The Man in the High Castle

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF PHILIP K. DICK

Philip K. Dick was born a twin, but his baby sister died only a few months after their birth. This absence had profound consequences on Dick's family life: his parents divorced before he was in kindergarten, and he and his mother moved, first to Washington, D.C. and then to Berkeley, California. Soon after graduating from UC Berkeley, Dick became a full-time writer, producing science-fiction stories and novels with incredible speed. Personally, Dick struggled with romantic relationships (he was married and divorced five times) and with an addiction to amphetamines. Professionally, Dick's work was popular but did not garner the critical praise he so aspired to (though *The Man in the High Castle*, winner of the prestigious Hugo Award, was an exception). Dick's drug abuse led him to operate with a great deal of paranoia, and eventually, to an untimely death; he passed away in in 1982, at the age of 54. After his death, scholars and critics began to revisit Dick's work, and today he is considered a master of speculative fiction—in fact, he was the first science fiction author included in the prestigious Library of America series.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Man in the High Castle namechecks many key historical moments, both real (like the bombing of Pearl Harbor) and imagined (like a German and Italian victory at Cairo). Of particular note is the exact instant at which Dick departs from the historical record: in the novel, then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt is killed by Giuseppe Zangara in 1933, whereas in real life, Zangara's assassination attempt was a failure. Moreover, while alternate history forms the backbone of the novel, Dick is himself emblematic of his own (real) historical moment. He lived just outside Berkeley (the hub of the counter-cultural art and activism that would define the 1960s) and he wrote publicly about rebelling against 1950s prosperity and conformity in his own more out-there, speculative work. And in his drug use, his fascination with UFOs, and his focus on altered states, Dick embodied many of the most pressing questions of his time.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Dick found his inspiration for *The Man in the High Castle* in *Bring the Jubilee*, a 1953 speculative novel that imagined a world in which the Confederacy won the Civil War. To write with some precision about a Nazi takeover, Dick consulted several history books, including *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* by William Shirer and biographies of both Hitler and Goebbels. Finally, Dick drew stylistically from Japanese and Tibetan poetry, and particularly from the *haiku* form; one such poem is even quoted in the novel itself.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** The Man in the High Castle
- **When Written:** Late 1950s/early 1960s
- **Where Written:** Northern California
- **When Published:** 1962
- **Literary Period:** Mid-century
- **Genre:** Speculative fiction
- **Setting:** The Pacific States of America and the Rocky Mountain States, two of the North American regions that emerged from World War II
- **Climax:** Nobusuke Tagomi, a mid-level Japanese bureaucrat, discovers the Nazis' plans to drop a nuclear bomb on Japan; meanwhile, Juliana Frink tries to prevent her Nazi lover from assassinating a visionary author.
- **Antagonist:** The Nazi Party
- **Point of View:** The point of view moves around, though most of the novel is seen through the eyes of either Mr. Tagomi, Juliana or Childan

EXTRA CREDIT

Oracles Everywhere. The ancient Chinese *I Ching* (Book of Changes) is a driving force for many of the characters in *The Man in the High Castle*—but it was also an immensely important source for Dick in his own writing process. Dick was open that he consulted the *I Ching* as he "developed the direction" of his plot, using it to answer crucial questions about time period and geography, as well as to determine smaller-scale interactions between his characters.

Recent Revival. Though television has not yet been invented in *The Man in the High Castle*, the novel was adapted into a 2015 TV show on Amazon Prime. Over the course of its four-year run, the show strayed increasingly far from the original text; much of the Amazon version is set in the eastern Nazi-controlled regions of the United States, for example, whereas the novel focuses primarily on the Japanese-run west coast.

PLOT SUMMARY

World War II has ended, but instead of emerging victorious, the Americans have lost—and the U.S. has been colonized by

Germany and Japan. Robert Childan, a white American citizen of the Japanese-controlled Pacific States of America (PSA), is the owner of a prominent shop that deals in old U.S. memorabilia. He spends his days trying to find just the right objects for his prominent clients: Nobusuke Tagomi, a Japanese trade representative, and Paul and Betty Kasoura, a young couple who are more tolerant of white people than many of their Japanese counterparts. Childan longs to escape the strict racial hierarchy that leaves white people with limited possibilities for housing, work, and socialization.

Tagomi is anxious to sit down with Mr. Baynes, a Swiss **plastics** expert who has traveled to the PSA for some unclear reason; Tagomi believes Baynes is a spy. To Tagomi's frustration, Baynes refuses to meet until they are joined by a businessman named Mr. Yatabe. Unfortunately, Chancellor Bormann (the leader of the Nazis) has just died, throwing the world into chaos and delaying Mr. Yatabe's arrival.

Meanwhile, metalworker Frank Frink is fired from his job at the prominent Wyndham-Matson factory. Frank is Jewish, but he tries to keep this fact a secret. Frank's colleague Ed McCarthy hopes to start a metal jewelry-making business with Frank. To get seed money for this business, Ed plans to blackmail Wyndham-Matson, since the Wyndham-Matson factory produces fake Civil War guns and sells them off as real antiques, and Ed wants to make this fact public. After consulting the *I Ching* (an ancient Chinese oracle), Frank agrees, hoping that he will now be able to win his ex-wife Juliana back. Juliana is at present teaching Judo in the Rocky Mountain States, a neutral buffer zone between the Japanese-controlled west coast and the Nazi-controlled east coast.

In disguise, Frank goes to Childan's shop and informs him that one of his guns—the **Colt .44**—is a fake. Childan's faith is deeply shaken, and word of the discovered forgery gets back to Wyndham-Matson; Wyndham-Matson realizes that Frank and Ed have revealed the secret of the fake antiques. Though he gives Frank and Ed the money they want, Wyndham-Matson also vengefully reports to the Nazis that Frank is Jewish.

Still anxious about the fake guns, Childan heads to dinner with the Kasouras—but to his dismay, the young couple disdains his anti-Semitism and anti-Black racism and no friendship blossoms. Meanwhile, Nazi officers Hugo Reiss and Kreuz vom Meere learn that a dissident German spy is currently in the PSA; though the man's real name is Rudolf Wegener, he is traveling under an alias. Wegener is supposed to meet General Tedeki, a high-ranking Japanese official, but Tedeki is also traveling under an assumed name. J. Goebbels, the Nazi propagandist who has taken temporary control of the party, charges Reiss and vom Meere with stopping Wegener's meeting at any cost.

Back in the Rocky Mountain States, Juliana has begun an affair with Joe Cinadella, an Italian truck driver with intense Fascist beliefs. Joe is reading a book called *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, which imagines a world in which the U.S. and Britain won World War II. Juliana—like many other characters—is fascinated by the speculative book, banned in Nazi territory. Joe explains that *Grasshopper* was written by Hawthorne Abendsen, known as "The Man in the High Castle" for all the security he keeps around his home. Abendsen also lives in the Rocky Mountain States, so Joe and Juliana agree to go on a trip: they will drive to Denver and then continue on to Abendsen's house.

Frank and Ed's business—Edfrank jewlery—is not nearly as successful as they'd hoped it to be. However, Childan takes a few of their pieces on consignment, and he gradually finds himself moved by the strangely original designs. Childan presents one of the pieces to Paul Kasoura, who suggests that Childan should mass-produce it. Childan is offended by this suggestion, which he feels cheapens the work—he instead commits himself to Edfrank and a contemporary American art movement. Frank, now a known Jew, is arrested; the Nazis want to deport him to the east coast and kill him.

Mr. Yatabe—who is actually General Tedeki—finally arrives in the PSA, and Tagomi schedules his long-awaited meeting with Baynes. In the office, Tagomi learns that Baynes is in fact Rudolf Wegener's alias. Wegener informs Tedeki that the Nazis are plotting to drop a nuclear bomb on Japan (Operation Dandelion). Wegener believes that the Japanese should align themselves with R. Heydrich, one of the most violent Nazis and another contender to be the next Chancellor, because Heydrich is against Operation Dandelion. Just as Tedeki begins to voice hesitation, several Nazis burst through the door, attempting to kill Wegener. Tagomi, who has always kept a decorative Colt .44. in his desk, shoots and kills the invaders.

Overcome with guilt at having committed murder, Tagomi goes to Childan's shop in an attempt to return the gun. Childan instead gives Tagomi a triangular piece of Edfrank jewelry. The metal triangle brings Tagomi into an alternative historical timeline (one that resembles what really happened after WWII); he suddenly finds himself in a U.S.-governed San Francisco, where white people treat *him* with racist disdain (not the other way around). Using the jewelry, Tagomi is able to re-enter his reality. Tagomi is profoundly changed by this experience, as is clear when he refuses to sign extradition papers for Frank. Frank is set free.

Wegener and Tedeki both make it safely home. Wegener reflects on the difficulty of moral action in such an ambiguous world, and he hopes that the Nazis will ultimately destroy each other in their various power struggles. "We can only control the end by making a choice at each step," Wegener reflects. "We can only hope. And try."

After a shopping spree in Denver, Juliana realizes that Joe is not an Italian but a Swiss Nazi; his goal is to assassinate Abendsen, and seducing her was merely part of that plan. In a

daze, Juliana slits Joe's throat with a razor. She drives to Abendsen's house by herself and is shocked to find that it is not a "High Castle" but a regular suburban home. Abendsen explains to Juliana that he did not want to live his life in fear. After she presses, Abendsen also reveals that he used the *I Ching* to write *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Juliana insists that *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* reveals some kind of fundamental Inner Truth about their world, upsetting Abendsen. Juliana leaves Abendsen's house and looks with excitement towards the future.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Robert Childan – Robert Childan, one of the book's protagonists, owns the well-respected antique store American Artistic Handcrafts Inc. A white man in a Japanese-led society, Childan constantly feels that he is disrespected and disadvantaged. In the beginning of the novel, he tries to raise his status through important clients like Mr. Tagomi and the Kasouras; at the same time, he panics when he learns that he has inadvertently been peddling fake antique guns to some of the most important people in the Pacific States of America. While he initially does not sell any contemporary American art, over the course of *The Man in the High Castle*, he moves away from the antique business and towards selling contemporary crafts, particularly the Edfrank jewelry, which he sees as the future art in the United States. Childan is an important character for several reasons. First, his focus on the Edfrank jewelry—which he initially dismisses—suggests a belief that art can leave some kind of permanent mark on the world. Not only that, but Childan seems to feel that art actually has the power to reshape reality—a fact that seems to be borne out when Tagomi, holding Edfrank jewelry in his hand, slips into another timeline. Second, though Childan feels that he is the victim of racism, his own prejudice is startlingly apparent: he is anti-Semitic, he resents the Japanese for their power and even demeans them as "monkeys," and he is a devotee of Dr. Seyss-Inquart, one of the most abominable eugenicists in the Nazi party. He therefore illustrates that prejudice in the novel does not belong solely to the Nazis and the Japanese—rather, those are the only groups powerful enough to turn their biases into law.

Nobusuke Tagomi – Nobusuke Tagomi is a mild-mannered bureaucrat who works in the Pacific States of America as a trade representative for the Japanese government. For much of the novel, he is concerned with orchestrating a meeting with the mysterious Mr. Baynes—it becomes clear that the two are involved in some kind of politically subversive activity. When they finally meet, Tagomi protects Baynes from a squad of Nazi Kommandos. He murders two of the men, which profoundly affects his outlook on life. More than any other character in the novel, Tagomi goes on a sort of moral quest: in the aftermath of the shooting, he struggles to locate an Inner Truth in his morally ambiguous reality. Ultimately, Tagomi concludes that "there is no understanding…yet [he] must go on living day to day anyhow." Tagomi therefore links two of the novel's most important themes: in recognizing that there is a lack of clear moral truth, Tagomi resolves to focus on quotidian, intimate life as opposed to large-scale historical action. In many ways, this recognition makes Tagomi the novel's moral center—and that is reflected in the way he works against Nazi policy, even refusing to sign an extradition order for Frank after his Jewishness is revealed.

Juliana Frink – As every man who encounters her immediately realizes, Juliana Frink is beautiful. Though has she been with many men—including ex-husband Frank Frink—Juliana struggles with what she calls a "neurotic fear of the masculine." Perhaps in an attempt to overcome this fear, she has trained in Judo. When the novel begins, she is living in Canon City, Colorado, and working as a Judo instructor. After meeting Joe Cinnadella in a diner, they start sleeping together, and she agrees to go to Denver with him. However, Juliana's consistent fears about Joe are borne out when she discovers that Joe is actually a Nazi—and that he is trying to kill Hawthorne Abendsen, the author of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* (Juliana's favorite novel). Juliana's encounter with Abendsen, which ends the novel, is especially revealing. Juliana understands that rather than being merely entertaining, *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is in some ways "true"—both because it proves that history is never inevitable and because it illuminates many of the problems and complications of her own present reality. Because she is able to reckon with and to some extent accept this uncertainty, Juliana is the character most able to move into the future, rather than mourning a bygone past or trying to make sense of an impossible present.

Frank Frink – Born Frank Fink, Frank is secretly Jewish (if not particularly religious). Though he grew up on the east coast, Frank fought in the Pacific States in World War II, and he remained there after the Nazis took over his former home. Though he is no longer with ex-wife Juliana, Frank still finds her beautiful and often fantasizes about reuniting with her. At the beginning of the novel, he has just been fired from his job at the Wyndham-Matson factory, where he was a skilled producer of counterfeit antique **Colt .44s.** Determined to apply his craftsmanship elsewhere, Frank goes into business with Ed McCarthy, calling themselves Edfrank Custom Jewelry. Much of Frank's action is motivated by his desire to get Juliana back—sometimes to the point of thoughtlessness. He puts himself at great risk when he enters Childan's store, posing as an important Japanese general's secretary, in order to scare Wyndham-Matson into giving Edfrank money. And in fact, as Wyndham-Matson seeks revenge, Frank's Jewishness is revealed, putting him in mortal jeopardy. Throughout it all,

however, he continues to think mostly in terms of Juliana, suggesting the extent to which intimate concerns take precedence in his mind over historical circumstances. Finally, it is important to note that Frank is not only a gifted artist but specifically a skilled *metal* worker. This both links him to a long history of U.S. craftsmanship and suggests a permanence to his work; unlike plastic, metal is not flimsy or cheap, and is instead made to last. Even his counterfeit guns, therefore, have some kind of weight and extended life.

Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener – Rudolf Wegener is a member of the German dissident Abwehr faction, which hopes to slow Nazi world takeover by preventing Operation Dandelion from occurring. Wegener is secretly Jewish, and this informs some of his anti-Nazi sentiment. At the same time, he resents that the Nazis want to be "the agents, not the victims, of history." By contrast, Wegener is conscious of his own smallness in the grand scheme of the world, and he even takes comfort in this fact. For much of the novel, while he waits to meet with Tagomi and General Tedeki, Wegener travels under the assumed identity of Mr. Baynes, a Swiss **plastics** salesman. It is interesting that plastics is the profession Wegener uses to hide his true identity. On the one hand, plastics are an industry in which the Germans have far outpaced the Japanese in invention and production; on the other hand, plastics often signal falsity or meaninglessness in the novel. By making his alias work in plastics, then, Wegener is giving a signal that "Baynes" is a malleable, fabricated character, and not his true identity.

Joe Cinnadella – Though he initially poses as a disgruntled Italian truck driver passing through Cannon City, Colorado, Joe is in fact a Swiss Nazi, renowned for his tactical expertise. He is on a mission to assassinate Hawthorne Abendsen. His seduction of Juliana is part of this project; he believes that Juliana is the type of woman Abendsen is usually attracted to, and he hopes that having her in tow will allow him greater access to the Abendsen home. Joe subscribes completely to the "Fascist theory of action," in which human agency is the all-important determinant of the future. However, even as he emphasizes the importance of acting decisively, his own plan is disrupted by Juliana's not-quite-intentional murder; when she learns what Joe plans to do to Abendsen, she slits his throat in a daze. Joe's trajectory—in direct contrast to the teachings of Fascism—thus suggests that human agency is never completely determinative of human reality.

Hawthorne Abendsen – Hawthorne Abendsen, the best-selling author of the speculative novel *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, is the "man in the high castle" of the book's title. For years after he wrote his controversial book, he lived in a "high castle," armed and secured against would-be Nazi assassins. However, by the time Juliana arrives at his house, Abendsen and his family have moved to a quiet, normal, suburban home. Having resigned himself to the fact that Nazis could attack him anywhere, Abendsen has instead prioritized a fulfilling day-to-day life over an existence spent in anxious watchfulness. He therefore illustrates the novel's call to "find the small:" the ordinary, everyday joys and heartbreaks of life. Abendsen can also be seen as an alternative version of Dick himself—both men write speculative fiction about an alternate outcome of World War II, and both use the ancient Chinese *I Ching* to do so. Interestingly, Juliana believes that Abendsen's book is in some way fundamentally true, in that it reveals something about their own world. Abendsen resents this fact, perhaps because in admitting the role of the *I Ching* in his own writing process, he is also admitting the role of chance and coincidence in creating *any* given reality.

Caroline Abendsen – The pretty, protective wife of Hawthorne Abendsen, Caroline is Juliana's primary point of contact for her visit. She is a little resentful of Juliana (whom Hawthorne is clearly attracted to), but she is also frustrated with Juliana for forcing her husband to confront the deeper "truth" that undergirds *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*.

Paul Kasoura – Paul is a young, graceful, successful Japanese bureaucrat who is married to Betty. Paul is highly educated—he reads and listens to a vast variety of music—and is fascinated by U.S. culture from before the war. Though he does so with tact, Paul's suggestion that Childan mass-produce the Edfrank pieces is (at least to Childan) his way of suggesting that Americans can no longer make true art. However, Paul takes a more complex view of the world than many other characters in the novel; he is simultaneously disdainful of Childan and deeply moved by the art Childan sells, and he seems to want Childan to take some sort of pride in American craftsmanship.

Betty Kasoura – The beautiful, elegant wife of Paul Kasoura (whom Childan often lusts after), Betty displays cultural adeptness with both Japanese and American traditions. She is particularly interested in "authentic" American cooking, which frustrates Childan (who sees this as appropriative). Betty embodies the more tolerant, less hierarchical view of many young Japanese officials; she is therefore horrified by the casual prejudice she encounters in Childan.

Ed McCarthy – A man of few words, Ed McCarthy was Frank's supervisor at Wyndham-Matson's factory—until Frank was fired and Ed left to go into business with him. Ed is a skilled and precise craftsman, and he takes pride in the original jewelry pieces he and Frank produce. He is unable to sell them to Childan for anything but consignment, and it's his idea to blackmail Wyndham-Matson, though he ultimately assigns the actual responsibility for doing so to Frank.

Mr. Wyndham-Matson – Though his sad-sack appearance might suggest otherwise, Wyndham-Matson—the owner of the factory where Frank Frink and Ed McCarthy worked—is one of the most powerful white Americans in the Pacific States of America. He has prominent ties to the pinoc government and

runs a lucrative enterprise selling counterfeit antique guns. It is important to that Wyndham-Matson is quite sympathetic to the Nazis. He proudly drives a German-made car, he defends the Reich government to his mistress Rita, and he even shares in Nazi anti-Semitism; after Frank blackmails him, for example, he quickly decides to turn his former employee over to the Nazis as a secret Jew.

Mr. Yatabe/General Tedeki – "Mr. Yatabe," allegedly an "elderly retired businessman," is the alias that General Tedeki uses to travel to the Pacific States without arousing Nazi suspicion. Tedeki is actually a valiant military man and high-ranking Japanese official, able to make change at the policy level. Baynes therefore postpones his meeting with Tagomi until Tedeki can be present at it. When faced with the prospect of Operation Dandelion, Tedeki is unsure how to proceed—though he obviously wants to prevent Nazi destruction of Japan, he (like many of his Japanese colleagues) is repulsed by the various German power struggles and therefore is hesitant to take any side in who their Chancellor will be.

Hugo Reiss – As the head of the German consulate in the Pacific States of America, Reiss fancies himself the highest-ranking Nazi on the west coast. However, he often finds his authority undermined by the various other bureaucrats he works with, whether that is Kreuz vom Meere or Nobusuke Tagomi. As the novel progresses, Reiss seems to feel some measure of doubt about the Nazi project; he finds himself moved by the alternate world imagined in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, for example, even though he quickly banishes those thoughts. At the same time, however, Reiss shares the Nazis' profoundly racist view of the world, as is evident in his screeds against Africa and Africans.

Kreuz vom Meere – Vom Meere is the head of Nazi intelligence in the Pacific States of America; he is a prominent (and dangerous) man. Throughout the book, vom Meere is focused on capturing Baynes before he can meet with the Japanese. Though he is supposed to collaborate with Reiss, vom Meere periodically goes over Reiss' head, much to the Reiss's frustration. Vom Meere is openly disdainful of the Japanese.

Chancellor Bormann – The Nazi who took over as Chancellor after Hitler was incapacitated, Bormann is succumbing to illness. His death early on in *The Man in the High Castle* throws the entire world into disarray, as various Nazis—many of them even more vicious in their beliefs than Bormann himself—compete to take his place.

J. Goebbels – Goebbels has gone down in history for his frighteningly effective work as the head of Nazi propaganda; he is known as the "sole intellectual" of the party. The novel imagines that Goebbels is among the many high-ranking Nazis scrambling to replace Chancellor Bormann. Due to a well-timed, powerful radio speech, Goebbels is initially successful in rising to become the new leader. However, Baynes and other members of the Abwehr faction of dissident Germans are against Goebbels, because Goebbels is in support of Operation Dandelion. Goebbels is the only prominent European Nazi to intervene directly in the Pacific States, which he does (via Reiss) to try to apprehend Baynes.

R. Heydrich – Another one of the Nazis hoping to become Chancellor, Heydrich is young, violent and curiously un-ideological. Having come up through the paramilitary SS organization, Heydrich is one of the most feared Nazis. However, because he heads up the Germans' space program, he is against Operation Dandelion (as he feels it will distract from his own work with **rockets**). Baynes therefore advocates that the Japanese should partner with Heydrich and try to elevate him over Goebbels.

Hermann Goring – Also known as 'the Fat One,' Goring is famous (in both reality and the novel) for his power-hungry excessiveness; he often styles himself as a kind of Roman emperor. Having founded the Gestapo (the Nazi secret police), Goring is a prime contender for taking over the Nazi party after Bormann's death.

Doctor Seyss-Inquart – Historically, Seyss-Inquart held a variety of important positions in Hitler's government. In the novel, Seyss-Inquart is "the most hated man in Reich territory," with a single-minded focus on exterminating Jews that makes him the Nazi "closest in temperament" to Hitler. He, too, is jockeying to replace Chancellor Bormann as the Reich's leader.

Franklin D. Roosevelt – The 32nd president of the United States. In *The Man in the High Castle*, the real-life attempt on Roosevelt's life by assassin Giuseppe Zangara was successful (in actuality, Zangara missed his target). Without Roosevelt, the U.S. is unable to successfully fend off the Nazi threat—and to many people living in the PSA, Roosevelt remains a nostalgic symbol of bygone American strength. In *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Roosevelt lives, but he does not run for a third term (and is instead succeeded by Rex Tugwell).

Rex Tugwell – In reality, Tugwell was an economist who spearheaded many of Franklin D. Roosevelt's most beloved New Deal policies. In *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Tugwell becomes the U.S. President after Roosevelt. The novel-within-a-novel depicts Tugwell as a strong leader; he successfully predicts Pearl Harbor, for example, and is therefore able to evacuate the U.S. fleet before the famous bombing.

Winston Churchill – In reality, Churchill was a brilliant military strategist and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for most of World War II (1940-1945). In *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Churchill successfully leads the U.K. to world domination—but he does so through the use of brutally racist tactics, including putting Chinese people in concentration camps.

Alex Lotze – Lotze is a German artist whose artistic style is

informed by the political ideology of Fascism. He meets Baynes on a **rocket** and—to Baynes' horror—tries to bond over their racial "close[ness]." Lotze embodies the "psychotic streak" in Nazi thinking, in which the world is reduced to questions of racial purity and anti-Semitism.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Baldur von Schirach – Another one of the high-ranking Nazis hoping to take over the party, von Schirach is a "handsome idealist" known for trying to moderate some of the Reich's most horrific violence. Though the Japanese would ideally see von Schirach in power, it is unlikely that he will actually take control.

Ray Calvin – Ray Calvin is an antiques wholesaler who often deals to Childan. In collaboration with Wyndham-Matson, Calvin knowingly sells fake guns (including **Colt .44s**) to unwitting antiques dealers.

Mr. Ramsey – Mr. Ramsey is Tagomi's assistant, whom Tagomi often relies on to navigate issues of white American culture.

Rita – Rita is Wyndham-Matson's young mistress, an avid fan of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*.

Miss Ephreikian – Miss Ephreikian is Tagomi's secretary.

TERMS

Pinoc – The Pinoc is the white American governing body of the PSA, located in Sacramento. Ultimately, this is a puppet government with very little power, as ultimately all final decisions rest with Japanese officials. **Wyndham-Matson** has close ties with the pinoc, which is seen to be a fairly corrupt institution.

Wabi – *Wabi* is the Japanese word for great taste—specifically, it is the ability to create beauty out of simplicity. Most Americans struggle with wabi, whereas **Betty Kasoura** embodies it.

Wu – *Wu* is the Japanese word for the tranquility associated with holy things, many of which reflect spiritual balance. As **Paul Kasoura** explains to **Childan**, wu can exist in surprising places; Paul believes that the Edfrank jewelry is a prime example of wu.

Operation Dandelion – "Operation Dandelion" is the code name for the Nazi plot to drop a nuclear bomb on Japan. The Nazis hope that by dropping this bomb, they will wipe out the Japanese government and then achieve world domination at last. As **Rudolf Wegener** explains to **General Tedeki**, the Nazis are split on whether or not they approve of Operation Dandelion. **J. Goebbels** is in favor; **R. Heydrich** is against, as he prefers to focus on the Nazis' space program.

Abwehr – The Abwehr was a real-life German military intelligence organization that was formed in 1920 and lasted until the end of World War II. In *The Man in the High Castle*, the Abwehr is a dissident German faction that wants to undermine the Nazi Party.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

PREJUDICE AND POWER

The Man in the High Castle imagines an alternate history in which the Allied Powers (namely the U.S. and Britain) lost World War II. Though it takes place entirely within the former United States, America has now been colonized in the east by the Nazis and in the west by the Japanese. This colonization has made the white characters under Japanese rule second-class citizens: they live in segregated neighborhoods, have limited job opportunities, and face daily indignities. Yet *The Man in the High Castle* does not present this kind of legalized racism—which resembles a milder version of the American Jim Crow system—as in any way uniquely Japanese. Instead, by emphasizing tensions between Germany, Japan and Italy; by revealing its white characters' privately racist thoughts; and by moving between alternate history and historical reality, the novel suggests that harmful biases exist across place and culture. But while the novel suggests that bias is universal, it also shows how only the war's winners gain power to actually shape society according to their prejudices. *The Man in the High Castle* thus serves as a cautionary tale to the *real* historical victors of World War II—the Americans and the British—warning them not to use their power to uphold racist systems.

