Personal History Study Guide

Personal History by Katharine Graham

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

Personal History presents the saga of Katharine Graham, who succeeds her father and husband as publisher of the *Washington Post* and leads it successfully through the troubled times of Vietnam and Watergate.

Katharine "Kay" Graham is the fourth of five children born to Eugene Meyer, a wealthy investment banker who turns civil servant under presidents Hoover and Roosevelt, and Agnes Meyer, a mentally troubled political and social activist. Eugene leaves government employ when Kay is young and buys the failing *Washington Post.* Agnes is ill-suited for motherhood and lauds her considerable accomplishments over the children, while Eugene is distant but supportive. Kay excels in school but is socially backward. She muddles through a year of college at Vassar but thrives at the University of Chicago, where she becomes involved in liberal politics. After a year writing for a small San Francisco newspaper, where labor issues are her favorite subject, Kay returns to Washington to work for her father. She meets and marries a promising young lawyer, Phil Graham, and follows him around the country during his army service in World War II. She bears four children and settles into awkward but dedicated motherhood. Phil's powerful personality strips Kay of ambition and self-worth. Kay's father overcomes Phil's reluctance to work for the *Post,* and Phil, who has only passing knowledge of journalism or business, succeeds Eugene as publisher within six months.

Eugene retires and gives the Washington Post Company to the Grahams, with Phil holding the majority shares. Phil acquires *Newsweek* and expands the company's media holdings, but he never gets over feeling he is just a son-in-law. Phil drinks heavily and suffers mood swings, but his manic depression is not diagnosed or treated. He becomes a close confident of John Kennedy and, even more so, of Lyndon Johnson, and he is instrumental in their 1960 election as president and vice president of the United States. In the closing days of the Kennedy administration, Phil suffers a breakdown, complicated by a love affair with Robin Webb. The Grahams appear on the brink of divorce, but Phil returns to Kay, is hospitalized but not medicated and manipulates access to a firearm to put himself out of the misery of hurting people.

Kay is thrust into the position of managing a massive operation demanding years of learning to master and great efforts to overcome the inferiority her mother and husband have implanted in her. Under Kay's direction, the *Post* frees itself from toady support of Johnson's Vietnam policy, inciting the Texan's wrath, and risks the Washington Post Company's very existence by taking on the paranoid and vindictive Nixon administration over the Pentagon Papers and the Watergate Affair in the early 1970s. The *Post* becomes a nationally and internationally recognized publication, and its publisher is cast ever more into the uncomfortable public spotlight. Kay establishes a coterie of famous and influential friends. Billionaire friend Warren Buffet provides Kay a hands-on education in business, helping her see the *Post* through a long wildcat strike in 1976. Thereafter, Kay concentrates on strategic growth for the company and begins gradually turning over the paper and later the company to son Don Graham, who has been groomed for the task of keeping the paper in the family. Freed of day-to-day

responsibilities, Kay concentrates on travel, educating the underprivileged and writing her memoirs, which serve to free her of the past and look forward to whatever old age brings. Throughout the book, Kay gives credit to the talented people who work for her and underplays the role of pioneering businesswoman for which she is repeatedly, and appropriately, honored.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis

On her father's side Katharine "Kay" Graham descends from prominent French Jews. Her brilliant, confident father, Eugene Meyer, is a thirty-two-year-old self-made millionaire broker and art collector. He is born in Los Angeles and raised there and in San Francisco to be a lonely fighter and reader. Later, he graduates from Yale, apprentices to European banks and opens the Eugene Meyer and Company brokerage house. On Lincoln's Birthday in 1908, Eugene spies beautiful, self-assured twenty-one-year-old Agnes Ernst in a gallery and instantly decides to marry her. A friend arranges a meeting, and Eugene does marry Agnes exactly two years later. For Agnes it is not love at first sight. Wealth and generosity are Eugene's attraction. Descended from German Lutherans ministers, Agnes grows up in austerity and devotion to learning, but when her father strays from the home, she turns bohemian and enters journalism after Barnard is a form of rebellion. Eugene funds a culturally and intellectually enriching sojourn in Europe and marries her on her return.

Agnes loves her handsome new husband and admires his brains. His being Jewish is of no concern to a non-practicing Lutheran, but sharing the burden of latent anti-Semitism surprises and stings. Few believe the union will last, but the couple never looks back. During their round-the-world honeymoon, they hire Margaret Ellen Powell, destined to raise their five children, the first of whom, Florence (Flo) is conceived during the journey.

Returning home, Agnes determines to fulfill her marriage contract by bearing and raising children, running the households and acting as hostess. Otherwise, she is determined to maintain her individuality. During the early years of marriage, Agnes is often desperately unhappy and turns to psychiatrists and the arts for relief. She becomes a protygy of Charles Lang Freer, collecting Chinese art and research materials for a book published in 1923. She attends courses at Columbia, helps found the New School for Social Research, remains involved with avant-garde art and co-founds and edits its journal, *291,* all while carrying and later nursing Flo. Eugene, meanwhile, suffers several business setbacks, which require him to retrench financially and tarnish his reputation on Wall Street. He longs to take part in the birth of an industry and make history. His youngest brother Edgar, one of the few people with whom he is close, perishes on *Titanic,* leaving Eugene painfully bereft.

Despite her reluctance to be a socialite or a loving mother, Eugene knows he can depend on Agnes for staunch support. After the birth of daughter Elizabeth (Bis) in 1914, Agnes spends more than two months in Europe, rekindling her artistic interests and restoring her commitment to the difficult marriage. She returns on the last ship out of Europe before the outbreak of World War I. Brother Bill is born a year later, followed by Kay on June 16, 1917.

Chapter 1 traces Graham's family history through the recitation of facts and through evocative samples of family lore. That her mother and father are extraordinary people, an unlikely match and unorthodox parents is clear; the extent is left to the next chapter, which details memories of Kay's childhood and adolescence and sets up the struggles of Kay's lifetime.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis

World War I falls conveniently at the time Eugene's "map of life" calls for him to take up public service. He has already begun playing a semipublic role, helping reform the New York Stock Exchange, and he finds various ways of applying his $40-$60 million fortune to the public good. Early in 1917, Eugene signs on as a "dollar-a-year" man in Washington, serving in several capacities culminating in the War Industries Board. Four months after Kay's birth, Mother leaves the children in the care of Powelly and a governess to join Eugene in Washington. The "temporary" situation lasts four years, and the effect on the older siblings is more profound than on infant Kay. Mother thrives socially in Washington and takes pride at a distance in the progress of her children, who grow devoted to kindly Powelly.

Mother finds Washington women intellectually backward but enjoys their luncheon debates. The allure of politics captivates both Mother and Father, who becomes managing director of the War Finance Corporation under President Harding in 1921. Convinced their lives are now rooted in Washington, they move the children there. Kay's earliest memories are of a sprawling mansion on Connecticut Avenue. Kay recalls Father as a rather distant character.

Oldest sister Flo suffers most from parental inattention and is an attractive but distant character to Kay. Sister Bis is a consummate rebel against parental authority, allied with brother Bill. Kay admires Bis' independence but cannot help being a "goody-two-shoes" and guileless tattletale. Kay cannot penetrate the clique of the three older siblings she adores, but she bonds with younger sister Ruth as companion and mentor. They become a duo, left behind with servants while the older trio takes trips to Europe and the American West. The Meyers winter in Washington but pass the summers busily at their huge country home in Mt. Kisco known as "the farm." An indoor pool, tennis courts, an immense organ rigged to play piano rolls, impractical furnishings arranged by mother, Chinese paintings, Brancusi statues and long-term friendly servants top Kay's pleasant memories of Mt. Kisco. A lack of friends and strong anti-Semitism provide the balance to give the place ambivalence in her memory.

When Kay is in fifth grade, the Meyers move for two years to a red brick house on Massachusetts Street and then to the house on Crescent Place that she identifies as her true childhood home. It is grand and formal, filled with artwork. Her school friends find the house - and Mother - intimidating. Mother insists on a strict regimen of lessons and planned activities year-round, including horseback riding and music and dance lessons, none of which Kay enjoys or excels in. Summer camping trips are important to Mother as a corrective to the affluence in which the children are raised. Some years the family goes instead to Europe, but Kay and Ruth are considered too young for museums. In 1929, father buys a ranch in Kelly, Wyoming, at the foot of the Tetons, but later he sells it when the children fail to show interest. For that, Kay is sad.

Kay's formal education begins in an unstructured Montessori school, where she blossoms as a reader and acrobat. In fourth grade, she transfers to the conventional Potomac School and is overwhelmed by the strict curriculum and the challenge of making friends. She feels awkward and different there, in high school and during her first two years at Vassar. Kay proves good at team sports, but she must control her bossy nature. Growing taller than most of the boys increases her awkwardness and shyness. Attending egalitarian, puritan Madeira broadens Kay's horizons, but it impedes her social development. Only at the University of Chicago does she learn to make male friends and attract suitors. She joins the staff of the school paper and glee club, acts in a play and is surprised to be elected senior class president. Her yearbook prophesies that she will be a big shot in journalism, but she remembers little more than being a goody-two-shoes.

In 1921, Mother becomes involved in Westchester County politics as protygy (and possible lover) of boss William L. Ward. Kay absorbs from her parents the sense that one must care about society and give back to it. Mother works on numerous civic projects, and by 1924 she is asked to run for office but demurs. Father, while involved in Republican causes, undertakes nonpartisan projects. His greatest achievement is reviving American agriculture through the War Finance Corporation in 1925.

Both parents are usually absent and formal and distant when at home. Mother is elegant, terrifying, distant, suspicious and ungenerous in small things; Father is exceptionally frugal. These characteristics rub off on Kay. Mother's rude assertiveness, by contrast, leaves Kay for life meekly submissive in public. Mother's frequent ill health, probably caused by depression, and alcoholism are an escalating burden. Her ego and setting of impossibly high standards stand in the way of Kay's developing interests, and yet she mythologizes her children as different from the *hoi polloi*. Mother's attitudes condemn Kay to years of not accepting people as they are. Father, who actually likes children, appears a remote and difficult figure, but his unspoken belief in Kay becomes one of the most sustaining things in her life.

The three taboos in the Meyer household are wealth, religion and sex. The children are not showered with luxuries and, in fact, live a Spartan life, to teach them everyone must work for a living. Father's Jewish background is not hidden but certainly not flaunted. They own a pew in the President's church for social reasons, and the children are baptized Lutheran to mollify their maternal grandmother. Kay is still amazed that she is unaware of anti-Semitism until the eve of World War II. The children are kept too busy to think about sex, and mother evades such questions as how babies are conceived and menstruation. Kay concludes her very candid evaluation of her childhood and adolescence by observing that Mother never encouraged her to learn practical life skills like dressing, cooking, sewing and shopping. She reckons that she and her siblings grew up knowing they were extraordinarily privileged but void of self-worth and seeking their own identities.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis

Father retires from federal service in 1933, and the solitude of Mt. Kisco grows unbearable within two weeks. He takes a hint from family friend and journalism insider, Eleanor Medill "Cissy" Patterson, to rescue the *Washington Post* from a $500,000 debt and receivership. He works through a lawyer to prevent the price from going to the $5 million he had earlier offered for the paper. Hamilton is authorized to go as high as $1.7 million but prevails at a mere $825,000. Kay is a junior at Madeira, preparing to take the college boards, and learns of the purchase second-hand. Father takes Kay and Bill on a nighttime tour of the building. The paper has shrunk to eighteen pages, and both circulation and advertising are terrible.

Father, lacking experience in journalism, seems rejuvenated as he sets about applying his business acumen to the expensive task of making the paper truly nonpartisan and excellent. Father enunciates a seven-point philosophy of editorial excellence for the *Post* to persuade readers to return while competitors spread rumors that he is running an anti-FDR organ for the Republican Party. He offers salaries out of line with the times, recruiting staff for both the editorial and business side of the business.

Alexander F. "Casey" Jones proves a perfect transitional editor. Reporting on the affairs of the federal government is given priority. Realizing the importance of sports for circulation, Father caters to it, and he revitalizes the women's pages by hiring female reporters to write what Washington's women want and need to know. Dr. George Gallup's polls first gain acceptance when Father runs them on the front page. The *Post* gains a reputation for insight, vigor and prestige and begins having an effect on Congress and the administration, whose policies it selectively supports or chides. By 1935, Father is learning how journalism works, but he still loses $1.3 million a year. He caters to the needs of advertisers, but success in circulation eludes the *Post* until after the war. He turns down numerous buyouts. Kay works as a summer copy girl and messenger in the women's department. In college, she reads the *Post* daily and corresponds with her parents frequently, offering encouragement and criticism. She is surprised now at how boldly she wrote then, considering the low self-image she then had.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis

Kay enters Vassar in 1934 and muddles through her freshman year, learning to survive by bumping into reality. She finds her political views departing from her parents' opposition to the New Deal. She identifies with the protagonist in Thomas Mann's *Tonio Krtzger,* who longs to like everyone else. Kay innocently and arrogantly battles with a hated history teacher about a paper on the position of women in the Middle Ages and avoids academic probation only when Mother raises Cain with Vassar's administration. Kay is intimidated by Mother's having read and assimilated all the books she is discovering.

Kay and new friend Connie Dimock become seriously interested in politics, and she accepts appointment as treasurer of the college political club in hopes of some fun baiting the more leftwing bears. Kay accepts a summer position on the *Mount Vernon Argus* and enjoys the experience, but not her introduction to union politics. The Newspaper Guild raises a furor over her working without pay. Kay finds herself slowly growing closer to shy, awkward Father and apart from Mother. Kay's "coming out" celebration is more restrained than most, and at it she meets the sophisticated young reporter Joseph Alsop, who becomes a lifelong friend. The next day, she and Dimock go to Columbus, Ohio, to report on the American Student Union, a meeting of communist and socialist groups opposed to fascism. Kay is surprised to be named to the National Executive Committee, as a token non-radical. Father opposes this, arguing that journalists ought not to join organizations, but he respects her judgment. Mother, too, is growing more involved in politics, priding herself in her role in Alf Landon's hopeless bid to unseat FDR. Kay finds it increasingly difficult to communicate with her. In 1936, Kay and Dimock take part in a nationwide peace strike and, curiously, accept an invitation to the old-fashioned Daisy Chain at Vassar. Mother initially supports Kay's plan to visit the Soviet Union with the Dimocks, but Father forbids it, since he cannot work full-time for her release should she get in trouble there. Kay marches in the Bastille Day parade in Paris and exults in a feeling of communal strength, and then she breaks off to visit widowed Aunt Elise. Kay recalls no resentment watching Dimock go to the Soviet Union.

In Chapter 4, Kay finds a political position radically at odds with both her parents but still more conservative than the young people with whom she is involved. Her childhood attitudes shift as Father respects her as a competent, budding adult while Mother treats her as an unsophisticated novice. Note Kay's amusement at finding that Tolstoy agrees with Mother's views rather than the other way around as well as the gap between her growing radicalism and the world of privilege that sometimes still tugs at her.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis

Father finds that Kay is too immature for the London School of Economics, but he allows her to transfer to the urban, coeducational, non-affluent, intellectually fervent University of Chicago. Kay lives on the edge of campus and acquires a nucleus of intellectual, beer-drinking friends. She declines to join sororities, which invite her only with difficulty because of her being half-Jewish. Kay is more surprised than distressed by this touch of anti-Semitism. Kay declares an American History major, is challenged by a great books course that uses the Socratic method, earns an A and is rewarded by Father with a hundred dollars to spend on the works of Plato and Aristotle. Kay finds it hard to balance academic and social activities. She becomes ardently anti-fascist and pro-labor while remaining basically conservative.

Chicago's ASU is far more radical than Vassar's, composed mostly of communists and socialists of a boring mind-set. Hitler, Mussolini and Franco appear far more dangerous than Stalin before the secret trials and purges come to light. Kay remains grateful for the world of privilege into which she is born and is unwilling to overthrow the system. She remains a "good girl" and does not join the Communist Party as do most of her friends, a decision that proves useful in the McCarthy era, when the *Post* comes under heavy scrutiny. Through a course in labor relations, Kay grows interested in unionizing and will support the movement for life, despite reservations at some of its personalities and radical tendencies. With a friend, Robert Beck, a stringer for the *Chicago Daily News,* Kay observes police violently breaking up a steal strike and drops the *Post's* name to gain entry to tour the plant. She apologizes for the presumption to Casey Jones, who gets a "bang" out of it and graciously gives her a letter of introduction for future use.

Kay and Father correspond frequently, and it is clear that running the costly *Post* is wearing him down. His crusade to improve the paper is aided by acquisition of the *Herald-Tribune* service, which brings him big-name columns and popular features. The *Post* is still a tiny entity in the news business, but Father encourages Kay to join him in the exhilarating fight to the top. She is certain he is extending this invitation to no other children. She is shocked by his decision to announce and sponsor a great homecoming celebration for FDR after his 1936 victory, but he insists this is sound, practical journalism, unlike the idealism she is absorbing in Chicago. This is the most overt difference that ever appears between them. Father is kind and supportive and relishes differences of opinion. By contrast, growing ever more self-centered, Mother constructs a static mental picture of Kay.

Alf Landon's 1936 defeat is a blow to Mother. She writes and speaks on many issues, especially welfare and education, and isolates herself at "the Cabin" on the Potomac River, working on a book on Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Mann. In 1937, Mother hears Mann speak on two occasions and decides to interview him for the *Post.* The meeting takes place hurriedly under inauspicious conditions, and Mother feels schoolgirl foolish

in her performance. Mother obsesses about the exiled German writer, and her mental instability manifests itself during a vacation in Wyoming that summer. Kay is forced to talk her down off a cliff. Thereafter, Mother becomes uncommunicative - particularly towards Father - and Kay and Father draw still closer together.

Kay is too much at home in Chicago to return to Vassar. She has occasional romantic flirtations, generally where only one or the other feels the attraction, and remains shy, virginal and unable to cope with sexual advances. During Kay's senior year, Bis visits from Hollywood, where she has established a circle of glamorous friends. Mother has nixed marriage to a movie producer, and the sisters discuss the burden of being Meyers, compelled to do great things in whatever line they feel best suited. Having lived so long at the top, it is hard to begin something at the bottom and struggle to climb. Kay adds that Meyerdom is like an inescapable octopus and confesses an interest in journalism - labor and political reporting in particular. She worries that she cannot be the jack-of-all-trades assistant Father needs.

Advertising and circulation matters repel her. Still, she realizes it will crush Father to work so hard and have no one to give it to, and it would be sad to lose his help, company and advice. She needs a more scintillating job in order to excel. Finally, because she hates to live alone, Kay figures she will marry someone and raise sixteen children. She observes in an aside to the reader that this largely comes about when her husband takes over the *Post* and she tends to their four children and works for good causes. Kay writes with disappointment that these thoughts shared with Bis sum up her three years in Chicago, but she acknowledges she learns a lot there and returns to Mt. Kisco uncertain about her future.

Chapter 5 shows Kay spreading her wings in Chicago, knowing in the back of her mind her fate lies with the *Washington Post.* Note her special interest in reporting on labor relations, a theme that will be developed in the next chapter, detailing her first professional experience, and aversion to advertising and circulation. These will become major concerns in 1976, when Kay is at the helm of the *Post* during a long and bitter strike. Going to London would have served her well in later years when she needs to know business, but by then she wishes she had gone to the Harvard Business School.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis

Father takes Kay to San Francisco to meet the family and arranges a two-month twenty-one-dollar-a-month writing job on the small, scrappy *San Francisco News.* Kay conceals her ties to the *Post* to avoid preferential treatment until her appointment is up, and she wants to remain on the job. Initially, Kay is lost in the city and overwhelmed by the job, but within a month she adjusts and grows ambitious. Bob Elliott invites her to be his "legman" on two labor confrontations, a fact she will emphasize later, when the *Post* is embroiled in a wildcat strike. Kay keeps tabs on a boxcar full of strikebreakers making the rounds of the waterfront and ingratiates herself to several key labor figures, growing closer, she observes, than would now be tolerated in reporters. In Chapter 6, Kay exults in being young and making youthful mistakes, about which she writes demurely. Throughout the book she will bring up romantic or sexual liaisons without confirming or denying them. After the waterfront dispute goes to arbitration, Kay is put on the retail clerks' strike. Besides making new friends on the job, Kay is introduced to many key figures in the West Coast artistic elite through Aunt Ro.

Father wants to read all of Kay's copy. He shares with her his concerns about the rising Nazi threat and his pride at improvements in the *Post.* Patterson merges the *Times* and the *Herald* to create more potent competition. Mother is busy speaking out against fascism, trying to get Jewish children to Palestine. She is still obsessed with Mann, who accepts her generous help but finds her too demanding. Kay's letters of this time show Hitler as a very distant if discordant voice and starting a real writing career as her immediate concern. She experiences ups and downs, but she generally takes pride in being able to write columns on a variety of "fluff" subjects. Father reminds her it is time to come back to the *Post,* and she does not want to take a job away from a *News* reporter who might really need it. *Time* magazine reports Kay going to work in the letters to the editor department for twenty-five dollars a week.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis

After five years away, Kay finds Washington, DC, a vibrant, youthful city, swept clean of stodginess. As the publisher's daughter, she finds it wiser to work in the editorial department than on the streets as a reporter. With the New Deal giving way to war preparations, the *Post* has grown less critical of FDR. Kay is part of the press corps that attends FDR's press conference in the Oval Office after Hitler invades Poland. Kay's pacifist boss, Felix Morley, finds himself at odds with Father and is replaced by Elmer Davis. Kay writes "light editorials" for the first year and edits letters to the editor. She gets to know many of the reporters well.

Eligible young men abound in Washington, many living like kings by pooling their resources in low-cost bachelor houses. Through fellow reporters who room in one of these, Kay first meets Philip Graham, then clerking for Supreme Court Justice Stanley Reed and in line for a job with Felix Frankfurter. Phil is co-editor of the prestigious *Harvard Law Review.* Kay and three other girls become adjutants of Hockley House, where they meet New Dealers, Harvard professors and judges. No topic is taboo there, and alcohol flows freely with often-hilarious results. Kay is intrigued talking with Phil at a coming out party for her sister Ruth and again at Bis' New Years Eve party, where she is charmed by his ability to penetrate human nature. Kay and Phil date a few times before he proposes that they elope to Florida in February 1940. Phil makes it clear that he will never accept anything from her father or work for him. Kay suggests that they wait a month, but she is amazed to have found in one man all the qualities she had ever hoped for: intellect, charm, humor and good looks. Discovering mutual love, she says, is incredibly exciting. Mother is unavailable in Nassau, but Father invites Phil to dinner to look him over. Phil, darkly suspicious of the old tycoon, accepts. Kay's heart sinks when they lock horns over a political cartoon, but she is relieved to learn that Father approves. Mother is cool about the idea when she returns, but she does not interfere as she had with Flo and Bis.

Phil's father, Ernest Graham, is a gruff, hardworking man born in Michigan, and his mother, Floss, is a Nebraska-born schoolteacher. Their fights during Phil's childhood have left him adverse to scenes of any kind, and Phil's resulting "no-fights" rule, to which Kay agrees, eventually causes differences to pile up between them.

Phil is born in Terry, South Dakota, in 1915, two years after his sister Mary. After the war, the Grahams move to the Everglades to manage a sugar cane operation. Until 1924, they live on houseboats, and Phil recalls a romantic childhood spent with the local Seminole Indians. The hurricane of 1926 and Wall Street crash of 1929 crush Pennsuco, and the Grahams become successful dairy farmers. Phil, who is closest to his mother, is the youngest and smallest boy in school, always socially behind. He and his younger brother Bill work endlessly to help support the family.

Ernest works in local and state politics and narrowly misses being elected governor of Florida. Phil attends high school in Miami, where he uses wit to compensate for his size and lack of athletic ability. At the University of Florida, Phil enjoys fraternity life, girls and alcohol, which puts him at odds with his tee-totaling father. Phil's beloved mother dies of cancer in 1934, and he is devastated. Her dying wish is that he attend Harvard Law School. Although Ernest can scarce afford it, he relents, and the hayseed farm boy goes to Cambridge, where he thrives. He makes the *Law Review* in his second year and is introduced to Frankfurter, who adopts him as one of his "boys." FDR appoints Frankfurter to the Supreme Court, and he takes Phil along, where his many talents flourish.

