

The Woman Who Lost Her Soul Study Guide

The Woman Who Lost Her Soul by Bob Shacochis

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



Contents

The Woman Who Lost Her Soul Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Book 1, 1998/1996, Part 1 – Chapters 1 - 6.....	5
Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 7 - 10.....	9
Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 11 – 13.....	12
Book 2, 1944-45 – Chapters 14 - 18.....	15
Book 3, 1986, Part 1, Chapters 19-24.....	18
Book 3, Part 2, Chapters 24 - 31.....	21
Book 3, Part 3, Chapters 32 – 34.....	24
Book 4, Part 1, Chapters 35 – 41.....	27
Book 4, Part 2, Chapters 42 - 46.....	30
Book 5, Part 1, Chapters 47 – 49.....	33
Book 5, Part 2, Chapters 50 - 52.....	36
Characters.....	40
Symbols and Symbolism.....	45
Settings.....	47
Themes and Motifs.....	48
Styles.....	51
Quotes.....	54



Plot Summary

This complex novel has two central narrative threads. The first has elements of a political spy thriller spanning continents, decades, mysteries, and brutal acts of violence. The second has elements of a socio-cultural contemplation on America's place, both behind the scenes and in front of the curtain, on the world stage.

The novel develops these aspects of its epic narrative in five parts. Book One moves back and forth between events in 1998 and 1996, primarily in Haiti. In 1998, human rights lawyer and advocate Tom Harrington joins an investigation into the death of Jackie Scott, a photojournalist with whom he became involved in the last days of the Haitian Revolution in 1996. As he looks into her death, he recalls various details of his original relationship with her – her wildness, her sexuality, his own sexual response to her, her interest in voodoo, her shifting identity (her real name, he discovers, is Dorothy Chambers), and her mysterious relationship with a U.S. Special Forces operative named Eville (eh-VILLE) Burnette. Book One concludes with Harrington returning to his home life in Miami, having satisfied himself that justice has been served.

Book Two shifts to the mid-1940's and to Eastern Europe in the aftermath of World War Two. Narration describes traumatic events in the life of a young Croatian refugee, Stjepan Kovacevic (who, the book reveals, eventually changed his name to Steven Chambers and became Dorothy Chambers' father) and his mother Marija as they escape from the war torn Balkans. Book Two concludes with a reference to how young Stjepan passed on his desire for revenge on his tormentors, both personal and cultural, to his family – the implication being that he passed that desire on to Dorothy.

Book Three focuses on Dorothy – specifically, her late teens, which she spent at school in Istanbul, far away from her strange, estranged mother and always looking forward to the next visit from her unpredictable diplomat father. She becomes romantically involved with young Muslim rebel Osman, who presents her with a beautiful blue bracelet that, over time and over every book of the narrative, becomes her most precious possession. Meanwhile, narration reveals that Dorothy has a long and complicated history of being sexually abused by her father, and that he wants her to help him with a tricky diplomatic mission that involves her posing as a prostitute. Dorothy reluctantly agrees, but the mission goes drastically wrong, and she ends up on the run, taking refuge with Osman, who is in turn killed by rival rebels. Dorothy returns to a dull life with her mother in America.

In Book Four, the narrative chronicles the history of Eville Burnette, explaining his involvement with government special forces and agencies, with Steven and Dorothy Chambers and their Secret Service work, and with Tom Harrington. This book concludes with a revisiting of Dorothy's apparent death, with narration revealing that Burnette accompanied her body back to the United States.

Book Five begins with a scene that reveals Dorothy's death was actually staged, given that her secret service work in Haiti had put her life in danger. A voodoo priest gave her



a potion that made her only seem dead, another priest reviving her in Miami and sending her into hiding. As she recovers from the shock of being both temporarily dead and brought back to life, she and Burnette take a holiday together and become romantically involved, only facing the question of what's going to happen to Dorothy when her father forces the issue. The second half of the chapter describes the aftermath of Dorothy's apparent death in a bombing in Africa – specifically, her final encounters with both Burnette and her father, and Burnette's being moved to another posting, in which he's later made responsible for the supervision for, and care of, the failing Steven Chambers. At a diplomatically important funeral in the Balkans, Burnette finds himself at Dorothy's grave, contemplating their relationship and their history, and how the desire for revenge can corrupt even the most wholesome human soul.



Book 1, 1998/1996, Part 1 – Chapters 1 - 6

Summary

Prologue (1998) – At home with his wife, reunited after two years of spending time in Haiti “during the final days of the occupation”, human rights lawyer Tom Harrington considers how much, if anything, to tell his wife about the female photojournalist he was obsessed with in the latter days of his visit there.

Chapter 1 (1998) – About a month after his return, a chance encounter at his daughter’s school connects Harrington with Conrad Dolan, a retired special agent and now hostage negotiator who wants Harrington’s help in solving a crime in Haiti. Dolan’s client is a shady businessman accused of killing his wife to gain the money from the life insurance policy he had on her. Harrington agrees to go to Haiti and assist Dolan with the investigation, but it’s only when they’re on their way that Dolan tells Harrington that the murdered woman, Jacqueline (Jackie) Scott, was the woman with whom Harrington was obsessed.

Chapter 2 (1996) – This brief chapter flashes back to the circumstances of Harrington’s first encounter with Jacqueline. During a restaurant meeting with Hollywood film-makers interested in dramatizing the life of secretive but effective Haitian rebel Jacques LeCouer, Harrington is told about a pretty young woman who resembles a famous movie star. Long attracted to the movie star, Harrington can’t resist taking a look at the young woman, and is introduced to her.

Chapter 3 (1998) – After arriving in Haiti and as they’re making their way into Port au Prince, Harrington tells Dolan about Eville Burnette, an American Special Forces officer who had some kind of connection with Jackie Scott that he (Harrington) never fully understood. Meanwhile, encounters with violent mobs and violent police officers lead Harrington to recollections of his violent experiences while in Haiti with Jackie.

Chapter 4 (1996) – Narration describes how, in the last days of the revolution and as other journalists in Haiti were preparing to leave, Harrington encountered Jackie at the hotel where all the journalists stayed. Eventually alone with him, Jackie asks Harrington whether he believes in voodoo (voodoo), and asks him to help her find a houngan, or voodoo priest. Against his better judgment, but drawn in by his attraction to her, Harrington enlists the help of his fixer, Gerard, and sets off with him and Jackie. On their way to meet a houngan of which Gerard knows, Jackie asks Harrington whether he thinks it’s possible for people to lose their souls. After an impassioned monologue from the Catholicism-influenced Harrington on the subject of the soul’s importance, Jackie confesses that she believes she’s lost her soul, but she refuses to say anything more. Harrington continues to drive in search of the houngan that Jackie evidently believes can restore her soul to her.



Chapter 5 (1998) – Conversations between Harrington and Dolan reveal several things. The first is that Jackie had several names: she was born Dorothy Kovacevic, had her name changed by her father to Chambers, and was married under the name Renee Gardner. The second is that Dolan got Harrington's name from a police report on the murder in which he was linked to Jackie (which is how Harrington continues to think of her) by Gerard. The third piece is that the report also contains information about a confrontation Jackie, Harrington, and Gerard had with followers of Jacques Le Couer, a confrontation that narration suggests took place on the day Harrington took Jackie to see the houngan. Finally, as Harrington wonders how this report could not include commentary on the presence of Eville Burnette in Jackie's life, Dolan reveals that Jackie's husband's identity is being protected by the American government. Harrington is left wondering why he's in Haiti at all, given that there doesn't seem to be anything nothing left for him to investigate – but then realizes that he's there entirely because of Jackie.

Chapter 6 (1996) – After a brief discussion of the nature and principles of voodoo, narration describes how Harrington, Jackie, and Gerard arrived at the enclave of the houngan, make their way into the central sacred space, and watch as he performs an exorcism on a thin, obviously diseased woman. As they watch, Jackie suddenly sits on Harrington's lap, instantly stimulating him to full sexual arousal, much to his embarrassed surprise. As the houngan finishes, Harrington tries to explain why he and the others are there, continuing even after the woman suddenly falls forward and dies. When the houngan (Boko St. Jean) finally understands what Harrington and Jackie want, he explains that it's not possible for people to lose their souls, but it is possible for a soul to be misplaced. When he quotes a price of fifty dollars for the ceremony to reunite Jackie with her "misplaced" soul, Jackie reacts dismissively and leaves, followed by Harrington and Gerard.

Analysis

The narrative of *The Woman who Lost her Soul* entwines two basic tracks. The first is that of a political spy thriller, involving (as many such narratives do) layers of mystery and identity, double crosses, sex, violence, suspense, and a sense that intimate person-to-person relationships have national, sometimes even global, consequences. This narrative track might best be described as plot-oriented, while the other narrative track with which it entwines might best be described, in its turn, as theme-oriented – what the actions of the plot, and the stories of the characters playing out those actions, have to say about larger, deeper issues. This is important to note because most books of the political spy thriller genre are primarily entertainments, and explore significant thematic issues almost in passing, or as a sidebar. In *The Woman who Lost her Soul*, the two usually disparate elements come together to create a work that on many levels, goes beyond the boundaries of what the reader of such thrillers might expect.

This is not to say that the elements of spy thriller introduced in this section, and enacted throughout the narrative, are not effective. On the contrary: this section introduces all the requisite elements outlined above to significant effect, engaging the reader in the



two-timeline story of Harrington and Jackie/Dottie almost with the very first word. Several of these elements are foreshadowing of later events: the revelation of Jackie's other identity foreshadows later revelations of other identities she adopts and, at the same time, introduces the central narrative theme that explores that very issue (see "Themes"). Here is an example of how plot and theme interact to unique effect: what creates mystery in the one narrative line explores meaning in the other.

Meanwhile, other noteworthy plot-based elements introduced in this section include the presence of Eville Burnette (who returns later in the narrative to play a particularly important role in Books 4 and 5) and the reference to Jacques Le Couer. The characters' interactions with the rebel leader play a significant role in propelling the plot throughout this section. Then there is Jackie's intense, aggressive sexuality (which foreshadows both later incidents of similar sexuality in the narrative as well as revelations of how Jackie – Dottie – came to be so hyper-sexualized) and, perhaps even more notably, the references to voodoo. Voodoo, in its turn, plays a key role in the resolution of the narrative's central question – how did Jackie/Dottie die? Also, there is the introduction in Chapter 4 of what might be described as the novel's primary theme – the issue of the existence and nature of the human soul.

Finally, it should also be mentioned that this section introduces and develops the second of the book's two main themes: its consideration (condemnation?) of what is currently being called American Exceptionalism, or the belief that America is exempt from, or has the right to define, the rules of how the rest of the world works simply because it is America. The quotes from this section (particularly Quotes 1 and 12, as well as other quotes throughout the narrative) refer almost explicitly to this socio-political state of mind, and in such a way as to suggest that a great deal of the corruption portrayed in the book, in terms of both political and personal relations, springs from this value system.

Discussion Question 1

Is it possible for a person to lose his / her soul? What does the concept of "soul" mean to you?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think the narrative is trying to say by introducing a character named Eville (pronounced eh-VILLE, but clearly resembling "evil") into the narrative at this point?

Discussion Question 3

In terms of the book's thematic interest in religion and spirituality, what point do you think the narrative is making by placing so much emphasis on the houngan's request for a fee for his services?



Vocabulary

infuriate, obsession, gardenia, excrete, audacity, rife, propriety, mortify, drudgery, flatulent, lethargy, perpetual, superfluous, fluency, ephemeral, monolithic, terminus, gauntlet, impromptu, requisite, altruistic, atrophy, pantomime, redemption, collegial, periphery, raconteur, gregarious, avuncular, luxurious, entourage, dogmatic, decrepit, solicitous, serendipity, ambiguous, arbitrary, paranoid, protocol, myriad, cacophony, congenital, commiserate, succubus, toxicity, gangrenous, acrimony, pontificate, altruism, macabre, inscrutable, cajole, frivolous, predatory, gratuitous, dyspeptic, proliferation, derisive, miscreant, altercation, benevolence, animistic, cadence, cohere, infinitesimal, emaciated, rivulet, propitiation, embryonic, venal, frivolous, vertigo, fulsome



Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 7 - 10

Summary

Chapter 7 (1998) – Harrington and Dolan visit the morgue in Port au Prince, where they discover that the coroner conducted only the most basic examination of Jackie's body, responding to the pressures and manipulations of police authorities who were, in turn, being manipulated by the American Government, who arranged for Jackie's body to be immediately flown back to the United States on a government plane. Later, Dolan drops Harrington off at the American Embassy, where Harrington learns that Jackie was the daughter of an important American politician; that her husband (Jack Parmentier) was a crook working with Dolan; that American Justice Department wants to put Parmentier behind bars; and that the Department believes that whatever happened "up north" with Jackie and Harrington has nothing to do with the killing. Harrington then makes an effort to get out of Haiti, but finds there are no available seats on any departing flights. Back at his hotel, Harrington encounters Dolan, who asks what he (Harrington) was told at the Embassy, and then reminds him of another piece of information that was in the report on Harrington's relationship with Jackie (Chapter 5) – that Harrington killed a man on the trip up north.

Chapter 8 (1996) – On their way back down from the encounter with Boko St. Jean, Harrington, Jackie, and Gerard stop at a hotel for a drink. The increasingly aroused Harrington watches Jackie swim in the hotel pool. Later, when they return to Port au Prince, Jackie's attitude towards Harrington becomes more flirtatious, their banter interrupted by the arrival of Eville Burnette and two of his fellow Special Operations officers. They join Harrington and Jackie, who asks why they look as though they've been in a fight. Burnette and the others (who are about to be sent back to the States) tell the violent story of a drug investigation gone wrong, leaving the female drug importer wounded and in the hospital.