Though Italy, Germany and Japan were all technically victorious in the war, racial tensions still exist among the three powers—and each group is discriminated against by the others. Italian truck driver Joe complains that on the east coast, where the Nazis are in charge, he cannot get a good job because his skin is too "dark." By contrast, on the west coast—where the Japanese are in power—white people attempt to darken their skin tones. This juxtaposition reveals that while the aesthetic values themselves may differ, racism and colorism play a major role in every one of the novel's post-war societies. Similarly, while the Japanese have instituted one kind of rigid "place" system in the PSA (in which white people automatically have lower status), the Nazis treat have a completely opposite hierarchy. For example, in San Francisco, only Japanese people are allowed to live in the nicest neighborhoods; in New York, only white people are allowed to read the most controversial

books. The same people are thus treated differently depending on which government is in charge, further suggesting that political power—regardless of who holds it—can be used to enforce prejudice on a systemic level. These prejudiced beliefs then affect even the smallest personal interactions. When Mr. Tagomi prepares to greet Mr. Baynes with a gift, he assumes that Baynes lacks "comprehension" of Japanese art and disdains it like other Nordic people. So even though Tagomi is at the top of the hierarchy in San Francisco, he must still navigate harmful anti-Japanese stereotypes when he deals with people from other parts of the world. Interestingly, Tagomi also has certain biases, as the real Baynes has almost nothing to do with the generic "Nordic" figure Tagomi imagines. Though Tagomi is more active than many other characters in examining his own prejudices, even he occasionally stereotypes, suggesting that no one is immune from this biased instinct.

Moreover, while white Americans have very little power in the Pacific States of America, *The Man in the High Castle* demonstrates the extent to which they retain their internal racial and ethnic biases. Though at first Robert Childan hopes to impress his Japanese clients, he soon grows frustrated with his feelings of admiration. "Why do I cater to them?" wonders Childan, "due solely to their having won?" In other words, Childan is recognizing that Japan's political and military victory has translated into cultural (and racial) power—a fact that seems only to fuel his racist resentment. After all, Childan's deep-seated prejudices have not disappeared with his loss of power. "Only the white races endowed with creativity," he fumes, "think how it would have been if we would have won! No Japan today, and the U.S.A. gleaming great sole power in entire world." Childan's internal monologue suggests that had the Americans won, he would have wanted the Japanese to face much worse treatment than they had subjected the U.S. to—yet Childan does not seem to realize this hypocrisy. This barely suppressed racism is in fact common among the novel's white Americans. Juliana, remembering that Frank likes Japanese people, wonders if "maybe he identifies with them because they're ugly." Here, the novel is again asserting that the average white American has at least as many (and likely far more) prejudices than their Japanese colonizers; the only difference is that the Japanese hold power, while the Americans do not.

Finally, when Mr. Tagomi briefly stumbles into historical reality, he discovers that the same cultural hierarchies are still in place—only this time reversed, since it is a white American government in power as opposed to a Japanese one. When Tagomi first switches timelines, he encounters a white policeman and is met with an unusual lack of respect. Tagomi is initially furious to have been "interrupted by that white barbarian Neanderthal *yank*," whom he sees as "subhuman." But he then reflects that this kind of "racist invective" is "beneath" him, the result of a frustrated moment. Tagomi feels able to take out his anger on people he assumes are less powerful, which in his normal life would be white people. This moment is therefore an example of dramatic irony, as Tagomi does not know yet how the racial hierarchy has flipped on its head. Minutes later, Tagomi makes his way to a diner filled with white men. Not only does no one give up their seat to him, but one man tells him to "watch it, Tojo." The racist phrase, which lumps Tagomi in with Hideki Tojo (one of the most violent Japanese generals in World War II), again emphasizes American prejudice. But more than that, this scene illustrates that the war's winners will continue to humiliate and stereotype its losers—regardless of whether those winners are Japanese or American.

Of course, the alternate reality that Tagomi stumbles into is the actual reality of postwar America; as Juliana says, speculative novels tell us "about our own world," reflecting back our own realities and biases. *The Man in the High Castle* therefore warns its readers not to be complacent merely because, in actuality, the U.S. won the war and the Nazis and Japanese lost it. Instead, the novel uses its upside-down world to suggest that Americans must be careful about how they wield power: they should not just condemn other groups' biases but should work to check their own.

HISTORY VS. DAILY LIFE

The Man in the High Castle is set in alternate universe, one in which Germany and Japan won World War II and split North America between themselves. It follows, then, that many of the novel's characters, reeling from the fallout of war and colonization, conceptualize time in terms of global political events. Additionally, this kind of historical thinking is a crucial feature of Nazi ideology, which shapes and threatens the lives of everyone living in the former U.S. Yet even as history dominates every facet of life, many of the book's protagonists—especially Nobusuke Tagomi, a thoughtful Japanese bureaucrat—realize that to go on living through geopolitical upheaval, they must find calm and pleasure in everyday occurrences. *The Man in the High Castle* thus makes clear that while historical events like war and colonization reshape even the most private aspects of life, real meaning is found not in the broad strokes of history, but in the mundane routines of daily existence.

When the Nazis secured military victory, their Fascist view of history (in which people are able to shape and take ownership of world events) emerged as a triumphant worldview. **Plastics** expert Baynes reflects that the Nazis have a fundamentally different sense of "space and time": "they see through the here, the now, into the vast deep black beyond. They want to be the agents, not the victims, of history." In turning their attention to the future—and thus in thinking of time on an inherently "vast" scale—the Nazis must also devalue the "here" and "now" of daily existence. And even those who resent Nazi thinking seem to

(perhaps unconsciously) adopt this view of time. Baynes, for example, dismisses his fear of dying as "the trivial worry. The finite, private worry about my own particular skin." Similarly, antiques dealer Robert Childan admires the Nazis focus on infrastructure and conquest; the Nazis can "remold the world by magic," and he berates himself for not doing the same. After all, the Fascist mindset values legacy, not life—and when the world's newspapers are full of just-discovered planets and brand-new feats of engineering, personal, private affairs begin to seem "trivial".

Indeed, historical change—specifically, the massive geopolitical shift wrought by German and Japanese colonization of the U.S.—alters every aspect of daily life. When Childan dines with wealthy Japanese clients, he berates himself for his inability to move the conversation away from politics—but then reflects that it is "impossible to avoid the topic. Because it's everywhere, in a book I happen to pick up or a record collection." Juliana encounters a similar issue with her Italian lover Joe, where even the sound of German folk music sets him off on a tangent about his preference for Italian culture. Music and literature, which might normally be seen as an escape from political reality, now become reminders of how completely the world has changed. A prime example of the way German and Japanese victory shapes daily life is in the absence of **television**. As Juliana (somewhat sardonically) reflects, "the Nazis have no sense of humor, so why should they want television?" The Nazis have prioritized geographic expansion over entertainment technology, and so in *The Man in the High Castle*, German rockets speed to Mars while TV has yet to be invented. It is also worth noting that this obsession with rockets reflects the Germans' focus on the "deep black beyond," while TV is more about gathering together in the present. And most tellingly, every single profession in the novel reflects the legacy of conquest. Juliana teaches Judo, a Japanese martial art; Frank and Childan both work to sell American artifacts to wealthy Japanese buyers; and Tagomi is a Japanese trade representative stationed in what is now a Japanese colony. Even though many of the characters have chosen seemingly apolitical jobs, every industry (from art to sales) has been completely altered in the aftermath of World War II.

Yet as the novel's characters learn, life's meaning comes not from focusing on big global events, but instead on small pleasures and slow changes. Baynes reflects that the Nazis' desire to be individual shapers of history may ultimately bring about the party's ruin, as each man will try to out-maneuver the others. If that is the case, Baynes desires that the rest of the world can "build and hope and make a few simple plans." The language of Baynes' wish testifies to small-scale time (he wants just a "few" plans, and they can be "simple" ones), the exact opposite of the Nazi's massive, historical view. Similarly, shaken by having killed two men, Tagomi resolves to "go on living day to day anyhow," to "find the small" things and enjoy them. Here, Tagomi explicitly moves away from thinking in terms of years or decades, instead focusing on each day as it comes. Moreover, Tagomi's emphasis on "find[ing]" small pleasures suggests that this day-to-day outlook is an active one; if everyone else is emphasizing the future, someone like Tagomi must consistently work to ground themselves in the present. Most shockingly, writer Hawthorne Abendsen, once famous for living in a high-security mansion, eventually chooses to prioritize mundane routines over safety—even if it means putting his life at risk. When Juliana is shocked that Abendsen now lives in a modest suburban home, he explains that the Nazis can always "get you […], charged wire and High Castle or not." In other words, while Abendsen accepts the dangerous reality of a Nazi takeover, he resists despair by living a normal life; if the Nazis can "get" him anywhere, he may as well spend time with his family or in his garden.

Finally, it is particularly telling that Abendsen's High Castle gives the novel its name. This calls readers' attention to the characters' desire for security against historical forces—only to ultimately suggest that such a desire is fruitless. The man in the High Castle has instead chosen to live in a single-story home, just as the novel urges its audience to "find the small": to make meaning and change not on the level of history but on the level of daily life.

AUTHENTICITY VS. ORIGINALITY

In the alternate reality presented in *The Man in the High Castle*, Germany and Japan have won World War II and colonized the United States. In the Japanese half of the country (the Pacific States of America, or PSA), Japanese settlers highly prize American "antiques"—from valuable Civil War guns to seemingly throwaway milk bottle-tops. As the antiques market grows, more and more forgeries are being discovered—and the fakes themselves are usually functional and beautiful, even if they are inauthentic. Moreover, nearly half of the novel's major characters assume false names, personas, and backgrounds, casting doubt on the authenticity of the characters' identities. As the characters struggle to differentiate between the real and the fake, the entire concept of authenticity comes into question. In critiquing this focus on what is "authentic," *The Man in the High Castle* suggests that when societies seek to verify old trinkets or customs, they trap themselves in an unknowable past. Only by seeking to create—by crafting new ideas and objects valued for their artfulness and originality—can a society look toward the future.

Though many of the characters are obsessed with the idea of authenticity (or "historicity"), the novel makes clear that such ideas are unreliable and borderline absurd. Many of the objects or traditions that the Japanese consider "authentically" American are in fact trivial or stereotypical. Trade representative Tagomi, for example, treats a low-quality Mickey

Mouse watch as a valuable artifact, and housewife Betty boasts of buying "authentic" American products like Coca-Cola. The Japanese colonizing forces have rushed to replicate the culture they have colonized without actually establishing any sort of cross-cultural relationship. Accordingly, Tagomi and Betty's claims to "authentic" American-ness are more about bragging rights than a deep understanding of how Coca-Cola or Mickey Mouse function in American life. The idea of "authenticity" is thrown more directly into question when factory owner Wyndham-Matson shows his mistress Rita two identical Zippo lighters. One belonged to Franklin D. Roosevelt (and is therefore priceless), while one is just a normal lighter; the only way to distinguish between the two is a piece of paper declaring one of them "authentic." Wyndham-Matson therefore claims that "the word 'fake' meant nothing really, since the word 'authentic' meant nothing really"— "authenticity" comes from people's minds, not from objects. And the novel emphasizes that such concepts of authenticity are equally absurd when applied to identity. **Plastics** expert Baynes, frustrated with a Nazi artist he meets on a **rocket** trip, tells the man that he is actually Jewish—but he has had his "nose altered, [his] large greasy pores made smaller, [his] skin chemically lightened." The Nazis were famous for racial purity tests, but Baynes' claim that he has eradicated all physical traces of Judaism suggests the superficiality of such tests, especially in an era of increasing technology. But more than that, the novel never affirms or denies Baynes' ethnicity, leaving the reader with an open question—and with the sense that identity is too complex to ever be "authenticated."

Moreover, some of the so-called "inauthentic" objects are nevertheless useful and beautiful—just as some of the people using assumed (fake) identities are doing so for necessary reasons. To forge **Colt .44s**, metalworker Frank needs a plastic mold, but he also needs time, labor, and great skill; he reflects that one day, "the fakes [will] undermine the value of the real." In fact, the people at the University of California charged with authenticating the fake guns are more impressed by the craftsmanship than they are horrified at the forgery. And because the fakes themselves have such artistic merit, the "real" things become both less rare and less unique. Even more confusingly, the fake guns are almost indistinguishable from real guns—and just as effective. When Tagomi fires his (likely fake) antique Civil War gun, he is able to kill two men. In this remarkable moment, a counterfeit object fulfills the purpose it was made for. *The Man in the High Castle* thus forces its audience to reckon with the difference between authenticity (measured in papers and scholarly pronouncements) and reality (measured in actions and consequences). The novel's most pivotal exchange of information—in which the Japanese learn of the Nazis' plan to drop a nuclear bomb on Japan—is made possible by false identities. Baynes is actually Rudolf Wegener, a German dissident and spy; his mysterious elderly colleague is in reality General Tedeki, an important Japanese policymaker. But under the dangerous eyes of the Nazis, these two men cannot meet as themselves. More than just questioning the concept of authenticity, then, the novel even posits that deception is sometimes *necessary* to dodge broken, totalitarian systems.

Ultimately, then, *The Man in the High Castle* suggests that rather than focusing on authenticity, societies should value creativity and originality. Tagomi, inspired by the Edfrank pieces' strange novelty, reflects that the artist's job is to bring "the dead to life"; in Edfrank's jewelry, "the past had yielded to the future." Similarly, antiques dealer Childan reflects that art possesses a great deal more longevity than even life itself. While the characters' focus on authenticity traps them in the pre-war past, art and creation allow them to imagine a more hopeful "future." Juliana—whose commitment to forging ahead closes the novel—reflects that humans can similarly reinvent themselves, emerging anew as if "created out of nothing." The novel demonstrates that in order to cope with changing political and personal circumstances, most people will have to abandon their self-conceptions, whether that is Baynes shrinking his pores or Frank changing his name. Even Juliana, who does not alter anything drastic about herself, gradually becomes capable of thoughts and actions she would never have thought possible at the beginning of the novel. Rather than holding people and objects accountable to backwards-looking notions of "authenticity," *The Man in the High Castle* advocates for creation, invention, and change.

AGENCY VS. CHANCE

In *The Man in the High Castle*, various characters try to alter history, whether that means assassinating a prominent writer or intervening in an important election. It follows, then, that many of these people believe that they have a great deal of agency over their lives. But on the other hand, some of the protagonists—particularly Jewish artist Frank Frink and Japanese bureaucrat Nobusuke Tagomi—frequently consult the *I Ching*, an ancient Chinese oracle that suggests fate is the result of mysterious, unalterable chance. As the novel's various protagonists struggle to reconcile the randomness of fate with their own actions and choices, they come to realize that their lives are neither purely random nor purely a result of their choices. Instead, *The Man in the High Castle* suggests that both individual life—and historical reality—are the result of various people's choices interacting with one another in surprising ways; neither agency nor chance determines the future on its own.

The Nazi-dominated world of *The Man in the High Castle* is shaped by a Fascist outlook, which dictates that people have complete agency over history—and therefore that people should act quickly and independently of others. As Joe—the novel's most deeply committed Fascist—explains to Juliana, "what is wanted is the *deed* […] you never find true Fascist

talking, only doing." Joe's emphasis on action over language suggests that, rather than trying to make sense of the world as it is, one should merely try to alter it. **Plastics** expert Baynes similarly reflects on this Nazi fascination with agency: "they want to be the agents, not the victims, of history. They identify with God's power and believe they are godlike." Instead of seeing themselves as the "victims" of either historical or spiritual forces, Fascism dictates that people have complete and total power over their circumstances. In this framework, no other being—not even God—can be seen as having any agency. Moreover, the Nazis constantly assert their human power to alter worlds: they describe outer space, for instance, as "the future arena in which the affairs of man will be acted out." In contemplating the vastness of the solar system, most people would reflect on their relative insignificance. The Nazis, however, see merely another territory to conquer and reshape.

At the same time, many of the protagonists rely on the *I Ching* to predict a future they see as uncontrollable and inevitable. Frank feels that every time he asks the oracle a question (even about entirely personal matters), his destiny will reflect the randomness of the universe: "here came the hexagram, brought forth by the passive chance workings of the vegetable stalks. Random, and yet rooted in the moment in which he lived, in which his life was bound up with all other lives and particles." Whereas the Nazis preach agency and action, Frank feels himself to be at the mercy of "passive chance." Importantly, Frank's sense of powerlessness is rooted not in low self-esteem but in an understanding that is his own needs are intertwined with so many other people's. Additionally, though Tagomi takes full responsibility for killing two Nazi henchmen, both he and Baynes see this action as inevitable. "We are all doomed to commit acts of cruelty or violence or evil," Baynes muses; Tagomi feels that "no human intelligence" can make sense of this murder, and that he must turn to the "five-thousand-year-old joint mind" of the oracle. Both Baynes and Tagomi believe that they are often forced to act by destiny or "doom"—to them (unlike to the Fascists), even "deeds" do not always reflect conscious choice.

Ultimately, the novel suggests that neither human action nor blind chance is important on its own; instead, in an interconnected world, each individual's actions combine in surprising and mysterious ways to produce the future. "There is no answer," Tagomi reflects, "even in the oracle. Yet I must go on living to day to day anyhow." While Tagomi has none of the certainty that Joe and many of the novel's other Fascists share, he refuses to merely become a "victim" of history. Therefore, though Tagomi remains realistic about his relative lack of power, he still decides to "go on living," making choices and adapting with each new day. Baynes echoes this sentiment, reflecting that "we can only control the end by making a choice at each step […], we can only hope. And try." Along the same lines, author Hawthorne Abendsen—who has relied heavily on the *I Ching* to write his beloved book—also insists on his own agency. When Juliana asks if the oracle is fully responsible for *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Abendsen is frustrated by the implication that the "did nothing but the typing, and that's neither true nor decent." Moreover, while he still feels that he "can lean on the oracle now and then," he is the one who "decided" to move to town and make himself vulnerable to Nazi attack. Abendsen acknowledges the force of the *I Ching*, and he does (eventually) admit the role of chance in his own success—but he also retains a sense of identity and personal pride. Most crucially, he alone decides what makes him happy, something no oracle (or other person) can predict for him.

Lastly, the plot of *The Man in the High Castle* demonstrates that people's actions do sometimes have great force. "Can anyone alter the future," Frank wonders toward the beginning of the novel, "all of us combined…or one great figure…or someone strategically placed, who happens to be in the right spot." Juliana's life is changed (and Abendsen's life is saved) because of a chance meeting with Joe in a diner, and Frank makes jewelry and sells it to antiques dealer Childan, and that jewelry then acts as Tagomi's portal to an alternate reality. In making its various characters and stories dependent on one another, the book is structured to emphasize both agency and chance. People can make change, *The Man in the High Castle* suggests, but never in the way they might expect to.

MORAL AMBIGUITY AND FORGIVENESS

Throughout *The Man in the High Castle*, the characters must make difficult moral decisions: Mr. Tagomi, a mild-mannered Japanese bureaucrat, is forced to kill two men to save another, and Baynes, a dissenting German spy, must join forces with a repugnant Nazi to stop a horrific nuclear war. As Tagomi, Baynes, and the other characters make moral choices, they are forced to reckon with the impossibility of morally pure behavior in a fundamentally compromised society. But none of the characters retreat from the world or renounce their responsibility to it—in fact, by the end of the novel, once-reclusive writer Hawthorne Abendsen has even *returned* to public life. *The Man in the High Castle* thus suggests that forgiveness is necessary in navigating an imperfect world—if any action has the potential for harm, then all people can do is try their best and seek absolution for the pain they did not mean to cause.

After finding themselves forced to act in a way that violates some of their most deeply felt beliefs, various characters reflect that true moral purity is impossible in their messy post-war world. Having killed two members of the Nazi Kommando squad, Tagomi laments that "there is no Way in this; all is muddled. All chaos of light and dark, shadow and substance." Tagomi has committed these murders for a good reason: had the Nazi assassins been successful, Baynes would have died and Japan would have come under nuclear attack. Yet Tagomi

has still killed two men, so his good deeds are inextricably "muddled" with his bad ones. That confusion is echoed when Baynes—having allied himself with one of the most violent Nazis of all—comes to term with the fact that there are not "clear good and evil alternatives"; "we do not have the ideal world […] where morality is easy because cognition is easy. Where one can do right with no effort because he can detect the obvious." Just as Tagomi struggled to distinguish between "light and dark," Baynes too feels a lack of clarity. At the same time, he accepts the necessity of such confusion: while tough moral dilemmas would not exist in an "ideal world," the complex reality of post-war life necessitates difficult questions. More than any other character, Juliana—made to kill her lover Joe in order to prevent his assassination of Abendsen—seems to collapse in the face of her moral quandary. While Juliana murders Joe, she is never quite sure of her actions; her thoughts are rendered in abstract, stream-of-consciousness prose (which at points simply veers into word association). Here, the novel's moral "chaos" becomes literal, as readers are forced to struggle with thinking through an impossible choice right alongside the characters.

In order to deal with this ambiguity and guilt, several of the novel's central figures turn to almost spiritual ideas of forgiveness—whether they are seeking it or practicing it with others. Tagomi, "crav[ing] forgiveness," begins to seek solace in the doctrine of Original Sin. Earlier, Baynes mentioned that in this religious schema, wrongdoing is "destiny, due to ancient factors." According to this Christian doctrine (and, to a lesser extent, to the *I Ching*), harm is unavoidable but also reparable; if sin is an inherent part of life, then so is repentance. Antiques dealer Childan, hurt and mystified by his client's dismissal of a beloved jewelry line, is able to successfully ask for an apology. Moreover, when his client Paul does actually apologize, Childan feels a new sense of clarity, "as if [he] rose to the surface and saw unencumbered." Though the characters struggle with the "chaos" of moral ambiguity, apology and forgiveness here are offered as antidotes to that chaos—Childan and Paul, in forgiving and being forgiven, are able to "[see] unencumbered" in a world too often "muddled." And tellingly, though Juliana spends much of the novel angry with her ex-husband Frank, in its closing moments she begins to consider going back to him. This concluding note of reconciliation leaves readers to dwell on the value of forgiveness.

Just as *The Man in the High Castle* seems to suggest that bias is a cross-cultural stain, it also implies that forgiveness is a kind of universal answer (Tagomi looks for absolution in both the *I Ching* and the Western doctrine of original sin, for example). The novel therefore suggests that in an increasingly globalized and complicated world, the principle of forgiveness can help each person make sense of otherwise impossible moral quandaries.

ART, PERSPECTIVE, AND TRUTH

The characters of *The Man in the High Castle* have startlingly different perspectives. Juliana Frink, a Judo instructor and the one-time wife of a Jewish man, sees the world very differently from Hugo Reiss, a Nazi ambassador. Likewise, prejudiced antiques salesman Robert Childan has little in common with pensive bureaucrat Nobusuke Tagomi. Yet even as each character experiences a dramatically different reality (shaped by his or her unique background, nationality, and worldview), they unite in their appreciation for a few works of art. Almost every person in the novel has read (and fallen in love with) *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, a book that imagines a universe in which the U.S. and Britain won World War II. Many of the characters are also fascinated by Edfrank jewelry, a collection of delicate metalwork designed by Frank Frink and Ed McCarthy. In perusing these artworks, the novel's characters are able to access perspectives and realities outside of their own—and, in doing so, they are able to approach a more universal truth. *The Man in the High Castle*—itself an art object—therefore suggests that art, in granting people access to new worlds and worldviews, is able to reveal difficult, otherwise unknowable truths.

The Man in the High Castle depicts people of dramatically different perspectives finding pleasure and meaning in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*—not merely because of its content, but because of its artful form. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Americans of various generations love the novel, which imagines the United States victorious in the World War II. Juliana is enthralled by the book, while the much-younger Rita is able to recount every plot point in detail. Even for politically unengaged people, as Rita and Juliana both are, the book is fascinating—"it's got to be entertaining or people wouldn't read it," as Rita explains. Rita thus articulates the great power of fiction (whether it is *Grasshopper* or *The Man in the High Castle*): a novel draws its readers in with "entertain[ment]," and then it forces them to care about situations and experiences they might otherwise ignore. But it is not only the Americans who find themselves forced to care: Paul and Betty Kasoura, both members of the young Japanese elite, are also reading *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Tellingly, when Childan asks them to explain the plot, they refuse, telling him it is "better for you to read. It would spoil it for you, possibly, for you to hear." In refusing to explain the plot to Childan, the Kasouras are acknowledging the importance of craft and artistry. Abendsen, the novel's author, uses his skill with language to capture interior feeling or to suggest a mood. Were the Kasouras to reduce the story to merely its plot, they would flatten or "spoil" the text. Even Hugo Reiss, an ambassador to the Nazi regime (where the novel has been banned), finds himself captivated by Abendsen's work. As he reads passages about the fall of Hitler, Reiss feels that "it was all somehow grander, more in the old spirit than the actual

world," and admits that "the novelist knows humanity." Though Reiss could not be more opposed to the content of the book, its artful form—and its essential "humanity"—forces him to engage with *Grasshopper*'s politics.

Similarly, though they have different reactions to the strange Edfrank pieces, each character who interacts with the metal jewelry is able to gain access to a new worldview or understanding. Even as Paul Kasoura seems to insult the metalwork, he has to acknowledge that "an entire new world is pointed to by this […], we evidently lack a word for an object like this." The strange jewelry provides a completely new—and shared—non-verbal language, allowing people of radically different perspectives (like Paul and Childan) to communicate with each other. Just as the jewelry allows for linguistic renewal, it also helps to transform political life. Childan, describing the Edfrank jewelry to potential customers, makes a similar claim: "this is the new life of my country," he argues, "the beginning in the form of tiny imperishable seeds. Of beauty." While there is no meaningful American government to speak of, the country can renew its national identity through artwork—and Americans can take pride in the homegrown, specific talents of their artisans. And most astonishingly, Tagomi is physically transported "out of [his] world"—and into the actual postwar United States, in which the United States won the war—by a little metal Edfrank triangle. In entering the real-life San Francisco, Tagomi encounters a different racial hierarchy: one where he must defer instead of wait for others' deference, and where he himself is the victim of prejudice. This jewelry thus gives Tagomi a radical new perspective on the most hierarchical, harmful aspects of the Pacific States of America, giving him new empathy for the conquered Americans.