In Chapter 7, Kay portrays herself unabashedly as a happy young socialite and working girl, giddy about the prospects of a revitalized Washington, DC, even before she bumps into the love of her life. At the end of the memoir, explaining why she has written it, Kay says no one has dealt satisfactorily with the life story of the brilliant and tragic Phil Graham. Beginning here, she makes up the deficit, devoting nearly as much attention to him as to herself. Readers will learn much about her own perceived shortcoming by reading how Phil challenges and improves her, forcing her to confront character defects she largely attributes to her mother's earlier influence.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 8 continues the narrative of the Grahams' whirlwind romance with Kay's observations. They are very young relative strangers, but they share many interests. She observes up front to readers that the seeds for eventual tragedy exist, but she builds and preserves the suspense to the very end (assuming the reader does not look at the cover blurbs). Frankfurter approves of the union, but Ernest Graham is not keen on his son marrying a Jew. Phil describes Kay in a long letter as belonging to a vulgarly rich family but willing to live on what he can earn. They foresee no problems with her family and plan to wed during the summer. Ernest recalls eloping and wishes them well. Kay comes to love her father-in-law. The couple announces the engagement, which Kay nearly breaks when Phil's drinking reveals a frightening frenzy. His charm prevails, however, and she assembles an enormous trousseau in order to keep her word after the ceremony to live off their earnings. The Meyer fortune continues to worry Phil. Neither is religious, but Kay wants more than a justice of the peace at the ceremony in Mt. Kisco on June 5, 1940. Ruth is Kay's attendant, and Prich is Phil's best man. They meet newly married Flo in New York and then sail to Bermuda for a honeymoon of reading and tennis, oblivious to the fall of France.

The Grahams return to Washington to set up housekeeping and then drive to Florida to see Phil's family, augmented by shy but affectionate stepmother, Hilda, and their spoiled son, Bob, the future governor and senator. Kay is pained to see signs forbidding entry to dogs and Jews - taking up, again in passing, the theme of American anti-Semitism. Kay is also surprised at latent sexism, which she has not encountered in northern cities. She knows nothing about the subjects that bind Phil with his father and finds Phil's college friends offensive. During the three-week visit, Phil receives a birthday card from his mother-in-law, who is envious of the newlyweds entering a brave new world. From experience, she cautions him about the dangers of money making one soft, but she has more confidence in him than in anyone she has ever known. Throughout much of the book readers will see Kay puzzling about - but rejoicing in - Phil's positive relationship with the mother she has never gotten along with smoothly. Note in Phil's introductory letter to his father that he finds Agnes Meyer initially unattractive.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary and Analysis

Kay and Phil's first home is a small, unfurnished, eighty-dollar-a-month rental outside Georgetown. Phil is horrified that Kay wants to become a housewife and suggests they hire Mattie Jeffres to keep house and cook. He earns $3,600 a year, and she earns $1,500. Also, they enjoy a $500 wedding-present cushion. Kay learns to live on a new scale. Mattie's presence retards Kay's learning basic domestic skills, but Kay is determined to live up to the agreement to live within their means, even if it means looking quite dowdy during her first pregnancy. Old and new friends enrich their lives, but the dominant influence remains Frankfurter, who revels in arguing, gossiping and irreverence. Phil is kept busy at the Court, so Kay immerses herself in writing for the "Brains" section of the Sunday *Post* and joins the Women's National Press Corps. The local newspaper wars are heating up, and Father enjoys running his expensive operation, even though it lags behind the *Star* and the *Times-Herald*. Circulation is growing, and in 1941 *Time* declares the *Post* a journal of national importance.

Kay and Phil's ardent support for FDR puts them at odds with her pro-Willkie parents. News from Europe is troubling, and the Frankfurters and Meyers become involved with English and Jewish refugees. As the 1941 Court session ends, Phil wonders what to do next. Florida politics tug at him, but he remains in Washington to help with the build-up to war. Frankfurter and Robert Lovett, who feels Phil can help break the bottleneck in the White House, ease his entry there. Phil works in Lend-Lease alongside Ben Cohen, making sure arms production is on target. Kay remarks that her "nervous nanny-bed manners" are continually shocked by the rough manners of these brash young men dealing with their superiors. Kay hears about Pearl Harbor over lunch with her parents and is shocked when Phil proclaims, "Thank God." He and his friends try to enlist but are rejected for the moment. With Bob Nathan, Phil becomes part of an *ad hoc* "Goon Squad" battling red tape until the War Production Board is up and functioning. Phil gains a reputation as a go-getter in Lend-Lease and the Office of Emergency Management. He is tasked with liaising with the Australians. He also works on V-Loan legislation to help private industry convert to producing war material.

Kay is bereft after suffering a miscarriage but finds herself happily pregnant again late in 1941. Phil is anxious to enlist but puts it off until after the birth in May. Exhausted and lethargic, Kay stops working at the *Post.* The obstetricians are so overworked that they fail to realize the baby's chord is wrapped around its neck, and Kay's son is stillborn. She is devastated at an occurrence unheard of in her old world, compounded by Phil's being called up. Kay draws support from her father, since Mother is too upset to be of any help. Mother and daughter flare in Mt. Kisco over the former's claim that young New Dealers are dodging the draft and the latter's charge of living in opulence and doing nothing to support the war effort. Mother begins a career as a traveling correspondent, for which Kay gives her great credit.

Kay credits Phil with helping her grow up during those first years of marriage, liberating her from the Meyer family and its myths and helping her overcome an inborn resistance to change. Phil grows to enjoy talking with Father, which helps her view the latter's stodgy monologues in a new light. Phil also enjoys Mother, but with greater ambivalence and criticism. Phil becomes a great help to them both, while insisting he and Kay live their own lives. Kay feels confident Phil also learns things from her, such as to appreciate art, music and beauty, and he gains stability. She confesses to enjoying the role of "doormat wife," with slight resentment. She begins developing the theme of how Phil always dominates and how she always implements. Only because Kay holds out hope that she will outgrow this does the whining not grow unbearable. She ends the chapter reflecting on how they grow, learn and laugh together before he goes off to the uncertainty of war, heaped on top of her second failure to have a baby.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary and Analysis

Kay sees Phil off to boot camp, knowing that she will join him as a camp follower wherever he lands. The first stop is Atlantic City, New Jersey, where she rents a room on the boardwalk. Phil is ambivalent about the army, disliking the sadism, ineptitude, incompetence, negligence and foul language, but reveling in the camaraderie. He is next sent to radio school in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Kay follows to a town swollen to 300% its prewar population by military families. Both are miserable at the bottom of the heap, after having lived lives of privilege. Kay grows frustrated studying typing and shorthand but volunteers to roll bandages for the Red Cross. She is surprised at the kindness of small-town Middle America towards strangers. She joins the "Mrs. Private" club formed by soldiers' wives, many of whom are pregnant and working locally.

Kay too becomes pregnant and is advised to observe complete bed rest, but she takes her chances and does not miscarry. An x-ray of Phil's lungs disqualifies him from Officers' Candidate School, but Cox and Frankfurter gain a waiver. The Grahams head east. While Phil attends OCS in Wayne, Pennsylvania, pregnant Kay lives with her parents. When he is sent to Yale for more study, they rendezvous weekends in New Haven. Phil is assigned to the Office of Strategic Services, but he soon finds it too political and transfers to the air corps. He is dispatched to Salt Lake City. Kay can no longer travel, and they reenact the earlier tearful farewell. Phil goes on to depressing Ephrata, Washington. They correspond about fetus "Petunia" and the nadir of Phil's military career. Mother is in England, reporting on a "people's war" and social revolution far beyond anything being done in the U.S. Returning early in 1943, Mother begins a four-month tour of the home front.

Kay keeps company with Father. The *Post* is growing immeasurably, and Kay happily accepts a part-time, gratis job reading and comparing papers for news play and ideas. Women are taking over many jobs earlier occupied by men and produce a nucleus that survives the unfortunate rollback after the war. Welfare and education are their primary focus. Because Father is nearing seventy and visibly worn, Kay is not convinced the *Post* has a bright future. Brother Bill is in medicine, so Father hopes to win over Phil, since it is unthinkable the *Post* should pass out of family hands, or that a woman should head it. Kay confesses it never occurred to her she might have an important job at the *Post.* She knows only the prospect of war kept Phil from his dream of entering Florida politics and remembers his vow never to work for his father-in-law. Furthermore, Phil has only passing, indirect knowledge of the business, and his own father wants him to help on the farm. When Phil and Father discuss the question, Phil surprisingly agrees, seeing journalism to be as good a way of effecting public policy as politics.

Bill advises Kay to have her baby at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and she and sister-in-law Mary Meyer take a room at the Belvedere Hotel a month early, to be safe.

Phil graduates Ephrata and arrives in Baltimore just in time for the arrival of Elizabeth "Lally" Morris Graham on July 3, 1943. Father comes to see his granddaughter, but Mother remains at home. Kay is determined to take care of Lally herself but soon accepts Mary "Mamie" Bishop as a nurse. Like Powelly a generation earlier, Mamie will be part of the family until the last child outgrows her. How having a nurse retards Kay's maternal growth becomes an ongoing theme, with frequent anecdotes sprinkled in the text.

Mother and child follow Phil to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he teaches at the Air Intelligence School. They live an "ideal and spoiling life" for two months in a borrowed house before moving into a miserable housing complex. Kay again notes that when it comes to making the physical move, she is responsible. Gradually she becomes a drudge and grows unsure of herself. Writing at age seventy-eight, she declares this unhealthy and will repeatedly lament her inability at the time to see this pattern of behavior. Perhaps she wants to drum into women of her granddaughters' generation the destructiveness of such passivity, although she regularly recognizes that the women's liberation movement has made this passy. Kay first mentions Phil's frequent bouts of flu, far more intense than her own, and again is concerned about his drinking.

Pregnant again, Kay takes Lally to Washington when Phil is shipped to an important assignment in the Philippines, reporting to General George Kenney. Kay regularly sends Phil *Post* clippings, and he corresponds with Father about the paper. In order to keep busy, Kay takes a part-time, and frustrating, job in the *Post's* badly disorganized circulation department, answering complaints. She loses control of the first dinner party she tries to host as the drunken participants argue politics. As her lease runs out in the spring of 1945, Kay is relieved to have Phil visit Washington with the general for meetings. Phil pulls strings to get Kenney into the White House to see an exhausted FDR. Phil is not in the mood for house hunting and leaves it to Kay's discretion. She learns about "restriction" of Jews and blacks, which Phil says is illegal but probably not worth fighting. Kay buys the next house she sees, an odd place in Georgetown, and furnishes it without a decorator. She moves in and finds it harder to run than the one she left.

On April 12, 1945, word comes of FDR's death, and Kay, overwhelmed with sadness, watches the funeral procession go by en route to the White House. Mother accompanies her to Baltimore for the birth of David Edward on April 22. The baby looks like no relative and is quite a character from the start. The war ends in Europe on May 8, but it grinds on in the Pacific until the atomic bombs drop. Phil approves of the military tactic but shows no knowledge of the massive civilian casualties. Five days later he writes Kay it "scared the living hell out of me." Rumors have Phil taking part in the occupation of Japan, but Don's birth earns him additional "points." He flies home within ten days, embarrassed at having gotten out so easily.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary and Analysis

The year 1946 gradually moves Kay and Phil Graham towards a new and serious life. Phil becomes Father's deputy and starts learning the newspaper business at the top. Donny is a difficult baby, and Kay regularly leans on three-year-old Lally for eager assistance. Kay learns to get along with her new responsibilities and to relate to her immediately overworked husband. The Grahams' social circle is expanding. Prich remains close even after returning to Kentucky. They establish a life-long friendship with Joseph Alsop, the popular *Herald-Tribune* columnist, who lives beyond his means. They also become friends with the prima dona columnist Walter Lippmann and his protective wife, Helen. They grow so close to star *New York Times* reporter James (Scotty) Reston and his wife Sally that they name them legal guardians for the children. Kay's closest new friendship is with Polly Wisner.

Because they must cooperate on labor relations at their papers, the Grahams throw a party for Cissy Patterson, and Phil achieves immediate rapport. The growing family moves to a larger country-style house on R Street, and Father keeps Kay from losing the property by trying to haggle. Kay quakes at the though of furnishing the house and takes years to do so fully. She describes it as "casual, to put it mildly." The library and children's multi-purpose room receive special attention.

Phil knows nothing about the newspaper business when he starts at the *Post,* but brains and ability serve him well, as does hard work at Father's side. They assume public obligations together. President Truman's Famine Emergency Committee is based on Father's suggestion, and he rallies the press to support it. Kay notes how journalism would later abandon such activism and is happy they had an effect on postwar world hunger. In June 1946, Truman asks Father to serve as the first president of the World Bank, a vital project Father cannot turn down, and Phil becomes in title and fact the *Post's* publisher - the youngest publisher of a major U.S. newspaper.

The *Post* lacks the funds or prestige to recruit badly needed high-quality staff in the news, editorial and business areas, but Phil throws himself into turning a marginal, money-losing enterprise into one worthy of the capital of a great nation. He brings in a wartime associate, Wayne Coy, as assistant to the publisher and wants to replace staid managing editor Casey Jones with the dynamic young Russ Wiggins, who chooses instead to join the *New York Times.* Phil and Elliston fly to Europe in August 1946, and the trip helps Phil shed some of his extreme liberalism. He encourages and supports his father-in-law, who finds the World Bank frustrating from the start. When Father resigns in December, he wisely leaves Phil in charge of the paper and backs him in everything as chairman of a non-existent board. Relations among the Meyers and Grahams solidify. Phil publishes a series of Mother's articles on postwar problems. She pushes health and welfare concerns. She is, at age sixty, "a one-woman reform movement." In 1948, Phil is dragged into the middle of a bitter tug-of-war between Mother and Elliston

over the editing of her pieces. In this instance and more broadly, Phil's tact helps defuse this volatile woman. Mother should have been a model for her daughters, but she always made them feel inferior to her. Kay finds herself now dependent on and submissive to Phil in everything.

Kay decides not to go back to work after Donny's birth, but Phil convinces her to undertake a weekly column digesting the week's magazine content, "The Magazine Rack." Kay becomes more involved in civic affairs, accepting an appointment to the National Sesquicentennial Commission and various fund drives and boards. At home, she is completely responsible for raising the children. She stops taking them every summer to Mt. Kisco to keep them away from their grandmother's influence and to give them more time with Phil.

Phil throws himself into his job and within the first year is thoroughly knowledgeable and totally in charge of a very thin organization. He emphasizes advertising and handles labor and circulation negotiations, areas that had been killing the *Post.* He knows everyone in the building and helps with their problems, and he actively recruits new talent, particularly women reporters. In April 1947, a second attempt to bring Wiggins aboard as managing editor succeeds, and Jones is pushed upstairs to become assistant to the publisher. Wiggins works productively for the paper for twenty-one years. His first steps improve the quality and integrity of the city room, eliminating racial identifications and outlawing reporters' "freebies" and anything that might compromise the ability to report without influence. Phil and Wiggins lead a crusade against crime locally and nationally, culminating in the retirement of the district police chief in 1951.

The *Post,* which still lacks an overseas reporting staff in 1947, firmly backs the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. A special supplement on the latter wins a National Headliners' Club award, which marks the paper's emergence as a journalistic power. On the downside, a printers' strike looms. Kay is again pregnant. Kay and Phil are vacation in Nassau when Phil receives a phone call from CBS President Frank Stanton, asking if he wants to purchase a majority share in its Washington station. They hurry home, and negotiations begin, expedited by Phil's legal training. By May 1948, the *Post* enters the electronic era, buying 55% of WTOP, and Kay has a new friend in Ruth Stanton. They are conversing when Kay goes into labor with William Welsh Graham, whom she delivers naturally. They come home from the hospital to find that Phil has bought one of the first television sets in the neighborhood.

In mid-1948, Father decides to pass his rocky, lively, prize-winning paper to Kay and Phil, and he appoints a five-member "self-perpetuating" committee to control ownership once the new incumbents pass, but which will exercise no power over politics or organization of the newspaper. Father's public announcement emphasizes that a newspaper must be a commercial success to ensure its high calling as a restrained protector of the people's need for information. The Grahams sign an agreement pledging to perpetuate Father's vision, and Phil receives a birthday gift of $75,000 so that he can pay for his share of the Class A common stock. Together the spouses control 5,000 voting shares. Kay is amused that she did not challenge Father's view that Phil should own the majority, lest he appear to be working for his wife. The Meyer

children avoid the kind of battles that rend other newspapers' family owners. Bill continues to invest, and when he dies in 1982, he leaves his children and foundation well endowed. Flo, although estranged from the family in 1948, is assured she and her children will be taken care of. Bis and Ruth, who do not invest in the *Post*, are left secure but not affluent, but they do not act as though they are short-changed. To help Phil pay back the debt he incurs to buy the stock, Kay volunteers to pay all their living expenses from the trust Father has established for his children. Fifteen years later, she will rue the decision.

Two days after the transfer, Patterson dies suddenly, putting the fate of tge *Times-Herald* in question. Phil immediately enters negotiations with her seven heirs. The *Post* is incorporated to remove Father's liability for future losses. The youthful Grahams find themselves heavily obliged to make the paper a success. Chapter 11 shows how the Grahams have grown up overnight. At several points, Kay confesses her surprise at her attitudes in the immediate postwar years. The crisis ahead with Phil is again hinted at in the context of finances. Phil has abandoned his intention of never working for his father-in-law, and he now also drops his objections to using his wife's inherited fortune. He is portrayed as overworked but not yet psychologically deranged, as will shortly transpire.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary and Analysis

The paper the Grahams take over is fragile and losing money. The building on E Street is in ill repair. Wiggins is doing a remarkable job transforming the news desk but is held back due to finances. In 1948, Ben Bradlee arrives for the first time, largely by chance as a young reporter. Readers will see much of him later, at the helm of the *Post* during the heady days of the Pentagon Papers and Watergate, but at this point, he quickly leaves to go to Harvard and subsequently joins *Newsweek's* European staff. Phil at this point, Kay believes, shines as an editor and leader in journalism at large. He rejects the idea that newspapers can brush off their defects blithely, acknowledges they must be run as profitable businesses and works hard to expand the *Post's* sad advertising base. He takes the lead in automating accounting and in hiring reporters on merit alone. He runs front-page crime stories to inspire the lackluster Senator Estes Kefauver to hold the hearings that vault him into national prominence. Phil breaks free of his Southern upbringing to give firm backing to Bradlee's crusade to desegregate Washington swimming pools. Kay approves of the ends but disagrees with Phil's means, using the paper to coerce policy change, saying that it betrays Father's legacy. This will become an increasingly frequent theme.

Buying the *Times-Herald* means more to the *Post* than to its richer rivals, and eventually Father and Phil reach a secret agreement, for which Father puts up a total of $5.55 million. Frank Waldrop, claiming this would betray Patterson's legacy, throws the deal into the hands of the rich Chicago Tribune Company. Ruth Elizabeth "Bazy" McCormick Miller takes over as the *Times-Herald* publisher*,* which appeals to blue collar workers' love of scandal and gossip*.* The *Washington Star* is also formidable competition, its three owners wielding a heavy hand in the government and appealing to a snobbish, WASP readership. The fourth major paper, the *Daily News,* aims at lunch-counter and street sales. The *Post* targets the average reader and does not stoop to old-style journalistic slugfests. The *Post's* lean years begin. Phil hires Harry Gladstein as circulation manager and John Sweeterman as business manager. Sweeterman is a costly acquisition. He is strong and domineering as he goes about cleaning up the organization. He is often at loggerheads with news and editorial because of his aversion to spending, but he improves circulation and advertising and builds up the Sunday paper.

By 1949, the *Post's* building and equipment are clearly holding back progress, and a new building with twice the capacity and replete with modern amenities is erected on L Street at a cost of $6 million. A drunken wake is held for the beloved old building, and the first issue comes off the new presses in December 1950. The Grahams, unlike Father, cannot afford to subsidize the paper's losses and are fortunate the CBS radio operation is profitable. Phil foresees the value of non-print journalism, and with CBS again a partner and using Father's money, he buys WTOP television. In 1952, Stanton

puts the Grahams onto WJXT in Jacksonville, Florida, resulting in the costliest media purchase to date. It becomes the dominant source of news in the market.

Phil concentrates on news and editorial. He finds it financially difficult to take a stand against the methods of Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The *Post* points out the danger of equating loyalty with conformity and opinions with activities, and it deplores McCarthy's unfair treatment of witnesses as more dangerously un-American than any of the groups or individuals under investigation. The conservative *Plain Talk* launches an attack on the *Post*. Rival papers in Washington and Chicago leap on the bandwagon to undermine the *Post* with subscribers and advertisers. The *Post* is heavily attacked for its coverage of the Alger Hiss affair, and Phil admits making silly judgments. Initially, the paper sympathizes with Hiss but later is convinced by the evidence he is a "cool and cynical perjurer." Justice Frankfurter takes his old protygy to task over one editorial.

Phil and Kay attend both political conventions together in 1948 and feel intimidated, young and unimportant. They maintain the tradition of endorsing neither Truman nor Dewey, but they publish many editorials pointing out the candidates' strengths and weaknesses. When the last Gallup Poll proves wrong and Truman wins, Phil sends him a tongue-in-cheek invitation to a "crow banquet" at which Truman alone will be served turkey. The president is amused but declines, calling on everyone to get together and see to it that all Americans can eat turkey whenever they wish. He applauds the *Post's* fair and comprehensive coverage of his campaign. The 1948 election brings sadness to the Grahams when Prich is caught tampering with ballots and is sentenced to two years in prison. In 1951, Truman pardons Prich, but his brilliant political career is derailed. Kay can see how Prich's permissiveness and laxity could lead to the tragedy and continues to love him. Prich bounces back and works heroically in Kentucky education before dying in 1984.

During the 1950s, McCarthyism heats up, and Phil turns more conservative and anti-communist, partly as a result of attacks on the *Post.* This puts him at odds with Alan Barth and cartoonist Herbert "Herblock" Block. Frankfurter persuades him not to fire Barth for one of his editorials. Phil was determined not to let the paper turn "namby-pamby" like the *New York Times* and kills an inordinate number of editorials with which he disagrees. Eventually the two men manage to get along, and Barth becomes a great adornment to the editorial page. By the summer of 1951, Phil joins Father in backing Eisenhower for the presidency. On March 24, the *Post* endorses Ike over Taft for the Republican nomination, the only such endorsement it will ever make. Kay will return to the question repeatedly, particularly when the dangerous Richard M. Nixon runs in 1968. Father is upset by the move, feeling left out of the loop as his health declines sharply. Phil takes pains to advise and consult with Father thereafter. Kay sides with Phil on the endorsement, while disagreeing over whether Ike should be president. They attend both conventions, and Kay is swept away with excitement over the charismatic Adelai Stevenson, although she realizes he has no chance of winning.

Phil is militantly pro-Eisenhower and gets to know his running mate, Nixon. When the neophyte politician allows handlers not to defend Marshall against right-wingers, Kay

loses all respect for Eisenhower. She is shocked at her husband's tolerance for such a display of weakness, but they do not allow political differences to come between them. Herblock shares Kay's views on Nixon. Tension with Phil rises, and Phil foolishly pulls one particularly caustic, but syndicated, cartoon from the *Post.* Kay sits silently beside Phil as he delivers a campaign speech for Eisenhower. She observes that this was not uncommon among publishers at the time, but she clearly finds it distasteful at the time she pens her memoir.