Chapter 9 (1998) – In the bar of their hotel, Dolan tells Harrington about his most recent involvement with Parmentier, which began with a meeting on Parmentier's boat, The Payday. This meeting, Dolan says, began with Parmentier's new wife Renee (Jackie) on board and steering the boat 1996 a near collision with a second boat. After they recovered from Renee/Jackie's skilled but reckless sailing, and after learning that Parmentier met his wife at an art gallery showing of her photographic work, Dolan says Parmentier asked for his advice as an ex-operative of the American government, explaining that he's caught between the conflicting demands of several different agencies. Dolan says he told Parmentier that there were/are always deeper layers to what the government wants to do and that he (Dolan) didn't want to get involved if (when?) things fell apart. That, Dolan tells Harrington, was the last time he saw Parmentier before the latter was arrested for the murder of Renee/Jackie. He mentions that he did see Renee/Jackie one more time, but doesn't explain further. That night, Harrington is woken both by the sound of distant gunfire, meaning more violence in Port au Prince.



Chapter 10 (1996) – After the departures of the two other soldiers, who are to ship out the next day, Eville Burnette (who is also supposed to ship out) stays with Jackie while Harrington has a conversation with a lawyer for some of the wealthy, once-powerful families ousted by the revolution, who asks him to search for some of the missing members of the families he represents. As narration describes Harrington as “a humanitarian wandering around hell in a stupor”, Harrington agrees to do as the lawyer asks. After he leaves, Harrington explains to Jackie and Burnette that he’s been asked to travel into the north, into the stronghold of Jacques LeCouer, and search for the missing people. Jackie immediately asks to go, and after initially trying to talk her out of it, Harrington agrees to take her along. The next day, his attempt to get her on his government-sponsored helicopter fails, and he arranges for her to drive north with Gerard. When he arrives there himself, he discovers that LeCouer has made a truce arrangement that hasn’t been fully followed through; that there is only one hotel room for him and Jackie; and that instead of travelling with Gerard, Jackie has come north with Eville Burnette.

Analysis

The plot, with its questions about identity, its layers of secrets and mystery, and its questions of who did what to whom and when, starts to wind in on itself in this section. As Harrington discovers more and more truths about the woman with whom he was so passionately involved (and, as a consequence, more uncomfortable truths about himself), he also starts to realize that he’s gotten himself into a situation playing out on a larger geo-political canvas than he thought – he discovers the amount of American government involvement in the situation, striving to hold on to his personal integrity (“a humanitarian wandering around hell in a stupor”) in the face of increasing challenges to both his outer and inner worth, as a person and as a professional.

Meanwhile, important elements are introduced in this scene that recur and play out later in this section, and later in the book, include the references to the immediate shipping to America of Jackie’s body; the reference to the drug deal with which Burnette was involved; the reference to Renee’s sailing ability (which has particular significance to events in Book 3); the references to Jackie/Renee’s photographic work (which has significance in Books 4 and 5, eventually revealed to be related to her death); and the references to what happened “up north”, which have particular significance later in this section. These elements entwine, here as plot does throughout the novel, with important thematic considerations. For example, the various revelations of American government involvement in both the investigation and the context in which the investigation happened play out the book’s thematic interest in American power politics which in turn, and as noted above, lead Harrington into questions and considerations about his soul, one of the other central themes at play in the book as a whole. He is also led to these questions by his sexually-tinged contemplations of Jackie while he’s swimming.



Discussion Question 1

What do you think is the metaphoric or symbolic significance of Harrington's being woken up by gunfire while at his Port au Prince hotel?

Discussion Question 2

Why is the description of Harrington as "walking around ... in a stupor" appropriate?

Discussion Question 3

Given that "Le Couer" is French for "the heart", what are the ironies and meanings associated with the author's choice to give that particular name to this particular character?

Vocabulary

audacious, emissary, pious, flippant, seraphic, zealotry, consensus, fabulist, lethargic, hallucinatory, pretense, camaraderie, obsequious, affiliation, ubiquitous, chiaroscuro, coquette, aureole, potency, tracheotomy, desultory, vernacular, subterfuge, congestion, emulate, euphemism, diaspora, vernacular, invidious, solicitous, ludicrous, invocation, interminable



Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 11 – 13

Summary

Chapter 11 (1998) – Dolan reveals his knowledge that the man Harrington supposedly killed died in an ambush that Harrington set up, and then describes his last encounter with Jackie/Renee – in Haiti, where she told him that Parmentier was double-crossing the American government with Arab criminals, and that Parmentier was in danger of being murdered, perhaps even by her. Gerard urgently interrupts, telling Harrington that he (Gerard) took Jackie/Renee to see Boko St. Jean several times, the last time in the company of Eville Burnette. Gerard also reveals that a jealous voodoo priest, Honore Vincent, tried to interrupt the ceremony St. Jean was performing for Jackie and attempted to assault her, but that Burnette intervened. Finally, Gerard says, Burnette came to him the day after Jackie's murder and paid for a trip north where, he adds, Vincent was apparently killed. At that, Harrington decides it's time to go north himself.

Chapter 12 (1996) – When Harrington, Jackie, and Burnette arrive at LeCouer's stronghold, they are met by a squad of LeCouer's fighters. Jackie immediately starts taking pictures, which triggers one of the fighters to try and stop her. She counter attacks and almost kills him, leading Burnette to radio for help while telling Harrington to explain to the fighters, in their language, that he is saving the man's life. The fighters watch as Harrington, in English, confronts Burnette and Jackie about the danger they have put his negotiations in. A helicopter soon appears, piloted by an Arab. Burnette loads the injured man onto it, insisting that the violently resistant Jackie (who is desperate to hold on to her camera and film) accompany him.

After the helicopter disappears with Jackie, Burnette, and the wounded man, Lecouer himself appears. Harrington tells him what Burnette said to tell them, and Lecouer appears to believe him, telling Harrington he can go, but adding a warning – that he (Lecouer) will continue to fight that he believes in. Later, after a dangerous trip back to his hotel, Harrington discovers Jackie is waiting for him. He resists as long as he can, attempting to distract her apparent sexual intention by trying to get her to tell the truth about why she took so many pictures when he had never seen her take a single one previously (she says she was intrigued by the faces). When she finds out he has her camera, she reacts ecstatically, but then quickly dissolves into anger when she discovers that the fighters pulled out the film. She attempts to seduce Harrington into taking her back up so she can get some more shots, but he refuses. She then goads him into having sex with her, which, much to his own self-disgust, he turns into sodomy. He wakes the next morning to her absence, and a taunting note she left behind.

Chapter 13 (Present) – On the trip up north, Harrington muses on Dolan's relationship with both the American government and Parmentier, who in Harrington's mind seem to be equally corrupt. Conversation with Dolan reveals Dolan's belief that everyone involved in the current situation (including Jackie and Parmentier) are caught up in conflict and/or rivalries between agencies of the American government, who are in turn



trying to exert power and influence not only in Haiti, but in relation to other cultures, including “The Arabs”.

They arrive where Boko St. Jean was last seen, only to learn that he has disappeared and been replaced as houngan by a young boy, Toussaint. Toussaint tells them that the only way they can get the information they want is by paying him to conduct a ceremony, which they do. During the ceremony, Harrington discovers evidence (a bracelet owned by Jackie) that links Boko St. Jean to her death. Following Dolan’s attempt to take Toussaint in for questioning, which is itself followed by a shoot-out that sends Toussaint to hospital, more evidence of St. Jean’s involvement in Jackie’s death (a motorcycle spotted around the time and place of the crime) is discovered, and Harrington returns to America, both he and Dolan relieved that Parmentier has been cleared of involvement in the crime.

As Book One concludes, narration describes how Harrington returns to his life in Miami with an increased awareness of how empty both he and his life are, feeling like not only has he lost his soul, but so has the country in which he lives and for which he works.

Analysis

The first important point to note in this section is that events in Chapter 11, particularly those narrated or described by Gerard, foreshadow revelations later in the narrative (specifically: the beginning of Book 5) that define the solution to the mystery of how and why Jackie died. A similar point can be made about the events described in Chapter 11, except that later in the narrative, the events here are revealed to be related less to Jackie’s death and more to the bigger picture, behind-the-scenes, global military/political context in which all these events and situations are taking place. Of particular note is the description of the nameless helicopter pilot, who is later revealed to be Colonel Rashid Khan, a significant Pakistani player in the aforementioned international, behind-the-scenes game-playing.

Other significant plot-related elements in this section include the injury to the rebel fighter, which can be seen as the basis of the rumor/report that Harrington was responsible for a man’s death while “up north”.

Then there is the culmination of the sexual tension between Jackie/Renee and Harrington, which is important for two key reasons: It may be one of the reasons that Harrington questions the condition of his soul at the end of this section and, in fact, throughout Book 1; and it vividly foreshadows a key event in Book 3, in terms of both the actual act and what it means in the bigger picture of Jackie’s identity (i.e. both are examples of the sexual violence she is repeatedly forced into).

Then there is the introduction of Toussaint who, as the narrative of Book 5 reveals, is eventually charged with Jackie’s murder, imprisoned, and is eventually exonerated ... but is in fact completely guilty of creating the circumstance in which Jackie is BELIEVED to be dead.



Finally, in terms of significant elements introduced into the plot, there is the reference to Jackie's blue bracelet, which reappears at several key points in the narrative and has particular value to both Jackie as a person and to the novel's exploration of her character, circumstances, and identity.

Meanwhile, and in terms of the novel's concurrent explorations of its various themes, there are the various, increasingly ominous references to America's background influence on events; the previously discussed reference, at the end of this section, to Harrington's feeling that he's lost his soul as the result of what he's experienced in Haiti; and, for the first time, an entwining of both these themes in the suggestion that not only some of the characters have lost their souls, but the country manipulating them, while celebrating its own sense of exceptionalism, has lost ITS soul.

Discussion Question 1

Which do you think is a more significant trigger for Harrington's questions about the deterioration of his soul: his experiences of cultural depravity that are overt in Haiti; his experiences of socio-political depravity that are covert in his relationship with the American government and its agencies; or his experiences of sexual depravity that culminate in his sexual relationship with Jackie?

Discussion Question 2

Why do you think LeCouer's men are so upset when Jackie starts taking photographs of them?

Discussion Question 3

At this point in the narrative, what seems to be the most likely reason for Jackie's determination to see Boko St. Jean?

Vocabulary

audacious, emissary, pious, flippant, seraphic, zealotry, consensus, lethargic, hallucinatory, pretense, camaraderie, obsequious, affiliation, ubiquitous, chiaroscuro, coquette, aureole, potency, tracheotomy, desultory, vernacular, subterfuge, congestion, emulate, euphemism, diaspora, vernacular, invidious, solicitous, ludicrous, invocation, interminable



Book 2, 1944-45 – Chapters 14 - 18

Summary

Chapter 14 – “During the final days of the German occupation of Croatia”, there was a boy named Stjepan Kovacevic, who is later revealed to have changed his name to Steven Kovacevic, later Chambers – father of Dorothy Chambers, who became Renee Gardner, who became Jackie Scott. Narration describes the death of the 8-year-old boy’s father, at the hands of Serb soldiers, and how the boy’s mother, Marija, escapes with him to the home of her mentally unstable sister. While there, Stjepan takes comfort in his family’s Roman Catholic faith, until his mother’s sister speaks too sharply to a soldier and gets the response of a rifle butt in her face. After her lingering death, Stjepan’s mother attempts to get him to leave again, but he refuses, saying he’s made a promise to himself to kill the men who killed his father.

Chapter 15 – With the assistance of the local archbishop, who puts them in contact with a guardian envoy, Marija and Stjepan begin their escape to Italy. They manage to get through several dangerous checkpoints, but one proves impossible to navigate – as Stjepan looks on and is cut by a threatening guard, Marija is forced to reveal the identity of the envoy (i.e. that he is an emissary of the church), who is then shot. A man in a nearby car then reveals himself to be Davor Starcevic, a comrade of Stjepan’s father. When he asks Marija to stay in Croatia and continue fighting, she angrily refuses, telling Stjepan that when he comes back to kill the men who killed his father, he should kill Davor as well, who is then revealed to be Stjepan’s godfather.

Chapter 16 – As Marija and Stjepan continue their journey, they learn that their driver’s name is Bogdanov. At yet another checkpoint, Marija is lured from the car and taken to a piano, where a rebel commander first asks her to play and then attempts to rape her. Bogdanov attempts to rescue her, but the attempt is only successful when Stjepan arrives with a gun. Stjepan, Bogdanov, and Marija make their way back to the car, where they are met by Davor, who manipulates the situation so that Marija has a chance to execute the rebel commander. Davor then gives her a pass and a sealed envelope to pass to the Croatian authorities in order to ensure her escape.

Chapter 17 - That night, the escapees take a break on their journey near a waterfall, where Stjepan swims and Marija cleans herself up in the aftermath of the attempted rape. Later, Marija talks with Bogdanov, who refuses to tell her the full truth about himself, but tries to convince her that she is innocent of any sin in killing the man who tried to rape her (“How is it possible to sin by resisting the devil?”).

Chapter 18 – After surviving several more violent encounters on the road, Bogdanov brings Marija and Stjepan to Zadar, the coastal city where they are to join a boatload of Jewish refugees. Bogdanov insists that Marija hand over both the pass and the documents she got from Davor, and she has no choice but to do so. He then leaves



them, and they make their way into Zadar where, during the course of routine interviews, they are recognized and taken to one of Davor's lieutenants.

