

Time and Again Study Guide

Time and Again by Jack Finney

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

Contents

Time and Again Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter 1.....	6
Chapter 2.....	8
Chapters 3 and 4.....	10
Chapter 5.....	12
Chapter 6.....	14
Chapter 7.....	15
Chapters 8, 9, and 10.....	17
Chapter 11.....	20
Chapter 12.....	22
Chapter 13.....	24
Chapters 14 and 15.....	25
Chapter 16.....	27
Chapters 17 and 18.....	29
Chapter 19.....	31
Chapter 20.....	35
Chapter 21.....	37
Chapter 22.....	39
Characters.....	42
Objects/Places.....	45
Social Sensitivity.....	47
Techniques.....	48
Themes.....	49



<u>Style.....</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>Quotes.....</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>Topics for Discussion.....</u>	<u>57</u>
<u>Literary Precedents.....</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>Related Titles.....</u>	<u>59</u>
<u>Copyright Information.....</u>	<u>60</u>

Plot Summary

This novel of speculative fiction tells the story of a lonely, frustrated artist in New York City who journeys back and forth through time. It is in many ways written in the tradition of similar novels written by H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, using real-life science as a springboard for a narrative that explores the possibilities of what might happen if the principles behind that science were taken further. Within that context, the novel explores themes of personal responsibility and the relationship between past and present.

The novel begins as Simon (Si) Morley's regular day at work as a graphic artist in advertising is interrupted by the arrival of an unexpected visitor, Ruben Prien, who invites him to participate in a mysterious government project. At first Si is hesitant, but is soon convinced to give the project a try. He then undergoes a bewildering series of tests, the results of which prove he's an exceptionally good candidate - but for what, exactly, is still unclear.

Shortly after the tests are completed, Si is introduced to Danziger, the head of the project. Danziger explains that he and other scientists are exploring the theory that it's possible that the past exists at the same time as the present, and that a person can travel into it. He also tells Si he has more potential for successfully completing such a journey than any of the other potential candidates, and tells him what period in the past the scientists want him to visit. Si has other ideas, and explains his interest in visiting a moment at which a mysterious event in the family history of his girlfriend Katie occurred. After debating Si's proposal with board members overseeing the project, Danziger agrees. Si then begins an extensive process of training in which he's taught about the manners, history, and attitudes of the period of the past to which he's been assigned - the winter of 1882 in New York City.

The training process is soon complete, and Si makes a very brief journey into the past. Once Danziger and the other scientists are satisfied that the present hasn't changed in any substantial way, they agree that Si should go back for a longer visit and investigate the incident. Si makes the journey and observes the incident, tracking one of the participants to a particular boarding house and then returning to the present. Once more the scientists are satisfied the present hasn't changed, and plans are made for Si to go back into the past once again, on an even longer visit to conduct further investigations.

Si once again completes the journey into the past, taking a room at the boarding house. While there, he falls in love with Julia Charbonneau, a young woman running the place. Conflict arises when Si discovers that Julia is involved with the emotionally volatile Jake Pickering, who also happens to be the suspicious character Si followed to the boarding house. Si's detective work continues at the same time as his feelings for Julia deepen, bringing him into a tense relationship with Jake. This eventually leads Si to tell Julia what he's learned about Jake, and she insists upon accompanying him when he goes out to observe a mysterious rendezvous between Jake and another man, Carmody, who is the mysterious family member in Katie's past.

Neither Jake's plans nor Si's plans proceed as they'd anticipated. They both, along with Julia and Carmody, are trapped in a deliberately set and quickly spreading fire. Si and Julia escape, both feeling guilt at having been at least partially responsible for the fire but both realizing there was nothing that could be done. A visit by the ruthless Chief of Police convinces them that there is a plot to make them criminally responsible, and they spend two very tense days on the run, ending only when Si makes the desperate choice to take Julia back to the present with him.

Si spends a pleasant day educating the sometimes wonderstruck, sometimes fearful Julia about the 20th Century. At the end of the day, however, she announces her decision to return. When Si expresses concern that the police will still be after her, Julia reveals that she knows the truth of what happened in the fire, which leads Si to understand the truth behind the mysterious incident involving Carmody. Julia returns to the past and Si returns to the scientists at the project, explaining what happened and expressing his desire to leave the project. The scientists tell him they want him to go back one more time and change a crucial event in the past to improve the present. Si refuses, saying no one has the right to tamper with reality that way. They insist, he reconsiders, and arrangements are made for him to return. Conversation with Danziger, however, convinces him that his original impulse was right - the past should remain as it is and the plans to change it can't be allowed to develop further. Si agrees, and when he returns to the past, he eliminates the possibility that the entire project could be started in the first place. He then returns to the boarding house, preparing to start a new life with Julia.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

This novel of speculative (science) fiction tells the story of a lonely, frustrated artist in New York City who journeys back and forth through time. It is in many ways written in the tradition of similar novels written by H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, using real-life science as a springboard for a narrative that explores the possibilities of what might happen if the principles behind that science were taken further. Within that context, the novel explores themes of personal responsibility and the relationship between past and present.

Si is in the middle of what he describes as a typical boring Friday at his job creating artwork for an advertising agency when he gets word that he has a visitor. Glad of the diversion, although not expecting anyone, he goes down to the reception area and meets Ruben Prien, who asks for an immediate hour of his time. They go out to get some lunch, strolling along Fifth Avenue, Si's favorite street in New York, getting sandwiches and eating in the park since Ruben insists they eat outside where they can't be overheard.

As Si and Ruben eat, Ruben explains why he's there - to offer Si the opportunity to participate in a once in a lifetime adventure. He explains that he works for a secret government agency searching for people to participate in a potentially dangerous project, and adds that the agency has gone into Si's background and has discovered he fits the profile of the kind of person it is seeking - quiet, a little lonely, unfulfilled. He also refers to the fact that Si is an artist, mentioning that the agency owns a couple of his privately sold paintings. Si is both suspicious and intrigued, becoming more so when Ruben asks him to give permission for someone from his agency to search Si's apartment. At first Si resists both the job opportunity and the request for the search, saying he wants the weekend to think about it. For a few moments, he reflects on the few friends he has, the few girls he's dated (including the one he's anticipating marrying, Katie Mancuso) and the generally unexciting nature of his life, and realizes that there wasn't a whole lot wrong with it except for the big gaping empty hole at its heart.

In the time Si has been wondering, he and Ruben have finished their lunches. As they walk back to Si's office, Ruben asks again for permission to conduct the search. Si agrees, which Ruben says is evidence that he's already decided to take the job.

Chapter 1 Analysis

There are three layers of function in this chapter. The first is to create a sense of mystery and suspense, putting the reader in much the same position as Si. Just enough information is offered to intrigue both reader and protagonist, to make both curious, and to draw both into a chain of events that even at this point seems difficult to avoid. This

sense of identification between reader and protagonist is reinforced by the novel's first person narrative perspective - in many ways the reader is as much of an "I" as Si is.

The second layer of function in this chapter is to create the sense that Si doesn't have much of a life in the present, making the lure of excitement and adventure offered by Ruben a large part of why the previously mentioned chain of events is unavoidable. This sense of a relatively meaningless life is created through the careful detailing of Si's boring job, his few friendships that seem to exist more out of habit than anything else, and above all his romantic relationship that seems to have come into being because the participants were just there, rather than because of any mutual desire or passion. This sense of a small life serves both to create a clearly defined starting point for Si's emotional and temporal journey, and to foreshadow his final choice to create a new life in the old world. This foreshadowing is the chapter's third layer of function.

Another piece of foreshadowing can be found in Ruben's reference to Si's paintings, foreshadowing both Danziger's request in Chapter 5 for a sketch of his parents on the day they met and the several occasions when Si's sketches are included in the text.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Si goes on a playful trip to the country with Katie, during which he reflects on how they met - when he went into the small antique store she owns. He also reflects on the collection of old photographs she has in the shop, and on how detailed they are but that they are just snapshots of life, not a life truly being lived. Finally, he reflects on how much he enjoys Katie's company, but then makes clear in his narration that he's not going to tell the reader everything, saying he's the kind that will keep most things to himself.

The day after his outing, Si tells his boss he's quitting, and then calls Ruben to tell him he's taking the job, on one condition - that he be allowed to tell Katie the truth about what he's doing. Ruben agrees, and three days later Si seeks out the address Ruben gave him. At first, it appears to be that of a moving company, but after greeting Si, Ruben reveals the company is just a front for the operations of the agency.

Si undergoes a series of psychological tests conducted by Dr. Rossoff. These tests include finding out how susceptible Si is to hypnosis. At the conclusion of the tests, Rossoff says he believes Si is an ideal candidate. Rossoff then calls in Danziger, who explains that he's the director of the agency, and that he envies Si for the opportunity he's being given. He tells Si he's in for an experience he will never forget, tells Ruben to start showing him the things Si needs to see, and asks to see Si again later in the day.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Again, there are multiple layers of function in this section. The first is similar to the first layer of function in Chapter 1, to offer just enough information to both satisfy at least a portion of both the reader's and Si's curiosity, and to simultaneously generate even more curiosity so that both reader and protagonist are pulled further into events.

A second layer of function is to introduce one of the novel's recurring motifs or images, the photographs. In his narration, Si refers several times throughout the book to photographs as being only a moment in a life or an event, and to his awareness that life existed both before and after that moment. This perspective colors his views of the past when he's there, by his awareness of the flow of time as opposed to focusing on the isolated importance of individual moments *within* that flow. This awareness increases as he spends more and more time in the past, realizing both that things are very different but also that many things remain the same. This is not to say that he is unaware or dismissive of the importance of those moments, but rather that he has a simultaneous awareness that there is more to life than what images of those moments represent.

Si's sense of the flow of time, and of the relationship of that flow to the moments that exist within it, manifests throughout the novel in several ways. This occurs most notably

in the novel's thematic examination of the relationship between past, present and future - specifically, the idea that no moment in time ever exists in isolation, that actions in the past can and do have a profound effect on the future.

A third layer of function can be discerned in Si's almost passing comment that he's not going to include every detail about his relationship with Katie. This is important for two reasons. First, it builds on the understanding gleaned in the first chapter that there is little actual passion between Katie and Si. This idea is reinforced further later in the book when Si experiences very different feelings for Julia and refers to her in more detail and with much more feeling. He never becomes passionate about her, but he does reveal more of his feelings. He reveals little about his feelings for Katie. This is another important component of the personality sketch of Si contained in these first few chapters, along with the clearly defined boredom and emptiness of his life.

Chapters 3 and 4

Chapters 3 and 4 Summary

Chapter 3 - Ruben takes Si on an extended tour of the agency's complex, first leading him down a long hallway lined with classrooms in which Si sees people learning to dance the Charleston, speak Medieval French, and how to fight with weapons from World War 1. At the end of the tour, Si is led into a large, frighteningly deep and cavernous warehouse that contains what looks like several stage or theatre sets, and in which there are people playing out different roles and scenes. One set and the action played out therein is described in meticulous detail - a small town street in the Midwestern United States early in the 20th Century. Si watches and describes the action as a man greets his neighbors and goes through his daily routine. Ruben explains to him that everyone interacting with the man is actually an actor, paid to help him immerse himself in the culture and society of the time. Ruben shows him several other similar sets and scenarios, some of which are still under construction. He apologizes the whole time for confusing Si, saying he's got to see what's going on before he can understand it. Finally, he tells Si it's time to go see Danziger.

Chapter 4 - Si and Danziger meet in the cafeteria, as previously arranged. Si notices that the girl who was learning to dance the Charleston and one of the young men learning to fight in World War I are also there, having lunch. As he and Si eat, Danziger begins a long and detailed explanation of what the agency is doing and why, exploring Einstein's theory that the past continues to exist in the present. As part of his explanation, Danziger arranges for Si to visit The Dakota, an apartment block that continues to exist in the present exactly as it did almost a hundred years in the past. While on his visit, Si takes several pictures, which are included in the text.

