

Snow Falling on Cedars Book Notes

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson

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Author/Context

David Guterson was born in Seattle in 1956. He earned a Master's Degree from University of Washington. He has written two other novels, "East of the Mountains," and "Our Lady of the Forest," a book of short stories, "The Country Ahead of Us, the Country Behind," and a nonfiction book entitled, "Family Matters: Why Homeschooling Makes Sense." (Guterson and his wife homeschooled all four of their children.) His stories mainly take place in the Pacific Northwest. He is a contributing editor to Harper's Magazine, and has written for Sports Illustrated. He lives in Puget Sound with his wife and children. For a time, he taught high school English. "Snow Falling on Cedars won the PEN/Faulkner Award in 1995. This illustrious award has been given to many of America's most admired writers. The novel's success allowed him to quit teaching and write full time. He claims that writing and being with his family are what fulfill him.

Guterson studied under Charles Johnson, author of "Middle Passage." Guterson is the son of Murray Guterson, a lawyer who instilled in his son the desire to do right and make his mark on the world. "One of the things I heard [from him] early on was to find something you love to do--before you think about money or anything else. The other thing was to do something that you feel has a positive impact on the world." Although he does not think writers should give their readers easy answers to moral questions, Guterson believes it is important that the questions be posed. He respects Chekhov and Jane Austen for their style, and is preoccupied with what he calls "human needs." He says, " I'm interested in themes that endure from generation to generation. Fiction is socially meaningful. Every culture is sustained by certain central myths. At its heart, fiction's role is to see these roles and myths are sustained." He argues that living for a long time in a place such as the Pacific Northwest, as he does, allows him to see those myths and explore them. He writes as a native, with a deep love of the landscape and people. He thoroughly researched the history of the Japanese internment camps he writes about in the novel, speaking with many Japanese people from the towns near where he lives. He has done this for his most recent book, Our Lady of the Forest, as well: the book's focus is the Catholic faith, and the book demonstrates his knowledge about the subject. Some reviewers have objected to his display of that knowledge: they argue that his characters are mouthpieces for his own views, and are thus less than believable. Additionally, he is criticized for overuse of complex words and syntax. However, many reviewers agree that his descriptive writing is forceful and skilled.

In Snow Falling on Cedars, Guterson wanted to write about commonplace tragedy, about the way accidents can affect people's lives tremendously. He sees this as part of his writing and his way of life. He enjoys the vast, unyielding power of nature much more than the bustle of city life and civilization. He searches for the calm his character Hatsue feels in the novel, and thinks of himself as a happy person when he is able to achieve that calm.



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Plot Summary

Kabuo Miyamoto, a Japanese-American fisherman living on the small island of San Pedro off the coast of Washington in the nineteen fifties, is accused of murder. The dead man is Carl Heine, another fisherman. Carl and Kabuo grew up together. Kabuo's family was in the process of buying some of Carl's family's land when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Soon after that, Kabuo's family was sent to internment camps in California with many other Japanese families who were suspected spies. While Kabuo's family was gone, Carl's mother Etta took advantage of their absence to sell the land to someone else, even though the Miyamotos only had one payment left to make. Kabuo returned from the war furious with Etta and determined to get the land his family had wanted.

While in the camps, Kabuo married a beautiful Japanese girl named Hatsue Imada. She had had a long childhood romance with a Caucasian boy named Ishmael Chambers. Ishmael loved her with all his heart, but Hatsue had often felt some "wrongness" nagging at her, and when she forced to go to the camp she wrote him a letter telling him their relationship was over. Ishmael, like Kabuo, went to war and served his country well. When he returned, he was still very much in love with Hatsue and very lonely and angry.

Carl Heine also went to war, and came back with some dark memories and some anger at the "Japs." Nevertheless, he felt that his mother's treatment of the Miyamotos was wrong, and when Kabuo approached him to buy his land he leaned toward yes, but wanted to think about it. Soon after, Kabuo came upon Carl late at night while fishing. Carl's boat had lost its power. Kabuo gave Carl one of his batteries, and Carl made an agreement with Kabuo to sell the land. Kabuo left, and later a huge boat came close enough to Carl's boat to knock Carl into the water with its wake, hitting his head on a pole in the process. When Carl's body was found, it appeared that someone had hit him with something to knock him out and then thrown him overboard. Since Kabuo had recently had a conversation with Carl about his land and was known to desperately want the land, suspicion was raised. A major contributor to this suspicion was Kabuo's race: many San Pedro residents still hated the Japanese, even ten years after the war. The trial was long and full of racism. No one was aware of the huge freighter passing so close to Carl's boat until Ishmael stumbled upon the information while doing research for an article for his newspaper. When he finally brings his knowledge to the judge, along with some other information, the case is dismissed. Though Ishmael has not regained Hatsue, he finally feels she respects him for how he has helped her, and he can begin to respect himself again.



Major Characters

Kabuo Miyamoto: Kabuo is a strong, stoic Japanese-American accused of the murder of Carl Heine. Kabuo is married to Hatsue, the beautiful woman Ishmael Chambers has loved for most of his life. Kabuo is honest and ethical, though given to anger. Trained in kendo stick fighting, Kabuo is a war veteran who is capable of killing and prizes his abilities as a fighter, but still has nightmares about what he saw in the war. He values a traditional and simple life, and longs to work the strawberry fields his father worked before him. Accused of murder mainly out of racism, Kabuo maintains a coldly rigid stance throughout the trial, hoping to appear calm. Instead, he appears removed and uncaring and, above all, fundamentally different from the other townspeople.

Carl Heine: The dead fisherman at the center of the novel's mystery. Carl Heine is a large, imposing, but seemingly kind and polite man. An expert fisherman who is happily, passionately married to the beautiful Susan Marie, Carl had no known friends but no enemies. He was friendly with Kabuo when they were children, but the war seemed to affect him, making him unable to have easy friendships any longer.

Ishmael Chambers: Another war veteran in love with Hatsue Miyamoto. Ishmael met her when he was a boy and has been unable to forget her ever since. When she rejected him and then he lost his arm in the war, he quickly became an embittered, lonely young man who felt alienated from the rest of society. Full of self-hatred and believing he will never live up to the legacy of his ethical newspaper-owner father, Ishmael is miserable. When he finds evidence that proves Kabuo is innocent, however, Ishmael finds a way to redeem himself, both for Hatsue and in his own mind.

Hatsue Miyamoto: Hatsue Miyamoto, born Hatsue Imada, is a beautiful woman married to Kabuo Miyamoto. Hatsue was romantically involved with Ishmael when she was a girl, but eventually realized he was wrong for her, and married Kabuo, who she viewed as a strong, kind man who would make a good husband. She wanted from a young age to please her mother and her other elders. She yearned for the stillness and calm that her elders taught her.

