

# The Remains Of The Day PDF (Limited Copy)

Kazuo Ishiguro

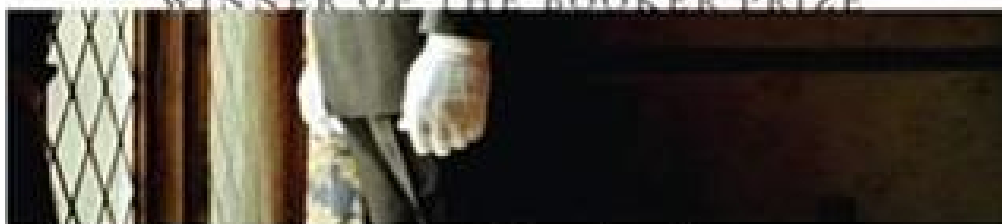
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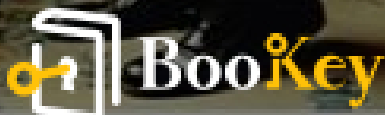
## The Remains of the Day

WINNER OF THE BOOKER PRIZE



Kazuo Ishiguro

AUTHOR OF *THE REMAINS OF THE DAY*



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# **The Remains Of The Day Summary**

A Journey of Regret and Lost Purpose

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## About the book

In Kazuo Ishiguro's evocative novel "The Remains of the Day," the deeply introspective butler Stevens embarks on a poignant journey of memory and self-discovery as he reflects on his decades of devoted service at Darlington Hall, a grand English estate. Through his meticulously crafted narrative, Stevens grapples with themes of duty, regret, and the elusive nature of happiness, revealing not just the complexities of a life spent in unwavering loyalty to a fading world, but also the heart-wrenching realizations about missed opportunities and unspoken feelings. As he recalls his interactions with the spirited housekeeper Miss Kenton, readers are drawn into a mesmerizing exploration of the human condition, prompting us to question the sacrifices we make in the name of duty and the true cost of our choices. With its lyrical prose and profound insights, "The Remains of the Day" invites us to reflect on our own lives and the relationships that define us.

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## About the author

Kazuo Ishiguro is a renowned British author, born on November 8, 1954, in Nagasaki, Japan, before moving to the UK at the age of five. He is celebrated for his profound explorations of memory, time, and the complexities of human emotion, often set against the backdrop of an ambiguous historical context. Ishiguro's literary style is marked by its subtlety and a profound sense of nostalgia, which is particularly evident in his acclaimed works, including "The Remains of the Day," which won the Booker Prize in 1989. With a diverse body of work that spans novels, short stories, and screenwriting, Ishiguro has garnered widespread acclaim, including the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017, solidifying his place as one of the most important contemporary writers.

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## Chapter 1 Summary: PROLOGUE: JULY 1956: Darlington Hall

In the prologue of *\*The Remains of the Day\**, set in July 1956 at Darlington Hall, we meet Stevens, the dedicated butler whose life revolves around service and professionalism. His employer, Mr. Farraday, an American gentleman, encourages him to take a much-needed break, suggesting a trip to the picturesque West Country. This gentle nudge triggers Stevens to reconsider not only the importance of a vacation but also the broader implications of his past and present functions at the estate.

Reflecting on his career, Stevens grapples with recent small errors in his duties that unsettle him, mainly attributable to inadequate staff planning following the transition from the Darlington family to Farraday. His contemplation about work and personal fulfillment deepens with the unexpected arrival of a letter from Miss Kenton, a former housekeeper, sparking nostalgia and the possibility of her return. As he meticulously devises a new staff plan to manage Darlington Hall with fewer staff members, he realizes he may need Miss Kenton's help to execute it successfully.

Stevens's character is steeped in tradition and professionalism, reluctant to adopt the changes that modern life demands. He struggles with the American style of banter that Mr. Farraday embraces, feeling hesitant and awkward in

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navigating their employer-employee dynamic. His reflections reveal a man who values dignity and responsibility over personal desires, suggesting a theme of the personal cost of duty that runs throughout the narrative.