Following his return from the Dakota, Si continues his conversation with Danziger, who tells him The Dakota is one of several similar locations to which the agency has access. He adds that in each location, the agency is attempting to recreate past conditions in exact detail, and that it hopes to use each one as a doorway to the past. He speaks at length about how potential agents like Si are being trained for specific journeys into the past, and that the girl doing the Charleston and the young man studying World War I are undergoing just such training. He assures Si that the agency has no motive for its experiments other than intending to prove that going into the past can be done. He reveals that he has already decided on Si's assignment - into the San Francisco area during the early 1900s, before the earthquake. Si boldly asks to be sent back into New York's past instead, offers a specific date (1882) and the explanation that he wants to watch a man mail a letter. At first Danziger is puzzled, but when Si offers to explain his reasons for his request, he agrees to at least listen. They arrange to meet the following day.

Chapters 3 and 4 Analysis

These two chapters resolve several of the mysteries hinted at in the first two chapters - the nature of the agency's work and the adventure Si is to go on, as well as the scientific background giving rise to both. The key point to consider here is that the author has used reality as the basis for fiction, "speculating" what might happen given certain facts or beliefs. This is the origin of the term "speculative" (as opposed to "science") fiction. Albert Einstein is a real scientist and his theories as defined in Chapter 4 by Danziger are real, but exploration of those theories, at least the kind of exploration explored in this narrative, is not. This relationship between reality and fiction is developed in several other ways throughout the book - the fire that serves as the book's climax, for example, actually occurred. Another way is the incorporation of various photographs, appearing for the first time in Chapter 4 and recurring, in various contexts, throughout the book. They are, of course, actual photos from the period but were not taken by a visitor from the present. They, like the fire, are examples of the way the author has taken not only science but also history and used them both as springboards for both an entertaining story, and to ask thematically intriguing ethical questions, in particular, whether the past should be changed.

The detailed description in Chapter 3 of the training being undergone by the young man foreshadows similar training Si will undergo in Chapter 7. The passing reference to World War I foreshadows a moment much later in the book (Chapter 21) in which Julia, brought into the present from the past, is shocked and troubled by photographs of the war. It also foreshadows one of the reasons Si decides to stay in the past - the war, and its inevitable negative effect on humanity, is still very much in the future. Other foreshadowing can be found in the references to other potential journeys, the outcomes of which are described later in the book - the one to Medieval France, for example, succeeds, while the one to World War I fails.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Si narrates how after one of his dates with Katie, she told him a story from her past - how she was adopted, how her adoptive father's father Andrew Carmody was a minor official in the administration of American President Grover Cleveland, and how Carmody killed himself under mysterious circumstances. She also shows him a photograph of Carmody's grave, which has no date or any other inscription other than a pattern of a star in a circle made by a series of small holes or dots. She then shows him a letter sent to Carmody, bearing the postmark of a particular date and time in January, in which the sender asks him to meet at a certain place and time to discuss a particular issue. She tells how, several years later, Carmody scrawled a mysterious suicide note on the same letter and then shot himself. Katie adds that Carmody's wife had the body buried without any kind of post mortem or autopsy. Finally, Katie says the letter and the story behind it have haunted the lives of both her and her father.

Si recounts how he told the story to Danziger and showed him the evidence, saying he wants to go back in time to find out who mailed the letter and why. He also recounts how Danziger is doubtful that his board of directors (including the military representative Colonel Esterhazy) would approve the idea, and how the board eventually agrees. When Danziger gives Si the good news, he adds that at approximately the same time as the letter was written, his parents met for the first time. Danziger expresses the hope that if the project is a success, Si will be able to sketch the way his parents looked that day. Si tells how his excitement about the project gave way to doubt as his training got underway.

Chapter 5 Analysis

The appearance of the mysterious letter sets in motion the second of the novel's three main plotlines, the mystery of the letter. The first, anchored by the narrative of Si's experiences with Danziger and his project, was set in motion by the appearance of Ruben Prien. This plot serves as a vehicle to examine both thematic and literal aspects of the relationship between the past and the present. The third plotline, introduced a few chapters further on, is the development of the romantic relationship between Si and Julia. It's interesting to note how the structure of *Time and Again* is such that single events often play important roles in all three plots, moving the action along in each one. The specifics of that technique will be discussed as they occur.

In the meanwhile, there is an interesting and vividly defined parallel between the emotions and desires motivating the first two of those plots. Katie and Si's curiosity about the letter is essentially similar to the curiosity referred to by Danziger as the explanation for why he and the other scientists are doing what they're doing. In this parallel can be found a statement of one of the play's secondary themes - that life, both

in terms of scientific understanding of it and emotional filling of it, is able to move forward only as the result of the human determination to know and understand.

Danziger's request for a sketch of the moment his parents met foreshadows the moment at the end of the book (Chapter 22) in which Si is indeed present at that moment, which turns out to have a bearing on future events that Danziger, in making his request, could not have foretold.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

This chapter documents Si's training process - his introduction to the clothes, food, language, history, and manners of 1882. Over time, he grows his hair and beard to enable him to fit into the styles of the time, he's shown photographs of the era that have been reproduced by artists to give more of a sense of life, of actually being there. He also learns to hypnotize himself and give himself post-hypnotic suggestions that make him behave in a certain way until he hears a certain voice or cue word. The intent of these lessons in hypnosis is to make it possible for him to let go of the present and enter the past. Katie helps him in this process a great deal, quizzing him on the knowledge he acquires. As his training draws to a close, Si writes postcards to his friends, family, and colleagues to explain why he may be out of touch for a while. A day or so later he dresses in old-fashioned clothing, and is taken to an empty room in the Dakota, where he begins his life in 1882.

Chapter 6 Analysis

This chapter is the first of several that contain extensive historical detail, apparently the product of painstakingly detailed research by the author. In and of itself this detail is interesting, but it does tend to slow down the movement of the narrative. This chapter also contains the first of several reappearances of the previously discussed motif of the photographs and their relationship with the flow of time - Si refers repeatedly to the photos he's shown as being little more than moments. As such, the photographs serve to deepen his excitement and eagerness to go into the past and explore the life behind and around those photographs. Finally, this chapter introduces hypnosis as the means of returning to the past, an aspect of the story that becomes less and less important as Si becomes more and more adept at moving back and forth between time frames.

The Dakota becomes an important focal point of both the action of the book and a theory behind that action. Danziger's belief is that movement into the past is easier in physical locations that have remained unchanged for long periods. The Dakota is one such location - Danziger explains that the apartment Si is to inhabit was uninhabited during the same dates decades earlier, and believes that this will make his shift into the past both easier and unnoticed. This principle becomes important later in the novel, when Si uses another location existing in both time frames (the arm of the Statue of Liberty) to make the jump between periods.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Si describes his 1982 routine, including references to mistakes made in details like the way fresh, delivered food is wrapped. From the description of the mistake it becomes possible to understand that he hasn't actually slipped back into time, which was the sense generated at the beginning of the chapter, but is in fact being trained in the Dakota in the same way as the man in the small town (Chapter 3) was being trained. His routine is interrupted at one point by a visit from Ruben and a young woman named May. Both are dressed in period costume. They invite him to go skating with them, but Si refuses. Later in their visit, May plays the organ in the living room, with all three behaving in the way that individuals in 1882 would. After they leave, Si recounts incidents in the next few days by glancing out his window to imagine that he was looking out on the world of the past. He also recounts how his imaginings were being interrupted by passing cars and other distractions. He then tells how he stopped looking out windows altogether.

One evening it snows quite heavily, and Si once again looks out his window, finding it much easier to imagine that he's back in time now that everything is covered in a thick blanket of snow. His thoughts are interrupted by the arrival of Rossoff, who gently hypnotizes Si into briefly forgetting the present day; into believing he's actually living in 1882; and, into going for a long walk in which he interacts with no-one. Finally, he makes the post-hypnotic suggestion that when Si wakes up in the morning he will remember everything, both the life of the present day and what happens on the walk.

Si narrates how he was embarrassed when he woke up after falling asleep during Rossoff's visit, his impulsive trip outside, and his encounter with a laughing couple passing by on a sleigh. He also tells how the passing treads of the sleigh and his own footsteps had disappeared under the snow when he looked out again from his apartment, how he observed a cleaning woman silhouetted in a museum window, and how he fell asleep the instant he got into bed.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Aside from offering intriguing and entertaining detail about Si's training process, the most important part of this chapter is the description of Si's first actual trip into the past. The writing of this section skillfully creates doubt in the minds of both Si and the reader, doubts about whether Si actually was successful - did he really go back in time or did he just imagine it? This re-engages the sense of mystery about the book, the sense of suspense and forward momentum and of wanting to know. It's interesting to note how the previously discussed thematic element of curiosity functions as a defining impulse on both the characters and the reader.

A significant contribution to this sense of suspense is a subtle shift in writing style in the final third of this chapter when Si takes his walk. The narration is still written from the first person point of view, but the phrasing suggests that instead of telling what happened from the perspective of full awareness, which is the case in the rest of the book, this section is written from the perspective of Si's post-hypnotic *limited* awareness, that of his experience in 1882. For example, his reaction to waking up is his 1882 reaction, and he has no awareness of why he was asleep. In addition, his reaction to the passing sleigh-riders is his 1882 reaction. There is no awareness that there should also be cars on the street. With this very slight but very specific stylistic shift, the author takes the reader further into Si's experience, creating even more of a sense of identification with him.

The disappearance of the footprints and the sleigh tracks is one of this fairly straightforward book's few symbols, and represents the way any and all traces of Si's visit to the past disappear when he returns to the present. On another level, the disappearances foreshadow the moment at the end of the book when the aspects of the present that made his visits possible also disappear. Meanwhile, the specific detail of the cleaning woman in the window plays an important role in triggering the book's remaining action, a role defined in the following chapter.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 Summary

Chapter 8 - Ruben, Rossoff, and Danziger go over Si's story repeatedly to determine whether he really was back in 1882 or whether he merely imagined it. Finally, the detail of seeing the woman in the window of the museum makes it definite - the window could not be seen from the window in the present day because there are other apartments in the way. The sudden, intense jubilation of the scientists that their theory has been proven correct quickly gives way to more scientific activity as they examine Si's memories to determine whether his knowledge of the present world, or indeed the present world itself, has changed because of his journey. Everything checks out fine.

After a date with Katie, after which she seems slightly disappointed at his explanation of his absence, Si returns to the apartment in the Dakota - the agency has access to the room for only a few more nights, and they want him to try and get back to the past again, this time without Rossoff's help. Si is willing to try, but as he's preparing his dinner he's surprised by the arrival of Katie, who has come dressed in period costume and says that because the letter is hers, she's decided to go back with him and discover its origins herself. Si tries to talk her out of it, but she insists, and Si eventually agrees. After an evening spent in the way a couple of 1882 would spend an evening, including sleeping in separate bedrooms, the next morning they hypnotize themselves into the past, giving themselves the post-hypnotic suggestions to see who mails the mysterious letter and to not interfere with other events. They also tell themselves to remember at some point on their way home that they are in fact from the present and become observers.

When Si and Katie wake up, they are back in 1882. They go out for a walk and start to make their way to the post office where the letter was mailed. Katie has a physical reaction to being in the past and is about to faint. Si tries to help her but he too starts to feel faint, and they both suddenly remember that they are visitors in that time. Their post-hypnotic suggestion has taken effect.

Chapter 9 - Si and Katie board an 1882-style bus and travel down Fifth Avenue, remarking as they go on the buildings that are still there in their own time, buildings that haven't been built yet, and on buildings that are partially completed. Si observes how people are dressed and their manners in greeting each other, taking particular note of a beautiful woman whose face is scarred from smallpox. After a while, Katie points out Carmody's house, recognizable from the address on the letter. Soon afterwards, Katie confesses that she's feeling overwhelmed and needs some quiet and privacy. Si says he feels the same, so they get off the bus and hail a cab. Si tells the cabbie to take them to the post office by the time on the letter's postmark. The cabbie speaks rudely and sets off. Si reflects on how some things in New York (e.g., rude cabbies) never change.