Minor Characters

Alvin Hooks: Prosecutor in the case against Kabuo Miyamoto. Mr. Hooks often uses personal attacks and prejudice to try to implicate Miyamoto in the death of Carl Heine.

Art Moran: Sheriff of Amity Harbor. Art Moran tries to do his job well, but at times this seems to go against his very nature. Squeamish around dead bodies and reluctant to take responsibility for the controversial situation of the trial, Art is often uncomfortable and vaguely feels he may be exposed as incompetent.

Abel Martinson: Sheriff Moran's deputy. Abel is even more squeamish than Art, and equally ill-suited to his profession. Though he tries to please Art and perform his duties,



Abel often makes mistakes or gets in over his head, such as when he tries to help Horace Whaley examine Carl's dead body and ends up vomiting.

Etta Heine: Carl Heine's mother. Etta was born in Bavaria and did not like San Pedro very much. She never even liked strawberries. She took advantage of her son's being away at war to sell the farm to Ole Jurgensen, even though technically the Miyamotos owned it. For years after her husband had died and her other three children moved away, she had lived alone on the island with Carl Junior.

Nels Gudmundsson: Attorney for the defense. Nels is very old and is conscious of how feeble he looks, of how many things he can no longer do. He knows, also, that he is good at his job. He desires to understand the truth of the case, and he knows that racism is at work. He wants to help Kabuo and is honest with him about the danger he is in.

Horace Whaley: The town coroner, Horace is a nervous, businesslike man who is haunted by the people who died in his medical care during the war. He is careful, observant and judgmental of those who are not.

Arthur Chambers: Ishmael's father, and a highly respected man in San Pedro. Arthur ran an independent newspaper, which he used to voice the Japanese concerns during the internment and the duration of the war. Many Japanese people loved him as a result. Ishmael feels he must live up to his father's reputation.

Mrs. Shigemura: Hatsue's teacher when she was a girl. Mrs. Shigemura taught her manners and grace, and told her that she could find peace and happiness in Japanese ways, with Japanese people, and to stay away from white men.

Ole Jurgensen: The old farmer who bought Etta Heine's land instead of the Miyamotos. Ole didn't know at the time that the Miyamotos had basically bought the land, and he felt uncomfortable being caught in between the two feuding parties. Once he has a stroke, however, he sells his land to Carl Heine, restarting the feud.



Objects/Places

San Pedro Island: San Pedro is a small island off the coast of Washington State. Its residents are mostly Eastern European Immigrants, along with a few Japanese settlers. The main crop is strawberries. As in many small towns, secrets and gossip abound. When Carl Heine is found dead, it is nearly impossible for a fair trial to be held.

The Susan Marie (Boat): Carl Heine's boat. An indication of his love for his wife (it is named after her) and the scene of Carl's death and his meeting with Kabuo.

Carl Heine's head wound: The cause of much debate in the trial of Kabuo Miyamoto. It is behind the left ear and shaped as if it were made by a two-inch-thick stick. It causes much disgust on the part of Abel and Art.

Kendo Stick: A type of stick used by Japanese fighters to quickly kill by blows to the head. Many Japanese are trained from a young age in the art. Horace Whaley had seen them in the war and began to wonder if the wound on Carl Heine's head might have been caused by one.

Tree: Hatsue uses the tree as a place to think. Ishmael finds her there and remembers it as a place they used to share. They spend more and more time in the tree, and it becomes a central way to hide their relationship, as well as to make it more precious.

Alien Land Act: A law which in the early part of the twentieth century stated that a noncitizen could not own land. Also, in 1906 the U.S Attorney General ordered courts to deny naturalized citizenship to Japanese immigrants.

Hatsue's Letter: Hatsue sends Ishmael a letter from the camp. In it, she says she never loved him, really, and that she always felt things were wrong between them. Ishmael keeps the letter for years, until it almost disintegrates, but he can't bring himself to throw it away.



Quotes

Quote 1: "The most distressing news story of the preceding ten years had been the wounding of an island resident by a drunken Seattle yachtsman with a shotgun on the Fourth of July, 1951." Chapter 1, page 3

Quote 2: "San Piedro lived and breathed by the salmon, and the cryptic places where they ran at night were the subject of perpetual conversation." Chapter 2, Page 9

Quote 3: "The man had survived Okinawa. Carl Heine, it was unbelievable." Chapter 4, page 30

Quote 4: Since they could not forget about it, neither could he." Chapter 4, page 31

Quote 5: "He loved humankind dearly and with all his heart, but he disliked most human beings" Chapter 4, page 36

Quote 6: "And the majority of Japs, Horace recalled, inflicted death over the left ear, swinging in from the right." Chapter 5, p. 56

Quote 7: "in the spirit of one who knows his place simply leave Susan Marie alone." Chapter 6, pg. 70

Quote 8: "Hatsue settled into missing her husband...a deliberately controlled hysteria that was something like what Ishmael Chambers felt watching her in the courtroom." Chapter 7, pg. 93

Quote 9: "he decided he would love her forever no matter what came to pass." Chapter 8, pg. 100

Quote 10: We're enemies all right. They've been botherin' us over those seven acres for near ten years now. My son was killed over it." Chapter 10, pg. 141

Quote 11: "But which facts? Which facts do we print, Ishmael?" Chapter 13, pg. 188

Quote 12: "she concealed her love for Ishmael Chambers not because she was Japanese in her heart but because she could not in truth profess to the world that what she felt for him was love at all." Chapter 14, pg. 206

Quote 13: "[Miyamoto] tied up to Carl's boat and left a line on it. That seems to me pretty clear." Chapter 17, pg. 258

Quote 14: "Here was the Jap with the bloody gun butt Horace had suggested he look for." Chapter 18, pg. 269

Quote 15: No, it would not surprise Sergeant Maples to hear that Kabuo Miyamoto had killed a man with a fishing gaff." Chapter 19, pg. 285



Quote 16: "The world was one world, and the notion that a man might kill another over some small patch of it did not make sense—though Ishmael knew that such things happened." Chapter 22, pg. 321

Quote 17: "The Japs did it. They shot my arm off. Japs." Chapter 23, pg. 332

Quote 18: "An enormous freighter had plowed right through the fishing grounds, throwing before it a wake large enough to knock even a big man overboard." Chapter 23, pg. 335

Quote 19: "I have to think it's a travesty. That they arrested him because he's Japanese." Chapter 24, pg. 343

Quote 20: "We know you will follow in your father's footsteps. We are certain you will honor his legacy." Chapter 24, pg. 352

Quote 21: "But later that day...a clerk at Petersen's told Hatsue about the terrible accident that had befallen Carl Heine." Chapter 25, pg. 368

Quote 22: "We're sly and treacherous. Can't trust a Jap, can you?" Chapter 27, pg. 391

Quote 23: "You're a hard man to trust, Mr. Miyamoto. You sit before us with no expression, keeping a poker face through—" Chapter 28, pg. 412

