

The Winds of War Study Guide

The Winds of War by Herman Wouk

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Plot Summary

Victor "Pug" Henry arrives home from the Navy Building worried about his career. Victor only wants to command a ship of his own and fears that the assignment will not further his career. As he puts it, when the Navy considers commanders for a ship, the amount of time on the water is a huge factor.

Victor finally decides that he really has no choice in the matter and accepts the assignment as naval attaché in Berlin. Rhoda, Victor's wife, acts typically by lashing out at Victor as she prepares for the move and then finding her sense of adventure at the foreign assignment. Rhoda and Victor, having been married twenty-five years, are comfortable with each other though both feel they have not gotten all from their marriage they wanted. They have three grown children—Byron, Warren and Madeline.

Warren is solid, like Victor, and is training to be a Navy pilot. He meets Janice, daughter of a U.S. Congressman, and they soon marry. Madeline does not want to go to school but Victor refuses to hear of her living in New York. She ignores the demand, gets a job at CBS and launches her career, though she is also building a relationship with a married man, her boss, Hugh Cleveland. Byron is seeking his masters degree but drops out of school to work for a famous author, Aaron Jastrow. Aaron's niece, Natalie, captures Byron's heart but Aaron—and later Natalie—encounter problems trying to escape from war-torn Europe because both are Jews.

Natalie later manages to meet Byron—who joins the Navy as a submariner—in Lisbon and Byron, armed with the correct official documents, marries her. Natalie soon writes to Byron that she is pregnant and later that she has given birth to a son that she will name Louis.

Meanwhile, Victor has met a British girl, Pamela, who is the daughter of a journalist named "Talky" Tudsbury. Victor eventually admits to Pamela that he loves her but they take no action. Rhoda has met Palmer Kirby and they eventually begin an affair. Rhoda cannot quite decide where her heart lies and writes Victor a letter saying she wants a divorce but then sends a cable saying she should not have written the letter.

The entire story of the Henrys and those who interact with them is set against the backdrop of World War II. There are evaluations of the war as seen from those involved and from a German officer's writing. The story comes to a close as Pearl Harbor is bombed by the Japanese. The second book will take up at this point and go through the war.



Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Summary

Victor "Pug" Henry arrives home from the Navy Building worried about his career. He has been given a choice of assignments but feels that he really has no option. The Navy wants to send him to Berlin to seek out information about German Naval capabilities. Victor only wants to command a ship of his own and fears that the assignment will not further his career. As he puts it, when the Navy considers commanders for a ship, the amount of time on the water is a huge factor.

During a visit with Kip Tollever, Kip says that Hitler is "a remarkable man" and that Americans are "too naïve." He goes on to say that the Germans have political ideals that other people do not understand and that the Jewish people have prompted a particular act of violence by murdering a German officer. Kip ends his tirade by saying that the American government has no common sense when it comes to dealing with German officials.

The Henry family is introduced. Victor and Rhoda have a daughter, Madeline, who is nineteen and a college student. Their son, Warren, is in the Navy and announces during a quick visit that he has applied for flight training. Their other son, Byron—sometimes called Briny—has been studying fine arts in Europe but has lost interest and is now working as a research assistant for a Jewish writer named Aaron Jastrow. When Victor receives a letter from Byron raving about his new assignment and the writer's niece, Natalie, Victor takes the letter to mean that Byron is interested in Natalie romantically and writes Byron, cautioning him about marriages between Americans and Jews in the current climate. The day after he writes the letter, Victor decides that he really has no choice but to accept the assignment in Berlin.

While attending college, Byron had come to believe that he was interested in art, completed a fine arts degree and traveled to Europe to continue his studies. While there, he realizes that what he thought was a deep love was only a passing fancy and drops out of school. He learns through a professor that Aaron Jastrow, author of "A Jew's Jew," is looking for a research assistant for his next book. Byron accepts the job and is immediately enamored with Aaron's niece, Natalie. Natalie is slightly older than Byron, has a boyfriend named Leslie Slote, and her level of intelligence is actually intimidating to Byron.

Victor and Rhoda sail on the Bremen to Germany. Just before they are to leave, Madeline announces that she wants to drop out of school and live in New York. Victor refuses. After the ship leaves, Rhoda makes it clear that she is planning to treat the trip as a second honeymoon and Victor, monogamous in all his actions, is delighted.

Victor and Rhoda meet Alistair and Pamela Tudsbury. Alistair, called Talky, is a journalist. Pamela is his typist and assistant and she tells Victor that Talky's one



objective is to find out whether the "little tramp"—a reference to Charlie Chaplain and by inference, Hitler—is going to war. Talky himself says that Hitler is inciting the Germans in their natural tendency toward violence. Victor notes that every time Talky has the floor, his conversation turns to the possibility of the United States coming into war against Germany. Victor argues that the bigger threat is Japan, and that Hitler, by comparison, is "more of the same old runty cat-and-dog fight." Talky says that Victor—and Americans—underestimate the Germans.

At the captain's table on the last night of the voyage, the captain says the media has misrepresented the situation with the Jews. Talky says that people outside Germany do not understand the German policy toward the Jews, and that is why the topic continues to surface.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Analysis

Victor feels that Rhoda did not uphold her end of the bargain regarding their marriage. He says that she promised she was ready for the life of a military wife, but that she really was not. He says that at the end of the day, he never knows for sure whether he will be met by "Rhoda the charmer or Rhoda the crab." He also notes that Rhoda contributes to the household budget so that she can live in a manner that would not have been possible on Victor's salary alone.

Victor had put himself forward for a Naval Academy appointment and had been successful in his career. It is noted that he held very strict ideals in those days but has been drinking—almost to excess—since the death of an "infant girl." There are no other explanations on this point.

Byron asks Aaron why he has remained in Europe considering the ongoing threats against Jews and he says that he believes to be as safe here as anywhere. Aaron is as naïve as the rest of the world at this point about Hitler, saying that Hitler is a "very, very prudent man," and predicts that war is at least ten years in the future. Aaron also says that people have never been overly tolerant of Jews and that the Jewish people have survived anyway.

When Rhoda mentions that they might be sailing with Nazis, Victor insists that they leave the ship's bar and go outside. He tells her that she must assume that everything they say indoors is recorded and that it will likely be the same once they are settled into a home in Germany. Rhoda is upset but Victor says that he has been told they will soon adapt to the lack of privacy. Later, Rhoda quickly charms a young ship's officer and when he comes to ask her to dance, Victor's scowl prompts the ship's captain to intervene. The delicate balance between Germans and Americans prompts Victor to think about everything he is about to say and it seems the captain has the same agenda. The captain catches Victor looking at a Jewish couple being waited on and uses the opportunity to make the point that the stories of abuse of Jews is not true, using the fact of the couple on the boat as evidence.



A German submarine man named Grobke encounters Victor in the library and they begin to talk. Grobke seems very open about the German capabilities and plans. He later invites Victor to visit his base. Victor hesitates, wondering if he will have to offer a return visit and knowing the American military will not be excited with the idea of a German on a military base. He agrees to consider the offer and Talky asks if he can come along. Grobke agrees but later tells Victor that he has encountered snags with the visit.

Victor is taken with Pamela. He is impressed that she manages to make a derogatory remark about Hitler at the table of a German sea captain and no one except Victor catches on. She is twenty-eight though he thinks she is younger. He wants to have her meet his son, Warren, and says as much to Talky. Victor will later decide against it when Warren meets Janice Lacouture. Victor's attraction to Pamela will eventually lead to a relationship between the two and they will even marry during the sequel to this story.



Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Summary

Victor and Rhoda have just arrived in Berlin when they are invited to meet Hitler. Rhoda is upset that she has nothing to wear and rushes around until just hours before the meeting. When she returns from shopping, Victor is dismayed with her choice but tells her it is wonderful. Later, Victor is told that Rhoda selected well. Hitler asks Rhoda how they are enjoying the stay and she says that they have not yet found a house. Just a few days later, a man arrives to show Rhoda some houses. Rhoda asks whether Victor thinks Hitler sent the man and Victor laughingly says that perhaps Hitler's aide did.

Rhoda soon finds an incredible house with a very low rent. Victor is suspicious, especially when the man showing them the property says that the house is owned by a Jewish man. Victor asks if the man is aware of the deal and the man says he is, then brings the home owner to meet Victor. Victor learns that there is a current rule regarding Jews and ownership of property. The owner says that he cannot live in it under the current rule and that if the property is vacant, the German government can seize it. The fact that Victor has diplomatic immunity means that the man's property will be safe as long as Victor is in residence. Victor is uncomfortable but the man insists that Victor is actually doing him a favor by renting, hence the cheap rent. Victor and Rhoda are soon moved in and Victor notes that Rhoda makes the house a home in no time at all. They soon receive a letter from Madeline saying that she is settled in with her aunt in Newport, and in July receive a letter from Byron saying that he is enjoying his work with Aaron.

As Pamela drives Victor and Talky to their tour of the U-boat facility, Talky says that he now believes Hitler is probably not preparing for war. He cites the fact that the British are on the verge of creating a military alliance with Russia and that Hitler could not possibly hope to win in that situation. Victor will disagree and will later write a memo to his superiors with the opinion that Hitler's plans are to join Russia

At the U-boat facility, Victor notes that it very much resembles a similar facility anywhere. He and Grobke even joke about "civilians" and their work ethic. Grobke then invites Victor for a tour of a ship though with the understanding that Talky is not invited. Talky excuses himself and Victor even eats dinner aboard with the men. After dinner, Grobke takes Victor into town to visit his daughter and grandchildren. Grobke's son-in-law is at sea. He tells Victor that he wanted to show him the family of a typical German Navy man. As they later share a beer and some songs in a bar, Grobke tells Victor that the Navy officers of the world would never engage in war. He then says that Hitler and Roosevelt are both great men, but that Roosevelt is "getting lousy advice." He says that Hitler is smarter than the typical politician, predicts that there will not be any war over Poland, then urges Victor to "watch the east," though he does not explain further. Grobke does say that Germany, with their small fleet of ships, is in no position to



challenge the world powers but that the situation may be different in a year when the fleet is larger.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Analysis

Victor says that he is not overly impressed with Hitler's ill-fitting attire. He is however impressed that Hitler knows Victor has only recently arrived in Berlin. Victor says that Hitler looks "pasty," but that he turns on the charm whenever necessary. Victor also notes that Rhoda is a success and that it is because of her charm that they are immediately absorbed into Berlin society.

When Victor and Rhoda begin their lives in Berlin, they soon find that there are many public places where Jews are not allowed. At first, Rhoda refuses to eat at restaurants that display signs declaring no Jews are allowed. Then she goes to a restaurant with friends, sees the sign but does not want to cause a scene, and so eats at one of those establishments. She soon stops paying attention to the signs though she continues to say that the German treatment of Jews is deplorable.