Chapter 10 - Si and Katie's cab ride to the post office is interrupted a couple of times, first by an 1882-era horse-drawn fire engine rushing down the street, and second by an 1882-era traffic jam, compete with horses, carriages, delivery vehicles, pedestrians, shouting, crashes, and ear-splitting noise. When they finally get to the post office, they watch every person that comes in and study the letters they mail. They finally discover the one they're looking for - Si recognizes the envelope, the handwriting, and the exact way the stamp is a little crooked. What he doesn't recognize is the man delivering it - tall, husky, bearded, chewing a cigar and hoisting a big belly.

Si and Katie follow the man out to the street where he catches a cab and gives his home address as 19 Gramercy Park. Once he's been driven off, Si and Katie go to where he stood, and Katie notices that his boots left an imprint with the same design as Carmody's tombstone. As she and Si puzzle over what this means, they make their way back to the Dakota, where they sit in front of the fireplace and discuss what they experienced. At one point Si suddenly wonders whether they're back in the present, and Katie says they must be, saying while they were on their way back to the Dakota they decided it was time to come back and just . . . came back. Si looks out the window and the line of traffic in the street below confirms it - they're back.

Chapters 8, 9, and 10 Analysis

These three chapters primarily function to develop the novel's two main plots: the traveling back into time plot, and the mystery of the letter plot. The latter is handled in a straightforward manner, as Si and Katie (and therefore the reader) glean more information that simultaneously answers some questions and raise others. The most important piece of information is the discovery of the footprint, foreshadowing both the discovery of a similar footprint after the fire in Chapter 19, and Julia's eventual solving of the mystery in Chapter 21. It's clearer at this point more than ever that this plot functions essentially as a good mystery, a "whodunit," a "why-dunnit" and a "what-he-done" all in one, drawing the reader into the action and creating the sense of wanting to know more.

In terms of the traveling back in time plot, the action takes on two additional layers of complication with the revelations that another person can accompany Si and that they can retain awareness of both past and present when they're in the past. Both these elements foreshadow important developments later in the action. In addition, within the parameters of this plot, it becomes even clearer how much research has gone into this re-creation of the New York City of 1882. This section is one of those in which evidence of that research becomes self-conscious, with forward movement of the story practically stopping dead as Si exhaustively details what he's seeing and the differences/similarities between the past and the present. That being said, there is thematic and narrative value in these comparisons, with the extensive detail offering illumination of the wonder and dislocation Si and Katie both feel. At the same time, there is also an increasing sense of suspense as both the characters and the reader wonder whether they will learn how to navigate this strange and familiar city in time to see what they came to see.



Perhaps most importantly, the amount of detail highlights the novel's key thematic question of the complex relationship between past and present. This is accomplished most dramatically by the repeated descriptions, both in this section and in other sections, of buildings and streets in the past that have survived into the present and the surprised awareness with which Si and Katie register those that haven't. It's also accomplished in the detail of the woman with the pockmarked face, which functions on two levels - as a reminder of diseases like smallpox (which caused the pockmarks) that have been eradicated in the present, and how things that are common and accepted in one era (seeing faces with such scars) would be completely out of place in another. Later in the novel, the relationship between past and present is defined by Si and Julia's awareness of changes in the faces of people inhabiting the streets of New York. All these narrative manifestations of the novel's core theme create a very interesting tension with circumstances described in Chapter 8 - the determined insistence of the scientists working on the time travel project that history isn't changed.

For a while, until they decide there is value in changing history, the scientists seem determined to keep things the way they were/are. What Si and Katie, and by extension the reader, discover is that doing so is impossible - that time, almost by definition, is nothing more or less than a means by which the process of inevitable change can be measured. The novel's key thematic question, as specifically defined by the action in later chapters, is whether that process should be deliberately affected or whether it should simply be *allowed*.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

Once again, Si is asked an extensive series of questions to determine whether he changed anything in the present by being in the past, and once again it seems to the scientists on the project that he didn't. This time, however, there are many more people who attend the questioning and the sessions afterwards during which Si tells what happened. He omits any mention of Katie, narrating how he decided to tell Danziger later, and in private.

As the members of the board of directors meet in a closed session to discuss what to do next, Si waits in Ruben's office. Finally, he's called back into the meeting, and Esterhazy sums up what's been discussed - concerns about Si changing the present when he's in the past. He says the Board has determined that major changes are unlikely, but also warns that because the project is funded by the government, the people signing the checks are eager to see real, practical, usable results, and want to see the results faster than pure researchers like Danziger are prepared to offer them. He concludes by saying that control of the project still rests with Danziger, and that his orders won't be countermanded.

Later, in Danziger's office and with both Danziger and Ruben in the room, Si proclaims his loyalty to Danziger, and Danziger accepts it gratefully. He also tells Si what he's to do on his next visits to the past - continue to observe the man who mailed the letter who, it must be remembered, was connected somehow to Carmody, who was in turn connected to President Cleveland. He tells Si that all the historians, sociologists, physicists, and others associated with the project agree that this is one way they can all begin to understand the practicalities and potential benefits of what Si is doing. Si agrees, at the same time committing to minimizing any direct relationships he might have in the past. Ruben then tells Si, firmly and almost threateningly, that this time he goes without Katie. When Si expresses curiosity as to how Ruben knew she had gone, Ruben explains that he (Si) is constantly watched, and that further risk must be minimized. Si agrees, and Ruben then becomes less aggressive, volunteering to take Si back to the Dakota.

Chapter 11 Analysis

This chapter contains the first of several examples of the previously discussed idea of an incident playing a role in one or more plots. Si's decision to return to the past functions in all three plots as he is reminded again about the dangers of changing the past, is instructed to investigate the murder thoroughly, and makes the fateful trip that will both introduce him to Julia, his beloved, and kick the love story into action.

The most important element in this chapter is the various developments involving Danziger. These include Esterhazy's declaration of loyalty to Danziger, a comment that becomes deeply ironic when, later in the novel, Esterhazy takes over control of the experiment and Danziger is effectively banished. Another important development is Si's own profession of loyalty, a comment that does *not* become ironic but instead plays a key role in the novel's narrative twist in Chapter 22.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

This chapter begins with Si having already arrived in the past and having made a plan of action. On his way to make that plan a reality, he's surprised to see the area behind the Dakota and the area where the museum is in the present filled with farmland. The text includes two sketches Si says he made.

Later Si arrives at 19 Gramercy Park, the address given by the man who mailed the letter to the cab driver (Chapter 10). Si says in narration the house looks much the same in both the past and the present. A sign in a window reveals that the house is a boarding house, a fact that fits into Si's plan - he asks the young woman who opens the door to him whether there is room for him, and she says there is. As she shows him the room, she introduces herself as Julia Charbonneau. Si, revealing in narration that he finds Julia very attractive, introduces himself, saying he's from out of town and might not be familiar with New York customs. Julia teasingly tells him that she doubts it will take him long to adjust. Alone in his room, Si has a moment of desperate homesickness, realizing how far away he is from everyone and everything he knows and loves, but then excitement at the adventure he's on takes over.

On his way down for supper, he encounters Felix Grier, who says that he too is a border, that he's a photographer, and that it's his birthday. He takes Si's photograph, and shows him photos of the other borders, all of which are included in the text. When Si goes downstairs he's met by Julia, who introduces him to her Aunt Ada, the woman who owns and runs the house. As Ada takes Si on a tour of the parlor, showing him her prized souvenirs of several trips around the world, two other boarders arrive, Maud Torrence and Byron Keats Doverman. They all sit down to dinner, with Si anxiously watching to see when and/or whether the man who mailed the letter will arrive.

During conversation at dinner, and during some festive birthday party games afterwards, Si makes the occasional comment or displays a lack of understanding of events that cause Julia to look at him curiously. Later, she tells him it's his turn to entertain the company, and Si uses his key from the Dakota to do a sketch of her in the frost on a window. Julia and the others look at it perplexed, and Si suddenly realizes he used a 20th Century technique. He does a fuller sketch on a larger window, realizing as he does so that the man who mailed the letter is coming up the front walk. When the man comes in, he introduces himself to Si as Jake Pickering, seems disturbed that Julia and Si are paying so much attention to each other, and reveals that he's Julia's fiancé. When he and Si shake hands, Pickering applies so much pressure that Si's hand is almost broken, and is swollen and sore for hours afterwards.

That night, Si reflects on how he and the scientists in the present miscalculated - that just by interacting with people he is changing the past. For a moment, he considers returning, but then realizes that the following day is the day mentioned in the letter that

triggered Carmody's suicide, and that he has to stick around at least to see what happened.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Another of the book's few symbols appears in this section; the collection of souvenirs Ada shows Si. They represent the importance and meaning of the past in the lives of the present, echoing and illuminating Si's response to sights in the New York of the past that he finds moving because they exist in his present. The other side of the coin, the way the present seems anachronistic or out of place in the past, is represented by Si's several slight but clear slip-ups. These represent the way the present can misinterpret or not take into account the past, and as such, foreshadow the actions of Esterhazy and Ruben in Chapter 22, in which they want Si to change the past in order to improve the future. In other words, the perceptions of Si in this moment and Esterhazy/Rube later both fail to take the past, its values and reality and integrity, into account.

The story's third plot, the romance between Si and Julia, begins in this section. As previously discussed, Si's comments about and descriptions of Julia are, even at their first meeting, threaded with more feeling than anything he says about Kate. Also, this chapter contains another example of the same incident functioning within two plots - the appearance of Jake Pickering moves the mysterious letter plot along and also provides an immediate obstacle to the romance plot.

The other members of the household in the boarding house - Ada, Felix, Maud, and Byron - play relatively minor roles in the action. Of the four, Felix is interesting because he ostensibly provides the camera that takes the photos Si includes in the narrative. These photos, it must be remembered, are actual photos used by the author for a purpose not originally intended - they are of people other than characters in the book. This is another example of the way the author uses the past to define the present, an idea that also plays a role later in the narrative when Si is asked to change the past to *re-define* the present. The only other member of this quartet of supporting characters is Byron Keats Doverman, who doesn't do too much in the action but is notable for his name - Byron and Keats are both the last names of important romantic poets.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

The following morning Si deliberately comes down late for breakfast, avoiding contact with the other boarders. As she serves him, Ada gently admonishes him that breakfast is generally served much earlier, hinting that if he wants to get a job he needs to get going more quickly. As Si eats his breakfast, Julia comes down, sees he's looking at the paper, and asks what his plans for the day are. Si tells her he needs to get some clothes. She comes over to look through the advertisements with him, and Si narrates how he was unusually aware of her presence, her cologne, and her beauty.

Julia offers to show Si the shops, saying they're on the way to where she's going - the Ladies' Mile. Si happily agrees to go with her and gets ready to go out, taking with him his sketchbook and some pencils. The rest of the chapter is taken up with descriptions of what Si sees on his travels with Julia through the New York of 1882 - children playing in open parks where there are apartment buildings in the present, the habits of men with their pocket watches, and the quality and quantity and variety of goods in the various women's shops. Si also tells about seeing the arm of the Statue of Liberty, standing upright in the middle of a park. Julia tells him the rest will be arriving soon, once it's decided where the statue is to be placed. Si jokes that he knows the perfect place, naming the island where the Statue is in the present.

A conversation about Julia's reaction to a speech given by Oscar Wilde leads to a discussion of Jake Pickering, and Si, who admits in narration to falling a little in love with her, tries to convince her that Jake would not be a good husband. Julia tells him Jake would be a good provider, and that that's just about the most important thing to a woman. She goes off to complete her shopping, leaving Si to wait anxiously around for the rendezvous arranged in Jake's letter (Chapter 5).