McCarthy grows more ominous, and *Post* editorials speak out clearly and courageously. Herblock coins the term "McCarthyism." The Alsop brothers' anticommunist columns and the paper's support for Eisenhower help blunt claims of communist sympathies. Phil grows disenchanted with the new president's reticence to criticize McCarthy, a view shared by Lippmann and by Kay's indomitable mother, who likens HUAC to the Gestapo. When a misinformed congressman calumniates her in the *New York Times,* the *Post* rallies to Mother's defense. She also takes on the Catholic Church over the danger of public funding of parochial education. Phil is troubled by her radical views but restrained by Wiggins in publicly dissociating the *Post*. Mother and Phil feud in private over whether the *Post* can afford to take on every controversy and/or afford to have its name dragged into them. Kay and Father back Phil, and eventually the sharp division is put behind them. Phil also falls out with Joseph Alsop over Fifth Amendment issues. No one yet suspects that mental illness underlies Phil's outburst in this matter.

In 1953, the *Post* loses Elliston to heart disease, and Phil tries to hire Reston to succeed him. The *New York Times,* however, retains Reston, who moves to Washington as bureau chief. Young Robert Estabrook is surprisingly elevated to editor, and Friendly is cajoled into being his assistant. The transition from reporter to editor is difficult, but Friendly is enthusiastic.

In 1950, the Grahams buy a house in Warrenton, Virginia, as a summer and weekend getaway. Phil loves the country, and the children thrive there. Kay is less enthusiastic, being saddled with the logistical work. Kay finds another property in secluded Marshall, Virginia, and they buy 350-acre, heavily wooded "Glen Welby" for $87,500. It requires repairs, restoration and furnishing, all of which fall on Kay's shoulders. Phil decides what social events to attend and enjoys them greatly once they arrive, while Kay is shyer and often uncomfortable at parties. She accompanies Phil on his travels and continues to write her column until 1953, when she quits against Phil's wishes. Her time is given to fund-raising, several boards and the children's endless activities.

Kay suffers another depressing miscarriage in 1951, but in April 1952, she bears her last child, Stephen. Relations with Father and Mother are close but difficult. While the party-loving parents are on vacation in Europe, Kay organizes a successful seventy-fifth birthday party for Father, at which many prominent men praise his talents and accomplishments. The Grahams develop a number of rituals that carry on for years: attending Yankee spring training camp in Florida, a brief early-summer vacation in Jacksonville and a burdensome catered staff party to celebrate progress on the anniversary of the purchase of the *Post.*

Relations between the Grahams grow tense as Phil stretches himself too thin, sickens often and drinks heavily. Bouts of drinking make Kay tense, as she anticipates another cycle of blow-up and abject apology. Fights are never public. Phil's rage rarely explodes for any clear reason. Kay writes off Phil's fits of rage as a means of venting work pressure, not suspecting an organic cause. She does not see the signs of depression, which in the 1950s are still little appreciated. She will return repeatedly to the theme of blaming herself for ignorance. Because Phil hates to be alone, Kay accompanies him everywhere and is, therefore, aware of every aspect of his job. Phil has a photographic memory, a great sense of humor and an aversion to anything boring or tedious. On a business trip to Louisville, Kentucky, Phil falls ill and sends Kay with friends to attend the Kentucky Derby. When she returns home, however, she finds Phil furious at being left alone. Today, she recognizes the meaning of the mood swings and Phil's growing penchant for making her the butt of his jokes. She also realizes this has undermined her self-confidence. Everything in the Grahams' lives revolves around Phil's wit and love of the outdoors. Kay remains grateful for all she has learned from her infectiously energetic husband.

The *Post* is growing in size, quality and profitability, often matching the *Star.* Profit sharing is expanded to involve employees in the fate of the newspaper. Sweetman deserves credit for much of the progress. The year 1953 is particularly good, but it is surpassed by 1954 when Father receives a confidential letter offering him the *Times-Herald*. Sweetman is enthusiastic about the acquisition, and the financial team sets to work. The *Times-Herald's* straight-laced owner, Colonel McCormick, has grown dissatisfied with activities at the paper, as have subscribers. McCormick does not want to sell to the competition any more than in 1933 and 1949, but he has great respect for Father. He wants only the $8.5 million he has invested in the paper, which is less than Father is prepared to pay, and demands secrecy until he can deal with his stockholders. The *Post* complies scrupulously as its lawyers examine anti-trust concerns. Last-minute attempts to outbid the *Post* fail because McCormick does not want to sell to "amateurs." *Post* management strategizes about joint operations including which *Times-Herald* personnel to retain. John Hayes hand-delivers a $1.5 million down payment to Chicago. Merging advertising and circulation pose the most immediate challenges. Kay declares that the moment the deal is closed in Chicago, at 12:44 p.m., St. Patrick's Day 1954, is the "supreme moment" in the company's history.

Implementation of the merger is, of course, difficult. The two staffs have very different cultures and audiences. Both names appear on the masthead, but *Times-Herald* grows less prominent and eventually disappears. Its most-read features are retained, and readers receive the joint paper without interruption. Most become paying subscribers. Advertising picks up instantly. The *Post's* anti-trust lawyer, Gerry Gessell, expertly handles the dissolution of the *Times-Herald* Company, to the eventual satisfaction of the Justice Department, despite outcries from many conservatives (including, Kay remarks, tongue-in-cheek, Clara Booth Luce). Sweetman later recalls being sure the *Times-Herald* had reached such bad straights that the buy-out was unnecessary, but Kay clings to her belief - and Phil's - that it was the shortest route to their goal. The paper loses $238,000 its first year, despite gains in circulation and advertising, but the merger goes smoothly and guarantees that the company is here to stay.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary and Analysis

Phil and Kay feel the slowdown of entering middle age and want to give back to the world some of their privileged life. The family spends much time at Glen Welby, actively relaxing. Reconfiguring the property to their needs is Kay's job. They dam a stream to create two artificial lakes, Lake Kay and the larger, later Lake Philip. They assemble a fleet of boats and build a shack that they christen the Lake Philip Yacht Club at a gala party. Phil loves to fish and hunt and teaches the children to shoot. Meals are mostly family-oriented and often served on the beach. Friends and college students are always visiting. Lally learns to ride and hunt. Don hates riding but is superb at a variety of sports. Phil entertains the family with stories about history and other entertainments.

Only at Glen Welby does life seem right. Father is showing signs of his age while Mother, nearing seventy, is enjoying recognition for her diverse and useful work. She and Phil lock horns over placement of a proposed auditorium and cultural center in Washington. She and the committee she chairs want to put it in haughty Foggy Bottom while Phil wants to see it contribute to the renovation of Southwest Washington. She threatens not to raise funds if Phil gets his way and even to publish an expose in the *Star.* Still, they are deeply bonded. Father's mind remains sharp, and his interest in the paper is keen. He comes up with a plan to give $500,000 in non-voting stocks to everyone on the paper for more than five years. Phil feels this will be nicer than a posthumous gift. Recipients are assured the stocks will appreciate if held until the company goes public. The stocks are distributed at a gala celebration in June 1955.

Kay admits growing shyer and less confident during these years, being fearful of boring others. She recalls being the only woman with no activities to report during a luncheon given by Lady Bird Johnson. Phil later helps her write speeches that she delivers despite sharp anxiety. Polly Wisner hosts a "Salute to Kay Graham" party to bolster her, without Kay realizing she needs attention. Kay now sees the detrimental effect of Mother constantly and subtly denigrating her accomplishments by contrasting them with her own and of Phil regularly overshadowing her and occasionally turning on her his cruel humor. His withering glances convince her she is boring, and she stops talking in public. She adores Phil and sees only the good part of what he is doing to her. She perceives none of the shadows developing. Phil is chief strategist for the expanded company, allowing subordinates in each area to attend to routine matters so that he can concentrate on larger issues. In a daring move in the fall of 1954, Phil buys CBS out of WTOP-TV for $3.5 million. After purchasing the *Times-Herald,* the *Post* equals or passes the *Star* everywhere but advertising. Frank Gateway, who comes over from the defunct paper, convinces big accounts to give the *Post* a larger proportion of their budget, and from 1955 onward, the *Post's* profits exceed the *Star's,* as costs are closely controlled.

Phil grows more prominent at public and political events and is involved in increasingly political organizations. Disenchanted with Eisenhower, Phil commits time and energy to the press-loving Lyndon B. Johnson, with whom he shares numerous traits and affinities. As early as 1953, they are in regular contact, and Phil praises LBJ's efforts as Minority Leader to control committee assignments and unify the Democratic Party. An appreciative LBJ begins cultivating Phil in ways that Kay says would no longer be appropriate but were commonplace in the 1950s. The Democrats gain control of Congress, and Phil moves closer to LBJ. Phil has a keen interest in campaign finance reform, and LBJ pushes the "Graham Plan" on his frightened colleagues . LBJ gathers an unprecedented 85 co-signers for his resolution, but the counterpart in the House is defeated. In 1956, Kay remains behind Stevenson, and Mother joins her, frustrated that Phil will not accept that Ike is "dumb." Mother develops another of her emotional relationships with Stevenson, offering him ample advice. They become friends.

In June 1955, Mother undergoes surgery for uterine cancer and in anticipation of the worst gives away jewelry and money to her grandchildren. She donates $25,000 to launch Stevenson's 1956 campaign. Phil and Kay visit Stevenson at his farm, beginning a complicated relationship for her. Phil, who already knows the governor, is growing devoted to his more decisive rival, LBJ. LBJ casually invites the Grahams to his ranch. LBJ badgers Phil, a reluctant hunter of anything but birds, into shooting a deer, but otherwise they see eye to eye on everything. LBJ jokingly lumps Kay with the "Northern liberals" and shocks her with his story about how civil rights came to Johnson County. Returning to Washington, Phil begins writing LBJ about how to improve his national image by seizing the initiative on civil rights legislation. Kay has seen in the LBJ Library the senator's note about Phil's timing being premature and his *Post* perspective not reflected in many American communities.

In 1957, the Teamsters make a bid to unionize the *Post's* circulation on the pattern of the *Star.* Phil, who is now involved in labor negotiations, particularly with the Newspaper Guild, denounces the effort because the Teamsters are not honest. He convinces the independent distributors of the dangers the Teamsters present to their business. Phil seems to fizzle out physically that summer and rests at Glen Welby. The only interruption is LBJ's request for help passing the Civil Rights Act of 1957. LBJ led the opposition to a similar bill in 1956, but he has manipulated an amendment into this one that restricts its effect to the right to vote. Liberals and blacks oppose this watering down, but it is what LBJ feels he can keep from being filibustered and even passed. It will set a precedent. LBJ needs Phil to influence Joe Rauh to win over Roy Wilkins, leader of the NAACP. Phil also gets Frankfurter to lecture Rauh on the value of voting rights, helps defuse ultra-liberal opposition to the watered down bill and works out a formula everyone can accept. After LBJ's legislative victory, Phil cautions him not to appear as a presidential candidate in 1960. He advises to let Kefauver and Kennedy fight it out for the next thee years.

A month after this limited victory, Eisenhower has to look up from his golf to deal with a racial crisis at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. With great confidence, Phil begins contacting key acquaintances to defuse the crisis without introducing federal troops. Though in favor of desegregation, Phil understands how hard this is for

southerners to swallow. Phil takes personally Ike's sending in the troops and enters his first period of true depression. He is suddenly racked with pain and despair, weeping that he feels trapped. Kay sits helplessly with him all night and in the morning phones her brother Bill, a staff psychiatrist at Johns Hopkins. Bill suggests an analyst who can set up a plan of action, and to their intense misfortune, Phil falls into the hands of Dr. Leslie Farber, who will do him far more harm than good. Kay understands none of what is happening with Phil, but she goes along with his demands that they hide it from family and friends. Believing it is a temporary, curable problem, she goes along.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary and Analysis

The legacy of Phil's breakdown is a year of seclusion at Glen Welby, indecision, guilt and occasional talk of suicide. Kay is continually "on call" to sit and talk with him and often feels a need for escape. She learns to say whatever he needs to hear. Phil receives treatment from Dr. Farber, a devotee of Rollo May's existential psychology. A weak man studying the importance of will in life, Farber instills in Phil a fear of drugs and refuses to label Phil's disease. They break every rule of psychiatry. Phil reads and edits Farber's research and reveals to Kay details of their sessions. Kay struggles to keep the children's lives normal and the outside world unsuspecting. She needs help but does not know how to admit it. Phil and Farber decide Kay should receive therapy too, and at one point she alone is seeing Farber. For over a year, Phil cuts back on work and delivers no speeches. Airplanes bother him, so he does not travel. He plays golf and spends weekends at Glen Welby. They dine out rarely because of the danger of liquor setting off filthy language. Many at the *Post* know that Phil is worn out, but no one seems to realize what has happened. The timing of Phil's illness is fortuitous because the *Post* in 1957 is making record profits and running smoothly.

Phil can still function when he has to, through correspondence, memos and telephone. He continues working for LBJ, who calls him his favorite counselor and best and most enthusiastic source. Phil begins writing plays and light verse, reviews John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* for the *Post* and after reading Germaine Tillion's *Algeria,* becomes an early advocate for the Third World. Phil becomes friends with the famous trial lawyer, Edward Bennett Williams, who is defending the Teamsters' president, Jimmy Hoffa. An instant rapport develops between Phil and Williams, who is surprised at Phil's depressive self-doubt. Kay takes greater part in social causes when not attending to Phil. Looking back, Kay sees Phil might have wanted out of the marriage and family life, but at the time she misses the signs. By the fall of 1958, Phil proclaims he is feeling better and resumes active participation in the business. Mother's increasing self-absorption makes it easier to conceal Phil's condition, and her health begins deteriorating under the influence of alcohol. Father declines sharply in his eighties, and Mother turns to the Grahams for help dealing with his darkening frame of mind. Father must have been puzzled and concerned about Phil's condition, but he dies before it reaches the crisis stage.

In 1959, the Grahams tour Europe. Father is coughing up blood, but his doctor assures Kay it is safe to go. Mother urges Kay to throw herself into the experience, and Kay is reassured when Phil remains behind to finish some business and be with Father. Kay finds relief in Europe and letters from Phil suggest the return of the man Kay knows and loves. He writes a long love letter on the eve of leaving for a Paris reunion, signed "your burden and your sustainer." Phil delivers dire news about Father being hospitalized because Mother cannot cope, and Kay feels guilty at leaving his side. In Forte dei Marmi, they are summoned home to attend Father's last day, and they leave the

children in the care of a college girl. Kay is troubled at the thought of watching her father die, but she is there when he does. Kay is conscious of becoming the older generation. The widow goes into deep depression, and Bill, who has the most ambivalent relationship with Father, takes it badly. Eugene Meyer is buried privately after a simple, moving service at All Souls Unitarian Church, with Chief Justice Earl Warren delivering a eulogy.

A week later, the Grahams return to fetch their children, who have fallen in love with Italy. They prolong the trip in London and take the steamer Mauritania home. Kay continues in her guilt and grief, but Phil seems to bounce back and takes particular interest in politics. The speeches in 1959-60 are vintage Phil, dealing with the complex nature of the newspaper business. Both Grahams have gotten to know JFK and are thrilled that someone of their generation is making a bid for the presidency. Phil gets drunk at a Georgetown dinner and tells JFK he is too young to run in 1960. Kennedy replies that he is as qualified as anyone except LBJ, and if he waits he will end up a mediocre senator and lousy candidate in 1968. Kay is impressed. JFK and LBJ declare their bids for the nomination within days of each other, and the *Post* praises JFK's awareness of current issues. Phil, on the edge of a manic period, predicts that they alone will emerge at the convention as candidates, but he holds hope for Stevenson as a compromise.

At a *Post* editorial luncheon, JFK announces that he will debate Nixon on television and is little worried about his reputation as a debater. He dismisses the idea of LBJ as his running mate, but Wiggins says it will broaden his appeal. The Grahams attend the conventions, divided in their loyalties. Joe Alsop recruits Phil to push JFK to accept LBJ as vice-president, and Phil is shrewd and eloquent in making the case. Phil tips *Post* reporters before speaking with LBJ. Before a last-minute debate before the Massachusetts and Texas delegations, Phil puts an exhausted LBJ to bed and scribbles talking points for his use. Phil also passes to JFK his "wild idea" of asking the convention to draft LBJ. JFK offers the vice-presidency to LBJ, assuming he will turn it down, and Phil hurries to LBJ's suite and is his spokesman in a phone call to the presidential nominee. JFK passes official word to LBJ and asks Phil to secure Stevenson's support. Phil delights in a soap opera interaction with Robert F. Kennedy, and he writes it up in a memo that he keeps confidential until Teddy White publishes it in *The Making of the President.* RFK disputes Phil's recollections but says Phil's influence on the decision was greater than he suspects. RFK does not live to tell the full story as promised, but from other published works it is likely the Kennedys expected LBJ to turn down the *pro forma* invitation. Phil was right that JFK would not have won without LBJ.

Rather than fly home between conventions, the Grahams visit Disneyland and spend an enjoyable day with Flo. It marks the beginning of an adult friendship between the sisters that continues until Flo's death two years later. In Chicago, Nixon is the only viable candidate. Politicians visit Glen Welby frequently that summer. While renovating the Georgetown home, Kay stays with her pro-Stevenson mother, who nonetheless serves as vice-chairman for the Democratic ticket and feels she can help defuse the question of religion. Kay is a JFK devotee and donates money to the campaign, which she now finds a questionable dodge of the ethical dilemma of a publisher. Phil sees JFK's

shortcomings but admits he may prove a great leader. By contrast, Nixon is an unmitigated fake. The *Post* remains neutral, although editorials leave little doubt where the Grahams stand, and Phil writes several speeches for LBJ.

Election night is tense at the *Post,* and remembering the 1948 embarrassment, Phil does not allow it to declare JFK the victor in the early edition. As the results grow clear, the Grahams realize that close friends will soon head the government, and they spend a week in Phoenix calming down. Returning to Washington, Phil begins pushing JFK to appoint their Republican friend Douglas Dillon as secretary of the treasury, assuring the president-elect that Dillon will be more loyal than Albert Gore, Sr. Phil fails in advocating David Bruce for secretary of state but helps secure for him a post in London. Phil pushes successfully for a high-level position for the Harvard-trained economist Robert Weaver, who under LBJ becomes the first black member of a cabinet. The *Post* angers JFK by announcing the appointment of Dean Rusk as secretary of state. It turns out JFK himself leaked the information in a phone call to Phil. The beginning of the new administration is exciting and busy for the Grahams. JFK and LBJ both accept an invitation to a pre-inaugural reception at their home but are thwarted by a massive snowstorm. The Grahams are thrilled by the inaugural address and inaugural ball, at which Phil drinks too much. They turn down an invitation to Joe Alsop's after-party and are surprised when JFK appears on their doorstep.

Chapter 14 is the story of Phil's downs and ups and offers insights into the advent of Camelot and the Great Society. Kay tells the stories as she remembers them, but she admits in a footnote that others challenge the traditional version. She is not writing a scholarly tome. Many have already done that, and she has drawn on their work. Instead, she does a solid job of evoking the exciting spirit of the times. In retrospect, Kay is as forthright about her husband's illness and her inability to cope as she was secretive when mental illness was considered scandalous. She seems relieved to tell the story and equally proud to chronicle Phil's crucial role in the 1960 election.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary and Analysis

Kay confesses that it is difficult to appraise how good a president JFK might have been had he lived longer. He and Phil enjoy an easy friendship, and most of JFK's lieutenants become family friends, particularly Robert McNamara and Bill Walton. Kay recalls being thrilled that their contemporaries rather than their parents are now in charge. Phil seems to be enjoying himself in March 1961, but today Kay sees a dangerous frenetic tendency in his purchase of *Newsweek.* The twenty-eight-year-old newsmagazine for businesspeople is only marginally profitable and lags far behind *Time* in circulation. Phil twice rejects the idea of purchasing it, but Bradlee puts him together with *Newsweek's* managing editor, Oz Elliott. The rapport is instantaneous. *Post* lawyers and advisers approve, and negotiations take place at breakneck speed. Kay is ambivalent about the magazine, but she appreciates Phil's need to be not just a son-in-law. The owners are impressed with Phil's vision for the magazine, and Averell Harriman's support proves crucial. Kay learns she has tuberculosis, but she keeps it from Phil in order not to upset him at a crucial time.

Phil sells the old *Times-Herald* building to raise capital and writes a personal check for $2 million as a down payment on the $8,985,000 total. Phil's new employees hurry to learn who he is. Only after the sale does Kay reveal her diagnosis, which Phil adamantly refuses to believe, and he begins drinking more heavily. He grows manic, and friends express concerns for his health. Phil dismisses it and pushes forward to get rid of the deadwood at *Newsweek* and start hiring new talent. Elliott is given the top editing job, and lawyer Fritz Beebe becomes Phil's full partner - something Father insists every full-speed-ahead businessperson must have. At the *Post,* Phil maintains an open-door policy, promotes Wiggins to editor and Sweetman to publisher and personally assumes the title president. His new *Newsweek* editorial team, dubbed the Wallendas, energizes the magazine, which surpasses the reactionary *Time.* Kay's TB is not contagious, but she is ordered to undergo bed rest, which benefits Phil's health by forcing him to cut back his social schedule. Kay reads all of Proust, and Phil's involvement with *Newsweek* in New York obliges her to withdraw from most of her Washington commitments. Knowing many of the principals personally and seeing nothing wrong with covert CIA operations, Phil arbitrarily tones down *Newsweek's* reporting on the Bay of Pigs, discouraging his editorial staffs. Just as arbitrarily, Phil drops the law firm of Covington & Burling and hires Bill Rogers as general counsel. Phil is writing speeches for JFK, LBJ and RFK, and he holds power of attorney from the Johnsons to buy them a house.

Kay is up and about in time for Lally's high school graduation in mid-May 1961, and a quiet family dinner turns into a 120-guest party. Kay is pleased that she emerges from her confinement in this celebratory way. The party coincides with the Kennedy-Khrushchev summit, and afterwards, the Grahams hear Vienna stories directly from the Kennedys, who are grim about the future. Phil pushes hard for *Newsweek* to promote

the president's policies in every legitimate way. Phil suffers back pain that summer and slips into depression on Cape Cod. He withdraws from work but gives in to Kay's pleas to socialize with the Kennedys. Despite his condition, Phil joins the board of the RAND Corporation and takes active part in national security matters, which Kay feels is unacceptable for journalists. Years later she will decline an invitation to join RAND. Phil wants never to be alone, and Kay spends weeks with him at the New York Carlyle Hotel, joining the glamorous social circle while always feeling like a country girl. Babe Paley becomes a good friend and introduces Kay to outgoing writer Truman Capote and the reclusive Harper Lee.

The Grahams attend several dinner dances at the White House and take part in dancing "the twist," which shocks columnist Drew Pearson. JFK is charming and irresistible. All men in the 1960s are chauvinists, but the Kennedys in particular have no idea how to deal with a middle-aged woman. Kay worries about boring them and lets Phil do the talking for her. The exception is Stevenson, who has close friendships with Kay, her mother and her daughter. Kay sees him often in New York, where he is serving as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Told that women appreciate it when Stevenson listens to them and likes them, JFK says he cannot go to such lengths. In the fall of 1961, the Grahams send Lally off to college with an enchanting party at her grandmother's house. Kay remembers it fondly as one of their last really good times.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary and Analysis

Early in 1962, the Grahams fly to Los Angeles to finalize formation of the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service, which begins with thirty-two subscribers and expands to over 600 worldwide. Vacationing with the Bohlens in July, Phil appears well and balanced, and Kay deludes herself into thinking he is cured. JFK names Bohlen ambassador to France, and the Grahams attend their send-off party. In Florida, Kay notices that Phil's mood swings are becoming more frequent and affecting her. Needing to be constantly on the go, Phil buys *ARTnews* and orders a family trip to Europe before sending Don off to Harvard. Phil advises his son to avoid the *Crimson* and concentrate on broadening his horizons, but Don soon becomes its president. Phil pulls off an incredible coup by wooing the preeminent columnist, Walter Lippmann, to the *Post* and *Newsweek.* Phil's mind is still functioning brilliantly as he pressures JFK to drop Dean Rusk (unsuccessfully) and cut taxes to boost the economy (successfully), but he is showing impatience and anger. A speech about Washington's Year 2000 Plan is hailed even in the *Star.* In October, JFK appoints Phil incorporator of COMSAT, a groundbreaking public/private enterprise Phil sees as an opportunity to shape the world.