Quote 24: "He was, they decided, not like them at all, and the detached and aloof manner in which he watched the snowfall made this palpable and self-evident." Chapter 28, pg. 412

Quote 25: "Look into his eyes, consider his face, and ask yourselves what your duty is as citizens of this community." Chapter 29, pg. 415

Quote 26: "Will you contribute to the indifferent forces that ceaselessly conspire toward injustice? Or will you stand up against this endless tide and in the face of it be truly human?" Chapter 29, pg. 419

Quote 27: "If I feel doubt, that's all that matters, right?" Chapter 30, pg. 29

Quote 28: "An enemy on an island is an enemy forever." Chapter 31, pg. 439

Quote 29: "The war, his arm, the course of things—it had all made his heart much smaller." Chapter 31, pg. 442

Quote 30: "Find someone to marry. Have children, Ishmael. Live." Chapter 32, pg. 446

Quote 31: "The heart of any other, because it had a will, would remain forever mysterious." Chapter 32, pg. 460



Topic Tracking: Love

Chapter 1

Love 1: In Chapter 1, the reader sees Ishmael's feelings for Hatsue, and her response to them, for the first time. He simply asks her if she is all right, and she refuses to answer, telling him to go away. Though he is deeply in love with her, when she turns from him, she leaves all his emotions unfulfilled, and there is nothing he can do.

Love 2: Susan Marie Heine's love for her husband is made clear when she is told about his death. She becomes inert, unable to speak, and says aloud that she always knew this would happen. The moment is especially poignant since Carl had named his boat after her.

Chapter 8

Love 3: Fourteen year old Ishmael is in love with Hatsue in the desperate way of a young teenager, but he seems to know that he will never outgrow this type of love for her. He thinks she feels the same way about him, but this is unclear to the reader. She worries that her family will be angry.

Chapter 9

Love 4: Though Carl and Etta Heine are married, they do not appear to love each other. At one point Carl even tells Etta they are not "right" together (because she is vehemently anti-Japanese and he wants to support his neighbors during their internment.)

Chapter 14

Love 5: Ishmael is so in love with Hatsue that he does not see how she feels about him. Meanwhile, she has begun to see their love as a product of their youth and the attachment she feels to where she lives: he reminds her of clams and cedars and the quiet woods. She realizes, suddenly, that she does not want to be with him and has never wanted it. She cannot quite tell him this, however.

Chapter 20

Love 6: Susan Marie thinks about Carl constantly now that he is gone from her life. Susan Marie and Carl Heine loved each other in a way that was largely about sex. Susan Marie knows that much of their marriage centered on their sex life—they had had sex just a few hours before he left, never to be seen alive again—and she wonders what would have happened if their sex life had gone bad.

Chapter 22



Love 7: Ishmael has begun to hate Hatsue in some way, and to him a mutual distrust and conflict is better than no interaction at all. He has never stopped loving her, but his loneliness and anger has forced him to reach out to her in strange ways. During the trial, he is somewhat cruel to her, telling her she cannot expect fairness for Kabuo because life is not fair.

Chapter 30

Love 8: Ishmael is still so obsessively in love with Hatsue that he tries to manipulate her into coming to his mother's house to talk about the case. He wants to have something to hold over her, something to make her care about him, even if it is not really about him. He will do anything for her attention.

Chapter 31

Love 9: Ishmael realizes that he loves his mother, despite their fundamental disagreements about such things as the existence of God. He knows he will miss her when she is dead. He feels this largely because her love for him is so dependable: she will never give up on him the way he feels Hatsue did.

Chapter 32

Love 10: Though Hatsue does not love Ishmael, she respects him again, and this seems to begin to heal him. She shows her warmth for him by kissing him gently, exactly the way he has wanted for so many years. Although he is helping her get her husband back—something he is loathe to do, it satisfies him simply to be helping her at all.



Topic Tracking: Racism

Chapter 1

Racism 1: Kabuo's trial gives the reader the first hint of the quiet racism that pervades the town. The courtroom tends to assume that Kabuo's silence indicates his guilt. For them, his behavior is alien, "Japanese," and impossible to understand.

Chapter 4

Racism 2: Throughout the investigation into Carl Heine's death, the white islanders condemn and deride the Japanese islanders, saying they all look the same, etc. However, Guterson takes care to point out the "foreignness" in the white islanders: many of them have Danish accents and distinctly European ways.

Chapter 7

Racism 3: In the courtroom, the Japanese citizens sit in the back, not because they are forced by law--instead, they are forced by public custom. Throughout the history of Japanese settlements, it seems, an assumption has been made about the inferior status of the Japanese. They could not own land, for example, if they were not citizens, and they could not be citizens because they were Japanese.

Chapter 8

Racism 4: Hatsue worries about what her families will think about her relationship with Ishmael. While Ishmael is not so concerned, for Hatsue race is a central question. She feels starkly uncomfortable kissing a boy who is not Japanese, and she later is in love with Kabuo partly because he is "right" for her in the way that her elders want.

Chapter 9

Racism 5: Etta Heine's racism causes her to dislike selling her land to the Miyamotos. Eventually, while they are away at the camps, she sells the land they were holding and sends them back their money. She does not seem to understand why they are angry with her, and sees something alien in their expressions when they look at her--something that disturbs her.

Chapter 15

Racism 6: Fujiko feels the pressure of race when she finds out about Hatsue's relationship with Ishmael. For her, they must stop seeing each other--not because she does not like him or disapproves of his family, but simply because he is white and not Japanese.

Chapter 24



Racism 7: Ishmael recalls his father's legacy as one of fairness to all races. Some of the Japanese townspeople of San Piedro even come to his funeral to tell Ishmael about their respect for Arthur. Ishmael himself does not feel as strong and idealistic as his father. When he learns that Kabuo must be innocent, he does not proceed in the public way his father would have. He is not so interested in making political pronouncements. And yet he too feels that the trial is wrong, and that he has to do something about it.

Chapter 27

Racism 8: Kabuo and Hatsue felt they had to lie about what happened the night Carl died, because they didn't think anyone would believe their story anyway. They had no reason to think they would get a fair trial, because of the history of persecution of Japanese people on the island. Kabuo is very aware that he looks like the soldiers the U.S. were fighting in the war, and he doubts that San Piedro's white citizens can forget about his race.

Racism 9: Kabuo points out that, as much as he is a "Jap," Carl is a Nazi. Both of them were born in the United States to immigrant parents, and both of their ethnic backgrounds were enemies of the U.S. during the war. Kabuo is sick of being associated with Japanese nationalism instead of American nationalism, and he lets Carl know this. Surprisingly, Carl agrees that ignoring Kabuo's patriotism is wrong.