Chapter 13 Analysis

This is one of those chapters in which extensive historical detail and description (e.g., evidence of research) threatens to overwhelm narrative action. The center half, including the descriptions of the Ladies' Mile and the reference to the speech by Oscar Wilde, which actually took place, suffers particularly from this. That being said, two of the novel's three main plots are further developed. The relationship between Julia and Si deepens as they walk and explore the city, but is also troubled by the conversation about Jake Pickering. In terms of the time travel plot, the reference to the arm of the Statue of Liberty (which was exhibited separately from the rest of the statue for a time) foreshadows its role in Si and Julia's escape from the police in Chapter 21.

Chapters 14 and 15

Chapters 14 and 15 Summary

Chapter 14 - From a hiding place across the street from the meeting place defined in Katie's letter, Si watches as Jake waits for Carmody. Carmody arrives, and he and Jake cross the street to a park bench. Si slips out of his hiding place and behind a statue near the bench. He listens as Carmody and Jake first argue politely over whether their conversation should be conducted in such a place, where no one in their right mind would be sitting at this time of year, and then get down to business. Jake explains that he works as a clerk in City Hall with the express intention of discovering the whereabouts and activities of the participants in a fraud scandal related to a group of businessmen called The Tweed Ring. He tells how his investigations have, for the most part, led to a series of dead ends, and how the fruit of his labors such as invoices and other documents, are kept in his office. He then says one trail is still very much alive - a trail leading to Carmody, who Jake says fraudulently contracted for millions of dollars worth of expensive Italian marble to be installed in civic buildings, many of which have no marble in them. He threatens to expose Carmody if he doesn't hand over one million dollars within a few days. Carmody protests that all his money is tied up and isn't available, but Jake says he's bluffing. They argue over who has the more influence with Byrnes, the Chief of Police, and finally Jake repeats his deadline, making an appointment for a meeting at midnight in three days time. The men then leave, and Si steps out from his hiding place, watching them go.

Chapter 15 - Si tracks down the building where Jake has his office, and with some difficulty finds the actual room in which he works. The building also houses the operations of a newspaper called the New York Observer, and Si feels a shudder of nervous foreboding when he sees the name. He's unable to actually get into Jake's office, and has to content himself with a glimpse through the keyhole of his desk and chair. He then returns to the boarding house, where he lies down for a rest.

Later that afternoon, after Julia has returned, Si tells her and Ada that he has to leave - he's had an urgent message from his family and has to return home to work on the farm. They both immediately understand, and express their regret at seeing him go. As he's going upstairs to finish packing, Julia suddenly remembers that he agreed to draw her portrait properly as opposed to sketching it in frost on the window. Si has a moment of doubt when he realizes that leaving something in the past changes it, but then gives in to his feelings of attraction for her, sits her down, and starts drawing.

The other residents of the boarding house return one by one; all including Si become concerned that Jake will return and react badly. Eventually Jake actually does come back, but when he sees what Si's doing, he turns and goes right back out, saying practically nothing. Si finishes the portrait, and then gives in to Ada and Julia's insistence that he stay for dinner. As dinner is finishing, Jake comes in, drunk and with a bloody shirt. Julia reacts with fright and starts towards him, but he gestures for her to

stay where she is and opens his shirt, revealing a brand new tattoo - her name, inked across his chest. He says that the tattoo means that Julia belongs to him forever, and then goes upstairs. Julia immediately follows him, and just as immediately Si tells Ada he has to leave, gets his bags, leaves the boarding house, and takes a cab back to the Dakota, wondering how Danziger and the others will react to what he's done.

Chapters 14 and 15 Analysis

These two chapters are mostly action and information oriented, deepening both the mystery plot and the romance plot. There is an important piece of somewhat heavy handed foreshadowing in the first of several references to the New York Observer, which foreshadows the important role that a sign advertising the Observer plays in Si and Julia's escape from the climactic fire in Chapter 19

.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

When he returns to the present, Si gives himself a day to get used to being back in the present. He then starts to walk towards the agency, but on an impulse takes a detour to 19 Gramercy Park. On the way, he observes vivid differences between the people of the past and the people of the present, differences he sees mostly in their faces and attitudes. When he arrives at 19 Gramercy, he discovers that the building is pretty much the same on the outside, and rushes up the front steps and rings the doorbell. He asks the woman who answers whether she knows anything about Julia Charbonneau, but she doesn't. Si has just enough of a glimpse of the interior of the house to see that the floor is the same as it was in the past, but everything else has changed.

When Si returns to the agency, his debriefing process is very different - everyone, from Rossoff down to the secretaries and interviewers, seem distracted. In addition, the interview process goes on much longer. Eventually Rossoff explains why - while a couple of other attempts to get into the past failed, one succeeded, but in spite of the extreme care taken by the traveler, a man was eliminated from history. Rossoff says Danziger, Esterhazy, Ruben, and the rest of the board are all meeting to discuss the future of the project, and they want Si's input.

As Si joins the meeting, Danziger is saying that the risk of future attempts could result in a change in history, and that any change in history is too high for the project to continue. Esterhazy very smoothly suggests that the risk is minimal, given that there was only one shift in history in all the attempts that were made, and that in the grand scheme of things, that particular shift was relatively insignificant. Danziger loses his temper and suggests that no shift is insignificant. In the meantime, the results of Si's debriefing become available, and it turns out that absolutely nothing has changed since he came back. Esterhazy suggests that this means the risk of change is even less than they originally thought, Danziger says he's going to shut down the project, and Esterhazy says that can't happen without a majority vote from the board. He calls for the vote, and the board supports continuation of the project. Danziger immediately resigns and leaves the boardroom.

After the board members have a chance to read the reports on Si's visit, Ruben and Si go out for lunch. Ruben argues to convince Si to stay with the project, and Si ultimately agrees. After his attempts to communicate with Danziger fail (he's already left the office and isn't answering his phone), Si visits Katie, telling her everything that happened. She expresses her gladness at his decision to continue the project, and urges him to continue to find out what happened to Carmody. The following day Esterhazy, in his position as the new head of the project, explains that that's exactly what the board wants Si to do. Ruben returns Si to the Dakota, with Si still concerned that he hasn't had a chance to talk with Danziger.

Chapter 16 Analysis

The first part of this chapter lays the groundwork for Si's decision at the end of the book to remain in the past. Firstly, his descriptions of faces in the present that lack the energy and excitement and joy and hope of the faces in the past is particularly noteworthy, in that he eventually discovers a similar joy in himself through his relationship with Julia and also greater hope for the future in the past than he has in the present.

Perhaps a more important factor in Si's decision can be found in developments in the narrative's main plot, as Esterhazy deliberately manipulates Danziger out of a position of authority. This foreshadows Esterhazy's desire in Chapter 22 to send Si into the past to change the present, and is a defining example of the kind of self-serving attitudes in the present that Si is so desperate to escape. There is some evidence, in fact, to suggest that Esterhazy and Jake are parallel characters, both acting out of selfishness with little or no regard for the beliefs and values of others.

An extremely important element in this chapter is the reference to the man who disappeared from history as the result of another visit to the past. This significantly raises the stakes in all three plots, creating an even greater sense of risk and/or danger for Si as he goes back and forth.

Chapters 17 and 18

Chapters 17 and 18 Summary

Chapter 17 - Si returns to the past, and immediately feels comfortable in 1882 New York. He feels less comfortable about returning to 19 Gramercy Park and the possibility of renewed conflict with Jake. He is therefore surprised when he arrives at the boarding house and is greeted joyfully by all the tenants *including* Jake, and is invited to join a sleigh ride. Following a joyful, playful ride through the streets, which are filled with other sleigh-riders, the party returns to 19 Gramercy, where Jake tells Si that he and Julia have set the date for their wedding. Si manages to conceal his negative reaction, offers his congratulations, and then goes off on his own to think.

He walks for a while, rides a bus for a while, and then rides on top of the bus with the driver. The driver talks at length about how hard life is for him and his family and about the hundreds of homeless children making their homes in hay bales down at the railway station, and finally questions the religious faith of the time which indicates that everyone should be grateful for the blessing that is life on earth. Si returns home, having realized that the people living in New York, including Julia, are more than just people in a postcard come to life - they all have the same rights as people in the present to a happy, fulfilling future. He decides that no matter what the consequences to the present, he's going to break up Julia's engagement to Jake, convincing himself that marriage to a man like Jake would result in a lifetime of suffering for Julia.

Chapter 18 - The next day is the day of the meeting between Jake and Carmody, but because it isn't scheduled to take place until midnight, Si fills the time by wandering the streets of New York taking pictures, which are included in the text. He also spends time in the building where Jake has his office, reacting once again with a shudder of apprehension when he sees the name of the New York Observer. He smooth-talks his way into getting a key and duplicating it, searching Jake's files, and making sure there's a way to overhear and see what transpires during the meeting. He also formulates a plan to break up the engagement, putting it into action during a tension filled evening at the boarding house in which both Si and Jake (presumably nervous about his meeting) are on edge. At one point Si asks pointed questions about Chief of Police Byrnes, and several tenants respond with horror stories of Byrnes' ruthlessness in interrogating prisoners. Si is gratified to notice that Jake is extremely upset by this turn of the conversation. Later, Si tells Julia he's a private detective investigating Jake, telling her all the things he's learned. Julia says nothing but listens attentively. After Si is finished, Julia sits in silence for what feels to Si like a long time. They hear the front door open and close, and realize that Jake is going out. Julia tells Si plainly that she's going with him, and Si agrees, telling her to meet him in the front hall.

Chapters 17 and 18 Analysis

In contrast to the previous chapter, in which the focus was mostly on developments in the time travel plot, these chapters focus mostly on developments in all three plots. It's interesting to note here how incidents function much less exclusively within one plot or another and more on various levels of narrative at the same time. Si's arrival in the past, for example, moves the time travel plot forward by showing how much joy he feels in the life of the past as opposed to the lack of joy he felt in the life of the present as recounted in Chapter 1. It also moves the romance plot forward by putting him in the same sleigh as Julia and giving him the opportunity to share his joy with her. Meanwhile, the news that Jake and Julia have set a date defines a new obstacle in the romance plot, and fuels Si's determination to get the goods on Jake's criminal activities in the mystery plot. The information Si has gathered, in turn, moves the romance plot further along when he uses it to try to convince Julia that Jake is no good. Finally, Si's conversation with the bus driver affects the time travel plot, in that it inspires Si to leave his life of misery, which he sees as a parallel to the lives of the boys on the docks. It also affects the romance plot, in that he decides to act to move Julia away from the life of misery he believes she'll have with Jake.

There are several important foreshadowings in this chapter. The repetition of the sense of foreboding Si has when he sees the name of the New York Observer and his preparations for a later visit to Jake's office both foreshadow events in the following climactic chapter. The reference to Chief Byrnes foreshadows Byrnes' menacing appearance in Chapter 20, in which he uses similar techniques to those described here to manipulate Si and Julia.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Si and Julia hide in a small room just off Jake's office, waiting for him to return with Carmody. They don't have long to wait - the two men arrive shortly after the time appointed for their meeting. Si and Julia listen and watch with growing horror as Carmody says he'll give Jake ten thousand dollars instead of a million, Jake threatens to ruin Carmody and his family in society, and Carmody in a fit of anger cracks Jake over the head with his cane and ties him to his chair. Then follows nine long hours as Carmody searches Jake's files for the invoices incriminating him, his efforts continuing in spite of Jake telling him the invoices aren't kept in one file and that only he understands the system. Carmody continues his search, regardless, but then realizes he has another option. He lights a cigar, but drops his match to the floor into a pile of discarded files and allows them to catch fire, saying he can always destroy all the files, not just the ones relating to him, and adding that no-one will mind if the old, abandoned building goes up in flames as well. He frees Jake from the chair, intending that he escape. Instead, Jake falls on the flames and attempts to douse them with his body so that his means for blackmail will survive. The flames are spreading too quickly for him to succeed and for Julia and Si to remain in their hiding place. They burst forth and rush out of the room, urging Carmody and Jake to do the same.