None of the guests at the Bohlens' farewell party suspect that JFK has seen the first pictures of Soviet missiles in Cuba or notice his agitation. Bohlen declines to remain in Washington as part of ExComm, fearing this will alert the Soviets. Reston and the *New York Times* detect troop movements in the South but agree to kill the story for the White House. Lippmann also suspects something is up and alerts Friendly, who assigns reporter Murrey Marder, who finds a way to get around White House stonewalling. The Sunday *Post* writes about a crisis apparently brewing in Cuba, and JFK explodes at Phil, who tries to reign in his staff. Friendly refuses to be muzzled. Kennedy briefs Congress on blockade plans and addresses the nation. Except for carrying out JFK's wishes too well, Phil behaves stably throughout the Cuban Missile Crisis, and Kay today remembers no personal fear and that the prospect of nuclear annihilation seemed surreal.

Only afterwards will Kay learn that big purchases are a sign of manic-depression. Phil inexplicably spends $52,000 to buy a 365-acre farm in Hume, Virginia, just five miles from Glen Welby, and an expensive demonstration Gulfstream I jet. Kay is amazed today that she questioned neither move. Mother, however, cautions Phil about speeding up their lives too much. At the end of October, Phil borrows from *Newsweek* an able, hard-drinking young Australian stringer, Robin Webb, to help him in COMSTAT meetings, and they begin a clandestine affair. Nothing appears amiss as the Grahams attend a White House dinner and fly Mother to New York to attend the funeral of Eleanor Roosevelt, with whom she has formed an unlikely friendship. Phil's behavior then grows aberrant, but everyone ascribes it to exhaustion. He turns on everyone around him with incredible outbursts of public rage and seems determined to offend people, including the president. He concentrates particular outbursts at Kay. At a COMSTAT board dinner

he lunges at a colleague, Bryne Litshgi, and is escorted from the building, leaving people aghast. Phil and Kay fly hastily to Palm Springs and then Phoenix. Phil twice writes Litshgi, apologizing for his behavior and claiming to want to work together. Phil speaks of fears that he is acting like a deep-sea creature brought too quickly to the surface. The Grahams play golf and tennis and visit Flo. The sisters talk intimately about their parents, particularly Flo's dislike of Mother, and Flo's romances with people Kay has known. Flo is obviously tormented but appears physically well, so Kay is shocked when Flo dies suddenly four days later.

Phil shines at the funeral, but afterwards he grows agitated. As *Time* runs an article about him as "The Acquisitor," he worries about appearing greedy lining up new media deals. He continues working effectively for RAND and COMSTAT, but during a second European meeting, he hooks up again with Webb. Kay learns the truth when she overhears a Christmas Eve phone call between them. Kay confronts her husband immediately and is devastated by his candor. She has been blinded by their closeness and only now sees that he is in the manic phase of his never-mentioned disease. Phil too is upset, claiming he wants to preserve his marriage and family and promising that the affair is over. Phil has a compulsion to tell the truth about his past, and Kay is shaken to learn of other infidelities with some of her friends. Phil confesses to Lally and asks her to give up a holiday trip. Mother inadvertently makes Kay feel even more demeaned. Phil's heavy drinking during the nightmare holiday season gets in the way of their attempts to put their lives back together. Don hears the drunken railing and is angry that no one has told him. The phone lines to Paris begin working again, and after a final battle on January 12, 1963, Phil moves out of the house. Webb is summoned from Paris. Kay deems Webb as much a victim as herself, but she continues working to win Phil back. He writes a confusing letter about loving Kay but having gone to his "Destiny."

Phil takes Webb to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on a trip Kay was scheduled to make. They sit separately on the plane, and Phil weeps constantly. He insults the publisher of the local paper he had hoped to buy, and the deal falls through. For two weeks, Kay tells no one about Phil's departure, but when she does, neighbor Lorraine Cooper says that she is better off without his poking cruel fun at her. For Kay this is a revelation. In Phoenix, Phil makes a spectacle of himself before the Associated Press. His astonished colleagues cover up the ugly details, and no one knows what to do for him. Phil calls everyone he has ever known, including JFK, who dispatches a government plane to transport Phil back to Washington. Kay and Webb exchange the only words they ever will. Webb loves Phil but realizes that Kay is there first. Lally agrees to fly out and be with her father, against Kay's advice. Dr. Farber goes too, and only when readings from Martin Buber fail does he tranquilize Phil and dismiss Webb.

An ambulance awaits Phil in Washington, but he refuses to get in, loudly protesting it as a violation of his civil rights. His children talk him into a limo for a ride to George Washington University Hospital and ultimately to Chestnut Lodge, a private suburban mental hospital. Kay writes JFK to thank him for his help and apologize for Phil. JFK realizes that Phil is useless at COMSTAT and writes a kind, uplifting note in response to Phil's resignation. Phil sees his doctor daily and Dr. Cameron when Farber is out of

town. Kay and *Post* executives meet with the psychiatrists and are shocked at their lack of understanding about their patient and his abandoned wife's dedication to him.

Phil's brother Bob flies up from Florida and is helpful. Phil and Kay talk about all that has happened and the possibility of getting back together. Phil reads and agrees with Buber's writings on guilt and reparation, and Kay is optimistic. Today she is amazed at her naivety, because as soon as Phil is released from Chestnut Lodge he flies to New York and takes up again with Webb. Clearly, he has given this a lot of thought. He claims he has refrained from suing for *habeas corpus* only to spare his family the publicity. He retains Williams as his divorce lawyer and writes friends about his intention to marry Webb as soon as this is legally possible. They maintain separate apartments in New York for legal reasons and share weekends at the new farm. Phil knows he controls the *Post* only because Father desired it and concocts a plan to buy Kay out and have it for his own. Kay is not about to lose both her husband and her newspaper, and she retains a reputable law firm recommended by company lawyers, who must remain neutral. They advise Kay to sit tight and wait. She digs in bitterly.

Phil escorts Webb around to meet reticent family and friends, while Kay flies to Florida to see her supportive brother-in-law. Kay makes a phone call to the *Post* and is mistakenly connected with Webb at the farm. Phil wants a private meeting with the children, but Kay thinks he is too unstable. She is candid today about being too doctrinaire and insensitive to the children's needs. Lally is supportive of both parents and carefully separates her father from his behavior. Don too stays neutral but is vulnerable. The parents eventually work out visitations. Kay cannot avoid hearing about Phil's antics with Webb and is puzzled that he sometimes makes sense but often does not, as when he tries to involve JFK in a New York newspaper strike. Phil fights with Wiggins about Charles de Gaulle and refrains from firing him only when Friendly threatens to leave with Wiggins. Their unity forces Phil to back down again when Wiggins refuses to publish Phil's rebuttal of the original editorial. Phil writes several pieces for the *Post* that attract positive response, including a letter from JFK. The tension for everyone is constant and tragic.

Chapter 15 finally makes clear all the hints Kay has been laying about her husband's severe medical condition. She is candid and generous with everyone but herself. She cannot seem to forgive herself for missing all the signs and for failing to demand Phil be formally diagnosed and treated. She remains a Pollyanna, determined only not to lose the *Post,* but she readily admits that Phil has worked hard to build it up from where it was when Father handed it to them. Only vaguely does she hint that the worst still lies ahead.

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary and Analysis

Kay is most pained at stories of Phil behaving irrationally, but Dr. Cameron assures her this is part of the disease. Phil is, indeed, sick. Kay agonizes about living a twenty-two-year-long lie. The Restons are staunch allies, advising she fight for the *Post* and begin preparing Don to inherit the paper by clerking during the summer. Luvie Pearson insists Kay can handle the job until Don is ready. If Cissy Patterson was up to the job, so is Kay. It is in her genes and has only been pushed down over time. Kay tries to dismiss this as sweet but wrong-headed, but others point out how extensively Phil has been controlling and mocking her. Pearson keeps Kay from giving in to Phil's demand to meet and talk about the divorce when he picks up his belongings. Kay keeps to herself at home, avoiding Phil's turf in New York, and from all she hears it appears that only good things are coming to him.

Mutual friends are caught in an uncomfortable bind, as Phil demands they meet Webb. Mother, for a change, is supportive, despite her affection for Phil. She signs a new will, omitting him. Kay dreams of putting the nightmare behind them, but Phil widely publicizes his intentions to marry Webb, who accompanies him on his travels. Friends fear being cornered and forced to deal with her. Isaiah Berlin in London times his hernia operation so as to be hospitalized during Phil's visit. *Newsweek* reporters confirm Phil can still deliver a coherent speech and observe he has dropped all mention of Father and Kay from his scripts. His line about journalism being the first draft of history is quoted to this day. Kay picks up the pace of her own social life and makes clear that she will not sign any divorce agreement that fails to give her control of the *Post.* She begins hearing form Puerto Rico that Phil is depressed.

On June 17, 1962, Phil tells Dr. Farber and Williams that the affair is over, and Williams demands to know if Webb is gone and if Phil wants to come home. She has, and he does. Note that Kay amazingly and apparently sincerely speaks of "poor Robin." Kay allows Phil back into the house and feels relieved, but she realizes she cannot resume being his entire support system. Phil begs not to be sent back to Chestnut Lodge, but his brother sides with Kay. Phil goes to Chestnut Lodge on June 20. Phil clings to Farber, who alone among the doctors refuses to label his affliction. Kay waits several days before visiting. Friends and family follow suit. McNamara is particularly regular and sincerely hopes Phil will recover and offer his expertise to the Defense Department. Kay remains unrealistically optimistic about a full recovery. Phil is remorseful, but no one seems to realize he is worried about hurting others again. Kay today regrets retaining Farber so long. Other psychiatrists later tell her manic-depression if left untreated, or wrongly treated, is a lethal disease. In 1962, lithium is undergoing experimental trials in Europe and is unavailable in the U.S. Radical electroshock therapy is widespread but unthinkable at progressive Chestnut Lodge. Only afterwards does Kay read a troubling note from Phil to Reston talking about suicide as more honest than the living death of "middle-of-the-road" measures.

If Kay had seen the note, she would have dealt differently with Phil's requests for a weekend break at Glen Welby. The doctors are divided about it and ask whether pills or guns are available there. Kay is too convinced Phil is getting better to understand the question. Later a doctor will comfort Kay by telling her that Phil is an accomplished manipulator. No one yet seems to see that they are enablers, doing nothing to help Phil by giving in to his whims. An outside medical friend is concerned that Phil is not on any medications, and Kay is determined to bring this up after the weekend. On August 3, a driver picks Phil up at the hospital, gets Kay at their R Street home and takes them to Glen Welby. They enjoy lunch on the porch listening to classical music, and then they retire upstairs for a nap.

Kay thinks nothing of Phil getting up to move to another bed until she hears a gunshot downstairs. Kay discovers Phil's ghastly corpse in the bathroom and rushes out to find the caretaker. Kay phones the *Post* and Dr. Cameron. The police arrive, as do the Friendlys, bringing Don. Mother and son walk together, consoling and supporting one another. Kay agonizes about letting Phil leave the room, failing to take seriously his talk of suicide and not realizing he planned the trip to get at the guns that would free him forever from his torment. Kay has now lost Phil twice and is tormented.

The Friendlys drive Kay and Don home, where an impromptu wake assembles. Kay remembers nothing about that night. The next day the nightmare sets in. Lally and Don were aware of their father's illness, but Bill and Steve have no preparation after being apart from him for months during his affair. Mother is not up to flying home from a European vacation, but companions Lally and Pearson hurry back. The Restons too abandon their vacation. Messages arrive in numbing quantities. Bob Graham is a great help. Kay does not know if her father-in-law, who has suffered several strokes, knows about his son's suicide when he dies several months later. The *Post* publishes a collection of Phil's sayings. Herblock is moving in his tribute, and Wiggins speaks of the need to carry on their duties as a tribute to Phil's diligent career. Phil prepared a new will during his affair, but doubting his intentions and competency, Williams maneuvered around it. When Phil returns to Kay, Williams voids the revised will, but arguably Phil has died in testate. The court allows a compromise that transfers most of the estate to the children. As far as Kay knows, Webb never receives anything, marries an Australian diplomat, lives a peaceful life and - Kay hopes - recovers.

Lally prepares talking points for Kay to deliver to the board of directors after the funeral. The men are almost as stricken as Kay. She assures them the *Post* will remain a family business and that she will keep the company going for a new generation to lead. Phil's funeral is held in Washington's National Cathedral with JFK attending. Burial is private and jolting, because his plot is within direct view of the R Street house. Kay today regrets being too much in a fog to help her children through the trauma. Lally and Pearson persuade Kay to fly with them to meet Mother in Istanbul. The decision might have been good for Kay, but not for Bob or her children, and she cannot today imagine how she went. She muses how one cannot rethink non-decisions and must simply move forward, but she will continue to rethink things in the chapters ahead.

Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary and Analysis

The cruise serves Mother's purpose of diverting Kay's mind from the eternal questions of "why?" and "what is next?" In fact, it addicts Kay to looking around, observing and learning. En route home, Kay stops to see the Bohlens and declares emphatically that she will work and not remarry, quite the opposite of the natural expectation. On September 20, 1962, the board of directors elects Kay president of the Washington Post Company. She does not feel she is "taking over." Indeed, she has no idea what her role will be as she silently learns about the company that she will tend for her children. She relies on the strong men already running various operations and naively believes everything will just continue on. She soon learns that nothing stands still and that the company is a frighteningly immense operation. She has no idea she will come to love the job. Father and Phil have kept Kay in the loop about operations, and she has some experience in reporting. She knows the *Post's* lead reporters, and she has a sense of whom to listen to when she has questions. She feels new and raw, but she is determined to succeed. Kay misses Phil and is at a loss making decisions without him. The myth of Phil's greatness exceeds reality. Kay lacks his energy, breadth of interests, specific knowledge and training. She feels her inadequacy, but at present she is all the company she has. She cares about the paper and keeping it in the family, so she has to make it work.

Beebe has been holding the company together during the years of Phil's decline and serving as a buffer between the Grahams during the conflict. Now he deals with the legal ramifications of Phil's death and becomes a generous, life-saving presence for Kay. Beebe remains chairman while Kay assumes the title of president, and they enjoy a kind of "business marriage." Fortunately, the company is small, private, adequately managed and profitable. Kay enjoys her new work, is economically independent and has a support group of family and friends. Lally is particularly supportive, reminding Kay that she has better judgment and a greater ability to get along with, and discern the potential in, people than Phil. Lally urges her mother to heed St. Paul's advice to "in all things give thanks." One wonders how Lally draws out religious advice after a non-religious upbringing. Kay offers no hint and appears not even to have been surprised.

In Kay's first weeks on the job, she wanders in a fog. She realizes how abysmally ignorant she is of the processes of business and journalism. She cannot read a balance sheet. She does not know how to deal with people professionally. She knows none of the things staff members have assimilated by education or experience. Least of all does she understand hierarchy, that it is unwise to wander through the building talking to whomever she meets rather than dealing first with managers and union leaders. She is too innocent to see that people will take advantage of her. Clare Booth Luce and Lippmann set her straight on handling herself as a woman in a man's world. Listening to them helps her manage her time, behave appropriately and learn the most important lessons effectively. Oveta Hobby, publisher of the Houston Post Company after the her

husband's death, visits Kay and tells her unequivocally that she will have to overcome her deathly fear of public speaking, because it is surely part of the job.

Kay feels like "Miss Dutiful," obliged to follow Phil's unnecessarily rigorous schedule of visits to New York, and today she realizes that this is unfair to Bill and Steve, who are still living at home. Except for Beebe, and notably including her later ally Bradlee, *Newsweek* executives appear thankful for the company's financial backing but resentful of any guidance, and Kay feels jittery, depressed, slighted and awkward among them. Nevertheless, she attends weekly editorial meetings. At the *Post,* Kay feels more like she is on her own turf. Only gradually does she acclimatize, making and agonizing over endless, unnecessary mistakes. Some welcome her while others resent her intrusion, but most people simply go on about their work, not bothering with her at all. Neither Kay nor the males who commit it understand sexism, and from living with Phil, Kay wants desperately for people to like her. She feels lonely, uncertain and inferior, seeking advice and irritating people who only want rational, logical leadership. In particular, she irritates Sweeterman, who runs every aspect of the business operation. Rogers regularly takes Sweeterman's side in conflicts. John Hayes runs the two television stations authoritatively but is more open to Kay, and she is so mystified by this technology that she stays out of Hayes' hair. The stations are doing even better than the newspaper, which is excelling in every area, and they face none of the competition and labor problems the *Post* does.

From the start, Kay fights unthinkable rumors that she intends to sell the company to circling vultures. She does not realize that offers are a testament to the enterprise's strength and appeal. CBS shows interest, as does the Times Mirror, which approaches Reston. He turns down a $100 million offer from Sam Newhouse, who refusing to take no for an answer, turns to intermediaries. Ted Sorenson claims to want to work for the *Post,* which Kay obviously finds attractive until he reveals that he wants her to step aside and let him run the paper. Kay points out Newhouse's reputation for exercising tight control over his publications and expresses surprise that Sorenson would get involved. Interest in the *Post* subsides for decades, but demoralizing rumors continue that *Newsweek* is for sale. Interested parties point out that Kay knows nothing about magazines. She has faith in Beebe and the positive direction *Newsweek* is following, though, and she rejects offers adamantly. Kay feels strong (often unreciprocated) loyalty towards the people in the organization and feels it is wrong to sell them away.

Kay becomes the first woman director of Bowater Mersey. She succeeds Phil on the board of George Washington University and gives her first dinner for a business friend, Otis Chandler. She visits the radio stations and turns down suggestions that they enter the embryonic cable industry. She attends *Post* editorial meetings and luncheons and begins learning jargon. The first luncheon guest she is called upon to question is South Vietnam's formidable dragon lady, Mme. Nhu, and Kay is so nervous that she nearly collapses. In October 1963, the White House asks Kay to squash editorial criticism of Jackie Kennedy taking Commerce Undersecretary Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., along as a chaperon on a visit to Aristotle Onassis, with whom Roosevelt is doing business. Kay agrees to talk with Wiggins, but she lets the editorial run. Many people over the decades use Kay as intermediary to her editors in this way, and she feels editors are right more

often than they are wrong. Kay finds it initially difficult to be the object of media interest and to be interviewed. Today, she sees it is pure bravura that lets her declare women can quickly grow accustomed to working in a man's world. Women's issues have not yet emerged, and Kay is insensitive to how people view her. She dislikes male condescension but does not blame colleagues for it. It will take the women's liberation movement for her to wake up to problems of women in the workplace. Kay's eyes are opened to women's issues, but she does not use her position to help guide and formulate its agenda. This idea will recur, as will her mixed pride and discomfort at being a forerunner. Recall that her mother's achievements and her vaunting of them underlie Kay's views, even when, as here, it is not explicitly mentioned.

Kay takes no pride in her initiation to labor matters. The firing of a typographer at the *Star* leads to a wildcat strike, and the *Post* union's demand that the *Post* management not side with the *Star's* Washington newspapers. Assistant Secretary of Labor Jim Reynolds points out to Kay the foolishness of supporting the *Star,* and Kay refers the question to Sweeterman, who interprets this as an order to withdraw support. This angers *Star* executives, who give in to the strikers. Kay realizes that she can no longer make offhand statements and makes peace with the *Star's* president, but as we will see, his successors will seek revenge in the *Post's* time of crisis.

Kay's initiation into dealing with foreign dictators and freedom of the press comes when she must get *Newsweek* reporter Bob McCabe out of trouble in Indonesia. She learns the business value of human presence by accompanying Beebe to Chicago to meet Chrysler executives. She learns to ignore her wobbly knees when speaking in public when she cannot avoid a *Newsweek* advertising/sales meeting in Puerto Rico. Emmet Hughes helps her craft a well-received "I Believe in Individual" speech and helps several times more before deciding that she is too hard to work with. She goes through several speechwriters, not knowing what she wants to achieve or how to appraise her success until Meg Greenfield joins the *Post* in 1968 and becomes Kay's willing and able helper in this terrifying task. Only eighteen years later does Guyon "Chip" Knight become her final solution. In all areas, by putting one foot in front of the other and overcoming inner turbulence and confusion, Kay finds herself moving forward. Her days once again grow endurable, sometimes even interesting.

Kay is having lunch in New York with White House insiders Schlesinger and Galbraith on November 22, 1963 when word comes JFK has been shot. Disbelieving and panic-stricken, they watch television reports. When the president's death is announced, they rush back to Washington, and her companions insist Kay accompany them to the White House. Sorenson is impatiently giving orders, and when one of these is for non-essential people to leave, Kay obeys. She returns to view JFK lying in state, and at LBJ's suggestion, she is invited to tea by the new First Lady, who is terrified at the role now thrust upon her. Kay today recalls being unable to offer her any help and expecting Lady Bird not to succeed. She does, of course, in her "beautification" campaign, in which she invites Kay to participate. Kay dines with the Johnsons before they move into the White House, and LBJ, pointing to a painting of Sam Rayburn, says how he misses the late Speaker's - and Phil's - advice as he follows the golden president. The

"Kennedy men" have been resigning. LBJ recalls Jackie turning down his offers of help in the hospital. Then, he turns to telling tales of Texas.

Early in 1964, Kay is miserable in places she and Phil had gone together. Glen Welby is unbearable, but since the children do not share her bad memories, she redecorates it (and the R Street home). She is particularly lonely in New York, although people treat her generously. She is painfully shy, but the pain of being alone forces her to socialize. It grows addicting. Today she is appalled at how often she leaves her children alone, much as her own parents did with their children. She feels guilt at not making more time for Bill and Steve in particular, who, in effect, lose both their parents. Before taking over the company, Kay managed to be an active stay-at-home mother, and she still tries to attend their games and school activities. At St. Albans, Bill leads a typical teenager's life, but at home he stays behind a closed door. Steve has an even rougher time because he is too old for a babysitter but too young to be on his own. Unlike his older brothers, Steve is not a jock, which is the key to success at St. Albans, and he is disadvantaged socially by having skipped a grade. Kay avoids talking about Phil to the boys, which she today sees as a mistake for them all. Lally assuages her mother's guilt by pointing out how fortunate the Graham children have been to have such parents.

Kay begins being asked out on dates, principally by Adelai Stevenson. Unlike many women, Kay is not enamored of him, but she sees him frequently in New York and Washington. *The National Enquirer* begins rumors that they will wed before the Democratic convention, greatly improving his chances for the vice-presidency and giving him control of a powerful publishing combine. Kay sends a clipping to Stevenson with a bantering note about her readiness.

Kay sees Pam Berry from London, Lally and herself as Macbeth's three witches as they and Joe Alsop attend the 1964 Republican convention in San Francisco. They are concerned that the reckless, ultraconservative Barry Goldwater will be nominated, a view Kay today confesses distorted and unfair. Journalists sit gloomily as delegates cheer Eisenhower's denunciation of newspaper columnists, and Kay mourns the minority takeover of a majority party. Although she is a strong Johnson supporter, Kay keeps the *Post* independent. Decades later she reads in the Johnson Library a memo from Mac Bundy suggesting that LBJ give her some "personal attention" to gain an endorsement at a time when the stakes vis-a-vis Goldwater are so great. At the time, Kay is bending over backward to be fair with Goldwater, inviting him to a "get-acquainted" luncheon to help assure coverage of his campaign is as fair and objective as possible. Kay asks the candidate to inform her of differences over objectivity as soon as they arise and assures him that she feels a solemn obligation to fair and even reporting. Kay reiterates to the reader the sincerity of these words. Editorial and news pages rarely touch and should never influence one another.