Byron and Natalie do preliminary work and research for an article Aaron has agreed to write about the Palios—races in Siena that date back to ancient times. The event is a contest among the various neighborhoods, lots are drawn for horses and they are stolid workhorses rather than thoroughbreds, the event is a community holiday, and there is plenty of cheating, bribing and tricks in an effort to win. When a horse without a rider wins the race, a man in the stands near Byron and Aaron tells them the horse was drugged. A fight erupts and Byron chooses a moment he believes he can get Aaron and Natalie safely out of the squash of people. The press pulls Aaron from Byron's grasp and he has to run into the street, waving Aaron's hat in front of a horse to save Aaron from being trampled.

Later, Natalie asks Byron to accompany her on a trip to Warsaw, saying that Aaron does not want her to travel but that he will agree if she has Byron along. Byron agrees because he wants to be with Natalie. Aaron was to have traveled to Greece but now reveals the news that his passport has lapsed and that he is having trouble renewing it, the result of the flood of refugees seeking to escape Hitler. Byron urges him to correct the problem soon and Aaron says it should not take long. He tells Natalie that he hopes she will contact Aaron's cousin, Berel, while in Warsaw.

From his conversation with Grobke and his own observations, Victor comes to the conclusion that Hitler is working to ally himself with Russia. Victor writes his observations, then rewrites them, finally leaving home with a final version, though he shreds the carbon papers used to type them. Victor is concerned about sending the memo because he notes that a similar memo regarding manufacture practices had prompted his return to land from an assignment at sea—a move he considers negative. Victor says that he fears this memo will be just as damaging to his career and wavers for some time before handing it to a courier bound for the United States. In the U.S., the

memo is read by Admirable Preble, condensed and forwarded to the President, who sends a request for Victor's service record.



Chapters 7 through 11

Chapters 7 through 11 Summary

Byron and Natalie are headed to Warsaw, Natalie to see Leslie Slote and Byron to watch over Natalie and—he hopes—to have some time with her. When they hear that Hitler and Stalin have allied their respective countries of Germany and Russia, Byron expects them to turn back. Natalie insists that she wants to see Slote, that things are never as dangerous as they are made out to be, and even though Slote tells her during a telephone conversation that she should not come, she insists and Byron acquiesces.

Upon arrival, they find the airports jammed with people to the point that they cannot even find food. They settle for warm beer though Slote, when he arrives about an hour later, says hotel accommodations are no problem since visitors have all fled. They have dinner together that night and Slote says that the situation is quickly deteriorating, and that his job has become that of a visa officer, handing out visas to anyone who qualifies because Jews are fleeing the country. Slote says there are hundreds of thousands of Jews in the city and that several thousand have the foresight to leave.

Upon arrival, Aaron's cousin, Jochanan Berel Jastrow, says that getting either train or air tickets to Rome will be no problem. Berel suggests that they go to Medzice where all the relatives are gathered rather than Cracow, and Natalie agrees. They stay there for a wedding and Byron admits that in the place of the "perfect girl" he had always dreamed of falling in love with, he was falling for a prickly Jewish girl. The morning following the wedding, Byron is asleep at the rabbi's house when Berel shakes him awake and announces that the Germans are "comink."

There follows an excerpt from the book, "World Empire Lost," written by German General Armin von Roon and translated by Victor in the 1960s. In his forward, Victor admits that he has taken pains to translate the book exactly as Roon wrote it, but that he added his own comments along the way when he disagreed with Roon. Victor says that it is important to remember that Roon's sole purpose was to glorify Hitler, and that Roon's work was not intended for publication until after his own death so that his writing is more honest than some in that he does not fear reprisal for his words. According to Victor's translation of Roon's book, Hitler came to power because of his popularity with the people. Though Roon admits that Hitler was harsh, even with his own people when necessary, "he brought prosperity and he rearmed us." Roon goes on to analyze particular happenings that sparked the war. He says that when England promised military help to Poland, Hitler knew they were unable to actually follow through and immediately made bold plans.

Roon says that the Germans might have done battle against Stalin except for the treaty between the two men. Had that happened, Roon says the war would have been over quickly with Germany erupting as the winner because England would have sued for peace instead of war. Roon then tells of the secret treaty between Hitler and Stalin that



left even Hitler's trusted staff in the dark, that there was the common understanding that England would not allow "bloodless" victories, and that Hitler managed to get carried away with himself so that he was shaken when war was declared against him. Roon goes on to point out that Hitler has not increased production of ships, tanks or arms because it would not be popular with the people.

On impulse, Madeline walks into the CBS studios and is told to see Hugh Cleveland, host of a show called "Who's in Town." She is told that if Hugh likes her, she is hired. Hugh is desperate for a girl and when Madeline says she is only available for three weeks until school starts, Hugh agrees with the idea that will give him time to find a suitable replacement. The fact that the war's on has every experienced secretary taken. Hugh sends Madeline to talk to Gary Cooper who agrees to the interview and speaks highly of Madeline's visit, prompting Hugh to hand her more work that keeps her there until late in the night. He drops back by, asks if she knows Admiral Stewart Preble. At Madeline's affirmative, she includes the information that he is the highest American Naval officer and Hugh tells her to send him a letter asking him to be on the show.

In Berlin, Victor has a staff meeting regarding the need to remain neutral, is invited by Talky to attend a press conference called by Hitler, and receives a telegram from Aaron Jastrow asking if he knows where Byron and Natalie are. It is the first Victor knows that they are not in Italy. During a phone call later, Aaron speaks highly of Byron and his capabilities, which pleases Victor. They agree to stay in touch if either hears from the pair. Victor attends the Hitler speech with Talky and returns to his office to find Palmer Kirby waiting. Victor and Rhoda are to host a dinner party for him while he is working on a project for his business which is producing magnetic amplifiers. Victor then receives orders that he is to fly to Washington, be prepared to stay for something less than a week and return to Berlin. Rhoda is initially upset but agrees to host the party for Palmer while Victor is away. Victor pledges that he will be able to return to Berlin, even with the war on.

Byron, Natalie, Berel, the newlyweds and several other of Natalie's relatives are traveling to escape the invading Germans. Berel secures two tickets to Warsaw but Byron and Natalie turn them over to Berel's wife and young daughter. They travel instead in a dilapidated Fiat with dozens of others also fleeing along the same stretch of road when they are fired on from the air. Byron is nicked in the ear and has a wound to the head which causes him to pass out.

They travel on to the next town, just a few miles distant, and send help back for other victims, stopping to have Byron's head stitched. Soldiers try to confiscate the car and Byron tells them he is an American, is expected in Warsaw by that evening, and that Natalie is his fiancé. His passport is held and he is told to return the next day but Byron, now at the wheel of the old car, does not stop at the outskirts of town saying that it is too dangerous to wait. Along the way, they encounter two bloodied young boys who say they fell from a truck. The two ride on the hot hood of the old car, though Byron later says that so much happens so quickly that these stories fade in his memory.



Once in Warsaw, the group splits up. At the American embassy, Natalie and Byron find that Leslie Slote—as the only bachelor in residence—is in charge, that there is a large American flag painted on the roof, and that there is no way out of Poland at the moment.

Chapters 7 through 11 Analysis

Slote explains his views on the alliance between Hitler and Stalin. He says that the British dawdled for years, finally sending a representative "on a slow boat" to talk to Stalin. Meanwhile, Hitler sent his emissary on a fast plane. He also says that it was Stalin's way of protecting Russia against Hitler's invasion plans.

Slote predicts that Natalie has a fifty-fifty chance of being captured if she goes on to Medzice, but she insists that she will continue with her travel plans. Out of Natalie's hearing, Slote tells Byron that he is going to get tickets for them to leave the country to a safe area and that he intends for Natalie to go, even if the two men have to pick her up and deposit her on a plane. Natalie arranges for plane tickets to Cracow to visit relatives without telling either Byron or Slote. Byron calls it a crazy plan but goes with her. Natalie is convinced that nothing bad will happen to her, and that she is safe as long as she has her American passport.

Victor notes that Roon had never intended his books for publication until after his death. In this way, he would be "safely dead and buried" before he could be punished for admitting any roles in these crimes. However, Roon includes a statement regarding one attack on Poland in which condemned war prisoners were dressed in Polish uniforms, shot and left near the border so that Germans could say that Poland was invading and justify a retaliation. Roon writes that he had no knowledge of these ploys but implicates another German officer. Victor adds a footnote that he is not at all certain of Roon's honesty on this point. Roon does say that the war was poorly organized from the beginning. He also points out that Poland was filled with bigotry, the dictator constantly double-dealing with other countries and the government constantly seeking expansion—and that the democratic nations entered in a world war to defend this nation. He ends this section by saying that when world superpowers blow up, the smaller nations can only survive if they bow in the direction of the wind.

While Madeline is working at her new job, Warren is dancing with the daughter of a Congressman. Her name is Janice Lacouture and she is very popular with the young men. Janice is looking for a man who will go places politically and is cold to anyone who does not fit that bill. They are immediately attracted and Warren notes that the woman he is having an affair with—a divorcee named Mrs. Tarrasch—no longer appeals to him at all. He says that the fact that war was declared that morning changed his future, and that in the evening he met the girl who would make the perfect partner.

Victor notes that Hitler seems overly tired and the speech he delivers seems the result of a few sleepless hours rather than the planned speeches typical of the Nazi party in general. After it is over, Talky notes that Hitler is going to be difficult for the English and



French to handle and urges Victor to tell the powers in Washington that, adding that he will be doing the same. Talky and Pam leave immediately for the United States with Victor again telling Pam that he would like for her to meet Warren, though she says it seems she would rather meet the daring son—Byron—tramping around Poland during a war with a Jewish women.

Rhoda's reaction to Victor's leaving indicates that she has given some thought to the fact that she is in Berlin while a war is gearing up, but she seems infinitely more concerned with the fact that she now has no one to escort her to the opera that night and that she is expected to host a party for Kirby—a man she does not even know. Rhoda and Kirby will eventually become close and she will actually marry Kirby after she and Victor divorce years later.

Natalie takes over Slote's apartment and invites Byron to stay with her, though he says he feels certain his mother would object to the arrangement. She plans to take a long bath though she has to boil water for it, but it is cut short by bombing. One shell hits very close and they watch as people are pulled from the rubble of a nearby house. Natalie says that she feels guilty for getting Byron into this. He responds that his family is Navy, that they are accustomed to worry so his situation will not unduly stress them and that he would not have missed it. He finishes by saying that he is having fun. Natalie is angry at the statement, saying it sounds like something the Germans would say, and Byron tries to explain but can say only that it is fun.



Chapters 12 through 17

Chapters 12 through 17 Summary

Victor notes that there is a vast difference between Europe and America with regard to what is known about Hitler and the war, even among Naval officials. He is in the Army and Naval Club having breakfast when he receives a phone call from Captain Russell Carton, Roosevelt's naval aide, informing Victor that he is to see the President at noon. Victor dresses carefully and waits for his ride, wondering about the situation which includes no debriefing before the meeting.