When Marija is unable to produce the documents Davor gave her, she and Stjepan are both severely beaten. The next day, when Davor comes to visit her, she refuses to forgive him for allowing the beating to happen, even when he suggests that "peace begins" one beating at a time. The documents are returned to her, and she and Stjepan are sent to Italy, where they wait out the war, and are eventually rescued by American soldiers, one of whom – narration reveals – eventually becomes Stjepan's stepfather.

Narration describes how the desire for vengeance remained in Stjepan's mind, heart, and soul, even beyond his mother's death, "...until the child himself would go forth on his quest to breed the ... legacy of grievance into another generation."

Analysis

Points to note in this section include Chapter 14's development of one of the narrative's major themes – the layering of identity.

In that same chapter, the religion motif reappeared – specifically, the way several of the characters have strong connections to, and/or are powerfully motivated by, religious faith. Chapter 14 can be seen as documenting the beginning of the deeply-rooted Roman Catholicism that motivates and defines Stjepan's/Steven's actions, feelings, and values throughout the narrative. Further to this point: because religion is, to a large degree, concerned with examining, valuing, and saving the spirit, the religion motif can be seen as a manifestation of one of the book's other key themes – the nature and value of the human soul.

The final noteworthy element in Chapter 14 is Stjepan's/Steven's vow to take revenge on the men who killed his father, which is important for two reasons: one, it explains his eventual geo-political commitment to destroying destroyers in general, and the Serbs who destroyed his father in particular; and two, it explains and foreshadows his eventual, additional vow to take revenge on the men who rape his mother – a vow that has major repercussions for his daughter which play out to devastating effect in Book 3.

Other important elements in this section include the introduction of Davor Starvecica, a character who appears at two other key points in the narrative – in a secondary role in Book 3 (at which point he assists Stjepan/Steven in the plan to take revenge on the last of the men who raped Marija) and in Book 5 when, at his funeral, Davor is hailed as a savior of his country and is, in his revered absence, a trigger for the final revelations of Stjepan/Steven's mental/emotional instability.

Then there is the reference to the papers that Davor gives to Marija, the loss of which is a key trigger for the abuse that both Marija and Stjepan/Steven experience which, in turn, fosters the belief in Stjepan/Steven that the only way to get anything done is through violence.



Finally, there is the final line in the section, which can be seen as a clear reference to, and foreshadowing of, the “legacy of grievance” that motivates and defines the actions and attitudes of Stjepan/Steven’s daughter Dorothy, whose life and experiences are the focus of the novel’s next section.

Discussion Question 1

How does Stjepan Kovacevic changing his name to Steven Chambers reflect the narrative’s theme exploring layers of identity? What do you think were some of the reasons why Stjepan changed his name?

Discussion Question 2

Given what the narrative has revealed about the nature, attitudes, and actions of Stjepan/Steven’s daughter Dorothy (who, in Book 1, has gone by the names Jackie Scott and Renee Gardner), how do you think the “legacy of grievance” referred to at the end of this section plays out in her life?

Discussion Question 3

Do you agree with Bogdanov’s contention that, in killing the man who attacked her, Marija is not guilty of any sin “by resisting the devil”? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

indelible, retribution, apostate, prostate, partisan, pogrom, orgiastic, rialto, insensate, diabolic, rampart, emissary, beatific, decapitate, aquiline, valise, sacristy, venomous, platitude, atrocity, surreptitious, inconsolable, rosary, virility, pugilism, ratatouille, cordon, incredulous, insurrection, apprehension, countenance (n.), incriminate, draconian, plunder, apothecary, vigilant, lascivious, portmanteau, callow, viscera, oblivious, disingenuous, apparition, solicitude, minion



Book 3, 1986, Part 1, Chapters 19-24

Summary

Chapter 19 – Dottie Chambers (real name Dorothy, known in previous chapters, as Jackie Scott and Renee Gardner, daughter of Steven Chambers, formerly Stjepan Kovacevic) arrives in Istanbul, Turkey, to celebrate her birthday in the usual style of her relationship with her father – on a sort of treasure hunt, with him as the prize. As she is driven from place to place in the city, she reflects on her relationship with her father and on his determination to make her independent. “She’s an American,” he says to her mother, “and I want her to know that she can go anywhere and do what she wants ... I don’t want her growing up to be afraid of anything.” Eventually, Dottie arrives at her party where she is met by her father and a collection of friends. Her earlier frustration at the game forgotten, she rushes into his arms.

Chapter 20 – As the party progresses, Dottie hangs out with her friends, including the flirtatious Osman, who presents Dottie with a beautiful bracelet which, he says, will protect her from the Evil Eye. The young people become aware that there is tension between the adults, tension that comes to a head when a group of Russian diplomats arrive. Eventually, Dottie leaves with her father, but then back in his hotel room, is sexually assaulted by him, narration indicating it’s not for the first time.

Chapter 21 – The next day, Dottie and her father attend mass, where her father is disappointed by his daughter not taking communion. Afterwards, he takes her for an elaborate lunch, during which he reveals that her mother is leaving him for good, moving to be near her younger brother as he attends college. Dottie is unsurprised, and mostly unmoved. Later, after the meal is finished, Dottie’s father shows her the contents of the envelope – a photograph of the sailboat he bought for her. Narration describes how, after leaving him, and Istanbul, to go back to school, Dottie reflects on how complicated her relationship with her father is, and how little fathers and daughters truly know about each other.

Chapter 22 – Sometime afterwards, Dottie and Osman wander through Istanbul taking turns photographing each other and the city. As they go, Osman tells Dottie how, in 1980, he accidentally got caught in a round-up of demonstrating students, was temporarily imprisoned and interrogated, and was eventually found by his father, who assumed that he was with the students on purpose, beat him, and banished him from the family. He was, Osman says, eventually allowed back, but things in his family were never the same. Narration then describes how carefully, politely, and respectfully he and Dottie dated each other.

Chapter 23 – One night, Dottie and Osman rendezvous with a group of their friends, including Osman’s friend Karim, whom Dottie doesn’t like. Shortly after they arrive, an argument begins, triggered by a reference to Osman’s membership in a group of Muslim rebels. As the argument escalates, soldiers come in and check everyone’s



identification, taking Osman away when they discover that he has misplaced his. Dottie, angry and accompanied by Karim, searches for Osman, defiantly confronting unhelpful police officers. Eventually, she and Karim are forced to wait outside the jail cell where Osman is being kept. Karim's conservative attitude makes Dottie increasingly annoyed, their confrontation being observed by the freed Osman who, Dottie is shocked to see, has been seriously beaten.

Chapter 24 – The next day, Dottie confronts Osman about his membership in the group of rebels. He insists that she trust him, assuring that no matter what, he loves her. Later that day, she talks to her father and asks him to help smooth Osman's relationship with the authorities. He agrees, although uneasy about his daughter becoming involved with a Muslim. Sometime later, as her boarding school finishes for the summer, Dottie goes out sailing with her father on the boat that he bought her, the *Sea Nymph*. Dottie, a very competent sailor, is nonetheless unnerved when a large, powerful boat appears to be on a collision course, but then slows and actually stops. Her father tells her he has to go to a meeting with the soldiers manning the boat, and then tells her he's leaving her to steer the boat into harbor herself. After he goes, Dottie manages to steer the boat into its moorings, and waits in the yacht club for her father's return.

Analysis

The first significant point in this section is the quote from Dottie's father Steven Chambers, which is important for a couple of reasons: first, it explains and foreshadows the assertive, entitled confrontations Dottie has with the Turkish police in Chapter 23 when she's searching for the arrested Osman, and can also be seen as part of the reason why her reactions to being told what to do, and/or not getting what she wants, are so intense in Book 1. This is particularly true of her reaction to having her film confiscated (although it's important to note that she is also taking pictures as part of her job – that is, to spy for the U.S. Government). Meanwhile, Steven's comments about Dottie and Americanism are a key component of, perhaps even one of the most important expressions of, the novel's thematic exploration of the nature, significance, and self-aggrandizement of American exceptionalism.

Chapter 20, meanwhile, develops and explains one of the book's key symbols - the blue bracelet Dottie receives from Osman.

Perhaps more importantly, Chapter 20 also introduces the element of sexual abuse – specifically, the abuse Dottie experiences at the hands of her father. Dottie's sexualization at the hands of her father can therefore be seen as an explanation for the frequency and intensity of her sexual expressions throughout the narrative. It is also possible that the sexual component of Dottie's relationship with her father could be seen as one reason why she believes she's "lost her soul".

Other important elements introduced in this section include the reference to, and appearance of, Dottie's boat (*The Sea Nymph*), which plays an extremely significant



role in future developments in both the narrative and in Dottie's life (i.e. the sailing sequence in Book 1, in which, as Renee, she displays significant expertise).

There is also the explanation of how Dottie's interest / skills in photography appeared, Osman's explanation of his relationship with his father, and the reference to Dottie learning how to steer the boat herself, which is deeply ironic, given that he has so much control over almost everything else in her life.

Discussion Question 1

What do you think is the relationship between Stjepan/Steven's history (as related in Book 2) and his beliefs about Dottie as defined in Chapter 19?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think is the relationship between Stjepan/Steven's sexual abuse of his daughter and his intense Roman Catholicism?

Discussion Question 3

In what ways is Osman's relationship to his father similar to Dottie's relationship with hers? In what ways is it different?

Vocabulary

tarot, sophomoric, affable, obtuse, plantain, consulate, couscous, expatriate, exoticism, procreation, chillum, parsimonious, assiduous, tacit, axiom, cryptic, somnambulant, ravenous, ominous, celestial, cistern, sonorous, purdah, ubiquitous, collegiality, bonhomie, titillate, liquefy, concierge, chagrin, mantilla, piety, emulate, perpetual, patisserie, boisterous, minaret, contrition, proprietorial, susceptible, utopian, exalted, euphoric, spasmodic, facile, porcine, dilapidated, impudent, matriculate, mannerly, cerebral, outlandish, dominatrix, flamboyance, mercurial, moribund, gendarme, mendicant, matrilineal, conspicuous, lambent, supercilious, lucidity, infidel, incendiary, tirade, harangue



Book 3, Part 2, Chapters 24 - 31

Summary

Chapter 25 – Dottie asks her father for permission to take the Sea Nymph out on her own regularly. After advising her to be careful about how much time she spends with Osman and what they do in that time, her father defines the rules for her taking the boat out. After he again leaves, Dottie begins several weeks of spending time with Osman. At the end of the summer, Dottie's father takes her on what he calls a pilgrimage to some of the Middle East's holiest sites, a visit interrupted at one point by a sexually-charged skinny dipping session, and at another point by her father's attempts to explain what he does (i.e. work for the government and destroy Communism), and to recruit her into the work. However, he passes out drunkenly before he has a chance to explain fully what he wants her to do.

Chapter 26 – The next morning, a storm hits and the Sea Nymph is swamped. Dottie and her father barely escape with their lives and a small dry bag of personal belongings. Dottie manages to hold on to the bracelet she had from Osman.

Chapter 27 – In the aftermath of the storm, Dottie and her father swim their way through extremely rough seas to shore, where they make their way through sheets of rain into an underground temple. There, Dottie is finally able to rest, waking up in the middle of the night to find her father having a tearfully ecstatic religious experience. Despite her reluctance, Dottie goes along with his plan. Repeatedly, narration describes how Dottie's father prays with, and stays focused on, his mother's rosary.

Chapter 28 – Eventually, Dottie and her father find their way to a hotel, where they check in, clean themselves up (Dottie doing her best to keep her nudity hidden from her father), have dinner, and finally discuss Dottie's proposed involvement in the work. Her father wants Dottie to help prevent the assassination of the Pope by pretending to be a prostitute and seducing the would-be assassin, whom her father says is a Slavic communist. That night, Dottie wonders "Who's behind the door – prostitute or daughter"?

Chapter 29 – On their way to Ephesus, where Dottie is to be transformed into the prostitute, she and her father stop at a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. There, Dottie is mortified when her father strips himself, cries out against Muslims, and slashes himself bloody. After he is calmed down, they continue on their journey, eventually arriving at Ephesus. There, Dottie begins her transformation into Carla, an identity that includes a new, legal-looking passport; transformation by hair, makeup, and clothes; and photo sessions, supervised by her father's godfather, Davor. With his encouragement, Dottie puts aside her own personality and becomes increasingly comfortable being Carla, but despite so many other aspects of her identity being changed, Dottie insists on continuing to wear Osman's bracelet.



Chapter 30 – After traveling with her to Istanbul (where the encounter with the assassin is to take place), after signing her into a pension, and after assuring her that no “carnal relations” will be necessary (a comment that she finds deeply ironic), Dottie’s father drops her off at an embassy party, narration throughout this chapter flipping back and forth between referring to Dottie by her own name, and by the name Carla. After establishing contact with the would-be assassin as planned, Carla then leaves the embassy and changes into more conservative attire, again as planned. The official meeting with the assassin almost DOESN’T go as planned, when Carla takes matters into her own hands and asks for more money. But the arrangement is eventually made, money is handed over, and Carla goes off with him, aware of a raging bitterness growing inside her.