Don and Lally accompany Kay to the Democratic convention in Atlantic City. Afterwards, their plane is delayed while Air Force One awaits the president's helicopter. Lally wants to watch the landing, and they find themselves in a reception line. Without thinking, Kay calls out, "Hi, Lyndon," and he responds by inviting them to Texas. LBJ will not take no for an answer and pushes Kay aboard ahead of him. She flees to the press corps, but

Lady Bird fetches her to join the president, who boasts about maneuvering the liberals to put Hubert Humphrey on the ticket, complains bitterly about living conditions in Atlantic City and catalogs which newspapers are endorsing him. Kay says she is not ready to break with inherited policy, and LBJ soon wanders away. Kay tries to fly home when they reach Austin, but Lady Bird insists that she remain. Kay gets acquainted with the witty, honest and utterly human Humphrey. LBJ invites Kay to sit beside him in the golf cart that he drives to the ranch, and boating on his private lake, he credits Phil with his own nomination because Phil always thought more highly of LBJ than others did. At and after dinner, conversations are varied - but always political - and all the while LBJ works the phones.

The guests are ready to collapse, but LBJ insists on carrying out the ritual visit to his relatives' cabin at the end of the lane. Saturday is marked by campaign strategizing and a barbeque to celebrate LBJ's birthday. LBJ is in a foul mood and talks so savagely with his wife that Kay surprises herself by telling him to shut up. LBJ addresses world affairs seriously at the barbeque and later confides to Kay that he did so to keep the legion of reporters from thinking all people in Texas are hicks. Kay can draw nothing out of LBJ about Vietnam except that he is very worried. Sunday they overcrowd a tiny church, make a pilgrimage to LBJ's birthplace and provide a photo op. Kay gets two minutes alone with LBJ to declare how Phil and she have appreciated working with the administrations and to offer a financial contribution to his campaign - the last she will ever make, as her ethical views subsequently harden. LBJ does not mention an endorsement. Kay maintains independence during the election while making her personal opinions clear to friends. This upsets Wiggins, who feels an implicit endorsement can be read between the lines. LBJ is deeply hurt by Kay's failure to respond to his attention.

Reston suggests Kay accompany each candidate's press plane for several days to get a feel for campaigning. In Indianapolis, LBJ summons her to fly with him, but she declines, both for appearances' sake and to gain the experience she intends. He invites her to his room in Cleveland, where she awkwardly witnesses LBJ laying savagely into Jack Valenti, displaying a temper and inhumanity she has never seen. She joins Goldwater's campaign in New York for a flight to Los Angeles and San Diego and finds the Republican unexpectedly charming and fun to watch working the crowds.

Lally announces her engagement to Yann Weymouth, an architecture student at MIT. Kay feels both are too young but refuses to react as her mother would. Yann seems good for Lally mentally and morally, and the wedding is schedule for the Thanksgiving weekend. During the planning, Kay is invited to the Johnson's 30th anniversary party and again finds LJB in a terrible mood. He demands to know why the *Post* has forced his hand on naming a commissioner for the District of Columbia. As he rants on, LBJ changes into his pajamas in front of a shocked Kay. The year 1964 ends with Yann and Lally marrying in the Navy Chapel in Washington. Frankfurter has suffered a stroke and cannot give Lally away as hoped. Don does the honors, and a small reception is held at home. The marriage lasts only a few years.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 19 continues Kay's critical examination of her steep learning curve. After a year of widowhood, Kay's grief grows more bearable, but job difficulties remain enormous. She has been conditioned to deal only with important people, and she overlooks many talented, invaluable workers until she learns to appreciate performance alone. She passes tormented sleepless nights over mistakes she wrongly assumes people in her position do not make. She adopts the Montessori method of learning-by-doing, taking trips with editors and reporters. The only drawback is having to leave her sons alone. She visits Europe and Japan with Elliott and his wife. In Japan, they meet the current and two future prime ministers and the royal couple, the first interview the Emperor has ever given to a woman. Kay catches herself making a reference to World War II and concentrates on the Emperor's interest in marine biology. They are assured that the interview, at which royals are obviously uncomfortable and wooden, is a success.

Kay and her party fly on to Hong Kong and Saigon. Few American advisers are on the ground there, but *Newsweek* and the *Post* have reporters in place to cover the buildup. Kay is flown in armed gun ships to the Cambodian border and the Mekong Delta, and she is told it will take five years to win the people's hearts from the Vietcong, who have been building infrastructure and providing services for decades. Kay has not read Vietnamese history and feels unprepared to ask questions. She defers to Wiggins, a strong advocate for American involvement but not an all-out hawk. Kay recalls thinking America should probably not have gone in but now has no choice but to help the South defeat the communists. Back home, Wiggins will continue to support LBJ, maintaining that legitimate authority cannot be usurped anywhere in the world. He is bothered by advance knowledge of Diem's assassination in 1963, however, and searches for a better solution that will not compromise U.S. prestige in the world. Kay's views change slowly until her son serves in Vietnam, and a new editor arrives and shifts the paper's official position.

After stops in Cambodia and Thailand, the *Newsweek* team spends several days in India before flying over burning oilfields to beautiful, untouched, prewar Beirut. The Lebanese are complaining about Egypt's strongman, Gamal Abdel Nasser, whom they interview in Cairo. A few days after the session, *Newsweek* contradicts Nasser's contention that he is not playing off East against West. The *Post* corrects the error, but Nasser is furious. Kay naively takes it personally. She will eventually learn that unintentional mistakes and confusions are part of the business and must be taken in stride. In Rome, an Italian journalist flirts with Kay, and she flies on to London and home, concluding a trip that is both exhausting and strengthening.

In the summer of 1965, Kay hesitates about but eventually accepts an invitation to cruise the Greek islands with Truman Capote and the beautiful Marella Agnelli. Phil would never have taken such a step to join the international jet set. Stevenson earlier

suggested they vacation together, but she declined and is appalled to meet him in London en route to the Aegean. Stevenson spends at least an hour in Kay's room and leaves without his tie and glasses. Kay runs them over to the U.S. Embassy the next day and learns that Stevenson has died of heart attack. An unhappy man, Stevenson has been talking of retiring. Kay and Capote fly to Athens without Agnelli and go over in detail galleys of *In Cold Blood.*

Reston asks Kay whether she wants to pass to the next generation a paper superior to the one she has inherited. Believing Kay will be more careful about the publisher's boundaries than Phil, Reston agrees to work for her. He rejects her ill-conceived suggestion to serve merely as an adviser, though. Kay observes executive indecision and poor choices in hiring, and she hears on the grapevine griping about stagnation in the city room. She sees her friend Friendly wearing out as managing editor but is unwilling to make changes in 1965. Kay does not yet know Bradlee well, but she appreciates his talent and fears that he might be lured away from *Newsweek* by television. She invites Bradlee to lunch to discover his ambitions. He wants to be the *Post's* managing editor, and Kay is shocked. It is thinkable, but the timing is bad. Having made the opening, Bradlee is tenacious. Kay's close advisers approve, and she suggests Bradlee come aboard and wait a year for Friendly to retire. Friendly, however, is looking forward to heading the American Society of Newspaper Editors and is in no hurry to give up his base.

In July 1965, the forty-three-year-old, charismatic Bradlee becomes deputy managing editor, chiefly responsible for national and foreign news. He hits the ground running and quickly points out flaws in the *Post* operation. Lippmann agrees to discuss these with Friendly but oversteps his bounds and suggests Friendly return to reporting. Kay is dumbfounded but follows through, and Bradlee is promoted to managing editor in November. A wounded Friendly rebuilds his life. After winning a Pulitzer Prize for reporting on the 1967 Middle Eastern war, Friendly tells Kay he wishes he had had the foresight to leave editing on his own initiative. Characteristically, Kay does not spare herself from looking passive and indecisive in this turnover. She ends the tale by pointing out how Friendly sent her a memo on November 1, predicting she would need to make tough decisions to turn the *Post* into the world's best newspaper.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary and Analysis

Bradlee moves energetically to improve the *Post* staff, bringing over from *Newsweek* key personnel and hiring star political reporter David Broder from the *New York Times.* The demise of three New York papers provides a pool of talent, and the editorial staff adds fifty positions. The budget rises from $2.25 million to $7 million in 1969, although Sweeterman restrains spending initially, with Kay's backing. Bradlee proves a better recruiter than manager, but he does inspire the people under him. He is Kay's first major appointment, and they form an effective partnership, sharing a common vision for the future. Bradlee constantly asks "why?" and Kay usually agrees with him. They learn to deal with one another and form a close personal friendship and a solid professional relationship as they watch the *Post* steadily improve.

Elliott turns *Newsweek* into a "hot" magazine, spotting issues and trends far earlier than the competition. Financially, it does less well than the *Post* because Beebe is lenient with the editors, and Kay has no idea how much it can and should earn. Kay is still viewed as an interferer. In the absence of corporate structure, chaos reigns, and talented people are lost. Rumors of a possible sale dispirit the staff, and Kay always receives the brunt of criticism for the magazine's problems. The third part of the company, the broadcast division, consists of two television stations, Washington's popular WTOP and Jacksonville's WJXT, which is beginning to make its mark through investigative reporting. Hayes runs both operations until LBJ names him ambassador to Switzerland. Larry Israel is hired to replace Hayes. Israel brings in Jim Snyder as news director and purchases stations in Miami in 1968 and Hartford, Connecticut, in 1973. Israel bans cigarette advertising before the government orders it and comes up with the idea of donating the Washington FM radio station to Howard University, making it the first black-owned station in the country. For all his vision and enthusiasm for radio, Israel has few business or management skills, which Kay laments overlooking.

Kay presides over all three divisions, depending heavily on Beebe for advice. Unfortunately, neither is a trained manager. Kay begins doing her homework on management, and the more she learns the more she feels compelled to learn. She travels to observe the operations of other newspapers, Texas Instruments, Xerox and NCR. She attends executive seminars offered by the ANPA and IBM. The only female at the latter course, Kay grasps the power of automation, which she knows will be difficult to introduce at the *Post.* Kay's relationship with Sweeterman is difficult. She resents his unwillingness to accept her but is intimidated and defers to his ideas. She recalls today being reduced to tears when Sweeterman angrily opposes feting Molly Parker's retirement after fifty years at the *Post* switchboard, lest this set an expensive precedent. Kay confesses it takes her years to outgrow her timidity. She sees herself in those days as overly self-critical and second-guessing, which allows Sweeterman to dominate. He tells her that a publisher needs to exercise good judgment rather than pick people's brains. Kay believes he is correct and feels the contrast between her and Phil is too

great for Sweeterman. A wise move in 1966 brings the company a one-third share in the *Paris Herald-Tribune,* later renamed the *International Herald-Tribune,* which comes to be read by decision makers around the world and helps make the *Post* better known.

Kay's social life grows more varied. Through Pamela Berry she meets Edward Heath, who is elected prime minister of Great Britain, and the London tabloids link him and Kay romantically. Kay's closest and most constant friend is Polly Wisner, whose husband in 1965 commits suicide eerily like Phil. While the friends are vacationing at Saratoga Springs, Capote phones to tell Kay that he intends to give a masked black-and-white motif ball to cheer her up. Kay is puzzled until she and Berry meet the writer for lunch. She is merely a prop in his efforts to re-energize after *In Cold Blood,* but she plays along. Excitement grows through the gossip columns. Kay is allowed to invite twenty Washington couples. She buys a French dress and has her hair done by the famous hairdresser Kenneth. She ends up looking her best, but she feels like an orphan in the midst of the world's most sophisticated beauties. She finds being Capote's guest of honor exciting and terrifying. The evening is a spectacular success.

Kay believes Capote, who never turns on her as he does on many other friends, feels protective of her. Perhaps he wants to give her a taste of a world she does not know, and she does feel herself a "middle-aged debutante - even a Cinderella" that night. Perhaps he simply needs a reason for a good party. Kay quotes neutrally a Capote biographer stating that the ball allows an unknown powerful woman to emerge from her dead husband's shadow and become a woman on her own. At any rate, press coverage is intense and continues for weeks after the event. The *Post* covers it in the women's section. Kay is asked to put everything back on and pose for photographs by Cecil Beaton. It appears in *Vogue* with a flattering piece by Schlesinger. Kay finds the higher profile frightening and feels she would have been harmed professionally had the women's movement been any more advanced at the time. Several critics point out the incongruity of this gala with the sobering headlines of the day. Kay's final assessment is that for one night she steps outside her real life and is transfigured.

Don graduates magna cum laude from Harvard in 1966, and surprisingly, he volunteers for the army. He has reservations about Vietnam but cannot live with the idea of the poor bearing the brunt of the war. Parting from him at the train station is awful, reminiscent of Phil's departure, and Don's reaction to army life is much like his father's. In January 1967, Don marries fellow *Crimson* editor, Mary Wissler, and in June he is shipped to Vietnam. He writes home about a war no one believes in. Don doubts that the administration can admit its errors and withdraw, and he observes that unlike World War II, no one cares how this ends, just so long as they go home safely. The *Post's* lone reporter in the war zone, Ward June, writes of horrifying civilian casualties that will doom the U.S.-supported regime. Television brings the fighting into people's living rooms, and the home front boils. Don fears the U.S. will be fragmented. Bill Graham joins the anti-war demonstrators in the fall of 1967 and avoids jail once through the efforts of the *Post's* lawyer. Kay is not allowed to interfere when Bill is arrested again at Stamford.

Having a son on both sides of the fierce debate causes Kay to doubt the war and reconsider the *Post's* obsequious pro-LBJ stance under Wiggin's editorship. William

Fulbright, Lippmann, RFK and ordinary readers focus intense heat on Kay. She grows concerned that the editorial page is diverging from the news pages. Knowing that Wiggins intends to retire in 1968, Kay and Bradlee recruit Phil Geyelin from the *Wall Street Journal.* Kay tells Geyelin that she does not expect him to agree with her on everything, but she demands that no surprises be sprung on her. She wants to be in on takeoffs as well as landings. Geyelin has been to Vietnam twice and believes the war cannot be won. His views are moderate, however, and Kay feels comfortable with him. They bring the *Post's* editorial policy around slowly, like a great ship. Wiggins remains locked in his position but is good-natured and forgiving. LBJ cools towards Kay even before the editorial change changes. She hears rumors that LBJ has cut her off and writes a toadyish letter to the paranoid man she admires. LBJ's response is a slap in the face. He misses Phil and is obliged by his office to correct journalistic untruths. Kay today sees LBJ as blaming her for being too permissive with her staff. If he ran a newspaper people would toe the line. Kay fears most politicians think publishers order what their reporters should report. In the few ongoing contacts she has with LBJ, Kay feels certain he worries about casualties and feels the war will end soon.

Kay and Mother vacation in Europe in the summer of 1967, and Mother arranges an interview with Yugoslavia's Tito, whom she earlier meets. Tito speaks rapidly on the record for two hours on many subjects, and Kay's article appears on the front page of the *Post* under her byline, something not routinely done. Returning home, Kay finds that problems have piled up at the *Post,* and during a restful family weekend at Glen Welby, she suffers a convulsion and passes out. After six days in the hospital, doctors determine that she has some sort of brain irregularity, and she is put on Dilantin, an anti-seizure drug too powerful for her system to tolerate. She nearly faints while arguing about Vietnam with RFK at a party, leading to a humorous quip about his effect on women, but increasing her resolve to stop taking the drug.

In March 1968, RFK challenges LBJ for the Democratic nomination, and two weeks later the president stuns the nation by announcing that he will not run for re-election. At eighty-one years old, Mother, crippled by arthritis and about to undergo a mastectomy, attacks RFK savagely, and Kay finds the tirades hard to endure. In April, Martin Luther King, Jr., is assassinated, and the country goes up in flames. On June 5, Bradlee phones Kay at four in the morning to report that RFK has been killed. Kay decides, despite the cost, to print and deliver the early edition and immediately put out a special update. Geyelin removes the caption "Murder" from an already-scheduled savage Herblock cartoon about RFK's vote on gun ownership, which makes an angry cartoonist even more independent. Herblock is too powerful and respected for Geyelin to rein in. Kay attends services for RFK and says that the tragedy of those days is still seared into her mind today. She disagreed with him on certain issues but sees him as a passionate advocate for many things in which she believes.

With LBJ and RFK out of the picture, Humphrey and Nixon face one another after significant challenges for the nominations. At a *Post* luncheon before the conventions, Nixon is more gracious than expected and predicts he will be nominated on the first ballot. He says he will take as a running mate whomever will most advance his chances in the general election (Spiro Agnew is *not* in the list), and he feels it is too late for

Humphrey to dissociate himself from LBJ. On Vietnam, he predicts an "honorable settlement" soon and abandons the "domino theory" as passy. Kay believes that Nixon does not feels threatened at this meeting and behaves impressively. Soon, however, he reverts to meanness. The Democratic convention in Chicago is marked by violent demonstrations. The *Post* officially sticks by its policy of non-endorsement but implicitly supports Humphrey, pointing out Nixon's disregard for principles and good sense. The paper declares his choice of Agnew as running mate the "most eccentric political appointment since the Roman emperor Caligula named his horse a consul." Kay will follow Agnew's pique at this editorial through Agnew's eventual downfall. Intelligent, witty Humphrey, by now Kay's friend, would have been an excellent president, but he is soundly defeated. The *Post* - and even Herblock - gives Nixon a honeymoon.

Executive turnovers become frequent, and Kay receives the blame. Wiggins leaves to become ambassador to the U.N., and Geyelin takes over the editorial page, reporting directly to Kay. Meg Greenfield becomes Geyelin's No. 2, and she quickly becomes a major force in the operation, although Bradlee has a difficult time accepting deputies. He accommodates to Howard Simons, whose interests complement his own. Simons concentrates on "SMERSH" (science, medicine, education, religion and all that shit) and developing young talents. Kay feels more confident passing comment on stories and is teased for being Brenda Starr in suggesting stories. The *Post* misses the scoop that Jackie Kennedy will marry Onassis. In 1968, Sweeterman refuses to be talked out of retiring from day-to-day responsibilities, but he accepts the newly created post of vice-chairman, responsible for planning the company's future development. Sweeterman insists that Kay assume the title of publisher, like Father and Phil, and she begins looking for a new business head, ignorant of headhunters and unsure about what skills the job requires. McNamara endorses Paul Ignatius, a former secretary of the navy, but within six months Ignatius' ignorance of the newspaper business proves too great. Nevertheless, they hold onto him as president of the *Post* and executive vice-president of the company until 1971. Production goes from bad to worse, and *Newsweek* suffers editorially and financially. The company is spinning, and Kay can only fret about making - and not making - decisions. She allows them to spend a great deal of money having the renowned architect I. M. Pei design an elaborate building that does not suit the production process. Today, Kay hates the dowdy building she works in, which reminds her of her how poor a decision-maker she used to be.

One good decision is to replace the "women's section" of the *Post* with "Style," focusing on things that interest all Washingtonians. Still unsure how to criticize constructively, Kay is cautiously optimistic and allows the experiment to go forward. Bradlee often has to keep her from interfering as "Style" gradually grows capable of handling the convergence of men's and women's interests. Shelby Coffey edits "Style" from 1976 to 1983 and hires Sally Quinn, who brings a talent for getting famous people to talk openly. Coffey's successor, Mary Hadar, turns "Style" into a great developer of skills and talents. Papers all over the country embrace it.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary and Analysis

The lion's share of this chapter is devoted to Kay's awakening to the women's movement, heretofore only tangentially touched upon. Kay agrees with an article about her in 1969 that she accepts responsibility more often than she asserts authority. She has gained some business sense, but through the 1970s, her expectations exceed her accomplishments. She feels like a pretender on the throne and a perennial test-taker. Some of her insecurity is bred into her generation of women, who buy into the assumption that men are intellectually superior and more capable of managing everything outside the house and children. Women develop a non-businesslike, apologetic, indecisive way of speaking, which makes them precisely what they most fear: boring to their husbands, who contribute to the syndrome and then move on to greener pastures. Women in charge of even small companies are so rare that it is inevitable for Kay to stand out. Typically, the *Post* has no woman within four levels of Kay. Still, she is unaware that she is an oddity and that workingwomen in her organization face difficulties. She attributes none of her problems to being female. She is amazed today at reading herself tell *Women's Wear Daily* in 1969 that a man would be better suited to her job than she, for which *Post* editor and friend Elsie Carper storms into her office and announces she will quit if Kay truly believes that. This shakes Kay up, and she begins paying attention to women's issues. She finds it harder to be singled out at all-male meetings. She sees that women are invisible to men and points this out politely to *Newsweek* executives, but she is too insecure to press the issue. There is a part of her that enjoys being the first one in the door. Men and women traditionally segregate after dinner at parties, the men to discuss vital matters over brandy and cigars and the women to powder their noses and gossip. One evening at Joe Alsop's, Kay rebels without intending to spark a revolution, but very quickly the practice disappears all over Washington.

Without any particular motivating event, Kay becomes aware of and active in the women's movement. Reading and discussions with Greenfield helps clarify Kay's thoughts. Greenfield "makes it" before liberation but still faces prejudice. The *Post* first addresses the question in 1969 by pointing to the barring of a female reporter from a football press box as symptomatic of salary and other inequalities and by putting forth the ultra-radical notion that women are human beings. Kay becomes friends with and is influenced by Gloria Steinem, but she is put off by the militant man-hating, bra-burning extremists. Eventually, Kay accepts the truth of Steinem's arguments that throwing off the myths of male superiority will make her life better. Kay puts up $20,000 seed money for *Ms.* magazine. Personal experience in boardrooms and observation of the plight of women reporters accumulate, until finally Kay accepts responsibility for changing things. She has little idea how to go about this, but she begins by rejecting the old prejudices and then refuting them whenever they arise.

Kay circulates to male executives a *New York* magazine article, "The Female Job Ghetto," and implements policies like not differentiating between males and females in referring to them by first or surname. (Note how Father decades earlier banned racial descriptions from news reports.) Today, Kay regrets siding with (male) editors on a number of issues she does not refrain from detailing. Bradlee assembles a committee of female reporters to develop policies that will not offend or condescend to women. In the early 1970s, women's issues explode, often leading to equal-opportunity lawsuits. *Newsweek* is named in one and the *Post* in another, leaving Kay torn. She is surprised by statistics showing women have lost ground at the paper. Kay approves a report endorsing creation of new jobs for women and blacks, and she names Carper personnel director. When saddled with unqualified writers, neither publication knows how to cope. Greenfield sends Kay a stunning memo opposing the popular "melodrama" of quotas, saying that the *Post* ought instead to become a colorblind bastion of excellence.

Outside the company, Kay finds herself conflicting with bastions of male dominance like the Gridiron Club, which only recently has admitted a black member. Kay is among nineteen women invited to attend its annual dinner as guests. She is excited by the prospect, but she holds out for full membership. Sally Quinn seals the decision by asking how she would respond to an invitation from a club banning Jews. Note how sensitive Kay remains to a religious heritage she has never experienced. Many prominent women picket the Gridiron Club event, but Kay is too timid. In 1975, Kay is admitted to membership and attends the banquet. Similarly, the Federal City Council, which Phil founded and which had female members in his day, fails to appoint Kay until she makes clear the *Post* will publicize its sexual segregation. She drafts but fails to mail a letter to the head of the Associated Press protesting the absence of women on its board, but she does withdraw from attending social affairs. She is elected to the board as the first woman and serves three terms. Her attempts to raise the question of white male dominance are always treated, however, as a cute joke. Kay believes progress is inevitable, but there are never enough women in high place to effect this. The most important understanding she develops is that equality is less the key than women being able to choose whatever lifestyle suits them, and acceptance of this will benefit men and women equally.

