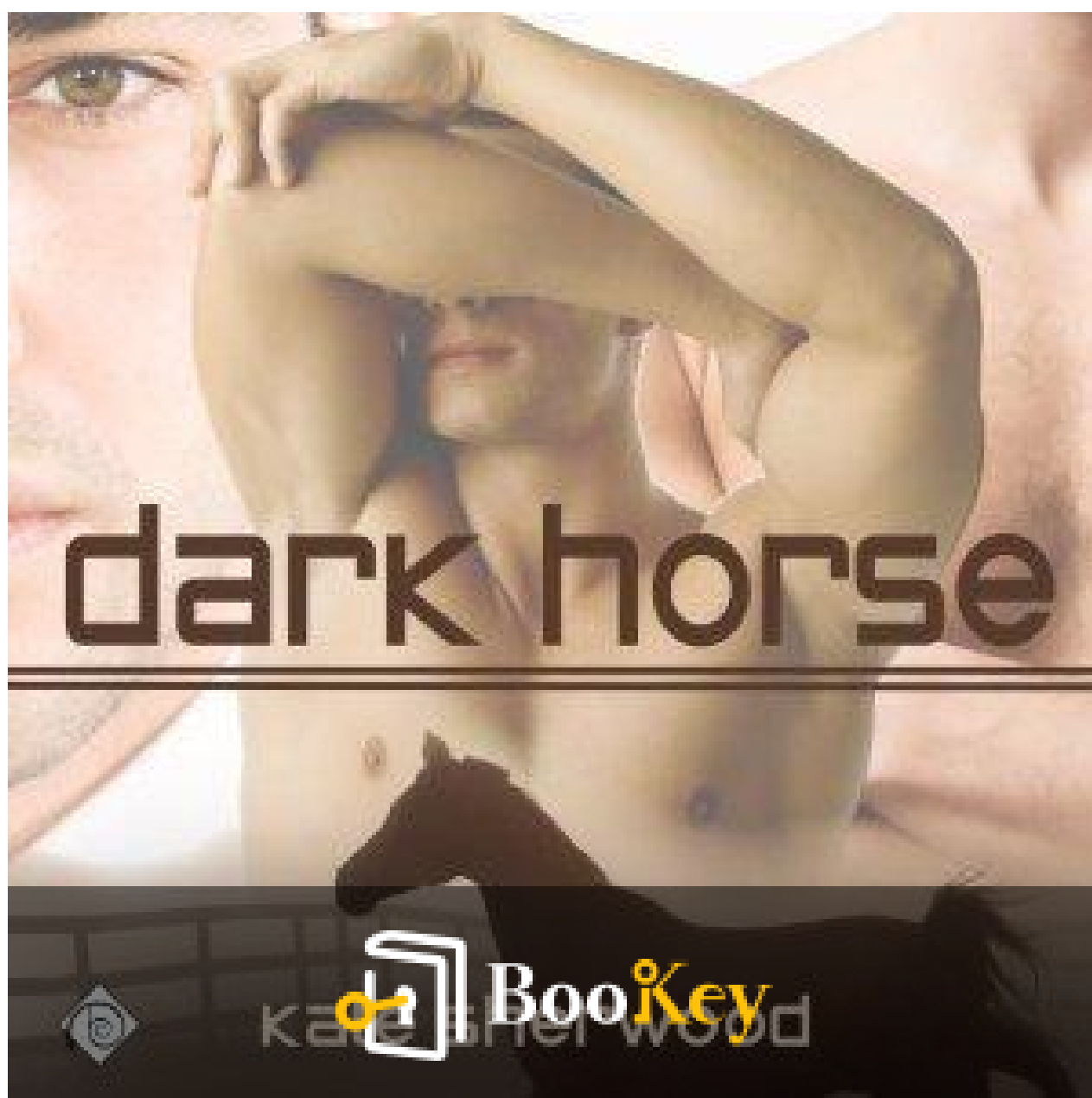


Dark Horse By Kenneth D. Ackerman PDF (Limited Copy)

Kenneth D. Ackerman



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Dark Horse By Kenneth D. Ackerman Summary

Unraveling the Gilded Age: Garfield's Rise and Tragic Fall

Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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About the book

In "Dark Horse," Kenneth D. Ackerman provides an insightful look into the complex political dynamics of post-Civil War America, particularly highlighting the tumultuous period surrounding James Garfield's 1880 presidential campaign. The narrative begins by situating Garfield within the context of the Republican Party's longest nominating convention, where his emergence as a "dark horse" candidate—someone unexpected and previously not considered likely to win—sets the stage for a dramatic political battle.

Ackerman explores the competitive environment of the era, characterized by fierce rivalries and the intense pursuit of power, as various factions within the Republican Party jostled for influence. Garfield, a former general and congressman, stood out not only for his surprising rise to candidacy but also for the principles he embodied, including integrity and a desire for reform amidst widespread corruption.

As Garfield ascends to the presidency, Ackerman paints a vivid picture of his administration, marked by internal conflicts and partisan strife—common challenges of Gilded Age politics that reflected the nation's struggles to unify after the Civil War. The narrative delves into Garfield's efforts to implement his vision for governance, highlighting both his successes and the challenges posed by opponents who resisted change.

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Tragically, Garfield's presidency is cut short by the shocking assassination carried out by Charles Guiteau, a disillusioned office seeker who believed he deserved a government position. Guiteau's act of violence serves as a chilling climax, illustrating the extreme consequences of political rivalry and the toxic atmosphere that often surrounded the era's political landscape.