Chapter 29

Racism 10: Alvin Hooks pointedly asks the jurors to consider Kabuo's eyes and face when they decide their verdict. He seems to be implying that one can know another's innocence or guilt based on the way they look-particularly when they look different.



Topic Tracking: Small Town Life

Chapter 2

Small Town Life 1: Art Moran's job is made more difficult by the fact that he knew the entire Heine family. Their entire history comes back to him as he discovers Carl's body. His police work is far from impersonal, and he worries so much about the Heines that he wishes he did not have to be involved in the investigation of Carl's death.

Chapter 5

Small Town Life 2: Horace Whaley and Art Moran have known each other a long time, and so their professional relationship can at times become personal. Horace is a coroner "by default"--he does the job because no one else in this small town wants to. Horace knows that Art does not handle gore very well, and he kindly reassures Art that it is important for him to see Carl's wound.

Chapter 6

Small Town Life 3: Art Moran is uncomfortable when he goes to tell Susan Marie that her husband has died. Art would like to speak to her formally and then leave--this would be easier for him--and so he decides he will tell her he has urgent business and "in the spirit of one who knows his place simply leave Susan Marie alone."

Chapter 10

Small Town Life 4: For Ole Jurgensen it makes sense to sell his farm to Carl Heine Jr. Carl and his family had lived there, and Etta Heine had sold the land to Ole. In such a small town, family histories are of great consequence.

Chapter 13

Small Town Life 5: When the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, the entire town of Amity Harbor is up in arms. Everyone is watching everyone else, and the minority population of Japanese residents is suddenly in the spotlight. They have nowhere to hide in the small town, and although they make a point to show their patriotism by sending money and joining the army, Amity Harbor's white residents are often very suspicious of them.

Chapter 17

Small Town Life 6: When the snow falls heavily in San Pedro, all the citizens band together. Everyone goes to the same grocery store to stock up on food, and many people go to the same doctor if they injure themselves on the ice. The community is insular and self-reliant.

Chapter 19



Small Town Life 7: When Dr. Whitman enters the courtroom, he is seen as a curiosity, partly because he is tall and partly because no one knows who he is. This event helps the reader see just how much everyone knows about everyone else: no secrets can be kept, and everyone has a personal view of everyone else.

Chapter 23

Small Town Life 8: In a town like Amity Harbor, a reporter like Ishmael Chambers has many jobs. He can act as a private investigator, and because he knows everybody he knows exactly who to talk to and how much to trust them. When he searches through the coast guard records, he finds evidence about the night of Carl Heine's death that changes the entire case.

Chapter 28

Small Town Life 9: At the trial, the citizens seem to think as one. They watch Kabuo and determine that he is "not like them". Their town is so insular and afraid of difference that for them, it is almost the same as guilt. The townspeople are desperately trying to see something of themselves in the accused man, but they can only think of him as foreign, because of the way he looks and acts.

Chapter 30

Small Town Life 10: The jurors are tired and desperate to get home to their families. Once all but one of them has decided that Kabuo is guilty, the last juror feels a great deal of pressure from the others. In the manner of small town people, they band together and try to convince the juror to agree with them.

Chapter 31

Small Town Life 11: Arthur Chambers fit well into small town island life, because he understood how to respect and love people without liking them. He knew that on an island, one cannot be anonymous, and any feud that begins will probably continue for a long time, because the two parties cannot separate from each other. Ishmael has not blended as well into island life: he is too obviously different.



Chapter 1

The story begins in the first week of December in San Pedro, a beautiful rural island in Washington. The only town on the island is Amity Harbor. A stately, blank-faced Japanese man, Kabuo Miyamoto, is on trial for the murder of Carl Heine, a fellow fisherman. The courtroom members are solemn, and they don't know why Kabuo is acting so removed—they wonder if he is guilty and simply doesn't care. He has been in prison almost four months. The town is not used to violence: "The most distressing news story of the preceding ten years had been the wounding of an island resident by a drunken Seattle yachtsman with a shotgun on the Fourth of July, 1951." Chapter 1, page 3 Several reporters have come from the surrounding towns to cover the case. Ishmael Chambers is reporting there too. He is thirty-one, a war veteran with an amputated arm. He feels uncomfortable sitting with the out-of-town reporters: he went to high school with Kabuo, and feels that the reporters are acting disrespectful at the trial. That morning Ishmael had spoken to Kabuo's wife, Hatsue, asking her if she was all right. She had told him to go away, and looked at him darkly. He had tried to reason with her, but she had turned away from him.

Topic Tracking: Love 1

Topic Tracking: Racism 1



Chapter 2

Prosecutor Alvin Hooks is questioning the first witness, Sheriff Art Moran. On the morning of September 16th, Carl Heine's boat, the Susan Marie, (named after his wife) was seen adrift in a bay. The sheriff had gone to investigate. There had been a deep fog the night before, and all the boat's lights were still on. The sheriff and his deputy, Abel Martinson, went out to the boat, and found everything neat and undisturbed, except for a coffee cup on the floor. Art Moran began to wonder if Carl may have been knocked over into the ocean the night before. Both men can guess at what Carl's fishing routes and practices might have been the night before. "San Pedro lived and breathed by the salmon, and the cryptic places where they ran at night were the subject of perpetual conversation." Chapter 2, Page 9 The two men wondered what to do. Art knew the Heine family well: Carl had gone to war and his mother, Etta Heine, had sold the strawberry field that had been in the family for two generations while he was gone. When he got back, he became a gill-netter to support his wife and children. He was always polite but never very friendly. Everyone on the island liked him, and Art knew that the town would be very upset by his death. He wished he didn't have to deal with this problem. He and Abel bring up Carl's net from the water, and find Carl tangled in it. Abel, who is young and has never seen a drowned man before, vomits. They notice a wound on Carl's head, and wonder if he hit his head falling over the side of the boat.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 1



Chapter 3

Nels Gudmundsson, the defense attorney for Kabuo Miyamoto, is old and frail. He is in court, interviewing Art Moran. Art indicates that the night of Carl's death was foggy. After careful questioning from Nels, Art explains that Carl Heine's boat took D-8 batteries, but that his spare was dead and that in the battery compartment were two batteries--one a D-8 and the other a D-6, both working perfectly, despite having been used all night to light the boat. Nels reveals that Miyamoto uses D-6 batteries in his boat, and that his spare was not found on his boat. Nels appears to be suggesting that Miyamoto's spare is the D-6 battery on Carl Heine's boat. He then questions Art as to whether he and Abel might have banged Carl's head when they pulled him in, causing the wound on his head. Art says it's unlikely, but he isn't sure.