Victor then learns of Madeline's job and goes to visit her. Hugh Cleveland asks him to be on the show but he absolutely declines. He then visits an old friend, Digger Brown, aboard a battleship, learns of new radio technology that could patch him through to Rhoda in Berlin, and learns that though it is two in the morning there, Rhoda does not answer. While visiting Warren, Victor imparts the news that Byron is in Warsaw, but Victor predicts Byron will "crawl out of the rubble with someone's gold watch," indicating his belief that Byron always manages to extract himself safely. Victor also tells Warren that Byron "chased a girl" there, that Natalie is a graduate of Radcliffe, and that she is Jewish. As Victor later watches Warren among a group of young fighter pilots, he notes that the next few years are going to be difficult for parents of grown sons.

He later has dinner with Warren, Janice and her parents and Janice's father, Congressman Lacouture, pumps Victor for information about Germany and about Warren. Victor is uncomfortable discussing his son and notes that Lacouture seems ready to absorb Warren into his business. The Congressman says that he believes the war will be short-lived, as long as the United States stays out of it. Warren and Victor play tennis the following day amid jokes that Warren had not had much sleep the previous night. Warren says that he will likely ship out soon and that his relationship with Janice will probably end at that point. They part a bit reluctantly with Victor heading back to Washington before securing passage back to Berlin.

Germany has plans for their part in the war, including plans for invading Poland. Though the military men are largely untried, they continue a slow steady advance—toward Warsaw where Byron remains with Natalie. Natalie spends her days working at a hospital while Byron has taken on the task of delivering water for the embassy which is now without water because of a broken main. Though he is reduced to going to get water using an old boiler and hauling it back with a horse and cart, he says that the work is satisfying. He is to be paid but actually volunteered for the task.

When Slote learns that the Russians are advancing on Warsaw, he insists Natalie return to the embassy which she reluctantly does after sending Byron with all the cash she has available to Berel. Berel says he does not want the money but agrees to put it toward food for the war-damaged Jewish community. As Byron is in that neighborhood, he notes that the Germans have a complete hatred for the Jews and that they continue to



waste energy bombing the Jews when those people have no power to surrender the city.

Then Slote, Natalie and Byron agree to help look over the route the neutrals are to take on their way out of the city, but Slote is upset by the danger and leaves Byron to advance with another officer, taking time to map the route. The Germans have agreed to a two-hour cease fire during which time the neutrals can leave. A Jew named Hartley—who was born Horowitz—is among those Americans leaving but he fears he will be singled out and killed before he is safely away. Byron reassures him and the groups make it to the German side safely. When they have eaten, they are divided into groups by preferred destination and in this line are asked who among them are Jews. Slote says that it is not an American passport question, that he personally does not care, and refuses to give up anyone as a Jew. He finally tells the German officer to simply consider that they are all Jews but one man and one woman speak up, denying that they are Jews. They also refuse to give up anyone else as being Jewish and an officer searches Hartley's suitcase, finding a New Testament Byron had given him. Byron says he has known Harley since they were children attending Methodist church services together and the Germans eventually give in, saying that it is feasible that of the one hundred Americans, there were no Jews stupid enough to be traveling now. Byron receives word from his father that he is supposed to go immediately to Berlin, but is already on the train before he discovers the contents of the message.

Byron goes on for several hours, telling his parents about his adventures, though he says little about Natalie herself. Leslie Slote visits Victor at the embassy and asks if Byron had mentioned anything about the trip when they were planning for their escape, apparently fearing the Byron had said Slote was a coward. Byron actually had not and Slote says only that he had felt the need to protect Natalie and that he owed Byron for his help. Victor is considering things Byron said, including that the Germans had bombed farm houses when the Germans were circulating the information that they had only attacked military places. Victor later says that he feels Byron's observations would be vital intelligence for the United States and the Allies.

Meanwhile, Victor receives a letter from Roosevelt, thanking him for taking time for the recent visit and asking him to stay in touch via letters that communicate basic information of life in Berlin. Victor cannot help but feel that he is out of line, sending a letter directly to the President without sending it through proper Navy channels, but he spends most of the rest of the day preparing the letter.

As Rhoda, Byron, Victor and Palmer have lunch just prior to Palmer's departure, the news is announced that Warsaw has fallen to the Germans. Immediately, the German anthem is played and the Americans remain seated which angers their waiter, prompting him to make a mess on the table, to jostle the women at the table and to refuse service. Victor demands to see the head waiter, explains that as Americans, they are neutral, and the head waiter immediately chastises the offending waiter who continues to serve the Americans as though nothing had happened. Though everyone at the table applauds Victor, Byron's "Okay, Dad," is what makes Victor proud of himself.



Byron finally gets around to writing the report on his escape from Warsaw—five pages. Victor dictates the rest of the information from Byron's talk on the night of his return and has the entire report combined and sent to his superiors.

Victor and Byron are invited to hear Hitler's speech and Byron is amazed by the outright lies Hitler tells, and by the apparent acceptance of these lies. Hitler offers rationalization that Germany—with its sheer number of people—has the right to rule over more land than that within the German border, and demands that Germany hold Poland and colonies taken at the end of World War I. He then offers an "outstretched hand" of peace and Victor predicts it will be touted often.

Later, Victor, Rhoda and Byron are visiting with Grobke and his wife. Grobke says that people believe Hitler because of where Germany was after World War I and the prosperity Hitler has created in the country. He then says that only one person can stop a major war, and that person is not Hitler but Roosevelt. Byron and Victor spend several days together, touring German facilities. Byron is adept at traveling, handling problems that crop up, listening to conversations without interrupting, and having something intelligent to add when asked. Victor is proud of him and later tells him so, though Byron has announced that he is going to Siena. Byron has received a letter from Aaron, saying that Natalie is trying to get to Siena, that he would welcome Byron back but does not think it is wise, and that Byron should forget about them altogether.

There follows another excerpt from Roon's book in which Roon outlines his observations regarding the attack by Russia on Finland. In truth, the Russians lost some three thousand troops to less than a thousand of Finland's. Roon says that there was extensive propaganda offered about Finland in an effort to keep the German troops upbeat about Hitler's ongoing plans.

One of Roon's skewed views of the situation comes through when he offers a comparison between Hitler and Churchill. Roon says that Hitler's officers were tried when they occupied Norway, which was at that point a neutral country. In truth, the British landed just days later. Roon says that if Hitler had won the war, the British would have been tried for the same crime—occupation of Norway. He says that the trials for this and other crimes were nothing more than politics. Victor adds a footnote disclaiming Roon's list of similarities between Hitler and Churchill, saying Churchill was a proponent of laws, freedom and security. Victor adds that Roon, like most German officers, probably believed what he wrote and that there is no need to try to convince him of anything different.

Roon says that Germany's victories were largely "in spite of" Hitler's interference. He says that Hitler had been a soldier for four years, and that there are "worse ways" to learn about military tactics, but that Hitler had the tendency to react to situations which meant troops were sometimes stalled when continuing forward was the better plan. He then says that Hitler had an insatiable lust for power and that the German people did not fully understand this "until it was too late."



Chapters 12 through 17 Analysis

Victor has hoped that Roosevelt does not remember the only time they have met in person. Victor—an ensign on a ship—had just finished exercising and was hosing himself down with a saltwater hose when the ship listed. Victor lost control of the hose and showered Roosevelt, then just Assistant Secretary of the Navy, ruining his clothes and hat. When Victor enters the President's quarters all these years later, Roosevelt asks if he has learned to hold onto a hose.

Victor will later learn that he was scheduled for ten minutes with Roosevelt but spent almost forty. Victor seems disappointed that, though Roosevelt refers to this memo on the situation in Germany, he seems to have little grasp of the real situation. He asks many questions, such as what Hitler is like and imparts the news that Hitler's speeches are typed on a special machine with large print so that Hitler does not need glasses to read it. At the end of the meeting, Roosevelt tells Victor that they have renewed their acquaintance now and that Victor should feel free to "drop him a line" whenever he has something to tell him. Roosevelt says he gets plenty of official reports, but seems to be interested in Victor's first-hand observations. Victor ends the meeting with the idea that he has really just been summoned to fill a free hour of the President's time. When he later considers the meeting, he will come to believe the questions posed by the President were insignificant and that he had wasted the money on a trip to the United States with no real purpose.

Victor again notes that all he has ever wanted was to work his way up the ranks to become commander of a battleship and that every day he spends in Berlin is one wasted day because it is not helping him achieve that goal. When Madeline asks to be allowed to remain at CBS rather than returning to school, Victor says he cannot imagine any reason she would be attracted to this life, saying that it is far removed from either his own interests or those of Rhode. However, Madeline says that her mother was once in a play and has aspirations of being an actress, and that Madeline had seen her do the dance she had performed in "Ching-ching-challa-wa China Girl." Victor says it was just an "escapade," but agrees to talk over the situation with "Ching-ching-challa-wa China Girl" once he gets back to Berlin. It is interesting that Victor himself has a goal and sees everything else as a waste of time, but cannot support that same idea in his daughter. He does seem to waver on the point and Warren seems to know that Victor will allow Madeline to remain in New York.

Leslie Slote admits that he is a coward, and explains it away to himself as nothing more than a character flaw prompted by an overly solicitous mother. He has managed to hide it though he sometimes breaks out in laughter when he is actually very afraid. He now worries about Natalie's closeness, knowing that she could figure it out if they spent time together. He has also evaluated his relationship with Natalie and admits that he will never be willing to marry her and that he has to officially break it off.

While the group are scouting out the route the neutrals will take during the cease fire, Slote is overcome by his fear and demands that they be returned to Warsaw, citing the



fact that he has put Natalie and Byron in harm's way. Byron seems to see through Slote's statement, though he does not say anything other than to insist that Natalie wait with Slote while Byron goes ahead to check out the route. Back in Berlin, Slote will anxiously ask Victor if Byron said anything about the incident. Considering Slote's fear, it is amazing that he so willingly stands firm when the German officers try to determine who among the American travelers are Jewish.

The relationship between Natalie and Byron is growing as that between Natalie and Slote is dying. Natalie chooses to ride with Byron in the military trucks rather than with Slote in the diplomatic car. Byron continually introduces Natalie as his fiancé while Slote does not stand up for her any more than he does for all members of his group.

There is a huge differences in how the neutrals are treated by the Poles and the Germans. When they board the Polish trucks, there are no lists of who is leaving the city, everyone is piled haphazardly into a vehicle and no one is really in charge of the event. Those being left behind are solemn. On the German side, the refugees are treated politely but with disdain. Old people and children are lifted onto the trucks or offered stools to help them step up. Once they reach Klovno, the place where they will board trains, they are fed an excellent meal, complete with waitresses filling coffee cups repeatedly and music that prompts a gay atmosphere. Then the Jews who are identified from other nationalities are taken aside under guard and are not allowed to board the trains.

Byron accidentally meets up with Slote who says that the Americans are going on to Oslo the following day and asks if Byron is coming along. Byron asks about Natalie, saying only that she was rather short with him the last time they spoke. Slote says that Natalie had sent a message but that he had been reluctant to deliver it—that she hoped never to see Byron Henry again. Byron declines to go on with them. When he asks Slote if he plans to marry Natalie, Slote says he will if she will have him though just a few days earlier he had come to the decision that he should break it off with her.

