernard is pale skinned with freckles, and carrot red hair upswept in a motif that appears as if it may be that way because he slept on it awkwardly, but more likely took careful preening to accomplish. He smokes cigarettes called Silk Cuts. His eyes are a peculiar shade of brown that seems almost iridescent, or greenly copper tinged. Bernard is married to a woman named Helena.

Lucian Greenaway

Lucian is a dealer. He is located on Bond Street and has recently out bid Baranov on eBay for a Curta that Hobbs coveted.

Andrei Volkov

The uncle and guardian to both Stella and Nora, Andrei is a powerful and influential man. He has roots in organized crime which in Russia has more to do with politics than actual crimes.



Objects/Places

F:F:F

Fetish:Footage:Forum is a site that Cayce regularly enters and posts to, largely regarding the 'footage'.

Blue Ant

Blue Ant is a firm located in Soho that pays for Cayce's ticket to advise them on a new marketing endeavor. Small in terms of permanent staff, the company is globally distributed.

CPU's

Cayce Pollard Units (CPU's) is the name Damien gives to the type of clothing that Cayce wears which is as trademark free as is possible.

ZX 81

Of importance historically to personal computing, the ZX 81 was invented by British inventor Sinclair. Marketed in Britain at the same time as the Timex 1000 was released in the US, it had one K of RAM and required the user to learn programming to operate it.

Lombard

Lombard is an acronym for a man with "Loads Of Money But A Real Dickhead".

Pattern Recognition

The spinning of the given moment's scenarios is referred to as pattern recognition.

Watermarks

Watermarks are a distinctive method of marking footage discovered on the footage for which Cayce and Boone are hired to track down the author.



Sigil Technologies

A watermarking company that offers a distinctive style and has a high end client list, Sigil Technologies appears to be the company that worked on the footage.

Columbus, Ohio

Sigil Technologies is located in Columbus, Ohio.

Selfridges

Boone turns to Selfridges for a suit made fast.

Echelon

Echelon is an American intelligence system which allows for the monitoring of all Net traffic. It could be said that Hobbs is the grandfather of its creation.

Puppenkopf

Puppenkopf is German for puppet head, and Dorotea's name for the front person she uses to communicate on F:F:F as Mama Anarchia without detection.

Dream Academy

The only prison in Russia that people are clamoring to enter is run by Volkov's people. Cayce is taken to Dream Academy to recover from Dorotea's drugging.

Seven Sisters

Seven Sisters are the high end real estate skyscrapers that Volkov uses as a meeting place with Bigend, Boone and Parkaboy.

MAWG

An acronym for Middle Aged White Guy, MAWG is what Peter insists a particular kind of musician in Chicago needs.



Systema

A Russian martial art, Systema formerly forbidden to all but Spetsnaz and KGB bodyguards.

Curtas

Curtas are precision calculators that are the invention of Curt Herzstark - an Austrian man who developed the remarkable unit while he was a prisoner in Buchenwald. He was liberated by the Americans in 1945.

Bibendum

Bibendum is the name of the Michelin Man and also of the restaurant in the retrofitted Michelin House.

Themes

Progressives vs Completists

As the mystery footage is released, and more segments are viewed, the debate over their origin rages. Parkaboy is the unofficial spokesperson supporting the position of many footageheads who believe that the footage consists of smaller pieces of a work in progress. Referred to as Progressives, they assume that the segments are pieces of a work as yet unfinished, and in fact still being generated by the maker. They are part of an ongoing debate that rages with the group of footageheads that are Completists.

Completists are a small group of footageheads who are convinced that the footage is simply little bits of a larger, finished work. They are convinced that the maker is releasing small parts of a completed work in a random order for reasons that no one really understands yet. By this definition, it might be assumed that the maker is toying with an audience that grows ever larger.

When there were only a few fragments, it seemed possible that they might be part of a completed work being released slowly to generate interest in the work. They discussed the possibility that this might be a very short work, perhaps even created by a student even though it was strangely exotic and extremely polished for a student effort. As the number of downloads mounted, the mystery that surrounded their origin deepened. One thing that both sides seemed able to agree on as the number of segments grew was that this was no amateur production and whoever was behind the footage was talented and unique, and the footage was remarkable and without labeling or identifying trademarks of any kind.

Footageheads vs Exploitists

The release of segments of extraordinary footage created an interest that quickly grew into something that was almost as incredible as the footage itself. With each new release, interest grew and the number of followers grew exponentially. Calling themselves footageheads, those interested in the footage could be found everywhere, and from all walks of life. Most simply enjoyed the purity and exotic originality of the segments, and eagerly looked forward to each new release. Some searched for patterns or tried to join them together to create a single work of art while others accepted the randomness of each segment, convinced that eventually the purpose or reasons for their release would one day be revealed.