Through this compelling retelling, Ackerman not only examines the personal and political dimensions of Garfield's story but also critiques the broader societal issues of the time, ultimately revealing the virtues and failings of a nation grappling with its identity in the Gilded Age.

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About the author

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Unfortunately, I don't have that information at the moment. However, I can provide a framework for how to approach summarizing chapters based on the elements you mentioned:

1. **Main Characters**: Introduce any new characters in the chapters. Provide background information that illuminates their roles and motivations in the story.
2. **Setting**: Briefly describe the setting where the events take place. If the setting plays a significant role in the plot, highlight its importance.
3. **Plot Summary**: Present the main events in chronological order, detailing character interactions, conflicts, and resolutions. Be sure to connect events logically, showing how one leads to the next.
4. **Themes**: Identify and summarize any central themes that arise in the chapters. These may include moral lessons, social commentary, or personal growth.
5. **Character Development**: Discuss how the events in the chapters lead

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to significant changes or growth in the characters. Highlight moments of choice, challenge, or realization.

6. **Conflict**: Outline any central conflicts—internal or external—that drive the narrative. Explain how these conflicts impact the characters and the overall storyline.

7. **Conclusion**: Wrap up the summary by touching on the implications of the events and how they set the stage for future developments in the story.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Dark Horse The Feud

Chapter Summary: THE FEUD

April 1866

In the aftermath of the Civil War, a fierce rivalry emerged between two ambitious politicians, Roscoe Conkling and James G. Blaine, shaping the landscape of American politics for the next twenty years. This contentious relationship not only deepened divisions within the Republican Party but also influenced three presidential elections and had significant repercussions for both individuals. The conflict began over a seemingly trivial matter regarding a section of the Military Bill debated in the House of Representatives.

Conkling, a Congressman from New York, vehemently opposed a provision that allocated funds for the Provost Marshal General, a position tainted by associations with the controversial military draft and recurring corruption allegations. His passionate denunciation of the role revealed his formidable public speaking skills and charisma, capturing widespread attention. In response, Blaine, hailing from Maine, felt the need to defend the Provost Marshal General against Conkling's criticisms. He argued that Conkling's personal attack unfairly undermined the character of General Fry, the

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officeholder, depriving him of a chance to respond.

This fiery exchange laid the groundwork for a public feud driven by mutual accusations of dishonesty and arrogance, which captivated the media and the public. Despite their ideological alignment on several issues, their contrasting personalities created an insurmountable rift, leading to a long-standing animosity that intertwined personal and political grievances.

As time passed, both men continued to advance their political careers—Blaine emerged as a notable figure in the House of Representatives, while Conkling thrived in the Senate. Their increasingly divergent journeys mirrored the broader political currents of the Gilded Age. This rivalry not only intensified during pivotal Republican conventions in the late 1870s and early 1880s but also transformed their ambitions into a national spectacle, ultimately altering the trajectory of American political life.

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Chapter 2 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 1 - Chicago

Chapter 2 Summary: Political Dynamics in Chicago

On May 29, 1880, James Garfield arrived in Chicago in the lead-up to the Republican National Convention, which was overflowing with delegates and political factions rallying for various candidates. Prominent among these were Ulysses Grant, James G. Blaine, and John Sherman, each representing distinct visions for the Republican Party's future.

Garfield, recently appointed as a U.S. Senator, was a notable presence at the convention, drawing inquiries about his political alignments. Although he officially endorsed John Sherman, whispers circulated about Garfield potentially running as a "dark horse" candidate. This situation placed him in a complex position, balancing his loyalty with the rising speculation about his own ambitions.

His political journey is marked by a remarkable ascent from humble beginnings to a significant figure in national politics, shaped by his experiences during the Civil War. While Garfield supported Sherman, he harbored doubts regarding Sherman's electability, citing a lack of charisma and public enthusiasm that could hinder their campaign.

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As Garfield settled into his hotel amid the ongoing fervor, conversations erupted around the controversial “unit rule.” This rule aimed to bind delegates to a bloc vote, suppressing individual dissent. Recognizing this as a critical issue for the integrity of the Republican Party, Garfield became an advocate for opposing the unit rule. He understood that its adoption could have dire consequences for the party's future cohesion and democratic principles.

In the midst of escalating tensions, Garfield sought to unite the anti-Grant factions and strategized actively against the unit rule, placing himself at the core of the ideological struggle. His engagement underscored the delicate balance of power and allegiance within the convention, as he emphasized the need for a united front against any moves that could jeopardize the party’s democratic foundations.

Reflecting on the broader implications of leadership during such divisive times, Garfield penned letters to his wife, Lucretia, expressing his hopes for a return to principled politics. He hinted at the necessity of a deeper societal transformation that extended beyond mere electoral strategies, indicating his aspiration for a Republican Party that could navigate the challenges of a fractured nation.

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Chapter 3 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 2 - The Hero

Chapter 3: The Hero

The chapter opens with John Russell Young, the senior editor of the New York Herald, arriving in the scenic town of Galena, Illinois, in 1880. This town is imbued with nostalgia, particularly for Julia Dent Grant, reminiscing about her days with Ulysses S. Grant, the celebrated local figure. Galena is bubbling with anticipation as it prepares to welcome back Grant, who, following his national recognition after his presidency, contemplates a possible return to political office.