Chapter 4

During the court's recess, Ishmael sits thinking about Carl's death. When he called Horace Whaley, the coroner, the morning Carl was found, Horace had told him, "The man had survived Okinawa. Carl Heine, it was unbelievable." Chapter 4, page 30
Ishmael, like everyone else in town, is shocked at the tragedy. He remembers his own history: after the War he returned cynical and alienated, his arm amputated at the age of twenty-three. Other people stared at his empty sleeve, and "Since they could not forget about it, neither could he." Chapter 4, page 31
He had gone to Seattle to study history, his attachment to San Piedro not as strong as that of many locals. Finally, however, he decides that books will not make him money, so he goes back to San Piedro to work for his father's press as a journalist. Arthur Chambers loved the newspaper he had started years ago, and took no vacations for years. Ishmael was raised in the press, hearing stories of how if he caught his sleeve in the printer, he would be crushed into smithereens. Arthur was morally strict and Ishmael admired him. Arthur was also cynical, and Ishmael's mother points out that he inherits this from his father. "He loved humankind dearly and with all his heart, but he disliked most human beings" Chapter 4, page 36 she says about her husband.

Ishmael attempts to get some information from other fishermen about Carl Heine's death, feeling awkward. He is an intellectual, unlike the fishermen, but he feels that his war years lend him status in their eyes. Art Moran chats with Ishmael awhile, asking him not to write anything about an investigation--Art has been noticing some funny things about the case, but he doesn't want to go public.

Topic Tracking: Racism 2

Chapter 5

Horace Whaley, the coroner, is testifying for Alvin Hooks, describing his examination of Carl's body. He had admired the strength apparent in Carl's body jealously. He was normally a family physician, but because of his coroner work he had been exposed to many types of death. He had seen many drownings. He was a careful and observant person. Horace is able to see that Carl was breathing when he went into the water. He suddenly notices a wound on Carl's head, which looks like it was made with a stick about two inches wide, as if from a gun butt or a kendo stick (used in Japanese stick fighting.) "And the majority of Japs, Horace recalled, inflicted death over the left ear, swinging in from the right." Chapter 5, p. 56 He begins to remove Carl Heine's face, cutting through the skin and bone, to get a better look. At this time Sheriff Moran and Abel Martinson, who are back in the room, become sick. Horace knows that Art is very disturbed by this time of thing, but he thinks it is important for Art to look at the wound. They are unsure what might have hit Carl, or whether he was alive when it hit him, but Horace and Art begin to think about kendo weapons and Japanese suspects.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 2

Chapter 6

Horace Whaley is now testifying for Nels Gudmundsson. Nels questions Horace until he (apparently reluctantly) indicates that ultimately, Carl died by drowning. That is, he did not die from the head wound.

Art Moran is remembering how he told Susan Marie about her husband's death. He went to her uncomfortably because she was attractive, and because he knew her well enough that he could not give her the news formally. He had to talk with her and see her pain. And so he decided he would tell her he had urgent business and "in the spirit of one who knows his place simply leave Susan Marie alone." Chapter 6, pg. 70 Instead, however, he went into the house and told her gently that Carl was dead. She was struck dumb and he walked past her carefully to call her sister.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 3

Topic Tracking: Love 2



Chapter 7

We are given a short history of the Japanese settlers in San Pedro, who first arrived in around 1883. They worked in the strawberry fields that were owned by white farmers, and there was always an uneasy tension between the two races.

Hatsue comes to visit her husband. He is stoic about his ordeal, though she is very upset. She has put her life on hold, in fact, worrying about their future. He has been imprisoned for seventy-seven days. Hatsue, who is thirty-one, knows she is no longer as beautiful as she was. She is remembering her former teacher, Mrs. Shigemura, who told her that white men might want her, but she must marry a Japanese man, and that she must find stillness in order to stop wanting petty things and find peace. She remembers her mother, who was partially tricked into marrying her father (she thought he was much wealthier than he was) and how they all toiled in the strawberry fields. She remembers kissing Ishmael Chambers on the beach after he taught her how to swim, and then how when she married Kabuo she told him he was the first person she kissed. She remembered marrying Kabuo in the internment camp, and then having sex with him in a small room with her whole family on the other side of a thin wall. She knew him to be what she was supposed to want, and she knew they wanted the same future (a strawberry farm), and this made her love him. Soon after, he went to war, because he felt it was necessary to show his patriotism. "Hatsue settled into missing her husband...a deliberately controlled hysteria that was something like what Ishmael Chambers felt watching her in the courtroom." Chapter 7, pg. 93

Topic Tracking: Racism 3



Chapter 8

Ishmael remembers how he and Hatsue searched for clams when they were young teenagers. He kissed her and she kissed him back, though it seemed reluctant. Nevertheless, "he decided he would love her forever no matter what came to pass." Chapter 8, pg. 100 For a few days after that Ishmael did odd jobs and worried about what Hatsue was thinking. He spied on her several times, admiring her, and then one afternoon when it was pouring rain he followed her into the woods, where she was hiding in a large hollowed-out tree, They talk a little, wondering if their relationship is wrong and knowing that their parents would not like it, and then they kiss for some time.

Topic Tracking: Love 3

Topic Tracking: Racism 4



Chapter 9

Etta Heine is testifying for Alvin Hooks. She remembers that Zenhichi Miyamoto had come to try to buy her husband's land. Carl Sr. had considered the offer. Etta didn't want to sell to "Japs," but that didn't matter to Carl. He said the Miyamotos were good people and that he and Etta could use the money. He sold the land to the Miyamotos even though, under the Alien Land Act, immigrants were not allowed to own land. Etta takes pains to point out that the Miyamotos never owned the land--and that she never approved of her husband's "selling" it to them. She remembers how when the Japanese townspeople were ordered to go to internment camps within eight days, Zenhichi came to the Heine house to talk with Carl about his payments. Etta was angry--she didn't want "Japs" working her land anyway, and she felt they were going to cheat her and Carl. Zenhichi offered them his savings, and asked them to pick his strawberries while he was gone and sell them. He hoped that the profit would cover what he owed in payments on the land. He and his family had two more payments to make on the land--about two hundred fifty dollars. Etta tried to take the money, but Carl refused it: he could not take it from Zenhichi when Zenhichi and his family were about to go to the internment camps with nothing. Etta remembers that later that day her son came home with a fishing rod given to him by Kabuo, and she ordered him to take it back, because the Miyamoto family owed them money and she didn't want things to get mixed up. Carl was hurt, but he took it back, Etta says. Etta tells Alvin Hooks that the Miyamotos didn't meet their payments--very simple. She sold the land to Ole Jurgensen and sent the Miyamotos back their equity money. She believes that because the Miyamotos wanted the land back, Kabuo murdered her son.

Topic Tracking: Love 4

Topic Tracking: Racism 5

Chapter 10

Etta is testifying about moving to a small apartment in town after her husband died, because she could not work the farm by herself. In 1945, Kabuo came back from the war and went to see Etta. She hadn't seen him in three years. Kabuo is angry because Etta sold the land to Ole without telling him the Miyamotos were one payment away from ownership. Etta shut the door in his face. Ever since then, she says, she and Carl Jr. had to watch out for Kabuo--he was always giving them dirty looks. She claims, "We're enemies all right. They've been botherin' us over those seven acres for near ten years now. My son was killed over it." Chapter 10, pg. 141

Nels Gudmundsson questions Etta until he learns that she sold her land to Ole at twenty-five thousand dollars more than she was selling it to the Miyamotos.