With the growing interest in the footage segments, those who have an eye towards exploitation begin to pay attention. Men like Hubertus Bigend, who see the footage as the next greatest advertising gimmick, are quick to enlist the brightest minds available in a world wide search for the creator. Fortunately, the person hired to find the author is Cayce, and her motivation is not geared to increasing her bottom line. A purist at heart,



Cayce has followed the footage almost from the beginning, getting immense pleasure from each new segment released. With each one, hours of debate and speculation are sparked with fellow footageheads and her search for the author/creator is one with the most honest of intentions. Though hired by someone who has the intention of exploiting the magic of these segments, Cayce has a change of heart once she learns the truth, and seeks to keep their identity a secret.

Art: Creation By Intelligence or By Design

The creation of the footage on line was the source of much speculation, but all seemed to agree on one thing. The segments were unique and obviously created by an exceptional artist, the likes of which had not been seen before. Each segment was so intense and so dramatic on its own that it began a following that became almost cult like in its enthusiasm and participation. Speculation ran rampant. Everyone had an opinion as to who might be responsible for these incredible segments, and efforts were made by many to discover the source of the incredible artwork.

When Cayce finally finds the source of the footage she has followed for so long, she is rocked by the reality of the situation. Suddenly it isn't about finding the artist anymore. It isn't about collecting a paycheck for turning in the person who created the riveting glimpses of love and life. In fact, once Cayce knows new the whole truth, she is reluctant to tell anyone that she has found them at all. The only person she can think of who might be able to understand and appreciate the truth is Parkaboy. Cayce realizes that the art she has so come to appreciate and comment on is actually the production effort of a woman who has suffered a great deal. Nora, no longer able to communicate any other way, is expressing all of her longing, her desire, her love and her intensity for life in brief flashes of reality as she sees it. All of the segments are then mapped on a representation of the piece of metal stuck in her brain. It is a constant reminder of the death of her parents, and is now memorialized for all time in her chosen expression.

Art is not always created the way we perceive it, and its intention is not always merely our enjoyment. As in this case, art is a catharsis, and an expression of all that was, and all that could have been.



Style

Point of View

Pattern Recognition by William Gibson is a fictional tale told entirely in the first person through the eyes of the main character, Cayce Pollard. The limited point of view is almost a necessity in this story since the details are so involved. To have another perspective would likely make the story too confusing to follow. As it is, Gibson manages to reliably relate the details of this intricate and complex story entirely through Cayce's eyes. The basis of this story is the search for the source of a series of mysterious postings on the internet. One-hundred thirty-five seemingly random segments of creative genius draw the attention of followers and those with an eye to exploitation alike. Cayce is one of the followers, called a footagehead and she is hired by one of the latter who seeks to find a way to increase his advertising strength by using the brilliant mind at the heart of these segments. When Cayce manages to track down the creator, she discovers much more than she had expected, and is so touched by the reality and truth that she resolves to keep the identity of the creator to herself. Betrayed by one of her employer's staff members, Cayce is drugged in an effort to reveal the details of her discovery, but her reaction is anything but predictable. A story that is just short of a confusion of details, Pattern Recognition is an involved read, but worth the ride.

Setting

Pattern Recognition is set in several key locations. The first is London. Cayce, the main character, refers to London as mirror world. Everything in this place is a reflection of what she is used to in her home in New York. People drive on the wrong side of the road, drink their coffee flooded with milk, and generally have a slightly off kilter outlook compared to home. It makes jet lag a little more difficult for her, and leaves her feeling as though she has left a significant part of herself behind. The second location, geographically speaking, is Japan. Cayce is hired to find an artist of remarkable caliber, and her search leads her to Tokyo where she must meet with a man named Taki in the hopes of gleaning information from him that can be gotten only in person. Her search for answers takes her from one cultural shock to the next. The following destination is Russia. Here is the culmination of all of her efforts, and she finally meets the artist she and so many others have come to admire, respect and follow with an almost cult like passion. When the events unfold, and Cayce's search has finally come to an end, she is due for a vacation. She and Peter, known formerly to her only as Parkaboy, take a well earned rest in Paris while they get to know each other on a more face to face basis.

There is one other location that is critical to this story and how it plays out. It is real estate that is growing in size exponentially every day, and it is at the heart of the entire adventure. This location is, of course, the internet. The artist so sought after is using the internet to post remarkable and exotic footage that seems to be as timeless as it is



intriguing. After 135 segments have been posted, Cayce finally meets the artist she so admires, and her story is one of such depth and emotion that Cayce is determined to keep her from being exposed to those who would exploit her talents.

Language and Meaning

William Gibson is an interesting author who uses the English language as a palette to paint a picture of startling depth and intensity. He writes with descriptive phrasing, and it is obvious that the subject matter he discusses is well researched. Even smaller details such as the Curtas calculators, are inserted with such clarity that the reader is able to see them, and almost hold them. The ZX 81 is another example of this kind of writing, where Gibson gives the history and provenance of this unit, making it easy for the reader to understand its value and collective qualities. This author gives the same kind of attention to detail where locations are concerned, and the use of advanced technology as well. Gibson gives his readers a glimpse into the world of electronic spying and tracking, using watermarking and programs designed to copy keystrokes as well as being able to more than adequately bring to life the varied locations in which this story takes place. He doesn't merely describe the character as being in Russia, but takes the added effort of showing his readers the underground, the outskirts still contaminated by titanium and catastrophic industrial pollution, and the prison system with its inherent medical issues. In Japan, he takes the reader through yet another cultural turn, and still another in London. Each location is brought carefully into existence in its own right, and woven into the story line with such care that his readers are not lost.

