

A Salty Piece of Land Study Guide

A Salty Piece of Land by Jimmy Buffett

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Plot Summary

A Salty Piece of Land follows the misadventures of Tully Mars, a Wyoming native who flees his home state after throwing a massage table through Thelma Barston's window. Thelma is Tully's boss on the poodle ranch and she wants revenge. She's even hired Waldo and Wilton Stilton, misguided bounty hunters, to track him down.

Officially a fugitive, Tully's travels take him to the tropical beaches of Key West, Cayo Loco, Punta Margarita, and Belize. Joining him on his journey is his trusty, quarter-horse Mr. Twain, a two-piece art collection, and a Lister's conch, which was given to him by his good friend Johnny Red Dust.

After meeting up with Captain Kirk, Tully heads to Punta Margarita where he is offered a job as a fishing guide at the Lost Boys Fishing Lodge. He befriends a Mayan named Ix-Nay and while Tully teaches him the ways of fishing, Ix-Nay shares his knowledge of the island.

When Tully's old girlfriend Donna Kay arrives on a plane painted like a pink flamingo, Tully worries that his past might be catching up with him, but he soon discovers that his past has moved on without him. Donna Kay leaves the island and Tully takes some time to reflect. After drowning his new boss' Jeep in a giant puddle, he ends up on a beach where he encounters 101-year-old Cleopatra Highbourne. Tully begins a conversation with Cleopatra, learning that she's looking to restore a lighthouse in Cayo Loco. She invites him on board her schooner for dinner. The two become fast friends and Cleopatra even offers him a job on her crew. However, Tully turns the job down because of his commitments at Lost Boys.

Ix-Nay tells Tully about a Land Rover that is for sale in Belize. Wanting to replace Bucky's Jeep, Tully and Ix-Nay make the trek and encounter an eccentric Brit, Archie Mercer. Since the Land Rover isn't yet available, Archie extends the use of his condominium at Renaldo's, a nearby resort, to his new friends. At the resort, Tully meets Dawn, a sexually adventurous teenager on spring break. However, Dawn possesses a very dangerous secret - she's the stepdaughter of Thelma Barston and the Stilton Brothers are in town to capture Tully! With the aid of his new friends, Tully narrowly escapes. Tully's adventures are far from over as he sets out to finish the journey Johnny Red Dust cautioned him about - his journey to find his true home.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

"The Soul of the Light - Tully Mars, Checking In"

A Salty Piece of Land begins as Tully Mars reminisces about wanting to be Roy Rogers as a child and how the life of rescuing people, looking perfect in blue jeans, and nights beside a campfire seemed like the perfect job. When Tully races his horse and falls, though, he realizes that life is not like it seems in a movie. Instead of Roy Rogers, Tully takes to Butch Cassidy as his new hero because Cassidy is not perfect.

Tully left his home in Wyoming a couple years earlier, after he tossed a massage table through the window of Thelma Barston's ranch. Thelma is Tully's boss at the poodle ranch in Wyoming. Upon his departure, Tully swears that, from here on out, he will be self-employed. He changes his mind when he meets Cleopatra Highbourne.

Cleopatra, a 101-year-old captain of the schooner *Lucretia*, hires Tully to restore a 150-year-old lighthouse in the Bahamas. She also asks Tully to help with an important mission: finding an original Fresnel lens for the lighthouse.

Tully first sees the lighthouse at Cayo Loco from the decks of the *Lucretia*. Cleopatra leads him down a winding path and shows him the decrepit lighthouse. The salt air has eaten away at the padlock she keeps on the door. She busts off the lock with a rock and takes Tully inside for a tour. At the top, they can see the crew of the *Lucretia* diving in the water. The view of the clear ocean is spectacular. Cleopatra tells Tully that she believes that fate has brought them together for a reason. She explains that because she helped him, he owes her. Tully agrees to be the lighthouse keeper.

Chapter 1 Analysis

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to Tully and Cleopatra and though it's not clear exactly what they've been through together, it is clear that Cleopatra helped Tully.

Tully explains that when he was a kid he wanted to be like Roy Rogers. He outgrows this when he idolizes Butch Cassidy, but ultimately he sticks to his plan to be a good guy, yet flawed. Tully is not the average guy, though he seems completely harmless. He's just a guy trying to get along in life and now he's been put in charge of taking care of Cleopatra's lighthouse. The Fresnel lens is the primary quest of the book. The search is significant, and ultimately this search represents the quest for happiness and fulfillment. Finding the lens equates to finding a good life. It foreshadows how the light will illuminate the way.



This chapter also introduces the influence that weather phenomena will have over events throughout the book. In this instance, the salt air has eroded the pad lock on the lighthouse. In *A Salty Piece of Land*, weather signifies some kind of change.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

"The Song of the Ocean"

Tully explains more about his childhood, including the significance of a Hallicrafter S-40B shortwave radio. The radio was his father's prized possession and he teaches Tully how to tune the radio to pick up the BBC and Polynesian stations in Hawaii. When Tully learns that some people have picked up radio frequencies through fillings in their teeth, he wants to be one of those people. His father is killed in an avalanche, which Tully hears about via the radio.

Unable to get sufficient answers from his mother or other adults, Tully tries to reach his father on the radio. He hitchhikes to the Strategic Air Command radio tower - the tallest tower in Wyoming - to contact his father. Realizing that Tully doesn't mean any harm, the military sends him home.

Later, Tully decides that he wants to start transmitting. After a snowstorm, he shovels a path and sees a conch shell fly out from under the snow. The shell is a good-luck charm given to him by his friend and shaman, Johnny Red Dust.

Johnny Red Dust was a friend of Tully's father; they were old war friends. Tully's father believed in Indian magic and passed it along to Tully. When Tully listens to the shell, he thinks he hears music. Johnny Red Dust tells him that when he is ready, Tully will understand what the shell is trying to tell him.

Tully keeps the shell with him into adulthood and when he finds the shell it is after the only time he has ever lost track of it. He regards finding the shell a sign and he soon receives a message from Johnny Red Dust's daughter; Johnny Red Dust is dying.

With the shell in hand, Tully listens as Johnny Red Dust tells Tully that the song in the shell is in his heart. This melody will take him through life until he finds the place he will one day call home. He then gives Tully a carved gecko on a leather strand; it is Tully's traveling companion. Tully tells him that he thinks there is a journey in his future. Johnny Red Dust tells him to go. It's the last time Tully sees Johnny Red Dust alive.

Later, Tully loads up his truck and sets out with Mr. Twain, his horse, and heads for the shore. He also takes his two-piece art collection.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Johnny Red Dust sets Tully on the path for his journey. This journey is where the novel truly begins. The goal is simple: for Tully to find the place where he belongs.



The shell is symbolic of communication. Tully is able to listen to it and find his path. This will occur throughout the book, but not necessarily with the shell; Tully will find different ways to hear messages: on the wind, a satellite phone, and through Cleopatra, among others. If Tully listens, he will find his proper path. This also begins a pattern of Tully interpreting random events as signs. Furthering the influence of weather, Tully's father is killed in an avalanche, and when Tully loses his Lister's conch, it is not until after a snowstorm that it reappears.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

"The Patron Saint of Lightning"

Tully sets out on his journey. He makes his way to Alabama where he meets a horse trainer named Clark Gable who then introduces Tully to Captain Kirk. Kirk decides to take Tully and Mr. Twain on his shrimp boat through the Gulf of Mexico and on to the Yucatán Peninsula.

Of the two pieces of art that Tully has with him, one is called *The Patron Saint of Lightning*, the other is an engraving that belonged to his "almost great-grandmother" (pg. 20). He purchased the painting at a flea market in Cheyenne. It is a woman on a cloud reaching out where beams of light shine down. The light comes from a lighthouse, and where the beams meet, a tiny sailboat is being guided through the storm.

At the flea market a biker couple is negotiating for a pistol. The seller wants them to buy both the painting and the gun, but the couple doesn't want it. She then offers to sell Tully a pair of roller skates and the painting, but Tully only wants the painting; he buys it for \$5.00. He later discovers that a card on the back of the painting identifies the woman in the painting as "St. Barbara, the patron saint of those besieged by lightning" (pg. 23).

Boarding the *Caribbean Soul*, Kirk's boat, Tully and Mr. Twain set sail. He assures Kirk that he's not an axe murderer and Kirk tells him that he knew that because he once set sail with an axe murderer, so he knows how they act. Kirk tells him that he has a friend who is from Wyoming and that Tully reminds him of his friend.

They travel to Key West and Tully is taken with it immediately. He nearly decides to stay, but his planned destination is Mexico, so he continues on his travels.

The *Caribbean Soul* is quite a sight with a horse on board in the middle of the ocean. This leads to Tully's encounters Willie Singer, a musician. Willie asks why there is a horse on board and Tully explains. Willie is in the area shooting an album cover and he approaches the boat because he's got a craving for shrimp. Tully tells him that they aren't equipped for shrimping, but he offers to share fresh grouper in exchange for an autograph. Willie agrees.

After lunch, Tully joins Willie and the photography crew on the beach. They sit around a campfire and sing songs. Willie shows him a pearl that he found on one of his treasure hunts. That night, Tully is captivated by the idea of being a treasure hunter.

Kirk and Tully head for Punta Margarita, which is on an island called *la piedra del cocodrilo*. The island was originally inhabited by Mayans and when the Spanish came along, they kept the name. The island is full of poisonous reptiles, alligators and crocodiles, and experiences earthquakes and hurricanes.



Captain Kirk finds the island while traveling through a channel en route to the Honduras. His first trip found him rescuing a couple of fisherman who were caught in a gale. When he returned the fisherman to their village at Punta Margarita, he interrupts the funeral procession for the fisherman. The natives thought Kirk had brought them back from the dead. Since then, Kirk has been making the route from Alabama to the island.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Chapter 3 introduces two important characters: Captain Kirk and Willie Singer, though Willie will feature much more prominently as the book progresses. Willie seems to be somewhat of a substitute for the author in the book. In a manner of speaking, Willie Singer is representative of Jimmy Buffett; he's a laid-back island guy just trying to get by in the world. Willie will also be a key to finding the Fresnel lens.

This chapter also demonstrates the absurdity of having a horse on a boat in the middle of the ocean. Mr. Twain represents how Tully is a fish out of water. His journey is taking him to the place where he belongs, but in getting there, Tully doesn't quite fit.

This chapter also introduces Punta Margarita, which is an important location in the book. Punta Margarita is an island in limbo. Since the island is prone to earthquakes and hurricanes, Tully has arrived in a place where the threat of weather phenomena is constant. In this regard, Punta Margarita becomes a vessel for impending change. Kirk uses Punta Margarita as a stopping place on his route; he continually returns to the island. This foreshadows Tully's later relationship with the island. The lighthouse guiding the sailboat in the painting foreshadows Cleopatra's death.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

"Dreaming of Columbus"

Kirk offers to teach Tully about navigating the boat. That night Tully gets his first experience with rough weather on the boat. He steers the boat, having been told by Kirk that even though Tully may be at the helm, the boat usually knows where to go. As they reach the storm, they find a safe place for Mr. Twain and make their way through the worst of it. Tully had dreamed the night before about stormy weather and Columbus telling him not to panic; he remembers this as the storm crashes around the boat.

As they make their way through the worst of the storm, Tully sees the beacon from the lighthouse at Cape San Antonio. They reach Punta Margarita and must make their way through the shallow channel. Kirk reveals the secret to navigating the shallow water. He points out the birds along the shore and fires his gun in the air. Some of the birds fly away, revealing the remaining birds as decoys that indicate the safe passage to the island. After unloading Mr. Twain from the boat, Tully joins Kirk on the island.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Tully has his first experience with rough seas. His dream about Columbus assists in how he is able to cope with the storm: don't panic. Tully manages to keep his wits about him and he navigates the storm successfully. His ability to weather the storm shows that, no matter what happens, he will do okay.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

"Land of the Lost Boys"

Bucky, Kirk's friend, from Wyoming is on the island. Tully is nervous at first because Bucky may know about what he had done back in Wyoming that forced him to go on the run. Kirk tells him that Bucky will meet Tully at the Lost Boys Fishing Lodge.

Tully rides Mr. Twain into town and meets Bucky at Lost Boys. They ask each other where they're from in Wyoming and when Bucky tells him Simmons Creek, Tully exclaims that he's fished there. Bucky shows him around.