After Schlesinger's *Vogue* article, Kay finds herself often being written about. She makes the cover of *Business Week* and the *Washingtonian,* and Mother is impressed. Kay refuses all television interviews, protecting her identity, and she is uncomfortable talking to print journalists. She is pleased that most articles about her are positive, indicating she is doing something right. She develops the habit of responding to all letters from readers, positive and negative. She generally backs reporters and editors, particularly against government criticism, and she is careful about the company's reputation. Still, she is careful not to develop an "editor's crouch," and thinks it is healthy for reporters to get a taste of the poison they dish out to others. Kay is constantly having to defend Herblock's cartoons, pointing out that it is the essence of cartooning to exaggerate and that great artists like Herblock must be granted artistic license. She cannot conceive of the *Post* without Herblock. He and the *Post* take flak from both ends of the political spectrum over Vietnam. Kay reminds readers that the paper does not make or substantially influence government policy. Nevertheless, she appoints an

industry-first ombudsman in 1970 to review complaints. Kay becomes the paper's combination "house mother and cheerleader," working to create an atmosphere conducive to freedom and good ideas, and she takes pride in the modest progress the *Post* makes in the 1970s.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 22 begins the ramp-up to Watergate, the high mark of the *Post's* history in the years Kay heads the organization. Nixon, whom readers have already seen on Kay's radar as a suspicious and perhaps even dangerous character, is inaugurated as president in 1969. In March, Nixon suggests that Kay invite brilliant, humorous and articulate Henry Kissinger to an editorial luncheon to brief editors on Vietnam policy. It marks the beginning of a long, close personal and professional relationship. Kissinger laments inheriting a mess from LBJ, confesses they have no overall policy and is more interested in discussing arms control and nuclear proliferation. Kay is invited to the Nixon White House only twice, and early on the *Post* is dragged into Nixon's war against the "Eastern establishment elitist press," whose field general is Agnew.

Kay is flabbergasted at Agnew's misunderstanding of how the *Post, Newsweek* and the two all-news radio stations interact, and she is worried that his attacks will strike a popular chord. The White House plays down fears that the company's FCC licenses might be in danger when time comes for renewal, but Kay hints this dirty trick will indeed be used after the paper becomes embroiled in Watergate. Agnew recalls the Caligula's horse reference. Still, politeness and professionalism mark the first year of the Nixon administration, the *Post* even correcting misquotations and earning Attorney General John Mitchell's praise as the "best paper in the country." Tongue firmly in cheek, Kay says she should have framed the letter. She meets John Erlichman and finds him helpful, even fun. She casually dates Kissinger and is relieved to become friends with his wife Nancy after they marry. Kay is certain that, if anything, the *Post* and *Newsweek* go harder on Kissinger because of her friendship.

Nixon puzzles Kay. She writes LBJ to lament the advent of this strange group, and he sends her Easter flowers. When the Johnsons visit Washington in April, they enjoy a delightful dinner at R Street, with LBJ reminiscing to Don how much his father had meant to them. The next day, the editors meet with LBJ for four hours of candid discussion that results in Harwood and Johnson's *Lyndon.* Concerned about his place in history, the ex-president has brought masses of top-secret documents about Vietnam that he consults continually. LBJ overpoweringly chronicles events in typical profane language and agrees with Agnew about press liberalism. After lunch, LBJ discusses his domestic policies and three crucial influences on his life: his daddy, FDR and Phil, who infuriated, loved and improved him. LBJ's last story is about Rayburn, whose loyalty to a blacksmith reminds him of his relationship with the *Post.* Never has Kay witnessed an emotional farewell like the editors give LBJ.

Mother's health declines sharply in the 1960s until she cuts back on drinking, and she enjoys several more years exercising her authority, criticizing and arguing. It is a shock when a maid finds her dead in her bed on August 1, 1970. Kay is at Mt. Kisco for Labor Day. Kay, who normally weeps too easily, is amazed that she never cries over deaths,

and Mother's is no different. Still, it is strange no longer to have her there to emulate or rebel against. Kay's brother is also an ailing, lonely, heavy drinker for years after the breakup of his marriage, but he recovers and leads a good life for many years. Kay's youngest son Steve, lonely at home, begins using drugs, and since the Graham house is the largest and least supervised, it becomes the "local pot parlor." Kay begs Steve to stop with no effect and warns him that the *Post* will publish his arrest on the front page.

Kay's social life escalates as she makes new friends, many quite famous and wealthy. She adopts Halston as her dressmaker and attends the Marlboro music festivals with Rudi Serkin, who laments that music plays no great part in Kay's life. She sees much of Phil's old friend Jean Monnet and "can testify to his virility." This is the most explicit (but not very) reference to sex in the book. Kay bears four children and suffers a few miscarriages but says nothing about how she finds herself in that condition. She is coquettish about Stevenson's last night on earth and evasive about college experiences, and she will leave readers wondering at what goes on between her and Warren Buffet. Finally, she will dodge the question of intimacy at the end of the book, while otherwise candidly discussing the question of remarriage. Whether Kay intends to be enigmatic on the subject or not, she certainly is.

In the spring of 1971, Beebe advises Kay that the company is cash strapped and must either go public or sell assets. Having been sheltered from such matters by Phil, Kay assumes Beebe's analysis is correct, but her instincts are to keep the company moving forward. They plan for one million A shares to be held by Kay and her children and ten million B shares to be opened to the public, Kay's brother and employees through profit-sharing. The ceremony takes place on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on June 15, 1971.

That spring, the *Post* battles the White House over its banning of reporter Judith Martin from covering Trisha Nixon's wedding, and H. R. Halderman is dispatched with "talking points" explaining the decision. He makes Kay's blood run cold. Kay recalls thinking that she would not want the caustic Martin covering her own daughter's wedding, but she has to defend freedom of the press. Other reporters, similarly concerned, protest by feeding details to Martin, whose story is printed in the *Post* with no byline. That same day, May 13, the *New York Times* announces plans to publish a major study of the Vietnam War. At his son's wedding the next day, Reston talks about the "Pentagon Papers," commissioned in 1967 by McNamara without LBJ's knowledge, as a source of raw materials for future historians. Kay calls Bradlee, who has heard rumors, and tells him to look into the *Times* exclusive. Most of Sunday is devoted to reading the *Times* stories and articles and discussing the contents. The *Times* decides to publish the materials, covering American involvement in Southeast Asia from World War II to the opening of the Paris Peace Talks in May 1968, because they show that the American people have been deceived. The *Times* lawyers believe that they are within the law. Bradlee is anguished to be scooped, but when he cannot get the Papers for the *Post,* he rewrites the *Times* reporting and credits the competition.

On Monday, the Justice Department asks the *Times* to suspend publication and threatens, with Nixon's backing, to get an injunction if it refuses. The *Times* respectfully

declines, and McNamara encourages Reston to go forward, even going over wording of the paper's agreement to abide by the decision of the highest court. When the Tuesday *Times* continues the series, Judge Murray Gurfein issues America's first-ever order of prior restraint of the press. With the *Times* forbidden to publish them, long-suspected Papers author Daniel Ellsberg hands them over to the *Post* on Kay's birthday. In Bradlee's absence, national editor Ben Bagdikian sifts through a disorganized mound of 4,400 photocopies in Boston and flies them to Washington where a team of *Post* editors and writers set to work. Meanwhile, Kay is holding a garden party and receiving continual updates. Chalmer "Chal" Roberts, the fastest writer, puts together the copy. Lawyers point out that with the Washington Post Company about to go public, facing off against the government over the Papers is risky. A criminal indictment against the *Post* would let underwriters out of the contract, and a felony conviction would strip the company of the right to own its profitable television stations. The editors want to publish as a sign of solidarity with the *Times* and condemn proposed compromises with the Justice Department as gutless. They remind the lawyers of the *Post's* promise to Ellsberg to publish immediately. Williams in Chicago tells Bradlee that they must go forward. The newsroom pretends that nothing is up, but Kay is certain reporters know this is not true. Kay acknowledges that the *Post's* very soul is at stake.

Kay's toast is cut short by a phone call from Beebe, telling her she must decide immediately whether to start the presses. Various editors get on extensions and barrage her with opinions. Beebe's caution causes her the greatest concern, but Geyelin's pithy remark that there is more than one way to kill a newspaper appears to convince her. Kay orders the presses started. Beebe and Roger Clark come to Kay's house. The lawyers have raised the question of collusion with the *Times,* but Beebe declares it is no time to rethink the decision. Assistant Attorney General William Renquest phones Bradlee. When he is told the *Post* is going forward from where the *Times* left off, he files suit against the paper, everyone named on the masthead and Roberts. Liberal Judge Gerhard Gesell, whom Phil once fired, hears the case and rules for the *Post.* The government appeals, and Gesell is reversed, although the night issue, already in the presses, is allowed to finish its run. The case is ordered back to Gesell for a more thorough hearing, and he threatens to dismiss it if the government insists ludicrously on barring *Post* employees from the courtroom for security reasons.

Gesell faces down armed, uniformed federal officials demanding he turn over custody of the Papers. Gesell does not believe CIA testimony about the security risk posed by publishing the Papers, and he summons a top general to the stand. The general testifies that the war plans are hopelessly out of date. The government next grasps at straws, claiming publication will subject the Canadian diplomat who passed information to the Americans from Vietnam would face execution as a spy. *Post* reporters, however, easily refute this. Gesell allows publication to resume, but the appeals court again steps in with a restraining order. The U.S. Solicitor General tells the Justice Department that it has no leg to stand on, but they take the case to the Supreme Court, which on June 25 puts both the *Times* and the *Post* under equal restraints, another first for U.S. law. The next day, the high court hears arguments that the journalists do not understand, and on June 30 it announces that the government has failed to show justification. Kay and Bradlee both commend the *Post* staff for the victory. Still, they are disappointed that

there is no ringing affirmation of First Amendment guarantees in the 6 to 3 decision. Hidden in justices' opinions are avenues for criminal prosecution of individuals after the fact by the vindictive attorney general. Messages come from the government requesting the paper relinquish national security-sensitive documents coordinated with veiled threats against the company's licenses and stock offerings. Joe Alsop learns from a "Mr. X" that Nixon wants to tear both newspapers' guts out and will do so as soon as possible. On advice from Williams, the *Post* pledges to continue its policy of not publishing secure information, and the government appears to drop the matter.

Today Kay wonders why Nixon - who is not mentioned in the Pentagon Papers - reacts so violently. She notes that during the Iran-Contra Affair in 1989 the *Post* publishes an op-ed article about the lesson that should have been learned about the overclassification of materials in 1971. In 1971, speaking at Denison University, Kay maintains publishing the Papers contributes to the national interest rather than threatening it and declares the *Post* has upheld the obligation of responsible newspapers. The decision-making system must be open if there are to be "no more Vietnams." The drama of the Pentagon Papers lasts only two and a half weeks, but its effects ripple on for years. The Nixon administration hardens its imperious views, and the *Post* for the first time is considered a major player. They are spoken and written about, and Kay admits this feeds her vanity. The principals at the *Post* bond more closely together. Kay gains greater respect for Bradlee, and the two begin a Christmastime tradition of exchanging letters in lieu of flowers. All of this prepares them for the next crisis - Watergate.

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary and Analysis

Chapters 23 and 24 offer Kay's unique views on the Watergate Affair and the negative and positive effects it has on her company. She first learns about a break-in at the Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters on Saturday morning, June 17, 1972, and a Nixon spokesman promptly dismisses it as a third-rate burglary attempt. Joe Califano, a DNC lawyer, calls *Post* editors, and veteran police reporter Al Lewis is sent to investigate. Lewis spends the day at the busy crime scene and gets the byline on the story that appears Sunday. Contributing background information are Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. The two had never worked together, but their skills prove complementary. Woodward has been at the *Post* only since September, but he has distinguished himself as conscientious, hardworking and driven. Bernstein has often been in trouble for his messy, undisciplined ways, compensated for by creativity, imagination and excellent writing. Bradlee is about to fire Bernstein, but he backs off when Bernstein makes the first connection to Nixon's re-election fund.

Following the story with alacrity, skill and elbow grease, Woodward and Bernstein emerge as the lead reporters on the Watergate story, but a considerable part of the *Post* staff contributes. The buck always stops on Bradlee's desk, and his standing orders are to push relentlessly for the truth. Simons carries the story in the early days. Tough, picturesque editor Harry Rosenfeld controls the story in the metro section before it makes page one. Barry Sussman directs coverage day-to-day and becomes a compendium of Watergate information. Geyelin, Greenfield and Roger Wilkins plug away editorially at the seriousness of the charges as the White House works to minimize the story. Herblock is relentless, always moving far ahead of the news people.

The first big story under the Woodward and Bernstein byline appears August 1, revealing a connection between the burglars and the Committee to Re-elect the President (CRP, pronounced "creep"). Three weeks later, Nixon is nominated and (untruthfully) declares his counsel, John Dean, has investigated and found no White House involvement. Nixon observes that the worst thing to do is to try to cover-up. The five burglars are indicted, along with former aids E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy. Only later will it be learned that on same day, Nixon orders aids to play rough with the *Post* when its television station's license comes up for renewal and to get even with its lawyer, Williams. Woodward and Bernstein reveal a secret CRP fund used to gather intelligence controlled by Mitchell, who caught off guard at home, threatens to catch Kay's tit in a wringer if the story appears. Bradlee authorizes use of everything but the reference to Kay's anatomy, and she is shocked to read it and offended at the threat. Friends will give her humorous gifts memorializing Mitchell's tantrum. In October, the *Post* publishes two seminal articles revealing massive, nationwide political spying and sabotage and linking it directly to Watergate through Haldeman, Nixon's alter ego and right-hand man. Senator Bob Dole accuses the *Post* of mud slinging and siding with the

McGovern campaign, but Bradlee maintains that not one fact has been successfully challenged and proclaims the paper's objectivity.

Evidence of criminality is strong, as is White House pressure, and Kay feels beleaguered. Friends such as Joe Alsop and Kissinger are puzzled at the *Post's* tenacious reporting, and readers accuse it of ulterior motives, bad journalism and lack of patriotism. Surprisingly, few publications even mention the juicy story until, just before the election, Walter Cronkite airs a long segment on Watergate, giving the *Post* full credit for the revelations. The *Post* exercises greater than usual diligence in vetting stories, but Kay continues to worry that they might be being misled. Many times they delay publishing items until they have met rigorous "two source" tests. Today, Kay still does not know Deep Throat's identity but is convinced he is a real individual rather than an amalgam, as some argue. (In 2005, eight years after publication of this autobiography, Deep Throat's identity is revealed: FBI No. 2 man, W. Mark Felt.) The White House personalizes the issue and threatens reprisals. Dole claims it all stems from Kay's personal hatred of Nixon. She and her colleagues, however, take no pleasure from having the kind of government that needs to be investigated in this way. She writes Erlichman, with whom she amazingly remains in touch, calling Dole's views childish. Publishers have no such influence on editors and reporters, and she hopes misquotation will end.

The *Post* does not endorse McGovern, many of whose views and policies the editors disagree with, but it does favor him simply because Nixon is so unsympathetic. McGovern complains about the paper's coverage of his campaign. To no one's surprise, Nixon is re-elected by a sixty-two percent majority, proving how little impact Watergate has and how powerful the men are behind the break-in. Nixon replaces anyone who does not agree with him explicitly, including Pete Peterson, who dares have lunch with Kay. The atmosphere is poisonous, but the story dries up while Woodward and Bernstein dig for new material. Kay gives several speeches defending the *Post's* reputation and liberty of the press. The administration gives exclusives to the rival *Star,* which decries the "divide and conquer" tactic used when the *Post's* senior society reporter, Dorothy McCardle, is barred from events. Nixon aids attack Bradlee and try to get Richard Mellon Scaife to buy the *Post.* Colson orders a "butcher piece" on the *Post*. Haldeman moves pounding the media to the top of Jeb Magruder's priority list. Kay is to be "needled" daily, and a round robin letter is to be started alleging Washingtonians are appalled at its coverage of Watergate. Nixon forbids any contact with the *Post* and alone can allow exceptions to the rule.

Since October, Colson has been waiting for the company's television stations to come up for renewal. Four separate challenges to the Jacksonville and Miami stations are filed, clearly orchestrated and politically motivated, although no paper trail can be established. Jacksonville's conservatives authentically dislike the station's strong, aggressive reporting and promotion of Florida's corporate income tax and sunshine law. The challengers lack broadcast experience and underestimate the complexity and cost of the FCC review process. Leaders include Nixon and Agnew cronies and, sadly, Phil's old friend George Smathers. They portray Kay as a "Dragon Lady" pulling sinister strings. Kay flies down to mollify feelings in Jacksonville. The stations' reputation for

excellence leaves little grounds for an FCC refusal to renew, but the process has a stultifying impact on the boldness of editorials and hiring at the stations. At the same time, the company worries - unnecessarily - that its underwriter, Travelers Insurance Company, will get cold feet and withdraw from efforts to acquire another station in Hartford, Connecticut.

Seven anxious months into the Watergate story, Kay has lunch with Woodward and is dismayed that he doubts the full story will ever emerge. He offers to reveal Deep Throat's identity but is relieved that Kay does not want the burden of knowing. In the days leading up to the trial of the "Watergate Seven," a friend, Andry Meyer, cautions Kay enigmatically not to be alone, and she often lies awake at night worrying less for her own safety than for the *Post*'s existence. She feels like they are part of a Kafka story. Hunt promises to take care of the burglars if they plead guilty and go to jail and joins them in this course. Liddy and McCord are convicted after claiming no high-ups are involved. Kay and four colleagues are subpoenaed to testify on their sources in the Democrats' civil suit against CRP. Company lawyers give Kay some of the reporters' notes, and Bradlee reassures Woodward and Bernstein that the judge is unlikely to throw anyone in jail. There would be a revolution if Kay were pictured in jail over the First Amendment. Deep Throat tells them that Nixon has pledged to use the $5 million remaining after the campaign to "take the *Post* down a notch" and offers hope that the end is in sight. The subpoenas are quashed. The White House convinces the Teamsters to drop Williams' firm to punish him for representing the *Post.*

The *Post* begins gathering allies. Judge John Sirica is "not satisfied" that the truth is coming out in his courtroom, and the Senate votes 70 to 0 to establish a committee on campaign abuses. Kay is in Asia when she learns that Sirica finds the Watergate Seven guilty of perjury, and McCord agrees to a plea bargain. This reinvigorates the story, restores Kay and the *Post's* image and draws other publications into the search for information. Seeing requests for interviews as a chance to promote *Newsweek International,* Kay complies. By March 1973, when she returns home, Kay finds an administration unraveling. Several administration figures resign. Dean is fired, and Elliott Richardson, the new attorney general, appoints a special prosecutor. Nixon goes on television to admit responsibility, but not accept blame, and has the gall to commend the free press for bringing the facts to light. Simons warns the staff not to gloat over the national tragedy.

Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary and Analysis

Beebe dies of cancer the day after listening to Nixon's speech and giving a last hurray from his hospital bed. Ziegler apologizes to the *Post,* Woodward and Bernstein at his press conference, claiming he has been duped. The Pulitzer jurors reward them, Herblock and Wilkins for meritorious service in reporting on Watergate, but only after Reston and Noyes argue that in light of the McCord letter it would be senseless for the *Post* not to be recognized. Regional editors earlier think the affair incredulous and do not give them the public service award. Re-entered under investigative reporting they win, but three other individual awards to *Post* reporters are rescinded. Broder retains his for editorial work.

Watergate, however, is still far from over. Much of the world continues to think the matter is overblown and stands with Nixon, who remains the *Post's* sworn enemy. New details emerge as Mitchell is indicted for conspiracy. The Senate begins televised hearings, and the first calls for Nixon's impeachment are heard. The size of the iceberg begins to be seen, and a steady stream of revelations follows. The *Post* sweeps its buildings for bugs after the use of illegal wiretapping comes out. That Nixon keeps an "enemies list" in 1971 to 1972 becomes known, and Kay cannot today recall whether her name is on it. She considers it an honor if it is. Finally, it comes out before Senate investigators that Nixon has a voice-activated taping system, about which he has apparently forgotten and/or failed to destroy. Kay deems this incredibly good luck for the *Post* and those who want to know the whole truth and bad luck for Nixon, who refuses to surrender tapes to the special prosecutor on July 25.

Kay exchanges witticisms with Agnew about graffiti on an old shed claiming that he likes her, and ten days later it is revealed that he is under criminal investigation. His lawyers subpoena reporters' notes, and Kay, by asserting ultimate responsibility for custody of the notes, again faces the possibility of jail. After many times insisting that he will not resign, Agnew does so on October 10, 1973, and he pleads no contest to income tax evasion. Kay is off the legal hook. The unfolding Agnew crisis does not help Nixon. On August 22, he names Kissinger secretary of state, and a week later Judge Sirica demands the tapes. Nixon loses his appeal, and special prosecutor Archibald Cox rejects Nixon's proposal to provide an authenticated transcript. This leads to the "Saturday Night Massacre," in which Nixon fires two attorneys general before Robert Bork is willing to axe Cox, but Cox's successor, Leon Jaworski, pushes ahead, as does the House Judiciary Committee. Nixon delivers the tapes, and there is a strong backlash against the *Post*. Kay asks critics why so many leave the White House, voluntarily and involuntarily, if it is just a matter of biased reporting? In February 1974, the House grants the Judiciary Committee subpoena power. In March, a grand jury indicts seven Nixon cronies, and in May, the House considers impeachment. Kay's friend Andry Meyer criticizes the *Post's* blood lust, but she replies that the country matters more than the man who is currently president. She feels Nixon should be

impeached but does not allow this to bias reporting. In mid-May, it is found that Nixon's discussions about retaliating against the Post Company during FCC hearings have been cut from the tapes. Joe Alsop admits that Kay and the *Post* have been right about "our miserable President" and that he should not be giving him benefit of the doubt.

During the summer, Nixon continues blaming the press for all his woes. In July, the Supreme Court votes unanimously that Nixon cannot withhold the remaining tapes, and the House Judiciary Committee adopts three counts of impeachment. The *Post* does not join other papers in calling for Nixon's resignation. Finally, on August 5, the "smoking gun" turns up, showing Nixon was behind the cover-up from the start. Kay returns from Martha's Vineyard to Washington. Nixon insists that he will not resign, but he reverses himself on August 8. The next morning, the *Post* publishes a twenty-two-page special section on the Nixon years, and Kay watches with a few staff members Nixon's surreal farewell to White House associates. No one can believe this has come to pass. The *Post* receives a lot of unpleasant phone calls, but Kay recalls mostly being relieved but still anxious. She returns to Martha's Vineyard, where she listens to President Ford talk about the end of "our long national nightmare," and she is glad the U.S. again has a *"nice,* open, honest, and nonthreatening president." Woodward gives Kay a wooden laundry ringer signed by the six lead reporters and editors, which remains a cherished memento.

Kay longs to be out of the limelight, but this does not happen. The FCC licenses are all renewed, and Kay and Bradlee dine at the Ford White House. Ford, however, has pardoned Nixon, which ends the possibility of unearthing the even more awful deeds Kay is sure are there. Today, she remains troubled that Nixon is eventually rehabilitated as a senior adviser to Reagan and Bush while underlings go to prison. Kay finds it curious that she rather than Bradlee is named "outstanding newspaper executive" in 1974, and she recalls that there were many rumors about her wanting to fire him at the height of the Watergate investigation and many sexist remarks about their relationship. In fact, they bond for life during that time. Her 1974 Christmas letter deals with separating truth from myth in the coming year and reviews the odd course of their coming together. Bradlee agrees they will never see such a year again.

In the spring of 1974, Woodward and Bernstein publish *All the President's Men,* and there is immediate talk of a movie produced by and starring Robert Redford as Woodward. Facetiously, Kay hopes Raquel Welch will play her, while in fact doubting a film can bring out the complexities of reporting on Watergate. They debate whether to allow the *Post's* name to be used. Woodward and Bernstein bring Redford to breakfast, and Redford agrees to honor Kay's privacy. She does not allow filming in the *Post's* newsroom but cooperates in constructing an exact replica. She also allows external shots of the building to be used. Kay is crushed to be written out of the story entirely, except for an allusion to one part of her anatomy. Kay loves the finished movie and congratulates Redford on achieving everything she thought impossible. Relations among several *Post* employees are harmed by the fictional depiction, however.