Ultimately, art gives its audience a way to break free of their own narrow perceptions, and so it allows them greater (if never complete) access to difficult truths. Though Tagomi finds his experience with Edfrank disorienting, he nevertheless accepts that it has changed him: "I broke from my moorings […], one seeks to contravene one's perceptions." This ability to see beyond his own narrow "perceptions" then impacts how he does his job. When Tagomi returns to the office, for example, he does so with new purpose—for example, he is able to stand up to the Nazis by refusing to authorize the extraditions of Jewish people. Paul Kasoura, who actively seeks to break from his "moorings" through books, music and visual art, believes that such confusion leads to "insight of most original kind"—especially when the art's creator is from a different background than its audience. The word "insight" here is worth noting: though Kasoura looks to a wide variety of sources for his artwork, he hopes ultimately to look inward, gaining clarity about himself and his own world. Most importantly, *The Man in the High Castle* ends with Juliana's realization that art can illuminate the present reality even as it sheds light on alternate worlds. Reflecting on Abendsen's work in *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Juliana decides that "he told us about our own world […], he wants us to see it for what it is"; not coincidentally, the *I Ching* prophecies that *Grasshopper* will reveal Inner Truth. Though the book is fictional—created, like the Edfrank jewelry, by hand—it nevertheless allows its readers to see reality for "what it is," as opposed to through their own skewed perceptions.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

COLT .44

The novel's various Colt .44s symbolize the ambiguity between authenticity and inauthenticity. Though the guns (which Childan sells in his antique shop) are supposed to date from the American Civil War, they are in fact forgeries that are being manufactured in Wyndham-Matson's shop. Many of the Colt .44s are therefore definitively inauthentic, as experts at the University of California confirm. Nevertheless, the guns still require tremendous skill and care to make; Frank Frink and Ed McCarthy, the primary fabricators of the guns, are later revealed as some of the most gifted artisans in the Pacific States. And even more crucially, the guns actually *work*: Tagomi has a (likely-fake) Colt .44 in his office for decorative purposes, but when he faces hostile intruders, the gun works perfectly well as a lethal weapon. The Colt .44 therefore symbolizes that something can be inauthentic (a "fake") and yet still be real: the gun really is beautiful, and it really is effective. The presence of the Colt .44 then casts further doubt on the idea of authenticity, one of the most contentious concepts in the entire novel.

PLASTIC

Plastic, the material used in most German mass production, represents falsity and it is frequently associated with deception. For example, the fake **Colt .44s** are "reproduction[s] cast from a plastic mold," and when Rudolf Wegener sneaks into the U.S. under an alias, he pretends to be a plastics salesman. It makes sense that plastic would be associated with dishonesty; plastic is cheap and malleable, prized for its ability to shapeshift.

But it is also important to note that plastic, especially in Nazi hands, symbolizes speed and impermanence. The Nazis' Lufthansa **rockets** are made largely of plastic, and they are capable of transporting passengers across the globe in under an hour. In a more negative sense, several of the characters believe that plastic is "trashy," easily made and so easily

discarded. When Childan is faced with the possibility of mass producing the Edfrank jewelry in plastic, he finds that he is unwilling to do so; he wants the jewelry to last, to "stretch[] out endless," which can never happen with plastic. Thus even as the Reich embraces plastic as the solution to all its problems, the novel's suggestion that plastic is deceptive and discardable perhaps hints that the end of Nazi reign is imminent.

TV AND ROCKETS

The various mentions of TV and rockets represent the way the Nazi priorities diverge from American ones, even in seemingly apolitical ways. In 1962, when *The Man in the High Castle* was published, televisions sets were becoming a common fixture in American homes; by contrast, it would be another seven years before the first rocket would successfully head into space. In the novel, however, television has yet to be invented, while rockets have become routine—the Germans make regular space trips, and rockets have replaced airplanes as the fastest mode of commercial travel. As Juliana puts it, "if those Nazis can fly back and forth between here and Mars, why can't they get television going?"

In real life TV is as essential part of U.S. culture; the country's emphasis on television suggests that its citizens value entertainment, and that they will prioritize technologies designed to be used in the home. However, as *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* makes clear, TV can have more than simply entertainment value: in that book within a book, the U.S. ships its televisions around the world, earning cultural loyalty that then translates into political power (what is sometimes called "soft power"). If TV therefore symbolizes an American view of conquest, rockets reflect a distinctly Nazi ideology. To the Nazis, rockets are a means of colonizing even more territory, extending the empire that they fought so hard to build in World War II. These rockets demonstrate that the Reich is prioritizing geographic conquest and scientific superiority; Baynes reflects that to the German leaders, "they see through the here, the now, into the vast black deep beyond." Thus the contrast between American TV and Nazi rockets reveals that Americans focus on reaching people in their daily lives, while Nazis are less interested in the "here [and] now." Instead, the Reich merely wants more territory—even when that territory is devoid of human beings.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Mariner Books edition of *The Man in the High Castle* published in 2021.

Chapter 1 Quotes

❝ Childan nodded. No contemporary American art; only the past could be represented here, in a store such as his.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Paul Kasoura, Betty Kasoura

Related Themes:

Page Number: 3

Explanation and Analysis

When Childan (an antiques dealer) admires Betty Kasoura's earrings, she is quick to inform him that they are imported from Japan ("the Home Islands"). Childan then reflects on the fundamental contradiction of his business: though the Japanese settlers in America value any object, no matter how trivial, from the years before World War II, post-war American creations are devalued and almost forbidden.

The Japanese emphasis on U.S. antiques reflects two of the text's crucial political realities: first, the absence of a market for contemporary American art discourages American creation. "Only the past" of U.S. craftsmanship can thrive, while the country's present and future artists are scoffed at. More subtly, though, the antiques industry allows Japanese colonizers to buy and sell American Civil War guns and old whale darts—to turn the history of the people they have conquered into home decor. In other words, shops like Childan's offer up the United States' past as another spoil of war for the Japanese victors.

❝ Hating the Japs as he did, he had vowed revenge; he had buried his Service weapons ten feet underground in a basement, well-wrapped and oiled, for the day he and his buddies arose. However, time was the great healer, a fact he had not taken into account [...] since 1947 he had probably seen or talked to six hundred thousand Japanese, and the desire to do violence to any or all of them had simply never materialized. It just was not relevant any more.

Related Characters: Frank Frink (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 8

Explanation and Analysis

As Frank recalls his experience in the war, where he fought against Japanese soldiers in the Pacific, he marvels at his own sharp change in feeling. This quote reveals the

baselessness of racial prejudice. When he viewed Japanese people as an abstract racial group, Frank felt murderous hatred (he keeps his Service weapons "well-wrapped and oiled" for some act of future act of anti-Japanese violence). But when he has "seen" and "talked to" individual Japanese people, his abstract categories become "not relevant any more." None of the real people he meets have anything to do with the biased categories in his imagination.

This passage also shows the importance of everyday interaction in changing the way people understand history. Frequent, routine contact helped Frank to take a much more peaceful and nuanced view of the world than his political preconceptions would allow. Frank's reflection that "time was the great healer" therefore has two meanings. On the one hand, the passage of time makes him able to forget the intensity of his feelings—but on the other hand, the time he spends actually talking to Japanese people gives him a more open-minded perspective.

Chapter 2 Quotes

"The cipher was the metaphor type, utilizing poetic allusion, which had been adopted to baffle the Reich monitors—who could crack any literal code, no matter how elaborate. So clearly it was the Reich whom the Tokyo authorities had in mind, not quasi-disloyal cliques in the Home Islands. The key phrase, "*Skim milk in his diet*" referred to *Pinafore*, to the eerie song that expounded the doctrine, "*. . . Things are seldom what they seem—Skim milk masquerades as cream.*"

Related Characters: Nobusuke Tagomi (speaker), Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener, Robert Childan

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 20

Explanation and Analysis

The message that Tagomi receives about Baynes's arrival is written in code, suggesting that their meeting involves something other than routine bureaucracy. The reference in the telegram suggests that Baynes is in disguise, hiding his true identity from the Nazis. And the idea that "things are seldom what they seem" is one of the novel's central ideas: many characters take on false identities, and Childan's discovery of the forged Colt .44s drives much of the plot.

This passage also offers insight into the difference between Nazi thinking and Japanese thinking. The Nazis are far ahead when it comes to science and technology (they can "crack any literal code, no matter how elaborate"), but they have absolutely no understanding of poetry or other art forms. Moreover, the quote is an allusion to *H.M.S. Pinafore*, a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Tagomi is able to understand the message only because he, like many of the high-status Japanese characters in the novel, is familiar both with literary analysis and with a broad artistic canon. While the Nazis win out when it comes to technology invention, the Japanese prioritize artistic creation.

Finally, it matters that in this telegram, art forms like poetry and opera are Tagomi's gateway to a hidden truth. This idea—that art is somehow revelatory of otherwise obscured meanings—will guide many characters throughout *The Man in the High Castle*.

Chapter 3 Quotes

"Their view; it is cosmic. Not of a man here, a child there, but an abstraction: race, land. *Volk. Land. Blut. Ehre.* Not of honorable men but of *Ehre* itself, honor; the abstract is real, the actual is invisible to them. *Die Gute*, but not good men, this good man. It is their sense of space and time. They see through the here, the now, into the vast black deep beyond, the unchanging. And that is fatal to life [...] What they do not comprehend is man's helplessness. I am weak, small, of no consequence to the universe. It does not notice me; I live on unseen.

Related Characters: Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener (speaker), Alex Lotze

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 42

Explanation and Analysis

After meeting Fascist artist Alex Lotze on a German rocket, Baynes is struck by the single-mindedness of his thinking: all Nazis ever talk about is exterminating more Jewish people and conquering more territory. Even an artist like Lotze is uninterested in the specifics of daily life or the nuances of people's thoughts and emotions. Instead, the Fascist worldview looks constantly toward the future, whether that is the "vast black deep beyond" of the solar system or the abstract honor (*Ehre*) of political legacy.

In other words, the Nazis think in historical "space and time" rather than experiential space and time. The Fascist interest in broad concepts makes them inattentive to particulars:

they value *Die Gute*, which translates to "good men," but they have no use for any one individual "good man." Perhaps this refusal to pay attention to individuality is what makes Baynes see Nazism as "fatal to life." By contrast, Baynes views the world on a much "small[er]" scale. He is keenly aware of his own limits—he goes un-"noticed" and leaves no legacy. But rather than seeing those limits as shortcomings, he recognizes that they make him human.

It is also worth noting that while the Nazis want to conquer and reshape the world, Baynes feels no such sense of agency. Whether or not people are as "helpless" as Baynes believes them to be is one of the novel's major questions—and it is particularly complicated by the fact that at this very moment, Baynes himself is on a mission to change the course of history.

Chapter 4 Quotes

"*Oy gewalt!* he thought. What's happening? Did I start it in motion? Or is someone else tinkering someone I don't even know? Or - the whole lot of us. It's the fault of those physicists and that synchronicity theory every particle being connected with every other; you can't fart without changing the balance in the universe [...] I should take my tools, get my motors from McCarthy, open my shop, start my piddling business, go on despite the horrible line. Be working, creating in my own way right up to the end, living as best I can, as actively as possible [...] I'm too small, he thought, I can only read what's written, glance up and then lower my head and plod along where I left off.

Related Characters: Frank Frink (speaker), Ed McCarthy, Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener

Related Themes:

Page Number: 52

Explanation and Analysis

As Frank debates whether or not he should join Ed McCarthy's jewelry-making venture, he consults the ancient Chinese *I Ching*—but though the oracle predicts personal success, it also seems to hint that apocalypse awaits. Frank's life, which is relatively "piddling" and unimportant, is nevertheless a crucial part of "the balance in the universe." Drawing on both science and Carl Jung's psychological theory of "synchronicity," Frank realizes that each of his actions, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, can interact with other people's choices to have surprisingly large-scale results. This fact is then borne out by the novel's plot itself, in which each character's actions has surprising effects on the other characters.

In some ways, Frank's belief that he is "too small" to have an effect echoes Baynes's earlier sense of "helplessness"; Frank feels that he can only "read what is written," rather than doing anything to change it. But even as he accepts his lack of agency, Frank still resolves to go on "creating [...] right up to the end, living as best" as he can. Thus, even as Frank gives up changing history, he commits to making meaning—and art—in his own daily life. His decision demonstrates one of the novel's central lessons: that artistic creation and everyday routine are both essential ingredients of a satisfying existence.

Chapter 5 Quotes

"When a thing has history in it. Listen. One of those two Zippo lighters was in Franklin D. Roosevelt's pocket when he was assassinated. And one wasn't. One has historicity, a hell of a lot of it. As much as any object ever had. And one has nothing. Can you feel it?" [Wyndham-Matson] nudged [Rita]. "You can't. You can't tell which is which. There's no 'mystical plasmic presence,' no 'aura' around it [...] You see my point. It's all a big racket; they're playing it on themselves. I mean, a gun goes through a famous battle, like the Meuse-Argonne, and it's the same as if it hadn't, unless you know. It's in here." He tapped his head. "In the mind, not the gun."

Related Characters: Mr. Wyndham-Matson (speaker), Rita

Related Themes:

Page Number: 66

Explanation and Analysis

Wyndham-Matson, who earns his living by running an antique-forging business, wants to prove to his mistress that the antiques industry as a whole is founded on faulty principles. In showing Rita that Franklin D. Roosevelt's famous lighter—which is tremendously valuable—looks no different than a regular Zippo lighter, Wyndham-Matson is suggesting that authenticity (or "historicity") is subjective, not factual. It exists solely "in the mind," in the perceptions and ideas people bring to an object rather than in the object itself. This passage brings up questions about authenticity and truth—if Roosevelt's lighter is only historic because of the verifying papers, then is the past tangible and undeniable, or is it created by whichever generation is writing the history?

This passage is also important because Roosevelt's assassination marks the exact moment at which the

alternate history of *The Man in the High Castle* splits from real-world history (Roosevelt dies in the novel but survived in real life). So, even if Wyndham-Matson does own the authentic, physical lighter that was in Roosevelt's pocket when he was killed, the very fact that Roosevelt is dead represents a human's creation and alteration of fact—and in this case, that human is novelist Philip K. Dick.

Chapter 6 Quotes

I wonder what it's like to sit home in your living room and see the whole world on a little gray glass tube. If those Nazis can fly back and forth between here and Mars, why can't they get television going? I think I'd prefer that, to watch those comedy shows, actually see what Bob Hope and Durante look like, than to walk around on Mars.

Related Characters: Juliana Frink (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 80

Explanation and Analysis

When Juliana stumbles on a copy of *Life* magazine at the grocery store, she learns that the Nazis predict TV will be invented by 1970 (though in reality, TV has been commonplace since the 1950s). The fact that the Nazis have invented rocket technology before they have invented television reflects their Fascist priorities: to the Reich, conquest and grandiosity are more important than entertainment and small-scale technology. As a very literal group of thinkers, the Nazis want to claim the "whole world" for themselves, not merely watch it from the comfort of a "living room."

But to Juliana, an American, these priorities are unsatisfying for two reasons. One, comedy and art matter to Juliana; she wants to expand her interior world more than she wants to physically travel the exterior world ("walk around on Mars"). Moreover, Juliana values home and specifically the living room, spaces associated with family life and everyday pleasures. Here, then, the novel contrasts the Nazis' desire for epic success with Juliana's emphasis on more intimate, personal joys, which the book implies are more valuable and fulfilling.

Juliana shut the radio off.

"They're just babbling," she said. "Why do they use words like that? Those terrible murderers are talked about as if they were like the rest of us."

"They are like us," Joe said. He reseated himself and once more ate. "There isn't anything they've done we wouldn't have done if we'd been in their places."

Related Characters: Juliana Frink, Joe Cinnadella (speaker), Robert Childan, Mr. Wyndham-Matson

Related Themes:

Page Number: 89

Explanation and Analysis

As Joe and Juliana road trip to Denver, Juliana grows frustrated with the constant radio broadcasts about various Nazis' struggle to take over the party. Juliana feels that the German leaders as inhumane, and she is quick to distance herself from "those terrible murderers." But Joe believes that the Nazis are deeply human, and that they are merely acting on what he sees as a universal desire for power and influence—if he and Julie were "in their places," he suggests, they would do the exact same thing.

The novel is clear that the Nazi Party's leaders are deeply evil and genocidal. But though *The Man in the High Castle* condemns Nazi behavior, it shares Joe's view that the Nazis are not as distinct as Juliana would make them seem. In fact, many of the racist policies that the Nazis and the Japanese enact in the book are based on the Jim Crow (racial segregation) laws in the early 20th-century American South. And though Juliana hates the Nazis, she—like Childan, Wyndham-Matson and several of the novel's other white American characters—shares many of their biases. The book is fascinated with moral ambiguity, and Joe's comment reveals the lines between good and evil to be much blurrier than they might initially seem.

Chapter 7 Quotes

[Childan] thought, Here I am, not invited in a business context, but a dinner guest. He had of course taken special pains with his attire; at least he could be confident of his appearance. My appearance, he thought. Yes, that is it. How do I appear? There is no deceiving anyone; I do not belong here. On this land that white men cleared and built one of their finest cities. I am an outsider in my own country.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Paul

Kasoura, Betty Kasoura

Related Themes:

Page Number: 109

Explanation and Analysis

As Childan travels to the Kasouras for dinner, passing through their upscale, Japanese-only neighborhood, his anxiety about the evening sets in. This scene shows the immense, constant psychological stress of living in a racist society. Childan is well-aware of the stakes of this dinner—being seen as a friend of Japanese people would raise his social and professional status tremendously. But he also knows that every detail of his appearance and behavior will come under extra scrutiny because he is white, and therefore, under the laws and culture of the PSA, automatically beneath the Kasouras.

But while the novel extends some pity to Childan, it also reveals his great hypocrisy. He resents that he is made to be an "outsider" in his "own country"—and in the same breath, he fondly recalls that the U.S. is "land that white men cleared." White people were the initial colonizers of the continent, and they subjected Native Americans to violence and genocide (far worse than anything the Japanese have done in the PSA). So although Childan often acts as if he is opposed to conquest in principle, he is actually more jealous than outraged. In other words, he believes that colonialism is good—as long as "white men" are the ones doing the colonizing.

> I did it again, Robert Childan informed himself. Impossible to avoid the topic. Because it's everywhere, in a book I happen to pick up or a record collection, in these bone napkin rings—loot piled up by the conquerors. Pillage from my people.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Paul Kasoura, Betty Kasoura

Related Themes:

Page Number: 115

Explanation and Analysis

Though Childan is trying to impress the Kasouras with talk of American cultural artifacts, every subject he brings up inevitably leads to politics (which in turn leads to political disagreement). On the one hand, then, Childan's frustration is a testament to the difficulty of separating daily life from history. The World War II's legacy is omnipresent, rearing its head in music, literature, and even something as seemingly benign as "napkin rings."

On the other hand, even though this dinner party is supposed to signal the Kasouras' open-mindedness and lack of prejudice, being in the Kasoura home actually cements the racial divide in Childan's mind. He mentally defends his "people" (white Americans), and he begins to view the Kasouras as "the conquerors." Most strikingly, even though Childan himself sells antiques, he now begins to understand that the Japanese fascination with these old objects is part of how they conquer the U.S. In purchasing historic "bone napkin rings," for example, the Kasouras lay claim not only to American land but to American history.

> "Thank you," [Betty] said, obviously pleased. "Doing my best to be authentic . . . for instance, carefully shopping in teeny-tiny American markets down along Mission Street. Understand that's the real McCoy."
>
> You cook the native foods to perfection, Robert Childan thought. What they say is true: your powers of imitation are immense. Apple pie, Coca-Cola, stroll after the movie, Glenn Miller . . . you could paste together out of tin and rice paper a complete artificial America. Rice-paper Mom in the kitchen, rice-paper Dad reading the newspaper. Rice-paper pup at his feet. Everything.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Paul Kasoura, Betty Kasoura

Related Themes:

Page Number: 118

Explanation and Analysis

Betty serves Childan American food (steak and salad), and he commends her for its rare deliciousness. Privately, however, he resents the idea that the food he grew up eating in his daily life is now something Betty wants to copy and "authentic[ate]," just as Japanese buyers hope to authenticate the antiques Childan sells them. Though the term did not exist at the time of the novel's publication, Childan is struggling with a form of cultural appropriation. Betty is able to claim the parts of American culture that interest her, but she does not have to suffer any of the stereotypes or disadvantages that Childan deals with every day.

This passage also returns to the text's central questions about what is real and what is fake, what is "authentic"

versus what is "artificial." Though Childan thinks the food tastes exactly as it should, he nevertheless will always see it as an "imitation" of the real thing; in his eyes, it is suspect and even somewhat deceptive. Once again, the concept of authenticity is revealed to be grounded in subjective, private belief, not in physical appearance or sensory fact (like taste).

Yet even as Childan complains about this injustice, his tendency to stereotype is evident (especially with his repeated use of the term "rice-paper"). It is important to remember that *The Man in the High Castle* is never interested in merely critiquing one group and praising another. And in fact, in the real world, Americans often try to copy and create "authentic" versions of other nation's foods, engaging in the kind of appropriation that is here carried out by the Japanese. Implicit in this passage, then, is a critique not only of the fictional Kasouras but of real-life Americans (who may be reading this exchange).

Chapter 8 Quotes

❝ What upset him was this. The death of Adolf Hitler, the defeat and destruction of Hitler, the Partei, and Germany itself, as depicted in Abendsen's book . . . it all was somehow grander, more in the old spirit than the actual world. The world of German hegemony.

How could that be? Reiss asked himself. Is it just this man's writing ability?

Related Characters: Hugo Reiss (speaker), Hawthorne Abendsen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 133

Explanation and Analysis

Reiss, bored and stressed out by the bureaucratic tasks of his job as a German ambassador, has been reading *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* on his breaks. To his horror, he finds himself deeply moved by the book, which not only criticizes Hitler but imagines the Nazis' downfall. The fact that such a book can affect even a passionate supporter of the Reich demonstrates the great power of literature. This book—like several other art objects in the novel—forces Reiss to view the world from the opposite perspective, giving a more complex picture of the world. The sheer beauty of Abendsen's craft (his "writing ability") entices Reiss to think about ideas he would otherwise dismiss.

It is also worth noting that Reiss specifically describes Abendsen's vision as "grander" than the Nazi reality. In the book and in real life, the Nazis were famous for their massive, bombastic spectacles, all of which were supposed to suggest "grandness." But the artistry of Abendsen's writing is still more impressive, suggesting that creativity is ultimately a greater spectacle than conquest.

Chapter 9 Quotes

❝ The Colt .44 affair had shaken [Childan] considerably. He no longer viewed his stock with the same reverence. Bit of knowledge like that goes a long way. Akin to primal childhood awakening; facts of life. Shows, he ruminated, the link with our early years: not merely U.S. history involved, but our own personal. As if, he thought, question might arise as to authenticity of our birth certificate. Or our impression of Dad.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Mr. Wyndham-Matson

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 150

Explanation and Analysis

Though Childan continues to run his antiques shop after finding out that a Colt .44 he was trying to sell was a fake, he is unable to shake thoughts that if one gun was forged, others may be as well. But as this passage makes clear, he feels more than financial concern—the entire country's existence is at stake. Now that the U.S. is no longer a self-governing nation, its identity as a once-independent place is fully grounded in its past. But if that past can be forged, then the "link" to that bygone era is severed, and the U.S. becomes some intangible thing, unreal and unverifiable.

Fascinatingly, though, Childan is upset not just as a citizen but on his own "personal" behalf. Just as Wyndham-Matson earlier mentioned the certificate he carries to authenticate Roosevelt's Zippo lighter, here, Childan begins to fret about the papers that authenticate him as a human being: his "birth certificate." In other words, political history and personal memory are not so easily separated. And if Childan cannot trust the national past he claims to sell, then he fears that his own memories of family—and even his own ideas about himself—will be similarly undermined.

Chapter 10 Quotes

But he had to remain where he was, in San Francisco. Still trying to arrange the meeting for which he had come. Forty-five minutes by Lufthansa rocket from Berlin, and now this. A weird time in which we are alive. We can travel anywhere we want, even to other planets. And for what? To sit day after day, declining in morale and hope.

Related Characters: Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener (speaker), Mr. Yatabe/General Tedeki

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 158

Explanation and Analysis

After making the quick trip from Germany to San Francisco (which would take 11 hours by plane), Baynes has to spend weeks in his hotel room, doing nothing until the mysterious Mr. Yatabe arrives. This passage therefore shows the contradictions of the Nazi-dominated, post-war world: though Baynes can traverse the globe in an instant, there is now so much secrecy and bureaucracy that life actually moves at a slower pace.

More than that, though, Baynes's question ("and for what?") again exposes the gap between epic invention and daily life. The Nazis have achieved some spectacular feats of technology, but Baynes is still waking up each morning to feeling increasing despair and "declining [...] morale." Just as Baynes earlier reflected that the Nazis emphasize the future over the "here and now," it is clear that the rockets exist to demonstrate power, not to actually improve people's quality of life.

"In some ways it's not a bad book. He works all the details out; the U.S. has the Pacific, about like our East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. They divide Russia. It works for around ten years. Then there's trouble—naturally."

"Why naturally?"

"Human nature." Joe added, "Nature of states. Suspicion, fear, greed. Churchill thinks the U.S.A. is undermining British rule in South Asia by appealing to the large Chinese populations, who naturally are pro-U.S.A., due to Chiang Kai-shek. The British start setting up"—he grinned at her briefly—"what are called 'detention preserves.' Concentration camps, in other words. For thousands of maybe disloyal Chinese."

Related Characters: Joe Cinnadella (speaker), Juliana Frink

Related Themes:

Page Number: 169

Explanation and Analysis

Having introduced Juliana to *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, Joe now impatiently explains the plot to her. This passage reiterates his earlier point that the Nazis are not as much of an anomaly as Juliana would like to believe; he sees prejudice and power-grabbing ("suspicion, fear, greed") as intrinsic parts of human nature.

But this passage is also notable for its insight into *Grasshopper*'s third historical timeline (in addition to the real one and the one at the center of *The Man in the High Castle*). In this timeline, it is the British who have instituted a horrific racial hierarchy. Crucially, the concentration camps that the British erect parallel Nazi and Japanese injustices—but its closest parallel is the American concentration camps, which interned Japanese Americans merely because of their race. As Joe underscores, *Grasshopper* reveals that prejudice is widespread, and that those who have the power to enforce their prejudices –the war's winners—will almost always cause great harm. The novel thus calls for its readers (largely American) to reflect on their own mistakes as a victorious nation.