Chapter 31 – At the assassin’s apartment, even though she knows that her father and his assistant are keeping an eye on the situation, Carla becomes increasingly nervous as the assassin becomes more and more insistent. Finally, the assassin can no longer resist temptation: he punches Carla between the shoulder blades and sodomizes her. The act is interrupted by Dottie’s father, who shoots the assassin in the crotch and orders Dottie to be taken away. She goes, but not before she hears her father identify himself to the assassin, using his Slavic name – Stjepan Kovacevic. Dottie realizes that the “assassin” wasn’t an assassin at all: that he was someone on whom her father wanted to take humiliating revenge. Back at the pension in Istanbul, she waits sleeplessly for her father to return. When he doesn’t, she dresses herself again in the conservative clothes, and goes out into the city.

Analysis

The novel’s exploration of Stjepan/Steven’s complex, often contradictory, relationship with religion plays out with particular vividness in this section – the idea of the pilgrimage, the vision, the scene at the temple, and the reference to the rosary are all indications that, on some level, Stjepan/Steven feels tormented, or at least conflicted, about his motivations, his actions, and even his very existence. Meanwhile, by juxtaposing the intensity of these religious experiences with his vividly portrayed sexualization of his daughter, the narrative very clearly suggests that a significant part of Stjepan/Steven’s torment is, in fact, the result of that sexualization which, in turn, can be seen as manifesting the lengths to which he will go in order to gain revenge on the man/men he believes tortured his mother.

Meanwhile, perhaps the most significant element of this section comes at the conclusion of Dottie/Carla’s encounter with the “assassin” – not the fact that he sodomizes her (which is a clear echo of the way in which Harrington sodomizes her in Book 1), but the fact that she realizes her father’s true intentions. On one level, this makes her realize yet again how much she’s been / is being manipulated by him. On another level, the novel again explores issues thematically related to layers of identity, in that she learns more about core elements of her father’s identity. Finally, and perhaps more importantly, the moment is yet another possible reason why she says in Book 1



(which, it must be remembered, takes place after the events here) she feels she's lost her soul.

Other important elements in this section include further explorations of the novel's thematic interest in layers of identity, which manifest here in the portrayal of the different types of clothing she wears, but also Dottie's physical/mental transformations and her resistance to making those transformations complete, the latter represented by her refusal to give up the blue bracelet. One other noteworthy component of the transformation sequence: her insistence upon having more money, which can be seen as a manifestation of her earlier developed ability to assert herself in potentially dangerous ways.

Discussion Question 1

In what ways is the storm at sea that almost kills Dottie and her father foreshadowing of events later in this section?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think is the answer to Dottie's question – what, in fact, does her father see her as, a prostitute or a daughter?

Discussion Question 3

Why do you think Dottie's father waited so long before interrupting the assassin's assault on his daughter? What aspects of his character, and/or his relationship with Dottie, are in play here?

Vocabulary

vicissitude, fixate, petulant, chauvinistic, appendage, extemporaneous, scintilla, erratic, rapturous, exhilaration, supplicant, seraph, ostensible, impervious, Coptic, Byzantine, pinochle, implicit, lassitude, malignant, bludgeon, lethargic, tremulous, littoral, cavalier (adj.), promontory, dogged, meander, adjacent, excruciating, credulous, myrrh, epitaph, mawkish, aqueduct, scabrous, unctuous, excursion, priapic, flagellated, aplomb, allegiance, requisition, cryptic, sophistry, atrocity, facetious, prurience, surreptitious



Book 3, Part 3, Chapters 32 – 34

Summary

Chapter 32 – Early in the morning, as the mosques are calling the faithful to prayer, Dottie makes her way to Osman's family home, where she is surprised to find him reconciled with his father. Before they can talk in any detail, her father calls and orders her out to his car, but she refuses. She and Osman escape, making their way back to the residence of Dottie's school. As they travel through the city, Osman explains that he has reconciled with his father, that he and Karim are still close, and that he still loves Dottie. At the residence, Dottie is surprised and dismayed to learn that her father has made arrangements for her to move back to the United States and spend her final school year at her mother's home. When talking with her father's motherly assistant, however, she says that she's staying in Istanbul.

Chapter 33 – Leaving the residence, Dottie goes in search of a place to stay for at least a few days. After changing the money she took from the "assassin", and much to Osman's disapproval, she finds a room in a run-down boarding house. Later, in her room, Osman confesses that he wants desperately to be with her. Dottie, however, loving him more than ever but appalled by the thought of sex, convinces him to wait. He tells her that he has to go have a long-delayed meeting with Karim, but that he will be back, to spend the night with her "like brother and sister".

Chapter 34 – Dottie accompanies Osman on the ferry as he goes to meet Karim, aware in the back of her mind that they're being watched but unconcerned when he doesn't return from a trip to the toilet. Meeting Karim on the dock, however, she becomes frantic when Osman doesn't get off the ferry, becoming even more so when she's grabbed by one of her father's men who is then shot by the Palestinian man who accompanied Karim. She is pulled into the back of their car, but the Palestinian doesn't trust her and she is shoved out, wandering the streets until she is arrested when she tries to return to the boarding house. She manages to conceal the various versions of her truth from the interrogating police, helped by the fact that Carla's false passport had been lost.

Meanwhile, Dottie is surprised to be rescued by her father's assistant, who takes her to a hotel, cleans her up, tells her that her father has taken leave of his job, and that she is to be sent home to her mother, where her father will join her around Christmas. Dottie is also given a letter from her father, in which he explains that the "assassin" was, in fact, the last of the "freedom fighters" who attempted to rape his mother in Croatia at the end of the war. Reluctant and unhappy, but fully aware that she's got no-place else to go, Dottie returns to America and the suburban, antiseptic life lived by her rather dull mother. There, Dottie struggles to put her memories together, shuts out her mother's well-intentioned efforts to talk to her, and becomes resigned to her brother's resentful denial of anything she says about her father's abuse of her. As she tries to put herself back together, she finds herself waiting with intense love for her father to return.



Analysis

The opening image of this section functions as an ironic exploration of the novel's exploration of religion, ironic because as the muezzin is calling the Muslim faithful to prayer, Dottie is wandering the city desperately searching for something to replace the faith in her father, and in their relationship that has just been lost as a result of the encounter with the assassin, a relationship which is damaged even further by his decision to send her home to live with her estranged mother. In this context, it's interesting to note the counterpoint between the attitudes of Dottie's Christian father and of the Muslim Osman towards her and her situation. In the same way, it's also interesting to note the contrast/parallel in the two parent/child relationships enacted in this section – while Chambers is pursuing the now-thoroughly alienated Dottie in an effort to control her, Osman has reconciled with his once alienated father, who is giving him more freedom than ever.

Meanwhile, a briefly glimpsed but nonetheless significant element in this section are the references to Chambers' assistant, which foreshadow events in Book 5: specifically, Dottie's (apparent) death in Kenya, where she is (apparently) killed while visiting this same assistant.

Finally, while the narrative never states explicitly who is behind Osman's apparent death, there are strong indications that the killing was arranged by Chambers, whose motivations for doing so are plentiful: Osman's a Muslim, Osman's keeping his daughter from him, and Osman is a member of the rebel movement that opposes the political regime in Turkey that Chambers is working to support.

What's interesting about the conclusion of this section is that Dottie knows, or at least suspects all of this. She knows how often and how painfully her father has both betrayed and used her; and she knows, at least to some degree, how damaged she is as a result of his betrayals. Still, she waits for him with love, longing, and eagerness. The state of mind Dottie waits for her father demonstrates two things: one, a common, paradoxical response that the victims of sexual abuse often have towards their abusers; and two, another reason why Dottie believes she's lost her soul.

Discussion Question 1

Aside from the sexual trauma she recently suffered, why is Dottie's refusal to have sex with Osman significant?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think is the main reason Chambers decides to send Dottie back to the States to live with her mother?



Discussion Question 3

How do you think Dottie's mother and brother affect Dottie's belief that she's lost her soul?

Vocabulary

morose, serpentine, tribulation, sequester, abject, expatriate, dubious, officious, oleander, equanimity, belligerent, insensate, voluptuous, tendril, liaison, pliant, scrutinize, ascendance, acquiesce, seditious, insouciance, contretemps, compliance, flaccid, libertine, depravity, muezzin, perfidious, mendacity, indecipherable, fez, immaculate, residue, histrionic, squalid, reputable, ziggurat, repugnant, extricate, peregrination, depository, necropolis, propitious, clandestine, juggernaut, purgatory, inanity, resurgent, voluble, despicable, dissonance



Book 4, Part 1, Chapters 35 – 41

Summary

Chapter 35 – This brief chapter reintroduces Eville Burnette into the narrative. Narration describes his caddying relationship with the Friends of Golf, powerful American politician/spies each with strong religious faith, and each with deep, tightly networked ties of political and military influence. One of them is Steven Chambers (Stjepan Kovacevic), Dottie's father.

Chapter 36 (February, 1996) – Narration in this chapter describes how Burnette came to be in Haiti in Book 1 – as the result of a three-way golf course conversation and deal between himself, Chambers, and a gruff, racist Colonel. The deal results in Burnette being promoted to Captain, being sent to Haiti to look into the Jacques LeCouer rebellion, to keep an eye on a drug shipment (the shipment alluded to in Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 8), and to keep an eye on Chambers' daughter. Narration also describes Burnette's grudging admiration for Tom Harrington and his (Burnette's) initial reluctance to take the arrangement beyond the encounter at the helicopter (Book 1, Part 4, Chapter 12), a reluctance that soon disappears.

Chapter 37 – Narration describes several confrontations Burnette has in the aftermath of the escape in the helicopter – with the frustrated and very upset Harrington, with the resentful Arab Colonel who flew the helicopter (Colonel Khan), and with the arrogant, self-centered Jackie/Dottie. At dinner, she sexually taunts him; reminds him of the drug investigation he's supposed to be running; and hints that they're both cogs in an unstoppable machine run by her father. Narration also describes how, during his and Jackie/Dottie's conversation, the drug deal Burnette was supposed to be watching was taking place, and that he didn't know until a couple of months later, back on a golf course in Miami.

Chapter 38 – Burnette recalls first becoming aware of how sexualized Jackie/Dottie was; in Rome, when she was in her early teens and greeted him naked in her father's hotel room.

Chapter 39 (April, 1996) – Back in Miami, Burnette rejoins The Friends of Golf, who have also welcomed another caddy (an American intelligence agent) and Colonel Khan, who turns out to be a Pakistani ally of Steven Chambers and, therefore, of the government. Later, after Khan leaves, the visiting agent reveals that Khan was heavily involved in the drug deal that went down without Burnette's engagement. As the agent reassures Burnette it was all part of a larger plan, he also reveals that Khan was working with Parmentier, and that pictures taken of Khan and Parmentier together were, in fact, taken by Dottie/Jackie/Renee.

Chapter 40 – Burnette remembers meeting Jackie in a hotel bar, and how after some small talk and some not so small talk about her father (in which she says the only thing



she trusts is his cruelty), she talked him into accompanying her up north to observe and photograph a Haitian voodoo ceremony. Burnette agrees, later observes as she loses herself in the ritual, and then still later fends off her sexual advances in their hotel room. Leaving his apartment after emerging from his memories, Burnette reports to his base, where he's given a stack of paperwork and encounters two fellow soldiers about to be shipped to duty in Bosnia.

Chapter 41 – As he attempts to resume what he believes to be the relatively normal side of his life, Burnette recalls “the one good thing that had happened in Haiti in the 1996 two months.” Narration describes how, in the aftermath of Khan’s rescue of Jackie and Burnette from LeCouer’s rebel stronghold (Book 1, Part 4, Chapter 12), several members of the rebel community, fighters and hangers on alike, were taken into custody and treated brutally by Khan and his men before being released. Burnette encountered a woman (Margarete) and her son, who had been abandoned by the others, and arranged for them to be housed in a small bungalow behind a large Catholic church. Eventually, Margarete and her son, as well as her newly located brother Reginald, are settled, and Burnette, this “good deed” making him feel more and more morally compromised, finds himself dreaming of them.

Analysis

Several important narrative elements are re-introduced or re-developed in this section. The first is the character of Eville Burnette, who appeared almost passingly in Book 1, and who appears both here and in Book 5 as the central character. Here, the narrative focuses primarily on his past, both in terms of his childhood and youth (both of which are explored relatively briefly) and his more recent involvement with Dottie/Jackie/Renee and her father, Steven Chambers. In this latter aspect, the novel also returns to its spy-thriller orientation, with much of the information communicated answering the questions arising from Burnette’s seemingly enigmatic presence in Book 1. This is arguably the primary narrative purpose of all of Book 4 – to add more information and/or enhance the reader’s understanding of the events of Book 1 while simultaneously deepening and/or exploring the bigger picture circumstances in which those events took place.

Also in this section, particularly in Chapter 35, the narrative brings back its secondary thematic consideration of the presence, power, and influence of deep religious faith – specifically, in its careful references to the conservative, traditional faiths of The Friends of Golf. Not only is Steven Chambers a strong, traditional Roman Catholic, but another of the group’s members is portrayed as a Southern Baptist which, traditionally, has been among the most conservative of the Western Christian religions. “The Friends of Golf”, meanwhile, is a new element introduced in this section, portrayed as a mysterious, powerful, almost puppet-master-like organization of behind-the-scenes power brokers.

Other important points to note in this section are the reference to Burnette’s encounter with the teenaged Dottie in Rome (which, as noted, is an example of how sexualized she had been made by her father), his more recent refusal of her sexual advances in



the hotel room in Haiti (which foreshadows his eventual succumbing to similar advances in Book 5), and the exploration of Burnette's relationship with Margarete and her family. This is the first of several instances throughout Book 4 and Book 5 in which Burnette, unlike many (most?) of the other characters, strives to put some good in the world, to behave with compassion and generosity as opposed to cruelty, self-indulgence, and self-serving, obsessive, manipulation.