The flames are spreading so quickly and so thoroughly that it soon becomes impossible for Si and Julia to get out of the building by any of the main doors. They eventually have to escape out a window and across a sign advertising the New York Observer, taking refuge behind a police barricade as they watch firefighters attempt to rescue people trapped on the building's upper floors. In several cases, ladders prove too short and several people lose their lives but there are also several exciting rescues, one of which involves Si racing to the aid of a trapped young woman. He narrates how his actions were the result of guiltily believing he was part of the cause of the destruction. Julia feels the same way, but Si recalls Katie's letter, which referred to a fire and its destruction, realizes he has no reason to feel guilty, and reassures Julia.

Si and Julia make their way back to the boarding house, where they both rest and wait for news that Jake survived the fire, which doesn't come. Later in the evening, they return to the scene of the fire, watching as the burnt out shell of the building collapses. Overcome by their feelings they later walk in silence for hours, with the pain and guilt they feel slowly ebbing away. At one point Si discovers several footprints near the site of the fire with the same markings as those discovered by Katie in Chapter 10, the same markings as those on Carmody's tombstone. When Si points them out to Julia, she tells him that many men had those markings on their shoes as "a good luck sign." In narration, Si reflects on the mystery the markings represent, and assumes that they indicate Carmody survived the fire.

Later on in their walk, Si and Julia pass a ballroom and look inside, where they see several beautiful, well-dressed and bejeweled women watching the dancing at a society ball. Si looks for one woman in particular and finds her - Mrs. Carmody, without her husband, unlike the other woman accompanied by their spouses, who is watching the dancing with complete composure and apparent confidence that she's in the social world where she both belongs and has striven to be. In his narration, Si comments that at that moment he knew why Carmody acted as he did - social advancement was so important to both him and his wife that he was willing to do anything to procure the money to gain that advancement. He and Julia then turn and walk away, returning to their lives at the boarding house.

Chapter 19 Analysis

This lengthy and action-packed chapter contains three clearly defined sections, recounting events before, during, and after the fire. The first section focuses on the contest of wills between Carmody and Jake, with Si and Julia as increasingly shocked and increasingly uncomfortable observers. The key point to note here is the similarity between Si's inability to participate in the specific events in Jake's office and his being forbidden to participate in events in the past in general. In both circumstances, he is imprisoned - in the office by his hiding place, and in general by the rules imposed by Danziger. What's particularly interesting is that while in both circumstances he seems to be helpless, in both circumstances he ultimately makes the choice to act - to escape from the fire, later to rescue people from the fire, and ultimately to change the past by moving there. There is perhaps a secondary thematic point here suggesting that action is ultimately better than inaction, that participation in events has more value than passivity. This idea is supported by the idea that Si realizes happiness, both as a consequence of his actions here, but also presumably as a consequence of his choice in Chapter 22 to make his home in the past. In other words, the novel is making the thematic point that action leads to happiness.

A third noteworthy point, illustrated in the first section by Carmody's explanation of why he committed the fraud with the marble, and in the third section (post-fire), is the indication that Mrs. Carmody is extremely socially ambitious. Both references lay the groundwork for the explanation provided by Julia in Chapter 21 of what happened during and after the fire.

The main body of this chapter is taken up with extensive, detailed descriptions of the fire, of Si and Julia's escape, and of their efforts to help others escape. There are several noteworthy points here. The first is that while the action here is intense and functions on important levels in all three plots, it is *not* the novel's climax. That point comes in Chapter 22, when Si is faced with the choice whether he should return to the past under circumstances he considers unconscionable. The key point here is that a climax generally can be defined as a point of personal and/or emotional and/or spiritual and/or moral crisis for a central character, not *merely* a point of physical crisis as Si faces in the fire. The true climax, in Chapter 22, fits all these criteria - the choice he faces at that point is a crisis in all four areas of his journey.

A second important point is that, as previously discussed and as referred to by the author in an after-word, this incident actually happened - there was a fire in the building described, and several of the deaths and rescues, including that of the young woman, were documented in newspapers of the time. The author also notes, however, that the cause of the fire was never determined. His placement of the fictional Si and Julia within this non-fictional context is yet another example of the novel's central technique of using reality as the foundations for fiction. A third is that it follows through on all the foreshadowing relating to the New York Observer. The sign across which Si and Julia escape is an Observer sign, meaning that the sense of foreboding Si experienced whenever he saw the sign or the name of the paper was related to the danger he experiences during the fire.

The fourth and perhaps most significant point of note about this section concerns the thematically key question of just how responsible are Si and Julia for what happens, for the fire itself, and for the deaths it caused. Could those deaths have been prevented if they'd revealed themselves earlier and helped to put out the fire, or was it all as inevitable as Si claims? His reference to Katie's letter tends to sound like an attempt to let himself off the hook - the fact that the writer of the letter blames himself becomes irrelevant when the fact that Si and Julia were there and could have at least attempted to stop it is taken into account. Yes, the letter writer started the fire, but by their delayed reaction, Julia and Si, to at least some degree, enabled it to continue. They do seem to bear at least some responsibility, a sense that seems to color their attitudes and actions in the third section. This relates to the play's core theme examining what, exactly, is the responsibility of an individual to the past and/or the present and/or the future.

The third section of this chapter focuses on Si and Julia as they deal with their reactions after the fire. In the same way as there were several layers of function in the center section there are several layers here, the first being a dramatization of simple human shock after surviving a traumatic experience. Si and Julia's feelings on this level are simply but evocatively sketched in. The second level of function relates to the similar function in the first section, in that part of their shock has to do with their sense of guilt. The action of this section has to do with them releasing that guilt, but whether this is a true representation of their level of responsibility is open to debate. A third level of function relates to another previously discussed point, Mrs. Carmody's social ambitions, which were spoken about in the first section of this chapter and vividly dramatized in this section. Her appearance at the ball on the very day her husband was at least hurt and at most killed in the fire shows just how important social advancement is to her.

A fourth layer of function relates to the discovery of the footprints. This primarily serves to keep the mystery plot alive, as Si links the footprints with the pattern inscribed on Carmody's tomb, leaps to the conclusion that Carmody survived the fire, and recalls the puzzle in Katie's letter that led him into the past in the first place. He seems to have forgotten, however, that back in Chapter 10 Katie discovered that *Jake's* boots left the same pattern. Julia's passing reference to many men having such markings on their boots *almost* explains the fact that Si doesn't even mention Katie's discovery, but not quite. There seems to be either a mistake on the part of the author or forgetfulness on the part of one of his characters. Whichever is the case, the point must be made that if

Si put two and two together and made the deduction here that Julia makes in Chapter 21 that it was in fact Jake who survived the fire, taking Carmody's place, there wouldn't be much reason for the rest of the book (particularly the suspense filled following chapter) to exist.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

The next morning, over a very late breakfast and with there still being no news of Jake, Si reads newspaper accounts of the fire to Julia, reassuring her there was nothing they could have done to prevent it. They are interrupted by the arrival of a police officer, who takes them out into a police carriage where they come face to face with the infamous Chief of Police Byrnes, who rides with them in a steadily more threatening silence to the police station. There they are photographed and their money is taken. Si attempts to stand on his constitutional rights to speak with an attorney, but is quickly beaten into submission.

Byrnes loads Si and Julia into the carriage again, where they are taken to the home of Andrew Carmody. They are greeted by Mrs. Carmody, who addresses only Byrnes, and by Carmody himself, who is seriously burned by the fire and speaks from behind a mask of bandages. He explains that the doctors have told him that as the result of his burns he will be disfigured for life, and then identifies Si and Julia as the two people he saw in Jake's office just before the fire started. He tells a partially true story of the relationship between himself and Jake, admitting the blackmail but understating the amount of money Jake asked for and omitting any mention of his fraudulent deals with the marble. He also accuses Si and Julia of being in on Jake's plan, of setting the fire with the intent of murdering him, and of being responsible for Jake's death. At that point, a police officer returns, claiming to have found a large wad of money in Si's room. Si tries to protest his and Julia's innocence, but Byrnes doesn't seem interested in hearing him, only in placating Carmody. He leads Si and Julia outside, where he tells them that in a court of law it would only be their word against Carmody's, that more hard evidence needs to be found, and that they're free to go. Si and Julia walk away, but when they hear Byrnes shout to one of his officers that the prisoners were getting away, they start to run. Byrnes fires several shots after them, but they escape.

Si and Julia spend the remainder of the day eluding the police, discovering that copies of the photographs taken at police headquarters have been distributed. They eventually decide the best way to escape is to split up and make it more difficult for the police to spot them. They arrange to meet later in the day, and go their separate ways. Si attempts to get some money from his room at the boarding house, but discovers that it's being watched by two of Byrnes' men and that he can't get in. He meets Julia; they again elude the police, and eventually spend a cold night in the arm of the Statue of Liberty. At one point Si wakes up and, without previously considering it, tells Julia the truth of who he is. Julia thanks him for telling her an entertaining story to keep her mind off her troubles. They fall asleep again, and when Si wakes up for good in the morning, he almost gives himself up, thinking he has no alternative. Then he realizes that he does, and putting an arm tightly around Julia, he hypnotizes himself into waking them *both* up in the 20th Century. His plan works - he and a terrified Julia come to consciousness in the present time, still in the arm of the Statue of Liberty now attached

to the full statue and in its place in the harbor. At first, Julia is terrified, but when Si tells her that the story he told her in the night is the truth, she becomes relaxed and almost joyful.

Chapter 20 Analysis

The mystery plot takes an intriguing and suspenseful twist in this chapter, at the same time triggering a chain of events that affect both the romance plot (as Si and Julia are drawn closer together by their adventures) and the time travel plot (as Si and Julia make their escape into the present). Carmody's comment that he has been disfigured plays an important role in the deduction of the truth accomplished by Julia in the following chapter, while the way Mrs. Carmody addresses only the Chief of Police is yet another example of her social ambitions. The Chief is far more socially important than two apparent criminals or even the lowly police officers accompanying him. It's interesting to note that in his narration, Si portrays Byrnes as being, in his own way, just as socially ambitious as Mrs. Carmody. Specifically, Si comments on the way Byrnes' words and accent seem to be overlaid with a shallow layer of sophistication. This is a stark contrast to the brutality and cunning Byrnes displays as he participates in the framing of Si and Julia, a situation that pays off the earlier foreshadowing of the nastiness of his character.

Another paid off piece of foreshadowing is the earlier reference to the arm of the Statue of Liberty, which serves as both a hiding place and point of transportation to the future for Si and Julia. The arm's symbolic value is clear - the liberty it represents is also clearly expressive of the liberty gained by Si and Julia, both from the immediate pursuit of Byrnes when they hide and the larger danger he poses when they flee into the present.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

Si takes Julia through Manhattan, showing her both the places that have changed since her time and the places that haven't. At one point, she becomes overwhelmed and asks to be taken to his home. Si takes her to his apartment, where her fear quickly transforms into excitement. Leaving her absorbed in the miracle of television, Si goes out and buys her some modern clothes. After a few comic struggles with the clothes and getting the right kind of look, Si and Julia go out into the city for more sightseeing.