There is a coral at Lost Boys and they leave Mr. Twain there. Tully asks Bucky how he met Kirk and Bucky invites him to climb up to the tree house so he can tell him the story. Tully follows Bucky high into the tree. At the platform, there is a guardrail, a telescope, a small bar area, and a hammock. Bucky pours them some rum and begins to tell the story of how he met Kirk.

The reason they met is Joni Mitchell. While in New Orleans for a jazz festival, Bucky is traveling with his girlfriend and she wants to go see Boz Scaggs. Bucky isn't up for it so he ends up in a café where Joni Mitchell gets up on stage and starts singing, unannounced. Bucky was at the bar sitting next to Kirk. Both Bucky and Kirk applaud Joni's performance and she walks over to them when she's finished. She asks if Bucky and Kirk know each other, (which they don't) so Joni introduces them. They start up a conversation and Kirk tells him about Punta Margarita.

Bucky goes on to tell Tully that the Mexican government declared the bays a protected biosphere, and that there are limits on the amount of development allowed in the area. He asks Tully if he's ever heard of a man called Shawn Spurl; Tully says no. When he reveals that Shawn Spurl is the real name of a country star called Tex Sex, Tully knows about whom he's talking.

Chapter 5 Analysis

This chapter furthers Tully's concern about his past catching up with him, foreshadowing that trouble is on its way. However, when Tully meets Bucky, his worst fears do not come true, foreshadowing that Tully will come out of trouble no worse for wear.

The Isle of the Lost Boys in *Peter Pan* is a place where boys never grow up. Symbolically, the Lost Boys in *A Salty Piece of Land* serves as a transitional home for Tully. When he arrives at Lost Boys, it feels right, he will later have the option of staying or leaving, and he will decide to stay. The time he spends here is indicative of his not being ready to go out on his own to find his home.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

"How Nightmares Turn into Dreams"

Through Bucky, Tully learns that part of the Lost Boys' history was Tex Sex. Some years prior, Tex abruptly retired from the music business at the height of his career. A country music sensation, he was born in Texas, but moved to Chicago when he was two months old. He drops out of high school, works at an arcade in Wisconsin and later starts delivering pizzas for Domino's. He wins a local karaoke contest and is discovered by Aaron Segal, a man who runs a funeral parlor and limousine service.

Since Tex was a dead ringer for Brad Pitt, it didn't matter that he couldn't really sing or play guitar; Aaron signs Tex. Eventually Tex meets Darcy Trumbo who starts to manage his career. She gets him singing and guitar lessons, becomes his lover and grooms him into a celebrity.

On a drunken bender, Tex meets up with Ix-Nay in a bar on the beach not far from the docks of Punta Margarita. He falls, splits his head open and declares that he wants to live among the natives on the island. Ix-Nay tends to the wound.

Later, Mexican and U.S. immigration officials show up on the island to investigate the possible kidnapping of an American. They talk to Kirk about Tex and Kirk reveals that Tex hasn't been kidnapped, but someone claiming to be Tex Sex showed up drunk and hurt his head. Kirk stitched him up and took him onto his boat figuring that someone would show up looking for him. Amid a frenzy of media, Tex leaves the island with Darcy.

Tex never returned to the island, but shortly after his departure, crates containing a prefab beach house arrived and beach property was purchased. Darcy had arranged everything, telling Tex that his dream was being carried out on the island; Tex was content dreaming about his island paradise and came out of retirement. Eventually Bucky shows up and converts the beach house into Lost Boys.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Tex's arrival is transitional; it is a stopping point before he returns to his career, or, in a manner of speaking, home. This reinforces Lost Boys as an intermediary location.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

"Pancakes Make the World Go Round"

Kirk comes and gets Bucky and Tully from the tree house. They go out to the Fat Iguana and celebrate. Tully wakes the next morning with a massive hangover. He goes down to the shore and finds Mr. Twain eating his oats and he runs into a couple of workmen who tell Tully that Bucky has gone into town and that he should join him. Tully goes for a swim in the ocean, thinks about what he is going to do about finding a job, and then ventures into town for a pancake breakfast.

He meets up with Kirk and Bucky. Kirk finishes his breakfast and goes to talk with some locals. Bucky asks Tully if he's going to go to work for Kirk on his boat. Tully says he didn't know anything about it when Bucky informs him that Kirk was planning to offer him a position on his boat. Instead, Bucky wants Tully to come and work at Lost Boys as a fishing guide.

That morning, Bucky took a client fishing and was bit on the finger by a barracuda and needed stitches. Since he can't fly fish for the time being, he is looking for extra help because Lost Boys is about to open for business. Tully takes the job and he and Bucky go to tell Kirk the news.

That night, Bucky explains that Tully will be working with Ix-Nay, but Ix-Nay is currently in Xibalba. Tully dives into learning all he can about being a fishing guide. He stays up late reading books about it and practices casting his line with Bucky. Since Tully will need a boat, Bucky gives him one called *Bariellete*; Tully is thrilled. Bucky shows him around the lagoon.

Bucky is called back to the office and Tully sets out to fish. He spends the next several hours easing along the shore, watching for permit and bonefish. Tully falls asleep on the boat and drifts off into an unfamiliar part of the water. He wakes and doesn't know where he is. He spots a giant permit in the water and, even if it means he has to spend all night on the boat, he is going to try and catch it before the sun goes down. His battle with the fish is successful and he returns the fish to the sea.

Tully looks up to the shore to see an Indian with a .45 strapped to his belt. He introduces himself as Ix-Nay, explaining to Tully that Buck sent him to find him. Tully sees Ix-Nay with the gun and hears it go off; Ix-Nay shot toward an approaching crocodile and Tully turns in time to see the croc heading up on shore.

Tully and Ix-Nay spend the next week teaching each other; Ix-Nay teaches Tully about Crocodile Rock and Tully returns the favor by teaching Ix-Nay all he knows about fly-fishing.



Chapter 7 Analysis

By the end of the chapter, everything seems to be going in Tully's favor. He's found a place where he's happy and has a job and new friends. Even Mr. Twain is content in this island paradise, but Tully senses that everything is about to change. Like the crocodile approaching Tully from behind, something from Tully's past is about to surface. When Tully meets Ix-Nay, Ix-Nay saves him from the crocodile. This will not be the last time that Ix-Nay will help save Tully. Tully takes the job at Lost Boys as it is the proper transition from the boat to land at this point on his journey.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

"One Man's Cathedral"

Lost Boys is an instant success. In addition to it is prime fishing, it boasts four-star lodging and food. A plane arrives with a giant pink flamingo painted on the fuselage. Bucky tells Tully that there are three guests and two pilots on the plane. From the plane emerges a beautiful woman - Donna Kay Dunbar - a woman from Tully's past.

Tully has not seen Donna Kay in over a year. After winning ten thousand dollars in the lottery, he sent the money to Donna Kay with a note telling her to meet him in Belize; Tully never showed up.

Donna Kay greets him with a kiss and Tully sees two men get off the plane. They are Sammy Raye Coconuts and Del Mundo. Sammy is Donna Kay's boss and business partner. She introduces Tully to them both. After spotting Mr. Twain, she runs over to greet him with more enthusiasm than she did for Tully.

Tully grants Donna Kay's request to take Mr. Twain out for a ride. When she returns, she finds Tully on the dock. He offers to take her for a cruise before dinner. She changes her clothes and joins him on the boat.

They troll along the coastline and Donna Kay spots a crocodile. Tully warns her that she's safe. He takes her to a reef that Ix-Nay and Bucky made from the remnants of boats that had been destroyed in a hurricane.

Tully asks her if she wants to dive in for a closer look. She tells him that she's forgotten her bathing suit and he explains that she doesn't have anything he hasn't seen before. She dives in and Tully waits for her near the shore. After she comes out of the water Tully leads her up a path toward a chamber used by Mayan navigators to make offerings to the gods.

Donna Kay dives into the water and Tully follows. In the water they start to kiss when they're interrupted by two women shouting Donna Kay's name. The women know Donna Kay from the restaurant that she owns in Alabama.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Donna Kay's arrival marks the first appearance of his past blending with the present. Though it is uncomfortable at times, Tully gets through it, relatively unscathed.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

"Fish Tales"

Tully isn't sure what to make of Donna Kay's return to his life. He feels guilty about not showing up to meet her in Belize and he dreads the fact that Donna Kay may have shown up for revenge.

At dinner, Sammy Raye entertains the table, distracting Donna Kay and Tully. They all drink wine and savor dinner. After hearing about the story of Tex Sex and Lost Boys, Sammy Raye declares that Tex is gay, which no one else believes. Donna Kay explains that Sammy Raye thinks everyone is gay. While laughing, Tully starts choking on a carrot stick. Everyone thinks he's just laughing until, finally, someone grabs him and gives him the Heimlich. Tully turns around to see that it is Willie Singer.

Willie is a distant cousin of Sammy Raye's. Since one of Sammy Raye's pilots was ill, Sammy called Willie to come fishing and be a co-pilot.

Later, Tully relieves himself on a tree and Donna Kay comes up behind him and asks to see the tree house. Tully tells Donna Kay that he needs to go up first and get everything ready. On his way up he notices the wind kicking up. Ix-Nay has told him "the appearance of a land breeze that shouldered no visible weather carried spirits instead" (pg. 100). In the tree, Tully hears Johnny Red Dust talking to him. He reminds Tully about the journey that he set out on and how he ran into Donna Kay on that journey. However, after meeting Donna Kay he continued on to encounter Clark Gable and Captain Kirk. He warns Tully that he hasn't told either Donna Kay or Bucky about his past in Wyoming and that he should. The wind settles and Donna Kay starts up the tree.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Ix-Nay has told Tully that wind without visible weather carries spirits. As Tully climbs up to the tree house, the wind kicks up and Tully is visited by the spirit of Johnny Red Dust. Tully is reminded that Donna Kay was part of his journey, not the destination. Yet, Johnny Red Dust wants Tully to confide in Donna Kay and tell her the real reason he didn't show up in Belize. Tully must make amends with his past before he can move on. This is part of his transition from Lost Boys to his final destination.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

"Into Everyone's Life a Coconut Man Should Fall"

In the tree house, Donna Kay tells Tully about Sammy Raye and how his parents died and he inherited a large sum of money. Sammy Raye became a successful songwriter and entrepreneur and he met Donna Kay at a restaurant in Arkansas. He offered her a job as his personal chef. She went to work for him and after a while she found and trained a new cook for Sammy Raye and Donna Kay went on to open a restaurant, which Sammy Raye helped her buy.

Donna Kay tells Tully that she isn't just on vacation, but that she came to tell him that she is getting married. Tully mishears her and thinks she says she wants to get married. She corrects him and asks him if he remember Clark Gable.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Donna Kay has moved on with her life. As much as Tully needs to set the past straight with Donna Kay, she must also do the same with Tully. They both need to put their past behind them.

Chapter 10 also deals with Sammy Raye's eccentric past. It paints a colorful picture of him to rival his bright pink plane. Nevertheless, it also reveals a side to Sammy Raye that will remain a constant: he will help people when he can. He helps Donna Kay get started in her business, and he will later help both Tully and Bucky.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

"Tree House of the Mayan Moon"

Tully is initially hurt that Donna Kay doesn't want to marry him, but he knows that that isn't what he wants. Donna Kay tells him about how much it hurt when he didn't show up in Belize and how Clark was there for her after it happened. Clark feels like he has stolen Donna Kay from Tully, and wanted to come to the island to set things straight with Tully, but Donna convinced him that this was something she had to do herself.

Tully starts to tell her his side of the story of why he didn't show up in Belize. He tells her that he has "been in love with you right up until the moment you told me you were marrying Clark" (pg. 117). He explains that he left because he was hiding something from his past. Donna fears that Tully may have murdered someone in Wyoming, but he sets her at ease and tells her what happened with Thelma Barston and how there was an arrest out for him, even a reward for his capture.

Thelma had hired bounty hunters to track down Tully. He says that the bounty hunters are two morons named Waldo and Wilton Stilton. Tully pours them each a glass of rum and continues his story. He gives her background information about the Stiltons, explaining that in addition to pursuing Tully, they worked as bodyguards for Kelly Brewster, a member of the Galactic Wrestling Federation. He tells her that he ended up at a Mullett Toss after going into the place for a fish sandwich. It turns out that Kelly Brewster was a judge in the contest. As Tully was eating his sandwich at the bar, Waldo and Wilton spot him. They kidnap Tully and put him in the car. He hears Wilton and some chick from the bar having sex and he sneaks out of the car and runs to the boat dock. He meets up with Kirk and they set sail for the tropics. Tully decides that he needs to leave the country until the statute of limitations is up.