Though initially dismissive of Mr. Farraday's suggestion to travel, Stevens's perspective shifts as he brainstorms the possibility of combining his journey with a professional context—reaching out to Miss Kenton to explore her interest in returning. With careful consideration of responsibilities, expenses, and appropriate attire, he meticulously plans for the trip, embodying his role's expectations even when contemplating a personal adventure.

In summary, this prologue serves to establish Stevens as a character who embodies restraint and duty, juxtaposed against the evolving world around him. His journey is poised not only as a physical trip to a beautiful part of England but as an introspective exploration of his past relationships and professional identity as he grapples with the interplay between duty and desire. The themes of nostalgia, the passage of time, and the challenges of adapting to change resonate throughout, setting the stage for Stevens's journey of self-discovery.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: DAY ONE – EVENING: Salisbury

In Chapter 2 of "The Remains of the Day" by Kazuo Ishiguro, we follow the thoughts and reflections of Stevens, the dedicated butler of Darlington Hall, as he embarks on a significant journey. He starts his day with an odd sense of nostalgia, as he prepares to leave an empty house for what feels like the first time in decades. Despite his meticulous planning, he departs later than intended, feeling a mix of apprehension and excitement. As he drives away, he experiences a blend of familiarity and disconnection from the landscape around him. While at first, he feels unenthusiastic, as he navigates unfamiliar roads, a slight unease transforms into exhilaration when he begins to truly embrace his journey.

Stevens encounters a local man who encourages him to hike up a nearby hill for a breathtaking view. Initially resistant, Stevens feels compelled to prove himself and embarks on the climb, ultimately reaching a stunning vantage point. This moment becomes a pivotal one for him, as the view of the rolling English countryside inspires a sense of anticipation for the experiences ahead. Despite some minor trials during his travel, such as a stop at a modest guesthouse in Salisbury, he feels a sense of satisfaction and comfort at the end of the day.

Throughout his reflections, Stevens considers themes of dignity and professionalism, particularly in the context of what constitutes a "great"

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butler. Memories of discussions about the nature of butlers arise, with Stevens reminiscing about the debates in the servants' hall, where he and peers pondered the essence of dignity in their work. He holds admiration for his late father, a man he believes embodied the dignity expected of the profession, despite lacking certain superficial attributes valued by others.

As Stevens explores these ideas, he reflects on the significance of emotional restraint, professionalism, and the qualities that distinguish a great butler. Stories from his father's career serve as illustrative examples of dignity and composure in the face of challenging situations. Through Stevens's eyes, we engage with broader themes about duty, self-identity, and the introspective journey of a man grappling with his past while searching for meaning in his service. By the chapter's end, it becomes clear that Stevens's journey is not only geographic but also a quest for self-discovery and a deeper understanding of what it means to serve with dignity.

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## Chapter 3: DAY TWO – MORNING: Salisbury

In Chapter 3 of "The Remains of the Day," we follow Stevens, the dedicated butler of Darlington Hall, as he reflects on his past while navigating a quiet morning in Salisbury. After a troubled night's sleep in a strange bed, Stevens wakes early and contemplates a letter he received from Miss Kenton, who has recently separated from her husband and expressed a yearning for her past at Darlington Hall. Stevens recalls fond memories of their time together, revealing his deep nostalgia and bittersweet feelings about her potential return to the estate. He reflects on their professional relationship and past interactions, particularly emphasizing the rigid distinctions of class and duty that shaped their work dynamic.

As Stevens thinks about Miss Kenton's letter, he recalls specific incidents that highlight their professional relationship, including minor conflicts over staff management and the expectations tied to social hierarchy. These memories serve to illustrate not only Stevens's persistent adherence to duty but also the subtle emotional undercurrents that often went unspoken between him and Miss Kenton.