Byron's parents are impressed with his demeanor when he arrives home and Victor is soon disappointed that Byron is reading comic books, staying out late and falling asleep in his clothes, and has not begun writing up his experiences in Poland as Victor asked. For his part, Byron is suddenly interested in Hitler. He reads "Mein Kampf," and believes he now understands Hitler though Slote tells him there is an entire list of reading to be done before he can claim that understanding. Slote says that some believe Hitler—or someone like him—could have risen anywhere when the time was right, but Slote says it is a German situation that dates back to the time of the Roman Empire.

Rhoda drives Palmer Kirby to the airport as he is leaving town, though she tells Victor she is going to the movies. She has engaged in a flirtation with Palmer while Victor spent a week away, though she has never been unfaithful to her husband while he was away for months at sea. Rhoda now says that she was not initially attracted and thought Palmer was not attracted to her either. Their mutual attraction sprang up over the course of Palmer's week-long visit. Victor knows that Rhoda has the ability to attract a man instantly by putting on her best appearance and personality. Victor also knows that



there is nothing deeper than what is seen at first glance, and he has come to accept that about his wife. As they part, Palmer agrees to write Rhoda occasionally, just to stay in touch. Rhoda considers the flirtation almost completely harmless though she kisses Palmer goodbye at the airport. She does say that Palmer's interest in her has made her feel young and attractive again.

It is interesting that Byron had come to think of Hitler as an insane monster and sees only a man in a gray suit giving a speech. Byron confides in his father that he felt useful during the war time in Warsaw and that he wants to join the British forces. Victor, though proud that Byron wants to take a stand, urges him to wait, saying that Britain's involvement may be short-lived in which case Byron could find himself tied by red tape and unable to join on the side of the Americans, if a full war should happen.

On the same evening Byron announces that he is going back to Siena, Victor is in an obviously foul mood. When Rhoda asks what is wrong, Victor mentions a letter and sends Byron for it. It is from Madeline and she has not returned to school. Rhoda says that by the time she had heard from Madeline, it was too late for her to have enrolled but Victor insists that Madeline alone in New York is not a good idea and that there is nothing she could possibly be doing that would warrant a salary of fifty-five dollars a week. Rhoda says that Victor is upset that Madeline has "showed him up." After the conversation, Rhoda goes to her room, retrieves a letter from her dresser drawer and tears it up. It seems likely that the letter is from Palmer Kirby and that Rhoda had feared Victor had discovered it.



Chapters 18 through 26

Chapters 18 through 26 Summary

Warren, now engaged to Janice, visits Madeline. She is now living alone though her father would have been proud that she made the move because she considered her two female roommates to be "sluts." She has a tiny apartment and a boyfriend named Sewell Bozeman, known as Bozey. When Warren arrives, Madeline is in a robe and Bozey in an apron having been helping cook dinner. Warren later says that he is not sure whether he should force the issue and insist that Bozey marry Madeline, but Janice—reading the situation correctly—says there is nothing inappropriate going on between the two.

Byron arrives at Aaron's with little fanfare. He finds Natalie rather cold but says that he had wanted nothing more than to be with her, and so remains faithfully as if he were an obedient "dog with an irritable master." Aaron is working on a new book and Byron sets to work immediately, typing what Aaron writes. The gas shortage causes buses to be erratic and so Aaron lets Byron remain in an upstairs bedroom, a former maid's quarters. A few days after his arrival, Natalie gets a letter from Slote and tells Byron that it is a proposal. Natalie says she is not certain she wants it, that she feels he only proposed now because it is the "manly" course of action and that he feels he must take some action because of his obvious cowardice in Warsaw.

Natalie also tells Byron that she is not certain she wants to marry Slote because she is in love with Byron. He asks her to say it is true and when she affirms her feelings, he asks if she will marry him. Natalie is a couple of years older than Byron and uses that, but never truly answers. Then she receives a letter from her mother, saying that her father is ill and asking that she return home. She makes plans to leave and Aaron asks if she will encourage Byron to stay, saying that if Natalie said she was planning to marry Slote, Byron might stay on with Aaron. Natalie walks from the conversation without answering Aaron's request.

Victor meets Natalie and Byron by chance at Rome. Victor has arrived to accompany an American banker named Luigi Gianelli on a mission assigned by Roosevelt. He is given a package as soon as he arrives with a note that he is "out of uniform," and instructions to add a stripe in keeping with his promotion to Captain. Gianelli is to meet with Mussolini, asking if he would receive an official visit to create a peace treaty among the warring nations. Mussolini agrees, though he says that he doubts the success of such a mission. Victor asks if Gianelli is free to tell Hitler of Mussolini's agreement and is told that Hitler will know well before their meeting with Hitler. Meanwhile, Victor learns that there has been another naval confrontation and that the British have lost several ships. Victor asks if the British have confirmed the incident and is told that they also took some time admitting that their ship, the "Royal Oak," was sunk in their own harbor by a German U-boat that slipped in and got off multiple torpedoes before an alarm was sounded.



That evening, Victor has dinner with several and Byron learns of his father's promotion. Victor admits that he is pleased with the news, but not as much so as he would have thought. The conversation turns to Byron's plans and Victor urges him to consider submarines, a field Byron has expressed an interest in. Byron declines to make a commitment saying he has an obligation to Aaron. Byron is told that Aaron really should get out of Italy.

Victor and Rhoda arrive that weekend at the home of Stoller, and are taken up the back stairs which Victor sees as a possible slight on the part of the hosts. When they are summoned for dinner, they find that the main stairwell has been converted into a slide and that everyone is expected to slide down. Rhoda is excited, though pretends to be appalled by the fact that she has on "practically nothing" under her dress, but she slides and her dress flies up to show shapely legs.

The next day, Victor finds that a hunting party is going out but he lags behind with the German General Armin von Roon who says that he does not like to see deer being shot. He later reports on his conversation with Roon and others, though there are some tense moments when Victor is quizzed by the German officials in attendance. He says that he has no fear that Jews will rule America and that he does not approve of the treatment of Jews, which prompts questions about American treatment of Negroes in the south. Victor replies that it is not a good situation, but that they are not imprisoned which prompts the German reply that Jews who obey the laws are not imprisoned either.

Byron gets a letter from Natalie, saying she had a long talk with Slote and refused his proposal, and the affirmation that she loves Byron. She receives a letter back indicating that Aaron has had problems with his passport, that he hopes they will soon be resolved, and that Byron feels a strong force pulling him to be with Natalie. Natalie is making plans to finish her thesis, enroll in college and complete her master's degree when her father dies. Though she has barely considered him or his wishes since childhood, she is now overcome by grief, especially that she did not spend time with him as she should have.

Meanwhile, the war is escalating with the Normandy invasion and then a German attack on France. There follows another excerpt from Roon's book, outlining the German action that took them to Norman shores and the ensuing confusion because the plan did not specify what was to happen next. He gives credit to the fact that the British manage to scrape together a "flotilla of cockleshells" and says that June was when German forces should have struck London. Victor includes a footnote that indicates Roon, as usual, is presenting one side of the story and that his views are subjective.

Warren and Janice move up their wedding date when Warren is notified that he's being called for active duty. Madeline is very much in demand with her job, having now taken on the task of interviewing amateur talent for another show hosted by Hugh Cleveland. Meanwhile, Byron rushes to Florida as soon as he arrives in the United States for Warren's wedding so that he can be with Natalie. She agrees to marry him and Byron immediately tells his father.



Byron is obstinate about his father's insistence that he sign up immediately for submarine training and Natalie says that Byron acts as if Victor has caused the war. She calls his attitude "immature." Natalie also says that Byron's decisions should be joint decisions now and Byron comes to realize that she is right, promising to consider her opinion before making any decisions. He later says that he plans to have the physical and to check out the details of submarine school, but that he wants her blessing before he takes this step.

Natalie agrees to attend the wedding but feels very out of place. Rhoda is a bit chilly toward Natalie though the rest of the family openly welcomes her. Byron and Warren spend the morning together before the ceremony and when the family is leaving the reception, Rhoda takes along a bottle of champagne and wine glasses, swearing that the war has interrupted their family time on this wonderful event.

Natalie does not show Byron the letter she receives from Aaron because there is a section in which Aaron questions Natalie's judgment in writing to Byron while he was still in Siena. He also talks about Byron's occasional flashes of brilliance though he says that he would have given Byron a C-minus for Byron's interpretations of most books he read. Aaron also confides that he is now concerned about his passport, that his citizenship is in question and that he is not certain he can get out of the country. He asks Natalie to contact Slote. When Natalie tells Byron that she plans to go to Washington, Byron is angry even though Natalie tells him of Aaron's plight and her hope that Slote can help cut through the red tape.

Chapters 18 through 26 Analysis

Warren does quickly discover that Bozey has serious opinions regarding the war, Hitler, and the causes of conflict because he calls himself a communist. Madeline can spout the jargon but seems less convinced. Warren tells Janice that he will not tell his father about Bozey or his part affiliation, fearing Victor's reaction. After they leave Madeline's apartment, Warren tells Janice that the war has already torn his family apart, that he feels bereft without a solid home base at this point, and Janice replies that families are meant to scatter but that new families emerge.

Natalie finally admits that she felt horrible for allowing the Jews to be taken from the station at Klovno. Byron says there is nothing they could have done but it seems likely that Natalie is feeling guilt for surviving when others who shared her ethnic background were likely killed or at least detained. She says that she should have taken some stand, and that perhaps if she had stood up as a Jew the others would have been released. Byron says it was "touch and go" and that there was nothing to be done about the situation other than what they had done.

Aaron is visited one day by an official who talks about the gardener who was just fired by Aaron for leaving a gate open and allowing a donkey to enter the grounds, eat up a vegetable patch and a manuscript. The official says that the man has nine children and that jobs are scarce, then asks Aaron for his papers proving residency. Aaron provides



them and agrees to hire the gardener back. He is later upset and Byron says it is because he was forced to take an action. Aaron is buying his villa though Byron thinks he should simply walk away from the investment. Aaron's neighbors, an actor and actress, have left. Aaron himself predicts that those who flee will return, feeling silly for their paranoid attitudes.

Upon meeting Natalie, Victor understands Byron's attraction. He also fears that Byron is not—and never will be—up to the challenges he will face as husband of a Jewess and father to half Jewish children. Victor says that he is certainly not a bigot, but is willing to admit the realities of the world. He also wonders about Natalie, saying that she is more mature and self-assured than he had expected and that she seems to be "cradle snatching" in her relationship with Byron. He does tell Byron that Natalie is beautiful and Byron hangs on to that, assuring Natalie that Victor was fully taken with her.

Madeline dates the man she calls Bozey for awhile, but soon moves on to someone else. She later begins an affair with Hugh Cleveland.