Once renowned as a lead mining center, Galena's excitement is primarily fueled by Grant's unexpected reconsideration of running for president, despite previously pledging not to seek a third term. As the Republican National Convention looms in Chicago, longtime friends and supporters rally around him, urging potential candidacy discussions, which adds a layer of tension to the narrative.

Young's visit is not merely a social call; he has a dual purpose. As a journalist and friend, he is tasked with persuading Grant to reconsider participating in the upcoming election due to mounting concerns about his candidacy. Young is acutely aware of the political landscape and foresees



potential criticism from influential figures such as Roscoe Conkling and John Logan, who are pivotal players in the party's dynamics.

Throughout the exposition, Grant's character emerges as a man reticent to seek the limelight. Young, in their private conversations, points out the growing unease surrounding the prospect of a third presidential term, which many perceive as problematic. This growing discontent among the public further complicates Grant's potential return to the political arena.

Julia Grant provides critical insight into the evolving political climate. Her doubts about Grant's nomination reflect a broader uncertainty among their close circle regarding political loyalties and declining support from advisors who may not share the same enthusiasm for his candidacy.

As tension builds, Young's discussions with Grant become pivotal. Although Grant feels a sense of duty to his supporters, he is also beset by hesitation and indecision, culminating in a letter that ambiguously hints at withdrawing from the race. This uncertainty creates a divide among his supporters, each interpreting his message through personal lenses.

The political game intensifies with competing interests surrounding Grant's future. His loyalty to Conkling and Logan complicates his path, illustrating the intricate web of friendships and political alliances that dictate his decisions. As the convention draws near, conflicting pressures mount,

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further clouding Grant's potential candidacy.

In a larger context, the chapter underscores how Grant's ambitions intertwine with familial ties, political strategies, and public opinion, creating a complex narrative of loyalty and uncertainty. Grant's path forward is shrouded in ambiguity, demonstrating that his fate and intentions are heavily influenced by the desires and opinions of those around him.

In conclusion, the chapter encapsulates the turbulent atmosphere of the 1880 election, revealing the intertwining of personal aspirations and the collective ambitions of friends, family, and political allies amid an unpredictable political landscape. Grant stands at the crossroads of history, his journey not solely defined by his own will but shaped by the collective currents of loyalty, expectation, and the unpredictable nature of politics in that era.

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Chapter 4: Dark Horse Chapter 3 - Bosses

CHAPTER 3: BOSSES

In this chapter, we delve into the tumultuous Republican National Committee meeting, convened by J. Donald Cameron on May 31, 1880, just prior to a pivotal convention in Chicago. The meeting was fraught with tension over the controversial "unit rule," a procedural guideline that could potentially secure Ulysses S. Grant a third term as president. This rule was contentious, serving as a flashpoint for the growing divide between pro-Grant factions and their anti-Grant counterparts.

Cameron, who led the meeting with the backing of a small group of allies, soon found himself confronted by a formidable opposition. Key among them was William Eaton Chandler, a prominent figure in the Blaine faction, who was organizing efforts to challenge Cameron's authority. The situation became even more precarious as the Pennsylvania and New York delegations experienced internal revolts, undermining Cameron's control and highlighting the fractures within the party.

As tensions mounted, clashes soon erupted between Cameron and Chandler over procedural matters and the power dynamics within the committee. Cameron's attempts at authoritative rulings only fueled frustrations,

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illustrating the broader conflict within the Republican Party.

In the midst of this chaos, Chester Alan Arthur emerged as an unexpected mediator. Initially perceived as a passive participant, Arthur took a proactive role, leveraging his connections with key figures, including Roscoe Conkling, to propose a compromise aimed at preventing a complete breakdown in party unity before the convention.

Through diplomatic negotiations, Arthur and Chandler managed to establish a framework for resolving the main disputes, including the nomination of a temporary convention chairman and the handling of delegate votes. This initiative required Chandler to recognize the necessity of collaboration in order to secure the party's success, despite their differences.

As the convention unfolded, Conkling galvanized his New York delegation, calling for loyalty and emphasizing the high stakes involved in supporting Grant. His impassioned leadership helped to temporarily quell dissent within the ranks, but the underlying divisions remained palpable.

Meanwhile, James Blaine was making strategic moves away from the convention, aiming to harness the growing anti-Grant sentiment to elevate his own candidacy. As alliances shifted and loyalties were tested, Blaine positioned himself as a serious contender for the presidency, further complicating the political landscape.

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Ultimately, this chapter underscores a deeply fractured Republican Party, where temporary resolutions gloss over significant ideological rifts. The struggles for power among various factions foreshadowed ongoing conflicts, leaving the outcome of the convention shrouded in uncertainty as multiple candidates vied for supremacy amidst widespread dissent.

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Chapter 5 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 4 - First Volley

Chapter 5 Summary: Setting the Stage for the Republican Convention

On June 5, 1880, the Republican National Convention kicked off in Chicago amidst great anticipation. Held at the newly constructed Interstate Industrial Exposition Building, often referred to as the "Glass Palace," the event drew around 15,000 attendees, including delegates, dignitaries, and journalists. The atmosphere was electric, filled with excitement and marked by efforts for crowd control, as party symbols like the elephant—popularized by cartoonist Thomas Nast—were prominently displayed.