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## **Chapter 4 Summary: DAY TWO – AFTERNOON: Mortimer’s Pond, Dorset**

In Chapter 4 of "The Remains of the Day," the protagonist, Stevens, reflects on the essence of being a “great” butler, confronted with new realizations during his journey. Having already defined ‘greatness’ through the lens of dignity and professionalism, Stevens contemplates the criteria set by the Hayes Society for distinguished butlers and begins to reassess his previous conclusions. He acknowledges that while he still believes in the importance of dignity, he starts to appreciate the Society's point about being linked to a 'distinguished household.' However, he challenges their traditional, snobbish view of what constitutes distinction, proposing instead that greatness relates to the moral standing of one’s employer rather than mere titles or lineage.

Stevens compares the attitudes of his generation of butlers to those of their predecessors. He describes the older generation's view as a hierarchical ladder, where prestige correlates with social status, while his generation sees the world as a wheel, with influential houses at its center shaping broader society. This evolution of perspective suggests a more idealistic and morally conscious ambition among butlers like Stevens, who aimed to serve employers committed to serving humanity’s progress. He reflects on his own career path, explaining how he transitioned between positions searching for a purpose that aligned with his aspirations.

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While pondering these thoughts, Stevens encounters a batman who assists him with his car trouble. This man, who embodying the less formal, modern approach to the profession, hints at Stevens' own distinguished past, inquiring about his former employer, Lord Darlington. In a moment of uncertainty, Stevens misrepresents his connection to Lord Darlington, creating an impression that he has never served the lord. This decision troubles Stevens, as he reflects on his reasons for distancing himself from that part of his history, suggesting his desire to avoid judgment regarding Lord Darlington's complicated legacy.

Later, Stevens recalls a recent visit from Mr. and Mrs. Wakefield, where Mrs. Wakefield also questioned his past, leading to embarrassment for Stevens and his employer over a misunderstanding about his service history. His departure from the truth during this visit further connects to his earlier encounter with the batman, reflecting a pattern of avoidance concerning his former employer's reputation. As he sits by Mortimer's Pond, Stevens finds himself contemplating his long career, his service to Lord Darlington, and the pride he feels for having been associated with such a distinguished household.

Overall, this chapter resonates with themes of identity and the complexities of social status, the evolving roles within the class system, the heavy weight of past associations, and the search for meaning and dignity in one's work. Through Stevens' introspection, Ishiguro captures the profound depth of

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personal reflection and the societal standards that shape an individual's sense of self-worth within the confines of duty and loyalty.

Key Concepts	Details
Protagonist Reflection	Stevens reflects on what it means to be a "great" butler amidst new realizations during his journey.
Definition of Greatness	Previously defined by dignity and professionalism; reassesses this against the Hayes Society's criteria for distinguished butlers.
Critique of Tradition	Challenges the Society's view of distinction; suggests moral character of employers is more significant than titles or lineage.
Generational Perspective	Compares old and new butler generations; notes older generation's hierarchical views versus newer, more idealistic and morally conscious ambitions.
Personal Journey	Reflects on his career path, seeking purpose aligned with his aspirations.
Encounters	Meets a batman, who prompts him to confront his past; misrepresents his connection to Lord Darlington.
Embarrassment	Recalls a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Wakefield, where misunderstanding about his service history causes embarrassment.
Thematic Elements	Identity, social status complexities, the weight of past associations, and the pursuit of meaning and dignity in work.
Conclusion	Stevens' introspection reveals the depth of personal reflection and societal standards affecting self-worth, duty, and loyalty.



## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Greatness is defined by the moral standing of one's employer rather than mere titles or lineage.

**Critical Interpretation:** As you reflect on your own journey, consider how your choice of associations shapes your identity and values.

Embrace the idea that true greatness stems from the integrity of the causes you support and the people you align yourself with. In a world that often prioritizes status, let your actions and the company you keep be influenced by moral standing, fostering a deeper sense of purpose and connection in your own life.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: DAY THREE – MORNING: Taunton, Somerset

In Chapter 5 of "The Remains of the Day," we follow Stevens, the butler of Darlington Hall, as he reflects on his recent experiences while staying at the Coach and Horses inn in Taunton, Somerset. Stevens describes the quaint inn with its rustic charm and his bare but decent room. After a solitary dinner of sandwiches in his room, he ventures to the bar, where he encounters locals who seem uncomfortable with his presence. They attempt to include him in their conversations, revealing a sense of community and hospitality, though he feels somewhat out of place. When he attempts a witty remark — a play on the noise he will likely endure during his stay — it receives a mild, bemused reaction, leading him to consider the nuances of humor and social interactions.

