

PART 1

Chapter 1: Meursault has received a telegram from his mother's residential care home. She is dead and her funeral is arranged. As is the custom, he travels down to the home to sit in vigil over her coffin during the night before her funeral. Although he wants to 'see his mother' he turns down looking inside her coffin. Rather than go to the canteen for dinner he has a coffee and smokes cigarettes. During the night he is joined by ten or so residents and has the strange feeling that they are sitting in judgment of him. The next day he walks in the searing heat to the church. An old man, his mother's 'boyfriend', is permitted to attend but is ignored by all but Meursault. The old man, already described as being in a terrible state, is forced to run after the procession. He is crying and sweating when he arrives to the church and later faints. After the funeral Meursault catches the bus home to sleep for twelve hours.

Chapter 2: Meursault wakes up the day after the funeral. It is a Saturday and he decides to go swimming at the bathing station near the port. There, he meets Marie Cordona, a woman he fancies, who used to work as a typist at his office. They flirt a bit and he asks her if she wants to go to the cinema. She agrees and says there's a Fernandel (comedy) film that she wants to see. When Meursault gets dressed Marie is surprised to see his black tie and even more surprised to discover that his mother died the day before. That evening they go to the cinema where he fondles her breast, kisses her and then brings her back to his apartment. When Meursault wakes up the next day Marie has gone. It is a Sunday. He spent the morning on his bed smoking and cooked for himself. Meursault then sat at his balcony and silently observed everyone e.g. Families, little boys in sailor suits, football players and girls (the ones he knew). He has dinner then smokes by the window. Meursault realises he got through another Sunday and that things were back to the usual routine.

Chapter 3: Meursault returns to work. His boss asks after him and his mother. Emmanuel, a friend from the office, and Meursault go to lunch together at Céleste's. Because he has drunk too much wine, Meursault goes home to sleep it off before returning to work. After work he walks home feeling happy. On his way up to his apartment he bumps into his elderly neighbour Salamano and his mangy dog. Another neighbour, Raymond Sintès, appears and invites Meursault into his room to eat and drink. To save himself from having to cook his own dinner, he accepts, and over wine Raymond tells Meursault of his problem with his girlfriend. The chapter ends with Meursault writing a letter for Raymond that will draw this woman into a humiliating trap. Meursault finally leaves Raymond's place and before he enters his own place, he hears Salamano's dog whimpering.

Chapter 4: It is Sunday. Meursault's been at work all week and gone out to the cinema a couple of times with Emmanuel. During the week Raymond stopped by to tell Meursault that he'd given the letter to his mistress. The previous day, he and Marie went out of Algiers to spend the day at the beach. She stays the night and they plan to have lunch together. On his way back from the shop to buy meat, Meursault hears a woman in Raymond's room and later the dog in Salamano's room. When he gets back Marie asks him if he loves her. Meursault replies that love doesn't mean anything. She looks sad but then she laughs as they prepare lunch. At this point they hear a commotion from Raymond's room. Raymond is carrying out the 'punishment'. Due to the loud screams coming from Raymond's room, Marie asks Meursault to call the police, which he refuses. Someone has called the police because a policeman arrives at Raymond's door. As soon as Raymond opens the door, the girl rushes to the door and tells the policeman she was being beaten, after which she is asked to leave. Raymond tries to act coolly, in front of his neighbours, but the policeman humiliates him with a slap, causing his cigarette to fly out of his mouth. Marie has gone off the idea of lunch so Meursault eats most of it. She leaves and he takes a nap. Raymond knocks on his door at three to discuss what happened and ask Meursault to act as a witness for him. Meursault agrees and they go out together ending up in a bar. Later they bump into Salamano who has lost his dog. That evening, after he has said goodnight to Raymond, Meursault gets a knock at his door. It is Salamano looking for some piece of mind over his missing dog.

Chapter 5: Raymond phones Meursault at his office to invite him to a friend's chalet the following Sunday. He also warns Meursault that a group of Arabs, including the brother of his former mistress, has been following him (Raymond) around all day and wants Meursault to keep an eye out for them. After the call Meursault's boss asks to speak to him about a possible promotion that will involve a move to Paris. Much to the man's surprise Meursault turns him down. That evening Marie asks Meursault if he wants to marry her. He, hardly enthusiastically, replies that he doesn't mind. They walk through the town and she turns down dinner at Céleste's due to a prior engagement. In the restaurant Meursault observes and the follows a strange 'robotic' woman. Back home he bumps into Salamano who tells him that his dog is definitely lost and then

opens up about his late wife and how he ended up with the dog. The chapter ends with Salamano revealing how some local people thought badly of Meursault for putting his mother in a home.