Discussion Question 1

In what ways does Jackie/Dottie's reference to Burnette and herself being "cogs" in the machine run by her father tie in with The Friends of Golf?

Discussion Question 2

What do you think might be the reasons why The Friends of Golf hold the conversations they do (i.e. making decisions about military and/or government operations) in the places they do (i.e. open, public golf courses)?

Discussion Question 3

How do the narrative's comments about Burnette's home life relate to its portrait of his relationship with Margarete and her family?

Vocabulary

equinox, advertent, mulligan, sinewy, algorithm, tectonic, expedience, arbiter, culpability, minion, perfunctory, sartorial, preamble, puissant, behest, recalcitrant, caprice, epiphany, contingent, fatuous, slattern, pudenda, sanctimonious, nymphet, nepotism, replete, apostasy, indomitable, ravenous, recrimination



Book 4, Part 2, Chapters 42 - 46

Summary

Chapter 42 – Burnette is accepted for training as a special operations officer in a unit called Delta Force. After that training is complete, he joins Chambers and The Friends of Golf on another beautiful golf course. This time, the group is joined by Colonel Vasich, a Croatian with ties to Steven Chambers. Burnette realizes that there's really nothing different between the two worlds, militaries, and missions – “the fate of societies left in the hands of a few men playing a round of golf, a few men drinking chai in caves, hatching both sides of the same eternal plot, reversible good versus reversible evil, and God's way both ways ...”

Chapter 43 – Near the end of his training, Burnette undergoes a series of challenging, threatening psychological tests. At the end, he's thrown off-center by a patronizing question about his father, but manages to get himself under control. He's then told that he has passed this particular test.

Chapter 44 – Shortly after Burnette finishes his training, he goes home to Montana for Christmas with his family – his widowed mother, his brothers, and their families. While there, he honors his father by cleaning his guns, and tells his mother he'd be interested in returning to live on their ranch once his tour is finished in three years. A few days later, she cries as she dances with him at a New Year's Eve party.

Chapter 45 – Back in Miami, Burnette is sent by Chambers to the art gallery where Dottie, now known as Renee Gardner, is opening a show of her photographs. Burnette eventually recognizes her, and after learning that she's travelling back and forth between Miami and Haiti, agrees to be her ally and protector, watching as she has a flirtatious encounter with Parmentier and the owner of the gallery. Shortly afterwards, Burnette embarks on a series of missions throughout Europe, eventually encountering both the Croatian Colonel Vasich and Chambers who, along with other members of the Friends of Golf, give him a new mission: to take out Renee Gardner. Burnette refuses.

Chapter 46 – In present tense narration, Burnette arrives in Haiti where he learns that Renee and Parmentier are to be killed (at a voodoo ceremony which nobody is supposed to know about) by the Arabs with whom Parmentier has been working. When Burnette learns that the Arabs are being directed by a Haitian rebel collaborator with whom he has a relationship, he makes a successful attempt to defuse the situation, preventing – as he believes – both the death of Renee and further rebellion. Burnette travels to the ceremony, where he encounters Renee and, with her help, fends off an attack by Honore Vincent (who is leading the ceremony and is still angry with Renee). The next time Burnette sees Renee, she's just been murdered and he is assigned to accompany her body to the airport for transport back to Miami. The next day, following a visit to the American Embassy, Burnette is taken into custody and escorted to the airport.



Analysis

Important points in this section include the relationship between Burnette and his mother, and the continuing revelations of what was going on behind/during the events in Haiti described in Book 1.

In terms of narrative style, the shift in Chapter 46 from past tense to present tense narration is important. This is one of only a few occasions in the entire book in which this takes place. This shift brings the reader more fully and immediately into the narrative, as first person narration tends to do in general. Furthermore, the shift is something different, and because the different always draws attention to itself, suggests to the reader that the events being described at this particular moment are particularly worthy of attention.

Perhaps the most important point to note about this section happens right at its beginning – specifically, Burnette’s realization of the similarities between what in today’s military-political context might be viewed as the two sides in the so-called War on Terror. While the narrative here is set in the years before 9/11, the image of the powerful Friends of Golf can very easily be seen as simultaneously echoing and foreshadowing various relationships that motivated various aspects of the West’s contemporary, ongoing war on Muslim extremism, while the image of “a few men ... in caves” very clearly similarly echoes and foreshadows images of Osama bin Laden and his Afghan allies seemingly plotting attacks on the west from caves in Afghanistan. In other words, with this phrase / image, the author seems to be very clearly drawing parallels between fictionalized history and contemporary realities.

Discussion Question 1

How does Burnette’s trip home to Montana relate to the narrative’s emphasis, in the previous section, on his home life and his relationship with Margarete and her family?

Discussion Question 2

In what ways does the relationship between Burnette and his mother parallel and/or contrast the other parent/child relationships portrayed in the narrative, such as Stjepan and his mother, Dottie and her father, and Osman and his father?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss the contrast between Burnette’s training and what the narrative suggests are other aspects of his character – specifically, his trip to Montana. What do you think the narrative is suggesting about a) who he is as a person, and b) any/all of the novel’s themes by portraying these two sides of his life?



Vocabulary

negligible, clairvoyance, chastened, plumage, serendipity, ontological, kestrel, insidious, nascent, antebellum, cannonade, evangelical, joviality, disingenuous, gluttonous, kinetic, rictus, audacious, brazier, raucous, messianic, braggart



Book 5, Part 1, Chapters 47 – 49

Summary

Prologue – After her body arrives in Miami, accompanied by Burnette and Boko St. Jean, Renee is revived by a ritual conducted by St. Jean – it seems her death was staged with the help of voodoo. After a period of recovery in a secret hospital (where she is visited by her father), Renee is taken to Burnette’s apartment, where she is to stay until a new identity can be readied for her, narration commenting that she remembers, in the moments before losing consciousness, that the boy who posed as her killer (Toussaint) stole the precious bracelet she got from Osman. Meanwhile, Burnette returns to Haiti.

Chapter 47 – After tidying up some loose ends with the rebels, Burnette returns to Miami to find that “Renee” has made way for “Dottie”, a transformation symbolized, in narration, by the reemergence of Dottie’s natural hair color. As she snorts cocaine (a habit she picked up, she says, while posing as Renee), Dottie explains that the work she was doing for her father in tracking Parmentier’s drug deals and the situation in Haiti was being compromised by the fact that Parmentier was in love with her, and that the Haitians were starting to figure out she wasn’t what she seemed. So, she says, she came up with the idea of utilizing some of the research she had done on voodoo to find a way to simulate her death and get out – the only current problem being, she adds, that it’s being treated (by Dolan, among others) as a REAL death. She also confesses that she knows she’s got issues with her father, but that it’s not just him they’re dealing with.

Chapter 48 – Following a mission debriefing in which he learns that the plot to kill Dottie (Renee) wasn’t hatched by the Arabs but by Parmentiere, Burnette is told to take some time off. He proposes to Dottie that they go out of town for a while and she agrees, quickly packing her gear (including her satellite phone) into his kitbag. As they drive in his truck towards the Florida coast, Dottie’s curiosity leads her to ask Burnette about killing people. He says he’s only killed one person, telling her how, when he was working his way through Eastern Europe in the company of Dottie’s father and Colonel Vasich; Vasich used him as the getaway driver for the assassination of someone described only as “an asshole”. Burnette adds that he later found evidence that tied some of their prisoners to Khan, and at that moment, he adds, he lost control of his conscious self but felt connected to his true soul for the first time. Dottie (the woman who lost her soul) is particularly intrigued by this, but before the conversation can go any further, they arrive at a ferry terminal. As Burnette drives them on, Dottie flashes back to the last time she was on a ferry in Istanbul, the day that Osman was killed. Burnette notices something is wrong, and Dottie asks for some time alone.

Chapter 49 – Recovering from her surge of memory, Dottie apologizes to the suddenly aloof Burnette. Shortly afterwards, the ferry docks and they resume their journey, but not for long – Dottie suddenly finds herself in the grip of debilitating cocaine withdrawal. Shaking, hallucinating, and having no appetite, she drifts in and out of consciousness.



Meanwhile, Burnette prepares a camp for both of them by a lake. At one point, Dottie points to their two shadows, cast by a bright moon, and says they are their two souls. Eventually Dottie drops into a sound, comfortable sleep, held in Burnette's arms.

Analysis

The revelation in the prologue, that Renee/Jackie/Dottie isn't really dead, has a great deal of impact, and functions on a couple of levels. First, it ties together several loose ends, left over from Books 1 and 4 – it explains the intense interest in voodoo and its ceremonies shown by Renee/Jackie/Dottie, it explains why her body was shipped out of Haiti so quickly after her "death", and it explains why Eville was sent to "take her out" (a phrase which he took to have one meaning – i.e. kill her – but which is now revealed to have an entirely different meaning). While some readers might find this twist frustrating, it is nevertheless a powerful element in one of the narrative's primary purposes – to engage the reader in a political-spy thriller-type narrative. It could be argued, in fact, that this revelation is the climax of this narrative line, leaving the rest of the narrative to build to its more thematic climax through the encounters various characters have with their souls.

Other important elements in this section include the revelation that Toussaint stole Renee/Jackie Dottie's bracelet, the implication that Vasich was/is, on some level, engaging in the same sort of revenge as Chambers was/is, and the development of a romantic/intimate relationship between Burnette and Dottie, the deepening of which is the primarily motivator of the following, final section of the book.

The most significant element of this section, however, involves the multi-level deepening of the narrative's thematic exploration of the nature and value of the human soul. Of the various aspects of this development, perhaps the most significant is Burnette's story of how he felt most connected to his soul, which the reader could very well see as being deeply ironic. This man who seems to have such a strong sense of personal integrity and connection to what most people would describe as soul-affirming relationships (literally to mom and home) and as being directly responsible for the death of only one person is also portrayed as finding what he considers his soul in an act of extreme, uncontrolled violence. It could be argued, in fact, that this idea of his is a delusion, something that Burnette tells himself because he has to. This is because the narrative places so much emphasis on Burnette's aforementioned home/family relationships, as well as on the moonlight connection of souls at the end of the chapter and the discoveries Burnette makes about himself in the following, concluding chapters of the book.

Discussion Question 1

In what ways might Dottie's re-awakening from death be seen as foreshadowing or paralleling her comments at the end of Chapter 49 about her soul?



Discussion Question 2

Operating on the presumption that Burnette tells himself that he found his soul in an act of violence, why might he feel the need to do that?

Discussion Question 3

Aside from the literal physical parallels, what are other possible parallels between Dottie's experience of being on a ferry with Osman and her experience of being on a ferry with Burnette?

Vocabulary

mimicry, sacrilegious, atropine, epinephrine, subterfuge, beatific, sartorial, fastidious, monastic, odorous, ablution, tangential, peruse, hubris, ebullience, cognitive, dissonance, voluminous, archipelago, herniated, pugilist, effusive, atrocity, facile, absolution, expiation, specious, cavalry, laconic, catechist, osprey, daffy, heinous, delirium, malevolent, cognizant, flotsam



Book 5, Part 2, Chapters 50 - 52

Summary

Chapter 50 – After a couple of relaxed, playful days of beachside camping, during which the sexual and romantic tension between them continues to build, Burnette and Dottie are faced with a choice: stay and ride out the impending storm (which is going to keep the ferry from running for a couple of days), or leave on the next ferry and start making their way back to civilization. They decide to stay, and drunkenly ride out the storm in the cab of Burnette's truck. The next morning, they wake to find the beach flooded. Dottie goes off exploring, gets caught in an unexpected wave, and struggles to stay afloat, but eventually makes it to shore, where she is held by Burnette. As they make love, Dottie finds herself flashing back to her childhood, in a church, and the last time she prayed – praying for killing the enemies that her father tells her are out there. She also has an epiphany about what having a soul might mean, and at that moment, the sun comes out.

Chapter 51 – The next morning, the two of them receive a summons (via Dottie's satellite phone) from Chambers: they are to meet him back in Virginia. They pack up, travel back, spend a sexually charged night in a hotel, and then meet Chambers at another hotel, where they are surprised by the appearance of Dottie's brother Christopher and his new white South African fiancé. Chambers takes Burnette aside and tells him he's no longer a suspect in "Renee's" death. Burnette, unaware that he ever WAS a suspect, is further surprised to learn that Parmentier is being released from prison.

Later, when the family goes out to dinner together, Burnette is virtually ignored until Dottie is invited to Christopher's wedding and asks him to be her date. After dinner, Chambers takes Dottie back to their hotel, but she later joins Burnette at the hotel Chambers has arranged for him, the two of them spend one last night together, being intimate and talking about Dottie's future, which she says will still involve being in the secret service, but not knowing which branch or which job. The next day, the lovers part, narration describing, among other things, their agreement to meet in South Africa for the wedding and Dottie's last postcard, which says "love may be the only thing we are right about."

Chapter 52, Part 1 – This chapter begins with narration of Dottie's death, shortly after being visited by the desperate Burnette, as the result of her being caught in an explosion while visiting Chambers' supportive, motherly assistant in Kenya on the way to the wedding. After watching her body be taken away, Burnette finds Chambers in the Chapel, where they have a tense, angry conversation that concludes with Chambers telling Burnette he (Burnette) has a new assignment.

Narration then describes how Burnette goes on a tour of duty in Afghanistan, which is interrupted by a brief visit to his mother in Montana. After his tour ends, Burnette is sent



to officer training school, but his time there is interrupted by another assignment –being sent to work with Colonel Varich on security for the funeral of Davor Starevica, Chambers' mentor. Burnette is also told that Chambers, who is likely to attend the funeral, suffers from a significant medical condition that Burnette later learns is a kind of dementia, and that he (Burnette) is to bring Chambers back to America the moment the funeral has concluded.