Donna Kay gets up to leave, undecided as to whether Tully has had a bout with bad luck or he's making up the story. He swears that the story is true. He walks her to her cottage and she gives him a small peck on the cheek. Tully knows that they're still friends.

Chapter 11 Analysis

A lot of Chapter 11 is prologue. It gives the background story on the Stilton Brothers and Thelma Barston. All of this information will be necessary later in the book, but for now, it is part of an outlandish story that Tully must tell. The question remains, however, whether or not Donna Kay will believe the story.

By the end of the chapter, Tully has walked Donna Kay back to her cottage and she gives him a peck on the cheek. Tully feels as though she believes him, but honestly has

no way of knowing. He trusts his instincts and this offers him peace. Tully is one step closer to moving on.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

"If I Were Like Lightning"

The next morning Tully takes Mr. Twain for a ride. They go for a swim and lay on the beach. Mr. Twain gives him a look that asks *what's next*. Gray clouds are on the horizon and a bolt of lightning strikes the water and the sun returns. Tully rubs his good luck charm and heads into town singing.

Chapter 12 Analysis

This short, transitional chapter brings a quick storm with a single bolt of lightning. Having followed through on what Johnny Red Dust has advised, Tully is ready and willing for the next part of his journey.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

"Grandma Ghost"

Tully finishes his breakfast at a café and sees an old woman setting up an easel and canvas. He watches her as she paints and remembers "Grandma Ghost," who was the other family member who ran off to the tropics.

Tully says that "what connects some people to the art they like is not wishing they could paint it but rather wanting to be *in* the scene that the artist has painted" (pg. 130). The second painting in Tully's art collection is *Heart of the Andes* and it is an etching of a painting by Frederic Edwin Church. Tully saw the original at the Metropolitan Museum of Art when he was a teenager. This painting is responsible for Tully's interest in the tropics.

He explains that in 1859, when the painting was put on exhibit, his great-grandparents Jubal and Sarah Sawyer Mars went to see it. The painting captivates Sarah and she won't leave it. Finally, the police arrive and Sarah is taken out of the gallery. The next morning, Jubal awakes to find Sarah gone, having left a note that she was going to the tropics because that was where she belonged.

Stories of Sarah's jungle adventures were whispered at family reunions and "Grandma Ghost" is a forbidden topic at Tully's house. While at his great-grandfather's house he and his cousins were playing in the attic and Tully finds an envelope with Sarah's name on it. He takes the letter. Later that night he opens the envelope and discovers two photographs inside and a letter addressed to "the descendants of Jubal Mars" (pg. 134). Tully reads the letter; it is from Sarah.

She writes that she knows that she is "Grandma Ghost" and hopes that she hasn't haunted the family too much. She is now an old woman and is about to die. She never had a family, but that if there is any room in their hearts she will not really die. As the letter continues she references a painting and writes that perhaps there is another Mars who longs to be in the tropics and that they should take the painting as a map to find their happiness. Tully looks around the attic for the painting. He finds it and keeps it.

Hearing the sound of a plane taking off, Tully snaps back to the present. He waves at the plane expecting to see Willie Singer wave back; it's Donna Kay. Tully passes the woman who is panting. She asks him if he wants to be in the painting and he tells her that he already is.



Chapter 13 Analysis

This is the introduction and explanation of Tully's second piece in his art collection. Tully considers *Heart of the Andes* his map; this is responsible for leading him to a tropical destination. His connection to Grandma Ghost is strong, though it's important to note that he is not related to Grandma Ghost; she left her husband prior to having children. *The Patron Saint of Lightning* is representative of the influence weather and lighthouses, and *Heart of the Andes* is Tully's map. These two pieces will lead Tully to his final destination.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

"Everybody Out of the Pool"

After Donna Kay leaves the island, Ix-Nay reports a very successful fishing day with red-black calico crabs hatching, a favorite food for permit.

Bucky offers Tully his Jeep so that he can drive up to Cancun for a few days. Tully runs into Sammy Raye on the dock. Sammy Raye tells Tully that Donna Kay did believe his story and that her leaving was the best thing for both of them. After a quick nap, Tully decides that a trip sounds like a good idea, but he doesn't think the Jeep will make it to Cancun; he decides to go to Tulum.

On the road, he drives through a puddle, which turns out to be an enormous pothole. Suddenly he's in waist-high water and the Jeep is stuck. Chino, a local fisherman, drives by and helps Tully get the Jeep out of the water. They leave the Jeep to dry out and Chino offers to take Tully into town. On the drive, Chino passes him a joint that he got from a Rasta band.

Tully remembers the first time he visited the ruins. Ix-Nay had given him directions and he took Mr. Twain up there. While there he meets a man named Hector who is obsessed with Jimi Hendrix. Hector is a guard at the ruins and carries an M16, which he pulls on Tully. Thinking that he knows him from somewhere, Tully finally realizes that he knows him the Fat Iguana. Suddenly Tully is in the guard shack having coffee with Hector.

At the shack, Tully meets Dr. Destin Walker. Dr. Walker is there to try to determine the validity of a legend about a light system the Mayans used to navigate ships. Tully makes several trips back to the guard shack and helps Dr. Walker with some of his experiments. Now Tully has returned to Tulum to find some of the magic he experienced that first trip to the ruins.

Tully pays his entrance fee and enters the ruins. He passes by the crowds, has a couple beers and heads down the beach. He waves at the other vacationers and an American woman mistakes him for part of their group, telling him that the bus is leaving. He corrects her and continues to wave. Tully leaves message about the Jeep at home, stating that he'll find a ride home. However, Tully isn't exactly sure how he's going to do that.

He stops to take a nap on the beach when he opens his eyes to find Hector playing air guitar on his M16. It's raining and thunder booms over head. Hector asks him if he's seen the big boat. Tully looks out to sea and spots an old woman on a schooner, dropping anchor.



Chapter 14 Analysis

Again, Tully's journey has been influenced by weather, though not directly this time. Tully is sidetracked on his trip when he drives the Jeep into an enormous pothole. Since the pothole is filled to capacity with water, it can be inferred that rain preceded his arrival in order to cause him to be stranded away from Lost Boys.

This chapter introduces Dr. Destin Walker. In examining Dr. Walker's name, one can see that Destin can equal "destiny," and Walker, with the root word "walk" indicating journey. Since Dr. Walker has been conducting research experiments on lighthouses, this furthers the idea that the lighthouse is key to Tully's journey.

Additionally, the knowledge Tully gains from the experiments will serve him well later in the book when he meets Cleopatra. As thunder booms overhead, Tully looks out to sea and, for the first time, sees the *Lucretia*. The weather has brought Cleopatra to Tully.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

"Schooner Fever"

Since Tully was a boy, he has been captivated by schooners. The arrival of Cleopatra on the *Lucretia* is all it takes to hook Tully like a fish. A dinghy comes to shore with four oarsmen and Cleopatra on board. Cleopatra calls out to Tully and tells him that she's looking for Destin Walker. Tully responds that he knows him and he introduces himself along with the fact that he's originally from Wyoming. He tells her that he worked for Dr. Walker on lighthouse experiments, which immediately catches Cleopatra's attention. Tully explains that Dr. Walker has moved on to Belize for further lighthouse experiments. Cleopatra invites Tully to dinner on the *Lucretia* and he accepts.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Cleopatra and Tully meet for the first time. Cleopatra, on occasion, will state that fate has brought her and Tully together. When Tully and Cleopatra first converse, she tells him that she is looking for Dr. Destin Walker; indeed, fate plays a role in this. It is also interesting to note that Dr. Walker has moved on to Belize for further experiments, and, of course, Tully will soon travel to Belize. This chapter foreshadows the coming lighthouse experiments and how Tully will navigate the schooner.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

"Dinner and a Show"

Tully joins Cleopatra and the oarsmen on the dinghy and head out to the boat. A young boy pounds out rhythm on a turtle shell as the oarsmen row in cadence. They drop anchor near the boat and Cleopatra tells Tully that the schooner was used in the film *Captains Courageous*. Tully is in disbelief and Cleopatra continues, "Son, I am one hundred and one years old. I don't have time to bullshit you" (pg. 156). Tully heads up the ladder and Cleopatra follows.

On board, Tully meets Captain Solomon and the rest of the crew. Some of the crew are maritime college kids and the remainder of the crew is from Belize. Solomon takes Tully to the guest cabin where Tully finds clothes to change in to; now he's dressed like the rest of the crew. When he comes out Solomon tells him that Cleopatra is taking him up to the mast.

In the crow's nest, Cleopatra explains how all of her crew is trained to do everything on board the ship. They talk and watch the sunset and she inquires about Dr. Walker's experiments. He tells her that they discovered that the mirrors in the lighthouse would deflect light to guide a ship through the natural opening to the reef and not the man-made channel. Tully goes on to say that he and Ix-Nay both know how to navigate the channel. Cleopatra tells him that she would like to go through the channel and for Tully to navigate it. If he is successful, she will take him home to Punta Margarita on the schooner.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Cleopatra wagers a ride home on the schooner if Tully can navigate the vessel successfully through the channel using the lighthouse. When he does so, Cleopatra will take him back to Lost Boys. Yet, symbolically, this represents the fact that Cleopatra is critical in his finding the home that Johnny Red Dust told him about and the schooner will be part of that as well.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

"The Dance of Life and Death"

Solomon tells Tully that there's not a dull day on the *Lucretia* and that she "kept a constant flow of scientists, students, and crackpots on board" (pg. 167). Clearly, Tully fits into the later category.

At dinner, Tully is offered carrot sticks, which make him nervous after his choking spell earlier in the book. They all sit down to dinner and listen to tango music by Carlos Gardel. The song that they are listening to - *Tomo y Obligo* - is the last song Gardel sang before being killed in a plane crash.

Cleopatra is obsessed with Cuban baseball and a young pitcher called El Cohete - "The Rocket." She tells of how baseball came to Cuba from the U.S. following the Civil War as a rebel game. Since it was a denouncement of bullfighting, the Spanish didn't like it and baseball become an important part of Cuban culture.

After dinner, Tully and Cleopatra go to the doghouse and she smokes a cigar. She tells him about why she adores El Cohete. It turns out that Luis Villa, El Cohete's grandfather, was the great love of her life.

While sailing from Port Antonio, Cleopatra came upon a stranded fisherman who was bailing out his boat. She takes him on board to take him home. A double rainbow appears as they arrive at the shore and a grand celebration takes place. A man approaches her, speaking perfect English, and offers her an emerald-encrusted cross thought to be from one of Christopher Columbus' ships; the gift is to show gratitude for saving his younger brother. The man introduces himself as Luis Villa.

Cleopatra and Luis have a torrid affair and despite countless proposals, Cleopatra wouldn't marry him. Finally, Luis marries another woman and they had a son - El Cohete - and Luis is later killed in a car crash. Cleopatra considers El Cohete the grandson she never had.

That night Tully dreams of a bizarre baseball game in which Che Guevara is at bat with a shark, El Cohete is pitching, and Ix-Nay is catching. Che Guevara strikes out and Christopher Columbus comes to play. The game ends up at "the bottom of the ninth, runners on second and third, two outs, no balls, and two strikes" (pg. 179). Tully wakes up without finding out the result of the game.



Chapter 17 Analysis

Both Cleopatra and Captain Kirk share the motif of returning a sailor home. They both play a part in returning Tully home as well. However, when Cleopatra returns the sailor to his village, there is a double rainbow as they arrive on shore. At this point, weather phenomena bring change for Cleopatra. She meets the great love of her life, yet she, like Tully, learns that her journey is not yet over and she must continue on her path. In this respect, Cleopatra can identify with what Tully is going through.

Tully dreams about a bizarre baseball game, yet he doesn't get to find out how the game ends. Tully's life mirrors this baseball game and at this point, Tully cannot know how the game will end.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

"Leap, and the Net Will Appear"

Tully tells Cleopatra about his dream and she says she has that dream all the time. He asks her how it turns out and she retorts that she didn't find out until she was ninety-three.