Chapter 6: It's Sunday and Meursault is having trouble getting up. Marie manages to get him out of bed and they go down, knocking on Raymond's door on the way. The day is hot and sunny and Marie is in high spirits, Meursault is feeling better but the sun hit him like 'a slap in the face'. They are off to Masson's chalet, to spend the day at the beach on the suburbs of Algiers. The day before, Meursault, with Raymond, had gone to the police station to file his witness statement. Raymond is nervous when he spots the group of Arabs but relaxes once they are on the bus and not being followed. Masson is a huge fellow and his wife is friendly, they have a nice wooden chalet near the beach. Masson, Marie and Meursault all go off to the beach for a swim and a doze on the sand. Back at the chalet they have a lunch of fried fish and lots of wine. After lunch the three men go for a walk while the women stay behind. The trio bumps into two Arabs, one of them the brother of Raymond's girlfriend. There is a fight between Raymond and Masson and the two Arabs. Masson quickly deals with his man and Raymond gets the better of his but when he turns, to show off to Meursault, the Arab pulls a knife and slashes Raymond's arm and mouth. The Arabs escape and Masson takes Raymond, who is only superficially injured, to a nearby doctor. Meursault returns to the chalet to tell the women what has happened. Raymond is in a bad mood when he returns and walks off down the beach on his own with Meursault following after him. They bump into the same Arabs but this time Raymond pulls a gun. Meursault persuades his friend to hand over the gun, telling him that it would be unfair to use it. The Arabs retreat and Raymond feels better. He and Meursault walk back to the chalet. However, when they get there Meursault doesn't want to go inside and talk with the others. He turns around and heads back out to beach. This time he bumps into the Arab and it's just the two of them. Raymond's gun is still in Meursault's pocket and the Arab still has his knife. The sun is beating down on his head and he steps towards the other man who draws his knife. Meursault's gun is drawn, the trigger gives and he fires. And then he fires four more times into the now lifeless body of the Arab.

PART 2

Chapter 1: Meursault has been arrested, it is not clear how much time has passed since the killing. He's been to the police station to be processed and a week later is being interviewed by the examining magistrate. The first meeting with this man seems unreal to Meursault, like something he's read about in books. The following day he is visited in prison by a lawyer who tells him that while the case is tricky he's confident of success. The lawyers ask Meursault about his private life, including events that took place at his mother's funeral. He asks, somewhat embarrassed, whether Meursault felt grief on the day of the funeral. Meursault gives a strange answer that makes the other man uncomfortable. The lawyer attempts to get Meursault to change his answer into something more acceptable for the court but he refuses. Meursault's refusal angers the lawyer who doesn't turn up to the next meeting with the examining magistrate. During this meeting the magistrate is concerned with one detail of the case, why Meursault fired four times into the body of the dead Arab. Meursault doesn't give an answer which provokes the man into reaching for his crucifix. Brandishing the cross at Meursault, the magistrate tells him that he must fully confess if he is to be pardoned by God. Meursault tells him that he doesn't believe in God to which the magistrate replies with indignant outrage. Finally Meursault is asked if he feels regret for what he's done; he replies that he feels a kind of annoyance. The attitudes of the magistrate and Meursault's lawyer change after this. There are many more meetings but the two other men barely talk to him, unless the conversation is about something general. They are not unkind to Meursault and even friendly at times. The investigation lasts eleven months.

Chapter 2: Meursault is in prison awaiting trial. When he first arrives he is put in a room with other prisoners, most of whom are Arabs. They laugh at him until Meursault tells them why he's in there; then they help him lay out his bed. After a few days he is confined to his own cell. One day a warder tells Meursault he has a visitor, Meursault guesses this must be Marie, and he is right. The visiting area is a large noisy room full of prisoners, mostly Arabs, and their visitors. It takes Meursault some moments to adjust to the bright and loud room compared to the dark quiet of his cell. Marie keeps on smiling and puts on a confident front. She sends Raymond's regards and tells Meursault that he must keep on hoping. Meursault admires her beauty and wants to reach out and squeeze her shoulders through her dress, which of course he can't. The other prisoners and their visitors are a continued distraction for Meursault and he finds it hard to concentrate and understand what Marie is saying; she is talking about their getting married when he gets out. After the visit Meursault goes through a difficult time adjusting to prison life. He can't stop thinking like a free man: he'll suddenly want to go for a walk on the beach or become suddenly aware of how closed in he is behind the walls. He is tormented by sexual desire for women and craving for cigarettes. This lasts for a few months. He then adjusts to prison life, looking forward to daily walks in the courtyard and the visits of his

lawyer. A big problem is coping with the boredom. He develops a technique of using his imagination and memory to kill time. An additional problem is sleeping but this too he deals with, going from hardly being able to sleep to sleeping sixteen to eighteen hours a day. He finds a scrap of newspaper between his mattress and bed-plank and reads and re-reads the article over again. One day the warder tells him that he's been in prison for five months.