Chapter 52, Part 2 - Burnette participates in all the preparations, working closely with Varich and watching carefully as Chambers, still attractive but mentally and emotionally unstable, makes his way through the various diplomacies around the wedding. At one point, Burnette is called from his post by Tom Harrington, who demands to know the truth about what happened to Jackie/Renee/Dottie, having heard rumors about what really happened the night she "died". As proof of his suspicions, he gives Burnette Dottie's blue bracelet, taken from her by Toussaint, the boy who staged the assassination. Seeing Burnette's shock (which narration describes as a kind of joyful gratitude), Harrington realizes that Dottie is really dead, and the two rejoin the service, just in time to hear Chambers speak dementedly and crudely about Davor, the man he calls his father. Before Burnette can act, Varich calms Chambers down, and the two of them start singing the Croatian national anthem, the entire congregation joining in.

At the cemetery, Harrington reconnects with Burnette, and convinces him to help get Toussaint out of jail. Burnette then visits Dottie's grave, his thoughts of her bracelet and of memory and bidding her a final goodbye. Finally, he takes the weary Chambers, ranting about how helplessly Dottie died, to the airport. As he goes, Burnette reflects on how, in pursuit of protection for violently endangered truths, people forget that other, more affirming truths are present, "that they are with us, that they are there."

Analysis

Throughout this section, the narrative builds to its various thematic climaxes – its answers to its self-posed questions about the soul (which manifest in, among other things, Dottie's discoveries about what she believes to be her own lost soul), and about the nature and value of memory. This manifests particularly in Chapter 52 in the experiences of Chambers (the departure / deterioration of his corrupting, obsessive memory leaving him vulnerable and lonely), Harrington (his own corruptive, obsessive memory driving him to extremes of both desperation and loss), and Burnette (who, it could be argued, connects with the genuine truth of his own soul as the result of his encounters with the other two, and also with his own memories of Dottie).

Thematic questions of memory are also explored in the larger, external context of this section's action.

Meanwhile, the novel's thematic exploration of the soul can be seen as climaxing, albeit ironically, in either the moment of Dottie's death (in which her final, dying encounter with Burnette can be seen as the moment in which the two of them connect fully with the best part of themselves and their relationship – i.e. their soul) or the moment in which



Burnette realizes that in her death, both she and he are released to connect fully with the best of themselves.

It should be noted, however, that for several reasons, there is some question as to whether Dottie actually is dead. Having been shown how manipulated by the government her life has been, how in this section she talks about continuing to be involved in the Secret Service, and how she's cheated death at least once, the reader might easily side with Harrington who, even at her gravesite, seems to be unconvinced that her life actually has come to an end.

Other significant elements in this section include a second visit made by Burnette to his mother in Montana (which can, like the previous visit, be seen as paralleling/contrasting other family relationships in the narrative); the return of the blue bracelet (which has clear symbolic implications); and the revelation that Chambers, now that he's losing his memory, actually seems to feel remorse for what he did to his daughter. This can be seen as yet another indication by the narrative that a character, after participating in an untold number of manipulations, murders, and other acts of physical/moral destruction, is reconnecting with his soul – with, as Burnette realizes, the affirming, positive truths that are present within everyone. This, in turn, might be seen as the climax of yet another of the narrative's thematic interests – its commentary on American exceptionalism.

Discussion Question 1

How do the circumstances and events of this section's action – the funeral of Davor Starevica – reflect and/or manifest the narrative's thematic exploration of the power and value of memory?

Discussion Question 2

In what ways does the storm in this section echo the storm in Book 3, Part 2, that swamps The Sea Nymph and leaves Dottie and her father shipwrecked?

Discussion Question 3

In what ways might Burnette's final realization (about the positivity of deeply held personal truths continuing to exist despite being buried beneath layers of corruption) relate to the novel's thematic exploration of American exceptionalism?

Vocabulary

viceroy, symbiotic, voracious, contrite, equilibrium, inviolable, venality, incipient, quotidian, apathetic, nonchalant, abrasion, vestige, chronology, amorphous, perfunctory, erasure, convulsive, dereliction, ambivalence, innuendo, inaugural, cursory, opacity,



internecine, dissipation, resuscitate, ecumenical, commiserate, adjutant, euphemistic, epaulette, disheveled, visage, aristocrat, aneurysm, viscid, incongruous, bellicose, pungency, sarcophagus



Characters

Dorothy (Dottie) Chambers

Dottie (as she's referred to throughout much of the narrative) is the book's title character. While she doesn't appear throughout the entire narrative (being entirely absent from Book 2), and while she is somewhat peripheral to the action in some of the books in which she does appear (Books 1 and 4), the novel gives the very clear impression that the experiences of the other characters, even in the decades-distant past like Book 2, are about her, related to her, or contributed to defining her. She is, in short, the character the book is about.

What's particularly interesting about her, and challenging about reading the novel, is that she appears in several identities: photojournalist Jackie Scott (photo journalist and obsessive interest of human rights lawyer Tom Harrington), Renee Gardner (the big-breasted, cocaine-addicted wife of criminal Jack Parmentier), and Carla Costa (a prostitute, whom Dottie "becomes" in Book 3 at the request of her father). Throughout each of these incarnations, Dottie is portrayed as strong-willed and independent, but only to a point – the narrative creates the very strong sense that she is too much in thrall to her charismatic, manipulative, powerful father to ever fully be her own woman.

This experience of living, working, and defining herself at her father's pleasure is, as the narrative further suggests, the result of his sexual abuse of her from a very young age. Perhaps paradoxically, she is simultaneously independent and desperate for her father's approval, rebellious but still receptive to manipulation, strong but achingly vulnerable, extremely sexual but lonely for genuine love, affection, and respect.

Her quest for what she says is her lost soul, or at least what her soul might be, is developed and/or explored in a somewhat understated fashion: the narrative focuses primarily on its political and military elements, and once mentioned in Book 1, Dottie's conscious search moves off the story's radar until sometime in Book 4. The search, and the loss that triggered it, nevertheless lies at the core of her identity – if, the book arguably suggests, someone who's been through so much and inhabited so many disguises can have a core to her identity at all.

Steven Chambers (Stjepan Kovacevic)

Chambers is Dorothy's father, a wealthy and powerful political and military operative. Without actually stating it directly, the narrative seems to present the opinion that after the traumatizing events of the end of World War II, Chambers (who changed his name from Stjepan Kovacevic once he moved to America as a refugee) became obsessed with thoughts of revenge on those who participated in racial and cultural genocide in general, and in the genocide of his home country (Croatia) in particular. This obsession, the narrative also suggests, defines and/or motivates every action he subsequently



takes, every characteristic he subsequently develops: his intense religious faith, in which he seeks redemption for his dark thoughts and deeds; his sexual abuse of his daughter, which can be seen as an exertion of the kind of power that his childhood experiences took from him; and his social / military / political manipulations, which took him into, and secured, positions of power in the American government and around the world.

In many ways, Chambers is a monster, corrupting his daughter (and arguably the planet) in the way he was corrupted as a child. He, too, lost his soul, the narrative also seems to suggest. Only at the book's conclusion does it appear that he seems to have reclaimed it, the irony being that because of his loss of memory, he can neither remember losing it, nor really feel at peace as the result of what he's regained.

Eville Burnette

Eville Burnette is an American military man, first a soldier, then a member of an elite special operations team (Delta Force), and finally, an affiliate of the American Secret Service. Throughout his appearances, he is portrayed as a good man, a soldier with a conscience, but not one entirely strong enough to overcome his training to obey orders no matter what. This training, this perspective, this set of circumstances leads him into dangerous situations, both professional and personal, the latter primarily involving Dottie Chambers, whom he is initially assigned to protect but with whom he later falls in love.

Of all the central characters, Burnette seems to be the one who is most in touch with his soul, despite apparent attempts by the military to train it out of him. This sense emerges as the result of the narrative's inclusion of Burnette's visits to his family home in Montana. Of all the characters, Burnette has what seems to be the healthiest relationship with his family, and particularly his mother. There is the sense that unlike the other primary characters (Dorothy, Chambers, Harrington), Burnette is able to do what he is asked to do without compromising and/or damaging the part of him that, as Harrington suggests in Part One, is humanity's connection to the divine.

Tom Harrington

Harrington is the central character of Book 1. A world-renowned human rights lawyer and advocate, he is drawn into the investigation of Dottie Chambers' apparent death by shady detective Conrad Dolan. Harrington's contemplations of the nature of the human soul, combined with his joining Dorothy (whom he knows as Jackie) on her quest for HER soul and his experience of losing HIS, form the basis of the novel's central thematic contemplation on the nature of souls, what makes them and what breaks them.

Harrington is portrayed as well-meaning but somewhat ineffectual, seemingly helpless in the face of strong feelings, including his own. Unable to deal with or resolve his obsessive attraction to Dottie/Jackie, he finds a kind of peace at her grave, but the



narrative creates the impression that that peace is fleeting at best, determinedly convinced as he is that she is still alive.

Conrad Dolan

Playing an important role in Book 1, Dolan is an ex-secret serviceman turned private investigator. He is hired by Parmentier to investigate the murder of Parmentier's wife Renee Gardner, who turns out to be Dottie Chambers.

Boko St. Jean, Honore Vincent

These characters appear primarily in Book 1, but appear in passing appearances/references in Books 4 and 5. They are voodoo priests or "houngans", experienced and powerful practitioners of this mysterious Haitian religion. They have a powerful rivalry in which Dottie/Jackie/Renee, Harrington, and Burnette get caught, but which is also made use of when it comes time to fake "Renee's" death.

Gerard

Gerard is Harrington's Haitian "fixer", or the local who speaks the language, knows the community and culture, and helps him accomplish what he wants and needs in order to complete his investigations. He also ends up working for both Dolan and Burnette, playing important roles in their activities and actions as well.

Jacques Le Couer

The activities of Haitian rebel Le Couer are the catalyst for several important confrontations in Book 1 of the narrative that, in turn, are the catalysts for important confrontations between Jackie/Dottie, Harrington, and Burnette.

Colonel Rashid Khan

Khan makes a brief appearance in Book 1, as the helicopter pilot who airlifts Jackie/Dottie and Burnette out of a confrontation with Le Couer's rebels. Later, in Books 4 and 5, Khan is revealed to be an influential Pakistani military officer, whose professional and personal relationship with Chambers plays an important role not so much in the narrative, but in the military-political context in which the narrative unfolds.

Marija Kovacevic

Marija is Stjepan Kovacevic's (Steven Chambers') mother. Appearing actively only in Book 2, she is the primary force behind Chambers' escape from potential death in



Croatia at the end of World War II, her fierce bitterness and resilience being a primary motivator of Chambers' own resentment and obsession.

Davor Starcevica

Starcevica is a Croatian rebel leader connected to Stjepan's father / Marija's husband. Despite Marija's intense personal dislike for him, he ensures her and Stjepan's escape in Book 2. He reappears in Book 3, as an influence on, and ally for, both Steven and Dottie Chambers as they prepare, as Dottie believes, to prevent the assassination of the Pope. Narration reveals, however, that the plan is, in fact, an act of co-vengeance on the part of Starcevica and Chambers in revenge for an act of violence perpetrated on Marija during the escape from Croatia. Finally, it is the funeral of Starcevica, who has been hailed as a Croatian hero, that Chambers, Burnette, and Harrington all attend in Book 5, that is the catalyst for several final self-revelations in those three characters.

Karim

Karim is Osman's best friend, and a fellow member of a group of young rebels. Karim is present when Osman is killed and initially tries to help the young Dottie Chambers escape the scene of the killing, but ends up revealing his lack of trust in her and discarding her.

Colonel Varich

The Croatian Varich is another survivor of the Croatian genocide in World War II, and in later life, becomes an ally of Chambers (in his pursuit of vengeance on those who destroyed both his people and his mother) and a colleague of Burnette (in several operations, including security at the funeral of Davor Starcevica).

Osman

Osman is the young Turkish Muslim with whom the teenaged Dottie Chambers becomes romantically involved in Book 3. His playfulness and idealism are very attractive to her, while his gift of what he says is a protective blue bracelet becomes one of her most precious possessions, staying with her throughout almost every transformation of identity which she undergoes.

“The Assassin”

In Book 3, Dottie is recruited by her father to help foil an assassination attempt on the life of the then Pope. The attempt, he tells her, is to be made by a Croatian with strong conservative Muslim ties. After she is sexually assaulted on the mission, however, Dottie discovers that “the assassin” is, in fact, the last of the men who sexually



assaulted her father's mother (her grandmother) during the escape from Croatia, and she has in fact been recruited as a tool to help her father take personal revenge on the man.

Jack Parmentier

Parmentier is a double-dealing government "asset", or spy/informer, drug dealer, human trafficker, and all-round crook. Playing an important role in book 1, Parmentier hires Conrad Dolan to investigate the murder of Parmentier's wife, Renee Gardner.

Toussaint

A young youdou priest, of "houngan", Toussaint participates in the fake death of Renee and eventually becomes the "fall guy", or the one set up by the plan to take the blame. Toussaint's wrongful imprisonment triggers Harrington's re-involvement in the case, in that he (Harrington) travels to Croatia in Book 5 in order to get Burnette and Chambers to participate in his plan to free what he believes to be the innocent Toussaint from jail.