In order to navigate the channel, Tully needs access to the lighthouse. He will need to bribe Hector to help. When he left for Tulum he had \$500 in his pocket, but that was stolen when he was sleeping on the beach before meeting Cleopatra. He only has \$50 and that's not enough to entice Hector.

Cleopatra and Tully approach the guardhouse and Hector is listening to *Viva Las Vegas*. Tully figures he can offer Hector a trip to Las Vegas and worry about how to pay for it later. Cleopatra speaks to Hector in Spanish and Tully explains, in his best Spanish, his plan. Hector agrees to help in exchange for a trip to Las Vegas and \$200 for lap dances. Tully finally agrees.

As Cleopatra and Tully make their way back to the shore, she asks him if he had any clue as to how he would pull this off with Hector. Tully is coy in answering the question and Cleopatra reveals that she knows that his money was stolen; Solomon told her. Tully explains that he simply followed the advice of Johnny Red Dust: "Leap, and the net will appear" (pg. 184).

Chapter 18 Analysis

Tully tells Cleopatra about his dream and she tells him that she has the dream all the time, yet Cleopatra discovered how it ended when she was ninety-three. Perhaps the revelation of the game ending came with the understanding that she must find the Fresnel lens.

Chapter 18 is also about trust: trust in other people, i.e. Hector and Cleopatra; trust in instincts, i.e. Tully will be able to get Hector to assist him, though he doesn't know how; and trust in what he has learned, i.e. how Johnny Red Dust has taught him to "Leap, and the net will appear" (pg. 184).



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

"And the Wind Cries Mary"

Hector is in the tower and Tully and Cleopatra have made it back to the boat. After lining up the lights, Tully is able to get them through the channel in less than 10 minutes. Cleopatra is impressed and admits she didn't think it would work. Tully has earned his ride back to Punta Margarita.

They set sail and the wind is kicking up. They can hear Jimi Hendrix coming from the tower as Hector watches them sail away. They start to sing along with Hendrix. Solomon orders Tully to take the wheel. Tully passes the Lister's conch to Cleopatra and she asks where he got it. He tells her the story behind it.

Cleopatra calls Tully into the cabin for a discussion. She finally offers him a job as a crewmember on the *Lucretia*. He says he'll have to think about it and he climbs up to the crow's nest. Within twenty minutes, they approach the shore and Tully can see Lost Boys. He tells Cleopatra that he is going ashore, and explains that her offer is tempting, but he made a commitment to Bucky.

Cleopatra asks Tully for a favor: she wants Tully's help in finding the Fulsom lens, fearing that she's running out of time. He promises to contact Willie Singer and ask him to keep a look out on his travels. She tells him that he will always have a place on her ship.

On shore Tully goes looking for his friends, sees that Willie has left and he doesn't know how he will make good on his promise to Cleopatra. Then he realizes that he has left his conch shell on board the ship. He runs into Bonefish Bob and learns that Bucky is in Fort Lauderdale fishing. Tully and Bonefish Bob go fishing and Tully learns that Bob is heading to Key West. Tully asks him to take a note to Willie Singer when he gets there and he agrees.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Tully successfully navigates the channel, earning his ride home on the schooner. As they set sail, the wind begins to pick up, but there is no visible weather. Though it's not addressed, perhaps the spirit of Johnny Red Dust returned to Tully on the wind and that is why Tully tells Cleopatra the story of the Lister's conch, which will figure prominently at the end of the book. Cleopatra offers Tully a job on her ship, but Tully ultimately turns it down. He hasn't yet learned all that he needs to from his time at Lost Boys. He still needs to be on land.



After Cleopatra asks for help, Tully agrees to talk to Willie for help in finding the Fresnel lens. When Tully reaches shore, he discovers that Willie has already left and Tully feels guilty that he will have to break his promise to Cleopatra. He meets up with Bonefish Bob and, again, Tully needs only to leap and he will find his net; Bonefish Bob can get a letter to Willie.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

"Hello from the Netherworld"

A transcript of Tully's letter to Willie Singer asks for his help in finding the Fresnel lens. He offers Willie a few hours of fly-fishing for his help.

Chapter 20 Analysis

This is the first appearance of a letter in *A Salty Piece of Land*. The correspondence will figure prominently as Willie travels in search of the Fresnel lens.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

"Quiet Time"

Bucky and Ix-Nay return from their trips. The next day Ix-Nay and Tully go to get Bucky's Jeep and discover that it's completely useless. Tully tells Ix-Nay that he feels guilty about what happened to Bucky's Jeep, but that he feels worse about losing his shell. Ix-Nay reassures him that he didn't do anything wrong, he'd just gotten all he needed from the totem.

They hitchhike to Tulum and Tully makes good on his promise to Hector. Ix-Nay shows Tully a classified ad for a truck in Belize, complete with gun mounts. Ix-Nay makes a comment that stuns Tully because it is a quote from one of his favorite movies. Ix-Nay doesn't understand because he doesn't watch movies. Tully explains that *The Man Who Would Be King* is about two former British soldiers who go to India and find that it isn't big enough for the both of them.

On the ferry, they pass Quiet Time, a fishing spot where, during slack tide, there is a strange lack of predatory behavior among the fish. Ix-Nay explains that humans would benefit from quiet time because they would "have to think more like a fish than a man and look for the slack tides and the pools and eddies in life so you can catch your breath and reflect on the good moment" (pg. 207).

They return to Lost Boys and after Tully goes for exercise on the beach, he returns to hear Bucky slam the phone. Bucky explains that the lease is up on Lost Boys and there is a buyer for the property, Bucky has first refusal.

Tully tells him that he's going to Belize to buy a Jeep to replace the one he lost. Bucky gives him \$5,500 for his half of the cost. He considers the irony that he stood Donna Kay up in Belize and now he's going there to buy a Jeep; he wonders what that says about his priorities. The next morning Tully and Ix-Nay leave for Belize.

Chapter 21 Analysis

Tully feels bad about losing the Lister's conch and Ix-Nay comforts him by explaining that he had just gotten all he could from the totem. In a way, the shell, like Tully, is searching for its new home. The shell will return to Tully eventually, but that will not be the end destination for the shell.

In addition, Tully notes the irony in his being able to go to Belize to buy a truck, but couldn't make it there to meet a woman he supposedly loved. Ultimately, it's not commitment that Tully fears, but rather the type of commitment. He is able to commit to a journey, not a destination.



Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

"Any Place Named After the Holy Ghost is Fine With Me"

Since Tully is a fugitive and traveling to another country, he has a fake passport. Ix-Nay doesn't want Tully looking like an ex-patriot, so he tells him to either dress like a tourist or a surfer; Tully opts for the surfer look.

They take a freighter called the *L'Ostra Encantadora* and a group of Indian boys are playing with a soccer ball. One of the boys kicks the ball and hits Tully in the head. Ix-Nay tells him to practice his Mayan to talk to the boy. In broken Mayan, Tully compliments the boy on his kicking ability and it breaks the ice.

That night, on the ship, there is a great storm and all the lights go out on the ship. The ship sustains some damage and Captain Claro invites Ix-Nay and Tully to join them as they go into the village of Sartaneja. Tully is concerned about this change of plans, but Ix-Nay explains the situation and Captain Claro informs him that he has a friend in customs and that there is no reason to worry. When Ix-Nay gives Tully his newly stamped, fake passport, he informs Tully that they told customs the reason why Tully stayed on the boat was because he's blind and seasick.

On shore, Ix-Nay and Tully meet up with Hornblower, a cab-driving tour guide. He takes them to breakfast first and then the tour of the village before taking them to see Sergeant Mercer.

As they cross the bridge, Tully starts to laugh. Ix-Nay wants to know what's funny and Tully explains that if the people around them had turbans on their head it would look like the opening scene of *The Man Who Would Be King*. Ix-Nay admits he needs to see this movie and he likens movies to gringos as myths to Mayans.

They first encounter Sergeant Mercer in a safari jacket and pith helmet. He introduces himself as Archibald Mercer and tells them to call him Archie. Tully thinks he looks just like Daniel Dravot in *The Man Who Would Be King*. Archie has a letter for Tully and it is postmarked Honolulu. Tully had left a forwarding address with Bucky.

Chapter 22 Analysis

During the storm, the lights go out on the ship. This foreshadows Tully's blackout when he meets up with the Stilton brothers in the coming chapters.



Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

"Well, Hello, Cowboy"

This chapter is the transcript of Willie Singer's return letter to Tully. Since Willie is a bit of a lighthouse fan himself, he agrees to keep a lookout for Cleopatra's lens. Since he is now taking an alternate route to the Orient, he will be going through Samoa, Tahiti and to New Caledonia where the largest lighthouse in the Pacific is located.

Willie tells him that since he was approached by a book publisher to write a travelogue, he's going to practice his writing skills in his letters to Tully. Willie flies under the Golden Gate Bridge on his take-off from San Francisco. After landing *The Flying Pearl* in Pearl Harbor, the locals consider him a hero and he receives a lot of press. Then, he meets with an FAA chief at the airport and receives a stern warning to not fly under to bridge again. A documentary called *The Flying Pearl* is made about the landing.

Sammy Raye and Burt are in Honolulu and he joins them. A Hawaiian woman wins a \$50 million jackpot and suddenly Willie's flight is old news. Willie's next stop is Sand Island at Midway. While in the remains of an old sea-hanger, Willie learns that their fuel barge sank in a storm. The Navy base offers to give them fuel, but all they have is jet fuel.

After a return trip to Hawaii, he learns that they will have to wait for another fuel barge to make it back to Midway. It will take about two weeks. Willie meets a guy named Ben Cooper who says he can solve the fuel problem. It turns out that on the island of Minola holds 19,000 gallons of surplus oil that was mistakenly sent to the island after the island was declared a bird sanctuary. Ben offers Willie the fuel in exchange for a flight in *The Flying Pearl*; Willie agrees.

Chapter 23 Analysis

This is Willie's reply to Tully's letter. He is up to the task of helping in the search for the Fresnel lens. The fact that he has always been fond of lighthouses will come full circle later when he discovers that a member of his family will be crucial in locating the lens for Cleopatra. The search for the lens is becoming more and more of a collaborative effort. This demonstrates how this diverse group of people comes together for a common goal, creating a family unit.

Often in his travels, Willie experiences setbacks that keep him from moving directly on to the next location. This seems almost like fate correcting itself. Willie is much like a ship that wind continually knocks off course, and in doing so, he must adjust to the right path.



Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

"Some Days There's Just Magic in the Air"

Tully is happy that Willie has agreed to help with Cleopatra's search; he'll write letter to them both when he returns to Lost Boys.

Making their way up river, Archie tells Ix-Nay and Tully how he ended up in this part of the world. He was in the Royal Marines, served in the Falklands War and spent time in Iraq and Pakistan. He was then stationed at Mountain Pine Ridge to teach jungle warfare. He says that he has "seen the world, been shot at and missed, from Belfast to Kafiristan" (pg. 234). Ix-Nay doesn't think that Kafiristan is real, but Archie tells him it's as real as Xibalba.

Archie continues with his life story and how he got into the tourist business. He claims that if you want to learn the tourist business, you train in Orlando. Seeing all the unhappy adults and screaming children at Disney World, inspired his idea for Cat World; this was set up a few blocks from Disney World. Customers were allowed to feed lab rats that were dressed with sweaters and ears to hungry alley cats. There were lines around the building, and he eventually received a "cease and desist" order, being kicked-out of the country.

Once in Belize he purchases a couple Land Rovers from the training camp and set up a safari company. At the conclusion of his story, Tully inadvertently calls Archie Danny. Both Archie and Tully start quoting *The Man Who Would Be King*. Archie tells Ix-Nay that he has a copy of the movie back at the camp.

Chapter 24 Analysis

Chapter 24 introduces Archie Mercer. He quickly befriends Tully and Ix-Nay, though the bond is stronger with Tully. Archie is a model journeyman. He has been all over the globe only to find him home in Belize. He understands the importance of what is to be learned and experienced during the journey.



Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

"Shackletons or Magellans They Are Not"

Archie welcomes Ix-Nay and Tully to Kafiristan of Central America. At the camp, they meet Tripod, a three-legged ocelot; she lost her leg to poachers. Archie shows them a picture of the Land Rover that is for sale. The Land Rover is currently in the shop getting repairs from an incident with the crankcase. It's painted yellow with black spots and has two machine-gun mounts on top. Archie starts calling Ix-Nay Billy Fish after a character in *The Man Who Would Be King*. He then offers to let them stay at his bungalow at a resort called Renaldo's in San Pedro. Tully says that he'll have to clear the time off with Bucky, but that they'd like to stay for a couple days.

That night Ix-Nay watches *The Man Who Would Be King*. Tully comes in and starts reciting the lines along with the movie. As the credits roll, Archie comes in and they sing along with the closing song.

Afterwards, Ix-Nay and Tully are walking toward the landing strip and Ix-Nay comments that the rabbit is in the moon. He says that the shadows on the moon are a sign that there is friendship and something major happening. Tully tells him it's just the man in the moon.

They part ways with Archie and Archie gives Tully the number to his satellite phone, telling him to call if he needs any help. He instructs them to talk with Sandra at Renaldo's and she'll get them set up with his bungalow. Ix-Nay decides that they should name the Land Rover the Fishmobile, because of the fishing that they do and because of Billy Fish from the movie.

Chapter 25 Analysis

When Tully and Ix-Nay meet with Archie about the Land Rover, it just so happens that the vehicle has had an accident and needs to be repaired. This should keep the two of them in Belize, but Archie offers to let them stay at his condominium in San Pedro. Tully checks in with Bucky and everything is cleared for them to stay an extra couple of days. Everything seems to be coming together for them to stay. Tully needs to stay in order to confront his past and though it may be a run of bad luck, it is still fate and all part of the journey Tully needs to take.



Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

"Ground Zero"

Ix-Nay and Tully arrive in San Pedro. A woman named Consuelo meets them at the airport; she thinks they have arrived for Spring Break. Ix-Nay corrects her, but when they tell her that they're headed for Renaldo's she informs them that Renaldo's is ground zero for spring-break. Tully feels comfortable because he blends in with the spring-breakers in his surfing clothes. Consuelo also tells them to be sure and dine at her aunt's Creole restaurant.

After a brief thunderstorm, they make their way to Renaldo's and meet up with Sandra. She takes them to their condo. They pass a swimming pool with many scantily clad coeds. When they get to the condo they find that the accommodations are top notch. They flip for the shower; Ix-Nay wins and Tully goes out for a swim.

Out at the pool bar Tully orders a cheeseburger and a beer. The bartender tells him about a major party the following night. Ix-Nay walks up to him at the table, and he's all cleaned-up. Tully doesn't recognize him at first. Ix-Nay is going out with Consuelo. Two girls, from the pool, wave at Tully.

Chapter 26 Analysis

There is a brief thunderstorm when Tully and Ix-Nay arrive at Renaldo's. Two changes are about to take place: Tully will meet Dawn and he will have a run-in with the Stilton brothers.



Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

"One Thousand One□One Thousand Two"

Tully takes a siesta and dreams of a giant marlin floating in the air. The fish's head is sticking out of a condo window and speaking like Hal from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The fish tells him that unless he wakes up he won't be able to fish that afternoon.

Tully wakes to the sounds of Eric Clapton and goes to take a shower. While in the shower he feels a sharp pain in his left foot; he feels the pain again. He gropes around the shower fearing that he's been bitten by a snake or spider. Angry, he grabs the .38 revolver that he keeps in his pack. He hears giggling from under the crawl space under the bungalow and he orders whomever it is to come out.

He hears a woman tell him not to shoot and the two women from the pool come out into the open. Their names are Dawn and Noel-Christmas and they're young and gorgeous. Dawn tells Tully he needs to calm down because all they have to do is yell rape, after all Tully is standing in front of them stark naked with a gun in his hand. The girls know his name and Tully wants to know how; they don't tell him. Tully goes inside to dry off and put on some clothes. The girls wait on the porch for him.

As Tully gets dressed he argues with the devil on his shoulder about hooking up with them, but then he reminds himself that he's old enough to be their father. Dawn interrupts him by asking if he has anything to drink in the condo. Tully grabs the complimentary bottle of wine and goes out after them. The girls tell him that they're cousins on Spring Break from the University of Texas, but they're originally from Beverly Hills. Dawn passes around a joint and they get high. It's storming outside.

Dawn tells Tully that she has "it on good authority that when a man looks at a woman, he can't go more than five seconds without thinking about fucking her" (pg. 261). She begins to count 'one thousand one□one thousand two' and she invited him to dinner the following night.

Chapter 27 Analysis

Weather returns in Chapter 27, but indirectly. In this chapter, Tully is in the shower - representative of rain - when he is stabbed in the foot by Dawn and Noel-Christmas. The other indirect reference to weather is actually in the name of the character Dawn. Dawn, as in morning, is a major change as it is the transition between day and night and Dawn, the character, brings a major change for Tully, because of her connection to the Stilton brothers.



Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

"A Little Family Fun"

Tully goes to eat at Consuelo's aunt's restaurant. Later he goes to the bar at Renaldo's, which is busy with activity. The next morning he goes for a swim and has breakfast at a café. He thinks about Cleopatra and looks up to see the *Lucretia* in the ocean; he thinks the ship is a sign.

Tully starts to wonder if he made the right decision by not taking Cleopatra up on her job offer. He decides that he will finish out his time at Lost Boys and then join Cleopatra on the boat. First, he is going to go and have dinner with Dawn.

At the bungalow, Tully finds a note tacked to the door that reads: 8. He gets ready for dinner and puts on his "'go to town' flip-flops" (pg. 266). He receives word that Ix-Nay and Consuelo have gone bird watching. Tully leaves for the big party.

Chapter 28 Analysis

This is a purely transitional chapter, but marks the reappearance of the *Lucretia*, but no mention of bad weather. It's the calm before the storm.



Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

"Take Me to Your Blender"

Tully heads into the Belly of the Beast where the big party is taking place. A hostess tells Tully that Dawn and Noel-Christmas are at the bar with Renaldo. He heads over and joins them at the bar. Dawn introduces him to Edward and Rentzel, two men from New York, and they go to eat. Dawn takes Tully into a cave-like room and they sit on pillows. There is lots of food and champagne; she explains that this is an apology for the day before and they toast to "jungle encounters" (pg. 271). Later they join up with Noel-Christmas and go to a foam party.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Continuing with the idea of the "calm before the storm," Tully is unwittingly heading straight into the storm. Dawn's seduction of him prevents him from seeing where he is headed.



Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

"A Cowboy Float"

Dawn and Noel-Christmas go to change before the foam party and Tully wanders around feeling the effects of pot and campaign. The girls return and Tully tells Dawn she looks like Barbarella; Dawn doesn't know who that is.

Warren Zevon's *Lawyers, Guns and Money*" is playing as they enter the party. Four men dressed as FBI agents enter holding hoses. They unleash the foam from the hoses and the party ensues. After the party, Dawn and Tully leave together.

Chapter 30 Analysis

Chapter 30 is more of a prologue for Tully's big set-up. At the foam party, the four men dressed as FBI agents become symbolic of Tully's impending capture.



Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Summary

"Belly to Belly"

After having sex in the condo, Dawn and Tully go for an ocean swim. On the beach, Dawn seductively tells Tully that they've met before and Tully laughs it off. He asks what her last name is, but she says last names aren't important in the tropics.

Dawn tells him that she needs to go and check on Noel-Christmas. She borrows one of his shirts and a pair of shorts. As she leaves, Tully asks what her room number is and she tells him. After she's gone, Tully realizes that his wallet is in the shorts he gave her to wear. He rushes out after her and spots Waldo Stilton in the hallway.

Panicking about how he's going to get off the island without his fake passport, he sees his salvation in a Ronald Reagan mask that someone left in the bushes. He puts it on and acts like a drunk, making his way to Dawn's room. He gets his wallet and goes back to his condo. He dials Archie's satellite phone number and gets Archie's voice-mail; Wilton Stilton zaps Tully with a stun gun, knocking Tully out cold.

Chapter 31 Analysis

Tully finally meets up with the Stilton brothers. He is knocked-out cold with a stun gun, mirroring what happened earlier on the ship when the storm caused the lights to go out. Even though Tully has been incapacitated, he is still able to get a message out that he is in danger. The fact that the phone call to Archie's satellite phone was not disengaged becomes crucial to Tully's rescue.



Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Summary

"Somebody Call a Witch Doctor"

Having been unconscious for half a day, Tully wakes up and asks for water; Wilton tells Waldo that Tully isn't dead. Waldo unties his hands and gives him crackers and water. They tell him that Thelma Barston has chartered a prison plane for his transport and they're taking him back to Wyoming.

A helicopter shows up and Waldo hollers, "We got the slimeball, Ms. Barston" (pg. 290). Expecting to see Thelma Barston for the first time since he left, Tully looks up, but instead sees Dawn get out of the helicopter. Dawn explains that she is Thelma's stepdaughter and how she had seen Tully when she first got to Wyoming. She had a crush on him and was angry with Thelma when she fired him. He corrects her and says he quit.

Just before high school graduation, Dawn's father died of a heart attack. Since Thelma has all of the money, Dawn needed to do something to ensure her inheritance; she decided to get Tully for Thelma, but first she wanted to have fun with him.

Dawn tells him that she'll do what she can to get him "into one of those cushy Club Fed" (pg. 295) places. Tully tells her not to do him any favors. Just then he sees what he thinks is an ocelot out of the corner of his eye; it's Tripod. Suddenly the Fishmobile is headed right for them.

Chapter 32 Analysis

Tully's past has finally caught up with him, but in the unexpected form of Dawn. The most important thing that occurs in Chapter 32 takes place during Tully and Dawn's conversation about how Tully left Wyoming. Dawn states that she was angry because Thelma fired Tully, but Tully corrects her and says he quit. In this moment, Tully not only takes responsibility for his actions (as Johnny Red Dust instructed him to do in the tree house in Chapter 9), but he's also taking control of his destiny. Tully realizes that he quit and left; he made that decision, regardless of whether or not he had to after the incident with Thelma.



Chapter 33

Chapter 33 Summary

"Put on Your Sailin' Shoes"

Chaos ensues as Archie, Bucky, Ix-Nay and Captain Kirk barrel in to rescue Tully; they're armed with assault rifles. They knew where to find Tully, because, when Tully got Archie's voicemail and was shocked by Wilton, Wilton never hung up the phone and the entire incident was recorded on voicemail.

Tully contemplates going back to Wyoming and turning himself in because he's tired of running, but he won't turn himself into Thelma. Archie tells him prison isn't the place he wants to go. Instead, he should continue with the plan to stay out of the country until the statute of limitations runs out.

They duct tape Waldo and Wilton to the seats in the plane and Archie instructs the pilots to fly them north; he doesn't care where, just as long as they're at least 500 miles away from Belize. To ensure the pilot's compliance, Archie informs him that if they come back the local authorities will have been told that they are carrying a kilo cocaine on board.

The plane takes off and Tully sees Dawn being gagged and taken away in the Land Rover; she's going to be held until Tully is out of the area and released. Since Tully won't be making the trip back to Lost Boys, Kirk tells him to consider sailing.

Chapter 33 Analysis

Tully is rescued and the Stilton brothers and Dawn have been taken care of. Tully contemplates going back to Wyoming and turning himself in, but Archie quickly reminds him that prison is not where he wants - or needs - to be. If Tully goes back to Wyoming, he loses the control of his life that he has just acquired.

Tully has finally grown up and faced his past, which means that he has no need to return to Lost Boys and all that that place represents. Kirk suggests that Tully return to the boat. Since Tully has previously questioned whether he made the right decision in turning down the job offer from Cleopatra, returning to the *Lucretia* seems like the right thing to do. It's time to move on and Tully understands this.



Chapter 34

Chapter 34 Summary

"One the Case"

Willie writes that he has made progress in the search for the Cleopatra's lens. After running into some weather trouble going through Tahiti, Willie heads into Papeete Harbor. Since this was the first seaplane landing in thirty-years at the harbor, there is a celebration. He meets up with an old friend, Tom Prophet who introduces Willie to Philippe Parfait.

Philippe introduces Willie to the mayor and journalists from the local newspaper. The next day he wants to take Willie to breakfast to discuss *The Flying Pearl* with people from the press. A couple days later, they are flying out and Willie's co-pilot points out an enormous lighthouse; it's Amedee Lighthouse and stands 185 ft tall.