That night Si and Julia have dinner in his apartment. While they're having coffee, Julia looks through some of Si's books, becoming particularly upset when she finds one about World War I and becoming even more upset when she understands that there was a second. For his part, Si contemplates the negative aspects of life in the present - pollution, racism, war, and more - and insists that Julia has to return home so she doesn't have to experience them. After confirming with him that he loves her, and confessing that she loves him, Julia nevertheless agrees that she has to go back. When Si expresses concern over what Byrnes and Carmody might do to her, she surprises him with her theory about what happened the night of the fire. She says that before they were arrested she spent time packing away Jake's things, noticed his boots with the strange pattern on them, recalled seeing the pattern in the snow, and realized that it was *Jake* who survived the fire, not Carmody. She believes Jake went to Mrs. Carmody, who would have ended up with no money and no social status if Carmody had died, and agreed that Jake, who had been scarred to the point of non-recognition, would take over Carmody's identity in order to get them *both* money and status. She reassures Si that once she gets back to her own time, which she says feels more real to her than the present, she'll confront him with her deductions and thereby enable herself to live in peace. Si sees her point, and agrees that she must go back. She puts on her old clothes; they take a cab to the base of the Brooklyn Bridge, say their farewells, kiss . . . and Julia walks back into the past.

Chapter 21 Analysis

It is interesting to note the parallels and differences in the two trips Si takes through Manhattan, the one he takes in Chapter 8 through the past with his girlfriend from the present (Katie), and the one he takes in this chapter through the present with his girlfriend from the past (Julia). On both trips, many of the same locations are visited, similar wonder at what's changed and what hasn't is experienced, and comments are made about the differences in the faces of the people. In other words, this chapter and Chapter 8 both are concerned with making the novel's core thematic point about the relationship between past and present, and developing the idea that some things never change while other kinds of change are inevitable. There is also a parallel unrelated to

the experiences of the characters, in that for a while the novel loses track of why they're where and when they are, becoming just the tiniest bit self-indulgent with details.

Developments in all three plots re-take the focus in the second half of the chapter, after the travelogue of the first half. Si's reflections on the negative aspects of the world of the present and his and Julia's mutual expressions of love advance both the romance and time travel plots and also foreshadow his determination and decision to leave. Here again is an example of the novel's masterful way of moving several plots along through the development of a single situation. Other examples of plot movement include the way Julia deduces the apparent truth at the core of the footprints and the letter which resolves the mystery plot, how the romance plot is moved along by deepening Si's love and admiration for Julia, and how dramatic tension is created in the time travel plot by making it clear Julia's both free and safe to return. This tension is increased at the end of the chapter when she returns, leaving both Si and the reader again in a similar position - knowing that Si is unhappy in the present, both because of the way the present is and because Julia isn't there. The stage is set, therefore, for the novel's climax in the following section.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

This chapter begins in the middle of a conversation between Esterhazy, Si, and Ruben. Esterhazy and Ruben tell Si that the debriefing has come up with the same results as the others - nothing in the present has changed as the result of his activities in the past. They then give him new information - that Carmody/Jake did in fact influence President Grover Cleveland in a way agency researchers hadn't been able to define before. Carmody/Jake apparently convinced Cleveland to not come to a peaceful resolution of a conflict with Cuba, a resolution that if it had come to pass would have resulted in Cuba becoming non-communist and perhaps another US state. They tell Si they want him to go back one more time and reveal Carmody/Jake's true identity, discredit him completely, eliminate any possibility of his influencing Cleveland, and thereby make Cleveland's peaceful solution happen. They argue that decades of conflict with communist Cuba would have been avoided, and even hint that the balance of power between the US and the communist world would change. Si argues that no-one has the right to make that kind of change, saying this is exactly what Danziger was afraid of and that there can be no way they, or anyone, can be sure that changes resulting from such a change would be minimal. Ruben tells him firmly that whether he goes or not, the desired change will be made. Si considers, and then tells the others that he is prepared to see his part of the project through to the end and that he'll go back. He says he needs a week to prepare, and the others happily give it to him.

During that week, Si visits Katie, and he tells her everything about what happened. They realize that Julia's theory about Jake taking over Carmody's identity would explain why Mrs. Carmody refused to let anybody see her husband's body - she wanted nobody to see the tattoo of Julia's name on his chest. Si and Katie also agree that their relationship, while pleasant, has no real future, and they part as friends. Also during the week Si summons the courage to call Danziger, is shocked to hear how old and defeated Danziger sounds, and is surprised when Danziger insists that Si do whatever he has to do to stop Esterhazy's plan. Finally, he recounts how he spent several days writing down the account of what happened to him, musing on how he might get it out to the public - going back into the past, leaving it in the New York Public Library (when it's eventually built) where an archivist friend in the present will someday find it.

A few days later, Si makes the journey to the past. He walks by 19 Gramercy Park and considers calling on Julia but goes instead to purchase a cigar. He makes his way to the place Danziger told him his parents met (Chapter 5). He waits to see the man Danziger described as his father, and then instead of watching him go into the music hall where he would have met Danziger's mother, Si steps forward and asks him to light the cigar he just purchased. This prevents Danziger's father from being inside at the exact moment at which he would have met his future bride, and Si recounts that he's just done exactly what Danziger asked him to do. By preventing his (Danziger's) parents from meeting, he's prevented Danziger from coming into existence, which means he's



prevented the project from coming into existence and eliminated any possibility that the past could be changed in the way Esterhazy wanted it to be and Danziger was afraid it would be. Si then returns to 19 Gramercy Park, and to the true love that the project made possible.

Chapter 22 Analysis

This chapter contains the novel's climax as Si faces the physical/emotional/moral choice of returning to the past on the agency's terms. There are several ironies at work here. The first is that when they make their request, Esterhazy and Ruben have no idea that Si not only has his own reasons for returning to the past (Julia), but that he also has a means of ensuring the agency's plans don't come to fruition (preventing Danziger's parents from meeting). Granted, when he agrees, Si hasn't yet formulated the plan - he doesn't do that until after his conversation with Danziger. The possibility is still there, however, meaning that the irony is still at play. The key question is why Si agrees to go when he does. He hasn't yet heard Danziger's somewhat pathetic plea to preserve the integrity of his original vision, so he can't agree to go back because he wants to stop the agency from changing the past. Perhaps he wants to go back to be with Julia and agrees to the idea because by doing so he'll be able to circumvent the spying that caught Katie's unauthorized journey (Chapter 11) - if he tried to go back without agreeing he'd be just as unauthorized and, in all likelihood, prevented from doing so. It's also possible that when he agrees, he does not intend to do what Esterhazy asks of him when he's there. Once he's in the past, the agency has no way of controlling his actions. Whatever the reason, he does agree, and his motivation is never really explained in the text.

The more significant irony here is that Si accomplishes Danziger's goal of eliminating the danger posed by the agency by doing exactly what Danziger was afraid of - changing the present by changing the past. Danziger's existence is wiped out in the same way as the man whose disappearance so upset him, and herein lies the novel's key dramatization of its main theme. Where does the responsibility lie for the effect the past has on the present and vice versa?

By making his climactic choice to return to the past and change the present, not just by eliminating Danziger but also by staying, Si resolves the two remaining plots: the time travel plot and the romance plot. The mystery plot was resolved in Chapter 21 through Julia's deductive explanation of what happened in the fire. At the same time, Si's completing a personal journey of transformation, having changed from a lonely, unhappy man with very little life in the first chapter to a happy, fulfilled man with more life than he ever dreamed was possible by the novel's culmination. By making the choice to stay in the past, Si is again dramatizing the play's secondary theme, that acting on one's desires brings happiness.

The final twist of having Si place his novel in the library is an entertaining one, and explains why the novel contains the pictures and sketches it does. The reader is left with the sense that while the events contained in the novel are not quite probable, there

is a tiny, tantalizing hint of possibility that ignores the flat statements of the logical mind and speaks to the curious, hopeful, imaginative part of the human soul inherent in the novel's characters and the reader alike.

Characters

Simon (Si) Morley

Si is the novel's central character, an attractive but somewhat aimless young man who seems to be in his late twenties or early-to-mid thirties. His outlook on life at the beginning of the novel is summed up in the first of the "Quotes" listed in this analysis - he sees his existence as empty, pointless, and devoid of both feeling and meaning. That being said, he does exhibit the admirable trait of compassion as shown through several circumstances in the novel. These include his striving to solve the mystery troubling his girlfriend, his desire that the woman he loves in the past not be condemned to a life of suffering, and his unexpected rescue of the girl trapped in the fire. For the most part, though, he feels emptiness at the heart of his life, an emptiness that gets filled as the result of his experiences. Aside from being taken on an actual physical adventure through the course of the narrative, he is also taken on an emotional one, developing romantic intimacies he's always desired and never experienced. In addition, and perhaps most interestingly, he is also taken on a moral journey, with beliefs about humanity both formulated and challenged. He serves as the novel's first person narrator, meaning that every event and conversation is related through his experiences and perceptions, both of which deepen in breadth and widen in scope as his three parallel journeys unfold. This narrative approach also creates the potential for the reader to identify closely with Si, an identification that begins with the likelihood that the reader, on some level and in some way, shares Si's disillusion with life and longing for change, if not adventure. In other words, Si's story is an archetypal one, dramatizing universal human longings - for transformation, for love, and for knowledge and understanding of the mysterious.

Ruben Prien

This character sets the action of the novel in motion as he recruits Si into the agency. He is a catalyst character, triggering change without actually participating in it. For the most part, he is perceived as being friendly and easygoing with a great smile, but later in the book, he reveals that he is both authoritarian and quick tempered. It's also eventually revealed that he is in fact the head of the project, allowing others like Esterhazy and Danziger to speak on his behalf but making all the decisions and holding all the authority. In this sense he is one of several characters embodying the secondary theme relating to honesty, masks, and hidden agendas.

Katie Mancuso

Katie is Si's sometime girlfriend. When initially encountered, her personality comes across as quite low key, but there are incidents (the trip into the country, her decision to accompany Si into the past) that reveal she has more to her than both Si and the reader



expect. It's her letter and her troubling family history that awaken both Si's compassion and curiosity, and all three of the novel's plots are simultaneously triggered and complicated when she first reveals that history's existence. Her graceful and uncomplicated letting go of her relationship with Si completes the picture of her as honest, straightforward, and wise.

Danziger

This character is the scientist and visionary responsible for initiating and developing the time travel project. He is Si's moral inspiration, and insists that the guidelines of non-interference with the past be followed at all costs. Ultimately, his insistence leads to his downfall at the hands of the more exploitative and less honorable Esterhazy and Ruben. Interestingly, of all the characters in the book it is Danziger, who is in many ways the ultimate man of science, who is also the most romantic. This is indicated not only by his somewhat naive belief that the other scientists on the project will stick to the "don't change the past" rule, but also and more tellingly by his desire to have Si produce a sketch of the moment his parents met. The irony, of course, is that this romance indirectly leads to his own destruction, both in terms of his being removed from the project by the other scientists and by being removed from existence by Si.

Esterhazy

This character is the key antagonist in the present, opposing both Si and Danziger. Like Ruben, he functions beneath a mask. At first, he appears to fully agree with Danziger's policy of non-interference, but when that policy begins to interfere with what Esterhazy clearly believes are the opportunities for social and political alteration of existence, he clearly has no scruples about taking events in the direction that he wants.

Oscar Rossoff and Martin Lastvogel

These two characters are the principal persons with whom Si interacts during his training at the project. Rossoff, an academic and scientist, both tests him psychologically and teaches him how to hypnotize himself, crucial for Si's success in the past. Equally crucial are the teachings of Lastvogel, a historian with a seemingly endless knowledge of life in 1882. He teaches Si how to function when he's in the past. Si could not accomplish his mission without the assistance of either of these men.

Andrew Carmody

Carmody is Katie Mancuso's ancestor and the writer of the letter that for so long troubled his descendants. Before his identity is taken over by Jake Pickering, he is an ambitious and unscrupulous businessman, willing to do anything in order to ensure that he and his wife achieve the social and financial status they both crave.