Listen, I'm not an intellectual—Fascism has no need of that. What is wanted is the *deed*. Theory derives from action. What our corporate state demands from us is comprehension of the social forces—of history. You see? I tell you; I know, Juliana.

Related Characters: Joe Cinnadella (speaker), Juliana Frink, Frank Frink , Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener

Related Themes:

Page Number: 170

Explanation and Analysis

As Joe speeds along to Denver, he lectures Juliana about the virtues of Fascism. This passage is a little bit satirical, which Juliana herself picks up on; Joe declares that "theory" is unimportant, yet he cannot stop talking about the various theories that make up Fascist thought. But more than that, Joe's speech reflects his belief—shared by most of the novels Nazis and Nazi-sympathizers—that humans have complete and total agency over their destinies. While

characters like Frank and Baynes reflect on their own relative "smallness," Joe believes that if one can comprehend "history," one can also control it. All that is necessary is action, or the "*deed*."

Moreover, this passage again demonstrates the Fascist focus on history in its totality (as opposed to taking life day by day). Therefore, although Joe claims to be anti-intellectual, he is in fact more ideological than almost any other character in the novel. Even when Joe is having sex, one of the most intimate bodily acts there is, he is "distracted" by his focus on history and destiny.

Chapter 11 Quotes

Life is short, [Childan] thought. Art, or something not life, is long, stretching out endless, like concrete worm. Flat, white, unsmoothed by any passage over or across it. Here I stand. But no longer.

Related Characters: Robert Childan (speaker), Paul Kasoura

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 194

Explanation and Analysis

After a bewildering conversation with Paul Kasoura, Childan refuses to let a wealthy manufacturer mass-produce plastic versions of the Edfrank jewelry. Throughout the novel, plastic symbolizes deception: the fake Colt .44s are made from a plastic mold, and Baynes conceals his true identity by pretending to be in the plastics industry. The first thing to note in this passage, then, is the reference to "concrete." As a material, concrete is the opposite of plastic: it is permanent, heavy, "unsmoothed." And if plastic stands for forgery and deceit, concrete represents its opposite: truth. So, when Childan compares art to concrete, the implication is that art is stable, long-lasting, and deeply revealing or truthful.

Additionally, as some of the only contemporary American art after the Japanese conquest, the Edfrank jewelry is inherently future-oriented. In this passage, Childan underscores that optimism—he pictures "art…stretching out endless," long beyond the confines of human life. The Edfrank jewelry allows those who make and appreciate it to feel a sense of permanence without actually altering or destroying the world, to "stand" even when they are "no longer" physically present. While the Nazis are equally future-oriented, thinking in terms of legacy, they try to literally shape the future through conflict and violence; art offers a peaceful, beautiful alternative to the Fascist vision of futurity.

Chapter 12 Quotes

Evil, Mr. Tagomi thought. Yes, it is. Are we to assist it in gaining power, in order to save our lives? Is that the paradox of our earthly situation? I cannot face this dilemma, Mr. Tagomi said to himself. That man should have to act in such moral ambiguity. There is no Way in this; all is muddled. All chaos of light and dark, shadow and substance.

Related Characters: Nobusuke Tagomi (speaker), Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener, Mr. Yatabe/General Tedeki, R. Heydrich, Robert Childan

Related Themes:

Page Number: 200

Explanation and Analysis

Mr. Baynes (who is actually German dissident Rudolf Wegener) has informed Tagomi and General Tedeki of the Nazis' plan to bomb Japan—and the only way to stop total destruction is for the Japanese to ally with Heydrich, one of the most violent and despicable Nazis. Tagomi's black-and-white conception of "evil" falls apart as he is confronted with this predicament: every choice causes harm, and so there is no way to do anything purely good. The novel then makes this ethical "muddle" visual (there is only a "chaos of light and dark"), as if Tagomi is quite literally unable to perceive the best course of action.

Interestingly, though Tagomi's confused visual is almost exactly how he will later describe the little Edfrank triangle he gets from Childan's shop: he sees the jewelry as at once "dark" (symbolizing "decay and collapse") and "light" ("pulsing with life"). Ed and Frank's artwork thus embodies the moral contradiction that Tagomi finds himself in—and, in doing so, makes something almost beautiful out of this confusion.

Nevertheless, Mr. Baynes thought, the crucial point lies not in the present, not in either my death or the death of the two SD men; it lies—hypothetically—in the future. What has happened here is justified, or not justified, by what happens later. Can we perhaps save the lives of millions, all Japan in fact?

But the man manipulating the vegetable stalks could not think of that; the present, the actuality, was too tangible, the dead and dying Germans on the floor of his office.

Related Characters: Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener (speaker), Nobusuke Tagomi

Related Themes:

Page Number: 213

Explanation and Analysis

When Tagomi shoots and kills the two Nazi invaders, he is overcome with guilt—despite the fact that he has saved Baynes's life and thereby helped to stop Operation Dandelion. In this passage, the moral ambiguity that both Baynes and Tagomi have struggled with is further complicated by the tension between history and the present.

In the "here and now," Tagomi has committed murder (and even if he views it as self-defense, he has still taken two men's lives to protect only one). But if Tagomi thinks in historical time—as so many Fascists do—his actions become not only forgivable but heroic. One of the reasons that morality is so difficult, then, is because what might be right from one perspective is morally wrong from another. Tagomi's respect for lived experience, which the novel so often heralds as a sign of good character, makes it difficult for him to justify the "tangible" deaths in terms of abstract survival.

It is also important to note the wording around Tagomi's use of the *I Ching*. For most of the book, the vegetable stalks have signified the randomness of fate and the *absence* of human agency. In this scene, however, Baynes describes Tagomi "manipulating" the stalks, suggesting that even the readings of the *I Ching* are, to some extent, influenced by its readers' conscious decisions.

Chapter 13 Quotes

As they searched for a good hotel, Juliana kept glancing at the man beside her. With his hair short and blond, and in his new clothes, he doesn't look like the same person, she thought. Do I like him better this way? It was hard to tell. And me—when I've been able to arrange for my hair being done, we'll be two different persons, almost. Created out of nothing or, rather, out of money. But I just must get my hair done, she told herself.

Related Characters: Juliana Frink (speaker), Joe Cinnadella, Frank Frink

Related Themes:

Page Number: 216

Explanation and Analysis

After a shopping spree in Denver, Joe and Juliana are almost unrecognizable as the people they were only hours before, especially because Joe has dyed his hair blond. This passage adds yet another layer to the novel's exploration of "authenticity": Juliana and Joe are transforming themselves, but Juliana does not see their transformation into "two different persons" as at all deceptive. Rather, she sees what they are doing as inventive, as they have "created" themselves "out of nothing." Just as Frank's forgeries are also art objects, then, Juliana's makeover further blurs the lines between artistry and artifice.

Moreover, as the book soon reveals, Joe is not dressing up so much as he is reverting back to his true identity (he is really a blond, Swiss Nazi). It is especially striking, then, that Juliana is not sure if she "like[s] him better this way." In this scene, the authentic person is less desirable than the fake one, suggesting that creativity may be more important than transparency.

Chapter 14 Quotes

Mr. Nobusuke Tagomi thought, There is no answer. No understanding. Even in the oracle. Yet I must go on living day to day anyhow.

I will go and find the small. Live unseen, at any rate. Until some later time when—

Related Characters: Nobusuke Tagomi (speaker), Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener

Related Themes:

Page Number: 234

Explanation and Analysis

As he struggles to come to terms with having just committed two murders, Tagomi—who is used to the fairly straightforward daily life of a mid-level bureaucrat—is forced to contend with deep moral uncertainty. Yet rather than retreating from the world, Tagomi commits to "go on living day to day anyhow." The phrasing of this sentence is important: rather than trying to come up with some over-

arching guide for his behavior, Tagomi resolves to focus on each individual day, to prioritize his personal experiences even if he cannot always fit those experiences into a larger narrative. He will never find a clear answer to his moral or historical questions; this uncertainty is captured in the way he breaks off mid-sentence when he tries to consider "some later time." But he will keep trying to do good work "anyhow."

Tagomi's resolutions to "find the small" and "live unseen" are also worth attention. Once again, the novel suggests that the great joys of life are not in theory or legacy but in mundane details and joys. Moreover, Tagomi's language here echoes almost word-for-word Baynes's earlier reflection that he is "small" and "live[s] on unseen." The unity of thought suggests that people are fundamentally interconnected, regardless of their different backgrounds or political views.

❝ Laying his coat over a chair, Frank collected a handful of half-completed silver segments and carried them to the arbor. He screwed a wool buffing wheel onto the spindle, started up the motor; he dressed the wheel with bobbing compound, put on the mask to protect his eyes, and then seated on a stool began removing the fire scale from the segments, one by one.

Related Characters: Frank Frink (speaker), Ed McCarthy, Nobusuke Tagomi

Related Themes:

Page Number: 256

Explanation and Analysis

Having been released from jail with no explanation, Frank's gratitude expresses itself in his newfound desire to create. This sudden change of heart is never directly articulated, but the novel implies it in several ways. First, though Frank wanted to quit the Edfrank business, he now rushes back to the shop immediately after being set free. Second, the degree of patience and specificity in both Frank's actions and the writing (he goes "one by one," step by step) suggests a level of passion and care not seen anywhere else in the novel.

This passage grows even richer when viewed in the broader context of the book. First of all, Tagomi has just vowed to "find the small," and now Frank does just that—his attention is on each detail of these tiny silver pieces. Second of all, Frank's arrest was seemingly random, as was his release.

But rather than giving up when faced with the unpredictability of life, Frank merely returns to his workbench with newfound concentration; he is "creating in [his] own way right up to the end," as he vowed to do at the beginning of the novel.

Chapter 15 Quotes

❝ And what will that leave, that Third World Insanity? Will that put an end to all life, of every kind, everywhere? When our planet becomes a dead planet, by our own hands?

[Baynes] could not believe that. Even if all life on our planet is destroyed, there must be other life somewhere which we know nothing of. It is impossible that ours is the only world; there must be world after world unseen by us, in some region or dimension that we simply do not perceive.

Related Characters: Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener (speaker), Nobusuke Tagomi

Related Themes:

Page Number: 258

Explanation and Analysis

Baynes has successfully delivered his message, but he still is not sure whether the Abwehr dissidents and the Japanese will be able to prevent Operation Dandelion. Here, he articulates the true tension between history and daily life: the Nazis' desire to shape history—to alter it with their "own hands"—may end the world, thus making daily life ("all life") impossible.

But this passage also shows, on a more dramatic scale, the narrowness of human perception. The various characters in the novel struggle to see beyond their own beliefs, but Baynes now expands that idea. It is not just that people need to see other people's perspectives; rather, he suggests that human beings need to let go of the idea that their species—or even their universe—is the most significant one. The novel itself has given credence to the idea of an alternate universe as physical reality (Tagomi literally enters a different timeline). But here, Baynes's vision is less about any given alternate world and more about accepting uncertainty. And more than just coming to terms with his lack of knowledge, Baynes actually finds some measure of peace in it—even in the worst-case scenario, the Nazis can only destroy what is known, and so the unknown and the uncertain will also remain untouched.

We can only control the end by making a choice at each step.

[Baynes] thought, We can only hope. And try.

On some other world, possibly it is different. Better. There are clear good and evil alternatives. Not these obscure admixtures, these blends, with no proper tool by which to untangle the components.

We do not have the ideal world, such as we would like, where morality is easy because cognition is easy. Where one can do right with no effort because he can detect the obvious.

Related Characters: Mr. Baynes/Rudolf Wegener (speaker), R. Heydrich

Related Themes:

Page Number: 260

Explanation and Analysis

Baynes is greeted at the airport by some of Heydrich's henchmen, and he is reminded of the fact that he has chosen to ally himself with such a repugnant figure. Crucially, though, Baynes does not despair at this confusion. Instead, this passage (which marks Baynes's last appearance in the novel) is one of the most hopeful in the entire novel.

Faced with moral confusion—these "blends" of right and wrong, in which harm is sometimes impossible to "untangle" from kindness—Baynes realizes that if he can never be ethically pure, what matters is his "effort." In other words, though he accepts that many scenarios will be out of his control, he will still make "a choice at each step," exercising agency wherever possible.

The use of the words "hope" and "try" is especially notable. On the one hand, both words suggest some degree of "smallness" or powerlessness; if these words imply effort, they do not imply that that effort will succeed. On the other hand, these words suggest that Baynes has a certain forgiveness for himself and others. Because he understands that perfection and control are impossible, he is able to accept that "hoping" and "trying" are enough.

[Abendsen] told us about our own world, [Juliana] thought as she unlocked the door to her motel room. This, what's around us now. In the room, she again switched on the radio. He wants us to see it for what it is. And I do, and more so each moment.

Related Characters: Juliana Frink (speaker), Hawthorne Abendsen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 263

Explanation and Analysis

In her motel room in Cheyenne, Juliana finally gets to the end of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Her epiphany about the book—that it is less about the mechanics of some other, speculative world and more about "what's around us now"—is revealing for several reasons.

First, Juliana's realization shows that art can reveal great truths: though Juliana has always been able to see the world around her, only after engaging with this art object can she actually "see it for what it is." Second, she pays attention to time in a new way. The universe is changing "each moment," and so is her perspective on it; Abendsen's book has helped her realize that.

Finally, in many ways *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is a clear stand-in for *The Man in the High Castle* itself. This, then, is author Philip K. Dick's way of communicating to readers that he does not mean his novel to be merely entertainment or a critique of long-vanquished Fascism. Instead, Dick intends for his American readers to use the novel to reflect on their own history, their own prejudices, and their own troubled worldviews.

Truth, [Juliana] thought. As terrible as death. But harder to find. I'm lucky.

Related Characters: Juliana Frink (speaker), Hawthorne Abendsen, Caroline Abendsen

Related Themes:

Page Number: 274

Explanation and Analysis

In consultation with the oracle, Juliana tells Abendsen and his wife that *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* reveals the "Inner Truth" of their world. But rather than welcoming this pronouncement, the Abendsen are shocked and horrified. In this passage, Juliana reflects on the difficulty of truth—and in a novel that treats forgery as art and false identities as a tool for good, truth often does seem "terrible."

But interestingly, while the novel blurs the line between deception and creation, it also values interior truth and personal epiphanies. And throughout *The Man in the High*

Castle, truth often is a kind of positive "death": when characters arrive at a new understanding, they must give up their old comfortable views and coping mechanisms and "create" themselves anew.

That is why, in the closing paragraphs of the novel, Juliana reflects that she is "lucky" to have found even a painful truth. *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* allows Juliana to exit her own life and enter another one. In this novel, which consistently celebrates human existence and experience on the smallest scale, artistic truth forces Juliana into a kind of death—and at the same time, it allows her to create, to continue, to "go on living."

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1

Robert Childan, the owner of the San Francisco antique shop American Artistic Handcrafts Inc., anxiously awaits an old Civil War poster he has ordered. When he receives a call from Mr. Tagomi, one of his most important clients, Childan must inform him that the poster has not yet come in. Mr. Tagomi explains that he needed the poster as a gift, and he demands that Childan present him with an alternative. Childan panics that he may have disappointed Mr. Tagomi—and he longingly recalls "the pre-war days, the other times. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the World's Fair; the former better world."

Though the specifics of the novel's setting are not immediately clear, the sense of a fallen world is present even in these first pages. Childan works in an antiques shop, where he sells memorabilia from major events in American history. But Childan is not merely nostalgic for the 19th century—he also longs for a more recent past, for the "former better world" that he grew up in. Crucially, the "better" era Childan mourns was a time when the U.S. held great political and cultural power (as signified by the reference to the famous 1939 World's Fair, hosted in New York).

A beautiful young couple (Mr. Kasoura and Mrs. Kasoura) enter Childan's store; they admire his stock, recognizing that his displays are "the best of their kind on the Coast." Childan is drawn to Mrs. Kasoura's beauty—but he remembers that, given his own relatively low status, he could never pursue a woman like her. Childan asks about Mrs. Kasoura's earrings, which he learns she has purchased "at home"; no one shows any interest anymore in contemporary American art, only the kinds of artifacts that Childan sells. After learning that the man works in government, Childan admires him for being one of the young, more open-minded "elite."

This passage reveals several key plot points. First, Childan has the "best" antiques shop in the region—and his personal status is linked to the status of his store. Second, despite his shop's prominence, Childan is still considered lower-class compared to the Kasouras. And most importantly, contemporary American art is no longer valuable, further emphasizing that the U.S.' present can never compare with its past. Instead, all new art objects tend to come from Betty's "home"—presumably Japan, given her Japanese surname.

The couple informs Childan that they are starting to decorate a new apartment—and Childan, sensing an opportunity, offers to help them furnish their home with objects from his store. Mr. Kasoura and Mrs. Kasoura agree, and Childan is elated at the opportunity to impress them, as he—a white American man—has never before gotten the chance to interact socially with a young Japanese couple. Reflecting on the society's racial caste system (known as "place"), Childan hopes that the young generation will be more accepting and less hierarchical.

Here, the social hierarchy of "place" begins to become clear: the Japanese are in power, and so as a white man, Childan is considered a second-class citizen. Though Childan understands this reality, he is desperate to break from it, and he believes that a friendship with the Kasouras could help him rise above his station. He is also hopeful that he will be able to bond with this young couple over their shared appreciation of art.

Childan begins to fret that he will not know how to behave with the Kasouras. At the same time, he lets his mind wander to lustful thoughts of Betty Kasoura; then he remembers that it is almost unheard of for a yank (a white American) man to be with a Japanese woman. He feels anxious again, and to soothe himself, he lights a marijuana cigarette.

In realizing the potential danger of his sexual desire for Betty, Childan is again struggling to come to terms with the "place" system. And implicitly, the novel's fictional ban against interracial sex recalls real U.S. legislation. Actual American laws banned mixed-race couples into the 1970s, and men of color who had sex with white women were frequently targets of violence.

Across the city, Frank Frink tries to rouse himself from bed. He regrets his actions of the day before: he lost his temper with Mr. Wyndham-Matson, the owner of the factory where Frank works, and Wyndham-Matson may now fire him. Frank knows that Wyndham-Matson has close ties with the pinoc, the white puppet government in Sacramento, and he wonders what kind of relationship Wyndham-Matson has with the Japanese government. Since San Francisco is in the Pacific States of America—a Japanese colony of sorts that comprises California, Oregon, Washington and parts of Nevada—the Japanese government holds all the real power.

In this passage, the novel begins to explain its alternate reality: after World War II, the victorious Japanese colonized the entire west coast of the U.S. San Francisco, where Childan, Tagomi and Frank live, is now the capital of this new region. Though the Pacific States are nominally governed by white people (the pinoc*), all meaningful political power belongs to the Japanese. As Frank considers the situation, it also becomes clear how deeply the political and the personal are intertwined. Though Frank has merely had a spat with his boss, even such a seemingly small interaction could have major repercussions for Frank given Mr. Wyndham-Matson's political ties.*

Frank wonders if he could leave the Pacific States of America (the PSA) and start a new life somewhere else. He considers escaping to the Rocky Mountain States, but he reflects that they might extradite him back to the PSA. He briefly thinks about going to the South, but then he remembers that the South is a haven for white supremacists. Moreover, the South has ties to the Nazi Reich government on the east coast, and Frank Frink—born Frank Fink—is secretly Jewish.

The three other regions of post-war America now come into focus. The first is the Rocky Mountains, a neutral buffer zone not under Japanese or German rule. The second region is the South, which—as the worst perpetrator of the U.S.'s own racial hierarchy—has prospered in an era of Nazi racism. The third region is the East Coast, a German colony now known (confusingly) as "the United States." Since Frank is Jewish, and the Nazis' core goal is to exterminate all Jews, the further he can be from the east coast, the better.

Frank recalls his time as a soldier for the U.S. in World War II. After the United States surrendered to the German and the Japanese, Frank was filled with violent rage against all the Japanese victors. However, as time passes, he no longer feels any animosity toward the Japanese people with whom he interacts every day; the desire for violence "was just not relevant anymore." In fact, he now admires the Japanese for their strict but just system of laws.

Having just reflected on the racial politics of the various American regions, Frank now considers the pointlessness of such racial groupings. His largely symbolic hatred of the Japanese dissipated when he actually dealt with individual people on a daily basis; Frank's racist stereotypes could not hold up against his own lived experience. For the first time, then, the novel begins to suggest the importance of small, everyday moments in shaping people's perceptions.

Frank listens to a radio report about the Germans, who have recently landed on Mars. He reflects that the Japanese, busy trying to colonize South America, have not yet made any progress in space exploration. In the "quaint old history-book days," the Germans lagged behind the other colonial powers of Europe, but now they are colonizing even outer space.

Though the Germans and the Japanese were allies in World War II, there is clearly some tension between the two victorious powers. Having divided up the U.S., the Germans and the Japanese now compete to gain even more territory.

With horror, Frank remembers the "Nazi experiment" in Africa—which has now become a "huge empty ruin." In Africa, the Nazis committed large-scale genocide and cannibalism, murdering people and then "eating them out of their own skull[s]." On the radio, Frank hears a Japanese announcer denounce such vicious Nazi violence. Pulled back into his own thoughts, Frank realizes that he must stay in the PSA—there is no other safe place for him. He therefore needs to make amends with Wyndham-Matson.

Through Frank's eyes, the book reveals the most horrific thing that has occurred since the Nazis won the war: driven by Hitler's racist, eugenicist ideas, the Germans launched a massive genocide against Black Africans. Though the Nazis claim to be agents of progress and modernity, Frank understands that they are actually brutally violent—even cannibalistic. Frank's desire to stay in the PSA is thus borne primarily out of fear—and from a realistic assessment of the Nazis' barbarism.

Frank pulls out his copy of the *I Ching* (a traditional Chinese divination text popular in the new Pacific States of America) and he asks the book how he should approach Wyndham-Matson. To obtain his answer, Frank throws the yarrow stalks that come with the book; the stalks reveal a pattern, known as a hexagram, that then corresponds with a brief message. This time, the hexagram is about modesty—so accordingly, Frank decides to plead with Wydham-Matson for forgiveness.

The I Ching *is a recurring motif throughout the novel, as many characters will consult the ancient book as both prophecy and spiritual guide. To the people who trust this oracle, the randomness of the stalk-throwing reflects the randomness of fate.*

Frank then asks the *I Ching* if he will ever see Juliana, his ex-wife, again. As he does so, he reflects on the power of the *I Ching*: it is "random, and yet rooted in the moment in which he lived, in which his life was bound up with all other lives and particles in the universe." Frank gets Hexagram 44, which is about a mismatched couple; Frank is disappointed, as he knows Juliana was wrong for him but loves her anyway.

Here and elsewhere, the I Ching *testifies to the importance of human interconnectivity—Frank muses that "his life was bound up with all other lives," meaning that people are inextricably linked to one another. This idea is part and parcel of Japanese culture but completely antithetical to Nazi ideology, which emphasizes individual agency.*

Frank reminisces about Juliana's great beauty and her particular spacey, "screwball expression." Even when they fought, Frank was madly in love with Juliana, viewing her as a gift from god. He wonders "who else in this complicated city of San Francisco was at this same moment consulting the Oracle," and he hopes that the others using the book are getting less gloomy advice.

As Frank dwells on his ex-wife, his great love for her becomes clear. Throughout the novel, Frank's primary motivation is his desire to win Juliana back—and this love drives him even in situations that have nothing to do with Juliana. This passage also shows Frank again thinking about himself as one small part of a larger unit; here, he positions himself as just one of many people turning to the Oracle "in this complicated city of San Francisco."

CHAPTER 2

From his office near the top of the Nippon Times Building, Nobusuke Tagomi looks out on the Golden Gate Bridge and frets about his upcoming meeting with a mysterious man named Mr. Baynes. Baynes is arriving by **rocket**, a new German mode of high-speed travel. Tagomi has never been on a rocket, so he must avoid looking impressed around Baynes. Moreover, though Baynes is Swedish—and Sweden is politically neutral—Tagomi vows to avoid talking about politics with him, even though the Nazi leader (Herr Bormann) is rumored to be quite ill.

In addition to introducing two crucial plot elements—Tagomi's meeting with Baynes and the Nazi's leader failing health—this scene hints at the symbolic importance of rockets. While the Germans have pioneered rocket technology, traveling to Mars and jetting across the globe in record time, the Japanese lag behind. Tagomi's insecurity about this gap suggests that despite claiming to be friendly with each other, relations between Germany and Japan are actually quite tense.

Tagomi calls in his secretary, Miss Ephreikian. He tells her that he has consulted the *I Ching* about his upcoming meeting with Childan. At two o'clock, Childan is going to present Tagomi with some options for a gift for Baynes, and Tagomi feels none of the choices will suffice. The *I Ching* has confirmed this suspicion.

Tagomi's anxiety about his gift to Mr. Baynes reveals that Tagomi puts a lot of weight on (and is anxious about) this strange meeting. It is also important to note that, like Frank, Tagomi regularly consults the I Ching.

Tagomi asks Miss Ephreikian to call in his assistant, a young American named Mr. Ramsey. Tagomi explains that, given most Europeans' racist view of "so-called Oriental culture," it makes sense to present Mr. Baynes with an American-made gift, not a Japanese-made one. However, Tagomi does not trust his own judgment of American memorabilia, so he wants Mr. Ramsey to come meet Childan with him. Tagomi notices that Mr. Ramsey, who is white, has been self-tanning in an attempt to darken his skin.

This important passage demonstrates the clashing racial hierarchies of the post-war world. On the one hand, Tagomi fears Baynes, like many white people, will lean on harmful "Oriental" stereotypes ("Oriental" is a synonym for "Asian" that's now considered outdated and derogatory). At the same time, Mr. Ramsey has darkened his skin in an attempt to increase his standing in the PSA, where white people are automatically inferior. The novel thus demonstrates how each of the two dominant groups creates policy and culture around its own specific prejudices.

Tagomi informs Miss Ephreikian and Mr. Ramsey that Mr. Baynes is here to sell the Japanese some new **plastics** technology—which is important, because the Germans are far ahead of the Japanese when it comes to plastics. Privately, Tagomi wonders why the information about his meeting with Mr. Baynes was sent to him in a kind of poetic code. The Japanese government uses this lyrical code specifically to evade the Germans, because the Nazis can crack any kind of literal code. Tagomi concludes that Baynes is a spy.