As the convention progressed, tensions began to rise among competing factions. Delegates, having previously rejected a unit rule that would bind them to vote collectively, showcased the internal divisions within the party. Various candidates, including the prominent Ulysses Grant, started vying for the spotlight, while James Garfield emerged as a voice for individual expression, openly opposing punitive measures from the powerful faction led by Roscoe Conkling.

The political stakes intensified as Conkling delivered an impassioned speech backing Grant, earning loud applause but also stirring discontent among dissenters. Following Conkling, Garfield took the stage, opting for a more

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measured tone that emphasized party unity while subtly redirecting attention away from Grant's candidacy. His address contrasted sharply with Conkling's fervor, inviting a level of reflection among the delegates.

However, the environment soon devolved into chaos, exemplifying the deep rifts within the Republican Party, as rival factions clashed and the crowd erupted in passionate protest. This tumultuous atmosphere not only highlighted the contentious nature of the convention but also foreshadowed the protracted struggle that awaited in the nomination process.

The following day marked the beginning of the first official ballot, where preliminary results indicated robust support for Grant alongside notable signs of dissent, including defections from key delegations. Garfield maintained his alliance with candidate Sherman, while whispers of his growing popularity further complicated the landscape of the convention.

As the vote counting commenced, it became clear that achieving a clear majority for any candidate would require intricate political maneuvering and negotiations. The unfolding drama underscored the complexity and competitiveness intrinsic to the Republican nomination process, setting the stage for further voting rounds.

By the chapter's end, the anticipation of a fierce battle over the presidential nomination loomed large, with the resonant speeches of Garfield and

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Conkling echoing beyond the convention hall, hinting at the shifting political currents destined to shape the party's future.

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Chapter 6 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 5 - The Break

Chapter 6: The Break

Context of the Convention

On June 7, 1880, the Republican National Convention unfolds in Chicago, creating a charged atmosphere that echoes back to Washington, D.C., where government officials and the public closely monitor the proceedings. Senator James Blaine, a prominent figure in the party and a previous presidential contender, is among those following the first ballot count with great interest.

Blaine's Response to Results

Upon learning he secured only 299 votes—just one less than in his prior campaign—Blaine feels disheartened and chooses to leave the Senate temporarily to be with his family during this unsettling time. Meanwhile, John Sherman, another contender for the nomination, navigates the pressure of his candidacy with the added complexity of his brother, General William Tecumseh Sherman, backing him while simultaneously worrying about their friends within the race.

Tension and Strategy

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As the ballot counting continues, both Blaine and Sherman feel the strain of internal divisions among their supporters, particularly as delegates begin to defect. Sherman vents his frustration, attributing the loss of crucial support from Ohio delegates to Blaine, which exacerbates the rivalry between the candidates and their factions.

Tiring Process of Voting

The convention is mired in a tedious process of repeated voting, leading to mounting frustration among participants and casting uncertainty over who might ultimately secure the nomination. Despite the growing discontent, Ulysses Grant, a former president and major contender, maintains a robust base of support that complicates the hope of a clear resolution.

Unexpected Breakthroughs

On the morning of June 8, strategic maneuvering among the delegates leads to surprising shifts in support. Initially, Sherman gains momentum, but this progress quickly stalls as Grant consolidates his hold. Tension fills the air, with delegates on both sides anxious about the evolving dynamics.

Garfield's Emergence

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As the voting proceeds, James A. Garfield unexpectedly starts to accumulate votes, culminating in his surprise nomination. This turn of events is largely attributed to the strategic realignment of Blaine's and Sherman's delegates, orchestrated in part by Blaine himself, indicating a shift in party alliances.

Reaction to Nomination

Garfield's reaction to being nominated is one of disbelief; he goes to great lengths to downplay his involvement in the orchestration of his candidacy. The convention hall buzzes with excitement over his nomination, starkly contrasting with the despondency felt by Grant's supporters, particularly Roscoe Conkling, who confronts the pain of defeat.

Conclusion of the Day

As the day draws to a close, Garfield is officially nominated, sparking a wave of congratulatory messages including one from Blaine, whose complex feelings underscore the mixed emotions permeating the convention. Garfield's rise signals a significant departure from traditional candidates, hinting at shifting alliances and the unpredictable nature of Republican politics during a dramatic and tumultuous chapter in American history.

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Chapter 7 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 6 - Compromise

Chapter 6 Summary: Compromise

The chapter unfolds just moments after James A. Garfield's unexpected nomination as the Republican candidate for President during the tumultuous Chicago convention in June 1880. As celebrations erupted among the 15,000 attendees, Garfield found himself in a whirlwind of excitement and congratulations. Despite his initial shock at the nomination, he was greeted by a jubilant crowd, cannon fire, and an avalanche of telegrams from well-wishers, reflecting the overwhelming support and anticipation for his candidacy.

As the convention prepared to reconvene for the critical selection of a vice presidential candidate, Garfield faced mounting pressure to quickly choose a running mate. Levi P. Morton, a popular choice due to his background and experience, hesitated, largely due to the rifts within the New York delegation led by powerful political figure Roscoe Conkling. Some Ohio delegates attempted to appease the aggrieved New Yorkers by suggesting that they could select the vice presidential candidate, leading to increasing tensions and divisions among Garfield's supporters, particularly those loyal to former Secretary of State James G. Blaine.