Alvin Hooks questions Ole Jurgensen, a frail old man, and learns that Kabuo came to him and angrily asked to buy his land back. Ole, who knew nothing about Etta's selling the Miyamoto land away, said that he did not want to sell any of his newly acquired land. However, after Ole had a stroke and could not work the land anymore, he put the land up for sale publicly. Carl Heine came and told him that he wanted to buy back the land his mother had sold to Ole. The fishing life didn't suit him, he said. Ole was pleased with the idea.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 4

The same afternoon, Kabuo Miyamoto came to try to buy Ole's land. When Ole told him he had just sold it to Carl, Kabuo's face showed anger for just a moment. Then he left.



Chapter 11

Kabuo sits in his cell, remembering his life as a soldier. He remembers killing a very young German boy. He remembers when he first met Nels, and the old lawyer invited him to play chess, even as he talked about the possibility of the death penalty. He liked Nels, and could tell that the lawyer would help him. He remembers his father teaching him kendo, and knows that he is so skilled at it because he is able to be ruthless. He learned about that side of himself in the war.

Chapter 12

Ishmael remembers his many meetings with Hatsue in the tree. They kissed and talked. Hatsue was nervous: she wondered if their relationship was evil, because it had to be hidden from her parents. Ishmael refused to believe it, and argued that the world was evil, not he and Hatsue. They both worried often about the war and the fact that he was likely to be drafted.



Chapter 13

Hatsue was at the town's Buddhist Chapel when she and her family heard the news about Pearl Harbor being bombed. There were many reports of racist insults and threats against Amity Harbor's Japanese townspeople. Hatsue is very worried--she knows that she looks Japanese, and that her parents speak little English. Ishmael's father Arthur begins printing articles about patriotic Japanese residents. Ishmael tells him that this is biased reporting--that quality reporting just tells the facts. Arthur asks, "But which facts? Which facts do we print, Ishmael?" Chapter 13, pg. 188 Arthur's newspaper begins to lose subscribers, although some people do write to tell him that they support his antiracist position.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 5



Chapter 14

Two weeks after the bombing most of the Japanese men in the area are arrested, including Hisao, Hatsue's father. The FBI men also confiscate much of their Japanese paraphernalia, including Hatsue's mother Fujiko's special kimono. Fujiko tells her daughters that life will be hard for them now, but she is confident--life has been hard for her before. She tells her daughters not to get involved with white people: they must live among them, but they should not get intertwined with them. Hatsue protests that not all white people are bad, but her mother simply tells her that she is being overconfident and that it is better to be silent. Hatsue says she does not want to be Japanese, but at the same time she feels very unsure of herself, and feels that her mother is right. Hatsue walks in the woods that afternoon, thinking about all the things that were worrying her. Most of all, she is concerned about Ishmael: she suddenly recognizes that "she concealed her love for Ishmael Chambers not because she was Japanese in her heart but because she could not in truth profess to the world that what she felt for him was love at all." Chapter 14, pg. 206 When she talks with Ishmael about this, he doesn't understand, but keeps insisting that love is the strongest thing in the world. Soon after, however, all the Japanese islanders are required to relocate within eight days. Each family organizes their livelihood in a different way. Most of them ask a white neighbor to take care of their farm (in exchange for the profits) until they get back. Furniture from Japanese houses is kept in huge storage rooms. Some white citizens begin to protest that most of the people being relocated--such as high school students like Hatsue--could not possibly be spies. Hatsue goes to the forest to be with Ishmael one last time. She begins to cry, feeling empty, and does not resist when he undresses her. After the first moment of sex, however, she instantly recognizes that she feels wrong with Ishmael, and that she has never felt right. She can't hurt him by telling him the truth--that she does not want to be with him. She leaves him there in the forest, after having promised to write.

Topic Tracking: Love 5



Chapter 15

Fujiko and her daughters are taken to a train on its slow way to California. They are packed in with other Japanese people, given disgusting food and typhoid shots that make them sick. They are forced to use filthy bathrooms and sleep in dust-covered rooms. There is misery all around them--one man even shoots his wife and himself. After a few days, a letter from Ishmael comes, and Hatsue's sister Sumiko reads it, then gives it to their mother. The letter makes clear that Ishmael and Hatsue have been intimate. Fujiko thinks about her own life with Hisao: she does not feel passionate about him, but she cares for him and trusts him. She is furious with her daughter. She writes a letter to Ishmael's parents, telling them that she respected them but that she wanted her daughter to have no more communication with Ishmael. Hatsue, who begs for her mother's forgiveness, tells her that she does not need to send the letter: she was not going to write back to Ishmael anyway. She does not love him anymore. She will send her own letter. Still, she feels grief about the end of their relationship, and so does not respond when Kabuo, who is (of course) in the camp with them, asks for her company. Only after a few months does she warm up to him and find that they have a lot in common.

Topic Tracking: Racism 6



Chapter 16

Ishmael goes to war, and gets very sick soon after. When he is well again he trains as a radio operator and sees a tremendous amount of violence. He is very angry with Hatsue and wants to kill many Japanese people because of it. The battles are vicious, and many of Ishmael's friends and acquaintances die. Ishmael loses his arm and when it is amputated, he sees it thrown in a pile of bandages. He dreams of this gory image even years later.



Chapter 17

The snow hits San Pedro heavily during the trial. Sheriff Moran is testifying about a rope line left on Carl Heine's boat, which clearly came from Miyamoto's boat.

"[Miyamoto] tied up to Carl's boat and left a line on it. That seems to me pretty clear."

Chapter 17, pg. 258

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 6



Chapter 18

The day Carl's body is discovered, Art Moran goes to see Judge Fielding. He asks for a search warrant for Kabuo's boat. Etta Heine had told him about the feud between the Heines and the Miyamotos, and Horace Whaley had told him about how a kendo stick could have made the wound on Carl's head. The judge reluctantly agrees, though he does not feel the evidence against Miyamoto is strong.

Art Moran and Abel Martinson search Kabuo Miyamoto's boat. Kabuo is irked and impatient, but respectful. Then the policemen find blood on a fishing gaff. Kabuo says it is fish blood, but Art tells him he is under arrest anyway, just to prevent him from sailing to Canada that night. Art begins for the first time to think of the situation as a murder. "Here was the Jap with the bloody gun butt Horace had suggested he look for." Chapter 18, pg. 269



Chapter 19

Alvin Hooks brings Sterling Whitman to the witness stand. Mr. Whitman is a hematologist whose job it is to perform blood tests. He tells the court that he tested the blood on the gaff and found that it matched Carl Heine's blood--and NOT Miyamoto's. Nels Gudmundsson asks the witness whether if the blood had come from a head wound, there would also not be some bone or hair or brain matter on the gaff. After some hesitation, Dr. Whitman agrees that this seems reasonable, and that the blood might have come from a cut found on Carl's hand--or from another man altogether.