Symbols and Symbolism

The Soul

The question of whether the human soul exists is part of one of the narrative's key themes. It also actively manifests in the lives of several of the main characters (including Dottie, Harrington, and Eville Burnette), while experiences of the soul, primarily negative, can be seen indirectly in the lives and experiences of others, including Dolan, Parmentier, and perhaps most significantly, Steven Chambers.

Religious Faith / Spirituality

Throughout the narrative, questions of religious faith and spirituality arise in the lives and experiences of several characters. A strong Roman Catholic faith drives both Steven Chambers and Tom Harrington, as well as several secondary characters. Strong Muslim faith drives Osman and several secondary, background characters and confrontations. Strong faith in voodoo drives complex relationships and rivalries in Haiti, and also turns out to be the source for the American government's means of getting Dottie/Renee out of a potentially life threatening situation.

The American Government

The presence of the American government, and what the narrative portrays as the manipulations, contradictions, and subterfuges of its various agencies, is in the background of the action throughout the entire novel. Its presence is a key, if subtly played out, manifestation of the book's thematically central consideration of the philosophy and practice of being "American".

Voodoo

More commonly spelled "voodoo", this mysterious spiritual practice is unique to Haiti. It is reputed to be based in beliefs in, and practices related to, the ultimate power of the mind and spirit over the body, utilizing their potential to both heal and destroy. Voodoo plays a key role in resolving the important plot point of Dottie/Renee's apparent death.

Dorothy's Photographs

Throughout the narrative, Dorothy is portrayed as a photographer – at times an amateur one, at other times a professional one. Her practice plays a key role in several important events (such as the confrontation with LeCouer's rebels in Book 1) and a few less impactful, but no less important circumstances (such as the development of her relationship with Osman in Book 3).



The Croatian Papers

In Book 2, Marija and Stjepan are given some papers by the man helping them escape. Those papers are taken by a second man, whom the first man had trusted. Their absence triggers brutal beatings for Marija and Stjepan, which in turn provokes bitter, violent resentment on both their parts to those who failed to help and/or save them.

Dottie's Bracelet

At her seventeenth birthday party in Book 3, Osman gives Dottie a bracelet of blue stones that he says will ward off the evil eye – in other words, that will protect her from harm. It quickly, almost immediately, becomes her most precious possession, as she keeps it with her throughout the rest of her life. It makes appearances in the narrative at key points – during her transformation into the “prostitute” Carla (at which point she refuses to leave it out of her disguise), at the beginning of the narrative (where Harrington recognizes it as hers and implicates the young man who has it in her death), and at the end of the narrative, when Harrington tries to return it to Chambers, but it's intercepted by Burnette.

“The Sea Nymph”

“The Sea Nymph” is the boat presented to Dottie by Chambers as a gift for her seventeenth birthday. She trains as a sailor on it (her skills showing up later in her life, but earlier in the narrative – Book 1 - when, as Renee, she pilots Parmentier's boat), and she and her father survive its being swamped in a storm (also Book 3).

The Rosary

Stjepan's mother Marija escapes from Croatia with a precious keepsake – her rosary, a string of beads that assists Roman Catholics in prayer. Decades later, Steven Chambers (formerly Stjepan) prays with the rosary in the chapel following the death of his daughter Dottie. The rosary symbolizes the power and comfort that both Marija and Steven find in their faith, Steven somewhat obsessively.

“The Friends of Golf”

This is the name of a group of powerful government operatives/politicians/military men that move behind the scenes of international political and military engagement. The group is primarily American, but occasionally invite guests of other nationalities to participate in both their games and their manipulations.



Settings

America

The United States of America is the setting for several key scenes in the narrative. Specific locations within America that play important roles in the action include: Miami, Florida is where Harrington, Dolan, Parmentier and “Renee” all live; Montana is where Burnette’s mother lives, and where he visits at two key points in his life / the narrative; and Washington, DC as the centre of government and the home base for the several interacting, conflicting agencies that manipulate the action that drives the plot.

Haiti

The small, tropical country of Haiti is the setting for much of the action in Book 1, and is revisited throughout the narrative. Poverty stricken and politically corrupt, it is referred several times as having the power and potential to corrupt/destroy even the best of men’s souls.

Croatia

This Balkan country in Eastern Europe is the home country of Stepjan Kovacevic (Steven Chambers). In Book 2, the narrative describes the vicious, violent circumstances of his and his mother’s escape from Croatia at the end of World War II. The narrative returns there in Book 5 for the climactic confrontation between Chambers, Harrington, and Burnette.

Istanbul

The capital of Turkey is the setting for much of the action in Book 3. It is in Istanbul that Dottie Chambers meets the young man that the narrative portrays as the love of her life (Osman), and it is in Istanbul that she also faces the biggest danger of her life so far: being manipulated by her father, being raped by the man her father is trying to take revenge on, and nearly being killed by men trying to get revenge on Osman for being a rebel against the state.

Themes and Motifs

Americanism

Throughout the book, the narrative makes pointed references to what is today called American “exceptionalism”, an attitude or belief system that’s expressed openly and explicitly in Chambers’ comments in Chapter 19 about the independence he believes he’s teaching his daughter. “She’s an American,” he says, “and I want her to know that she can go anywhere and do what she wants, within reason. I don’t want her growing up to be afraid of anything.” This, in a nutshell, sums up his essential philosophy about what it means to be an American, but what the book does, in general, is take issue with the phrase “in reason”.

Throughout the narrative, comments suggest that the phrase and the concept of “within reason” have become corrupt, defined by obsession rather than actual reason. The action of the novel bears this out, as several of the American characters and most of the American institutions are portrayed as operating beyond the realms and boundaries of reason, taking action after action – military, political, cultural, inter-personal – that embodies the “go anywhere and do what [we] want” principle of Chambers’ definition, afraid of nothing (the final part of the definition) and when faced with circumstances that could conceivably cause fear, face them down with either manipulation (as Chambers does), violence (as Burnette does), desperate attempts at integrity (as Harrington does), or self-righteousness (as Dottie does, particularly in Book 3, when she’s trying to track down Osman).

It could be argued, in fact, that the title is something of a misnomer. The amount of narrative references to the corruption beneath so many of the destructive actions and attitudes of the American characters, not to mention the institutions they work for and/or represent, suggests that in fact, the book’s real title is “The Country that Lost its Soul”.

Layers of Identity

Each of the main characters in the narrative, and several of the secondary ones, have different identities. The most notable example is Dottie, who displays at least three other personas (photo-journalist Jackie, cokehead bimbo Renee, tough hooker Carla) in addition to her own. Her father, Steven Chambers, goes through two primary identities – his childhood refugee self, and his adult political self, with the latter having several sub-identities, depending on the needs of the situation or the people he’s with. Tom Harrington, meanwhile, also has two identities: the globe-trotting, do-gooder human rights lawyer with the comfortable, secure marriage; and the lusty, conscience-stricken, sexually needy adventurer who can’t help acting on the more self-destructive sides of his nature.



Here it's interesting to note that these three characters also share the characteristic of not being fully and/or thoroughly connected to their souls. In the same way, Burnette manages to both develop and hold on to a soul, and he also is the only one of the four major characters whose identity stays fundamentally the same. Yes, he shows different sides of his personality in different circumstances, as, in fact, the others do. But he is not, as Chambers and Dottie are, an entirely different person in different situations, and he is not, as Harrington is, a seemingly split personality within the boundaries of a single life. It could be argued, therefore, that through this parallel, the novel is suggesting that a good, healthy, whole soul (such as that which Burnette seems to have) forms the core of a solid central identity, as opposed to a damaged soul (such as the others seem to have) that forms the cores of several contradictory, self-damaging identities.

The Nature and Value of the Soul

At times directly and at times indirectly, the novel explores the question of whether the soul exists, whether it can be lost, and if lost, whether it can be found. Jackie (Dottie), one of the three characters who arguably loses her soul permanently (the other two are Chambers and Harrington), raises the question in Book 1, while Books 2 and 3 dramatize the loss of a soul to violence and corruption (Chambers' soul in 2; his daughter Dottie's in 3).

Books 4 and 5, meanwhile, dramatize the question in the story of Eville Burnette who, the narrative suggests, struggles to hold onto the uncorrupted nature of his soul through several traumatizing experiences of violence, some of which (i.e. his military training) are in fact designed to DESTROY his soul. It could be argued, in fact, that Burnette's struggle, a deeply ironic one given that his first name so strongly resembles the word "evil", is one at which the other characters have failed – to hold on to the good of themselves, their good souls, in the face of unspeakable horrors.

Chamber fails at holding onto the good of himself, as evidence by the many instances of corruption and depravity the novel portrays him engaging in. Harrington also fails at it, as evidenced by how his sexual desire for Dottie finally enacts itself, a clear and apparently deliberate echo of the sexual desire in Book 3 that destroys what's left of Dottie's good soul. Dottie at least tries to hold on to her soul, as evidence by her clinging to the last remnants of the best of herself (i.e. the bracelet she received from Osman, a token of his awareness of, and love for, the best of her). But because she's been so corrupted by her father, she's unable to do little more than cling to hopes that glimpses of vulnerability and joy are, in fact, representative of something more, and deeper.

Only Burnette, the one character who has a good and healthy experience of "home", manages to both recognize and hold onto the value of his soul, in part through returning to the place where the best of him came to be (his home in Montana), but also in part by proving himself able to resist the negative, destructive temptations that surround him.



The Power and Value of Memory

The novel concludes with Eville Burnette's musings on the power of memory – specifically, its ability to define a person's identity and motivations to the point of obsession. This manifests throughout the narrative in several ways: in Harrington's feelings about Jackie (Dottie) in Book 1; in Dottie's feelings about Osman (as represented by the bracelet) throughout the narrative; and, perhaps most definitively, in Chambers' feelings about his childhood, variations on which drive almost every event in the book, either directly or indirectly (including, arguably, the utter corruption of his daughter).

The irony, at the point at which Burnette's musings take place, is that Chambers is experiencing dementia - a breaking down of memory. What has defined his entire adult life, and arguably a good portion of his ENTIRE life, is his memory of the humiliation and suffering that he and his mother experienced during their flight from war-torn Croatia at the end of Book 2. As that memory slips away, the narrative suggests, Chambers begins to experience feelings and motivations that had been overwhelmed by his negative memories.

The narrative suggests that in Burnette at least, there is the hope that this lesson has been learned in time: that he is potentially able to avoid the dangers of obsessive memory, particularly his memories of Dottie, and to live a mentally, emotionally, and spiritually healthier life. This is a clear contrast to Harrington, who also appears in the section of the narrative in which Burnette has his epiphany, and is clearly portrayed as still being stuck in his obsessive memories of Jackie (Dottie). It's doubtful that even his visit to what seems to be her grave will break the hold of these memories. Burnette, however, has reconnected with his true soul in a way that the narrative suggests Harrington (and Chambers, and perhaps even Dottie) never really did. He, in other words, can be seen as The Man Who Gained His Soul through the appropriate and healthy recognition of the power and value of memory.



Styles

Point of View

In general, the narrative unfolds from the third person limited point of view – that is, its story is told from the perspective of a single individual, with narration focusing on that person's actions, experiences, and inner life. Such narration tends to draw the reader into a relatively intimate relationship with the character whose point of view takes narrative focus.

In the case of this book, however, it's important to note that the primary point of view shifts in each of the novel's books, or sections. In Book 1, the point of view is that of Tom Harrington; in Book 2, it is that of Stjepan Kovacevic and his mother Marija; and in Book 3, it is that of Dorothy (Dottie) Chambers. Books 4 and 5 are told from the perspective of Eville Burnette, Book 4 focusing on the character's history, while Book 5 focuses on what might be described as both his and the novel's present – specifically, the immediate and longer term aftermath of Dottie Chambers' apparent death.

The primary value of this shifting in point of view is to add strength and mystery to the book's spy thriller sensibility, in that the reader sees the same series of events from the point of view of several different characters. Another value of this shifting, however, is that the reader is allowed access to the inner lives and identities of each of the main narrative's players – Harrington, Chambers, Dottie, and Burnette – so that the narrative of the chain of events that brings them all together takes on different layers of meaning each time the story is told and/or considered. In other words, the shifting points of view give the jigsaw puzzle of event, character, and perspective that is this novel jagged edges and difficult corners, so that the reader has to work to figure out what, exactly, the truth at the core of all this storytelling actually is. It's a narrative technique that works well to engage the reader in both of the book's primary narrative lines – the spy thriller and the socio-political-cultural commentary that underlies it.

Language and Meaning

There are several key points to note when considering language and meaning in *The Woman who Lost her Soul*. The first is its vocabulary, which tends to be expansive, varied, and advanced. The second, and related, point has to do with the way the prose, or the narration, is shaped. Throughout much of the narrative, sentences are long, complex, and filled with variations on perspective, point of view, and interpretation. There is the sense that each event in the plot, each narrative consideration of each event's meaning, each character's interpretation of those events, is written about from a variety of angles, each facet viewed in vivid detail.



There is also the sense, at times, that all that language overwhelms the narrative's sense of story and flow, so that on occasion, narration feels like it's about itself, rather than about telling the story.

A third point to note about language is less about how language is used (and, therefore, about how meaning emerges) and more about punctuation – how that language is presented. The author makes the choice to not indicate dialogue with quotation marks. There is no distinction, in terms of punctuation, between what is being said and how it's being described, or the events around the dialogue are being described, in narration. It can sometimes get confusing, figuring out which is which: there is the sense, however, that the author makes this stylistic choice in order to create the sense of deliberately blurred lines between what is being experienced and what is being said about, or in relation to, that experience.