They land in New Caledonia and are met with hostile members of DGSE, which is the French equivalent to the CIA. Willie mentions Philippe's name and they're suddenly in the clear. Philippe arranges their accommodations while on the island. They go to the lighthouse and the keeper takes them up to the tower. Willie describes the lens as a small glass cathedral.

Willie signs off telling Tully that he is on his way to find someone named Waltham and believes that he's getting close. Willie has also included a photo of an enormous bonefish that he caught in Minola.

Chapter 34 Analysis

Willie runs into weather trouble, which leads him to Papeete Harbor where he meets a man named Philippe Parfait. "Parfait" is French for *perfect*. Parfait will lead Willie to the proper place to find the Fresnel lens.

When Willie sees the lens for the first time he likens it to a small glass cathedral. Seeing it is virtually a religious experience for him and it is ironic that he is soon to venture to an island where the people worship pilots as part of their religion.



Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Summary

"Trying to Catch a Little Neutral"

Tully is tickled by Willie's letter and jealous about the fish. He thinks about Dawn and what happened. He feels bad for her, but knows she'll land on her feet.

Bucky informs Tully that he will go with Ix-Nay to meet Cleopatra. Just then a plane roars in and Sammy Raye gets off the plane. Bucky assures Tully that they'll take good care of Mr. Twain until he gets back.

On the plane, Ix-Nay tells Tully that he had a vision that Tully was in trouble, but since he made it out the danger he thinks this is the beginning of his journey. After landing, Tully meets up with Solomon and Benjamin. They take Tully out to the *Lucretia* and Cleopatra welcomes Tully aboard.

Chapter 35 Analysis

Tully has been worried about what will happen to Mr. Twain and Bucky tells him that he'll be cared for until he gets back. Tully wants to make sure everything is in order for him to be able to move on with a clear conscience. Ix-Nay has had a vision about Tully being in danger. Because Tully has made it through the immediate danger of his run-in with the Stilton brothers, Ix-Nay views this as the beginning of a journey for Tully. In a sense, Tully is reborn and is now able to find his proper home.



Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Summary

"Not a Bad-Looking Piece of Driftwood"

Cleopatra tells Tully that he looks "like a shipwrecked castaway and smell worse than a shrimper on a three-day binge" (pg. 322). She tells him that he's been made the research consultant on the trip.

Cleopatra gives Sammy Raye and Ix-Nay a tour of the schooner. Solomon shows Tully to his cabin and tells him that they're headed for Cayo Loco. First, there is a bon voyage party.

Tully showers, shaves and joins the party; Ix-Nay drags him into the limbo line. Sammy Raye says goodbye, tells Tully that he's going to look into the Thelma Barston situation and see what he can dig up on her, and leaves. Ix-Nay asks why Tully looks worried. He explains that everything is happening so quickly. Ix-Nay replies that "the world spins at one thousand miles an hour. This is nothing" (pg. 324). As Ix-Nay leaves, Tully tells him that he's giving him his skiff as penance.

Later, Tully and Cleopatra are talking and she wonders if Tully is having second thoughts about his earlier decision to join the *Lucretia*. She likens the decision to an episode in *The Odyssey* when Odysseus must make his way through a difficult passage. She calls it "being between Scylla and Charybdis [kuh-RIB-dis]" (pg. 327). On one side of the passage is Scylla, a lovely maiden who is turned into a six-headed monster by her rival. On the other side is Charybdis - a dangerous whirlpool. Like Tully, Odysseus made it through the danger.

Cleopatra returns his shell to him. Tully reflects on what Johnny Red Dust had said to him about the journey he would take. He thought that Lost Boys was to be his home, but he hadn't yet reached where he needs to be.

Chapter 36 Analysis

While Tully's journey has been greatly influenced by weather, Tully is now weathered. The description of him looking at "a shipwrecked castaway" (pg. 322) is indicative of this.

Cleopatra tells Tully the story about Odysseus and the decision he must make between two dangers: the six-headed monster or the dangerous whirlpool. For Tully, Thelma Barston had been the six-headed monster, but whirlpool is representative of Tully's journey and how he has gone where the weather has led him. The Lister's conch is returned to Tully and he realizes that his journey is continuing to the home that Johnny Red Dust told him he would find.



Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Summary

"The Spare Bulb"

After leaving New Caledonia, he goes looking for Waltham, beginning in Luganville in the Espiritu Santo island chain. After arriving in Luganville, they are greeted by friendly locals and Willie is tempted to ask about Waltham, but he has a feeling that he shouldn't.

Later, at a place called the Coolidge Bar, he meets up with Jetfuel Joe. Joe asks if Willie has brought a message from Captain Keed; Willie doesn't know who he's talking about. In turn, he asks Joe about Waltham and Joe tells him he's on the island Dalvalo.

Willie's suspicion about not asking after Waltham at the airport proves to be true because Waltham is either a drug dealer or conspirator, which makes Willie wonder why Parfait has sent him looking for Waltham. Knowing the importance of finding the lens, Willie continues his search.

At another bar called the Black Hole, Willie is given kava, which he describes as tasting like "a mixture of mud-puddle water and diesel fuel" (pg. 341) and it causes a real head trip, but, surprisingly, no hangover or flashbacks. The next morning Willie is offered Spam for breakfast and is told that the older locals claim it tastes like long pie. When Willie inquires about long pie, he is told that it is roast leg of missionary. Willie asks Joe where he can find Waltham, and Joe says that Waltham will find him. Joe takes Willie to Dalvalo and Willie is greeted by locals clapping "Keed bok, Keed bok" (pg. 348). This happens again on the beach and Willie wonders what is happening.

With two volcanoes on Dalvalo - one is active, the other is not - Willie is taken back by the rumbling of earth. Waltham appears and tells him that the rumbling is like everything on the island: it comes and goes.

The people of Dalvalo are pilot worshippers and they believe that Willie has been sent from the gods with a message. When the island was infiltrated with missionaries, the people were very unhappy, especially since they had been told "that kava was evil, dancing was sinful, and wife swapping would send you to hell" (pg. 361). Waltham and his father took all the bibles from the village and tossed them in the ocean, letting the people believe that it was a sign from the gods. Within a year, the missionaries left.

A prophecy came true when debris from the volcano caused a plane crash and only the pilot - Captain Keed - survived. After being nursed back to health, Keed finally leaves the island for Pentecost Island and no one ever hears from him again. Because they pray for his return, they annually light the lighthouse to show him the way home.



Willie attends the ceremony and watches the light illuminate a beautiful landing strip; it is lit with a Fresnel lens. Willie tells Waltham that he can't take the lens, and Waltham insists that he wouldn't let him, but that there is a spare bulb. The lens was hidden in the Torres Islands, but was recovered by an Australian Navy man. The lens was then shipped to the United States to a man named Captain Stanley Singer.

Chapter 37 Analysis

Not surprisingly, the place where Willie will learn the whereabouts of the Fresnel lens is an island that boasts two important themes: weather phenomena and transition. The island is home to two volcanoes and when Willie encounters Waltham as the earth is rumbling, Waltham tells him that like everything on the island: it comes and goes. From what Willie finds out about the lens, it seems that the lens has been on a journey, much like Tully, and is soon to find its proper home.



Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary

"From a Distance"

As Tully and Diver, Solomon's son, are finishing up the Cayo Loco Fish Market when Sammy Raye's plane lands. Sammy tells Tully that all of the charges against him have been dropped.

After Tully left Wyoming and the Stiltons were unable to track him down, Thelma Barston made a run for Congress as a born-again, right wing conservative. However, it turns out that Thelma was involved in a kinky affair with a film director and Sammy Raye found out and threatened to expose her secret if she didn't drop the charges. This made Thelma furious and she ran off on a snowmobile and ran over the pink flamingoes that used to be in front of Tully's trailer. She fired her shotgun, the sound triggered an avalanche and she was killed. All the charges against Tully were dismissed; Tully is a free man.

Mr. Twain is brought to Cayo Loco along with Tully's art collection. Six months after he first arrived, Tully feels at home. This continues for months and he receives word that Willie is still searching for the lens in Australia. On Tully's birthday, the restoration of the lighthouse is complete. Cleopatra takes his picture in front of the lighthouse.

Tully teaches Cleopatra how to use the satellite phone and she waits for news from Willie. They sail to Cuba where she takes Tully to a barbershop. She explains that she was born in the chair he is sitting in.

In spring 1895, Captain Anderson Meador and his wife Lucretia arrive in Havana at the U.S. Embassy where he will work as a naval attaché. In 1898, Captain Meador left his pregnant wife to command the USS *Maine*; the next morning an explosion sinks the USS *Maine*, killing Captain Meador.

It is the middle of Mardi Gras and Lucretia goes into labor. She can't get to the hospital through the crowd and she goes into the barber shop where she gives birth. Above the chair is an Egyptian mural, which inspires Lucretia to name her daughter Cleopatra. Lucretia buries her husband in Key West and she later meets a local sailor names Patrick Highbourne, a war hero. Lucretia and Patrick are married and Patrick teaches Cleopatra how to sail.

The history of the Highbourne family is as follows: After the Revolutionary War, Augustus Highbourne moved his family from the Bahamas to Key West after a hurricane left his house in tact, but moved it a hundred feet from where he built it; Augustus took this as a sign and moved his family back to Key West. Augustus started a shipping business and built schooners. He built a house six feet above sea level and called it Highbourne Hill. Patrick Highbourne later took over the family business.



Cleopatra's mother dies of tuberculosis when Cleopatra is seventeen. Patrick sends Cleopatra to boarding school in France, but Cleopatra flees Europe before World War I. She rejoins Patrick on their ship *Queen Conch*. On her eighteenth birthday, Patrick gives Cleopatra a ship named *Neptunia*; Cleopatra changes the name to *Lucretia* and has been sailing it ever since.

Cleopatra never settles down to marry because she was married to the sea. She says, "she may be an old woman, but I still feel like a young girl on a long voyage" (pg. 395). She tells Tully she feels like she's running out of time.

After dinner, Cleopatra takes Tully to see El Cohete pitch for the Havana Industriales. After the game, they meet up with El Cohete for a visit. He signs a ball and gives it to her, and then heads home on his bicycle.

The satellite phone rings and it's Willie calling to say that the lens has been found; it's in a Miami junkyard. Willie tells them that he was able to track down Captain Stanley Singer in Michigan. Captain Singer explains that the lens was in Australia and then sold to a developer in Cuba. After Fidel Castro came into power, the lens was smuggled out of Cuba and ended up in a junkyard in Miami where it remained.

Two days later, they sail to Miami and find the lens in the junkyard. Solomon makes a list of all the things they will need to get the lens working and Tully passes along the list to Sammy Raye and Captain Kirk. They were able to locate the petroleum burner, pipe fittings and tanks. Sammy Raye commissions an engineer from MIT to make the missing hardware.

With everything in Cayo Loco, they put the lens in the lighthouse. Willie Singer arrives with Philippe and Waltham. Willie and Cleopatra become fast friends.

Cleopatra finally lights the kerosene and the light illuminates. Later, Cleopatra asks Tully if he thought they would be able to find the lens and Tully admits that he didn't. A tiny hummingbird flies in and lands on Tully's arm; Cleopatra says he is off course and that he should actually be across the gulf this time of year. The bird takes off and Tully wonders if the bird knows what his final destination is. Cleopatra replies, "few of us do" (pg. 403).

Chapter 38 Analysis

The story finally meets up with where it began at Cayo Loco. The lighthouse is restored and the Fresnel lens is in its home. Cleopatra tells Tully that the hummingbird is off course, but that he'll find his way home - just like Tully. Ironically, Tully and the hummingbird are headed in the same direction; both need to be on the other side of the gulf, though it's unclear if either of them truly knows this at this point.

Whatever karmic debt Thelma owed to the universe is paid in full when Sammy Raye discovers her sorted past. Thelma is subsequently killed in an avalanche. Tully's father was also killed in an avalanche. Comparing these two deaths, Thelma and Tully's father



are the people who would have made Tully stay in Wyoming. Had Tully's father lived, Tully might never have made the decision to leave Wyoming. If Thelma had gotten her way, Tully would be in prison in Wyoming.