Kay reflects on Watergate as a journalist's dream. It aims at subverting the political process as a whole. People put personal political well being ahead of the nation's

survival and security. Neither Kay nor the *Post* is out to "get" Nixon. How can one be accused of recklessly pursuing stories if they turn out to be true? The *Post* supported many Nixon policies, but he allowed paranoia, hatred of the press and scheming to get in the way of his real job. Kay's role is peripheral, playing the devil's advocate to keep the reporters thorough. She discounts any particular courage on her part. Once the truth begins to come out, she is obliged to fight for the company's existence. Luck intervenes at every stage. Watergate transforms the *Post,* positively and negatively, giving it national and international prominence but distracting ongoing work. Reporters find it hard to let go of the high drama, and for many years coverage of non-glamorous events lags. Watergate shows the need for a free, able and energetic press.

Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary and Analysis

Meanwhile, the *Post* has been facing problems that make Kay feel incompetent as a manager. Ignatius proves mismatched to the job of *Post* president and is replaced in 1971 by John Prescott. Kay is pilloried as a difficult, whimsical, tyrannical, tempestuous woman, and she resents such sexist stereotyping as much as she does being lionized for the *Post's* successes. Kay looks forward to Prescott getting rid of the crisis management approach prevalent at the paper, and Prescott makes many good decisions. Beebe's death puts new pressure on Kay as ultimate decision-maker and entails a new learning curve on being a responsible CEO. She works long and hard but does not know what expectations to have about profitability, and she sets the goals unrealistically high.

Fortunately, billionaire Warren Buffet steps in and buys 230,000 Class B shares in the company. He puts the *Post* on the same level of excellence in journalism as he puts Walt Disney Productions in entertainment, in which he also invests heavily. *Post* stock, he says, is highly underrated. His company, Berkshire Hathaway, has no media properties, so there are no FCC complications. Buffet declares himself a fan. Kay knows nothing about the man who has bought a big chunk of her company, and research reveals nothing but good about him. She follows Phil's advice about reaching out to different people and not believing stereotypes. Kay and Buffet first meet in Laguna Beach, California, and she immediately likes his brains and humor. He is "Mr. Clean." Buffet realizes that Kay knows nothing about finances and takes her under his wing. They correspond and meet regularly. He admires Kay's son, Don, who accompanies her to Laguna. He finds the Meyer genes 100% intact in the third generation. By September 1973, Buffet has bought 410,000 shares of his "favorite investment," worth some $9 million.

The unions are Kay's greatest worry. The typesetters frequently resort to slowdowns during negotiations. The *Post* has made costly concessions to the typesetters, including a clause specifying that outside advertisements must be re-set even if the original copy is used. A large backlog of "bogus" work develops, and laggards fill the composing room. The paper is halfway through conversion from antique hot-metal printing to faster and less labor-intensive "cold" photocomposition, which the unions resist. In 1971, the three Washington papers offer to buy the backlog of "reproduce" for $1.7 million, but the printers refuse because of the leverage it affords. Also difficult are the pressmen, whose base incomes and fringe benefits are high and whose contracts guarantee overtime. Jim Dugan leads their union and is confident the *Post* will never stand firm in negotiations. The stereotypers, led by Charlie Davis, see technology as threatening their jobs and align with the pressmen. Kay enjoys good relations with Dugan and Davis, and she is surprised at what follows. Finally, the editors and "detail" personnel, represented by the Writers' Guild and led by Brian Flores, are among the highest paid in the profession, but they are represented in negotiations by greedy outsiders. Only

circulation is not unionized, and Kay fights to prevent the Teamsters from getting in, as they have at the *Star,* removing all growth incentive.

The unions view hiring Jim Cooper in 1972 as an act of war and concentrate their wrath on him and the *Post* in joint negotiations with the *Star.* Union supervisors are encouraged to manage better and improve production, but rules prevent the company from firing the incompetent. Worrying about rising costs, dropping profits and terrible morale, Kay consults various experts and implements luncheons with union leaders to facilitate communications. She and Prescott begin preparing non-union personnel to run the equipment in the event of a strike. Michael Padilla is fired for spending eight hours marking up a single ad, and fellow printers refuse to work until he is rehired. Federal marshals are called in and twelve strikers are arrested. Management implements "emergency procedures" and with difficulty photocomposes a forty-page paper. They are ready to put the plates on the presses when Dugan says that the pressmen are prepared to do the work rather than allow outsiders to touch their machines. It is a lie, and the press run is disabled. Management accepts Padilla back, and the pressmen print 100,000 copies. Warren explains "amortization of goodwill" to Kay and becomes her hero.

Slowdowns continue. Dugan grows more confident of his ability to dictate to management. There is public sympathy for the "Washington Post 12," and ignorance that a 15% profit margin is not an excessive goal. Most papers have 20% or more. The unions call this greed. In March 1974, the printers turn down an offer of jobs for life in return for the paper's right to automate. The tradesmen strike, and executives and union-exempt personnel reluctantly take over writing and editing tasks. The fill-ins are amazed at how hard the work is, without let-up, and discover they are not bad at it. There are only seventeen guild-exempt editors handling the work of 800, but they do well enough that a survey by the *Star* finds no drop in quality. Guild members propagandize against the *Post* with subscribers and advertisers, and the *Post* counters by sending home the particulars of its offer, which turns many against Flores for his public lies. On April 24, guild members approve a contract substantially the same as the original offer, by 347 to 229. Kay emerges from the crisis seeing the need for better management and communications.

In early 1974, Joe Allbritton buys the *Star* and revitalizes it. Buffet calms Kay's nerves about increased competition. Kay and Buffet enjoy each other greatly, and she is sure there are rumors of scandal. Buffet and Don Graham both join the board in September 1974. She confesses her need for a business education, which Buffet provides. He first purges from her the "priesthood approach," demystifying its nomenclature and dissecting the workings of specific companies. This "new kid on the block" intimidates fellow board members, and she realizes that "Warren says" are poisonous words. Still, she cannot discuss Wall Street matters without reference to him. Eventually, people grow to like and accept Buffet. With him, Kay can laugh, and Buffet's family is amused at how their lives come together from polar opposites to share many things in common. He assumes a central place in Kay's life, but she feels that she remains peripheral to his, confined primarily to improving his eating habits and attire and introducing him to people in journalism and government. Through "Buffetisms," anecdotes and analogies,

he bolsters Kay's confidence, serving as a personal business psychiatrist. He also helps her with the personal matters she confides to him, seeming always to know what will work on her.

The *Star* conducts separate bargaining negotiations with the printers, leaving the *Post* alone. It signs a six-month contract permitting gradual automation in return for 700 *Post* printers gaining lifelong jobs. The paper pays $2.5 million to eliminate the open sore of "reproduce." The paper has next to convert the distributors to an agency system that gives them incentives for building circulation. Prescott is promoted to head the expanding newspaper division, and Mark Meager is brought in as vice-president of finance and administration. Kay is roundly criticized for the change, and morale is low. The unions regard management as incompetent. The pressmen, long accustomed to getting what they want, are out of control and early in 1975, they are told that negotiations will concentrate on eliminating the practices that keep the paper from operating effectively. Executives brush up on production. Allbritton declines to stand with the *Post*, seeing the *Star's* only chance for survival to be its rival's demise. Supervisors are asked to begin managing effectively and are backed with resources to do so.

Chapter 25 shows Kay's baptism of fire in labor relations, rather than the respite she longs for after the Pentagon Papers and Watergate Affair, and it sets up Chapter 26's analysis of the great strike of 1975-76. Readers meet Warren Buffet, who seems to rank with Father and Phil as one of the greatest influences on Kay's life. She is both provocative and shy in describing their relationship. She mentions socializing with Buffet's wife and the raising of some eyebrows, which she accepts as not unthinkable, but she concentrates on how he teaches her to function as a businessperson. Characteristically, she downplays her influence on Buffet while gushing over the help he gives her. In the next chapter, readers will see Kay as the newly empowered commander-in-chief of a *Post* at war for its life.

Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary and Analysis

Meager awakens Kay at 4:45 a.m. on October 1, 1975, with news of the pressmen's "Pearl Harbor." They have sabotaged all the presses and assaulted foreman Jim Hover. Kay is surprised at having to force her way physically through the picket lines. The pressroom is flooded, and smoke hangs in the air. Dugan duped management into believing the pressmen would complete the run, and instead, they destroy the paper's means of fending for itself. Nearly all of the craft unions have taken to the streets. Bradlee leads tours of the clearly premeditated desolation for the reporters to keep the Writers' Guild from joining the action. Flores tries to rally them, but they vote overwhelmingly not to honor the picket line. Both sides appeal to the public for support.

The October 1 issues already printed are distributed, and the *Post* declines to speculate when publication may resume. The editorial staff continues working normally. A restraining order is obtained against the picketers, and the police arrest twenty in the coming days. Allbritton predictably refuses to print the *Post* on the *Star's* presses. An ex-Green Beret, Roger Parkinson, newly arrived from *Newsweek*, suggests using helicopters to transport pages to outlying presses. They obtain FAA authorizations and overcome many logistical problems to issue a scaled-down, limited-run paper on October 3 - a significant triumph for management. The company that makes the *Post's* presses is also being struck, so replacement parts are hard to obtain. Other papers lend non-union workers to repair the presses. The guilds warn members to perform no work other than their own, but a few brave individuals disobey. The guild keeps the pressure up, but members continue voting against honoring the picket lines. Kay and Allbritton both address the American Newspaper Publishers Association, which suggests joint publishing. Kay brings photographs of the vandalism, rejects joint publication and denies intentions to "bust" the unions, which fellow publishers demand as a condition for helping the *Post* to survive. Kay tells employees that she believes in unionism, but she also believes in her right to publish without fear of vandalism and intimidation. She acknowledges the bravery it takes for guild members to stay on the job and that they will strike if they perceive the *Post* is negotiating in bad faith. The paper sues the pressmen for damage to the presses, and a grand jury looks into the violence.

One press is repaired, and executives print 100,000 copies overnight. The guild keeps trying to rally the writers, but it seems to pull an unwise stunt every time resolve begins to falter. On October 7, bargaining begins under the auspices of the Federal Mediation and Conciliating Service. Newspapers around the country provide non-union workers to repair additional *Post* presses, but amateurs will find it difficult to perform the electrical and machine tasks once the presses are back in operation. The *Post* is losing $300,000 a day in advertising, but 300 courageous distributors keep circulation from dropping. Executives learn first-hand how dirty, tedious and interminal it is to mail subscription copies of a Sunday paper. By the tenth day, Kay worries she has ruined the paper, but she resolves to keep a calm, optimistic face. Williams thinks they are committing suicide

by not giving in to the pressmen and wins Bradlee over to his side. Kay, son Don and Meager stand firm against them. Greenfield reminds Kay that she has the option of giving up, which relieves Kay's desperate sense of being trapped, but Kay never seriously considers it.

The second Sunday of the strike, the *Post* looks respectable but has shrunk to a quarter its usual size, while the *Star* has doubled its advertising copy. Buffet promises to watch for the "tipping point" at which Kay will have to give in for the paper to survive. Meager puts day-to-day operations largely in Don's hands as he attends to the strike. Eight amateurs, mostly advertising executives, do the work of forty and even dare undertake complex "collect runs" to enlarge the paper beyond forty-eight pages. Kay substitutes in the classifieds department, dealing with circulation complaints and keeping up in the mailroom. She admires the women who for the first time in history take over the demanding job of fly pasting to keep the presses running. The ad hoc crew grows more competent, and the job of getting the paper out becomes more predictable and routine. Morale runs high. Caterers provide the workers' needs, but work conditions are miserable. Marriages are strained. Kay's brother Bill and daughter Lally come to help, bringing their young daughters. Flores keeps up pressure on guild members to walk out, and Kay confesses to wishing individuals who give in to him would never return. This is one of the rare instances in which Kay shows malice. The pressmen print brochures likening the *Post's* cover-up about the strike to Watergate and accuse Kay of union-busting. Vans have to be provided to keep workers safe from picketers, and many workers' families are threatened and reviled. When advertisers are harassed and picketed, the *Post* takes the pressmen to court for unfair labor practices. Many reporters feel guilty about crossing the picket lines, and eighty guild members address a letter to Kay asking for answers to twenty questions. She feels that many are silly and irrelevant, but she responds to them in detail, condemning the pressmen's irresponsibility in sabotaging the presses and insisting on a contract fair to both parties. The guild members who question her good faith never question the guild's.

The *Star,* naturally, takes advantage of the situation, putting some striking pressmen to work, which contributes to the strike fund. Nevertheless, within three weeks, the *Post* surpasses its rival in size and profitability. Kay tries to maintain civil relations, despite a brutal Olyphant cartoon reviving Mitchell's wringer theme. Area congressmen whose constituents are affected pressure Kay to settle until she points out that the pressmen's union is all-male and all-white. Arthur Goldberg offers to intervene but is sharply turned down. The Maryland attorney general's office looks into antitrust charges over the agency circulation system. The company's stocks drop for the first time since going public. Euphoria gives way to fatigue and boredom as the strike drags on past Thanksgiving.

Kay worries about people being exhausted, as replacements grow hard to find. Meager makes it clear to the unions that the *Post* seeks only to end "featherbedding," which will make operations more efficient and productive. Astonishingly, the pressmen refuse to offer a counterproposal, and when mediators find no ground for compromise, talks are suspended. Dugan's First Amendment defense for how the strike began is rejected by a grand jury, and pressmen face contempt charges if they refuse to testify. On December

3, the pressmen finally make an oral offer that is far from the *Post's* position, and Meager announces their "definitive and final" - and, Kay believes, generous - offer, which Dugan arrogantly tells them to "shove." When the members agree, 249 to 5, management begins hiring replacement workers, beginning the most frightening part of the strike. Kay announces the policy that those who participated in violence are banned, but others may apply. About 700 line up for interviews, and management hires very carefully, including blacks and women, heretofore excluded by the union. Six pressroom supervisors bravely agree to return and train the new people.

Still, the pressmen do not feel threatened. They rally 1,500 to show union solidarity. Dugan insists the *Post* is floundering, even as the paper reaches 98% of its circulation expectations for the year. AFL-CIO president George Meany, Father's colleague on the War Labor Board, tries to get Kay to take back all union members, but she refuses. Just before Christmas the all-black paperhandlers' union settles a contract. The NLRB refuses to side with the strikers. Pressmen's wives write Kay sorrowful letters. Bradlee's Christimas letter hopes the turmoil will soon end. On New Year's Eve the *Star* publishes an open letter calling for binding arbitration, signed by Meany and 100 civic leaders. Kay is certain they have been duped into signing and writes to several who agree and apologize. By January 6, 1976, the *Post* has hired 107 permanent replacements, half black and 10% female. The pressmen's union sues for $20 million, alleging union busting. The *Star* publishes a four-part "knife-job," purporting to tell the history of the conflict.

On February 15, the mailers accept a contract and return to work, followed by the photoengravers and typographers. The engineers, machinists and building services hold out the longest, until March 1. Press and public reaction to the end of the long strike is mixed. Wanting to bind up wounds rather than open new ones, the *Post* is patient with workers returning to work. No one gloats. The pressmen's union does not give in. Their last pickets depart only in May 1977. They picket the opening of *All the President's Men* and shout Kay down as she tries to speak at the Washington Monument during bicentennial ceremonies in July 1976. The saboteurs are convicted and jailed and/or fined. Dugan and Flores are both turned out of their union posts. Kay laments that 200 people have lost their jobs, and one has committed suicide. She never intended to replace the pressmen. Most workers at the *Post* continue to be represented by unions. She reminds readers that she began her career as a labor reporter. Management rights had to be restored and have been. Kay makes sure that the *Post* is fair and open to compromise, while Dugan does not, thereby killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Many newspapers today are non-unionized. Kay knows how many pressmen's families suffered and wishes they had not followed Dugan over the cliff.

The strike gives the *Post* a "clean slate" to upgrade management. As with Watergate, luck plays a role. Sabotage helps people side with the *Post,* and weather cooperates by letting the helicopters fly. The pressroom today runs more efficiently and amicably. Communications are much improved because Kay sees the dangers of management forfeiting its rights. Unlike Mother, Kay has always avoided conflicts, but when cornered she rises to the challenge because the *Post* has an obligation to its readers. The

paper's visibility grows even higher, and people have mixed feelings about Kay. Notice Kay's determination not to be seen as anti-union.

Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary and Analysis

Kay is clear that the last two chapters are dynouement. By 1976, the defining period of her working life is over, but the next five years prove difficult. Kay remains a lucky inheritor, still not confident and still overly critical of herself. She leans heavily on Buffet, who recommends that the company buy back its own undervalued stock. She and board members overcome reluctance and buy back 45% of the stock over the next twenty years. Kay takes back the title of president when she removes Israel in 1977, and she resents the sexist stories that fill the press. Male executives firing subordinates never attract such attention or innuendo. Kay is dissatisfied with the quality of news coverage post-Watergate, and Bradlee often does things his own way. Geyelin too goes into a slump. *Newsweek* undergoes a top-level turnover. Considering herself by now good at appraising people and their performance, Kay is sad - sometimes to the point of tears - to see people like Elliott and Derow move on. She admits it is bizarre that she welcomes Derow back to *Newsweek* as president after he derides the company when he first departs. Meager becomes president of the newspaper division and names Don executive vice-president and general manager of the paper.

For the first time, Kay focuses systematically on company growth. Debt is considerable and profits insufficient, and Kay grapples with how to organize for expansion. In mid-1979, Kay leaves it to the board to decide whether to invest in cable television news. It turns down the opportunity, leaving the field to Ted Turner's CNN. Buffet advises Kay on which stations and newspapers to purchase. Meager, Israel and Bradlee invest 25% too much in 1974 in the *Trenton Times,* and the Washingtonians never get the knack of editing a small local paper. Kay allows the lawyers to convince her to trade profitable WTOP-TV, Phil's first acquisition, for WDIV in Detroit. Eventually the station proves profitable, but the out-of-towners sent to manage it have a hard time finding their feet in a peculiar city and affiliated with then-troubled NBC. The company also does badly buying the *Everett Herald* in Washington State. *Newsweek* loses money and diverts talent to its ill-conceived launching of *Inside Sports.*

Allbritton gives up on the *Star*, which fails to compete with the *Post,* despite efforts to make it livelier and more interesting. Americans are no longer reading afternoon newspapers. Powerful, rich and savvy Time, Inc., buys the *Star* in 1978, invests heavily, utilizes *Time* foreign correspondents and markets the new product heavily, particularly a five-part expose on Kay portraying her as a Jekyll-Hyde character. Even Goldwater writes Kay to decry this departure from decency in reporting. Kay gets a break from business concerns when McNamara invites her to participate in the Brandt Commission. She and Britain's Ted Heath become friends during the sessions, in which she generally keeps silent. The final report has an impact on European views towards the Third World, but none in the U.S. Bradlee angers Kay by consigning coverage to the back pages. Kay gets *Newsweek* to feature the Third World, but it is the worst selling issue of the year.

Kay struggles over the timing for turning over the paper to her hardworking, capable son. She decides on 1978 and combines the announcement with the replacement of Geyelin on the editorial page. She knows from experience that it will be easier for Don to work with Greenfield, by now her close friend and choice to succeed Geyelin, if he makes the appointment rather than inheriting her. Kay turns over the reins at a routine meeting on January 10, 1979, outlining Don's qualifications, which far surpass her own and Phil's. He has a world perspective gained by service in Vietnam and the DC police force. He has worked his way up the ranks, taking on the alien world of sports reporting at mid-career and helping manage through the strike. Greenfield does a fine job at the *Post* and writing columns for *Newsweek.* Kay does not anticipate how wrenching it will be to give up the title "Publisher of the *Post,*" but she knows better than to hold on too long.

That same fall, Buffet tells Kay that his partners are unloading their holdings in the *Post*, and she tearfully takes this as a referendum on her stewardship of the company. Buffet retains his holdings and tells her they will profit greatly by buying up the newly available shares. Kay is determined to straighten out the company. She resigns from most outside involvements in favor of media organizations. She becomes the first woman member of the Bureau of Advertising and the ANPA. Designated to become chairman in 1981, she receives the demanding job early and unprepared in 1980 when the incumbent dies. At the Post Company, Kay concentrates on strategic planning, to make the various divisions work better together and growth to occur overall. Performance appraisals and rewards are introduced, and "people problems" are dealt with. Morale is low at *Newsweek.* Kosner is not a good manager and takes two tries to put in place an adequate editor in Rick Smith.

Relations with Meager decline and, personally and professionally discouraged, Kay announces his resignation. The press beats up on her for *Newsweek's* poor performance. Kay wants out of the presidency, but it is too early to elevate Don. They hire McKinsey and Company as consultants, and Kay is discouraged to see them regurgitating ideas given to them. When McKinsey suggests they stop buying back their own stock, she goes along, disregarding Buffet's advice, and they lose a lot of value. They hire a headhunter to help evaluate candidates during a long, difficult year. Mobile Oil sues for libel over a story on business dealings, which the *Post* eventually wins in 1982. Kay is hospitalized for pneumonia in November 1981.

Released from the hospital, Kay is approached by Time, Inc., about a joint publishing agreement with the *Star,* but two weeks later, Time announces that the paper will fold August 7, 1981. It is a bittersweet victory, but a sad development for Washington, DC. The *Post* buys the assets and hires many of its best writers. The *Post* finds itself embarrassed to have nominated for a Pulitzer Prize a twenty-six-year-old reporter, Janet Cooke, for a piece, "Jimmy's World," about an eight-year-old heroine addict. Background checks by the Pulitzer organization reveal Cooke has fabricated her credentials, and the *Post* has failed to check them out.

Cooke confesses that "Jimmy" is a composite character and that many of her quotes are made up. The paper accepts Cooke's resignation and withdraws the nomination.

The *Post* ombudsman determines the editors had been universally lax with the story. Kay feels sorry for Don having to deal with this at the start of his new career. She takes a chance by demanding the American Society of Newspaper Editors hold a session on this crucial ethical issue when it would rather let it be forgotten, and the *Post* takes a drubbing. Derow again leaves *Newsweek* for CBS, and Kay, having crystallized what she wants in a president, hires a proven manager, Dick Simmons, from Dun & Bradstreet. Note how Kay is still highly critical of herself in this chapter, but she is finally admitting that she is worthy of heading a major company, just at the point she is divesting herself of power.

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary and Analysis

Simmons' advent makes the 1980s profitable for the company and lifts a great weight from Kay's shoulders. Work becomes pleasurable again. In style and temperament, they are opposites but become friends and partners. Kay gives Simmons broad autonomy and he is not bothered by her higher profile. Within weeks Simmons unloads the unprofitable *Trenton Times* and *Inside Sports.* They invest in embryonic cell phone and online data businesses, launch a weekly national tabloid offering select *Post* articles on politics and government, acquire Kaplan Educational Centers and stock shares in various newspapers. They sell off several enterprises to reduce substantial debt.

The Post Company is still not highly valued on Wall Street, so they continuing buying up their own stock. They are staggeringly successful in cable television, but Buffet has to resign from the board to avoid a conflict of interest with the ABC network he acquires. Kay worries about losing contact, but Buffet remains discreetly involved. When the Post Company acquires Cap Cities it penetrates the Fortune 500 in 1986-87. Warren returns to the board after Cap Cities is sold to Disney. Rick Smith as editor and later president turns *Newsweek* into the leading newsmagazine of the 1990s with a staff of stellar writers. Post-Newsweek Stations, affiliated with all three networks, achieves the most competitive margins of any division. Buffet tells Kay his 1973 investment would have earned him far less in any other company.

Kay is sufficiently free from worry to indulge in her interest in world issues, and she undertakes a number of trips with *Post* personnel. She interviews Romanian strongman Ceasusescu shortly before his bloody overthrow and tours Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel. The overthrown Shah of Iran shortly before his death flays the West for two hours about how it betrayed him. Israelis attack the *Post's* failure to given them total support and single out Greenfield, a Jew, for special criticism. Libya's Qaddafi wants to talk about Woodward's portrayal of his proclivities in a book on the CIA, *Veil.* Kay's most demanding interview is with Gorbachev, who abandons the laid-back image he has in the West when the question of political dissidents comes up. Kay has no choice but to print a touchy question he chooses to answer. All told, Kay travels some 10,000 miles interviewing people - and thus staying out of Don's hair as he establishes his authority. She often invites visiting dignitaries to her home for business lunches and dinners. Sometimes she allows herself to be used as intermediary with prominent visitors, but she resents being portrayed as a "prominent Washington hostess."