This moment of awkwardness unsettles Stevens as he begins to feel that his humor, meant to impress, may have instead caused offense. He has been trying to cultivate his wit to meet the expectations of his current employer, Mr. Farraday, an American gentleman who appreciates a good banter. Stevens reflects on the challenges of this endeavor, realizing that the art of wit is perilous without adequate experience. The ensuing night is restless, as he is kept awake by the landlords' noisy activities.

After a disruptive night, Stevens moves on to a charming tearoom in



Taunton, contemplating his longing for perfection in service and the significance of silver polishing in his career. He reminisces about Giffen and Co., the silver polish that epitomized his profession and reflects on how polishing silver has evolved over the years. He recalls memorable encounters at Darlington Hall, particularly the impression the silver made on notable figures like Lord Halifax, suggesting a connection between the quality of service and political affairs.

As Stevens recalls these events, he grapples with the criticism surrounding Lord Darlington's past associations, particularly with figures linked to the Nazi regime. Stevens defends his former employer against allegations of anti-Semitism and fascist sympathies, arguing that the context of the era shaped such associations and that many prominent people at the time also engaged with these figures. He seems to be trying to justify his loyalty to Darlington, reflecting the inner conflict of serving someone whose reputation has tarnished over time.

Despite these memories, Stevens is aware of the present. He acknowledges recent minor errors in his service and the need for improvement. He holds onto hope that Miss Kenton, his former colleague, may return and restore his ideal standard of efficiency, even as he contemplates her ambiguous intentions in a letter. Throughout this chapter, themes of dignity in service, the complexities of social interaction, loyalty, and the burdens of the past intertwine, revealing Stevens' deep dedication to his profession amidst his



introspective musings.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The significance of humility in social interactions

**Critical Interpretation:** In reflecting on Stevens' awkward encounters and his attempts to navigate social dynamics, one key insight emerges: humility in our interactions with others can forge genuine connections. Life often presents us with moments that challenge our confidence and wit, reminding us that authenticity and a willingness to embrace our true selves are paramount. Instead of striving for perfection or trying to impress, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable fosters deeper relationships and enriches our experiences with the community around us.

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## **Chapter 6: DAY THREE – EVENING: Moscombe, near Tavistock, Devon**

In this chapter from "The Remains of the Day," Stevens, the meticulous butler of Darlington Hall, reflects on a tense period in the 1930s when his employer, Lord Darlington, made troubling decisions regarding Jewish staff members. The chapter centers around Stevens's recollections of how Darlington succumbed to pressures regarding anti-Semitic sentiments, particularly influenced by a visitor, Mrs. Carolyn Bernet, who had a significant, albeit negative, impact on Darlington's views.

The chapter begins with Stevens addressing allegations of anti-Semitism in the household. He refutes these claims by recounting his experiences with Jewish staff, particularly during a notable incident where Lord Darlington insisted that two Jewish maids be dismissed for the sake of the well-being of his guests. Despite Stevens's internal conflict and sense of loyalty toward the maids, he follows his employer's directive, highlighting his commitment to duty above personal beliefs.

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## Chapter 7 Summary: DAY FOUR – AFTERNOON: Little Compton, Cornwall

In Chapter 7 of "The Remains of the Day," we follow Stevens, an English butler, on a reflective journey as he travels to Little Compton, Cornwall, to meet Miss Kenton, a former housekeeper at Darlington Hall. Amidst the backdrop of a steady rain, Stevens paints a picture of his cozy hotel, emphasizing its homely charm despite its lack of luxury. With time to spare before his scheduled meeting with Miss Kenton, he reminisces about past interactions and significant memories he has of their time working together.