Another witness is called: Sergeant Maples. Maples trained Miyamoto during the war, but when he learned that Miyamoto was an expert at kendo, he began to take lessons from him and saw that he was ruthless and highly skilled. "No, it would not surprise Sergeant Maples to hear that Kabuo Miyamoto had killed a man with a fishing gaff."
Chapter 19, pg. 285

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 7



Chapter 20

Alvin Hooks finishes his prosecution with his most valuable witness: Susan Marie Heine. Susan Marie remembers that soon before Carl died, Kabuo came to see him. He seemed uncomfortable. Susan Marie also remembers how she met Carl. She was twenty and had wanted to be with him in a way she did not want other men. She remembers now that their sex life was at the center of their marriage, and wonders what would have happened if it had gone bad. She remembers that in just a few minutes after he arrived, Kabuo was gone, and Carl would not really tell her what they had talked about at first. Finally he explained that Kabuo wanted the land, and that Carl said he would have to talk to Susan Marie and think about it--particularly because of the 'mean faces' Kabuo had been making at Etta. Kabuo had gone away angry. Carl told Susan Marie that he didn't like Kabuo much anymore, even though they were friends as children--didn't like the way Kabuo acted as if the seven acres were already his.

Topic Tracking: Love 6

Chapter 21

Nels watches Susan Marie on the witness stand, feeling depressed because he is too old to be anyone's lover, and he admires how beautiful she is. He makes clear to the court that she was not there for any part of the conversation between Kabuo and Carl. Nels presses Susan Marie to tell the court that Carl had given Kabuo at least some hope that he might buy the land--Carl had told him he would think about it. Nels is clearly uncomfortable with the fact that in some way, Susan Marie is allowed to speak for her husband, and tell her version of what happened the day before he died, because he cannot tell it himself. Just as Nels finishes his questioning, the power goes out in the courthouse.



Chapter 22

Judge Fielding requests to see both lawyers as the court takes a recess. Ishmael walks out into the storm to check on his mother. He also takes some pictures of car accidents caused by the storm. Driving around the snow-covered town, Ishmael thinks, "The world was one world, and the notion that a man might kill another over some small patch of it did not make sense--though Ishmael knew that such things happened." Chapter 22, pg. 321 Suddenly Ishmael comes up Hisao Imada and his daughter Hatsue trying to dig his car out of the snow. Ishmael drives Hisao and Hatsue to Hisao's home. Hatsue asks him to talk about how unfair the trial is in his newspaper. Ishmael wonders aloud if anyone can expect fairness, and when Hatsue says they can, Ishmael agrees with her bitterly. He seems to be saying something about the way she treated him.

Topic Tracking: Love 7



Chapter 23

Ishmael goes to the coast guard lighthouse to look at storm records. He sits, remembering that when he saw her after the war and she was distantly polite to him he was angry. He told her, "The Japs did it. They shot my arm off. Japs." Chapter 23, pg. 332 She turned away from him and they did not speak to each other for some time. He ran into her on the beach one day. They were the only ones there, and he told her if she held him, just once, not as a lover but as another human being, he might be able to start to forget her. She gently but firmly said she could not do this. In the coast guard record room, Ishmael realizes that weather records might help him learn something about the night Carl Heine died. Soon after, he finds what he wants: a record that a large freighter had taken a path near the island very close to where Carl Heine was fishing that night he died. "An enormous freighter had plowed right through the fishing grounds, throwing before it a wake large enough to knock even a big man overboard." Chapter 23, pg. 335 Ishmael realizes that these records are kept in folders and almost never looked at again. He is the only one who knows about the huge boat traveling through the fishing waters.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 8



Chapter 24

Ishmael goes to visit his mother, making sure she is not freezing in her house. Ishmael remembers them once talking about God. Ishmael had said he was an agnostic, and his mother argued that everybody feels God in their lives. His mother asks about the murder trial. She says, "I have to think it's a travesty. That they arrested him because he's Japanese." Chapter 24, pg. 343 Ishmael says that the facts point to his guilt, but his mother argues that one needs more than facts to decide someone's guilt or innocence. His mother also tells him that in order to be happy, he needs to get married and have children. He tells her that is not the answer to his happiness. Ishmael remembers his father, how when he died a member of the Japanese-American Citizen's League had approached Ishmael. The man had said, " We know you will follow in your father's footsteps. We are certain you will honor his legacy." Chapter 24, pg. 352

Topic Tracking: Racism 7

He reads Hatsue's letter from when she was in the camp. In it, she states that she never loved him and that although she only wants the best for him, they must separate and no longer be part of each other's lives. He decides to write the article about the trial Hatsue asked him to write, in order to make her beholden to him.



Chapter 25

Hatsue is called to the witness stand. She looks beautiful and calm, but inside she is in turmoil. She remembers that when Kabuo came home from the war he had nightmares and there was a darkness to him which she gradually came to accept. He told her he meant to buy back his parents' land as soon as he could. He was furious at Etta Heine and at the way their lives had been upset by the internment. For years he tried desperately to make enough money to buy back the land, but he was not a very successful fisherman. Hatsue hoped that he would be softened by the births of his children. She did not want to always be waiting for something better--she wanted to be comfortable with what she had. Nels Gudmundsson questions Hatsue about what her husband seemed to think about his conversation with Carl the day before he died. She says that he seemed hopeful--that he felt Carl would do what was right and sell the land back to the Miyamotos. The morning of Carl's death, Kabuo had come home saying that he had gone onto Carl's boat and given Carl a battery (Carl's was dead) and that they had agreed on a price for the land. Kabuo, testifies Hatsue, was thrilled that the land was going to be Miyamoto property again. "But later that day...a clerk at Petersen's told Hatsue about the terrible accident that had befallen Carl Heine." Chapter 25, pg. 368



Chapter 26

Alvin Hooks questions Hatsue. He asks her why she didn't tell anyone the happy news about getting the land back. She says that once they heard Carl had died, they didn't know what would happen with the land. Hooks demands to know why she did not immediately come forward and explain what happened the night of Carl's death (Kabuo had helped him with his dead battery), and when she has no real answer, he confidently instructs her to step down. She protests that they had no time to tell anyone what happened, and though she does not say it, she implies that she knows the legal system is racist and that she and Kabuo wanted to implicate themselves as little as possible.