As Cleopatra takes Tully to Cuba, she knows she is dying and she wants to share with him all she can before it's too late. She tells him about how she was born in a barbershop chair in Havana and they go to see El Cohete pitch. As Cleopatra takes Tully on this stroll down memory lane, she is collecting various items she will need before she passes on; one of these is the baseball signed by El Cohete. We also learn that the lens is in a junkyard in Miami. It has essentially traveled the world only to end up not far from where it needs to be.



Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Summary

"Catching the Tail of the Comet"

Ix-Nay asks to stay with Diver as a light tender and Mr. Twain settles in on the island. However, Tully is feeling the urge to move on; he's not alone. He travels with Cleopatra to Key West. It is the first time she has been there since she was ninety-eight.

Cleopatra takes Tully to Highbourne Hill and shows him the house in which she grew up. She's there to gather up some of her belongings to take back to the Cayo Loco and wants his help. Lupe Cadiz, the caretaker, and his wife Carmen help them catalogue photos, letters, keepsakes, and the like to take to the Highbourne archives at the Key West library.

Tully tape-records Cleopatra's stories and they share a great deal of laughter. Tully fishes while he's on the island and goes exploring. They stay through February. The day before they are supposed to leave, Cleopatra takes Tully to the family cemetery.

She introduces him to her father and points out the good angels and bad angels in the cemetery. Donald and Ronald Diamond, her "no-good, nouveau-riche stepbrothers," (pg. 408) are buried there with their families in the bad angel section. In the good angel section are Lucretia, Patrick, and Teddy Diamond, the youngest brother of Donald and Ronald Diamond. She tells Tully that because she never met her real father, she hopes that she turned out the way he wanted her to; Tully notes that for the first time Cleopatra looks frail.

Cleopatra claims that she needed to come back once more to say hello and goodbye. She pulls a tree lizard off a vine and it changes color. She puts it up to her earlobe and it latches on, dangling from her ear; she says it doesn't hurt. She explains that when she was a child a maid showed her how to do it; she calls it a dancing earring. Cleopatra puts the lizard on Tully's ear. She then sends Tully to Waterfront Market for ice while she goes back to the house.

When Tully gets back to the house, Cleopatra, Lupe and Carmen are not there. Cleopatra was taken to the hospital after having a heart attack. Tully goes to the hospital where a doctor comes and tells him that Cleopatra is asking for him. When he goes in to see her, he finds her dressed; she announces that she's not going to die in a hospital. She is going back to the *Lucretia* and her Dr. Malta, a Pakistani man who is also an avid sailor, is going to join them. She instructs Dr. Malta to keep her alive until they reach Cayo Loco.



Chapter 39 Analysis

Cleopatra continues sharing her past with Tully and for the first time, Tully notices that Cleopatra looks frail. They both have an understanding that time is running out. Of all that she tells Tully, two things are the most significant and one is not necessarily intentional. The first is that she had three stepbrothers, but only one meant anything to her: Teddy Diamond. Teddy will be important at the conclusion of the book. The second thing is the dancing earring trick, which will be a sign for Tully. He will soon know exactly where his home is and how Cleopatra helped him get there.



Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Summary

"The Seconds Between Light and Dark"

There is a chill in the Gulf Stream as they sail toward Cayo Loco. Tully and Solomon navigate and the crew raises the fisherman sail. After Tully finishes his watch, he heads into the doghouse and finds Cleopatra wrapped in a blanket, singing to Dr. Malta in Spanish. She asks Tully to come sit by her. He wishes her a happy birthday and gives her a present; he gives her the Lister's conch. She won't accept it. Instead, she tells him that one day he will find someone that will need it more than her.

Cleopatra then tells Solomon that when she dies the *Lucretia* is his and that there is a trust fund to operate and care for the ship. She also tells him to build a school in Dangriga to teach sailing. She tells Dr. Malta that for keeping her alive and getting her out of the hospital, the clinic he wants to build in his village in Pakistan is his.

Cleopatra turns to Tully and tells him that he is never to let Cayo Loco fall into disrepair again, and then she fires him. She knows that Tully hasn't found his home yet and she wants to make sure that he'll continue his journey until he finds it. She also leaves him Highbourne Hill so that he can fish, perhaps settle down and get married.

They see the lighthouse, the bright white light piercing the darkness as they make their way to the island. Cleopatra dies.

Chapter 40 Analysis

It is not a storm or winds that Tully notices, but a chill in the Gulf Stream as they sail toward Cayo Loco. Tully tries to give Cleopatra the Lister's conch, but she tells him to give it to someone who needs it more; little does Tully know that he's about to meet that person very soon.

Cleopatra settles her affairs, passing along her belongings to her friends. She fires Tully in order to ensure that he won't settle on Cayo Loco; this is not where he belongs, which Tully hasn't fully accepted, but will very soon. Chapter 40 concludes with Cleopatra's death as the ship approaches the lighthouse. She has seen the fulfillment of her dream.



Chapter 41

Chapter 41 Summary

"On the Back of a Crocodile"

Following Cleopatra's death, arrangements for her funeral are made. Cleopatra had already obtained a mahogany coffin and requested conch shells and dirt from Havana. She also wants to be buried with a small wooden toy box from her childhood and the signed baseball from El Cohete. The winds pick up and the coffin is lowered onto the dinghy and rowed to Cayo Loco where she is buried.

Chapter 41 Analysis

Chapter 41 is a short chapter that deals with Cleopatra's funeral arrangements. As she is buried, the winds pick up. There is no visible weather with the wind, which can be interpreted as Cleopatra's spirit traveling.



Chapter 42

Chapter 42 Summary

"Gone Fishing"

Tully takes a ride on Mr. Twain. He remembers a story that Cleopatra had told him about Donald Diamond, whom they call "Donald the Turd." Donald wanted to sell off the family land to build luxury condominiums. A cigarette boat comes by named *PAR-T-ANIMAL*, speeds by and Cleopatra, clearly annoyed, asks for her gun - an M16 - and shot the engine of the boat with everyone on board swimming for their lives. He comes to an understanding of why Cleopatra fired him; otherwise, he knows he wouldn't have left the island and he knows it's time to go.

Chapter 42 Analysis

While he was initially taken back by Cleopatra's firing of him, Tully now understands that Cleopatra has made his next step much easier. He can move on and know it is the right thing to do.



Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Summary

"A Gang of Lady Pirates"

Tully is concerned with what will happen to Mr. Twain if he leaves. He dreams that he discovers a machine that will shrink Mr. Twain to the size of a dog, but alas, this isn't to be. He even considers sending the horse to Donna Kay and Clark Gable, but fate steps in and solves the problem.

A horse, which they name Ocean, is found swimming in the channel; she may have fallen overboard from a ship, but her origins are unknown. Mr. Twain takes a liking to her and they share the corral. Tully thinks the horse was sent by Cleopatra to help Tully move on.

Tully goes up to the tower of the lighthouse with Ix-Nay for a last goodbye. Afterward he fishes at a spot that he and Diver only knew about and then he plans to start out for his new home in Key West.

While fishing, he spots a large school of bonefish with sharks and dolphins preparing for attack. Having not seen anything like this before, Tully takes it as a sign that something is about to happen. He finds a campsite on shore, sets up his hammock and builds a small fire. He naps only to woken by voices speaking French.

He sees a ketch and a sailor in foul-weather gear at the rail. Getting out his binoculars, he sees a beautiful woman on the boat. He unties his skiff and heads out toward the boat. The woman swan dives into the water in the nude. He greets her and they start up a conversation. She tells him her name is Sophie Diamant.

A large fish swims by and Tully excuses himself and grabs his fishing rod. The fish, a tarpon over 100 pounds, jumps out of the water and splashes back into the sea. Sophie starts speaking frantically in French. The fish continues its acrobatics and a little girl, Montana, appears on the boat and begins to clap. Montana is Sophie's daughter. Tully introduces himself and Sophie invites Tully aboard for breakfast.

On board, Sophie tends to breakfast and Montana works on a drawing of Tully; it is a stick figure on a boat and a large fish. Over breakfast, Sophie tells Tully her story. She was born in Corsica and her grandfather was an American from Key West. Since Sophie's father died when she was quite young, the grandfather raised her. She went to school in Paris where she studied photography and eventually landed a job on Jacques Cousteau's boat the *Calypso*. After working with Cousteau, she made her way as a nature photographer. She met Larry Moore, a mountain climbing guide from Montana. They began an affair and Larry promised, after he returned from an expedition, that he would build her "a boat and take her to Key West" (pg. 443). Sophie became pregnant and Larry was later killed by Dogon guards. Sophie went to Corsica to have her



daughter and called her Montana. Before he was killed, Larry arranged for Sophie to be the benefactor of his estate. He was worried about his upcoming trip and wanted to ensure that she would be okay. He also wanted her to build a boat and go to Key West. Sophie did what Larry asked and Sophie and Montana began sailing.

Tully is captivated by his story, so much so that he forgets to eat his breakfast. As he dives in, she asks if he's ever been to the cemetery in Key West. He tells her that he was just there and Sophie insists that Tully join them when they go back to the cemetery.

Montana runs in with a lizard and Sophie shows her the dangling earring trick. Tully is taken back. Montana sees a boat through the companionway and exclaims that it's the boat from her dreams: it's the *Lucretia*. Tully takes the Lister's conch from his pocket and gives it to Montana.

Chapter 43 Analysis

If Tully has any reservations about leaving Mr. Twain on Punta Margarita, they have now vanished. He feels comfortable leaving Mr. Twain behind because of the arrival of Ocean; he believes that Cleopatra sent Ocean to Mr. Twain.

While Tully is fishing, he sees a school of bonefish with sharks and dolphins and he views this as a sign. Throughout the book, there have been several references to large fish, and when a tarpon jumps from the water, this is the ultimate sign. It is as if the fish has jumped up to celebrate or to point him in the right direction in case he misses the obvious. Tully, though it will take him a bit of time to completely accept it, has found his home. Her name is Sophie Diamant - and Cleopatra has sent her as well. This revelation comes to him as Sophie shows her daughter Montana the dangling earring trick. A few chapters earlier, Tully tried to give Cleopatra his Lister's conch, but she wouldn't take it, stating that someone else would need it more. Now, Tully has found that person in Montana.



Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Summary

"Boats to Build"

As it turns out, Sophie Diamant is the granddaughter of Cleopatra's stepbrother Teddy Diamond. Tully tells Sophie and Montana about Cleopatra living to be 102 years old and about their adventures. They go to Cayo Loco on the *Lucretia*. Then, they go to Osprey Point to visit Cleopatra's grave. Montana places a conch shell on the grave and promises to bring one every time she returns.

In Key West, Sophie and Montana visit the cemetery. Sophie takes Montana to Marathon to visit her grandfather, Larry's father. While they are away, Tully returns to Highbourne Hill. Upon their return, Montana shows Tully that Lister's conch shell on a gold chain that she wears around her neck. Sophie and Montana decide to stay at Highbourne Hill.

Sophie and Tully are later married. Willie Singer arrives for a visit with Waltham and Parfait. Willie and Tully finally go fishing together and Willie plays a song he has written for Cleopatra called "A Salty Piece of Land."

Chapter 44 Analysis

Tully learns that Sophie is the granddaughter of Cleopatra's stepbrother Teddy. He now knows Cleopatra has helped to show him the way home. As the book concludes, Tully and Sophie are married and Tully becomes a stepfather to Montana. Montana accepts Tully by having the Lister's conch put on a chain that she wears as a necklace; this way Montana can't lose the shell.

At the end of the chapter, Willie arrives with Parfait and Waltham. Willie has composed a song in Cleopatra's honor and this song serves as the title of the book.



Epilogue

Epilogue Summary

"Survivors"

Tully is now designing boats for one of Sammy Raye's companies. Sophie has published a best-selling photography book in France. Upon hearing of Cleopatra's death, El Cohete puts a black band on his jersey, dedicates the game to her and pitches a no-hitter.

Solomon retires from sailing the *Lucretia*. Diver becomes head light-keeper and Ix-Nay stays in Cayo Loco. Sammy Raye is helping to build a boat for Ix-Nay to sail around the world; Ix-Nay will call the boat the *Cleopatra*. Bucky purchases Lost Boys with help from Sammy Raye. After falling in love with fishing, Sammy Raye sails the globe to find prime fishing spots. Dawn Barston ends up in rehab after spending all of her family's money and Noel-Christmas becomes a born-again missionary in Africa. Hector hit a \$3 million jackpot during his trip to Las Vegas and he retires. He opens a bar and calls it Kiss the Sky.