Stevens recalls his departure from the Taylors, where he stayed overnight, and his conversation with Dr. Carlisle. This interaction reveals Stevens's loyalty to his former employer, Lord Darlington, and hints at the complexities of his character, showcasing both his dignity and the struggle to articulate emotions. The doctor's probing questions about dignity reflect deeper themes of the chapter, such as the meaning of personal worth and the masks people wear in service to others.

As Stevens drives through the picturesque Cornish landscape, he is plagued by a powerful memory of a moment with Miss Kenton where he sensed her distress. He recalls standing indecisively outside her parlour, imagining her crying—a pivotal moment that underscores his emotional repression and the barriers he maintains in relationships. The recollection extends to a

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particular evening involving the unexpected arrival of Mr. Cardinal, which adds another layer to Stevens's reflections on dignity and moral responsibility.

Miss Kenton's earlier connection with Mr. Cardinal, now hinted to involve a marriage proposal, prompts Stevens to consider missed opportunities in his own life. The chapter deftly contrasts Stevens's adherence to duty with genuine human emotions. His interactions with Miss Kenton reveal their complex relationship; while he shows concern for her, he remains emotionally stoic and formal.

Ultimately, Stevens's anticipation of the meeting with Miss Kenton becomes entwined with memories of shared moments at Darlington Hall, highlighting the theme of regret and the consequences of unaddressed feelings. The chapter culminates in Stevens's internal dialogue about dignity, memory, and the significance of human connection, as the rain continues to fall, reflecting the emotional turmoil that lies underneath his polished exterior. This rich interplay of past and present serves as a poignant exploration of identity, loyalty, and the cost of maintaining a facade in a changing world.

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## Chapter 8 Summary: DAY SIX – EVENING: Weymouth

In Chapter 8 of "The Remains of the Day," Mr. Stevens reflects on his time in Weymouth, a seaside town he has long wanted to visit. As he sits on a bench on the pier, awaiting the illumination of the lights, he feels a sense of peace and enjoys the sunset over the sea. This day is a welcome reprieve from his long drives, allowing him time to think and remember.

He recalls a recent encounter with Miss Kenton, his former housekeeper, whom he met at the Rose Garden Hotel. Their reunion is marked by a mix of awkwardness and nostalgia, as they reminisce about their time together at Darlington Hall. Stevens notes how Miss Kenton has aged gracefully but seems to carry a sense of weariness, hinting at underlying sadness in her life. While they engage in polite conversation at first, their exchange deepens as they reflect on their past and Miss Kenton's current situation, including her marriage.

Throughout their two-hour conversation, they share happy memories, but tension mounts when Stevens brings up Lord Darlington and the negative repercussions following his death. Miss Kenton seems genuinely moved by Stevens' concern for her well-being, addressing the emotional struggles she faces in her marriage. Despite acknowledging love for her husband, she admits to moments of despair and thoughts about "what might have been" with Stevens—a painful realization for him.



As their time together concludes, Stevens expresses his hopes that Miss Kenton finds happiness in her life ahead. Their moment captures the heart of regrets, lost opportunities, and the longing for what could have been, which permeates their memories of each other.

Stevens then meets a friendly stranger on the pier who reveals a more carefree attitude towards retirement and enjoying life's simple pleasures. Their brief exchange prompts Stevens to reevaluate his outlook on life, encouraging him to be less consumed by the past and more present in the moment. With the pier lights illuminating the night, Stevens contemplates the potential for warmth and connection through light-hearted interactions, finding a renewed sense of purpose in his role as a butler.

By the end of the chapter, Stevens decides to approach his duties with a fresh perspective, recognizing the importance of banter and connection—elements of human interaction that he had inadvertently neglected. As the evening unfolds, he embraces the idea of making the best of the time he has left and resolving to foster greater warmth in his communication when he returns to Darlington Hall.

The chapter elegantly weaves together themes of memory, regret, and the complexities of human relationships. Stevens' internal struggle highlights the broader human condition, grappling with personal fulfillment against the

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backdrop of duty and sacrifice, ultimately urging him to seek happiness in the present moment.

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