Plastic, another important symbol, is often used in the novel to symbolize deception—so it is fitting that Baynes, likely a spy, calls himself a plastics salesman. It is also worth noting that the Japanese use poetic code to trick the Nazis. While the Nazis are technologically advanced, they are unable to think in literary or artistic terms; many of the novel's Japanese settlers, by contrast, are deeply passionate about art.

Childan hails a pedicab from a Chinese man (whom he describes in racist language, as a "chink"). After a stressful day of sorting through objects for Tagomi, Childan is on his way to present the options. Childan feels that he has done a good job, but he worries that he will not know the correct code of conduct with all the different people he meets in Tagomi's office building.

Though Childan resents his own low status, he is perfectly comfortable with the fact that –under the strict caste system of the PSA—Chinese people have less power than white people. He has clearly internalized this racism, as he uses a racial slur to refer to the pedicab driver. Not for the last time, Childan behaves hypocritically; though he is anxious about navigating his own role in the racial hierarchy, he acts disrespectfully to all people he views as beneath him.

Childan wonders if he will see a slave—all Black people are enslaved in this society. Childan then worries that it will be bad form to carry his own bags; he decides that he will wait for a slave to help him with his bags, because he fears that if he does not, he will "never have any sort of place again." In his mind, Childan blames Black and Chinese people for his unease, thinking "they scorn me and humiliate me every day."

Childan's hypocrisy continues as he makes his way through Tagomi's building. It is especially interesting that, in venting his frustration at the "place" system, Childan blames the people who are more affected by racial discrimination than he is—Black and Chinese people. Perhaps the novel is demonstrating how such racist stereotypes can be internalized, pitting Childan not against his oppressors but against those who are even more oppressed than he is.

After the Nazis won World War II, they killed all of the Gypsies and Jews, and pushed the Slavs much further east. Childan admires the Nazis for filling the Mediterranean Sea with soil and turning it into farmland—and though Childan feels the Nazis have gone too far in Africa, he seems to approve of the general idea of ethnic cleansing. Childan muses that when the Germans do "a task, they [do] it right." Childan thinks that the Germans are better conquerors than the Japanese, and he sees this as proof of white racial superiority.

As Childan combs over the laundry list of Nazi atrocities, his white supremacy comes to the fore. Though in his first exchange with the Kasouras, Childan seemed deferential to (and a bit awed by) the Japanese elite, now he reveals his deeper belief in white superiority. His attitude suggests that even people who are discriminated against may also hold discriminatory beliefs own their own.

As he tries to imagine Mr. Tagomi's client, Childan recalls how he got his start in such a lucrative antiques business. Years ago, when Childan had owned only a small, dingy shop, a wealthy Japanese major had wandered in asking about "Horrors of War" cards. Though the cards had been popular and cheap—and so were not formal antiques—the major had appreciated Childan's ability to give context to such memorabilia; Childan had played with the cards as a boy and could thus speak about them with personal experience. Sensing that there was a market for Americana among the Japanese elite, Childan began to build his shop.

Childan's shop is popular for its selection of high-quality materials—but here, it becomes clear that in addition to selling antiques, Childan is also marketing his own life experience. In other words, the store is so popular because Japanese visitors also get to talk to an "authentic" American; Childan is a kind of human tourist attraction. The Japanese colonists' desire for authenticity can be read as a satire of American tourists' own claims to "authentic" experiences when traveling abroad.

Childan worries that Mr. Tagomi's client might not be Japanese—which would be an issue, because Childan has selected objects specifically for Japanese tastes. Privately, Childan goes over the stereotypical categories he uses to distinguish between Japanese people, because he has "difficulty telling them apart." Seeing a Black man, Childan hands him his bags and then goes up the elevator to meet with Mr. Tagomi. Childan notices that he is one of the only white people in the elevator.

Here, again, Childan's racism rears its head: he is relieved to find a slave, and he complains about how difficult it is to distinguish between people of other races (insinuating that they are all the same to him and therefore not worth recognizing as individuals). Even as he laments his low status, Childan takes pride in being one of the more powerful white men in this society—so while he resents the racial hierarchy, he also buys into it.

CHAPTER 3

Juliana Frink, Frank Frink's ex-wife, sees a Nazi **rocket** fly over her head. She is relieved that the rocket is not destined for Canon City, Colorado—in the Rocky Mountain States—where she has lived for several months. Juliana works as a Judo instructor, having learned the martial art from the Japanese who conquered the PSA. She is no longer under Japanese rule, however: the Rockies are "Protestant land," and they exist independently from both the Japanese and the Nazis. In this mountainous buffer zone, Juliana thinks, "we can live out our tiny lives. If we want to."

In several different ways, this introduction to Juliana's life emphasizes her removal from the coastal centers of power. The Germans' rockets are flying overhead, suggesting that geopolitical tension and technology literally skip over this quiet town. Even more tellingly, Juliana views her life as "tiny," separate from the history-making colonies in the PSA and the Nazi Reich. Yet it is this very insignificance that allows Juliana to "live out" her life with a normality that people in the colonies lack, as they are swept up in power plays and intrigue.

One of Juliana's Judo students thanks Juliana for her transformative classes. Juliana tells her client that self-defense is important, as the Japanese may conquer the Rockies, too. The conversation ends, and Juliana stops for dinner at Tasty Charley's Broiled Hamburger, a classic American diner. Juliana notices that a couple of truck drivers are gazing at her lustfully.

Though Juliana makes her living off of Japanese martial art, she is nevertheless constantly critical of the Japanese; without evidence, she depicts the PSA as an ever-growing force. Still, though Juliana is preparing for the threat of Japanese takeover, the Rockies clearly remain steeped in Americana: Tasty Charley's is almost a parody of a classic Middle American truck stop.

Juliana is particularly interested in Joe, one of the truck drivers. He describes himself as a "wop" (a derogatory term for an Italian), and he tells Juliana that he is also from the German-controlled east coast. Even though Italy won the war, Italians are second-class citizens in the new Nazi United States of America, and Juliana silently muses on the perils of "being dark." Her mind drifts to Frank and his "big nose"; she wonders if Frank "identifies" with the Japs because they are both "ugly."

Again, Juliana's exchange with Joe suggests that while the Axis Powers (Italy, Germany and Japan) won the war together, they are no longer united; in the Reich, for example, Italians are disdained for their "dark" skin. Moreover, Juliana's prejudices come out here, suggesting that she (like Childan) is a perpetrator of racism as well as a victim of it.

Juliana encourages Joe to move to Colorado, as there are fewer racist laws in the Rocky Mountain States. Both truck drivers say that they hate the Rockies because the towns there are so removed from power. As Juliana admires the German success in "building back up" the east coast, the fry cook at Charley's begins to critique the Nazis for their horrific treatment of Jews. The fry cook insults the truck drivers, and the truck drivers gear up to fight him, but Juliana calmly de-escalates the situation.

The truck drivers echo the Nazi party line: the Reich has done nothing but good, "building up" the U.S. and adding new technologies and infrastructure. The fry cook, however, refuses to let such slogans stand, instead reminding everyone at Charley's that shiny buildings and rockets cannot erase mass murder. These competing views of the Nazis are enough to start a fist fight, suggesting that even in the neutral Rockies, political tensions are high.

The truck drivers declare that people in the Rockies are too sympathetic to the Japanese, and Juliana privately agrees. Juliana begins to identify with—and feel attracted to—Joe. She reflects that Joe's intensity comes from "idealism," and she compares him to an "old-timer" pioneer—only "now the frontier isn't here; it's the other planets." Juliana wonders if the issue with the Nazi temperament has its roots in "something foul" with sex, and she considers the rumors that Hitler committed incest. Even now, she reflects, Hitler is dying because of syphilis (a sexually transmitted infection) in his brain.

Juliana's comparison of Joe to a U.S. pioneer is revealing of two things. First, it suggests geographic conquest is a way of creating a historical legacy (a connection the Nazis, jetting off to Mars, certainly believe in). Second, it suggests that Joe's support of the Nazis is somehow deeply American, or at least in line with American values. Also of note: the fact that Hitler is dying of syphilis is an example of the novel's fascination with the contrast between the historical and the intimate. Hitler altered the world with his military and victory, but he also fell prey to his bodily desires and ailments.

Juliana is increasingly drawn to Joe: "he breathes—death," she realizes, and she finds it very attractive. She notices the two truck drivers talking about her, and one of them gives her a box of stockings made by I. G. Farben, the Nazis' expert in synthetic materials. Joe asks Juliana for a ride to his motel, and she agrees.

Just as Baynes is associated with plastics, the "synthetic" material is important here: again, this is a signal of deception. Even as Juliana prepares to have sex with Joe, then, the synthetic stockings suggest that something more ominous is afoot.

Mr. Baynes, riding toward San Francisco on a high-speed Lufthansa **rocket**, strikes up a conversation with a young German man. Baynes tells his companion that he is a Swede and that he does not speak German; the German, an artist named Alex Lotze, is shocked by this fact. Baynes tells Lotze that he works in "**plastics**" and "polyesters," and Lotze is shocked to learn that Sweden has a plastics industry. Lotze explains the Fascist ideology behind his art, which Baynes seems to disapprove of.

Lotze's reaction to the fact that Baynes does not speak German reflects the Germans' belief in their own supremacy (as does Lotze's disbelief that Sweden could have a plastics industry). Their conversation about Fascist art is also important: Lotze's work is purely about representing existing ideas, whereas Baynes seems to want something more human and revelatory from art.

Lotze thinks the San Francisco baseball stadium is hideous—he comments that looks "as if it was designed by a Jew," which causes Baynes to reflect on the "psychotic streak" in Nazi thinking. When Lotze asks to see Baynes again in San Francisco—because they are "quite close," racially—Baynes refuses. Instead, Baynes begins to wonder if he is really "racially kin" (or at all similar) to this "insane" artist.

To Baynes, the Nazis' single-minded hatred of the Jews is "psychotic," and he wants to distance himself as much as possible from this line of thinking. But in doing so, Baynes also struggles with the racial classifications that define Nazi thinking: if people can be grouped by their ethnic backgrounds, does Baynes somehow share Lotze's insanity because they're both white?

Baynes tries to articulate to himself the fundamental issue with Nazi consciousness: "it is their sense of space and time. They see through the here, the now, into the vast deep black beyond [...] They want to be the agents, not the victims, of history." By contrast, Baynes himself feels helpless and small, though he does not think it is bad to be either of those things.

Here, Baynes sets up one of the most important tensions in the novel. The Nazis think in sweeping, historical time, and they believe that they have the power to shape the future. Baynes views himself on a more human, "helpless" scale—but he also feels that his intimate perspective affords him a more meaningful life.

As they prepare to leave the **rocket**, Baynes tells Lotze that he is Jewish—something he has never told anyone before. Baynes explains that he has had all his stereotypically Jewish features altered so he is unrecognizable, and he vows that "there are others of us [...] We did not die." As Baynes explains, Lotze cannot report this fact, as Baynes has so many powerful connections in the Reich government. As he leaves the concourse, Baynes announces that in fact, he will use this influence to report Lotze.

Baynes's supposed Jewishness is never again mentioned in the novel; like Lotze, the reader is left uncertain about whether or not Baynes is actually Jewish. Either way, Baynes's claim that he has successfully altered his physical appearance suggests that humans—like antiques—can be created or faked. Moreover, Baynes undermines the Reich, hinting that its central goal (exterminating Jewish people) will never be complete.

Baynes notices that a representative from the Pacific Trade Mission of the Imperial Government has come to meet him, and he assumes (correctly) that this is Mr. Tagomi. Tagomi presents Baynes with his gift, boasting that it is "among the finest objects d'art of America." Baynes is shocked to see that the gift is a 1938 Mickey Mouse watch—though the gift seems tacky to him, he can tell that Tagomi is presenting it in earnest. As the men prepare to leave, one of Tagomi's assistants recites a Japanese poem from the Middle Tokugawa period: *"as the spring rains fall, soaking in them, on the roof, is a child's rag ball."*

Baynes's confusion at Tagomi's gift underscores the lack of cultural understanding between the two men. It also begins to suggest that Tagomi is more concerned with objects' authenticity or historical significance than with their actual value, since the Mickey Mouse watch doesn't seem particularly high-quality. The poetic quotation at the end also suggests, again, that Japanese culture tends to prioritize lyrical, metaphorical thought (in direct contrast to the Nazis, who are very literal in their thoughts and pursuits).

CHAPTER 4

As Frank prepares to apologize to Wyndham-Matson, he reflects that his former boss looks more like a "Tenderloin bum" than a factory owner. Yet Wyndham-Matson does have real power. When Frank asks for his job back, Wyndham-Matson refuses and merely tells Frank to pick up his tools from his old super, Ed McCarthy.

Wyndham-Matson's misleading appearance—he doesn't look powerful, but he is—is another example of how people's identities are often different or more complex than they might initially seem.

Ed applauds Frank for his outburst the day before and tells Frank how much he admires his craft as a metalworker. Ed suggests they go into business for themselves, making custom jewelry. However, Frank points out that there is no market for contemporary American art; the only thing that sells are the so-called "antiques" popular at American Artistic Handcrafts.

The fact that there is no market for new American artwork takes on a darker tone in this passage, as this discourages American artisans like Ed and Frank from creating—American innovation has effectively ceased. Ed's plan to craft custom jewelry is therefore a somewhat radical push back against Japanese colonialism.

Frank reflects on the troubled antiques business—for a long time, Wyndham-Matson's company has been forging and selling pre-Civil-War American artifacts (which Frank helps to craft). Since there are a great deal of forgeries circulating in the market, Frank is aware that eventually the entire antiques business will collapse, but for now, it is highly profitable; in fact, forgeries are the main source of Wyndham-Matson's profits.

To cater to Japanese antiques buyers, Wyndham-Matson sells historical objects; but to make these objects, Wyndham-Matson calls on highly skilled, American-born craftsman to create totally new pieces. The distinction between fake and authentic is thus blurred, as is the distinction between past and future.

Tempted by Ed's proposal, Frank decides to consult the *I Ching*. The oracle initially promises him good fortune, but in its final line, it threatens that "the hour of doom is at hand." Frank is baffled and begins to believe that the *I Ching* is warning of a third world war. "Did I start it in motion," Frank wonders of the conflict, "or is someone else tinkering, someone I don't even know?" Frank feels that he is "too small" to do anything about the impending war but make jewelry and hope for the best in his personal life. Frank therefore accepts Ed's business proposal.

Again, Frank's use of the oracle makes him reflect on people's interdependence, as he wonders about his and other people's role in bringing about a third world war. He also reflects on his own relative "small[ness]," which calls back to Juliana's musings about the "tiny lives" people lead in the Rocky Mountain States. Frank's resolve to make his own "small" life meaningful then comes directly out of his overall sense of powerlessness. This passage is also important because it adds tension to the rest of the novel—the "hour of doom" is imminent, but it's unclear when, exactly, it will arrive or what it will entail.

Ed invites Frank over to dinner; the two men need money to start their business, and Ed has a plan to get it from Wyndham-Matson. After Ed leaves, Frank's thoughts return to the *I Ching* and its mysterious prophecy. He hopes that his jewelry business will take off, making him enough money to impress Juliana and win her back.

Ed is a family man, something that is not true of many characters in this novel. And Frank's focus on his personal life is especially clear here: even as he starts off a new business project, his mind remains trained on his relationship with his ex-wife.

Returning to his shop after his appointment with Mr. Tagomi, Childan is surprised to find a well-dressed, white visitor. The visitor produces an Imperial business card, and he tells Childan that he is representing a Japanese admiral; they have just landed from the ship *Syokaku*. The visitor explains that the admiral wants to buy 12 Civil War guns. This would be an incredibly expensive purchase, and Childan is overwhelmed with excitement.

The PSA's racial politics are especially clear here: white men gain power according to their proximity to Japanese people, so this white visitor has higher status than Childan.

Childan presents the visitor with an "authentic historic gun"—but the visitor recognizes the gun, a **Colt .44**, as a forgery. To Childan's dismay, the visitor announces that he will take his business elsewhere because he cannot trust the items in Childan's shop. However, the visitor tells Childan that he will keep the forgery secret because they are both "white men."

Childan's failure to sell the fake gun begins to suggest that authenticity or historical significance should not be prized above originality. Meanwhile, the visitor's refusal to expose Childan as a fraud emphasizes the importance of racial solidarity in the society of the novel.

In a panic, Childan sends the gun to be tested at the University of California in Berkeley. A few hours later, the university informs that the gun is, in a fact, a fake: "a reproduction cast from **plastic** molds," very professionally done. The university also suggests that there is a whole industry dedicated to producing these fakes, but Childan denies it.

Plastic is an ongoing symbol of fakery and deception in the novel, so the fact that plastic is used to forge the Colt .44s makes them all the more fraudulent. But even the scholars recognize the artistry in these guns (which have been made by Frank and Ed), and so the boundaries between art and artifice are even more blurred.

Childan calls Ray Calvin, the wholesaler who sold him the gun, and asks for a private meeting. Then, Childan phones the San Francisco office of the Tokyo *Herald* to inquire about the *Syokaku*. A girl at the *Herald* informs Childan that the *Syokaku* sank long ago. Childan realizes that the visitor was an impostor—but that he nevertheless had accurate information about the gun. Against his will, Childan begins to wonder if there really are many fake guns circulating in the market.

In a surprising twist, the visitor was just as fake as the gun—yet the imposter revealed the real truth of the fake gun. It is not surprising, then, that Childan finds his trust deeply shaken, as his entire of idea of truth has just been thrown for a loop.

CHAPTER 5

After his meeting with Childan, Ray Calvin calls Wyndham-Matson with the bad news: the factory's fake **Colt .44s** have been discovered. Wyndham-Matson feels that Frank and Ed are behind this snafu, but he does not know how they accomplished it; Wyndham-Matson had already bought off both the newspapers and the pinoc police.

The world of wealthy, successful white people in San Francisco is clearly pretty small. It is easy, therefore, for Wyndham-Matson to operate his forging business, as he knows all the white people in positions of power and so can keep his illegal activity quiet.

Wyndham-Matson decides it will be easiest to buy Frank and Ed off as well, and he resolves to give them the $2,000 they need to start their business. However, he also recalls a rumor that Frank is a "kike" (a derogatory term for Jewish person). If Wyndham-Matson notifies the German consul that there is a Jew in the PSA, the Germans will extradite Frank to the east coast and murder him.

The various threads of Frank and Ed's plan become clear—they have successfully blackmailed Wyndham-Matson, and they now have money for their business. More importantly, though, this moment reveals Wyndham-Matson's cruelty (as well as his anti-Semitism). Though he knows revealing Frank's Jewishness will kill him, he has no qualms about doing so.

Wyndham-Matson is frustrated by the whole situation, which has interrupted his time with his mistress Rita. "This whole damn historicity business is nonsense," he announces; to prove his point, he shows Rita two identical cigarette lighters. One is very expensive, because it was in Franklin D. Roosevelt's pocket when he was assassinated. The other one is worthless. Wyndham-Matson tells Rita that the only way to know the difference is to have the papers to prove it; historicity, he claims, is "in the mind," not the object.

In this crucial passage, Wyndham-Matson asserts that authenticity (or "historicity") is a subjective feeling and not a tangible fact. Interestingly, the valuable lighter Wyndham-Matson has dates from Roosevelt's assassination—something that did not happen in the real world. Roosevelt's assassination is the exact moment at which the novel's history deviates from reality. In pairing Wyndham-Matson's critique of authenticity with this break in historical fact, the novel suggests that questions about a given item's "historicity" are also questions about the stability (or instability) of history itself.

Rita does not believe that one of the lighters belonged to Roosevelt, so Wyndham-Matson gets the papers to prove it. He has bought the lighter for exactly this reason: to prove that "the word 'fake' meant nothing really, since the word 'authentic' meant nothing really." Rita reminisces about what would have happened if Roosevelt lived; she believes the Americans would have won the war.

By showing Rita the papers, Wyndham-Matson again underscores the idea that authenticity is something created by people, not inherent in objects. In questioning the word "authentic," Wyndham-Matson also opens the door to view fakery (or deception) in a new, more positive light. And indeed, throughout the novel, deception is often viewed less as lying and more as invention.

Rita prepares to leave, but on her way out, she spots a book she recognizes on Wyndham-Matson's shelf: *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. The book belongs to Wyndham-Matson's wife, but Rita has also read it; it is banned in the Nazi United States and Europe, but it is legal in the PSA. She explains that it is an alternative history, one in which Roosevelt lived and was succeeded by a man named Rex Tugwell; Tugwell predicted the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was able to evacuate the U.S. fleet before it could be damaged.

The Grasshopper Lies Heavy *is important for many reasons: first, as a tremendously popular book, it is one of the few things that unites almost all of the novel's characters. Second, as an art object, it allows the characters to access other perspectives. And finally, as yet one more alternative history—Rex Tugwell was never president, and Pearl Harbor was not evacuated in time—it further suggests that random chance has a heavy hand in historical events, and that these other outcomes could have easily happened.*

Wyndham-Matson debates the accuracy of this speculative history, but Rita is firm. She explains that in the *Grasshopper* novel, the British and Russians halt the Germans at a town "we never heard of": Stalingrad. Wyndham-Matson mocks the book, and he speaks wistfully about the German infrastructure and organization present on the east coast. Wyndham-Matson drives Rita home in his German-made car.

This passage further illustrates the gaps between historical fact and the novel's alternative timeline. In the real world, the Battle of Stalingrad was one of the most important of World War II. The Nazis lost to the Russians, and their defeat in this battle was a major factor in them losing the entire war.

As Tagomi drinks tea with Baynes, he reflects on the "absurd[ity]" of the *I Ching*: "we ask it questions as if it were alive. It *is* alive." Baynes is confused by this comment, and by Tagomi more generally. He asks about the mounted buffalo on Tagomi's wall, and Tagomi offers to demonstrate the art of buffalo hunting, pulling out an antique rifle to make his point. Baynes, even more baffled now, protests that he has a headache and excuses himself.

In grappling with the mysterious ways of the I Ching, *Tagomi is perhaps trying to determine whether random fate is more powerful than human agency. More subtly, the novel reveals that Tagomi owns an antique gun—which might be real or might be forged by Frank and Ed.*

Before Baynes leaves, he informs Tagomi that there will be a third man—"an elderly retired businessman" named Mr. Yatabe—joining their conversation in the coming week. Baynes explains that because the old man is in a precarious financial situation, Tagomi should not report his visit to the Japanese government.

Since Tagomi has already surmised that Baynes is a spy, it is also probable that Mr. Yatabe is not quite what he seems (especially if Tagomi is supposed to keep his visit a secret).

Believing that Baynes is Swedish and not German, Tagomi confides his anti-Nazi sentiment. He believes the Nazis are "barbaric" and racist, and he particularly resents their theory that Jews are Asians: "the implication was never lost" on the Japanese, Tagomi explains. Baynes panics, fearing that Tagomi's honestly will accidentally cause Baynes to reveal too much. As Baynes walks out the door, Tagomi's Japanese assistant tries to speak to him in Swedish, which Baynes does not understand.

While the Japanese are on top of the racial hierarchy (the "place" system) in the PSA, they are not exempt from the Nazi's violent white supremacy. Though the novel makes clear that Baynes is equally horrified by this racism, he cannot voice his disgust to Tagomi because the fear of Nazis is omnipresent. Meanwhile, Baynes doesn't speak Swedish despite claiming to be a Swede—making it even more likely that he is not who he claims to be.

CHAPTER 6

While Juliana does her grocery shopping, she comes across a magazine article announcing that by 1970, there will be a **television** station in New York. Juliana wonders why the Nazis have been able to travel to space before they have been able to create TV; she speculates it is because the Nazis have "no sense of humor." Juliana's mind drifts to the ailing Nazi chancellor, Bormann, and she wonders who will replace him when he dies.

The novel turns readers' attentions to daily routines (like grocery shopping) that persist even after geopolitical chaos, which implies that these small activities are perhaps equally important as the broader historical events happening around the characters. This idea contrasts with the fact that TV hasn't been invented yet, as this suggests that the Nazis prioritize geographic conquest over entertainment and home life. Meanwhile, the story flags that Bormann's death is just around the corner.

Juliana returns home to find Joe Cinnadella, the truck driver, still spread out on her bed. He has clearly missed his truck, and Juliana wonders if he did so on purpose. She is puzzled by Joe; the night before, they had had sex many times, but he always seemed distracted.

Though Juliana has spent the night with Joe, he is just as mysterious as when they met at Charley's. He is intensely focused, as became clear at the lovers' first meeting, but his focus is on something other than Juliana.

As Joe gets up, Juliana tries to tell him a Bob Hope joke about the Germans, but Joe is uninterested. Juliana studies Joe's naked body and realizes that he is old enough to have been in the war. Her suspicions are confirmed when she notices he has a tattoo commemorating the battle at Cairo. At Cairo, the Germans and the Italians jointly defeated the British. Juliana also discovers that Joe has an Iron Cross medal, and she surmises that he was an especially valiant fighter.

Once again, the intimate is completely inseparable from the political. It is in looking at Joe's naked body that Juliana realizes he fought in the war on the opposite side. In this instance, then, sex—something intensely private and intimate—reveals military and ideological opposition.

Joe tells Juliana a brief life story: Joe was inspired to join the war on the Italian side by his older brothers, who were later killed by British commandoes. To this day, Joe has a genocidal hatred of the British: "I'd like to see them do to England what they did to Africa," he tells Juliana.

Juliana was right to be fearful around Joe. Here, he claims to want all British people to suffer the same horrors (mass murder and cannibalism) that the Nazis inflicted on Africans, suggesting that he shares not only history but a general worldview with the Germans.

Hoping to change the subject, Juliana starts to cook Joe breakfast. While she makes bacon, Joe pulls out his own copy of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. He begins to explain the plot to Juliana, dwelling on the fact that in the book, the Allies are able to win because Italy betrays Germany. Joe accuses the writer, Hawthorne Abendsen, of a "fantasy." Juliana opens the book to a random passage, which posits that in this alternate history, the British have at last completed their goal of world takeover: "it had been fulfilled at last, that about the sun and the flag."

As an Italian himself, Joe is obviously resentful of the fact that Abendsen makes Italian betrayal the focal point of Grasshopper*'s plot. Moreover, Joe sees little use in art (whereas Juliana is immediately fascinated by it). In referencing the real-world British dream of a global empire, the novel suggests that the Allies have more in common with the Axis power than they would like to admit. Britain hoped to have so much territory that there would always be daylight in one of its colonies (to be "the empire on which the sun never sets"). The Nazis, in other words, were not the only people with dreams of world takeover.*

The radio interrupts Juliana's conversation with Joe, announcing the Bormann—the leader of the Nazis—has died. Both Joe and Juliana are shocked, and they immediately begin to discuss who will succeed Bormann as chancellor. Juliana expresses her horror at the Nazis, but Joe rants that "they are like us […] There isn't anything they've done that we wouldn't have done if we'd been in their places." Joe boasts of his talent for building earthworks, and he argues that the Nazis are uniquely able to honor the "dignity of labor."