As Victor is preparing to leave Rome, he tells Byron to write his mother more often, that she is "not happy." Rhoda has become bored with Berlin and that fact makes her difficult to live with. At this point, there is no real explanation for her mood but Victor accepts an invitation to a German official's home for the following weekend with the idea that his duty is to infiltrate German officials and that the outing would be good for Rhoda.

Prior to his visit to Karinhall, Victor learns from a journalist that Germany is tightening regulations so that businesses owned by Jews face incredible hardships, including a restriction on raw materials, until the businesses fold at which time Germans are buying them up. The German official named Wolf Stoller finds Germans interested in buying the floundering business and negotiates a very low price to the Jews, making the Germans—and himself—wealthy. The journalist who tells Victor of this practice has been forbidden to broadcast the story. Meanwhile the Germans simply say that they have rules to govern the Jewish communities because Jews—a minority in Germany—have not the right to own more than their share of the economy. Victor notes that he is paying less attention to the Jews and focusing on the military aspects of Germany, as he is being paid to do.

At Christmas, Victor is approached by Mr. Rosenthal—the man who owns the house where the Henrys live in Berlin. Mr. Rosenthal says that he has sold the business though the payment has gone to settle other debts, and that he wonders if he might sell some of the furnishings of the house to the Henrys. Victor says he does not want to profit from the misfortune of others but Rosenthal says that their life in Poland will be better if they have some cash. After some discussion, they make several purchases at ridiculously low prices and these bargains cheer Rhoda for days after the transaction.

Victor is disgusted with his assignment and sends a letter to Admiral Preble requesting a transfer. He says that he is not happy in the current position and that he believes his own dissatisfaction is making Rhoda unhappy as well. Victor's request indicates that he hopes his previous willingness to serve will be sufficient to warrant a transfer back to



sea duty. He later gets a note from Roosevelt, promising that he will have time off for Warren's wedding slated for July and that he hopes Victor will have time to stop by the White House for a visit during that trip home, but there are no reassignment orders.

Congressman Lacouture is making headlines, declaring that the United State should not be involved in the war. When Victor tells Byron that it appears the United States is preparing for an offensive, Byron says it is too late to help England or France in their current situations. Victor says that the Americans are finally realizing that if England and France fall, the United States will be left to fight Hitler alone. At Warren's wedding, Natalie interrupts his monologue by saying that she was in Warsaw, that she saw the bombing and describes the destroyed hospitals and the bodies piled at the front of the hospital where she worked.

Victor has a few minutes alone with Palmer Kirby, who is in town when the Henrys arrive in the United States and offers them dinner at the Waldorf their first night home. Victor has business with Palmer and when the two men are alone, Victor asks outright if Palmer is building a uranium bomb. He says that when he asked in Germany for some information Palmer had requested, he was strictly told "no" with the Germans citing their own efforts to build a bomb. Palmer says that if the Germans succeed first, it will not be pleasant for the Allies. He also says it will take lots of money to fund the endeavor and that there is no real guarantee whether a uranium bomb will produce an explosion or "horseshit."



Part 2, Pamela, Chapters 27 through 38

Part 2, Pamela, Chapters 27 through 38 Summary

Victor meets with Roosevelt who promises that he will have his sea command eventually but orders him back to Berlin now and then to London. Roosevelt notes that the British cannot go to the aid of the French because they will need their aircraft to defend themselves against Hitler, but Roosevelt cannot even sell aircraft to the French for fear of impeachment, so heavy is American sentiment against the war. Victor later encounters Talky and Pamela, learns that Pamela is engaged to a man named Teddy Gallard. They attend a party, Pamela says she is thinking of leaving her father's employ though she feels guilty about the prospect, and Talky and Leslie Slote argue the responsibility of Roosevelt to prepare the American people for war. Slote has also argued with Natalie over whether it is her responsibility to go to Siene to help Aaron get out of Italy. Natalie spends the night at Slote's apartment though she worries that Byron will find out. Slote accuses her of wanting to go to Italy only to run away from her life—including Byron—but does eventually agree that he will work on the problem of Aaron's papers so that he can return to the United States.

Victor's new assignment includes a bit of subterfuge. He arranges to have Navy markings removed from thirty-five planes that have now been classed "surplus" and are going to be given to the British. After making the arrangements, he prepares to leave for Berlin while Rhoda, because of increased war problems, will remain in New York to make a home for Madeline.

Natalie finally arrives at Aaron's, having gone the last leg of the journey by water, to find that the passport situation has not been resolved. She goes to Florence, gets no cooperation but a promise by August Van Winaker II to look into it because he is tired of dealing with the Jastrows.

Roon's account of the air battle over Britain expresses his opinion that the British had the advantage because much of the battle was fought over British soil. A German soldier shot down died or was captured. A British pilot who survived being shot down could fly again. In addition, Germans used most of their fuel arriving at the scene of the battle while British pilots were just minutes from a landing place. Victor notes that it is not the German way to accept responsibility for any defeat.

Victor spends time with E.J. Tillet, a military official and author, who takes him to see the British radar technology. Victor makes two observations: that the U.S. has to have this technology and that the British are better prepared than they have led the world to believe. Upon learning that the key to this technology is a "cavity magnetron," Victor asks if they have any spares lying around for sale, which earns him a laugh from Tillet and the others present. Victor then travels to London where he meets with Winston Churchill. Churchill's first words are that the British intend to win. After this visit, Victor points out to Tillet that there are two possibilities—that Hitler is of no danger to the



United States and therefore the U.S. need not worry or become involved; or that Hitler is going to strike at the U.S. in which case it will take everything they have got to defend themselves. Tillet says Hitler will not strike the U.S. but that the Americans may find that having Germany in control of such a large portion of Europe may not be in America's best interests.

Victor has dinner with Pamela and Gallard, who talks openly about the fact that some pilots are simply afraid, that the papers make their victories sound much less dangerous than they really are, and that he started as a fighter pilot believing he was in it for his country but soon realized that he simply wanted to survive the battles and land safely. At Biggin Hill, where Gallard is stationed, Victor notes that morale among the fighter pilots is high. Tillet says that it is the numbers that are wrong. Victor is watching an encounter between British and German planes when he learns from Pamela that Gallard has gone down. She holds to the hope that he will "crawl out of the water," but it does not happen over the next week and she spends a great deal of time with Victor who does what he can to cheer her up.

Victor and Pamela are together when the first of the German bombs fall on London. With the fires as beacons, more bombers arrive. Then Victor receives an invitation from Churchill to be part of a retaliatory attack the following day. He asks Pamela's advice and she confirms that it is risky, unfair to Rhoda and "idiotic." Victor returns the call to accept the invitation, saying that his mission is intelligence. He says he asked Pamela's advice only to see if she had some argument he had not already considered.

Victor soon learns that the men he is to be flying with also think he is insane for taking such a risk, and that the plane is made of fabric, but he boards for the flight anyway. He is jokingly called "Admiral Henry," and told that in the eyes of the British he has earned the promotion. The trip to Berlin is long and they arrive to find that a bomber in front of them has hit the primary target, leaving Victor's group to bomb a gas plant. They are successful but then are hit themselves, have one man injured, and have engine trouble. The pilot tells Victor they are headed back to England without taking photos of their hit as they are supposed to do, and Victor says he will vouch for the hit.

Pamela says that Victor is crazy to make the trip. He says that he does not believe he was born to die in a bomber over Germany. Pam replies that she is going to wind up with someone who is afraid of such missions, indicating her interest in Victor, though it is a new concept.

Pam expects that Victor has gone on a night mission and so calculates about when he will return and convinces the charwoman to let her into Victor's flat. Pam kisses him ardently when he walks in and allows him to sleep while she cooks, serving him steaks when he wakes. She says that she has come to realize that Victor has old-fashioned ideas and that trying to seduce him will scare him off, but that she plans to be patient in her quest for him as her lover. When he wakes, he says that going on the mission was the right thing and she says that, now that he is safe, she agrees. Victor notes that he is happier after spending time with Pamela.



Victor is called to the embassy for a meeting where he is told that some are saying that Roosevelt has made a fatal mistake when he handed off American planes as surplus. The thought is that if Hitler wins against Britain, he could use those planes against the United States. He receives orders to return to Berlin for a short stay, a letter from Roosevelt thanking him for recent intelligence, and a letter from Rhoda telling him that Janice is pregnant and that she wants Victor to come home as soon as possible. He calls Pamela and she says that she has to return to base. He tells her he is leaving in two days and that they will certainly meet up again soon.

Back in Berlin, Victor is told that England will fall once the German siege prompts food shortages. It is known by German intelligence that Victor has been in England but there is little effort to gain information from him. When Stoller asks if there is anything they can do for Victor, he inquires whether Gallard had been picked up as a prisoner of war, is told he is being held and Victor is allowed a brief visit.

Later, he visits first a German officer and then Stoller who tells Victor that there is money in a Swiss bank account that will be available to friends of Germany following the war. Stoller says that information about Washington is vital to Germany and points out that Victor is soon going to Washington. Victor says bluntly that the German official can "stick his Swiss bank account up his fat ass." Stoller says he believes Victor's reaction naïve and coarse, but honorable, and that he has no hard feelings.

Roon details the next stage of the war and talks of Roosevelt's military actions. He also talks of death statistics which Victor says in a footnote are unreliable. Victor does say that Americans, whenever possible, expended machinery and technology rather than lives and that Roon sees that as a failing of the Americans. Victor's personality shows through and he says that the Americans were able to take on the Germans regardless of whatever failings the Germans may point out.

Natalie waits in Lisbon for Byron who is supposed to arrive on his submarine for a three-day stay. Then Natalie gets word that the sub is not going to stop in Lisbon after all, but Byron arrives on time. He says that his commanding officer, knowing that Byron planned to marry Natalie while in Lisbon, had reported engine trouble and had put to port in Lisbon for repairs. Natalie has learned that there is extensive paperwork necessary for the marriage but Byron has it all complete with the required stamps, and has even made arrangements to skip the calling of the banns which would have taken more time than he had. Slote is also in Lisbon, stranded and waiting for an available flight, and plans to do everything possible to win Natalie back right up to the moment she and Byron marry. He does agree to go with Natalie to Siena in an effort to get Aaron's situation resolved and on his way to the United States.

Part 2, Pamela, Chapters 27 through 38 Analysis

Natalie goes to Italy to try to help Aaron get out and writes Byron a letter in the airport on her way out of the United States. She tells him that she hopes to be back in two months, that this is a chance for them both to catch their breaths, and that if he still



wants her when she returns she will marry him. When Victor, who happens to be nearby, stops where Byron is stationed for training, Byron says that Victor chased Natalie away and that he will never forgive his father for meddling. Victor notes that he has a faintly guilty feeling that is foreign to him.

Victor has a conversation with Pamela who tells him that the military people are of the opinion that the current battle is a "turning point" of the war. It is interesting that she—and apparently others—believe the war is going to be this easily ended when in fact it will rage on for years.