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Amidst this political intrigue, Chester A. Arthur emerged as an unexpected contender for the vice presidency. Although initially met with skepticism from Conkling, Arthur was resolute in his desire to accept the nomination. Conkling's reluctance to publicly endorse him weakened his influence over the New York delegates. Ultimately, after considerable back-and-forth and horse-trading among Garfield's campaign team and Arthur's supporters, the New Yorker garnered significant backing from the delegates, culminating in his nomination for vice president.

The chapter concludes with the convention's swift decision to nominate Arthur, despite lingering concerns about his ties to the controversial world of machine politics. Garfield accepted his presidential nomination with gravity and a sense of duty, while Arthur committed to fulfilling the responsibilities of his new role. Reactions to Arthur's nomination were mixed; many Republican insiders expressed disappointment, yet others recognized the necessity of solidifying New York's support for the election. Thus, Garfield and Arthur's partnership began amidst a backdrop of celebration, uncertainty, and intricate political compromises that were integral to their campaign strategy.

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Chapter 8: Dark Horse Chapter 7 - Chance Of A Lifetime

CHAPTER 7: CHANCE OF A LIFETIME

In June 1880, Charles Guiteau, a nearly 39-year-old man plagued by a history of failures and personal struggles, became fixated on the intense drama of the presidential nomination involving James Garfield. Guiteau, who had lived a transient life filled with disappointment—from a troubled upbringing in Freeport, Illinois, to various failed jobs and a brief marriage—saw Garfield's nomination as a pivotal opportunity to transform his own life.

As Garfield emerged as a contender within the National Republican Party, Guiteau decided to offer his services to the National Republican Committee, eager to align himself with what he believed to be a significant political shift. He left Boston for New York City, buoyed by his aspirations and even prepared notes for a political address to promote his vision of Garfield's presidency.

On June 11, Guiteau took an overnight steamer, the Stonington, to New York. The journey took a tragic turn when the ship collided with the Narragansett, resulting in a maritime disaster that left many passengers dead or injured. Miraculously, Guiteau survived this harrowing event, which

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profoundly impacted him. He would later use this survival as part of his defense in his trial for murder, interpreting it as a divine sign that he was destined for a crucial role in Garfield's administration.

The experience cemented Guiteau's belief in his unique purpose, driving him deeper into the political sphere as he became increasingly convinced that he was meant to influence Garfield's presidency, thus setting the stage for the dangerous actions he would soon undertake.

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Chapter 9 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 8 - The Bargain

Summary of Chapter 9 - The Bargain

On June 9, 1880, Ulysses Grant and his wife Julia returned to Chicago after the Republican convention, where he lost the presidential nomination. The couple was warmly greeted at the Palmer House, where supporters expressed their grievances over the convention's outcome, blaming figures like James Blaine and John Sherman for what they perceived as a rigged process against Grant. Despite their frustration, Grant maintained a stoic demeanor, downplaying his disappointment as he was whisked away by his son, Colonel Fred Grant, for a train trip to Wisconsin. Here, surrounded by loyal supporters, Grant understated the loss while keeping a facade of grace.

In contrast, James Garfield, who emerged as the Republican nominee, navigated his sudden fame amidst the whirlwind of media attention and congratulatory messages. However, he was not immune to scrutiny, facing questions surrounding his involvement in past scandals. Garfield's campaign kicked off with a train journey through Indiana and Ohio, where he garnered public enthusiasm while prioritizing his family commitments. As political tensions escalated, he recognized the necessity of engaging with Roscoe Conkling, a powerful figure within the party, to solidify his campaign.

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A pivotal meeting, known as the Fifth Avenue Summit, took place in early August, where Garfield was urged to mend ties with Conkling to unify the Republican Party. The event marked Garfield's triumphal entrance into New York City, though Conkling's notable absence sparked speculation about their relationship. In a subsequent closed-door meeting with Conkling's affiliates, Garfield allegedly made vague promises regarding the controversial patronage system in New York, suggesting loyalty to Stalwarts in exchange for their support, although the details of this bargain remain ambiguous and disputed by scholars.

Charles Guiteau, an eccentric and attention-seeking supporter of Garfield, attended the New York summit with hopes of securing a political position in the new administration should Garfield win. He believed that making a public appearance during the campaign would enhance his chances of recognition.

As Garfield shaped his campaign strategy, he aimed to balance pressing contemporary issues with traditional Republican values. His acceptance letter emphasized the need for government reform, strategically steering clear of divisive topics as he readied himself for the imminent election battle.

Ultimately, Garfield's ascent to the presidency showcased the intricate web

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of political alliances, unfulfilled promises, and the underlying tensions within the Republican Party as they navigated the lead-up to the election, highlighting the volatile nature of politics during this critical period.

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Chapter 10 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 9 - The Narrowest Margin

Chapter Summary: The Narrowest Margin

Overview

Chapter 10 of "Dark Horse" by Kenneth D. Ackerman focuses on Chester A. Arthur's determined efforts as he spearheads the Republican Party's campaign for the 1880 presidential election. This struggle unfolds against the backdrop of personal tragedy, as Arthur copes with the recent death of his wife, while simultaneously navigating the intricate dynamics of party politics.

Arthur's Campaign Management

At the helm of the New York State Republican Committee, Chester Arthur demonstrated his formidable political acumen from the Fifth Avenue Hotel. He diligently mobilized resources, directing finances and establishing local clubs aimed at rallying support for the Garfield-Arthur ticket. Despite his profound personal grief, Arthur channeled his energy into the campaign, reflecting his commitment to his party and country.

