**Text Fragments**

*After several drinks he gave the waitress a tip and left the bar for the*

*telephone booths in the lobby. He looked up the Robinsons’ telephone*

*number, memorized it and closed himself into a booth. For a long time*

*he sat with the receiver in one hand and a coin in the other but without*

*dropping it into the machine. Finally he returned the receiver to its*

*hook and lighted another cigarette. He sat smoking it inside the closed*

*booth and frowing down at one of the booth’s walls. Then he ground it*

*out under his foot and walked out of the booth and into the one beside*

*it to call Mrs. Robinson.*

(p. 58)

In this fragment Benjamin decides to call mrs. Robinson. You can clearly see that he hesitates and isn’t really sure if he should do it.

*“It wasn’t just some woman with a husband and a son.”*

*“Who was it then?”*

*Mrs. Robinson appeared in the doorway and stopped. Elaine looked at*

*her and then back at Benjamin. “Will somebody please tell me what*

*is—” Suddenly she stopped talking. Her head turned slowly back*

*toward her mother. Mrs. Robinson looked down at the floor, then*

*cleared her throat quietly and left the room. Elaine pulled her hand*

*away from Benjamin but continued staring through the empty*

*doorway.*

*“Elaine?”*

*“Oh my God.”*

*“Elaine?”*

*“Oh my God,” she said again. She looked for a moment at Benjamin,*

*then walked slowly to her window. She stared out through the glass at a*

*house on the other side of the driveway. For a long time it was perfectly*

*quiet. Finally Benjamin took a step toward her. “Elaine?” he said.*

*She spum around to face him. “Get out of here!” she said.*

(p.128)

In this fragment Benjamin tells Elaine that he had an affair with her mother.

**Time:**

The book doesn’t explicitly tell in what year the book takes place, but it does tell that the book starts in June after Benjamin graduated and gives some hints that it probably took place a long time ago. For example, it isn’t an issue to drink and drive yet. Our guess would be that the story takes place around the time it was written: 1968. The story is completely narrated in a chronological order, but sometimes when nothing happens during a time period, it is left out in the book. This happens mostly between chapters.

**Narrative Perspective:**

In the book you see everything that happens to Benjamin, but you don’t really get to know how he feels about anything. You can see this in the following text fragments.

*During the next week Benjamin spent most of his time walking. On his*

*twenty-first birthday he ate breakfast, then went out the front door,*

*walked around the block, walked around the block again, then walked*

*downtown. He walked back and forth along the main street till it was*

*time to eat lunch, then went into a cafeteria. All during the afternoon*

*he walked, sometimes stopping in a park or on a bus bench to rest a*

*few minutes, but usually walking slowly past houses and stores,*

*looking down at the sidewalk ahead of him.*

(p.54)

In this fragment you can see that the book tells you what happens to Benjamin, but not what he thinks.

*The driver waited a moment, then turned around and climbed back up*

*into his seat. He pulled a handle and the doors of the bus closed.*

*Benjamin sat back down.*

*Elaine was still trying to catch her breath. She turned her face to look*

*at him. For several moments she sat looking at him, then she reached*

*over and took his hand.*

*“Benjamin?” she said.*

*“What.”*

*The bus began to move.*

(p.215)

This fragment is at the end of the story, when Benjamin took Elaine away from her wedding. As you can see you get to know nothing about what’s going on in Benjamin’s head.

Because of this Benjamin remains a mysterious person, who you can’t really relate to, but it also gives you an objective view of the events.