Victor suspects from her letter that there is something troubling Rhoda but does not realize that the "something" is that she has slept with Palmer Kirby during an overnight trip to visit Byron. Palmer then asks Rhoda to marry him. She says that it is not necessary that he make "an honest woman" of her, but that she is flattered. She then says that she has cheated on Victor and that it would forever be in Palmer's mind that she might just as easily cheat on him.

There are no rooms in Lisbon and Slote gives up his own room to the honeymooners. Natalie and Byron plan to have several days together but their time is cut short when Byron is recalled as the sub ships out. Natalie calls Slote, tells him that she wants to go to Siena at once because she has to deal with Aaron's situation and "go home."

At one point during their time, Natalie says that it was stupid to have married. She is panicky over the situation, the number of German soldiers in the city and the number of Jewish refugees attempting to flee. Byron teasingly tells her that married officers get paid more which solves her mood. He says his family does not know of the plans though he had written to Warren.



Chapters 39 through 43

Chapters 39 through 43 Summary

Pamela tells Victor that men who were imprisoned with Gallard escaped but that Gallard, following Victor's visit, was held in a private cell with higher surveillance. Though Victor does not tell Rhoda where he is going, he confides in Pamela that he has been called to accompany the President on a brief trip because Roosevelt is ill.

Victor is on a mission for Roosevelt when he sees Byron's sub and goes for a visit. Byron's superior, Carter Aster, says that Byron is able but willing to simply drift along doing barely what is required of him. Byron then receives a letter from Natalie, informing him she is pregnant.

Rhoda, Victor, Byron and Madeline join the Roosevelts for dinner at the White House. Byron believes Natalie and Aaron are now in serious danger and wants Victor to request help from the President. Victor refuses, saying it is not the type of favor to ask of a president. When Roosevelt asks Byron if he is ready for war, he says he is and that his reason is that his wife is trapped in Italy. He offers a few details, including Aaron's identity as an author, and Roosevelt instructs Sumner Welles to check on the situation. The conversation is interrupted by news that the British have sunk another ship—the Bismarck.

Victor says Roosevelt has finally called for "unlimited emergency" in the United States during his radio broadcast, but Rhoda says she believes he "pussyfooted around." Later, Roosevelt tells reporters that it really does not mean anything, which is disappointing to Victor. Amid piles of work, Victor is ordered to pick up a veteran from a nursing home and escort him to a Memorial Day parade. Though he wonders about the order, he does so and finds Roosevelt waiting for the two of them to watch the parade with him. He tells Victor that the Americans will become involved in the war and that he needs Victor to go to London, promising him that he will be made temporary admiral for the assignment.

Chapters 39 through 43 Analysis

Rhoda is throwing a dinner party and Victor is late, held up at the White House. When he arrives and shakes hands with Palmer, Rhoda finds that she is no longer nervous about the two men meeting, but is pleased to have the two interested in her. Later, Palmer tells Rhoda that he wants to remarry, that he thought she would have told Victor she wanted a divorce by now, that he will be gone for several months and that he believes that time to be sufficient for her to make a decision. Rhoda is relieved that she has those months stretching out in front of her to continue juggling the two men in her life.



Victor is sent by Roosevelt on a mission to the North Atlantic in March in which he is to be an observer of a series of exercises. He soon encounters a British ship that sends the message, "Thanks Yanks, the cupboard is bare," to which Victor replies, "Eat Hearty, more coming, Mother Hubbard." The mission is never fully explained though Victor is later told that it is belligerent of the United States to patrol areas and broadcast U-boat positions.

Rhoda has every intention of leaving Victor but finds it difficult to "liquidate" their twenty-five years of marriage. The morning after seeing Victor interact with the President, Rhoda sends a letter to Palmer, saying she cannot leave her family and begging his forgiveness for her change of heart.

Victor and Pamela share a brief goodbye as she prepares to return to Britain, and Victor surprises himself by telling Pamela that he loves her and that he would never dream of hurting his wife or his children. She returns the sentiment and then leaves. At home, Rhoda tells him that Janice has given birth to a son, and that he is named Victor. Rhoda asks Victor to make a decision regarding the purchase of a house and they agree to buy a house on Foxhall Road, though it is above what they can afford with only Victor's salary.



Part 3, All Chapters

Part 3, All Chapters Summary

Roon defends a major military move that most Germans criticize—the opening of a second front when England was "hanging on the ropes." Victor suggests that Roon may have had a hand in the planning of that offensive.

In Russia, Slote discovers that—again—the Germans are attacking the city where he happens to be stationed. Meanwhile, Berel Jastrow's wife and daughter have died and Berel is living in a cramped space in Russia, having fled there with what remains of his family. Berel's son wants to flee from the Germans moving their way but Berel opts to wait on the chance that the Russians will repel the attack. In Italy, Natalie has seen a doctor who tells her the spots of blood she has passed could be nothing, but that she should rest, and so she does while waiting for the time when they can sail, having now received Aaron's passport.

Byron is posted aboard the submarine, the Devilfish, when Aster, aboard the Tuna, puts Byron's name as a possibility to fill a vacancy on the Tuna.

Victor runs into Palmer Kirby and invites him to dinner while Rhoda and Madeline are on a shopping trip. When Victor gets called away, he insists that Palmer remain to have dinner with Rhoda, never suspecting that anything could be going on between the two. As Rhoda and Palmer are alone after dinner, she tells him that she is "a quiet grandma now," and that there can be nothing else between them.

Victor is transferred from the Tuscaloosa to the Augusta, where Roosevelt is. Victor saves the note sent to him by the president the following morning, saying that he is preserving them for his grandchildren. Roosevelt, showing his incredible memory for such details, tells Victor that he has another task for him but that he does not want Victor "bogged down" because it is time for him to be assigned duty at sea. He says that the United States is preparing for war, though not yet officially. Roosevelt then says that Victor has been "delayed by unrewarding jobs" long enough, and that Victor will soon be given command of a battleship. Both the Tuscaloosa and the Augusta arrive in Newfoundland where Victor again meets with Churchill. Asked why the United States is not getting ready for war, Victor asks why Britain did not prepare sooner.

Natalie and Aaron manage to reach Switzerland but Natalie is told she will have to return to Rome. She hates the idea and is eventually offered passage out of the country but is questioned by a German officer. Knowing that she is likely on lists identifying her as Jewish, Natalie refuses to answer and returns to Rome where Aaron has managed to book passage to America. The tickets are several months in advance and Natalie now faces the issue of having to give birth to her child on foreign soil.



Victor and Pamela spend some time together in Moscow and then Victor is assigned his own battleship—the California—and is ordered to Pearl Harbor. Pamela and Victor again confess their love for each other. They make no solid plans though Victor promises to send a cable to Pamela when he can. He refuses to say what he might say.

In Guam, Victor encounters Kip Tollever and it is evident that the Japanese are on the move, putting Guam in a serious situation. Kip asks Victor to call his wife, say he loves her and "all that stuff." Victor is upset by the fact that Kip talks about himself in the past tense, as if he has already met the enemy and lost.

Natalie attends a party in Rome and is offered secret passage to Palestine. The ship's captain says Natalie's son can come along because "we always need boys." Natalie and Aaron discuss it, fearful of staying but more fearful of leaving, and decide to remain.

Janice is headed to town to get medicine for the baby, who is ill, when she sees Japanese planes flying over Pearl Harbor. She rushes to a place with a view of the harbor and watches as planes dive, columns of water splash up, ships erupt in flames and one battleship sinks into the harbor. Warren comes rushing into the house, bleeding. He says his plane was shot down and his radioman killed. Janice patches him up and he returns to the base, hoping to find an undamaged plane.

Victor, on his way to Pearl Harbor, learns that his ship—the California—has apparently escaped damage. When he arrives, he learns that the ship was actually hit hard and is now sinking. He will later be given command of the Northampton. Later he learns that the Devilfish has also been sunk. Byron is actually on shore during the time of the attack and is not injured, though he does risk his life to save some torpedoes. He has requested that he be transferred in the hope that he will be able to see Natalie and the baby, or find some way to help them escape. Natalie meanwhile has managed to make her way to Turkey and hopes that this is a step toward home. At one point, she tells Aaron that she is "beginning to feel like a Jew," indicating the fear created by the Germans.

Part 3, All Chapters Analysis

Madeline is at Pearl Harbor Naval Base as Hugh Cleveland conducts a radio program on the base. Byron, at Warren's house later, receives a telegram that Natalie has given birth to a son. Byron is going inside to tell Madeline but interrupts a heated kiss between Madeline and Hugh. Byron is angry but Warren says Madeline is an adult capable of making her own decisions. Byron argues that Hugh is married and that fact is sufficient for Byron to order that Madeline stop. In the end, he does not take any action but does leave Warren's home.

Victor received a large pile of mail upon his arrival. One of the letters is from Rhoda and she indicates that she wants a divorce. While Rhoda's story is not yet told, she has the opportunity to spend time with Palmer while Victor is away at sea, prompting this letter. Victor desperately wants her back, though he admits that it is at least partly his injured



pride. He writes a long return letter, telling her that he is a "one woman man," among other things. Later that same day he receives a telegram from Rhoda, apologizing for the letter. In fact, Rhoda will waver for some time before she makes a decision. The lives of the Henrys and Jastrows will be taken up in Wouk's next novel, *War and Remembrance*. In that novel, Natalie will be safely reunited, though after some serious hardships at the hands of the Germans and after having given her son up to another family in an effort to keep him safe. Berel and Aaron will both be killed by the Germans. Victor and Rhoda will divorce, with Rhoda marrying Palmer and Victor marrying Pamela.



Characters

Victor

Victor Henry is a Navy officer who is assigned to Berlin as a Naval attaché. He has been married to Rhoda for twenty-five years and though she said she was prepared for the life of a Navy officer's wife, Victor believes she was not. Victor meets a young woman named Pamela Tudsbury, the daughter of a British journalist, and is immediately interested though it is months before he confesses his love for her. Even then, he tells her that he will not hurt his wife.

Victor considers himself a solid, steady person and does not understand his two children who are not like him. When Madeline wants to live in New York, Victor thinks she is too young. When Byron is stuck in Poland, Victor says that he is not going to worry overly much because Byron has the ability to extract himself from sticky situations.

Victor himself is considered an important source of information by President Roosevelt as the United States watches the European countries engage in war. Victor carefully juggles politics and society as he tries to do his job in Berlin while keeping Rhoda socially happy.

Byron Henry

Byron is the son of Victor and Rhoda Henry. He is working toward his masters degree in fine arts when he grows tired of the subject and drops out of school. Through a professor, he discovers that Aaron Jastrow is seeking a researcher and takes the job. Aaron's niece, Natalie, immediately catches Byron's attention. Though she is Jewish and a couple of years older than Byron, she returns his love and the two eventually manage to marry in Lisbon. She later gives birth to a boy.