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Election Timeline and Challenges

The chapter emphasizes the nuanced timeline leading up to the election, pointing out the significance of local races as critical precursors to the presidential vote. States like Indiana and Ohio emerged as battlegrounds rife with challenges, notably allegations of voter fraud and bribery aimed at undermining Republican efforts. Arthur worked tirelessly to secure financial contributions from government employees and organized major speaking engagements to bolster support.

Key Figures and Conflicts

Arthur's campaign management was complicated by the rivalries among key party figures, particularly Roscoe Conkling and Ulysses Grant. Balancing their competing demands and coordinating public appearances proved challenging, especially following early setbacks, such as a defeat in Maine. These tensions highlighted the party's internal struggles as they aimed to unite behind a common cause.

The Voter's Landscape

In response to previous electoral missteps, the Republican Party shifted its focus, tackling economic concerns that resonated more deeply with voters than the lingering issues of the Civil War. Prominent figures like Grant and

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Conkling campaigned vigorously across states to rally support for their candidate, James Garfield, emphasizing the necessity of adaptation in their strategies.

The Final Days of the Campaign

As the election date approached, Republican efforts intensified. Arthur orchestrated numerous campaign initiatives and addressed emerging crises, fostering a spirit of anticipation. Celebrations erupted amongst party members, both sides energized by the competitiveness of the race, reflecting the high stakes involved.

The Election Results

Garfield ultimately emerged victorious, albeit by a razor-thin margin in the popular vote, underscoring the campaign's intensity. The election was marred by controversial tactics, such as the forged Morey letter aimed against Garfield, illustrating the cutthroat nature of politics at the time. Arthur's strategic leadership during the campaign facilitated a significant shift in Republican power dynamics.

Conclusion

The chapter culminates in the realization that Garfield's election represents

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not only a personal achievement for Arthur but also a testament to his navigation of complex party relationships and the malicious political maneuvering characteristic of the 1880 electoral landscape. It encapsulates the intersection of personal loss, duty, and the fierce rivalries of American political life in the late 19th century.

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Chapter 11 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 10 - Garfield Doesn't Sleep Excellently Well

Chapter 11 Summary: Garfield's First Days as President

The chapter begins by setting the stage following James A. Garfield's election victory, which generated significant excitement and relief among his supporters, including Harriet Blaine. Harriet, connected through a longstanding friendship with Garfield, emphasized her husband, James Blaine's, critical role in the campaign, particularly regarding issues like tariffs.

James Blaine's influence didn't end with the campaign—Garfield considered appointing him to a prominent Cabinet position, either Secretary of State or Treasury. Blaine, however, hesitated, contemplating the implications for his own political aspirations, eventually leaning toward the Secretary of State role due to its stature.

As Garfield navigated the delicate process of forming his Cabinet, he faced considerable pressure and numerous aspirants, leading to sleepless nights filled with stress and headaches. The situation intensified around the Treasury position, a contentious focal point of ambition and expectation. Levi Morton, a strong ally, believed he had been promised this seat,

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complicating Garfield's deliberations.

Compounding these challenges was Roscoe Conkling, a powerful politician representing the Stalwarts—the faction aligned with traditional party politics. Conkling was visibly disgruntled by Garfield's selections and felt sidelined in the decision-making process, particularly regarding Morton's nomination. Despite Garfield's intentions for unity within the party, his Cabinet choices sparked disappointment among Conkling's followers.

Amidst this turmoil, Blaine took on the role of a trusted advisor, cautioning Garfield about the risks posed by the Stalwarts. He urged the president to prioritize loyal supporters for key positions to establish a stable administration and mitigate potential discord.

By the time of Garfield's inauguration, he managed to finalize his Cabinet, carefully balancing regional and factional interests. His inaugural address aimed at fostering unity and addressing significant issues such as race relations and governance, while clearly outlining his administration's policies.

In the aftermath of the inauguration, Garfield was met with the dual challenge of celebratory public engagement and immediate pressures from office seekers. The turbulence within his administration continued, especially as he navigated Conkling's simmering dissatisfaction.

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In summary, Garfield's early presidency was marked by intricate political maneuvers, factional disputes, and the formation of a Cabinet that aspired to represent diverse interests amid a landscape charged with historical rivalries and expectations. As he embarked on his presidential journey, he faced the daunting task of managing these complex dynamics while striving to create a path forward for his administration.

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Chapter 12: Dark Horse Intermission: Photo Insert

Summary of Chapter 12 from "Dark Horse" by Kenneth D. Ackerman

Key Figures in the Political Landscape

The chapter opens with an introduction to several pivotal characters surrounding the 1880 Republican National Convention. **James A. Garfield**, a father of five, emerged unexpectedly as a "dark horse" candidate for the presidency, thrust into the harsh realities of political life. **Ulysses S. Grant**, a revered Civil War hero, sought a third term at age 58; he was a formidable candidate. Opposing him was **James G. Blaine**, leader of the Republican Half-Breed faction, who garnered significant support from delegates in northern and western states. **Roscoe Conkling**, a powerful New York Senator and head of the Stalwarts, was instrumental in managing Grant's campaign. Finally, **John Sherman**, the Secretary of the Treasury, found himself trailing behind the frontrunners, looking to Garfield for support amidst the political turmoil.

The Tumultuous 1880 Republican National Convention

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The narrative then shifts to the chaotic scene at the Chicago convention, where a protracted 36-ballot stalemate ensued. Manipulative tactics from Conkling and various factions played a crucial role in the fierce competition for the nomination. Garfield, leveraging his political background and strategic acumen developed in Ohio, contributed significantly to the intricate maneuvers that characterized this pivotal event in American political history.