Structure

Broken into 43 chapters, *Pattern Recognition* is just over 350 pages in length. Each chapter ranges from 5 to 15 pages in length, and most often closer to 10. William Gibson is a descriptive narrator who further breaks down each chapter with a title or heading that encompasses the main point of the chapter. This is especially useful if the reader is searching for specific information within the pages later. Chapter one, for example, is titled "The Website of Dreadful Night" and takes the reader through Cayce's arrival in London, while the second chapter clearly indicates that the antagonist of the story will be introduced. The third chapter, titled "The Attachment" introduces us to the footage and how it is becoming almost viral in nature. While some chapters clearly introduce characters of importance such as the one headed "Boone Chu", others are much more descriptive and indicative of the contents of the chapter itself.

Gibson is clearly a twentieth century writer who blends technology and the issues of humanity in such a way as to create a work of complexity that requires his readers to pay attention. He manages to create a story that is linear although it takes place in several wide ranging locations and in the electronic world as well.



Quotes

"She's a piece of work, isn't she?" Chap. 2, Pattern Recognition, pg. 15

"He took a duck in the face at two hundred and fifty knots." Chap. 4, Pattern Recognition, pg. 34

"We have no future because our present is too volatile." Chap. 6, Pattern Recognition, pg. 67

"Hubertus Bigend is a very smart man, and I don't like him very much." Chap. 11, Pattern Recognition, pg. 166

"I'm going to eat this whole bag of chocolate-covered espresso beans now, and sit here grinding my teeth flat until I hear from you again." Chap. 16, Pattern Recognition, pg. 145

"Dorotea knows something about me... Something very personal." Chap. 18, Pattern Recognition, pg. 163

"Darryl, who has otaku DNA himself, is convinced that Taki is not a member of this Mystic, but a peripheral character of some kind - possibly, since he designs games for a Japanese phone system, one of their sources of information." Chap. 19, Pattern Recognition, pg. 169

"It makes me complicit, and you didn't give me the opportunity to decide whether or not I wanted to be." Chap. 21, Pattern Recognition, pg. 183

"You have a lot going on, all of it very weird." Chap. 22, Pattern Recognition, pg. 193

"The problem is, Judy feels sorry for the guy, she's pissed at Darryl, and by extension with us, and she wants to write him back." Chap. 23, Pattern Recognition, pg. 197

"Dorotea knows a great deal about what's going on, and all of it, it seems, concerns you directly." Chap. 24, Pattern Recognition, pg. 202

"If you're about to meet the maker, and you're still talking to me, I really don't care what



manner or number of goats you've had to blow to get there." Chap. 34, Pattern Recognition, pg. 277

"I wished the world to see my sister's work, but they insisted it be anonymous." Chap. 35, Pattern Recognition, pg. 290

"You are my very good girl, now, and you will tell me where you got the email address, won't you?" Chap. 38, Pattern Recognition, pg. 315

"Men like Wingrove Pollard, my friends, through their long and determined defense of freedom, enabled men like Andrei Volkov to come at last to the fore, in free competition with other free men." Chap. 41, Pattern Recognition, pg. 341

"You weren't telling me what you were up to either, but at least you weren't lying to me." Chap. 42, Pattern Recognition, pg. 347



Topics for Discussion

Why is Cayce summoned to Blue Ant in England?

Who appears to be Cayce's immediate nemesis and what are the reasons for the animosity?

What does Bigend want from Cayce, and who does he enlist to 'help' her accomplish this goal?

What items is Cayce given to aid her and why are they both a help and a detriment as she unravels the multi-layered mystery?

Cayce's trip to Japan has several surprises. What and who are they and how is she affected both physically and emotionally?

Who does Bigend hire and why does the knowledge both surprise and anger Cayce? What motivates Bigend to do this?

How does Cayce get the email address for the creator of the footage and from whom? How does he attain it and what does she trade for it?

What prompts Cayce to be less than honest with both Boone and Bigend about her destination?

What does Damien tell Cayce that disturbs him so profoundly?

Cayce only entrusts a few people with her actual destination. Who are they, and who is the only one she wants with her at this stage? Why?

Why is there such secrecy surrounding the creator of the footage?

What is the significance of the 'map' of watermark numbers and why are the segments arranged within it?

Who rescues Cayce from the hotel and where is she taken? What likely happened to Dorotea?

Why is it fortunate that Cayce was found as soon as she was and what was the immediate danger she was in as she stumbled along through the wasteland?

The author draws several parallels between the main character and the artist she is seeking. What are they, and how are they significant to the story and these two characters?