Byron's father learns that Byron is in hostile territory and is naturally worried, though he says that Byron has a tendency to come out of bad situations on top. He predicts that Byron will climb out of the rubble with someone's watch in his hands, and does not seem at all surprised to find that Byron does escape safely. It is interesting that Byron is likely his mother's favorite. She says that she named him Byron upon seeing him and seems to have hoped that he would have an artistic tendency, and—unlike his father and brother—does grow up to feel unsuited for the military. It is also interesting that as Byron ages, he changes. He will actually come to be a good hand on the submarine where he serves out the beginning of the war.



Warren Henry

Warren is the son of Victor and Rhoda Henry. He is very much like his father, solid and stable. Warren is in the Navy as well and when the opportunity arises for fighter pilot training, Warren is accepted into the program. He marries Janice, the daughter of a Congressman, and they have a son. Warren is among those who fight during and immediately following the battle of Pearl Harbor.

Rhoda Henry

Rhoda is the wife of Victor Henry. Victor says that Rhoda is able to immediately capture the attention of any man she meets, but that what she shows off is the depth of her personality. Victor cites that as one of her flaws—he had hoped for more. Rhoda meets and falls in love with a scientist named Palmer Kirby though she will waver for some time before making a decision between her love for Palmer and her devotion to Victor.

Pamela Tudsbury

The daughter of British journalist, "Talky" Tudsbury. Pamela is traveling on the Breman with her father when Victor and Rhoda move to Berlin. Victor is immediately taken by her, especially when she manages to make a negative comment about Hitler at a table on a German ship and no one but Victor catches on. Pamela will soon come to love Victor though she does not tell him that until after he admits to his love for her.

Natalie Jastrow

Natalie is the niece and assistant of Aaron Jastrow, a famous writer. Natalie, a Jew by birth, is headstrong and it is at her insistence that she and Byron travel into Poland as the war is erupting. Natalie will eventually admit her love for Byron though she says she is wrong for him and worries that his mother does not approve of her. When she becomes ensnared in legal difficulties because she is a Jew, she manages to meet Byron in Lisbon where they marry.

Madeline Henry

The daughter of Victor and Rhoda Henry. Madeline is headstrong though she has trouble openly standing up to her father. She greatly admires her father and shares many of his ideals and morals. Madeline begins her life in New York though Victor orders her to return to college. Madeline chances upon a job at CBS—her dream—and is soon making enough money to support herself though she is also involved with a married man, her boss, Hugh Cleveland.



Alastair Tudsbury

Known as "Talky" to all his friends, he is a British journalist who continually pesters Victor about the need for American intervention in the war. Talky is outspoken but well-respected and seems able and willing to go after the story, even when it takes him into dangerous situations.

Palmer Kirby

Palmer is a scientist working with the United States Government. Though his initial mission is vague, Victor soon learns that Palmer is looking for a way to make a uranium bomb work on a real level rather than just as a theory. Palmer is enamored with Rhoda and they soon begin an affair though he says it bothers him to carry on with her while her husband is serving abroad.

Aaron Jastrow

Aaron is Jewish and author of "A Jew's Jesus" which is a famous book of the day. He lives in a villa in Siena by choice but when Germans begin killing Jews, Aaron finds that there is a problem with his passport. He does not work overly hard at correcting the problem at first and when he begins to get desperate finds that there is simply too much red tape.



Objects/Places

A Jew's Jesus

The book written by Aaron Jastrow.

Breman

The ship on which Victor and Rhoda Henry sail to reach Germany for Victor's new assignment.

Berlin

Where Victor Henry is assigned as a Naval attaché.

Warsaw

Where Natalie and Byron are trapped when Hitler invades Poland.

CBS Studio

Where Natalie lands a job with Hugh Cleveland.

Plan Rainbow Five

The plan put in place for America's decision to enter into World War II. It is noted that Germany was the first nation to have plans for war far in advance of actual war and that America soon emulated this act.

Siena

Where Aaron Jastrow lives and writes and where Natalie and Byron meet.

The California

The ship Victor Henry was to have taken command of upon his return to sea duty.



Pearl Harbor

Where Byron and Warren are both stationed and where Victor is to take command of his first battleship. Byron, Warren and Janice watch the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The Devilfish

The submarine Byron is stationed on.

Lisbon

Where Byron and Natalie are married.



Social Sensitivity

The Winds of War, the first installment in Wouk's multi-volume story of World War II, has been dubbed by the author an "historical romance." In it Wouk uses fictional characters to show the impact of the global conflict on Americans of various walks of life. In this novel, and in its sequel, War and Remembrance (1971, 1978), Wouk traces the wartime career of Captain Victor "Pug" Henry, a career navy officer, and of Henry's family. Through the Henrys and their associates, Wouk is able to take a close look at the way war forces families to cope with death, separation, divorce, and constant trials.

The Henrys are representative of American families whose lives are disrupted by the war and whose heroism in its many forms leads to America's victory. Captain Henry and his two sons find themselves fighting in the important Pacific naval engagements: Victor in surface ships, Warren as an aviator, Byron as a submariner.

The perennial conflict between fathers and sons is dramatized in Pug's relationship with Byron, who, unlike his older brother Warren, wants nothing to do with navy life. While the latter has graduated from the Naval Academy, as his father had done, and is pursuing a career with aspirations for advancement to admiral, Byron is the liberal intellectual, wandering about Europe as a means of escaping his dominating father. His relationship there with the beautiful Jewess Natalie Jastrow, which lands him in Poland at the onset of the war, provides a source of tension for the entire family, as Wouk demonstrates the latent anti-Semitism which existed in American society in the 1930s and 1940s.

Additionally, Wouk explores the impact of the German policy toward the Jews in Europe. Wouk dramatizes his analysis through the portrayal of the Jastrow family; Natalie Jastrow, whom Byron Henry eventually marries, and her uncle Aaron, a famous author and professor, are harassed by authorities and denied their rights as American citizens. Their inability to see the impending horror of Hitler's policy toward the Jews contributes in part to the difficulties they face when all-out war is declared and the United States becomes a participant. Wouk is careful, however, to make clear that the Jews in Europe were powerless to combat the inhuman evil and exceptional force which combined to create the greatest human disaster in history.

Techniques

Like the writers of most epics, Wouk approaches his story from a lofty perspective. He uses a complex method of narration in this romance to achieve a breadth of coverage of what is certainly an imposing topic. He alternates third-person narrative with first-person accounts of various characters, entries from fictional journals, even fictional memoirs of a German general "edited" by Pug Henry in the years after the war. Wouk makes it clear in editorial apparatus that he is not attempting to present a faithful picture of history as much as he is trying to bring to life the flavor of the period. Thus some of his characters not only meet real-life figures, but actually influence the course of historical events. Such a technique may disturb the historical purist, but it adds greatly to the drama that Wouk unfolds in *The Winds of War*; within the context of the novel it is both believable and acceptable.



Themes

Love

Victor and Rhoda Henry have been married twenty-five years at the time of this story. They have three grown children and both admit that they are comfortable with the other, often predicting what the other will do and say. However, both are caught up in their emotions when a chance at new love comes their way.

Victor is immediately captivated by Pamela Tudsbury. He admits that Rhoda is able to capture a man's immediate attention, but complains that Rhoda lacks depth. It seems that Pamela attracts him at least partly because of her intellect. He initially thinks that she would be a perfect match for his son, Warren, and goes so far as to make plans to introduce the two. That does not work out before Warren announces his engagement. Victor notes that Pamela is "mousy" and likely could not have stood up against the woman Warren marries.

Rhoda claims to have been an almost perfect wife, with one minor indiscretion with Kip Tollever. She admits that she had had too much to drink and that Kip had her dress off before Madeline woke, crying. That interruption ended the event, though Rhoda wonders what might have happened. When she meets Palmer Kirby, Victor is away, but Rhoda says that he has been away on other occasions, often for much longer periods of time, and she has never before strayed in this way. She is obviously facing a serious decision and—based on her letter and cable to Victor just after the bombing of Pearl Harbor—cannot decide what to do.

Duty

Victor is a Navy officer and lives the life of one. He says that all he wants is command of his own battleship, and that the way to get that assignment is to have as much time at sea as possible. That is why he hesitates when he is given the option to go to Berlin as a Naval attaché. He says that he knows it is not really an option, but an order, and says that once he admits this fact to himself he is able to accept the assignment and prepare to move to Berlin.

Rhoda is not nearly so dedicated though she shows her lack of dedication by being angry at Victor. He says that he never knows whether she is going to be a wonderful loving wife when he gets home or "a crab." Victor blames her for this lack of dedication. He says that she promised she understood the kind of life she was going to live as a Navy officer's wife, but that she never lived up to that promise.

Victor's attitudes are that a person who has a job to do should do so. He hates the lack of discipline shown by a person who slouches in a chair or does not do what they should do. He wants Natalie to return to college and is angry when she does not. When



Pamela suggests that she might join the military, he encourages her, saying it is the right thing to do. He even does this for his two sons.

The Need for Excitement

Natalie is incredibly headstrong and insists on going to Poland though the threat of war seems to make travel dangerous. Byron goes along simply because he wants to be with Natalie. However, once they are on the run from the Germans, Byron finds that he loves being in the dangerous situation. At one point, he tries to convey this to Natalie and can only tell her that it is "fun," which angers her. He cannot adequately describe that he feels useful when he goes each day through the warn-torn Warsaw to get water for those housed in the U.S. Embassy there. Though it is a dirty job, Byron finds that it is more rewarding than anything he has ever done.

It is with this just behind him that he tells his father he wants to join the British military. Victor convinces him to wait, saying that it is likely the United States will soon be in the war as well and that he may miss his real opportunity to be involved. When Byron hears a young German's description of a submarine attack, he decides that would be the perfect field and soon enlists in the American Navy.

Though Rhoda craves a completely different kind of excitement, the need drives her as fully as Byron's need. When the social scene is becoming boring for her in Berlin, Rhoda becomes difficult to live with. Victor accepts an invitation to visit a German officer where—as an ice breaker to the first evening's events—the main staircase is replaced by a slide. Though Rhoda objects that she simply cannot go down the slide, she does and the excitement is sufficient for her for some time to come.

Style

Point of View

The book is written in third person with a limited omniscient view. Though a slightly more open view would have been acceptable, only third person could have worked for this story. The people are in vastly different settings around the world and a more limited view simply would not have been adequate to tell this story. For example, while Victor and Rhoda are in Berlin, Madeline is in New York, Warren in Florida and Byron in Poland.

Some readers may be distracted at the structure because it does limit the view somewhat. For example, the reader learns that Natalie and Aaron have gone to Rome but then the scene switches. There is no more talk of what happens to them for several chapters. In another instance, Rhoda is left in Berlin with Palmer Kirby. The reader is then taken to the United States where Victor is visiting with President Roosevelt and it is some time before the writer returns to what happens between Rhoda and Palmer in Victor's absence.

Setting

The book is set in various countries around the world during the period leading up to the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Many of the people, places and events are real and this fact lends credence to the entire story. For that reason, some readers may have trouble separating fact from Wouk's fiction. For example, there are several scenes in which President Franklin Roosevelt either makes appearances or speeches or talks to Victor. Roosevelt was the United States President during the start of World War II. There are references to many other events and people that are historically correct. However, the author also quotes the German General Armin von Roon at length, and Roon is on a fictional character in Wouk's book. He did not in reality exist.