Chapter 3: Chapter nine covers one day, from seven in the morning until the evening. It is the first day of Meursault's trial. He is taken from the prison in a police van and is surprised to find the courtroom crowded when he gets inside. It is summer time and the room is stifling. By the end of the day the judges, the jury, the legal teams and the journalists will all be issued with straw fans. Spectators fan themselves with newspapers. Before the trial begins one of the reporters tells Meursault that they've blown his case up a bit. Meursault notices that the policemen who brought him into the courtroom, the journalists and the legal teams are all very friendly towards each other and Meursault gets the impression that they are all in some kind of club together. As the trial is starting, he notices one of the journalists is different to the others, he is younger and instead of picking up his pen he looks right at Meursault. The names of the witnesses are called out, none of them are Arabs but all European Algerians, people from the home and Meursault's friends. He notices the strange robotic woman from the restaurant sitting next to Céleste. The presiding Judge sets the tone of the trial when he immediately asks Meursault about his relationship with his mother. Meursault is confused by the proceedings and is taken back to the prison when the session breaks for lunch. When he returns that afternoon, he hears the witnesses' testimonies. Meursault is greatly moved by Céleste's attempt to paint him in a positive light. The warden and the caretaker from the home are encouraged by the prosecutor to say damning things about Meursault's behaviour and the accounts his friends give of him are torn apart. The lawyer for Meursault puts up a feeble defence. The hearing is adjourned and Meursault is packed into the van and driven back to prison. On the way he hears the familiar sounds of the town he loves at a time of day he used to feel happy.

Chapter 4: The chapter starts and ends in court. Meursault talks about the prosecutor talking about him and we get the thrust of the case against him. After the prosecutor's speech Meursault is given the opportunity to speak but he doesn't make himself understood and all he is able to form is that he killed the Arab because it was hot, at which some people laugh. The session adjourns for lunch. When they get back Meursault's lawyer delivers a long speech. Meursault is distracted and doesn't listen to most of it. As evening approaches, Meursault is taken out while the jury deliberates upon the case. His lawyer seems confident and predicts that Meursault might get away with a few years in prison or hard labor. Meursault asks about the possibility of getting the sentence quashed if it's unfavourable. They wait for almost 45 minutes before being summoned back. Meursault is told he will be decapitated in a public square in the name of the French people.

Chapter 5: Meursault has been sentenced and he is now in a cell awaiting the day of his execution. At first he is preoccupied with finding a way to escape the guillotine. He spends most of his day on his bed staring up at his cell window through which he can only see the sky. Have prisoners ever escaped the guillotine? Meursault wishes he'd learned more about executions. He imagines making a mad dash for it, running away until shot down from a street corner. Meursault remembers a story his mother told him about his father who had witnessed a public execution. When his father returned he was sick half the morning. He imagines himself as one of the witnesses but the thought of being a free spectator, rather than the condemned man, fills him with such a flood of joy he feels poisoned. When he first imagined his execution he thought of himself walking up steps to the scaffold, something similar to images he'd seen of the French Revolution. But then he remembers a picture he'd seen of a modern execution in which the guillotine was flat on the ground and much smaller than he expected. Meursault thinks about his appeal. If his appeal is granted then he will escape the guillotine. He is disturbed by contradictory ideas and feelings: he can think that it doesn't matter if he dies at thirty or seventy but then feel a sudden surge of joy at the idea of living another twenty years. Another obsession is the dawn. Meursault believes that when they come for him it will be at dawn. He can't sleep all night, waiting for dawn to break. Then when it does, every noise sets his heart pounding. He listens, with his ear pressed at the cell door, for any sign of people coming. Once the dawn passes and no-one has come, Meursault believes he has another twenty-four hours of life. He develops a kind of meditation pattern in which he concentrates on the idea that his appeal is rejected and he focuses on his belief in the meaninglessness of life. Then, and only then, he allows himself to imagine himself pardoned. He tries to remain calm and remember his reasoning, while in his body he feels joy at the thought of living. When he succeeds he experiences an hour of respite. The prison chaplain has tried three times to see Meursault, who is refusing to see him. Unexpectedly the chaplain turns up at Meursault's cell and wants to talk to him. At first Meursault is frightened by the visit but then it becomes clear that the chaplain just wants Meursault to talk about God. Although he found him quite pleasant at first, Meursault becomes irritated by the chaplain and

ends up raging at him, grabbing the man by his collar of his cassock and the warders have to pull the two apart. After the chaplain has gone and Meursault is alone again he falls asleep. When he awakes near dawn he feels purged of his ills, he realises that he'd been happy and was still happy. "My last wish was that there should be a crowd of spectators at my execution and that they should greet me with cries of hatred."