Joe underscores the idea that the Nazis and their enemies are fundamentally similar—"they are like us." Though Juliana resents this view and wants to distance herself from the Nazis as much as possible, she and Joe are both equally shaken by Bormann's world-altering death.

Privately, Juliana recalls that the Nazi leaders famous for new infrastructure—who were also more tolerant of Jewish people—were dismissed once the east coast had been rebuilt. With Frank in mind, Juliana recalls the mass killing of Jewish people that the Nazis carried out in their new United States.

Joe (like Childan, Wyndham-Matson, and most Nazi sympathizers in the U.S.) praises the Germans for their infrastructure. But Juliana, who was married to a Jewish man, recalls the genocidal evil that underlies such projects.

Juliana remembers that the *Grasshopper* novel is banned in the U.S., and she asks Joe how he manages to read it. Joe explains that different things are illegal for different racial groups—Poles and Puerto Ricans are allowed fewer books than Anglo-Saxons, for example—and that Joe hid the book in his apartment. Joe contrasts his own daring with Abendsen's quiet authorial life in Cheyenne, a part of the Rocky Mountain States. Though Abendsen was in the army, he now writes from the safety of his own very secure home, which he calls "The High Castle."

Though the Nazis disparage art, they nevertheless understand its power—why else would they ban books? This passage is the moment where the title of the novel first comes into view: the titular "High Castle" signals Abendsen's attempt to protect himself (to quite literally wall himself off) from the political circumstances around him.

Juliana laments the loss of free speech under the Axis powers, and to her surprise, Joe agrees with her. Juliana realizes how much Joe frightens her: "something terrible is happening […] Coming out of him." Joe notices her fear and promises to never hurt her, but Juliana remains scared.

Joe becomes a more and more menacing figure—and again, his focus on something other than Juliana ominously foreshadows that "something terrible" is indeed going to happen.

In his office, Tagomi receives a report that Mr. Baynes is not a Swede—the young man who attended their first meeting is almost certain, based on Baynes's poor knowledge of Swedish, that Baynes is German. Tagomi is not convinced, but either way, he reflects that he likes and admires Baynes.

The report Tagomi receives effectively confirms that Baynes is a spy. But despite Baynes's deception, Tagomi is drawn to him. And since Tagomi is arguable the novel's best judge of character, this hints that Baynes is probably a moral person (even if he's lying about his identity). This begins to suggest that not all forms of deceit are malicious.

Mr. Ramsey informs Tagomi that Chancellor Bormann has died. Tagomi cancels everything on his schedule and heads over to the German embassy, where a dozen other foreign dignitaries wait to hear from the Nazis. A Japanese official announces that several different high-ranking Germans will now compete for Bormann's place.

Bormann's death was a massive disruption for civilians like Joe and Juliana, but it is even more consequential for bureaucrats like Tagomi. Moreover, the competition within the Nazi party for power in some ways mirrors the competition between the Nazis and the Japanese.

The first candidate is Hermann Goring, also known as the "Fat One." Goring is founder of the Gestapo (the secret police), and he is "the most self-indulgent" of all the Nazis, styling himself as a kind of Roman emperor. But Goring is also very intelligent and powerful.

In real life, Goring was one of the most powerful Nazis—until he asked Hitler to take over the party, at which point Hitler ostracized him. At the Nuremburg trials (military tribunals held by the Allies), he was found guilty of war crimes and sentenced to death.

The next candidate is J. Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda officer: "elegant. Educated. Highly capable." Goebbels, "the sole intellectual" of the Nazi party, is disliked by many, even though he can be charming. He is said "never to rest."

In real life, Hitler's will dictated that Goebbels should take over the Nazi Party in the event of Hitler's death. He ruled for only one day before committing suicide.

The Japanese official then describes R. Heydrich, a much younger man who is feared by many of his own colleagues. Heydrich came up through the paramilitary SS. Though he is a violent man, he is "not party to ideological disputes." Instead, he views life and war as a series of games. He is something of a "question mark" to the Japanese government.

Often considered one of the most ruthless members of the Nazi Party, Heydrich was largely responsible for the mass execution of Jewish people. To anyone whose moral code opposes outright genocide (as the Japanese leadership seems to), allying with Heydrich would be almost unthinkable, which is why he's a "question mark" for them.

Tagomi begins to feel ill as he hears about the fourth candidate, Baldur von Schirach. Von Schirach, a handsome "idealist," is known for trying to mitigate some of the Nazis' most vicious policies. It seems unlikely that Schirach will actually become the leader of the Nazi Party.

Known primarily for his stewardship of the Hitler Youth program, von Schirach was a relatively minor historical figure. The novel is accurate, however, in presenting von Schirach as a moderating force on the Nazis.

The final person in contention is Doctor Seyss-Inquart, the man "closest in temperament" to Hitler himself. Seyss-Inquart is thought to be largely responsible for the genocide in Africa, and he is possibly the "most hated man in Reich territory."

In real life, Seyss-Inquart was famous for occupying the Netherlands and terrorizing Dutch people (especially those who were Jewish). He, too, was tried for high crimes at Nuremburg and sentenced to death.

Tagomi has a kind of panic attack, and he feels so dizzy and nauseous that he needs to run to the bathroom. An assistant comes to help him, and Tagomi feels embarrassed that his colleagues have seen him this way. As he exits the bathroom, Tagomi is struck by the idea that "there is evil! It's actual like cement."

Tagomi's moral sense—so strong that it expresses itself physically—here comes into conflict with social norms. It is also interesting that Tagomi compares evil to "cement"; later, Childan will compare art to concrete, suggesting that art and evil are two of the world's most powerful forces.

Gingerly, Tagomi makes his way back to his office, where he takes a meeting with another trade representative. From this man, Tagomi learns that the Japanese government believes Germany's mass murder and enslavement have been an economic disaster—one only staved off by the Nazis' scientifically advanced "miracle weapons." Even then, the German **rocket** trips to Mars, while impressive, have not been good for the economy. The Japanese government believes that the Nazis, unwilling to face their fiscal plight at home, will continue to move toward "greater tour de force adventures, less predictability, less stability in general."

Thus far, the rockets have seemed to be merely a fitting symbol for the Nazis' obsession with territorial conquest. But here, this obsession is revealed to be a distraction from the Reich's dangerous economic plight. Thus, even though the Nazis are technologically capable, they do not know how to actually use their inventions for good. The death of Bormann—and the prediction of "less stability"—raises the stakes of each character's actions for the latter half of the novel.

Before he leaves, the other trade representative opines that the best candidates are probably von Schirach and Goebbels, and that Heydrich and Seyss-Inquart are among the worst. But the Japanese government fears and loathes all the possible new German leaders. Shaken by this knowledge, Tagomi half-heartedly writes a letter of condolence to the German ambassador, but he leaves it to his secretary to finish the draft.

Goebbels and Heydrich are the most important candidates to pay attention to, as they will come back later in the novel. Goebbels is more appealing to the Japanese, as he is intelligent and restrained, whereas Heydrich is the ultimate symbol of Nazi destruction. Together, the two men form a spectrum of sorts (though, as Tagomi acknowledges, not one of these candidates is a good option).

Tagomi gets a call from Baynes, who asks if Mr. Yatabe has arrived yet. When Tagomi replies that he has not, Baynes announces that Bormann's death has changed things: now, he will not meet with Tagomi unless this Mr. Yatabe is present. Tagomi is shaken by Baynes's seeming coldness, and he belatedly consults the *I Ching*. The oracle predicts "oppression" and "exhaustion."

Baynes's request to delay the meeting is yet another indicator that Bormann's death has thrown the world into disarray. Also, while each of the powerful Nazis tries to exercise his own will, Tagomi merely consults the oracle and accepts its predictions. This suggests that both personal agency and random chance (or, perhaps, fate) have a role in life's outcomes.

Across town, Frank is also consulting the *I Ching*. Frank is baffled by the oracle's instructions to give "offerings and libations," and he reflects that he only understands the *I Ching*'s message "later on, when it has happened." Ed tells Frank to stop consulting the oracle and focus on setting up their business. Already, they have found a space, drawn up some designs, and decided on a name: Edfrank Custom Jewelers. Yet as they await Wyndham-Matson's money, Frank thinks of the oracle and feels apprehension.

Despite the lack of a market for contemporary art, Frank and Ed are (literally) forging ahead. There are therefore acting with tremendous agency—but Frank still feels the need to consult the oracle. It is also fascinating to think that the oracle only makes sense in hindsight, as the same could be said to be true of history as a whole.

CHAPTER 7

Having been invited to the Kasouras' house for dinner, Childan takes a pedicab to their "exclusive" neighborhood. No white people live in this district, so Childan attracts stares from the various prominent Japanese residents. As he approaches the Kasouras' apartment, Childan is overcome with social anxiety. "I do not belong here," he frets, "on this land that white men cleared [...] I am an outsider in my own country."

Throughout the novel, the PSA's racial hierarchy has been a source of stress and frustration to Childan. But here, he clarifies this feeling—he is angry at the Japanese colonization but proud of white men's colonialism, reflecting that "this land that white men cleared." Childan does not pick up on the irony of describing the U.S., which white settlers took from Native Americans, as his "own country."

Mrs. Kasoura greets Childan at the door, dressed in a Japanese kimono. Childan admires the tasteful décor of the apartment, which he feels possesses wabi—an untranslatable Japanese word about finding beauty in simplicity. As they sit down to drinks, Paul and Betty Kasoura instruct Childan to call them by their first names. Betty explains that they will be eating a typically American meal: steak and baked potato.

The Kasouras are clearly people of great taste and elegance. They have also gone out of their way to make Childan feel comfortable and casual, using informal first names with each other and serving him his own cuisine.

Childan presents Paul and Betty with a scrimshaw from an old U.S. whaling ship, and the couple is deeply appreciative of the gift. Childan thinks that he has made a successful libation, "as the *I Ching* put it." For the first time since he found out about the fake gun, Childan feels at some kind of peace. He reflects that the Kasouras are "balance[d]" people, in possession of the spiritual "proportion" known as Tao.

It is a coincidence that Childan is thinking about the same passage from the I Ching *that Frank was in the previous chapter (when the oracle instructed him to give "offerings and libations"). This is yet another way in which the novel suggests that its various characters are inextricably linked despite their racial and political differences.*

Paul Kasoura discusses the news of Bormann's death. Today, von Schirach has been placed under house arrest. When Paul criticizes the other possible replacements, Childan defends them, and Betty has to step in to alleviate the tension. Childan regrets having mis-stepped so immediately. "They're so graceful and polite," Childan thinks, "and I—the white barbarian. It is true."

Bormann's death is all anyone can talk about, and Childan has very different political opinions than the Kasouras (he is more sympathetic to the Nazis than they are). Even as he applauds the Nazis' white supremacy, however, Childan's sense of self-loathing ("I—the white barbarian") suggests that he has internalized the PSA's hierarchy.

Once again, Childan notices Betty's beauty and feels lust for her. To distract himself from these illicit thoughts, he brings up *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*—he has a noticed that the Kasouras have a copy. Paul offers to lend the book to Childan (whom he calls "Robert") and suggests that they could get lunch one day and discuss it. Childan fantasizes about going to a fashionable restaurant with a prominent young Japanese man, as it would do wonders for his social status.

The fact that the Kasouras own the Grasshopper *book—which imagines a world in which the Japanese lost—suggests that they are open-minded and willing to be challenged by art. This tolerance is also evident in Paul's offer to get lunch with Childan, which everyone at the table understands would dramatically raise Childan's social status.*

The conversation turns to music, as Paul is a big fan of jazz. Childan explains that he does not listen to "Negro music" because he prefers the classical "European masters." The Kasouras seem a little upset by this comment. Childan is frustrated, feeling that Paul only likes jazz because it is the "most authentic American folk music."

Again, Childan's white supremacy comes out, and the Kasouras do not approve. At the same time, Childan resents the Kasouras' desire to constantly have the most "authentic" view of American culture, as Childan feels it is appropriative.

Once dinner is served, Childan notices that Betty has set the table with a combination of antique American and contemporary Japanese flatware. As Childan appreciates the food ("thank God they had not presented him with a Japanese meal"), he announces that—contrary to the *Grasshopper* book—he is glad Germany and Japan have won the war, because otherwise Russian communists would have taken over the world.

The legacies of colonialism are evident in even the tableware—the flatware reflects both Japanese style and the Japanese penchant for American antiques. Though Childan has previously been at odds politically with the Kasouras, he here tries to ally himself to them by declaring that he is happy Japan won the war.

Betty counters that no one people can truly take over the world, and the table falls silent. Childan berates himself for again creating political tension—but then he realizes that it is "impossible to avoid the topic. Because it's everywhere, in a book I happen to pick up or a record collection." Childan grows angry, and privately, he resents the Japanese for stealing American artifacts and traditions. "Only the white races endowed with creativity," he fumes, "and yet I, blood member of same, must bump head to floor for these two."

Betty has a more nuanced worldview—she does not see people purely in terms of racial groups and ideologies. But rather than accepting Betty's more tolerant perspective, Childan slides into racist resentment. This passage touches on the idea that politics are completely inescapable in every realm of life ("it's everywhere"). Moreover, the Japanese emphasis on authenticity now feels to Childan like theft, which again suggests that originality and creativity may be more important than authenticity and "historicity."

Paul asks Childan about another American book he is reading, Nathanael West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*. West's book is largely about the Judeo-Christian concept of original sin, and Paul wonders aloud if the book's author—who was Jewish—was impacted by his sense of being an outsider. Childan states that if the U.S. had won, "the Jews would be running the world today." This comment horrifies Paul and Betty, who "descend into themselves." As the table falls silent, Childan realizes he has permanently damaged his new relationship with this couple.

The concept of original sin (essentially, the idea that humans are inherently flawed) will recur throughout the novel. Here, though, Childan's anti-Semitism prevents him from taking in the substance of what Paul is saying. Far more than his race, it is Childan's biases that prevent him from becoming close to the Kasouras.

Disgusted, Childan concludes that "*these people are not exactly human*…they're like monkeys dolled up in the circus. They're clever and can learn, *but that is all*." He is angry that, because the Japanese have won the war, he must "cater to them." Invigorated by these new thoughts, Childan begins to eat heartily for the first time all meal.

Childan dehumanizes the Kasouras by thinking of them in animal terms. (Notably, the Nazis used a similar technique to dehumanize Jewish people and other minorities, often describing them as vermin.) Indulging in this bias gives Childan a new sense of power (evidenced by his suddenly hearty appetite). The novel is therefore demonstrating the dangerous appeal of prejudice, as Childan runs from his own vulnerability by engaging in racial hatred.

With a newfound sense of confidence, Childan takes a pedicab back from the Kasouras. A pinoc (white government employee) is sitting in Childan's apartment upon his return. The *pinoc* wants to talk about the impostor who visited Childan's shop, pretending to work on the ship *Syokaku*. The impostor, Childan learns, is Jewish—his name is Frank Frink, though he was born Frank Fink. Childan is disappointed in himself that he could not recognize the "racial characteristics" of a Jew, but he is grateful for the orderly legal system.

Just as the novel suggested that Baynes might (or might not) be Jewish, Frank's Judaism is equally difficult to discern. In addition to painting identity as unstable, the text also reveals the futility to make lists of "racial characteristics," as nobody can be defined or confined by their appearance.

After the pinoc leaves, Childan decides to buy *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. His mind drifts to thoughts of the new Nazi leadership, and he hopes Doctor Seyss-Inquart will be chosen as chancellor. He dreams that one day he will have enough money to travel to Nazi leadership, as he feels that in the PSA, "history is passing us by."

If Childan's bias wasn't already clear, the extent of his Nazi sympathies really comes through here. Seyss-Inquart is one of the most vicious Nazis, yet Childan hopes he will take over. And similarly, he longs to be under Nazi control and to feel like he is part of "history," putting him in line with the Nazi's focus on agency.

CHAPTER 8

Hugo Reiss, the German ambassador to the PSA, gets a call from Kreuz vom Meere, the head of Nazi intelligence on the west coast. Reiss and vom Meere have a tense relationship, egged on by the authorities in Berlin. Vom Meere wants to talk about the "Abwehr character" who has just arrived in the PSA, a man named Rudolf Wegener (though he is using a cover name). Reiss has no patience for the call, and he eventually succeeds in getting vom Meere off the phone.

Just as the highest-ranking Nazis are competing to replace Bormann, lower-tier Nazis like Reiss and vom Meere are also engaged in power scrambles. This section also introduces the idea of the "Abwehr," a dissident German faction that hopes to undermine Nazi power.

Reiss's secretary comes in, telling him that according to the pinoc government, "there's a Jew running around the streets of San Francisco." Reiss is unconcerned; he wants to talk about who will replace Bormann as the new Nazi leader. Reiss gets a telegram informing him a Japanese General Tedeki is traveling to the PSA incognito for some mysterious purpose. Reiss is supposed to intercept his travel—if he fails, Reiss fears that he will be sent to South Africa, and he has a deep hatred of Black people.

This passage makes clear the multiple, overlapping racial hierarchies in a typical Nazi's mind, as Reiss is distracted from his anti-Semitism by his anti-Blackness. Moreover, the fact that both Wegener and Tedeki are both coming (and are both using assumed names) suggests that they these two mysterious figures might be working together.

Reiss' secretary departs, and he returns to the book he has been reading: *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. After reading a passage about the fall of Berlin, Reiss shudders, thinking about the "power of fiction" to make imagined events seem real. He moves on to another scene, in which Hitler, Goebbels and the rest of the high-ranking Nazis are being tried for their crimes at Berlin. His reading is interrupted by an urgent telegram announcing that Goebbels is about to make an important speech.

Perhaps the most surprising person to read Grasshopper *is Reiss, a committed Nazi. More surprising still is his reaction—he gets so wrapped up in the literary craft that he finds himself sympathetic to the novel's anti-German characters. This is one of the clearest examples of the novel's suggestion that art has real "power."*

Reiss again goes back to his book. In this passage, a German soldier struggles to make sense of Hitler's death—and then realizes that he has been brainwashed by Nazi ideology. Reiss is upset by this scene, because it appears "somehow grander, more in the old spirit than the actual world." However, Reiss assures himself that fiction always brings out people's "base lusts," and therefore that his own reaction to *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* is merely a result of authorial manipulation.

Though Reiss tries to dismiss fiction's influence on him, he finds himself unable to (it is particularly telling that he keeps picking up the book, even in the middle of work). It is especially interesting that Reiss finds the novel's anti-Nazi rhetoric "grander" than the Nazi reality, as the Germans specifically tried to make their government impressive and spectacular.

Now angry, Reiss decides that some Nazi needs to kill the book's author, Hawthorne Abendsen; Reiss even considers that Abendsen was originally Jewish. Reiss feels that to assassinate Abendsen, locked in his secure "High Castle" of a house, would be to have "the last word." Suddenly, Reiss is overwhelmed by the feeling that the war will never be over—there will be Jews everywhere, even on Mars. Reiss calms himself down and decides it is not worth it to focus on Abendsen. Instead, he turns on the radio to hear Goebbels's speech.

The comparison between Abendsen's art (literal words) and violence as "the last word" is fascinating—Abendsen is writing fictional narrative, whereas Reiss hopes to craft historical narrative. Those two things then come together in Goebbels' speech, which is probably highly articulate (as Goebbels is a propagandist).

CHAPTER 9

Two weeks later, Ed and Frank have created a sample line of their metal jewelry. They have used only good quality materials, and they have devoted great care and a lot of time to each piece; the result is that their work, mostly abstract "whirls of wire," looks very professional and precise. The first person Ed and Frank want to sell to is Childan; however, only Ed can go into the store, as "Childan would certainly remember Frank Frink."

Ed and Frank have devoted a great deal of time to make something truly artful and original—but the only person they have to sell to is Childan, who only carries antiques. There is no truly no place for new American creation in the PSA. Most important to note, though, is that Frank was the mysterious Jewish visitor who told Childan about the fake guns.

Frank's thoughts drift to Juliana; he wonders if she will be impressed by his new venture, and he pictures how she would look wearing the jewelry. While Ed gears up to talk to Childan, Frank decides that he will send several boxes of their jewelry to Juliana—and maybe one day, she can even act as their model. Frank's momentary excitement is cut short when he pictures Juliana sleeping with other men. Ed and Frank arrive at Childan's antique shop. Ed enters the shop, and Frank realizes how afraid he is that their jewelry venture will fail.

Even in the midst of this critical professional moment, Frank's thoughts wander to Juliana, suggesting how much he values that relationship over everything else in his life. Frank knows his ex-wife well, however, and he is right about the fact that she is sleeping with other men.

Juliana and Joe wake up together in Juliana's Canon City apartment. Juliana has decided she will no longer go into the gym where she teaches Judo; instead, she wants to take a trip with Joe. Luckily, Joe suggests just such a trip to Denver. He pulls out a lot of money, promising that he will buy nice clothes and maybe go see a show. While Juliana admires the money, she is surprised to see that Joe also owns an expensive-looking, heavy, cylindrical fountain pen.

Something about Joe's life does not quite add up: he has more money than a truck driver should, and the pen seems far fancier than anything he could afford (or would even want).

Now excited about his plan, Joe roughhouses with Juliana and pleads with her to teach him good manners; he is particularly concerned with getting rid of his "wop accent." When Juliana wonders how Joe has so much money to burn, Joe explains that he is not really a truck driver. Rather, he sits on the truck to ward off hijackers—and to prove his point, he pulls out as a knife as if "from the air itself."

More than almost any other character in the novel, Joe has internalized Nazi racism; he frequently berates himself for being a "wop," which is an ethnic slur for an Italian person. On another note, Juliana's fear of him seems increasingly prophetic. He is not a truck driver but something more dangerous, and the presence of the knife creates unmissable tension.

Joe claims that he had killed an important British colonel in Cairo, and that ever since, the Reich had trusted him to act as security of sorts. Juliana, however, does not believe this story. She wonders if Joe is a pick-up artist, or if he is really "some poor low-class wop laboring slob with delusions of glory." Juliana tries to shake these doubts off and berates herself for her "neurotic fear of the masculine." Joe informs Juliana that, although they are taking her car, he will drive—but he will let her read his copy of the *Grasshopper* book on the way.

Juliana, who has previously shown herself to be biased against Jewish and Japanese people, now also reveals her anti-Italian bias. Thus, even as she distrusts much of what Joe says about himself, she never second-guesses her prejudiced assessment that he is a "low-class wop" (echoing the same ethnic slur that Joe used to describe himself).

Back in San Francisco, Childan notices that a man in a "less-than-fashionable suit"—Ed McCarthy—has entered his store. Ed tells Childan that he is a representative of Edfrank jewelry, and he presents Childan with their line of "contemporary" metal pieces. Childan is uninterested; he is too focused on dealing with the problem of the forged antiques. He is still deeply troubled by the discovery of the fake **Colt .44**, which implicates not just U.S. history but also his own history. "As if," he thinks, a "question might arise as to authenticity of our own birth certificate."

Childan initially has no interest in the jewelry, which represents novelty and the future. Instead, he dwells on the uncertain past signaled by the fake guns. It becomes clear here how deeply the forgery has affected Childan: his lack of knowledge about these historical objects makes him feel that he does not have a legitimate claim to either his nation's history or his own personal past.

Even though Childan is not paying attention, Ed is still nervously making his sales pitch. Childan decides that, since this man is clearly inexperienced, he might be willing to let Childan sell the items on consignment (meaning that Childan gets the jewelry for free, and that if any of it is purchased, he will split the profits with Edfrank). Childan invites Ed to showcase the jewelry, and Ed very slowly begins to lay it all out.

Even as Childan worries about his history and his place in the PSA, he cannot force himself to pay attention to Ed's pitch. In other words, even though his history is in doubt, Childan struggles to imagine a future.

Childan helps another set of customers, and then returns to Ed. As Ed speaks faster and faster, Childan begins to select pieces from the collection. Ed's excitement at having made such a huge sale is palpable—until Childan explains that he will only buy this "untried merchandise" on consignment. Ed is devastated, especially when Childan emphasizes that on consignment, he will not assume any liability for the items.

Given all the work and money Frank and Ed have put into this jewelry, selling it on consignment is a worst-case scenario. Childan's offer once again underscores the lack of a market for any original American art.

Ed reluctantly agrees to leave the jewelry on consignment, but he also leaves Childan with the Edfrank business card. After Ed leaves, Childan thinks that even if it is unlikely the jewelry sells, it still reflects very impressive handiwork. Moreover, "*with these*," he realizes, "*there's no problem of authenticity.*" As the incident with the fake **Colt .44** proves, the authenticity problem may one day destroy the antiques industry.

Here, however, Childan begins to consider that the jewelry might be something more than he initially realized. It has no claim to history, and so there can be "no problem of authenticity." In a moment where the past is so contested and confused, Childan wonders if this jewelry can help his industry move into the future.

Inspiration strikes: Childan will present Betty Kasoura with a small pin from the Edfrank collection, patching up his relationship with the Kasouras and introducing the line to the Japanese public. Childan then decides that it is too forward to go directly to Betty, and so resolves to bring the gift to Paul. He congratulates himself on an airtight plan.

Hoping to promote such novel artwork, Childan decides to go through the Kasouras—even though he has just damaged his relationship with him. Once again, because of his race, he has to be extra careful to avoid any suggestion of impropriety with Betty.

When Ed returns to the truck, Frank is anxious to know what has happened. Ed explains that he gave the jewelry to Childan on consignment—something the two men had explicitly agreed they would not do. Ed and Frank sit together in the truck in silence.

Though Ed's actions have been devastating to Edfrank as a business, this moment of silence testifies to the strength of the men's bond. Rather than being angry, Frank and Ed merely share a quiet moment of sadness with each other.

CHAPTER 10

Mr. Baynes has had "a terrible two weeks." Mr. Yatabe is nowhere to be found, Bormann's death has thrown the entire German government into chaos, and Tagomi is getting increasingly impatient with the whole situation. Baynes reflects on the absurdity of the situation—he had traveled to California in 45 minutes by **rocket**, and now he must sit and wait around for two weeks.

Like everything else on earth, Baynes's critical but mysterious meeting has been derailed by Bormann's death. More important, however, is Baynes's frustration at the uneven pace of his journey. Given the amount of waiting he has to do, the Nazi rockets have not actually saved Baynes any time, another way in which German attempts to intervene in history clash with lived, daily experience.