Garfield's Family and Political Burdens

As Garfield navigated the treacherous waters of politics, his wife, **Lucretia Garfield**, faced her own challenges as she prepared for the demands of being First Lady. This role became all the more intense following her husband's tragic assassination. Also noteworthy was **Chester Alan Arthur**, who, despite his own political cleverness and demeanor, found himself unexpectedly elevated to the vice presidency under tumultuous circumstances.

The Assassination and Its Aftermath

Tragedy struck when Garfield was assassinated by **Charles Guiteau** at a train depot, an act that underscored the perilous intersection of personal ambition and political strife. Guiteau's delusion of his own importance

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within the political landscape added a tragic dimension to Garfield's presidency. The aftermath of this event revealed the personal grief shared by the Garfield family and the public, marking a profound moment that humanized American politics in a way that had not been seen before.

Conclusion: A Swift Transition of Power

The chapter concludes with the swift transition of presidential power as Arthur took the oath of office following Garfield's death. This turn of events encapsulated the unpredictable nature of political leadership during that era, highlighting how quickly fortunes could change in the tumultuous world of American politics.

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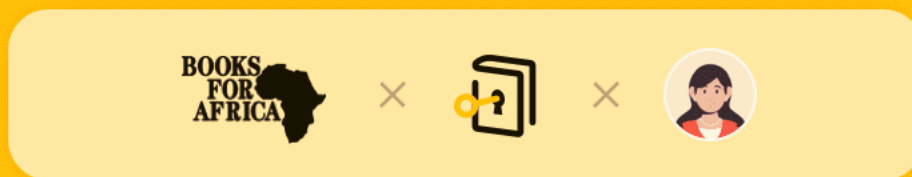




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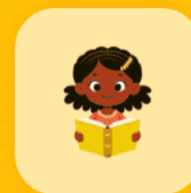
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Chapter 13 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 11 - The Appointment

Chapter 13 Summary

The Appointment of Charles Guiteau

In the wake of James Garfield's inauguration, Charles Guiteau arrived in Washington, D.C., filled with ambition and aspirations for a political appointment. He firmly believed that his campaign speech titled "Garfield Against Hancock" had significantly aided Garfield's electoral success, and he sought to capitalize on this by vying for the consulship in Austria. Residing in a boarding house near the White House, Guiteau intended to enhance his chances by directly appealing to influential politicians.

However, Guiteau's quest for political favor was met with considerable obstacles. Initially focused on the Austrian consulship, he soon discovered that the current consul had no intentions of relinquishing the position. Undeterred, he shifted his ambitions toward the Paris consulship, mistakenly confident that his connections within the Republican Party would compensate for his lack of qualifications. His persistence led him to the White House numerous times, where he finally had an encounter with

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Garfield's private secretary, Joe Stanley Brown, who informed him that his application was under review.

At the same time, Garfield's presidency was overwhelmed by an influx of office seekers demanding patronage, which prompted significant turmoil within his administration. As a seasoned politician, Garfield struggled to navigate these demands, particularly from influential figures such as Ulysses Grant and others within the Republican Party. The intense political environment, especially regarding patronage regarding New York's interests, placed considerable stress on Garfield.

In the backdrop of these events, Guiteau attempted to connect with key politicians, including Senator John Logan, but his overtures were met with skepticism, as Logan questioned his mental state. Despite his relentless ambition, Guiteau found himself on the margins of political power, frustrated by his inability to secure meaningful connections or appointments.

As political tensions heightened around appointments, Garfield faced backlash from various factions, particularly as his nominations began to upset the precarious balance of loyalties within the party. Meanwhile, Guiteau continued his fervent pursuit of the consulship, engaging regularly with prominent figures like Secretary of State James Blaine, yet remained trapped on the fringes of influence.

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Overall, Chapter 13 captures the relentless ambition of Guiteau amid the chaotic political landscape of Garfield's early presidency, illustrating the mounting pressures Garfield faced in managing expectations from office seekers while attempting to uphold party loyalty. This chapter foreshadows the increasing conflicts within the Republican Party that would unfold in the subsequent chapters.

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Chapter 14 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 12 - The Senate

Chapter 14 Summary: The Senate

In this chapter, political turmoil reaches a fever pitch following President Garfield's controversial nomination of William Robertson to lead the New York Customhouse. The nomination ignites a fierce factional battle reminiscent of a "War of the Roses," pitting the Stalwarts, led by Roscoe Conkling, against the Half-Breeds, who support the President. Conkling vehemently opposes the nomination, insisting that a president should refrain from meddling in state matters, while Garfield hopes to maintain a delicate balance.

William Robertson, unshaken by the turmoil, embraces his nomination.

He refuses to withdraw his name, viewing the position as a chance to weaken Conkling's grip on New York politics. This sets the stage for a contentious confirmation process that will test Garfield's political acumen.

As opposition mounts, Garfield faces internal pressures, with cabinet members like Postmaster General Tom James and Attorney General Wayne MacVeigh threatening resignation due to their disapproval of his nomination choice. This prompts Garfield to reassess his strategy and consider

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compromises aimed at appeasing the Stalwarts, reflecting his struggle to maintain political authority amidst escalating challenges.