Donna Kay and Clark live in Alabama with their three children. Donna Kay sold a cooking channel idea to the Superstation in Atlanta and is now worth a fortune.

Epilogue Analysis

The epilogue is a true summation of what happens to everyone following the conclusion of the book. It is subtitled "Survivors," which is indicative of what all the characters have become.



Characters

Tully Mars

After leaving the poodle ranch where he worked in Wyoming, Tully is a fugitive after throwing a massage table through the window of his employer's house. Regardless of when he starts his journey, Tully is on a mission to find his true home.

Although a loner, he befriends nearly everyone he meets. An affable character, he is prone, however, to unfortunate luck. His ex-girlfriend shows up on the island where he works as a fishing guide. When he learns that she's not there to tell him off, but rather to tell him that she's marrying someone else, Tully is hurt, albeit briefly. He doesn't like the rejection, but feels relief from it as well. He cares for his horse Mr. Twain and holds his two-piece art collection and his Lister's conch as sacred. He believes in magic and his journey to find home.

Cleopatra Highbourne

At 101-years-old, Cleopatra is the captain of the schooner *Lucretia*. She was born in a barbershop chair in Cuba and named Cleopatra for the Egyptian mural painted above the chair in which her mother gave birth. Eccentric and forthright, Cleopatra's goal is to find a Fresnel lens to restore the lighthouse at Cayo Loco. She befriends Tully, finding him to be a kindred spirit. Obsessed with Cuban baseball, she avidly follows the career of a young pitcher named El Cohete, the grandson of her former lover.

Ix-Nay

A Mayan and Hunan (medicine man) who works with Tully as a fishing guide at Lost Boys Fishing Lodge. He carries a .45 on his belt to help scare off crocodiles and other assorted pests. He is a loyal friend to Tully.

Willie Singer

A musician who doesn't much care for his fame. He takes up surfing in his 40s and is the subject of a *Life Magazine* article about treasure hunting. He befriends Tully and helps him to find the Fulsom lens for the lighthouse. He is a pilot and, because of his many adventures all over the world, he has been asked to write his memoirs. He practices his storytelling by writing lengthy letters to Tully.



Sammy Raye Coconuts

Born Simon Cohen Jr., his family left Europe before the war and ended up in Pensacola. His parents died in a boating accident and then he goes to live with his Orthodox aunt and uncle in Alabama. When he turned 18 he inherits \$17 million dollars and goes on to become a very successful songwriter. His flamboyance, flat feet and money keep him out of Vietnam and he starts investing in real estate and liposuction technology.



Objects/Places

The Lucretia

Cleopatra's schooner. Named for her mother, the ship was a gift from her father on her eighteenth birthday.

Lost Boys

The fishing lodge that Bucky operates. It was supposed to be a refuge for a country singer named Tex Sex.

Punta Margarita

The island where Lost Boys is located. Captain Kirk takes Tully there. Tully meets Bucky, another native of Wyoming, and gets a job as fishing guide.

The Lister's conch

A good-luck totem given to Tully by Johnny Red Dust. It is a small conch shell with two purple bands wrapping around it. It is from the Indian Ocean and it how it arrived in Wyoming is unclear.

Xibalba

The nine-layered netherworld where shamans go to commune with the spirit world.

Cayo Loco

The island where the lighthouse is located.

Highbourne Hill

Cleopatra's childhood home in Key West, Florida.



Themes

Journey/Movement

Tully, despite his laid-back tendencies, is in a constant state of motion. He travels from Wyoming to Alabama and on to Punta Margarita, Belize, and other tropical locations. Yet, even when he is stationary, there is motion: he climbs in and out of the tree house when talking with Donna, he trolls along the water in his fishing boat, or sailing on the *Lucretia*. At times, he rides Mr. Twain or takes a swim to relax. Tully comments about not going to see Donna Kay in Belize, but he will travel there to purchase a truck. When he questions the priorities that influenced this decision, it seems obvious in the context of his journey. He cannot accept the role of staying in one place with Donna Kay, yet he is willing to travel to obtain another mode of transportation. Clearly, Tully's journey is the priority.

Home

A Salty Piece of Land, on one hand is a travelogue for Tully Mars; on the other, it is a manifesto for finding one's home. Though Tully is not clear on where or why he goes places, he learns to trust his instincts and the signs the universe offers to him so that he knows he's headed in the right direction. Tully may question what he's doing from time to time, but he knows that whatever happens, he will end up in the right place.

His journey is made evident at the very beginning of the book. When Johnny Red Dust gives Tully the Lister's conch, he is a young boy, though his destiny is clear: he must find his true home.

Tully spends the majority of his journey on islands or boats. The island is a symbol of isolation, solitude and death, but it also indicates refuge. The islands are where Tully goes as a stepping-stone to the next and ultimate destination. The fact that Tully meets Sophie while on a boat indicates that she, too, has been on a long search to find home. When Tully and Sophie come together, it is perfection.

Weather

Throughout most of *A Salty Piece of Land*, a storm or a sudden change of wind signifies change. Buffett does this continually, until, after putting Tully through the worst of his experiences - being captured by the Stilton brothers - he makes Tully weathered, as is evidenced by Cleopatra telling him he looks like a "shipwrecked castaway" (pg. 322). Some of the events that weather signifies is Tully navigating Captain Kirk's ship through his first storm at sea, which results in his arrival at Punta Margarita; *The Patron Saint of Lightning*, the painting Tully is compelled to buy at a flea market before even beginning his journey to the tropics; and the winds changing just before Cleopatra's death.



Even when no storm or other weather phenomena are referenced, the presence of that force still exists. For example, consider when the Jeep is stuck in a large puddle of water. Though no storm is mentioned, it can be inferred that a storm preceded his journey and ends up altering his path.



Style

Point of View

Buffett uses a first-person narrative throughout *A Salty Piece of Land*. On occasion, he shifts from Tully as narrator to Willie Singer - continuing in the first-person - through letters written to Tully. In doing so, Buffett can keep the reader informed of what progress is being made in the search for the Fresnel lens when Tully is not directly involved.

Tully is reflecting on his journey; his destination is known before he begins his story. This perspective allows Tully to comment on what is to follow. Though he seems a reliable narrator, there is no way of knowing whether it is the truth. His willingness to acknowledge his follies may offer some insight into his reliability, but at the same time should be viewed like a great fish tale where some details are undoubtedly exaggerated. Ultimately the reader is being told only what Tully wants the reader to know.

Setting

A Salty Piece of Land begins in Wyoming with Tully's childhood dream of being Roy Rogers. His cowboy wishes change, but aren't totally dashed when he sets his goal on Butch Cassidy. Ultimately, Tully becomes a traveler.

After his confrontation with Thelma Barston, Tully sets out on his journey. His time in Arkansas and Alabama are discussed in passing. Virtually the entire book takes place in tropical locales: Key West, Punta Margarita, Cayo Loco and Belize. The tropical locale adds to the relaxed ambiance where no journey can move too quickly. However, scenes taking place on boat tend to indicate periods of transition. Though the boats move slowly, they move faster than when the characters interact on land. Both Ix-Nay and Cleopatra make reference to the time moving slowly as a misnomer, since the earth is rotating at roughly 1,000 miles per hour - hardly slow.

Language and Meaning

Buffett adopts a conversational tone, inviting the reader into his confidence. The language he uses is simple. The descriptions of characters and settings hint at just enough detail to convey an image without overly stating. Tully Mars as the narrator is like an old friend sitting down to share what's been happening in his life.



Structure

The opening chapter of *A Salty Piece of Land* balances both past and future. At first, the reader learns about Tully's past in Wyoming, but he's reflecting on this from a destination he will reach much later in the book. This is indicative of Tully's situation: he is a man in flux, trying to find his proper place.

The book includes a dedication and a quote from *The Little Prince*. Also included is the following quote from Pascal:

"We sail within a vast sphere,

Ever drifting in uncertainty

Driven from end to end"

A content list includes all the chapter titles and the relative starting pages.

Buffett includes an author's note, explaining that as he is beginning to write *A Salty Piece of Land* it is November 2001. He comments that George Harrison has just passed away and the events of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 weigh heavy on his mind.

The book begins, and for the most part, follows a linear path, with only a few instances of time moving forward or backward. Following the epilogue of the book, Buffett includes an Afterward. This second author's note, written in May 2004, justifies the subject matter of the book, noting quite clearly that the book is escapism, which is something he feels is needed. There is a brief author's bio and an audio cd, which includes the song "A Salty Piece of Land," performed by Jimmy Buffett.



Quotes

"You are one of the lucky ones who hold the melody in your heart. But be warned: it is a wandering song carried by the winds and the currents. It can turn you into a piece of driftwood that washes up on shore, but one day, when you find the place that is meant to be, you will take root." Chapter 2, pg. 16

"There's a strange sense of pleasure being beat to hell by a storm when you're on a ship that is not going to sink." Chapter 3, pg. 19

"I assured him I was no ax murderer, and he assured me that I would not be on his boat if I were. He told me he had actually gone to see with an ax murderer once, and he knew how they behaved." Chapter 3, pg. 24

"I think darkness is the thing humans fear the most, for it takes away our advantage. In the dark, we have to rely on our instincts to survive, and as a species, those feelings haven't been around the track in a while. You put all that fear onto the deck of a rolling ship in mountainous seas on a pitch-black night, and you can begin to understand why it was a sailor who probably painted the image of the patron saint of lightning." Chapter 4, pg. 35

"Johnny Red Dust had told me that people who nurture and love animals are better humans." Chapter 5, pg. 43

"Somewhere out there I felt the presence of Captain Hook in the form of a pissed off poodle rancher." Chapter 5, pg. 44

"The funeral business, as dreary as one might imagine, did have one useful asset - a supply of long black limousines, which also filled the bill for celebrities who passed through town on concert tours." Chapter 6, pg. 54

"But as Venus drew the curtain of the night sky up over the eastern edge of the horizon, we were simply jockeys straddling the back of that giant, unpredictable crocodile called life." Chapter 8, pg. 91

"Ix-Nay said that the appearance of a land breeze that shouldered no visible weather carried spirits instead." Chapter 9, pg. 100

"I think that what connects some people to the art they like is not wishing they could paint it but rather wanting to be *in* the scene that the artist has painted." Chapter 13, pg. 130

"Suddenly the answer appeared like one of those messages in an old magic eight ball: 'Hey dumbass, you left your lucky shell on the boat.'" Chapter 19, pg. 197

"I called it post-traumatic-theme-park-stress-release therapy." Chapter 24, pg. 236



"I felt as if I were in a movie - because it was only in the movies that a guy like me could ever wind up with girls like Dawn and Noel-Christmas" Chapter 30, pg. 275

"...the Fishmobile has three basic gears - forward, neutral, and reverse. We have only two. There is no reverse on the road of life, Tully. You just keep moving forward, and every now and then you try to catch a little neutral." Chapter 35, pg. 319

"Son, I have been around a long time, and I can tell you that in saving one's self from his own devices, there is luck involved. But it is more about friends. You better thank your lucky stars and that shell of yours that you have a few. They came to your rescue because you were worth saving." Chapter 37, pg. 328

"From a distance, things appear to be what they are not. Our planet looks to be a calm, blue jewel floating in space, but on the surface, there are wars, riots, and rock concerts." Chapter 38, pg. 383

"□the trouble with being a survivor is that you find yourself dancing alone a lot. It is a tricky seesaw on which the survivor has to sit. On the one side is your ability to be comfortable in a world inhabited only by yourself. And on the other side is your desire to share your time with others." Chapter 40, pg. 418



Topics for Discussion

Weather plays a major role in *A Salty Piece of Land*. Discuss both the positive and negative impacts weather has on Tully's experiences.

Tully seems to make a friend wherever he goes, yet, for the most part, he is a loner. Discuss how he is able to balance this dichotomy. Which is the life he prefers? Why?

Discuss the role of magic in *A Salty Piece of Land*. Is it real or is it something Tully creates to explain what happens in his life.

Does Tully ever find a home? Or is the journey his true home? Why? Explain.

Compare Cleopatra to Grandma Ghost. How are they similar? Different? Explain.

Tully has a two-piece art collection. How do the pieces of art relate to his journey?

Is Thelma Barston really the reason for Tully to begin his journey? Was she an excuse for a journey he would have taken anyway? Explain.