Kay feels it is part of her job to keep in touch with U.S. officials in and out of office, a means of letting them see journalists can be bi-partisan if not non-partisan. She has presidential friends in both parties, despite being considered the symbol of an often-hostile newspaper. She disagrees with those who say journalists ought not to socialize with politicians. She fears the unspoken anger that grows when people do not feel comfortable communicating. Kay and Bradlee both try to help the Carter administration

overcome its "outsider" mentality, but they are rebuffed. Later, Hamilton Jordan admits opportunities had been missed and may have cost Carter a second term. Capote suggests Kay will get along well with Reagan, and many are surprised when they become friends. When she entertains the Reagans at her home, the political right excoriates him for accepting, but Kay and Nancy become close, gossipy friends. The 1988 election is particularly unpleasant for Kay. She likes George Bush personally, but *Newsweek* labels him a "wimp." His family takes it personally. *Newsweek* reporters are shunned, and Kay never manages to convince him that the process of putting together a weekly newsmagazine is complex. Dukakis also dislikes the publications, which question his stands on national security. Kay dislikes Bush's campaign but finds Dukakis too inexperienced to govern, and she casts her only Republican presidential ballot. She sees little of the Bushes while he is in office. Kay agrees with a note she receives from McGovern after his presidential defeat: anger debilitates the person who holds it.

The women's movement helps Kay greatly to be happy in her private life. She has several male romances and close friends, but she feels she is a "one-man woman" and has always been too busy to consider remarrying, which she admits is a commonly-asked question. She is wedded to her job, and the few men who would accept an accomplished woman do not appeal to her. She cannot imagine adapting to living with someone after so many years alone. Living alone is not easy when so much of it seems designed for couples. Note the curious omission of any mention of Buffet. Buying a house in 1972 at Martha's Vineyard, where the children and grandchildren can gather, has helped her greatly. Many people who served in administrations have become fast friends, and she does not believe her choice of friends affects her paper and magazine's reporting in any way. She has always backed her reporters, and the subjects of stories have either made up with her or drifted away.

Over Kay's objections, Pearson and Lally give Kay a 70th birthday party that helps her reflect on her life. Friends begin dying off, including brother Bill, Joe Alsop and Luvie Pearson, whose easy slip out of life she admires. Kay keeps in touch with her surviving sisters. By the 1980s, the company is outstanding in every category, and Don is the most successful owner it has had. *Business Month* ranks it among the five best-managed companies, and *Fortune* gives Kay its Business Hall of Fame award in 1988. Kay credits Simmons for earnings growth and worries when he announces his intention to retire. Kay times her own withdrawal with Simmons'. In a loving piece in the 1991 annual report, Don traces his mother's career and accurately remarks her one regret is not attending Harvard Business School. It is not as difficult as Kay fears to give up authority. She is kept informed about operations and retains the title of chairman until 1993. Bradlee retires a few months before Kay, completing the transition. He receives a moving going-away party, remains a vice-president at large and publishes a fine memoir.

Kay knows that she wants to keep active, and she works to improve education for underprivileged preschoolers and writes her memoirs. She does not believe the stories of her parents and Phil have been adequately told and thinks many aspects of her own life - admittedly unexpected and unrepeatable - hold interest. She has tried hard not to be self-serving, which as has been repeatedly noted, she has certainly *not* been in this

book. She remains close to her children, Lally the journalist, Bill the lawyer and Steve the theater producer and book publisher. Don and his wife Mary live nearby with their four children. This book will be published when Kay is 79, and she notes that growing old is not a "barrel of laughs." She has heart and hip problems, is slowing down mentally and physically and resents being treated as a relic. She enjoys having the freedom to turn things down. This book has gotten the past out of her system, and she looks forward to whatever the future brings. The curious reader may wish to query the Internet for "Katharine Graham" to learn about her accidental but apparently peaceful death, the kind for which she hopes in this last chapter.

Characters

Phil Graham

Eugene Isaac Meyer

Agnes Ernst Meyer

Spiro T. Agnew

Fritz Beebe

Carl Bernstein

Herbert "Herblock" Block

Ben Bradlee

Warren Buffet

Truman Capote

Dwight D. Eisenhower (Ike)

Oz Elliott

Dr. Leslie Farber

Gerald R. Ford

Felix Frankfurter

Al Friendly

Phil Geyelin

Donald "Don" Edward Graham

Robert "Bob" Graham

Stephen Graham

William "Bill" Welsh Graham

Meg Greenfield

John Hayes

Florence "Flo" Meyer Homolka

Lyndon B. Johnson

Alexander F. "Casey" Jones

John F. Kennedy

Henry Kissinger

Elizabeth ("Bis") Meyer Lorentz

Thomas Mann

James McCord

Mark Meager

Eugene "Bill" Meyer, III

Marc Eugene Meyer

Ruth Meyer

John Mitchell

Richard M. Nixon

Eleanor Medill "Cissy" Patterson

Luvie Pearson

Margaret Ellen Powell

John Prescott

Edward "Prich" Prichard

James "Scotty" Reston

Dick Simmons

Adelai Stevenson, III

John Sweeterman

Robin Webb

Elizabeth "Lally" Morris Graham Weyemouth

Russ Wiggins

Edward Bennett Williams

Bob Woodward

Objects/Places

Chestnut Lodge

Chestnut Lodge is the private psychiatric hospital in suburban Washington to which Phil Graham is twice committed.

Glen Welby

Glen Welby is the 350-acre, heavily wooded summer and weekend getaway property the Grahams purchase for $87,500 in 1950 in secluded Marshall, Virginia. The Civil War-era home, expanded just before the Crash of 1929, requires repairs, restoration and furnishing, all of which fall on Kay's shoulders. Glen Welby is the site of most of the family's good times but also the venue for Phil's bloody suicide in 1962. For the children's sake, Kay refurbishes Glen Welby, and there she often entertains world leaders during her years as publisher of the *Post.*

Mt. Kisco, New York

The Meyers' lavish summer home, Mt. Kisco, is in Westchester County, New York. Eugene purchases it while still a bachelor and expands and enhances it over the years. Kay loves the place but remains forever somehow uncomfortable there. Her marriage is held at Mt. Kisco in 1940, and Agnes Meyer dies there in her sleep in 1970.

Newsweek

A second-rate weekly newsmagazine aimed at businessmen, *Newsweek* was founded in 1933, and Phil Graham buys it in 1961 from the Astor Foundation for $8,985,000. *Newsweek* helps Phil escape the fear he is only a son-in-law. When Kay takes over following Phil's suicide, she always feels like an outsider, and *Newsweek* has a rocky career before emerging as the premier newsweekly in the 1980s.

The Pearson Farm

Phil Graham buys the Pearson farm near Hume, Virginia, impulsively in 1962 with Kay's help. He sets up housekeeping there with Robin Webb during their affair, reproducing nearby Glen Welby in many details.

The Pentagon Papers

Formally entitled "History of the United States Decision-Making Process on Vietnam Policy," the Pentagon Papers are commissioned in 1967 by Defense Secretary Robert

McNamara as a source of raw materials for future historians. A year and a half of research results in an objective and encyclopedic forty-seven volumes - 3,000 pages of narrative and 4,000 pages of appendixes - from World War II to the start of the Paris Peace Talks in May 1968. In 1971, the *New York Times* obtains exclusive access to the top-secret materials, begins publishing portions and is enjoined by the Nixon Justice Department from continuing. Suspected author Daniel Ellsberg then delivers a copy to the *Post.*

The Washington Post

The *Post* newspaper is purchased at auction by Eugene Meyer in 1933 and gradually restored to prominence as a truly independent and objective organ. Kay Graham succeeds him as owner. It is the flagship of the Washington Post Company, which includes *Newsweek* and four broadcast stations and participates in a joint news wire with the *Los Angeles Times.* The *Post* attains national and international prominence after covering the Watergate Affair in 1972-74 and builds a renowned overseas bureau.

The Washington Times-Herald

Cissy Patterson's newspaper, the *Times-Herald,* is a rival to the *Post,* which Phil Graham buys out.

The Washington Star

The *Post's* enduring rival newspaper, the *Star* causes Kay great pain in 1976 by supporting the pressman's strike. In 1973, the *Star* becomes a greater threat under the new ownership of Texan Joe Allbritton. During the 1975-76 pressmen's strike against the *Post,* Allbritton and the Star do their best to profit from the ordeal. The *Post* survives, however, and surpasses the *Star.* Allbritton sells his paper to Time, Inc., and the new owner heavily markets the *Star.* It continues to lose money, though, and when no buyer is found, much to Kay's chagrin, this major paper dies.

The Watergate Affair

The news event that propels the *Washington Post* into national and international prominence, Watergate appears to be a small-scale burglary at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee until reporters Woodward and Bernstein dig deeper and discover that the White House is involved. Kay and the editors back them in digging deeper, relying heavily on an anonymous informer, "Deep Throat." Over the period 1972-74, Nixon's involvement becomes increasingly apparent but is vehemently denied, and the Washington Post Company's broadcast licenses are threatened by the FCC. The federal courts and Congress investigate until a "smoking gun" is found, and Nixon, impeached and facing likely conviction, resigns from office. *Post* employers win a

Pulitzer Prize. Woodward and Bernstein write a best selling book, *All the President's Men,* about the affair, and it is made into a movie by Robert Redford.

Themes

Freedom of the Press

The question of the First Amendment comes up in this memoir most directly in the battles Kay Graham's *Washington Post* engages in with the Nixon administration over the publishing the Pentagon Papers and investigating the White House's participation in the Watergate break-in. In the former, the *Post* picks up publication when the Justice Department obtains an injunction against the *New York Times,* which first obtains the Papers. She follows the legal arguments, pointing out the legal precedents set that endanger the public's right to information. In the Watergate affair, Graham shows how a ruthless and paranoid clique can use the vast power of the federal government to pressure publishers that block their agenda (exemplified in the FCC challenges to the Washington Post Company's broadcast stations). Less dramatic cases also abound. The *Post* has a strict policy of not formally endorsing presidential candidates, even when its editorial pages leave little doubt where the paper's sentiments lie. Kay is willing to sacrifice her close personal relationship with LBJ to uphold the principle. She tries to maintain good relations with all administrations, arguing that communication is healthier than silence. She attributes part of Carter's failure to be re-elected in 1980 to his resolute refusal to mingle with journalists, who can help politicians understand the world more clearly and help the people better understand their leaders. The press is guaranteed freedom by the Constitution and is obliged to use that freedom conscientiously to serve the common good.

Women's Issues

Kay Graham is brutally honest about being raised in the shadow of a self-made woman and happily accepting the stereotypical role of housewife in the 1940s and 1950s. She challenges nothing her husband says and allows her mind and talents to wither on the proverbial vine. Thrust into ownership of the *Washington Post* by her husband's 1962 suicide, which she forced herself not to see coming, Kay is at a loss where to begin. Her humble questioning annoys male subordinates, and her self-worth further shrinks. She credits Gloria Steinem and other feminists with wakening her to what is going on in her life and career. Kay sees women are not only unequal with males but are denied the opportunity to be all they can be. Slowly, Kay forces herself not to be pushed around. Mentored by billionaire Warren Buffet, Kay learns the ways of business and finance and realizes how backward she was. She rankles at being criticized as a hysterical woman when she makes executive decisions men regularly make and at the condescension she feels when she is the only woman in a meeting. Still, she is proud to be a pioneer in many organizations and sets the post-1976 strike *Post* on a policy of hiring and promoting women. Her friend and confidant, Meg Greenfield, becomes managing editor. How many other women pass through the glass ceiling at the time of Kay's retirement is, unfortunately, not mentioned.

Anti-Semitism

Kay Graham is the daughter of a non-practicing, non-Zionist Jewish father who is descended from prominent French rabbis and a Lutheran mother descended from German Lutheran pastors, and she has no direct contact with Judaism growing up. Still, she is particularly upset by any hint of discrimination against Jews - far more intensely than she reacts to discrimination against women. She recalls having few friends at the summerhouse in Mt. Kisco because of Father is Jewish, but she is first confronted with discrimination when sorority girls risk being banned for inviting her to join. As Hitler emerges in Germany, Father works to rescue Jewish children, which Kay, of course, hails. After her marriage, she is shocked by signs in Florida banning "Jews and dogs" and by "restriction" of Jews and blacks from certain Georgetown neighborhoods. Kay is curiously silent on the *Post's* coverage of the succession of Middle Eastern wars beginning in 1967, which many consider strongly biased towards Israel. The only reference is when she and reporter Meg Greenfield visit Israel and are harshly criticized for not backing Israeli policy 100%, particularly because Greenfield is Jewish.

Style

Perspective

As a memoir, *Personal History* is told in the first person from Kay Graham's point of view. In her 70s, Kay Graham retires as publisher of the *Washington Post,* wants to keep busy and decides her life may be interesting to general readers. She is dissatisfied with the coverage her parents and husband have received in print, and she devotes much of her attention to their lives and careers. Graham is educated at the University of Chicago and works for a small San Francisco newspaper as a reporter before joining her father's *Post.* Because in the 1940s it is unthinkable for women to lead a business, her husband Phil is brought in to assist father and succeed him as publisher. Kay is content to be a typical (albeit upper-class) suburban housewife until Phil commits suicide, when she is suddenly thrust into the all-male world of publishing. She learns the ropes slowly and painfully and becomes one of the most powerful women in America, standing up to and taking the wrath of the Nixon administration. Graham has known a vast array of important and interesting people, whom she sometimes too briefly characterizes. *Personal History* is intended for general readers, although those interested in 20th century history and/or politics will benefit most from it. Graham struggles to show how she grows out of her parents' and husband's dense shadows to preserve and improve upon the legacy she passes on to her son Don. She admits her life is unique and unrepeatable, and she is correct that it is a story worth reading.

Tone

A memoir cannot help but be subjective, but Kay Graham strives to keep *Personal History* as objective as possible. She is highly critical of herself in almost every way imaginable, but she nearly always finds ways to forgive others their trespasses. Richard Nixon comes closest to being unforgivable because his paranoia and misuse of power so endanger the republic - and because his successor grants him a full pardon that prevents the full truth from coming out. Graham's self-punishment is painful, but we see her slowly setting herself free, prospering and eventually enjoying her life as a pioneer woman executive. Over all, *Personal History* is uplifting as a strong spirit prevails against all odds.

Structure

Personal History is told straightforwardly in chronological order. It begins by telling in a fair amount of detail stories about Kay Graham's forbearers. It details how her father buys and builds up the *Washington Post* and how he turns it over to his son-in-law, Phil Graham, whose background is given more briefly. Phil's building up of the *Post* and tragic downfall are told in great detail, and then Graham agonizes over the years in which she must learn the ropes and occupy Phil's shoes. She concentrates on three

watershed events: the Pentagon Papers, the Watergate Affair and the 1975-76 strike against the *Post.* Finally, she concludes by summarizing her gradual retirement and muses about marriage, friends and family. Some chapters are topical, which causes some overlapping and repetition, but for the most part *Personal History* is structured precisely as one would expect a memoir to be.

Quotes

"I can't say I think Mother genuinely loved us. Toward the end of her life, I was a success in her eyes, and perhaps that is what she loved. Yet, with all her complexity, I felt closer throughout my early childhood to my mother than to the very distant and rather difficult figure of my father. I liked him, but always from a distance. Actually, he delighted in children and was rather jolly with us, but a little awkward. At most, he would take one of us as a small child onto his lap and dangle a watch at our ear. When Ruth and I were very young, he would come into our bedroom before breakfast for a short period of roughhouse play.

"But though he lacked the gift of intimacy, in many ways his supportive love still came through to me. He somehow conveyed his belief in me without ever articulating it, and that was the single most sustaining thing in my life. That was what saved me. I realized this only in retrospect, however, since our relationship took time to grow." Chapter 2, pg. 51.

"Washington was an afternoon newspaper town, with the government workers getting to their jobs early and home by four-thirty. He said no morning paper, especially the *Post,* would ever amount to anything. The *Star* had the town by the throat. To Cowles, my father rather piously responded: 'The Capital of this great nation deserves a good paper. I believe in the American people. They can be relied on to do the right thing when they know the facts. I am going to give them the unbiased truth. When an idea is right, nothing can stop it.'" Chapter 3, pg. 60.

"The soon discovered he was quite serious about the independence of the paper and the autonomy of its reporters and editors within the limits of his principles. He worked out a system that endured, one of delegating autonomy to his managers on both sides - editorial and business - provided they performed according to his standards and ambitions. Since three of the last five *Post* publishers - my father, Phil Graham, and myself - came to work inexperienced in different ways, this was the only practical way to run things anyway. But I still believe it's the best way for newspapers to be run editorially." Chapter 3, pg. 67.

"This question was typical of Phil in several respects. It was instant penetration of the human armor. It cut through formalities and reached you directly it created a sort of charmed circle, enclosing you and him in an intimate association. And it asked a central and real question. Typically, his questions elicited a frank answer in which I said everything I felt about Bis, including the ambivalences - the admiration and the envy - but the bottom-line answer was, 'Yes, we are for her.' Suddenly, with just one question asked and answered, Phil and I knew each other." Chapter 7, pg. 109.

"My father, along with members of the *Post's* staff, then worked to get newspapers and the public behind the idea of helping meet the needs of the world's hungry. The committee was an interesting example of a cooperative effort between government and the press - one that would be more difficult today, if not impossible. In general, the press

now sees its role as covering an issue like world hunger and commenting on it editorially rather than being a participant in trying to alleviate it. I wonder if this isn't journalistically right but, still, a loss to society." Chapter 11, pg. 167.

"Despite the intensity of his involvement in electing Eisenhower in 1952,Phil had quickly become disenchanted with the administration and had been developing a commitment of time and energy to Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson. I'm not sure what triggered his relationship with Johnson, but it now seems predictable, even foreordained. Johnson worked actively to cultivate the press, and Phil was always drawn to politics. They both loved power and its use for what they thought of as desirable purposes. They were both from the South. Both were full of humor - with an edge. They had a natural affinity." Chapter 13, pg. 233.

"People react in such complicated ways to any death, but particularly to the death of a parent, because a lot of what one feels is about oneself and the sense that nothing now stands between that self and dying. You have now become the older generation." Chapter 14, pg. 257.

"Eventually, we drove home from the dance with the Bohlens and the Bradens, and as our car passed Dumbarton Avenue, we looked down towards Joe's and noticed that the street was lit up, blocked off, and full of police. Avis said, 'Either Joe's house is on fire or the president's there.' Indeed he was.

"We felt sad not to have left with Joe and shared in the exciting moment when he heard a quiet knock, opened the door, and found the new young president of the United States, snowflakes in his hair and a smile on his handsome face, waiting to come in." Chapter 14, pg. 274.

"By that time, Marder had eliminated the idea of Berlin or the Middle East and guessed Cuba. Hoping to get Cleveland to confirm his guess without asking him directly, Murrey asked, 'Is it going to be like last time' - referring to the Bay of Pigs - 'where you're going to be in on the crash landing but not the takeoff? Are you people in the loop this time on this Cuban thing?' Cleveland said, 'I think we are.'

"So, on Sunday, October 21, the *Post* published a story about a crisis that appeared to be centered on Cuba. President Kennedy blew his stack; he had fended off the *Times*, which actually had about half or three-quarters of the story, and here, out of the blue, came the *Post*, to which nobody was paying much attention." Chapter 15, pg. 297.

"That Christmas Eve afternoon, the world I had known and loved ended for me. The phone rang and I picked it up, not realizing Phil, too, had picked it up, in his dressing room, with the door shut. I heard Phil and Robin talking to each other in words that made the situation plain. I waited until he had hung up and went right in and asked him if what I had surmised was true. He said it was." Chapter 16, pg. 306.

"'Me?' I exclaimed. 'That's impossible. I couldn't possibly do it. You don't know how hard and complicated it is. There's no way I could do it.'

"'Of course you can do it,' she maintained. 'Cissy Patterson did it. So can you.' And to counter my disclaimers of impossibility, Luvie added, 'You've got all those genes. It's ridiculous to think you can't do it. You've just been pushed down so far you don't recognize what you can do.'" Chapter 17, pg. 319.

"I really was a sort of middle-aged debutante - even a Cinderella, as far as that kind of life was concerned. I didn't know most of these people or their world, and they didn't know me. He felt he needed a reason for the party, a guest of honor, and I was from a different world, and not in competition with his more glamorous friends. One of Truman's biographers, Gerald Clarke, conjectured: 'She was arguably the most powerful woman in the country, but still largely unknown outside Washington. Putting her in the spotlight was also his ultimate act as Pygmalion. It would symbolize her emergence from her dead husband's shadow; she would become her own woman before the entire world.'" Chapter 20, pg. 394.

"Once married, we were confined to running houses, providing a smooth atmosphere, dealing with children, supporting our husbands. Pretty soon this kind of thinking - indeed, this kind of life - took its toll: most of us *became* somehow inferior. We grew less able to keep up with what was happening in the world. In a group we remained largely silent, unable to participate in conversation and discussions. Unfortunately, this incapacity often produced in women - as it did in me - a diffuse way of talking, an inability to be concise, a tendency to ramble, to start at the end and work backwards, to over explain, to go on for too long, to apologize." Chapter 21, pg. 417.

"I was extremely torn by Fritz's saying that he wouldn't publish. I knew him so well, and we had never differed on any important issue; and, after all, he was the lawyer, not I. But I also heard *how* he said it; he didn't hammer at me, he didn't stress the issues related to going public, and he didn't say the obvious thing - that I would be risking the whole company on this decision. He simply said he guessed he wouldn't. I felt that, despite his stated opinion, he had somehow left the door open for me to decide on a different course. Frightened and tense, I took a big gulp and said, 'Go ahead, go ahead, go ahead. Let's go. Let's publish.' And I hung up." Chapter 22, pg. 450.

"Unaccountably, during this time I was still attempting to maintain relations even with Vice-President Spiro Agnew, which in retrospect seems to me undignified, considering the awful slamming we were taking form him. I think my behavior was a combination of a national idea - that it was better to be talking to people who hated us or disapproved of us than not - and that good old-fashioned encumbrance of mine, the desire to please. Someone had sent me a funny photograph of an old shed somewhere in New York on which had been painted 'Ted Agnew likes Kay Graham. Pass it on.' I thought it was hilarious, and did just that, passed it on to the vice-president, saying, 'I thought this sign ... might amuse you as it did me. The man who sent me the snapshot of the "graffiti" told me that the shed later burned - thus destroying the evidence! I guest things in life - or in graffiti - often come full circle. I promise to keep it a secret.'

"Even more peculiarly, Agnew wrote back: 'I can find no fault with the sentiment of the graffiti. It is difficult to admire a newspaper that characterizes one as Caligula's horse, but I think you are charming.' How embarrassing!" Chapter 24, pgs. 489-490.

"I have been friends with presidents from both political parties, but any relationship, even an old one, can grow strained when you become - as I did - a symbol of a major newspaper and magazine and the target of presidential displeasure. This occurred with Johnson, Nixon, and Bush, but, curiously, not with Reagan. Ford was professionally friendly. Except for entertaining the Clintons on Martha's Vineyard when they were there on vacation, I have had little contact with them; they have been polite but are of a younger generation, so it's perfectly natural." Chapter 28, pg. 610.

Topics for Discussion

What is the significance of the laundry ringer?

How does Kay Graham view friendships with politicians?

Should the *Post* have endorsed presidential candidates? What morality is involved?

How does Agnes Graham influence her famous daughter's life?

How does Phil Graham influence his wife's life?

What are Kay Graham's greatest strengths?

What are Kay Graham's greatest weaknesses?