Julia Charbonneau

Julia is a spirited, independent woman Si meets and falls instantly in love with on his third journey into the past. She is open-minded, curious, and realistic, as evidenced by the way she simply and carefully takes in everything that happens to her, absorbs it, considers it, and reacts in a carefully measured way. This is not to say that she's unemotional - she is just as susceptible to love, fear, and excitement as Si. She is simply a well-balanced individual: intelligent (as evidenced by her deductions relating to what truly happened in the fire); wise (as evidenced by her decision to return to the present); and, open hearted (as evidenced by her readiness to love Si and admit it).

Jake Pickering

This character is Si's chief antagonist in the past, acting in opposition to Si's objectives in both the romance plot and the mystery plot. Pickering is uneducated, physically and emotionally violent, manipulative, devious, and ambitious, all negative traits that illuminate the more positive traits of Si and Julia by contrast. His darkness of character is alleviated somewhat by his apparently genuine affection for Julia, but even that disappears by the end of the book when he takes over Carmody's identity and appears willing to sacrifice Julia in the name of achieving his financial and social ambitions.

Chief of Police Byrnes

Another contrast to the positive qualities of Si and Julia can be found in Byrnes, who is even more ruthless and nastier, in his way, than Pickering. He is the principal antagonist later in the book, after Pickering has been taken out of the picture by the fire.

Objects/Places

New York City

New York is almost as much of a character in the story as Si himself, as the process of change undergone by both anchors much of the action. The action in both the past and the present is set entirely within the city's borders, with changes to its buildings, citizens, and attitudes playing important roles in the novel's action and thematic development.

The Agency Office

This is the headquarters of the time travel research project headed by Danziger. There is a subtle irony in the fact that the office is concealed within the walls of an abandoned moving company. The project is, after all, focused on "moving" a human subject back and forth in time. That irony is a part of the office's symbolic value, embodying as it does yet another variation on the secondary theme of masks and concealed realities.

The Dakota

The Dakota is an actual building in New York City, a luxury apartment building constructed decades ago and still standing today. Its incorporation into the action is an example, like the incorporation of New York itself, of the author's use of actualities to illuminate his fiction. Also, the fact that in many ways it hasn't changed much (which may or may not be an actuality, neither the text nor the author's after-word is clear on the subject) symbolizes the way that some things remain unchanged by the passage of time, a key aspect of one of the novel's central themes. An apartment in the Dakota serves as Si's point of transition for his first few trips into the past.

The Boarding House

The building at 19 Gramercy Park is the boarding house where Si stays on his third visit to the past, is where he meets Julia and Jake, and serves as the location for several of Si's comic but potentially disruptive slip ups, referring to incidents in his present that have yet to occur in the world of the past. Because the building also exists in the present, but in mostly changed form, it represents another facet of the novel's theme, relating to the way that the past can continue in the present, but in altered form.

The New York Observer Building

This is the site of a historically documented fire, the origins of which, according to the author's after-word, have never been conclusively defined. Its incorporation in the novel is a key example of the way actual events, situations, and people have been tapped into



in order to create this work of fiction. The building provides the setting for a key confrontation between Carmody and Pickering, overheard by Si and Julia. Its destruction, as the result of that confrontation, is perhaps symbolic of the destructive power of greed and ambition embodied in both Carmody and Pickering.

Katie's Letter

The contents and meaning of this letter are the focus of Si's investigations in the past. Written by the man Katie believes to have been her grandfather, those investigations reveal that it was in fact written by the man who assumed her grandfather's identity, and whose guilt triggered his eventual suicide.

The Statue of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty, is featured in the book; or, more specifically, its arm, which shows up disembodied in the past and serves as a curiosity, landmark, hiding place and point of translocation between the past and present.

The Gravestone and the Shoe

These two items bear the same insignia, a pattern of a star and a circle indicating that the person in the grave and the wearer of the shoe are the same person - not Andrew Carmody as at first believed, but the equally duplicitous Jake Pickering.

Si's Apartment

Where the apartment in the Dakota is used as the transit point into the past, Si's apartment is the transit point in the present for Si himself and for Julia. Its contents represent the aspects of the present Si most desires to leave behind.

Photographs and Clippings

The incorporation of these elements is another example of the way the author has included actualities (e.g., original photos, newspaper clippings) into his work of fiction. Symbolically they represent the way the past can be very much alive in the present.

Social Sensitivity

Time and Again describes Si Morley's discovery that he can live in two different eras: contemporary New York City and the New York City of 1882.

He must decide in which era he wishes to spend the rest of his life.

The context of the novel is the radicalism of the late 1960s. The novel reflects the worry about the dying city, the traditional urban centers threatened by white flight, black rioting, and resulting urban blight. It grows, too, out of crisis of authority prompted by the Vietnam War, the growing realization that citizens should not leave all important decisions to a central government. Finally, the novel discusses the relation between individuality and community, a debate strong in the era when alternate lifestyles, like the commune and the open marriage, competed with traditional social structures for the allegiance of the individual.

Techniques

Time and Again is a skillfully constructed narrative. The double plot and quick-paced dialogue hurry the story forward. As the plots gradually interweave and Si is forced to become an active participant in Jake Pickering's plot as well as an observer of the past, Time and Again becomes a novel that cannot be put down until the last page.

The unusual feature of Time and Again is the fact that it is illustrated with pictures and sketches of nineteenth-century New York. Professedly testifying to the reality of Si's adventures, these black-and-white illustrations also create a nostalgic mood.

Seeing the faces of the people Si meets and the places he visits helps the reader easily accept Si's decision to remain in the past. Through the photographs Finney conveys much factual information about New York City's history and architecture.

Illustrated novels are rare today, but once the common practice was to illustrate important works of fiction. The writings of nineteenth-century authors such as Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, and Mark Twain were often illustrated with drawings envisioning important scenes from the novel. Thus Time and Again is not only a novel about the nineteenth century, it also looks like a novel from the past.

Themes

Themes

Si Morley chooses to live in the New York of 1882. He finds that old New York has a quality of life that modern New York cannot match. Although more primitive in technology, its citizens have a joyousness about life, a knowledge of why they are alive, that twentieth-century New Yorkers no longer possess. Two world wars and a current desultory military action in Vietnam, Si Morley discovers, have taken the spirit out of people and have left them confused about the purpose of living.

Nor is the problem just the people.

The physical structure of New York City shows the differences. The New York City of 1882 is a rainbow of rural, suburban, and urban landscapes. Walking a few blocks in any direction will take Morley from commercial center to quiet residential neighborhood to active farmland, without ever leaving Manhattan island. Contemporary New York City, however, is all concrete and steel, unvarying canyons of high-rise apartment and office buildings.

The third theme of the novel is Finney's contribution to the ongoing debate among fantasy writers about timetravel. If someone from the present travels into the past, will their actions change the past and therefore the future known today as present? Si's visit to the past is made possible by a secret government experimental unit. Once time travel is proved possible, the project directors begin speculating upon the possibility of changing the past deliberately. Si chooses at this point to enter the past permanently, unwilling to see how government bureaucrats think the present should be improved.

The Relationship between Past and Present

This theme functions on two important levels. The first is technical, in that actual photos and incidents in the past are used to create a work of fiction. The novel itself embodies an important aspect of the past/present relationship - that the true, emotionally, spiritually, and physically inhabited life of the past can only be imagined in the present. The second level of this theme's function is on that of the story, as it uses this premise as a springboard into an exploration of two key questions. The first is whether the past can be experienced, and not just observed or recalled. Si embodies the answer to this question as he moves from merely observing the past, in photographs and in terms of Katie's letter, through theorizing whether experiencing the past is possible and into actually living it. In doing so, he discovers that there is much more to the past than meets the eye in photographs, newspaper reports, and mementoes. This is one of the novel's key points: that the past is people and experience and life, not just image and recollection. The second core question is whether the past can be changed in order to manipulate the present. Again, the answer to this question is explored through both

conversation and action, as several characters debate the pros and cons on either side and Si acts from a clear belief that no, it should not. This belief, however, doesn't stop him from taking action in the past that definitely will change the present - staying in 1882 to be with Julia. Therein lies a third key question related to this theme. What is the qualitative and/or moral difference between Si's decision to change the present by staying in the past and Esterhazy's desire to, as he believes, improve the present through changing the past?

Masks and Disguises

Several kinds of masks and disguises are utilized throughout the novel. There is the physical and temporal disguise Si and Katie wear when they travel into the past, the reverse of which Julia briefly wears when she travels into the present. There is the moral disguise Esterhazy and Ruben wear when at first they seem to be agreeing with Danziger, a disguise discarded when they see the potential for exploiting his discovery. There is the identity disguise assumed by Jake Pickering at the end of the novel when he takes on the identity of Andrew Carmody, a disguise that includes Mrs. Carmody's participation in its establishment and maintenance. The only principal character who doesn't wear any kind of disguise or a mask is Danziger. He is who he is, he believes what he believes, and he acts according to those beliefs in a straightforward, passionate way. As such, he illuminates by contrast the thematic significance of the disguises of the other characters, and serves as an example of personal integrity, inspiring Si to behave in the way he believes is right. The question is this - is Si's decision to stay in the past a betrayal of Danziger? Is Si, in his own way, as guilty of selfishness and manipulation as Esterhazy? Does he end the novel wearing exactly the same kind of mask as Jake Pickering, assuming an identity not truly his own? Alternatively, is his life in 1882 in fact his truth? Was his life in the present the mask?

Improving One's Lot in Life

This theme can be summed up in the premise that taking action leads to happiness and improving one's lot in life. Si, Jake, Julia, and the Carmodys all take action to increase their level of happiness and thereby bring increased fulfillment to their lives. What's interesting is that in many ways, Si and Julia are clearly intended to be viewed as admirable for taking these kinds of actions while Jake and the Carmodys are intended to be seen as corrupt, ruthless, and selfish. It could be argued that Si and Julia essentially act out of the ostensibly noble desire to live a personal truth, but that point could also be made about the others, who see their truth as emerging from a life of wealth and power. It could also be argued that Si and Julia do what they do as the result of experiencing true love, and this point carries rather more weight. It seems that the truest love experienced by Jake and the Carmodys is for prestige. It must be noted, however, that when Julia reveals to Si her deductions of what happened in the fire, she confesses to admiring Jake for his inventiveness and capacity for risk taking. It seems, therefore, that by having Julia make this point, the novel is making the point that it

doesn't really matter how a person gets there - as long as someone improves his/her lot in life, anything goes.

Curiosity

For the most part, the action in this novel is entirely motivated by curiosity. From its very first moments, in which Si becomes curious to see who his unexpected visitor is, the desire to know and understand fuels the action in all three plots. The time travel plot is not only fueled by the curiosity of Danziger and the scientists, but also by Si's own curiosity not only about the past but about the meaning of Katie's letter. The point of climactic choice in Chapter 21 is fueled by Esterhazy's curiosity about whether the present can be changed for the good by an action in the past. Meanwhile, the mystery plot is set in motion as the result of Katie's curiosity, which in turn deepens Si's curiosity, which in turn triggers Julia's.

In other words, there is a kind of domino effect to the curiosity in this book, with the one character's inquisitiveness and determination to know and understand triggering that of another, and so on and so forth. That being said, the curiosity motivating both the time travel plot and the mystery plot is essentially intellectual. The curiosity motivating the romance plot involving Julia and Si is much more emotional in origin. The interest both characters have in knowing more about the mysterious other person is given additional weight and motivating power by the attraction they feel for each other. There is also curiosity here about love in general. In addition to curiosity about who the other person is and what the attraction is, Si and Julia are both intrigued with the experience of love in general. Neither has encountered such feelings before, both become excited and stimulated, and both indicate a desire to move forward in the relationship as the result of their eagerness to feel and understand more deeply.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written from the omniscient first person point of view. This means that all its incidents, themes, and relationships are narrated and defined from the perspective of its protagonist, Si Morley. As previously discussed, this narrative approach works well to bring the reader into the novel's world and action. The reader experiences what Si experiences - curiosity (triggered by the succession of mysteries Si encounters); fear (triggered by the fire episode); wonder (triggered by his explorations of the New York of the past); and hope (as the relationship with Julia develops), are all evoked in the reader at the same moment as they are evoked in Si. An interesting but subtle shift in point of view occurs only once, at the point at which Si travels into the past for the first time (Chapter 6). As previously discussed, the narration at this point loses a degree of its omniscience, recounting Si's experiences from the somewhat narrower perspective of his being under hypnosis. For a few pages, the narrative loses the sense of story and becomes focused solely on experience. It becomes focused on the *incident*, rather than on the incident's place within a continuum of experience. In this sense, it carries the same weight as the photographs Si views in the novel's early chapters - there is no life before or after this incident, which becomes an isolated moment in time.