Baynes reads in the Nippon *Times* that Dr. Goebbels has been named the new leader of the Nazi party; his wildly popular radio speech has clinched the deal. Baynes calls Tagomi again to inquire about Mr. Yatabe, but Tagomi again says—with an edge in his voice—that no such man has appeared.

In what is perhaps a subtle testament to the power of language, Goebbels' skill with propaganda has elevated him above his competitors. (In real life, Goebbels was also the German chancellor, albeit for a single day).

Baynes is under strict instructions not to contact any members of the Abwehr, even though there are at least ten such people in the PSA. However, many of these operatives are known to vom Meere, the prominent—and dangerous—regional chief of police. Baynes wonders if the Reich knows about the whole secret meeting; he reflects that the Nazis could arrest and punish any Germans involved in such a meeting, which in this case would be Baynes himself. It is also possible that the Germans have managed to detain Mr. Yatabe somewhere along his journey.

As his relationship with Tagomi sours, Baynes looks for another solution. It is crucial to note that Baynes is in the PSA against Nazi wishes. And in fact, Baynes is an undercover member of the Abwehr faction, just like vom Meere mentioned earlier—so it is quite probable that Baynes and Rudolf Wegener are the same person.

Baynes wonders if he should just tell Tagomi everything he was supposed to tell Mr. Yatabe; Tagomi cannot act at a policy level, but he could report information back to the Japanese Home Islands. However, Baynes fears that Tagomi might have a breakdown when confronted with such vital information. Even worse, Tagomi could merely refuse to listen to Baynes's shocking reveal.

Though Baynes initially said Mr. Yatabe was a businessman, here it becomes clear that he is actually someone high-up in the Japanese government. In a neat demonstration of the unpredictability of fate, Tagomi—a mid-level, mild-mannered bureaucrat—might suddenly become a crucial player in important policy decisions.

Baynes hails a pedicab and travels to the large Fuga Department Store. Most of the salesgirls are white, while the department managers are Japanese. Baynes goes over to the men's trousers section. A young clerk comes over to help him, and Baynes informs the clerk that he is looking for a man named Larry with a red mustache. The clerk reports that Larry is out to lunch but will return soon, and Baynes heads to the dressing room with a pair of slacks.

The detail about the make-up of the department store once again enforces the PSA's racial hierarchy. Baynes is clearly working in some kind of code, adding further credence to Tagomi's belief that Baynes is a spy.

A few minutes later, a middle-aged Japanese man enters the dressing room. He asks Baynes for permission to go through his wallet, and he and Baynes discuss how they both have teenaged daughters named Martha. Then, Baynes asks about Mr. Yatabe. The other man tells Baynes to come back tomorrow, as he will have more information then.

Having gone through this series of coded actions, Baynes is able to get information from this man, who seems to be a spy posing as a department store worker. Again, this passage throws into question what is real and what is fake—likely, neither of these men have daughters named Martha, yet readers are left in the dark about the true significance of this exchange.

As Baynes heads back home, he wonders how it is possible that this department store agent will be able to get information from Berlin so quickly, especially because it has to be coded and decoded. As he drives past strip clubs, pasted over with pictures of "utterly white nudes," he congratulates himself for having done something "at last."

Though World War II is over, a sense of oppressive secrecy remains. For the second time, the novel mentions strip clubs with "white nudes." The novel is perhaps satirizing the fact that American soldiers were known to sexualize women in U.S.-occupied countries, as the Japanese are doing something similar to white women.

While the car radio plays German folk music (which Joe says is inferior to Italian music), Juliana reads *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. Joe complains about the Nazi spectacles that take place in New York, which the Germans force people to go to. He speaks fondly of the old days in New York, when there was a great deal of theater. Meanwhile, Juliana reads a section in *Grasshopper* celebrating the advent of **TV**. According to the book, "only Yankee know-how" could have done accomplished such a thing.

In several ways, this exchange brings home the cultural effects of Nazi military victory. Theater, with its emphasis on intimate moments and human connection, has been replaced with bombastic German spectacle. And in Grasshopper, *which imagines U.S. victory, television is a flourishing industry (just as in the real world).*

Joe criticizes the book, saying that the author has merely "taken the best about Nazism, the socialist part…and he's left out the bad part, the SS part." Juliana reads on. *Grasshopper* depicts how American factories increased production to meet Chinese demand, leaving the U.S. as the most prosperous country in the world. The British are similarly producing goods for India, Africa, and the Middle East.

As he did earlier, Joe suggests that the Nazis are not as different from their American opponents as the Americans would like to believe. In a different way, Grasshopper *implies something similar: though the U.S. and Britain have not engaged in direct territorial conquest, they are using goods and services to dominate other countries economically.*

Juliana muses that she always thought the British were the best leaders; she wishes they had won the war. Joe says nothing. Juliana reads more of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. In the novel, the U.S. is fully integrated, while racism remains in many of the British territories. Overall, though, the book describes an almost magically peaceful world.

Juliana idealizes the British, while Grasshopper *reveals that Britain, too, is a complex and prejudiced place. Indeed, Winston Churchill—the Prime Minister who led Britain through World War II—believed that white Protestants were superior to other racial and religious groups.*

Joe summarizes the rest of the book: this peace lasts for about 10 years, but then "human nature" gets in the way. Joe explains that in the book the British, led by Winston Churchill, begin to put Chinese people in concentration camps. However, Joe holds little stock in the novel; he feels that neither the U.S. nor Britain has any "spirituality" with which to unify and govern the world.

Churchill's racism ends up playing a major role in Grasshopper, *and Joe uses this fact to suggest that "human nature" is inherently flawed. Joe's focus on the Nazis' inherent worth and "spirituality" is surprising given that he is Italian (or at least he claims to be).*

Juliana reflects that Joe seems like a "devout Fascist." As if reading her mind, Joe explains that he is not an "intellectual," because in fascism, all that is needed is "the *deed*." Joe contrasts the money-hungry U.S. and Britain with the Nazis, driven by a kind of "folkness" or "communal mass spirit." Juliana makes fun of how quickly Joe is talking, and he replies indignantly that he is "explaining Fascist theory of action!"

Part of this passage is meant to be comedic: Joe is talking about how talking is unimportant, undercutting himself in the process. But more than that, this passage states the central Fascist idea that humans can change the world through their actions—as long as they act quickly and dramatically.

Joe's mood darkens, and Juliana fears for a moment that he will hit her. However, he calms down, and reflects that Italy really is powerless; it's a "two-bit empire" with a "clown for a leader." He spoils the rest of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* for Juliana, telling her that Britain wins in the end and conquers the whole world. Juliana tells him that she hopes he will be able to relax in Denver.

The idea that Joe is a violent and surprising man resurfaces here. And his spoiler alert reveals that in Grasshopper, *the U.S. and Britain win World War II, but things still go very differently than they did in reality. Like the Germans and Japanese, the U.S. and the British continue to vie for power, and Britain ultimately becomes the single global ruler.*

Suddenly, Joe has an idea: Hawthorne Abendsen lives in Cheyenne, only a hundred miles north of Denver. Since Juliana loves *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy* so much, Joe suggests that they could drive together to meet Abendsen and ask him some questions about the novel. Juliana loves this idea. She and Joe decide that they will buy new clothes and get haircuts in Denver before they go to meet the famous author—but first, Joe makes Juliana promise that she will tell Abendsen they are married, as he is worried Abendsen will pursue her romantically.

Given that Joe has been distracted the entire time he has known Juliana, this plan is disconcerting: is it really as spur-of-the-moment as Joe makes it seem? It is also worth noting the role dress-up plays here: in order to meet Abendsen, Joe and Juliana must transform themselves physically. Just as Abendsen created a work of fiction to connect with readers, then, Joe and Juliana are creating fictionalized versions of themselves in order to connect with Abendsen.

Tagomi, having woken up feeling anxious, consults the *I Ching*. The oracle gives him Hexagram 51, which predicts shock. As Tagomi reads the oracle, thunder and lightning erupt. Tagomi gets a call and prepares himself to be surprised—sure enough, the call is from Mr. Yatabe, who informs Tagomi that he has arrived at last in San Francisco. Mr. Tagomi calls Mr. Baynes, and the three men plan to meet in a few hours at the Nippon *Times* building.

While Joe frantically makes plans, Tagomi merely consults the oracle and waits for its predictions to come through. Yet without realizing it, Tagomi is at the helm of what readers can now understand is a critical meeting for the Nazi opposition.

As Mr. Baynes gets ready for this important meeting, he worries that he has messed things up by going to the Japanese agent the day before. To calm himself down, he sings a German song in the shower. His worry for himself is "the trivial worry. The finite, private worry about my own particular skin." But his work, which has global importance, can now truly begin.

The novel's rapid shifting between perspectives serves to speed up the action and raise the dramatic stakes. Baynes's dismissal of the "private" as the "trivial" suggests that even as he works against the Nazis, he has absorbed some of their ideology—he earlier professed the value of "smallness," but now he can only focus on his role in history.

CHAPTER 11

At the Reich's Consul in San Francisco, ambassador Reiss is greeted with an unwelcome visitor: police chief vom Meere. Vom Meere informs Reiss that they have found Rudolph Wegener, the "Abwehr fellow"; his real name is Baynes, and he is posing as a Swedish industrialist. Vom Meere has also learned that Baynes is supposed to have an important meeting with a Japanese official, and Berlin wants the police to intercept this meeting.

In this conversation, vom Meere and Reiss confirm what the novel has long suggested: Baynes is actually Wegener, a German spy and dissident. Baynes's meeting with Tagomi, though it initially appeared to be a matter of bureaucratic routine, is in fact a one of tremendous global importance.

Reiss worries that trying to capture Wegener before or during this meeting will upset the Japanese higher-ups. However, vom Meere tells Reiss that he already has a Kommando squad ready to capture Wegener; vom Meere is not worried about the Japanese, because he believes they are too polite to do anything. Vom Meere mocks the Japanese practice of bowing to guests.

As the two Reich officials contemplate how to stop the meeting, vom Meere's prejudices cloud his thinking. His mocking stereotype of the Japanese as too polite and deferential causes him to be careless in his plans.

Reiss gets a phone call from an unknown source; it turns out to be Goebbels himself, calling to emphasize the necessity of capturing Wegener. Without any other option, Reiss gives vom Meere an authorization for Wegener's capture. Vom Meere tells Reiss that when the Japanese call to complain about this German interference, Reiss should lie and say that Wegener was really "a homosexual or a forger." Reiss agrees, but he is frustrated that vom Meere went over his head and he is shaken by having spoken to Goebbels himself.

The novel is primarily set in the PSA, away from the center of Nazi action and thus seemingly removed from most geopolitical drama. But now, Goebbels himself is involved in San Francisco life, suggesting the omnipresence of German forces—and the inevitability of conflict and strife in the post-war world. It is also ironic that one of the crimes vom Meere suggests as a cover is forgery, a form of deceit, since Wegener's job as a spy is to deceive people about his identity.

Reiss thinks about ways that he could sabotage vom Meere. He considers telling the Japanese what flight Wegener will be departing on; he also considers trying to make the Japanese angry at the police force by convincing them that "the Reich is amused by them, doesn't take little yellow men seriously." Before Reiss can determine how to regain power, he gets a phone call from a schoolteacher hoping to get some "scenic posters of Austria for their class."

The personal and the political again clash here, as Reiss prioritizes taking petty revenge on vom Meere over government strategy. He also continues to show his prejudice when he thinks of the Japanese as "little yellow men" ("yellow" is a derogatory term used to describe Asian people). The ridiculousness of the whole situation is underscored by the call from the schoolteacher, which lends humor and absurdity to the passage.

At 11 o'clock, Childan heads over to Paul Kasoura's office, which is just as well-decorated as the Kasouras' home. Paul greets Childan with a trace of aloofness, though Childan is not sure if this is real or in his head. Since Betty has not yet called to thank Childan for his gift (the Edfrank pin), Childan assumes Betty did not like the gift, and he apologizes to Paul.

In this new encounter with Paul, Childan's anxiety about navigating the racial hierarchy comes back with full force. Childan is constantly second-guessing himself and apologizing, and his nervousness testifies to the psychological and interpersonal harm of prejudice.

Paul surprises Childan, informing him that he never gave the pin to Betty at all—instead, he showed it to many of his colleagues. Initially, the colleagues all laughed at the piece; Paul reveals that his initial reaction to the piece was also laughter. However, after studying the piece for several days, Paul began to develop "*a certain emotional fondness*" for it.

Childan's anxieties are borne out when Paul says he initially laughed at the Edfrank piece. However, Paul's thoughtfulness and deep appreciation of art cause him to approach the piece with an open mind. Here and elsewhere, the novel suggests that art always deserves this kind of care and analysis.

Paul tells Childan that the piece has a special kind of spiritual balance. Though it does not have wabi, the Japanese word for good taste, it does have wu, a Chinese word for the tranquility associated with holy things. In fact, to Paul the piece has value "in opposition to historicity." He tells Childan that *wu* is often found in "such trash as an old stick, or a rusty beer can by the side of the road."

Paul's compliments are a clearly mixed bag: he compares the jewelry, which two Americans labored over, to a "rusty beer can." But he—like Childan—also understands that this object represents a break with the past. Not only does it not have the "problem of authenticity," but its futuristic beauty is "in opposition" to history itself.

Paul celebrates the Edfrank jewelry as "authentically a new thing on the face of the world." He explains to Childan that his colleagues, after some discussion, agreed that the strange jewelry possessed wu. Paul concludes that, having persuaded his colleagues of this fact, he is "exhausted"; he returns the pin to Childan, who is baffled.

Paul's use of the word "authentically" here is particularly striking. Throughout the novel, authenticity has referred to an object's verifiable history. But now, authenticity means something artistic, more along the lines of "wu." Now, authenticity is about creation and the future, not the past.

Surprisingly, Paul tells Childan that he must "meditate" and figure out what to do with this radically novel jewelry. Paul believes that these pieces can have a massive impact on Childan's life and the world. Childan resents this advice, "and the worst of it was that Paul certainly spoke with authority, right out of dead center of Japanese culture and tradition." Childan once again begins to think racist thoughts about Japanese inferiority.

Though Paul and Childan have had similar thoughts about the jewelry, Childan resents having to do the work to convince other Japanese people of its worth. Once again, he fumes that Americans have lost the war and must therefore defer to "culture and tradition" that he has no real interest in.

Before Childan can leave, Paul tells him one last thing: one of Paul's colleagues, an importer/exporter who works mostly in South America, is interested in the jewelry. Specifically, he hopes to mass-produce these pieces, "either in base metal or **plastic**"; he would then sell the pieces as good-luck charms for "relatively poor people" in Latin America and Asia. Childan understands that there would be a great deal of money for him in this transaction—and that Paul, having shown the jewelry to his superior, no longer has any agency in the situation.

Though Paul has just heralded the jewelry as somehow special and "authentic," he now suggests mass-producing it in plastic. Throughout the novel, plastic has been a symbol of both deception and impermanence, whereas the jewelry seems to stand for truth and a more promising future. The contrast between the original metal jewelry and the mass-produced plastic replicas therefore represents an ideological conflict between respecting genuine art and earning a profit.

Childan asks Paul for advice. Paul explains that while he himself cannot get pleasure from anything mass-produced—he wants "something rare [...] something truly authentic"—the same is not true for the uneducated masses. Childan wonders if Paul is implying that there are fakes even among the valuable antiques Childan carries in his shop.

Paul seems to be struggling with this contradiction between artistry and profit, metal and plastic. As Childan thinks about potential fake Edfrank pieces, he recalls the fake Colt .44s—which depresses him, given that the Edfrank line initially seemed like a solution to the forgery problem.

After going back and forth, Childan tells Paul that he will meet with the importer. But to Childan's surprise, Paul does not seem pleased by this decision. Before Childan leaves, Paul asks if the American artisans who made these pieces—by hand, with the "labor of their personal bodies"—will accept such a fate for them. Childan thinks the artisans can be persuaded, but something in Paul's tone makes him hesitate.

Paul has displayed great dignity for much of the book, but here his strength of character is particularly clear. Though he stands to gain money and status from this transaction, Paul remains committed to the artwork in its original form (handmade and "personal").

Childan has an epiphany: the whole thing has been "a cruel dismissal of American efforts," Paul's tactful way of proving that American art is "worthless." Childan reflects that this is how the Japanese rule—"not crudely but with subtlety, ingenuity, timeless cunning." Childan feels a great deal of shame for himself and for all Americans; he sees himself through Japanese eyes, as a helpless "barbarian."

Childan often suspects the worst, so he sees Paul's plea for the art as one more way in which the Japanese are asserting their superiority. His prejudiced resentment of only moments before now slides back into internalized racism. But in his shame, Childan also begins to accept that Ed and Frank have brought truly original American art back to life.

His voice cracking, Childan tells Paul that he is "humiliated" by the whole ordeal. Childan explains that he is proud of this work and does not want to see it made into "trashy good-luck charms." Though he cannot tell how Paul is reacting to all of this, Childan demands an apology. After a long silence, Paul apologizes for his "arrogant imposition." Childan feels calmer, and as he leaves Paul's office, he reflects that life is short but "art, or something not life, is long."

This moment of apology and forgiveness, which breaks down the boundaries of racial caste, is striking—and for the remainder of the novel, forgiveness will be an important means of navigating a complex, colonized world. This passage is also important because of its association of art with permanence and the future. Childan realizes that art can lost beyond life—and if the Nazis try to leave legacies of destruction and conquest, Childan sees that art can leave a legacy of creation.

CHAPTER 12

At his office, Tagomi is finally able to meet Mr. Yatabe. As Tagomi looks at Mr. Yatabe, however, he is shocked to find that the man is actually General Tedeki, the formal Imperial Chief of Staff. Tagomi explains that Baynes is running late; he tells Tedeki that he fears "in this encounter something terrible." Tagomi tells Tedeki that he thinks Baynes is actually a German, and that his presence in the PSA has been affected by the upheavals in the Nazi government. Tedeki explains to Tagomi that Baynes needs an alias to slow the Germans down; by pretending to be Swiss, Baynes forces the Nazis to go through a series of bureaucratic formalities before they can arrest him.

The secret meeting finally is revealed: Wegener (posing as Baynes) is here to meet Tedeki (posing as Yatabe) in order to circumvent a Nazi plot. But though two of the three people gathered in Tagomi's office have been using fake identities, the novel does not seem to critique this inauthenticity. Rather, this deception allows the characters to interfere with the Nazis' focus on immediate action.

Baynes arrives and introduces himself as Wegener; he clarifies that he represents a loose association of powerful men, not any formal arm of government. Then he describes Operation Dandelion: the Germans will manufacture conflict in the Rocky Mountain States as a pretext for declaring war. Once they have done so, the Nazis will launch a massive nuclear attack on the Home Islands, taking out all the most important Japanese government officials. The Germans will then have cleared a path to complete world domination.

The tensions between the Germans and the Japanese, which have been brewing through the whole book, here come to a head. The Nazis do not want to share power, and they are willing to drop a potentially world-destroying bomb to take full control. This is why vom Meere wanted to stop this meeting: if Tedeki knows about Operation Dandelion, he can try to prevent it.

General Tedeki wants to know the date that this is planned to happen; Baynes explains that it has been delayed by Bormann's death. Baynes also tells Tedeki that certain powerful Nazis, including Goebbels, are in favor of Operation Dandelion. However, Heydrich—one of the most feared Nazis—is against Dandelion. Since Heydrich is in charge of the Reich's space program, he wants to focus all of his energy on **rockets**, not on nuclear war.

Just as the petty conflicts between vom Meere and Reiss threatened to derail Nazi policy, now Heydrich's desire for power might change the course of this nuclear bomb. If Goebbels remains chancellor, Japan will likely be destroyed. But Heydrich's desire to focus on rockets—themselves an important symbol of Nazi excess—means that he does not want Operation Dandelion to distract from his department.

Baynes tells Tedeki that the Japanese government should interfere in the Nazi struggle for power, on behalf of Heydrich. Tedeki believes the Japanese emperor would never do such a thing, as Heydrich represents the worst of German society. Tagomi is baffled by this moral puzzle—to save Japan, the Japanese must give power to atrocious human beings. To Tagomi, it is tragic "that man should have to act in such moral ambiguity." Tagomi realizes that no matter what they do, the Japanese will fail—their minds "cannot adapt" to the Nazis' chaotic madness.

Allying with Heydrich would save many Japanese lives (and would stop the Nazis from successfully achieving world domination). But Heydrich would certainly pioneer new atrocities. The impossibility of doing right in such a morally ambiguous world hits Tagomi with full force here; though he has always tried to be good, that is no longer possible.

Baynes suggests that to reach Heydrich, the Japanese should go through the Italian Foreign Minister. Tedeki asks Baynes to see proof of all of this before the Japanese jump into action; Baynes gives Tedeki cigarettes in a case, and Tedeki requests the case, as well.

Baynes's plan to go through the Italian minister reflects the reality of global interconnectivity, which complicates and compromises all action. (And while this exchange with the cigarette is likely another coded action, the novel never explains it further).


Mr. Ramsey, Tagomi's assistant, announces that there is a group of SD (police) men in the downstairs lobby. There are trying to reach Tagomi's office, but Tagomi orders the power in the elevator shut off. Tagomi pulls out a Civil War-era **Colt .44** from his desk, to Baynes's and Tedeki's surprise. Tagomi explains that the gun is part of his personal collection, but that he sometimes practices shooting it for fun. Tagomi points the gun at the office door and waits.

Various plot strands now come together: vom Meere and Reiss have been successful in their mission to disrupt the meeting, and Baynes and Tedeki are now in mortal danger. Most importantly, however, Tedeki takes out a Colt .44—likely sold to him by Childan and likely manufactured (forged) by Frank and Ed. The gun, meant mostly as décor, now gets put to its violent use.

As Frank crafts additional pieces of metal jewelry, he laments Edfrank's lack of success—they have not been able to sell their jewelry to anyone but Childan, and even that was on consignment. Frank wants to quit the business and start selling their materials for scrap, but Ed urges him to stay on. Lamenting his bad fortune, Frank goes outside to smoke a marijuana cigarette.

Despite being talented artists, Ed and Frank's inability to sell their work reflects how thoroughly the American art industry has been destroyed. Tellingly, Frank blames bad luck here, again viewing destiny as fated and out of his control.


While Frank is smoking, a plain-clothes white police officer approaches him. The policeman explains that Frank is under arrest for his impersonation at Childan's store. As they drive to the police station, the officer informs Frank that the state will provide him with a lawyer.

Frank has spent years making fake guns on behalf of Wyndham-Matson and has never gotten in trouble. But now Wyndham-Matson, acting through the corrupt pinoc *government, has had Frank arrested for a different kind of forgery (his false identity).*

The policeman asks Frank if his real last name is "Fink," prompting Frank to feel "terror." The police reveal that they know Frank is Jewish, and they label him "an escapee from the Nazis." Though Frank protests that he is an American, the policemen announce that he will be tried under German law—and that he will not actually be given a lawyer.

When Frank's crime was impersonation, he was treated as a full member of society, with all the benefits of a justice system. No such courtesy is extended to Jewish people, however—being himself (Jewish) is considered a worse crime than pretending to be someone else.

While Tagomi waits with his gun pointed at his office door, Tedeki is on the phone with the Japanese military. Tagomi laments that while they are operating through official channels, the men downstairs are clubbing people to death. Tagomi calls Reiss at the German consulate, but his calls are not answered. Tagomi then calls the SD police office, yelling at them to call off the Kommando squad. The person on the other end of the phone pretends to know nothing about it.

The gap between official rhetoric and lived experience is striking here, as the various embassies' polite language ignores (and perhaps obscures) the bloody reality on the ground.

Two white men, both part of the Kommando squad, barge through Tagomi's door. Without thinking, Tagomi shoots them both dead. As one of them dies, Tagomi realizes that they are making eye contact, and that the dying man "still perceives" him. Tagomi calls for emergency medical aid, and various employees in the building re-emerge, no longer afraid.

The gun is probably a fake—but when it comes to fatal violence, it functions exactly as a gun is supposed to. This is arguably the novel's most powerful questioning of what it means to be authentic: the gun has none of the historicity that makes it valuable, but its bullets can shape the present (and the future) in an instant. This scene is also important because of what it says about Tagomi's character: though these men are trying to kill him, he still empathizes with their perspectives.

Baynes inspects the guns the Kommando squad were using. They are Japanese guns, meaning that the Germans can deny complicity in the whole event; this denial is made even more possible by the fact that the invaders were not German nationals. But though this first assassination attempt has failed, it is clear to all three men that the Nazis know who and where Baynes is.

Here, too, the gap between physical appearance and actual fact is striking: the guns are Japanese, but the Nazis were the ones who ordered the violence. The Germans' discovery of Wegener's plan makes stopping Operation Dandelion even more difficult.

In great distress, Tagomi turns to the oracle. Tedeki observes that Tagomi, likely raised as a Buddhist, is deeply shaken by having taken two lives. Baynes wonders if the *I Ching* is helpful to Tagomi, or if he would be more helped by the doctrine of original sin. Baynes reflects that Tagomi's actions may have saved millions of lives, because now the Japanese can prepare themselves for Operation Dandelion. But for Tagomi himself, "the present, the actuality, was too tangible, the dead and dying Germans on the floor of his office." Baynes hopes that Tagomi will recover from his despair and not "succumb" to it.

If the Nazis are always focused on the future, Tagomi struggles to move beyond "the present" and the "tangible." This passage illustrates the gap between a historical view of life (Tagomi may have prevented the end of the world) and a view of life that prioritizes everyday experiences. Moreover, the moral ambiguity of Tagomi's actions cannot be reconciled by logical thought alone. Instead, he turns to both Buddhist and Judeo-Christian spirituality to make sense of what he has done.

CHAPTER 13

Having arrived in Denver, Juliana and Joe visit a series of modern, upscale shops. Juliana buys a blue Italian dress that costs $200; she also buys some new bras and a coat. While she looks for jewelry, Joe goes to get his hair cut. When he returns, Juliana can hardly recognize him—he has dyed his hair blonde. All he will say about it is that he is "tired of being a wop."

The elaborate nature of this shopping spree suggests that it is more important than Joe initially made it seem. Joe also creates a fake persona for himself, believing that because he is blonde he is no longer Italian (again, he refers to himself using an ethnic slur). Though he shares many of the Nazis' most hateful biases, he paradoxically also believes that identity can be altered with just a bottle of hair dye.

Juliana helps Joe pick out new socks, shirts, suits, and a new billfold. He pays for all of it with his German money. When Juliana considers what other items she wants to buy, Joe gets suddenly angry and insists that they eat dinner right away. Juliana presses Joe to find a hotel before they go out to eat.