Nels calls an expert gill-netter as a witness. The man testifies that it would be impossible to tie up one's boat to another person's boat, as Kabuo had done with Carl, without both people agreeing to it. That is, Kabuo could not have sneaked up on Carl that night and climbed onto his boat. Carl's dead battery is difficult to explain, says the witness--most fishermen have a spare they can use. Alvin Hooks cross-examines the witness, and gradually gets him to admit that the following scenario is possible: Kabuo lied to Carl, telling Carl his engine was dead. Carl tied his boat to Kabuo's in order to help him, and Kabuo hit him in the head with his fishing gaff. Though the witness does not think this is likely, he agrees could have happened.



Chapter 27

Kabuo remembers how he lied to everyone in the beginning of the trial, even Nels. He told them that he had not seen Carl Heine that night. Nels quickly figured out he was lying, and begged him to tell the truth. Kabuo claims he had to lie. "We're sly and treacherous. Can't trust a Jap, can you?" Chapter 27, pg. 391 Kabuo knows about the silent racism that pervades the island. Nevertheless, he tells Nels the truth.

Topic Tracking: Racism 8

Kabuo remembers the dense fog of the night Carl died. He waits for salmon and is grateful for each one he catches, knowing it brings him closer to buying his land back. He comes upon Carl Heine, his boat drifting, his battery dead. Kabuo goes aboard Carl's boat. Kabuo's battery does not fit in Carl's boat; Carl hammers it down with Kabuo's gaff to make it fit, and cuts himself in the process, getting blood on the gaff. Kabuo hopes that Carl will bring up the matter of the land, and finally Carl does. They exchange racial slurs--Carl calls Kabuo a "Jap" and Kabuo points out that Carl could be called a "Nazi" because he is German--and then they agree on a price. Carl will sell Kabuo seven acres for \$8,500.00, eight hundred dollars down payment.

Topic Tracking: Racism 9



Chapter 28

Kabuo tells this story on the witness stand. Alvin Hooks is very suspicious, and can't understand why Kabuo would not have told the truth from the very beginning of the investigation. He explains that after he lent his battery to Carl Heine, he went home and put a new one from his shed into his boat. Hooks demands to know why Kabuo keeps changing his story, and Kabuo responds that he doesn't remember everything. Hooks continues, "You're a hard man to trust, Mr. Miyamoto. You sit before us with no expression, keeping a poker face through--" Chapter 28, pg. 412 Nels objects to this sort of statement. Kabuo is permitted to step down, and the court gets a good look at him. "He was, they decided, not like them at all, and the detached and aloof manner in which he watched the snowfall made this palpable and self-evident." Chapter 28, pg. 412

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 9



Chapter 29

Alvin Hooks theorizes for the jurors about the night of Carl Heine's death. He claims that Kabuo waited until the dead of night, and then pretended his battery was dead. As Carl let him come aboard his boat to get assistance, Kabuo hit him in the head with his fishing gaff. Kabuo, says Hooks, had hoped that throwing Carl overboard would make him disappear forever. Hooks asks the jurors to look at the defendant. "Look into his eyes, consider his face, and ask yourselves what your duty is as citizens of this community." Chapter 29, pg. 415

Topic Tracking: Racism 10

Nels, in his closing statement, immediately points out the prejudice in Alvin Hooks' own statement. He claims that the trial is entirely based on prejudice, in fact. Nels asks, "Will you contribute to the indifferent forces that ceaselessly conspire toward injustice? Or will you stand up against this endless tide and in the face of it be truly human?" Chapter 29, pg. 419

Judge Fielding is worried, knowing that if the jury finds Kabuo guilty, he alone will decide whether or not Kabuo should hang. He cautions the jurors to think hard during their deliberation. They are being asked whether Kabuo committed first degree murder--they must address only that question. They must determine if he planned the murder--it cannot have been in self defense or a sudden whim.



Chapter 30

The courtroom is kept open because the townspeople have no other warm place to go. Ishmael sits watching Hatsue, knowing that all he has to do is give the judge the coast guard notes and the trial will be over. She approaches him, saying again that the trial is unfair. He tells her he is going to his mother's house, and she can come there if she wants to speak to him.

Topic Tracking: Love 8

The jurors have decided on Kabuo's guilt--all but one man, who has doubts. The others argue that one can doubt anything, but eventually, a decision has to be made. They begin to get impatient, especially when at six the court closes for the night, but the single juror will not budge. As long as there are doubts in his mind, he refuses to decide on Kabuo's guilt. "If I feel doubt, that's all that matters, right?" Chapter 30, pg. 29

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 10



Chapter 31

Ishmael takes his mother back to his apartment so they can weather the storm together. He remembers his father as a kind, honest, hardworking man. His father had talked with him about island life, and told him, "An enemy on an island is an enemy forever." Chapter 31, pg. 439 He was a gifted editorialist who saw both sides of most issues.

Topic Tracking: Small Town Life 11

Ishmael remembers walking with his father and hearing people say they were just the same, Ishmael and Arthur. People had said that Ishmael had his father's conscience. Now, Ishmael wonders if this is true. He still has the coast guard notes. "The war, his arm, the course of things--it had all made his heart much smaller." Chapter 31, pg. 442 Ishmael reads the old letter from Hatsue another time, realizing that she had once respected him, and he had lost his own self-respect. He looks in on his sleeping mother, and is struck by his attachment to her.

Topic Tracking: Love 9

Ishmael walks to Hatsue's parents house. It is 10:30 at night, but he seems to have no choice but to speak with her. He shows her and her parents the coast guard notes.



Chapter 32

Although Hatsue's parents are not convinced that this new evidence will cause a mistrial, Hatsue is grateful. Privately, she kisses Ishmael very gently and tells him, "Find someone to marry. Have children, Ishmael. Live." Chapter 32, pg. 446

Topic Tracking: Love 10

The next morning Hatsue comes to see Ishmael early. She excitedly tells Ishmael about a way they could see whether Carl's battery really did die: he would have lashed up a lantern as an emergency light. They go to town together to look at Carl's boat. Art Moran is at first hesitant to let them, but he eventually sees that the new evidence is important. Though there is no lantern on the boat, it is clear that a lantern was there, because of cuts in the lashings. Art, Abel and Ishmael also discover a dent in a wood pole near where the lantern was hung. The dent has several human hairs stuck to it. Art Moran takes them to the coroner to be tested.

Soon after the tests, Kabuo Miyamoto is released from prison. Ishmael sits at his typewriter, thinking about what he will say in his article about the case. He imagines Carl Heine trying to cut down his lantern after speaking with Kabuo and borrowing the spare battery. Carl must have been knocked against the wooden pole by the force of the wake of the huge freighter coming toward him. When he fell into the water, he was unconscious and drowned soon after. No one knew, considered Ishmael, what any of those involved in the case were feeling or thinking as the events occurred. "The heart of any other, because it had a will, would remain forever mysterious." Chapter 32, pg. 460