Another point to note about language is that in its descriptions of both violence and sex (and its descriptions of violent sex), the language is vivid, clear, direct, and explicit, without necessarily being vulgar. There are occasional exceptions, but for the most part, language is intense, and therefore engaging, without crudity.

Structure

The book is broken into five sections, or books, showing the same events being replayed from the very different perspectives of the three characters involved.

The sequence of events leading up to, and including, the death of Dottie Chambers (known by several names and identities over the course of these events) is recounted from different perspectives in Book 1 (which focuses on the perspective of lawyer Tom Harrington) and in Book 4 (which focuses on both the lead up to, and the perspective on, these events experienced by soldier Eville Burnette). This adds layers of mystery, suspense, and intrigue to a novel that, in many ways, follows the template of traditional thrillers.

Books 2 and 3, meanwhile, give extensive background on two of the main characters that play out the so-called “thriller narrative. Book 2 focuses on the history, or backstory, of Steven Chambers, who turns out to be something of a manipulative mastermind in the other four sections of the narrative. Book 3 tells the story of Dottie Chambers, Steven's daughter, victim of his manipulations and catalyst for the events described in Books 1 and 4.

It's important to note that each of these books is constructed with its own build to a climax, its own narrative momentum, and its own journey of transformation for the central characters: each book is a mini-novel in its own right. This is also true of Book 5, which begins with the revelation of the truth about Dottie Chambers' death, and takes all four of the book's central characters, as well as the reader, into the aftermath and repercussions of that event. It, too, is structured to build to a climax – in this case, the climactic encounters of Chambers, Harrington, and Burnette with the power and

influence of memory, and with memory's impact on understanding and experiencing truth. In other words, the book's structure takes its characters and the reader down a winding, complicated road to a simple destination - a discovery about the relationship between past and present.



Quotes

... when Americans pray, they pray first that history will step aside and leave them alone, they pray for the deafness that comes with a comfortable life. They pray for the soothing blindness of happiness, and why not?

-- Narration (Prologue)

Importance: This quote introduces one of the novel's sub-themes – specifically, the idea that as both a culture and as individuals within that culture, those who live in America are most content when they live in isolation from the world around them.

And then the idea behind the thing became unclear and atrophied and no matter who made it, a white man or a black man, every promise was a type of fantasy, if not an earnest lie, each hope an illusion, every sacrifice an act of unrequited love. Once again in Haiti there was no glory and too little honor and too much of God's indifferent truth.

-- Narration (Chapter 1)

Importance: This quote sums up the complicated web of uncertainties, promises, and falsehoods that defines the struggle to improve life in Haiti, and is a foreshadowing of the struggles Harrington himself faces to come to the truth of his experiences there.

...he was afraid that somehow she embodied a cycle in his life, a bad old season blowing in, and already he hoped to see her again.

-- Narration (Chapter 2)

Importance: This quote sums up the depth and intensity of Harrington's initial reaction to Jacqueline, and foreshadows the trouble she brings into his life, and into her own.

She had managed to make him less of a man than he thought he was and he had done everything he could to forget her, to will her nonexistent, but there was no reprieve from a succubus and for the two years since he had last seen her Jackie had found her way into his dreams, waiting there for him on the street corner of his libido like a neighborhood whore ...

-- Narration (Chapter 3)

Importance: This quote reiterates and deepens the sense of danger associated with Jackie, for both Harrington and the reader.

Americans were not built to take these matters seriously until their faces were rubbed in the awfulness they sometimes made when they were seized by the exalted passion to remake the world.

-- Narration (Chapter 4)

Importance: In the aftermath of Harrington's conversation with Jackie about voodoo, narration comments again on how Americans tend to close themselves off to other socio-cultural realities.



Do I believe in the soul? Yes. What is it? I don't know and neither do you. An eternal essence within us? Sure, why not? The life force that appears from darkness and reenters darkness, or, here's the happier scenario, appears from light and reenters light, and is not flesh and is our single connection to what some of us call the divine or the infinite or the force behind it all. Do I believe that something like that is in me? Yes, I choose to believe that. Do I believe I can lose it? I don't know.

-- Tom Harrington (Chapter 4)

Importance: This quote marks the beginning of Harrington's lengthy speech to Jackie on the subject of the soul, and lays the foundation for the novel's future thematic exploration of the subject.

He was staying because of the girl, because of the disease he had contracted, which was the girl, the only woman he had ever truly hated without first having truly loved. Even in her death he was without a cure for her, and he began to imagine that he might have always been this way.

-- Narration (Chapter 5)

Importance: This is another indication, in narration, of how obsessed Harrington has become (is?) with Jackie and her effect on his life.

Voudou is a pair of eyes that sees the divine in everything – trees, oceans, crossroads, rivers, mountains – and honors that divinity while striving to manipulate it as well. It assigns every force – love hate, lust, death, health, success, failure – its guardian spirit, its lwa, saints by any other name, only unlike the saints the lwas could be summoned to take possession of mortal beings, to borrow for a few minutes or a few hours the flesh and the voice of a dancer or petitioner or priest ...

-- Narration (Chapter 6)

Importance: This quote sums up the meaning and manifestations of voodoo, at least as portrayed and/or interpreted in the novel.

.... Haiti was a feeding trough for the manifest appetites of egos and illusions and simple schemes of rescue, Haiti offered its players a culture of impunity not just for the atrocities that devoured body and soul, but for the self-deceptions best described as crimes of enlightenment.

-- 10 (Chapter 10)

Importance: In this quote, Harrington reflects on the decaying effect life and/or existence in Haiti has/had on his own morals and on morality in general, an effect also experienced and reflected upon by Eville Burnette in Books 4 and 5.

...as he fell to his side of the bed for an instant he no longer knew who he was and the day had become a death that crushed him under its weight and left him, for seconds or minutes or an eternity, in an insensate afterlife ... all that remained was the disconnected awareness of a world from which he had been evicted.

-- Narration (Chapter 12)



Importance: This marks a turning point for Harrington. Not only has he finally indulged in his lust for Jackie: he has also reached a point that he seems to have been fearing all along – that the goodness in him has been destroyed by the Haiti-triggered darkness that comes with his relationship with Jackie.

Death had made him ravenous for life – it was imperative he keep moving, seeing things, feeling things – and into that hunger had walked Jackie and she had enraged him and inflamed him with the fullness of living even as she imperiled his soul.

-- Narration (Chapter 13)

Importance: Again, a vivid indication of the effect Jackie has on Harrington, with continued echoes of his Catholicism-bred fear of hell - in other words, his fear that by knowing her, he will lose his soul. This can also be seen as foreshadowing of the pull that Jackie (Dottie) develops on Eville Burnette later in the narrative.

... when a nation lost its soul, where did that soul even come from to begin with? What was the genesis of a nation's soul? The answer seemed only to be war.

-- Narration (Chapter 13)

Importance: This quote, from close to the end of Book One, sums up and introduces one of the book's central themes – its exploration of, and condemnation of the failings of, America's soul, tying it in with another of the book's themes, its examination of the nature and value of the soul in general.

... seeing for the first time in the eyes of the boy his intractable disregard for authority, the impudent but desolate fearlessness he now assumed in the face of danger, some unbreakable defiance in his character that had not been there yesterday and made her immediately afraid the boy was determined to cause great trouble.

-- Narration (Chapter 14)

Importance: This quote, from early in Book 2, describes Stjepan's mother's reaction to seeing her son confront a border guard, a reaction that foreshadows the adult Stephen's attitudes and actions later in the narrative.

His memory would hold her in this pose, a vision that over the years his imagination would enshrine and render beatific, this image of his mother and her persecution and its torturous gift, a permanent and consuming secret excitement, hidden in the darkness of his soul.

-- Narration (Chapter 16)

Importance: Stjepan, in the moment of rescuing his near-naked mother from her would-be rapist, sees her in a way that narration describes as "radiant", an image of her that metaphorically reinforces and/or foreshadows the older Stjepan's belief in the necessity for saving what he believes to be "the oppressed".



... tonight she would be having dinner with him but WHERE was the question, always the question, his habit of mystery, his idea of fun, turning simple things into a challenge and a challenge into something simple ... her body [was] tense with teenage urgency, already anxious to turn around and ride the ferry back to Asia, where her friends would be waiting for ... but, as always, there was no denying her father.

-- Narration (Chapter 19)

Importance: Here, at the beginning of Book 3, the narrative establishes the relationship between Dottie (Renee/Jackie) and her father, now Stephen but formerly Stjepan (the escapee child of Book 2), a relationship that, as the narrative reveals, was complicated and ultimately damaging to both characters.

...lying as he would always lie, as protocol, as policy, as a matter of prudence, because not to lie placed lives in jeopardy, and to tell the truth exposed a weakness in character. To not lie was an act of vanity.

-- Narration (Chapter 20)

Importance: In this quote, narration reveals a fundamental principle at the core of Stephen/Stjepan's character and work as a diplomat – and also in his relationship with his daughter.

...she struggled to smother the incendiary heat of her own temper, one of the pieces of her personality she did not own, or refused to own, because these parts were not her, or not herself, or made her feel like she wasn't herself, and they did not exist until they did, rising to the surface as her true self sank below ... selves that seemed real until you woke up, or until, like a Saint's visitation, God began speaking.

-- Narration (Chapter 23)

Importance: Here, narration describes the intensity of Dottie (Jackie/Renee)'s flashing temper, which has gotten her into trouble before and will again.

But Dottie glimpsed the real challenge at the end of the masquerade – changing back was not so easy if your former self no longer interlocked cleanly and separated effortlessly with the shape you had assumed, and when you retraced your steps searching for your original self, maybe that wasn't enough, because self-possession would now mean what – a sharing – or a refusal to share – between two selves.

-- Narration (Chapter 29)

Importance: Here, narration's comment, in the aftermath of Dottie's beginning to transform into Carla, can be seen as referring to any of her various transformations, and as such also referring to and developing the novel's thematic emphasis on layers of identity.

In a burst of pure clarity, she also understood her entire life – its plurality, the challenge of its basic improvisations, the assortment of homes and places and friends, the languages she readily acquired to mute her foreignness – had been designed to shape her into a professional changeling, and she resolved that this was the way she was



destined to live, a type of actress in a theatre without walls or boundaries or audiences.
-- Narration (Chapter 30)

Importance: This moment encapsulates Dottie's experience and understanding of herself and the life she has been pulled into, a moment that foreshadows events in Book 5 when she has what she believes to be renewed encounters with her own soul.

... she was determined to get on with her life, if she could only resolve the question of which self would end up being the lucky person who walked out of there. The competition was not fixed, the winner not a given.
-- Narration (Chapter 34)

Importance: This moment, at the end of Book 3 (the story of Dorothy's traumatizing adventures in Istanbul), indicates her drive to get on with her life, which, as the narrative reveals in the following two books, doesn't actually happen for quite some time because she's unable to get herself out of the complicated relationship she has with her father and the government.

We don't fly under the radar, son ... we are the radar. We're not operating with situational values here.
-- Steven Chambers (Chapter 35)

Importance: This quote, from the beginning of Book Four, is spoken to Eville Burnette on the occasion of his first time caddying for Chambers while golfing in Miami. It indicates the mindset not only of Chambers as an individual, and not only of The Friends of Golf, but in many ways the mindset of the entire American Secret Service, and arguably the American government. In this sense, the quote can be interpreted as a clear and vivid reference to the narrative's thematic interest in American exceptionalism.

There seemed to be a fault line at her core, two different plates of the self, slammed together in perpetual grating that he could fairly guess would one day crack and heave and devastate.
-- Narration (Chapter 37)

Importance: This quote sums up Eville Burnette's perceptions of Jackie/Renee/Dorothy – in short, his assessment of her essential instability, arguably the result of both the abuse she suffered at the hands of her father and the multiple identities she's had to assume over time.

Everything absorbed by his senses ... every mote of scent, every pitch of sound, reminded him of a beautiful pain within his rib cage, the tender hurt that was always there inside, mostly quiet, when you loved your country as much as Eville Burnette loved America ... it was a matter of gratitude, the thing that you were called upon to feel if you ever hoped to be a decent man, or a soldier.
-- Narration (Chapter 42)

Importance: This quote sums up Eville Burnette's feelings about both being American



and being in the military position he's been groomed for – a deep irony, given that one of the book's central themes is a condemnation of American entitlement, patriotism, and self-righteousness.

It's not just my father. It's him and his cohorts, his friends, his associates, his affiliates. His congregation. These powerful men, if you disagree with them, it's like you've made a heretical assertion. Challenged the will of God. Questioned the divine mission. Dissent in their eyes being the equivalent of disloyalty.

-- Dottie (Chapter 47)

Importance: When Dottie says this to Burnette, she is in effect summing up a key element of the novel's thematic condemnation of not only American self-valuing, but the self-valuing of all militaristic or espionage oriented cultures.

... perhaps a soul is what you have spent your life making, not a piece of metaphysical equipment shipped ready made from the factory ... at last she prayed, we must be patient until love turns. Amen.

-- Narration (Chapter 49)

Importance: This seems to be the climax and conclusion of one of the novel's key thematic lines – Dottie's search for her soul.

... what good is memory when everything about the journey ahead was unknown, and death bestowed as a homecoming, the end of homelessness, and a family restored to a thing it had lost when it was no longer young, which was togetherness.

-- Narration (Chapter 54)

Importance: This thought of Burnette's, at Dottie's gravesite in Croatia, relates not only to one of his only remaining connections to Dottie (his memories of her), but also, and in an ironic way, to Chambers' fading/failing memory. Its placement at the end of the narrative suggests that this insight is, in fact, an important aspect of the novel's themes.