There are extensive descriptions of technology, war plans, political events and policies, and battles included in this novel. Separating the fact from the fiction becomes a task for the reader, though it should be noted that the book, taken on the whole as a novel, is acceptable without making those differentiations.

Language and Meaning

The book is written in a straight forward style that most readers will find easy to follow. An average reader will find few words that are not easily recognized and meanings of unfamiliar words are typically understood from the context. There are sections of technical conversations, such as when Victor Henry is looking over the British radar capabilities. While some readers may find those passages interesting, there is no need



to fully understand the technical jargon or even the full meaning in order to grasp the basic idea that the technology is important and that the British are ahead in this arena.

There are also large passages of information about battles, politics and World War II. Again, some readers will find this fascinating and will anxiously devour every word. Even those who do not can usually grasp the basics to understand the ideas being conveyed by Wouk.

Structure

The book is the prequel to "War and Remembrance" by the same author. The "Winds of War" begins in the early stages of what will become World War II and ends at the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by the Japanese. The book is divided into three sections. Part One is "Natalie," Part Two is "Pamela," and Part Three is "The Winds Rise." These sections range from just more than two hundred pages to more than three hundred fifty. In addition, each section is divided into chapters. The chapters are not named but are merely numbered. Chapters range from just four or five pages to around twenty. The chapters tend to cover a specific event, prompting the vast differences in length.

The book focuses on several characters, including Victor Henry, Rhoda Henry, Warren Henry, Byron Henry, Madeline Henry, Natalie Jastrow, Janice LaCouture, Aaron Jastrow, Alistair Tudsbury, Pamela Tudsbury and Palmer Kirby. There are about a dozen less vital characters who are also introduced and play roles in the lives of the main characters. With this vast lineup, keeping a clear vision of the identities may present a challenge to some readers. However, Wouk carefully introduces the characters, making that task easier.

The book is not strictly presented in chronological order. Typically, the story will focus on one character and his or her current situation, following that character until that particular situation or scene is complete. The story will then focus on another, often moving backward and forward in time in order to accomplish this. Again, this could be a problem for some readers but Wouk handles it well and most will be able to put scenes into their correct time-frames.

Quotes

"He is really a very, very prudent man. If he can make it in Poland without war, he'll do it. Otherwise, he'll not move. Not now. Perhaps in ten years, when he's built Germany up enough." Aaron Jastrow on Hitler, Chapter 2, p. 24.

"Yes, here the Germans sit at the heart of Europe, Henry, these perplexing first cousins of ours, simmering and grumbling away, and every now and then they spill over in all directions, with a hideous roar. Out they pour from these lovely little towns, these fairy-tale landscapes, these clean handsome cities—wait till you see Cologne, Nuremberg, Munich, even Berlin and Hamburg—out they bubble, I say, these polite blue-eyed music lovers, ravening for blood. It gets a bit unnerving. And now here's Hitler, brining them to a boil again." Alistair "Talky" Tudsbury, Chapter 3, p. 43.

"I mean, this is the airport of the capital of Poland! The further east we've come, the smaller the airports have gotten, the more loused up the schedules, the worse the airplanes, the surlier the officials, the cruder the johns, and the rougher the toilet paper. I'm not sure my bottom would survive a trip to Russia." Natalie upon her arrival in Warsaw," Chapter 7, p. 70.

"The Germans returned the fire, laying down studied bombardments according to grids on maps. Howitzers flamed with satisfying recoils, everybody moved fast and worked up a sweat, officers shouted orders and encouragement, some fellows got killed or hurt but most did not, trees burned, village houses crumbled, and after a while the shooting died off and that invasion trudged ahead." Chapter 13, p. 169.

"I would do anything for peace. But until the British will to destroy me is itself destroyed, the only road to peace is through German victory. Anything else is irrelevant. I will continue to hope with all my heart for a last-minute signal of sanity from the other side, before the holocaust explodes." Hitler, Chapter 21, p. 298.

"Happily, there's no desperate urgency in it. Siena's tranquil, food's plentiful again, my ankle's healing, and the war is distant summer thunder. I am getting on with my work, but I had better clarify my right to go home. One can never know when or where the villain with the moustache will make his next move." Aaron Jastrow, Chapter 26, p. 348.

"They lob a few shells over for terror, but they fall in the fields. Nobody's terrorized." E.J. Tillet, military author describing German guns aimed at France, Chapter 31, p. 410.



"It had never occurred to him that the British could use fabric planes as attack bombers, and this piece of intelligence had not come his way, for he was not an aviator. Victor Henry could still have walked away from the flight, but he felt as compelled to enter this cloth plane and fly over Berlin as a murderer is to climb a gallows to be hanged." Chapter 33, p. 429.

"This is a contest now between Germany and the United States. If you lose, God help you and all mankind. We were too slow, too stupid and too late. But in the end we did our best. You're doing nothing, in the last inning." Talky Tudsbury to Victor, Chapter 43, p. 589.

"In the next item, the German propaganda ministry ridiculed an accusation by world Jewish leaders of massacres of Jews taking place in German-held parts of the Soviet Union." Chapter 47, p. 649.

"I didn't know there were that many trucks and cars in the whole Soviet Union. All piled with mattresses and old people and babies and what-all. And with those blue A.A. searchlights still swinging overhead—God knows why—and the snow and the wind, I tell you it's a real end-of-the-world feeling." Victor describing Moscow, Chapter 56, p. 769.

"We'll probably end up eating fish and rice behind barbed wire anyway, but at least we can make the bastards work to take the place." Chapter 60, p. 832.

Adaptations

The ABC television network produced a multi-million-dollar, eighteenhour mini-series of the novel in 1983.

Veteran leading man Robert Mitchum, portraying Victor Henry, headlined an all-star cast which included Ali McGraw (Natalie Jastrow), Polly Bergen (Rhoda Henry), Victoria Tennant (Pamela Tudsbury), John Houseman (Aaron Jastrow), Jan Michael Vincent (Byron Henry), Peter Graves (Palmer Kirby), and Topol (Berel Jastrow); a number of other Hollywood luminaries appeared in cameo roles. The series received good marks from critics, and has been revived on occasion on cable networks and produced in videotape format.



Key Questions

As the first half of Wouk's monumental exploration of the causes and conflicts of World War II, *The Winds of War* offers numerous topics for group discussion. Central to this work is the contrast between the attitudes of isolationism and complacency in the United States and the more alarmist reactions of Western European nations to Adolf Hitler's inexorable march toward war.

Early in his story, Wouk introduces readers to the strident anti-Semitism which characterizes not only the Nazis' treatment of Jews, but also the attitudes of individuals from a number of other countries.

Wouk is also concerned with developing a portrait of the ideal American military man. Unlike Captain Queeg in *The Caine Mutiny*, Victor Henry possesses the qualities Wouk admires in those who have chosen a lifetime of service to their country. His sons exhibit some of those same qualities — even the irascible Byron, who reluctantly dons his uniform when it becomes obvious that his nation needs him. In addition to the Henry family, readers will find a plethora of characters whose attitudes toward war vary widely. Examining their attitudes may help readers understand how the world could have plunged into another global conflagration within two decades after the "War to End All Wars" had come to a close in 1919.

1. A central theme of the novel is the conflict between fathers and sons.

Clearly the relationship between Pug and Byron is a strained one. Does Wouk present the conflict fairly? What evidence suggests that both Byron and his father are responsible for the conflict? What evidence exists to suggest that it will eventually be resolved?

2. Hints occur early that the Germans' policy toward the Jews is despicable; Pug's encounter with the Jew from whom he rents his house in Berlin is a key scene in which Wouk makes the problem apparent. What other indications are there that the seeds of the Holocaust are well sown by 1939?

Why do Americans and others not move to assist the Jews?

3. Although a conflict is raging in Europe by the end of 1939, the American public and its political leadership are unwilling to become involved in any but the most cursory way. What evidence in the novel is given for their reticence? Does Wouk do justice to the historical record in presenting characters such as Senator Lacouture, an isolationist?

4. In the course of the novel, Pug Henry meets a number of important historical figures. Why does Wouk include these encounters? What do you learn about these great men from Wouk's portrait of them in the novel?



5. Aaron Jastrow seems unwilling to believe that he is in danger by remaining in Italy as war breaks out in Europe. What reasons does he offer for staying? Do these seem appropriate, given the information Wouk provides to readers? Is Jastrow representative of the class of Jews whom Wouk identifies as prominent?

6. Unlike many writers who have written about the American military, Wouk seems sympathetic to those in uniform. How does he create a favorable portrait of his military figures?

How does this differ from other writers on war, especially those who have written about the Vietnam War, such as Philip Caputo or Tim O'Brien?



Topics for Discussion

What does Victor Henry do? Describe his personality. Which of his children is most like him? Which is least? Why?

Where is Victor about to be stationed as the book begins? Why does he dread this assignment? What is Rhoda's reaction?

Victor says Rhoda thought she was ready to be a Navy officer's wife, but that she was not. Why does he say this? What conflict do Victor and Rhoda have over money? How do the couple resolve these problems?

Compare Palmer Kirby and Pamela Tudsbury. What is happening to Victor and Rhoda's marriage? Why? What do you predict will happen? What decision is Rhoda now facing? What does she say in the letter Victor receives the day Pearl Harbor is bombed? What does Rhoda say later about that letter?

How are Madeline, Byron and Warren similar? How are they different? What is Victor's reaction when Madeline says she does not want to return to school? What does Madeline do?

Why does Byron go with Natalie to Poland as war is breaking out? How do they escape from Poland? What does Victor say about Byron's ability to take care of himself? Name one instance in which Byron exhibits ingenuity.

What is Leslie Slote most afraid of? Why does Natalie say he proposed to her? Do you believe Slote's proposal was genuine? Why had he not already married Natalie?

Who is Aaron Jastrow? Why is he in Siena? Realizing that the story is set against historically accurate events, what lies in Aaron's future if he does not escape to the United States?

Literary Precedents

Unquestionably, Wouk emulates in *The Winds of War* and its sequel the works of great writers of both history and fiction who have attempted to capture the essence of important national and international conflicts. The creation of a single family as the focus for exploring the conflict is a technique borrowed from Leo Tolstoy, who used it with great skill in *War and Peace* (1869), the work that Wouk has most clearly in mind as the model for his study. Wouk is also influenced in his techniques of plotting by such nineteenth-century masters as Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, and William Makepeace Thackeray.

Related Titles

The Winds of War forms part of a series on World War II; War and Remembrance, a two-volume chronicle, extends Wouk's story of the Henrys and Jastrows and offers further commentary on the horrors of the worldwide conflagration. Wouk's portrait of Victor Henry in The Winds of War stands in sharp contrast to that of Lieutenant Commander Philip Queeg in The Caine Mutiny (1951).



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