Setting

The action of the story takes place entirely within the borders of New York City - specifically, the island of Manhattan. The city's physical character, its buildings and style and atmosphere, are strongly defined through extensive use of detail. This intense specificity carries through in both past and present, as the action moves back and forth through time between two specific periods - the winter of 1882 and the winter of the present. The year of that "present" is never specifically defined. Given that the novel was copyrighted in 1970, it's reasonable to assume that, for the author, the "present" is the late 1960s.

However, the culture of the "present" (as opposed to its physicality, which is defined with incredible particularity) is defined in broad enough generalities that it's possible for the "present" to exist at any point in contemporary history. Important physical locations for the story, most of which are actual structures in New York and many of which continue to exist today, include the Dakota Hotel, the Statue of Liberty, Washington Square, and Fifth Avenue. Aside from the important narrative and thematic functions of the city's buildings and structures, setting the action in New York City also provides a spiritual, emotional and moral context for the action. New York has a romantic and almost mythic reputation for being a city where any ambition can be realized - for financial success, for career and/or intellectual advancement, and even for love. Setting the story within this kind of environment provides an appropriate atmosphere and context for the ambitions of the novel's characters for those very things - the social ambitions of the Carmodys

and Jake Pickering, the romantic ambitions of Si and Julia, Esterhazy's ambitions for influence and control, and Danziger's ambition for knowledge and understanding.

Language and Meaning

The novel's use of language is relatively straightforward. There is relatively little use of symbolism and/or poetry, dialogue and descriptions tend to be concise almost to the point of terseness, and thematic statements are relatively uncomplicated - paradoxical, perhaps, but simple. There are two reasons for this approach. The first is that the book is written in the first person, the narrator being somewhat limited in both imagination and emotional depth. The second reason for the relative unfussiness of the writing is that *Time and Again* is essentially an action/mystery novel, two genres that tend towards a lack of metaphoric complexity and linguistic ornamentation. This is not to say that its moods and atmospheres are not effectively evoked. The descriptions of the New York City of the past are extremely well detailed; specific and clear if perhaps a little over indulgent at times. The narration of the fire is particularly effective, with the tautness of the language working well to define a sense of urgency and danger. The minimalist sense of language perhaps undermines, to some degree, any sense of deep emotion in the characters. It's interesting to note that the deepest, most passionate feelings are expressed by secondary characters, Danziger and Jake Pickering. Yes Si (the narrator) experiences occasional rushes of excitement, but the relative casualness with which those moments are described and then moved on from gives a slight sense of superficiality. Yes the movement and meaning of the novel is grounded in its sense of action and momentum, but there is also the sense that if so much time could be spent on the physical descriptions of the New York of the past, there might be a little more time (no pun intended) for love, joy, and passion.

Structure

The novel's structure is also relatively straightforward, as the action steadily unfolds chapter by chapter. There is significant variation in length between chapters, with some being only a few pages long and others, such as those describing the New York of the past and the narration of the fire, being actually quite long. This variation, however, is appropriate - each chapter accomplishes what it needs to accomplish, in most cases defining just enough points in plot, character and/or theme to move both Si and the reader forward with curiosity and eagerness to find out what's next. This technique results in a well-defined sense of momentum, increasing narrative energy and drive to the successive high points in the novel's final third. These include the high point of the action reached in the fire, the high point of tension in Si and Julia's evasion of the police, the high point of emotion in their parting, and the thematic/ethical high point reached in the confrontation between Si and Esterhazy.

That being said, a key component of structure is the way in which events logically follow one another. An action or feeling leads reasonably to the next, and so on and so forth. There is an apparent logical, and therefore structural, misstep - the previously

discussed moment after the fire in which Si forgets that previously, the unique footprint he discovers had been identified with Jake, rather than with Carmody. This mis-deduction sends the structure and narrative of the story in a direction it wouldn't have taken if Si had recalled the earlier piece of information.

Quotes

"It was an ordinary day, a Friday, twenty minutes till lunchtime, five hours till quitting time and the weekend, ten months till vacation, thirty seven years till retirement. Then the phone rang." p. 8

"... the sense of wonder, staring at the strange clothes and vanished backgrounds, at knowing that what you're seeing was once real. That light really did reflect into a lens from these lost faces and objects. That these people were really there once, smiling into a camera. You could have walked into the scene then, touched those people, and spoken to them. You could actually have gone into that strange outmoded old building and seen what now you never can - what was just inside the door." p. 19

'It may be that the strongest instinct of the human race, stronger even than sex or hunger, is curiosity: the absolute need to know. It can and often does motivate a lifetime . . . and the prospect of satisfying it can be the most exciting of emotions." p. 73

"With no trouble at all Katie saw . . . the truth . . . underneath the serious pretense. She knew this was really a great, big, expensive fascinating toy; we were all of us playing with it, and like a determined tomboy on a playground shouldering her way into a circle of boys, she was damn well going to play, too." p. 108

"they carried with them a sense of purpose. You could see that: they weren't *bored* . . . just looking at them, I'm convinced that those men moved through their lives in unquestioned certainty that there was a reason for being. And that's something worth having, and losing it is to lose something vital." p. 219

"It is becoming more and more certain, as science uses an almost brand-new ability to pull apart the deepest puzzles of the universe, that we need not and should not necessarily do something only because we've learned how." Danziger to the board, p. 223

"I thought about Julia, silent here beside me. I didn't believe she was a girl who wanted to be possessed the way Jake thought he possessed her. And I knew, *knew*, she couldn't live out her life and be happy with the kind of degraded human spirit that is able to blackmail. Yet I had to let it happen." p. 248

"The man's . . . the most experienced policeman in the city! He's unscrupulous, true, and often acts beyond his authority and legal powers. And it's a known fact that he accepts - if not money, stocks or bonds - inside information from . . . Wall Street Millionaires . . . but we should think of him as like a good first sergeant; if he runs the company properly, you musn't inquire too closely into his methods." Byron Doverman on Byrnes, p. 274-275

"the entire cover was given over to a woodcut illustration showing Ida Small up on the ledge and her 'anonymous rescuer' on the ladder. And while I know I shouldn't, I'm

including that cover here, although the face of the man doesn't really look too much like me, and I wasn't wearing a vest either." p. 315

"I remember most of the day in a series of pictures: Julia at the refrigerator while I hunted for things to make up a breakfast, marveling at its coldness . . . her astonishment at instant coffee, her pleasure at its fragrance and her wrinkled-nose disappointment at its taste . . . Julia back in the living room, her third glass of iced orange juice in her hand, as she stood looking at . . . my television. . . " p. 365-366

"scientists make fantastic new discoveries which are immediately taken over by a group, almost a *breed* of men, who always know what's best for the rest of us. Science learns how to split the atom, and they immediately *know* that the best thing to do with that new knowledge is blow up Hiroshima . . . who's given this new little breed of men who've polluted the entire environment and who may actually wipe out the human race - who gave them the power of God to control the lives and futures of the rest of us? Most of them we never heard of, and we sure as hell didn't elect them!" Si to Esterhazy, p. 389

"I touched the unfinished manuscript in my overcoat pocket, and looked around at the world I was in . . . this too was an imperfect world but . . . , the air was still clean. The rivers flowed fresh . . . and the first of the terrible corrupting wars still lay decades ahead." p. 398

Topics for Discussion

Choose an important figure from history - a politician, an activist, a criminal, an entertainer, anyone who wasn't just well known but who changed their field and the world. Imagine what the repercussions would be if someone went back into time and eliminated them, or key moments in their lives, from history. How would the world be different - politically, socially, or in some other way?

Discuss the ethics of what Esterhazy and Ruben ask Si to do in their final conversation. Were Esterhazy and Ruben correct in saying Si would have been serving the greater good if he had in fact gone back and changed the course of Cuba's history? Alternatively, were Si and Danziger correct, and the possible repercussions of changing history in that way would be too far-reaching and too dangerous? Also: examine the question of whether Esterhazy has this goal in mind all along. Are his earlier protestations of loyalty to Danziger merely manipulation and lies?

Imagine the possible repercussions of Si's move to the past. Imagine his life there. Would he and Julia marry? Would they have children? What would they do for income? Would Si make his living as a painter? Would he have become famous? Given what is known of the characters of Si and Julia, what might their children be like? Would Si and Julia tell them the truth of how they met? Might one of them, in fact, grow up to make the same decisions and take the same career path as Danziger, with the same results? Might they take vacations in what was once Si's present?

Discuss how, if at all, Si and Julia are responsible for the deaths that resulted in the Observer fire.

Debate the relative moral values of Si's decision to change the past by staying there to be with Julia, and Esterhazy's desire to change the course of Cuban history. Both actions have the potential to change the present, but Si objects to the latter while believing the former is the right and only thing to do. Does this mean the book is saying that the desire for personal happiness outweighs belief in principles?

Define a key moment and/or person in history, and explain why you want to return to the past to observe that moment/person.

After viewing a photograph or painting of a street scene in the past, imagine what went on before and after the moment it captured, both in terms of the life of the street and the life of the individuals portrayed thereon.

Literary Precedents

Travel through time is an old fictional device, dating back to the mideighteenth century. Nineteenth-century novels of time travel such as Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) or Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) depended upon the hero falling asleep to change eras.

H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895) introduced the notion of constructing a machine that would allow a voyager to travel forward or backward. Much popular science fiction about time travel relies upon the device of a time machine to generate the story. Finney provides an interesting twist by assuming that time-travel is a product of deliberate imaginative effort. Si Morley experiences time not as a stream, but as shadow of the present given substance by sensation. Si moves into the past by recreating the sights, sounds, touches, smells, and tastes of 1882.

Related Titles

A man living in two worlds is the premise of an earlier Finney novel, *The Woodrow Wilson Dime* (1968). In this novel, however, the worlds exist sideby-side rather than in sequence. Ben Bennell discovers that spending a Woodrow Wilson dime sends him into a parallel but different universe in which he is married to a different woman and holds a different job.

The Woodrow Wilson Dime, though, is comic while *Time and Again* is nostalgic. The longing for a better past appears in several stories included in Finney's second collection of stories, *I Love Galesburg in the Springtime* (1963).

In the title story a town actively resists the inroads of the present: A trolley magically appears to scare off a factory builder, and a horse-drawn fire engine unexpectedly saves a burning Victorian mansion. In "Where the Cluetts Are," a modern couple build a house from nineteenth-century architectural plans and find themselves physically and mentally reconstructing an earlier era.

Copyright Information

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Editor - Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Library of Congress
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Includes bibliographical references.

Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for fiction, nonfiction, and biographies written for young adults.

Includes a short biography for the author of each analyzed work.

1. Young adults—Books and reading. 2. Young adult literature—History and criticism. 3. Young adult literature—Bio-bibliography. 4. Biography—Bio-bibliography.

[1. Literature—History and criticism. 2. Literature—Bio-bibliography]

I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952

Z1037.A1G85 1994 028.1'62 94-18048 ISBN 0-933833-32-6

Copyright ©, 1994, by Walton Beacham. All rights to this book are reserved. No part of this work may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or in any information or storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, write the publisher, Beacham Publishing, Inc., 2100 "S" Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1994