Joe and Juliana are changing everything about their physical appearances—but their relationship dynamic remains the same. Joe is still mysterious, angry, and volatile, and Juliana is still fearful.

While they look for a hotel, Juliana tries to imagine a weekend filled with nightclubs and nice meals. She congratulates herself on how beautiful they both look: they have been "created out of nothing, out of money or, rather, out of money." Juliana and Joe find a fancy hotel in downtown Denver, and she admires the soft carpet and the many shops. With Joe's money, Juliana purchases a copy of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*.

Juliana's reflection that they have been "created out of nothing" is fascinating—just as Baynes got rid of his Jewishness and Frank changed his name, Juliana and Joe are shrugging off their class status and making themselves anew. Self-creation in the novel is yet one more thing that blurs the line between forgery and invention.

When they get to the hotel room, Joe announces that they will be leaving Denver and visiting Abendsen later that night—to Juliana's dismay. Juliana does not understand the rush, and she insists that they stay in Denver as Joe had promised they would. Joe tells her they will see the sights in Denver later, but Juliana does not believe him, and she begins to feel even more afraid.

Though Juliana loves Grasshopper, *she is also enjoying this luxurious trip (which thus far has been one of the scenes in the novel most removed from politics). Joe's insistence on the Abendsen plan then suggests a frightening ulterior motive, perhaps explaining his near-permanent state of distraction.*

Joe begs Juliana to put on the blue dress, and when she refuses, Joe threatens to kill her; she replies by saying that she could probably use her Judo to maim him. As Joe tries to de-escalate the situation, a valet knocks on the door to take Joe's shirts for ironing. Juliana wonders how Joe knew that new white shirts must always be ironed. She begins to realize that Joe did not dye his hair blond just now; he has always been blond, and the dark hair was merely a wig.

Fascinatingly, Joe's new look is not a false identity—his old Italian persona was the true invention. This passage also reflects the importance of small, mundane details in revealing larger ideas: Juliana pinpoints Joe's deception because he knows about something as everyday as ironing.

Juliana realizes that Joe is not an Italian; he is a Swiss man in the Nazi intelligence agency, merely posing as an Italian to get her to come with him. Juliana learns that the heavy pen is actually a radio transmitter. More importantly, she realizes that Joe's plan all along has been to get a woman who looks like her ("a dark, libidinous girl") to seduce Abendsen so that Joe can then murder him. Juliana tells Joe that her ex-husband Frank is a Jew, but he does not seem to care.

Questions of racial prejudice and hierarchy (Joe has spent the whole novel lamenting his low racial status, when in fact he was a member of the dominant racial group) now intersect with the novel's focus on truth and reality. And while Joe has a mission, he does not seem particularly concerned with the racial ideology he defends. He is happy to sleep with a "dark" woman like Juliana, and he has no qualms about the fact that he has allied himself to a Jewish man's ex-wife.

Juliana starts to have a panic attack, and she begs Joe to let her go to the bathroom. She gets in the shower fully clothed as she looks for a razor blade. In a daze, Juliana moves to the toilet. A few minutes later, Joe—baffled and upset by the situation—comes in to dry Juliana off and pleads with her to get her haircut. Joe gives her two yellow pills for anxiety, but Juliana does not want to take them.

Rather than the orderly prose that makes up most of the novel, Juliana's breakdown is written in a kind of stream-of-consciousness confusion. Just as Juliana cannot figure out what to do, the reader cannot figure out how to make sense of the page in front of them.

Juliana's thoughts grow increasingly incoherent, and she behaves more and more erratically. Joe realizes he cannot take her to the Abendsens' house in this state. Juliana grabs another razor and heads for the hallway; Joe tries to stop her, but she slashes him with the razor. Juliana does not seem to realize what she has done. Still completely naked, she walks out of the hotel room—and meets the hairdresser in the hallway. Seeing her nakedness, the hairdresser sends Juliana back to her room.

Whereas Tagomi and Baynes both articulated their moral confusion, here, the book places the reader in the middle of Juliana's chaos. Faced with two difficult moral choices (commit murder or let Abendsen be assassinated), Juliana's thinking goes off the rails. Even when she does murder Joe, then, it is not the result of a conscious decision but rather a part of her descent into incoherence.

Juliana returns to her room, where Joe is slowly bleeding out. Still seemingly unaware that she has murdered Joe, Juliana giggles and gets herself dressed. Joe asks Juliana to get him medical help, and she tells him to do it himself; when he explains that he cannot, she says she will ask the front desk. As she leaves the room, she picks up all her new parcels and tells Joe not to look for her in Canon City, because she is going to use his money to leave forever.

Juliana still does not seem to comprehend what is going on. But even in her hazy state, she remembers to take her new parcels; the idea of self-invention (dressing differently and moving to a new place) persists above everything else.

Juliana tips the valet and retrieves her car; she marvels at how easy the entire thing has been. As she drives away, she realizes she never told anyone to send help for Joe. She beings to cry and laments that she forgot to consult the oracle before embarking on this trip.

Juliana's focus on her own future has ensured that Joe will not make it out alive. But rather than assuming agency or responsibility, she laments that she did not learn the oracle's prediction of her trip.

In an attempt to feel better, Juliana consults the *I Ching* from her car. The oracle tells her to take a trip and "consult with the prince"; she infers that this means she should visit Abendsen and tell him about Joe's (now thwarted) plan. She drives north on the *autobahn*—a German highway—as fast as she can go.

This is probably the oracle's clearest prophecy, which is interesting given Juliana's confusion about her own actions and decisions. It is also ironic that even as Juliana has now actively resisted the Nazis, she applauds German infrastructure.

Juliana places a call from a phone booth, and she gets through to Abendsen's wife. Mrs. Abendsen tells Juliana that it is too late right now for a visit, but she encourages her to come the next day—though she tells Juliana that her husband might be too busy to chat. Juliana agrees, but she is distracted by thoughts of how hungry and thirsty she is.

Abendsen's wife has not yet been mentioned, and the fact that Abendsen has family—and that he is so easily accessible by phone—already begins to chip away at the image of him as the titular "man in the High Castle." Juliana's focus on her bodily discomfort suggests the gap between the historical import of her actions and the daily needs of all human beings.

Juliana explains her urgency to Mrs. Abendsen by reading her the oracle's prophecy. This gets through to Mrs. Abendsen, who asks for Juliana's name and promises her that they will visit each with other the next day. Juliana hangs up and buys herself a sandwich and a coke. Then, she falls asleep at the nearest hotel.

History, prophecy, and everyday routine all combine in this passage. It is particularly worth noting how seriously Mrs. Abendsen takes the I Ching*; before the oracle was mentioned, she did not want to make time for Juliana, but now Juliana is a priority.*

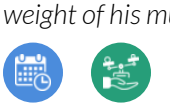
CHAPTER 14

Shaken by the shooting, Tagomi reflects "there is no understanding. Even in the oracle. Yet I must go on living day to day anyhow." He therefore resolves to "find the small," and he takes the day off work. He considers going to a park and even taking the outdated—but still pleasant—San Francisco Cable Car.

Tagomi here articulates one of the novel's central messages: if a complex, morally ambiguous world, understanding is impossible. But "living day to day" is possible: rather than chasing truth or trying to form history, Tagomi decides to seek out simple, joyful places like parks and the old Cable Car.

As he strolls, Tagomi wonders if he can ever return to his office—and even if he eventually can, he thinks Operation Dandelion will have destroyed the entire city by then. Tagomi rides the Cable Car to the end of the line and almost forgets his briefcase; it now contains the **Colt .44**, because after the incident with the Kommando squad he carries the gun everywhere with him.

Even as Tagomi resolves to "find the small," he cannot totally distract himself from the historical forces at play; he cannot picture his daily routine of going into the office because he is so focused on the possibility of nuclear destruction. It is also worth noting that in carrying around the Colt .44, Tagomi is symbolically carrying the weight of his murders.



Tagomi wonders if perhaps separating himself from the **gun** will allow him to return to his former "delighted attitude." Tagomi takes faith in the theory of "historicity," which states that the past is "within the gun" just as much as it is within his mind. Accordingly, he decides to go to Childan's shop and return the gun.

In contradiction to Wyndham-Matson, Tagomi feels that authenticity is so deeply physical that to get rid of the gun would be to get rid of his memories. Rather than moving toward a new future, Tagomi here is determined to erase the past.

However, when Tagomi tries to exchange the **Colt .44**, Childan grows cold and refuses to take it. Before Tagomi can leave, Childan takes him to a display case filled with the Edfrank jewelry. Childan boasts that this jewelry is "the new life of [his] country." Tagomi admires the pieces, but he does not feel the same level of emotion that Childan seems to. Childan presses Tagomi to see the meaning of the pieces, and Tagomi tells Childan he is behaving rudely—but Childan does not seem to care.

Childan does not want to take the gun because he believes it is fake, and he does not want to be discovered. Yet while Tagomi tries to undo history, Childan pushes him to look toward the future and "new life." Interestingly, Childan is so focused on the jewelry that he no longer seems attuned to the subtleties of racial behavior and status.

As he leaves the store, Tagomi dismisses Childan's obsession as "Anglo-Saxon fanaticism." Before he can get far, however, Tagomi becomes envious of Childan's newfound passion. He returns to the antiques shop and purchases one of the Edfrank pieces from Childan: "a single small triangle ornamented with hollow drops. Black beneath, bright and light-filled above."

After the trauma of the day before, Tagomi struggles to find joy. He therefore pushes himself to ignore his prejudices and to lean into Childan's passion instead of dismissing it. The appearance of the triangle might symbolize the Christian trinity, which is especially notable given Tagomi's new interest in the doctrine of original sin.

Tagomi takes a pedicab to a small park. He sits on the park bench and stares at the little piece of jewelry, trying to meditate with it. A few minutes pass, but Tagomi still feels nothing. He gets up but then sits back down, trying to resist the constant pressure he feels to "rise and act." He tries shaking the jewelry, he pleads it with to reveal its meaning, and he even holds the small triangle to his ear, but still Tagomi feels nothing. He tries smelling, touching, and tasting the triangle, all to no avail.

The novel has repeatedly suggested that appreciating and interpreting art is important—but in this almost satirical scene, it is clear that analyzing other people's creations is easier said than done. This passage also suggests that artistic interpretation allows people to slow down, and to move away from the Fascist framework of constant action.

Tagomi begins to study the triangle more intently. He muses that it is made of metal, "from the earth [...] from that realm which is the lowest, the most dense"—yet in the light, the jewelry glitters. Tagomi reflects that these jewelers have therefore "brought the dead to life [...] the past had yielded to the future." Tagomi begins to see the triangle as a perfect balance of bodily yin and soulful yang, and he hopes it will give him peace and understanding in his own life.

In this moment, the jewelry's material—cold metal made to reflect warm light—takes on almost cosmic symbolism to Tagomi, in that it represents both earthly life and what lies beyond. Not for the first time, the novel associates art with the future. This association is also quite literal, as Ed and Frank have stopped trying to replicate the past (as they did in Tagomi's Colt .44) and have started to create something new.

Suddenly, the light illuminating the triangle disappears and Tagomi looks up to find two white policemen in blue suits. Tagomi is upset that he has been "interrupted by that white barbarian Neanderthal yank"; then he stops and scolds himself for such "racist invectives," which he sees as beneath him.

The policeman treat Tagomi with a level of disrespect unusual in the Japanese-run racial hierarchy of the PSA. Tagomi's moment of racist weakness is also telling: when he feels low or insecure, he turns to biased "invective," suggesting that bias is borne of fear.

Tagomi walks out of the park, but he is surprised to see that there are no pedicabs on the streets. Even more shockingly, an enormous metal construction hangs in the sky like a "nightmare of [a] rollercoaster." Tagomi asks a passerby about this ugly metal stripe, and the passerby explains that it is the Embarcadero Freeway, which many people feel "stinks up the view." There are still no pedicabs in sight, and Tagomi begins to feel that he is in a "mad dream."

In real life, the Embarcadero freeway was a massive, elevated highway in San Francisco. It was built just after the Americans emerged victorious from World War II and was torn down in the early 1990s. The nightmare "rollercoaster" that Tagomi sees is, in fact, that freeway, suggesting that he has slipped out his alternate history timeline and into the reader's reality.

Desperately, Tagomi heads into a dingy diner. White people are sitting on all the stools, and not one of them gives up their seat to Tagomi. When Tagomi insists that the white people give their seats to him, one snaps at him to "watch it, Tojo." Tagomi is shocked by this disrespect; he realizes that he has wandered "out of [his] world, [his] space and time."

Tagomi still cannot process what is going on until the racial hierarchy flips on its head—suggesting that in some ways, such hierarchies are the ultimate determinant of a society's character. There are many meanings, therefore, to Tagomi's reflection that he has wandered out of "his world." He has left the world he belongs in, but he has also left the world he rules (to the extent that he is a member of the dominant racial group). Finally, the fact that Tagomi has stumbled into this other world emphasizes the role of chance and coincidence in creating individual and global history.

Realizing that he entered this alternate reality though the little silver triangle, Tagomi decides he must find the triangle again. He remembers that he left the jewelry in the park, so he heads back to the bench he was sitting on. Tagomi grabs the silver piece and begins to slowly count, hoping he will be able to return to his normal world.

Throughout the novel, works of art like the Edfrank jewelry and The Grasshopper Lies Heavy *have been shown to open people's minds and provide new perspectives. But here, Tagomi realizes that the Edfrank triangle has quite literally opened the door to a new world.*

In order to determine whether he is still in the strange alternate reality, Tagomi summons two little Chinese boys. He pays them a dime and asks them to see if there are any pedicabs in the street—if there are not, Tagomi decides he will kill himself using the **Colt .44**. However, the boys come back and announce that there are many pedicabs in the streets. Tagomi hails one and heads back to his office.

While the jewelry transported Tagomi out of his world by chance, he is also able to actively use the jewelry to re-enter his normal timeline. The shock of accepting another reality is so great that Tagomi contemplates killing himself. (And, tellingly, his potential use of the Colt .44, which represents the ambiguous nature of authenticity, further blurs the lines between realities).

When Tagomi arrives in the Nippon *Times* Building, the whole mess from the day before has been cleaned up. He reflects that "historicity" is nevertheless "bonded into nylon tile of floor." Tagomi learns that Tedeki is on his way back to the Home Islands, but that his co-workers have been unable to locate Mr. Baynes.

Upon returning to his office, Tagomi must come to terms with the fact that he cannot escape history—as Childan reflected at the Kasouras' house, history is everywhere. The fact that Tedeki is on his way back suggests that the Japanese might be able to stop Operation Dandelion, largely because of Tagomi's actions.

Tagomi's secretary informs him that a man from the German consul, Mr. Reiss, is there to see him. After some formalities, Tagomi announces that he personally shot the two Kommando men. Reiss tells Tagomi that the men were not even working for the German government and assures Tagomi that he acted "properly" in shooting them. Tagomi asks for forgiveness, and muses that he wants to read Cotton Mather—the famous American preacher—on hell and repentance.

Though Tagomi's shooting has not affected his professional status, he is no longer interested in this superficial marker. Instead, having to act with such moral ambiguity has caused him to seek forgiveness. His interest in Cotton Mather is particularly interesting, as he also represents classic ideas of original sin: that all men are born evil, and that repentance and faith are necessary to counteract this evil.

Tagomi tells Reiss that he believes Germany is "about to descend into greater vileness than ever." Reiss listens to Tagomi's anti-Nazi speech and curtly moves to leave. Before Reiss can exit, however, Mr. Ramsey appears with some papers relating to Frank Frink's trial and extradition. Tagomi, however, refuses to sign the papers.

Previously, Tagomi tried to cater to Reiss's preferences (even though he never respected Reiss). But his experience with the Kommando squad—and with the alternate reality—has changed him, and he now stands up for what he believes.

Reiss accuses Tagomi of taking out general frustration on this specific situation; Tagomi dismisses this claim as nonsense. As Reiss leaves, Tagomi starts having a small heart attack. He stumbles back into his office, crashing onto the floor.

Tagomi's heart attack occurs at the moment where he is most clear-headed and valiant. Such a sudden illness suggests both the randomness of the human experience and the frailty of human life.

While he is transported to the hospital, Tagomi wonders if he has ruined his career forever by snapping at Reiss. Tagomi speculates that this heart attack is itself a form of the Inner Truth he has been looking for, and he instructs his assistants to call his wife.

Moments before, Tagomi had resigned himself to the fact that "there is no understanding." Here, however, he finds not outer truth but Inner Truth: for the first time in the novel, he has started to pay attention to his own bodily needs and to his familial relationships.

That evening, a police officer releases Frank from jail with no explanation. The police give him back his personal belongings, and Frank marvels that this is a miracle of sorts. All of it—the arrest, the release—feels unreal. Frank wishes he could understand, but he realizes he will never be able to fully comprehend the world around him.

As Tagomi finds Inner Truth, Frank realizes that he will never understand his circumstances—he is free and deeply appreciative of that fact, but he will never know why it all happened.

Frank returns to the shop, where Ed is waiting for him; Ed evidently thought Frank had been killed. The two men say very little to each other, though Ed tells Frank it is "good to see you back." Frank sits back down on his work bench and returns to forging jewelry.

Ed's loyalty to Frank again testifies to the importance of everyday relationships. And even more tellingly, Frank gets back to work: he is focused on his art-making and, by implication, on building a new future.

CHAPTER 15

Now traveling as Conrad Goltz, Rudolph Wegener (a.k.a. Mr. Baynes) travels to Germany on a Lufthansa **rocket**. He hopes that General Tedeki is able to affect change in the Home Islands, but Wegener is not optimistic. He wonders if the Nazis will eventually wipe out all life on Earth. Wegener wonders if there is another, alternate reality, "in some region or dimension that we simply do not perceive." Though he cannot prove this alternate reality, Wegener believes in it.

Though Baynes/Wegener does not experience an alternate world in the same way Tagomi does, he is nevertheless sure that one exists. This certainty suggests the randomness of history, in which each event is contingent on the last. The history of The Man in the High Castle *is in some ways just as possible as the history in* The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*—or as "real" history.*

Wegener exits the **rocket** and sees children and families greeting the other returning passengers. Three men in black shirts, members of the Waffen-SS (the military), approach Wegener and address him by his real name. The "blackshirts" inform Wegener that they are going to take him to Heydrich. Wegener realizes that he will not be shot; rather, Heydrich is still alive and is using Wegener to try to strengthen himself against Goebbels.

In its final chapters, the novel periodically focuses on family, even in moments—like this one—of great political import. This suggests that focusing on everyday life and intimate relationships is perhaps more important than trying to create a historical legacy. The fact that Heydrich still has some power suggests that Operation Dandelion may yet be preventable.

Wegener's temporary relief is cut short when he reflects that even though Goebbels may lose power, the alternative—Heydrich—is not much better. "We can only control the end by making a choice at each step," Wegener reflects, "we can only hope. And try." Wegener reflects on the difficulty of morality in such an ambiguous world.

Here, the novel lays out perhaps its most coherent theory of history: destinies are made in part by chance and in part by "making a choice at each step." Results are not guaranteed, and human agency is not complete, but people can "hope. And try."

The "blackshirts" begin to criticize Goebbels for the mob mentality he has stirred up. Wegener hopes that the competing factions of the Nazi Party will destroy each other, leaving the rest of the world alive, "once more to build and hope and make a few simple plans."

Baynes/Wegener has often described himself as small. But here, rather than avoiding responsibility, his sense of smallness is almost a call to action: his plans will be "simple," but he will still make plans.

Juliana reaches Cheyenne and buys a newspaper. She finds an article about Joe Cinnadella's death. Though suspicion has fallen on Joe's wife (which Juliana had claimed to be at the hotel), nobody knows her real name or identity. Knowing that she is safe from the police, Juliana feels much calmer.

Juliana's self-creation is now complete; she has shed her past identities and her past crimes. She is therefore able to move on to Cheyenne, where the Abendsens await.

Juliana gets comfortable in her hotel room and finishes reading *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. She realizes that very few people actually understand the meaning of the book. Juliana looks for a place to eat dinner, and she is impressed by the future-oriented brightness of Cheyenne. After sitting down at an expensive French restaurant, she reflects that Abendsen "told us about our own world [...] he wants us to see it for what it is."

The Man in the High Castle *and* The Grasshopper Lies Heavy *have a lot in common: both are speculative fiction about what happens in the post-war world (and both were written using the* I Ching*). If* Grasshopper *is ultimately about its readers' world, then the same can be said of* The Man in the High Castle*: it is not merely an imaginative exercise but a cautionary tale about prejudice and power.*

Juliana puts on the dress but realizes she has forgotten the bra to go with it. She has a collection of pins, some from Frank and some from other men, so she picks a horse-shaped pin from Mexico to keep the dress up. She tries to call Frank long distance in San Francisco, but he does not pick up. Juliana hails a cab and heads to the Abendsens' house.

Just as Tagomi thought of his wife in his moment of crisis, Juliana now does the same with Frank. Though she has been angry at Frank for much of the novel, her own confusing moral decisions have led her to be more forgiving toward him.

However, when Juliana arrives, the house is not the well-secured "High Castle" she has been expecting; instead, it is "a single-story stucco house with many shrubs and a good deal of garden made up mostly of climbing roses." She is struck by the child's tricycle in the front of the house, further adding to its sense of being "ordinary."

This almost stereotypically normal house is a far cry from the imposing, secure tower Juliana has been expecting. The particulars of this house are also striking: there is, again, an emphasis on family, and there is also a particular kind of natural emphasis on the future (as signaled by the garden and the climbing roses, which represent new life and growth).

There is a small party going on. Juliana knocks on the door, and a teenaged boy—the Abendsens' son—lets her in. A pretty woman, Caroline Abendsen herself, welcomes Juliana and introduces to her husband. Hawthorne Abendsen is tall, dressed in an expensive and graceful suit. Juliana is a little awed by him.

The novel's emphasis on family continues, as Juliana meets Abendsen's wife and son. It is also surprising that she gains such easy access to this home—she merely has to ring the doorbell.

Abendsen explains that he used to live in a real fortress, but that one day—while drunk—he developed a phobia of elevators. Since then, he has moved back to town and now he lives in this nice, one-story house. Abendsen pours Juliana a drink.

Abendsen did not choose to move away from a secure house for any ideological reason. This figure, so large in Juliana's mind, is in fact remarkably regular.

Juliana asks Abendsen if he is familiar with the *I Ching*, but Abendsen avoids the question. Instead, he begins to ask Juliana about her dress; he compares the "technical secrets" that allow her to appear so beautiful to the "technical secrets" that allow him to write so skillfully. Caroline Abendsen grows frustrated with this flirtation.

Joe was right: Abendsen is drawn to women like Juliana, and here, he reveals himself to be a womanizer (or at least a flirt). More importantly, however, he draws a connection between Juliana's self-creation (through clothes and make-up) and his own writerly, artistic creation.

Juliana realizes that Abendsen is attracted to her, but she continues to push him about *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*. She says that the book showed her "there was a way out"; now, Abendsen's calm, regular life shows her that there is "nothing to be afraid of, nothing to want or hate or avoid."

Paralleling Tagomi's decision to "find the small," Abendsen has committed to a peaceful life. Abendsen's reference to a "way out" also once again suggests possible alternate realities.

Juliana explains that she killed Joe to protect Abendsen and warns that there may be a "next one." But Abendsen believes that the Nazis "can get you [...] if they want to. Charged wire and High Castle or not." Juliana realizes that Abendsen is "resigned to [his] own destruction."

Abendsen may accept his fate, but he does so for a reason. Rather than trying to change the course of history, Abendsen has decided to focus on the things he can control (like his garden and spending time with his family). In prioritizing day-to-day life over the (maybe inevitable) Nazi threat, Abendsen embodies the novel's central lesson.

Abendsen finally confesses that the oracle was the source of the entire *Grasshopper* novel; he consulted the *I Ching* to determine the characters, the historical time period, and even the specific events of the plot. Juliana wonders aloud why the oracle would have chosen to write a novel, especially one in which the Germans and the Japanese lost.

Philip K. Dick, too, consulted the I Ching *to write* The Man in the High Castle. *In each case, the use of the oracle suggests that even the author is not a total agent over the world he creates; rather, there is always random chance (or perhaps fate) to take into account.*

Abendsen instructs Juliana to ask the *I Ching* this question herself and presents her with his copy of the oracle. The *I Ching* answers Juliana's question with the hexagram about Inner Truth; Abendsen realizes that his book is somehow true. He is deeply angry at this revelation.

Juliana's reflection that the book has Inner Truth in some ways is a historical one: in the real world, the U.S. won World War II, and the Germans lost. But she is also realizing that in expanding its characters' perspectives—in showing them alternate realities—the book allows its readers insight into themselves and their connections to other people.

Trying to change the subject, Abendsen offers to autograph Juliana's copy of *The Grasshopper Lies Heavy*, but she refuses. Abendsen speculates that Juliana is a kind of "daemon," and Caroline comforts him, saying that Juliana is "terribly disruptive"; Abendsen merely replies, "so is reality." He thanks Juliana for what she did in Denver.

Juliana disrupts the neat little world the Abendsens have built for themselves—but rather than dismiss her, Abendsen understands that reality itself is filled with disruption and confusion. Neither a High Castle nor a suburban home can keep out such confusion.

Caroline asks Juliana what she will do next. Juliana considers going back to Frank Frink, but she does not feel terribly concerned about the uncertain future. Caroline tells Juliana she wishes they had never met. Juliana is surprised that the truth has made the Abendsens so angry. "Truth," Juliana reflects, "as terrible as death. But harder to find." Juliana leaves the Abendsens' and hails a cab—"moving and bright and living"—to take her back to her motel.

In the novel's closing passage, Juliana again considers forgiveness and reconciliation (with Frank, in her case) as a crucial part of living in such a mystifying world. Forgiveness, uncertainty, and contradiction are perhaps all forms of the "truth" that Juliana reflects is so hard to find. But despite this uncertainty, she can now look forward to what is "moving and bright and living"—the future.

HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

MLA

Sabel, Francesca. "*The Man in the High Castle.*" *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 13 Oct 2021. Web. 13 Oct 2021.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Sabel, Francesca. "*The Man in the High Castle.*" LitCharts LLC, October 13, 2021. Retrieved October 13, 2021. https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-man-in-the-high-castle.

To cite any of the quotes from *The Man in the High Castle* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

MLA

Dick, Philip K.. The Man in the High Castle. Mariner Books. 2021.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Dick, Philip K.. The Man in the High Castle. New York: Mariner Books. 2021.