In response, Conkling tries to consolidate support among Senators, yet the tide begins to turn as more lawmakers, swayed by growing public backing for Garfield, distance themselves from his cause. This creates a stalemate, with the Senate reluctant to address the nomination head-on, further complicating the conflict.

Recognizing the pressing nature of the situation, Garfield takes decisive action by retracting all nominations except for Robertson's, forcing the Senate to confront the issue directly. This move garners overwhelming public support for Garfield, signaling a potential shift in momentum in his favor.

Meanwhile, Garfield is beset by personal challenges as his wife, Lucretia, falls seriously ill, compelling him to juggle his presidential duties with deep concern for her health. Despite the challenges, he remains steadfast in his commitment to Robertson's nomination.

In a dramatic twist, Conkling and his ally, Senator Platt, resign from the Senate to sidestep the embarrassment of opposing Garfield publicly. Their resignations send shockwaves through the political landscape, indicating their diminished power and inability to reassert control.

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Amidst the political turmoil, Charles Guiteau, a frustrated office seeker, becomes increasingly radicalized. Harboring a delusional belief that assassinating Garfield is essential for restoring order within the Republican Party, Guiteau slips further into dangerous extremism, driven by feelings of betrayal and a misguided patriotism.

In conclusion, Chapter 14 illustrates a critical moment in American political history, characterized by factional strife, personal crises, and the emergence of radical ideologies. It highlights Garfield's struggle to assert his authority while foreshadowing the extreme actions that political tension can provoke in desperate individuals like Guiteau.

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Chapter 15 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 13 - Stalwart Of The Stalwarts

Chapter 15 Summary: Turmoil and Transformation

Political Landscape Change

The political environment in New York underwent a significant transformation following the resignations of prominent Senators Roscoe Conkling and Tom Platt. In their absence, the Senate quickly confirmed William H. Robertson as the new Collector of the Port of New York, igniting celebrations across upstate New York despite heavy rainfall. This enthusiasm reflected a shift in local political dynamics, as Conkling's once-dominant supporters found themselves increasingly isolated and defeated by a new coalition of reformists rallying against the entrenched power of Conkling's Stalwart faction.

Conkling's Return

With ambitions of a political resurgence, Conkling returned to Albany, yet he was met with escalating challenges. His allies initially felt a glimmer of hope, but soon realized that their support was waning as they faced a united front of opposition that signaled a significant change in the political tide.

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This new energy among reformists was undermining Conkling's longstanding influence.

Political and Personal Struggles

Amidst these political upheavals, President James Garfield navigated his own personal trials as his wife, Lucretia, recovered from illness. Despite his attempts to remain detached from the Albany struggle, Garfield found that the needs of his allies, who sought his backing against Conkling, drew him into the fray. The domestic strains on the Garfield household intertwined with the burgeoning political conflict.

Conkling's Decline

As the opposition against him grew stronger, Conkling's aspirations faced increasing mockery and ridicule. The public's scorn was exacerbated by personal gossip and perceived failures within his faction, spiraling further after a scandal involving Platt. This accumulation of negative sentiment eroded the credibility of both men, marking a notable decline in their political fortunes.

Guiteau's Determination

During this chaotic backdrop, Charles Guiteau, a disgruntled and delusional

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lawyer, became fixated on an extreme solution to his grievances within the Republican Party. Convinced that a drastic action could catalyze the political change he desired, Guiteau meticulously planned an assassination attempt on President Garfield. His distorted belief in the righteousness of his cause drove him to purchase a firearm and prepare for the moment he deemed necessary for his intervention.

The Presidential Shooting

On July 2, 1881, Guiteau executed his plan by shooting Garfield at the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad station. Initial medical attempts to treat the President's wounds were undermined by worsening conditions. Guiteau was apprehended almost immediately, openly admitting to the crime and claiming that he had acted out of a misguided sense of duty to unify the Republican Party through his drastic actions.

Aftermath

As Garfield fought for his life, the political aftermath of the shooting began to unfold, setting in motion a series of transformations within the nation's political landscape. The incident not only underscored the volatility of political ambition but also highlighted the extreme lengths individuals would go to influence it. The intertwining of political intrigue, scandal, and personal conflict laid the groundwork for profound changes among key

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political figures and the broader trajectory of American politics itself.

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Chapter 16: Dark Horse Chapter 14 - Bulletins

Chapter 16 Summary: Dark Horse

In the wake of a national tragedy, Chester Alan Arthur, the Vice President, learns of President James Garfield's assassination while aboard a steamboat on the East River. The abrupt announcement ignites a wave of fear and uncertainty, prompting speculation about Arthur's potential rise to the presidency amid the growing chaos. Public and political sentiments toward him are mixed, leaving Arthur grappling with the weight of leadership during an unpredictable crisis.

Meanwhile, Lucretia Garfield receives the harrowing telegram about her husband's shooting while vacationing at a resort. Overwhelmed with dread, she hurries back to Washington, where Ulysses S. Grant, the former president, offers his support during this dark moment, highlighting the solidarity among past leaders amidst national despair.

As news of the assassination reaches Washington, chaos ensues—speculation swirls regarding the motives behind the attack. Charles Guiteau, the assassin, is apprehended and claims his actions were politically motivated, raising suspicions about the involvement of prominent figures like Arthur and the political machine led by Roscoe Conkling. The nation is

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consumed by a mixture of grief and suspicion.

Garfield's fight for survival captivates the public's attention, drawing crowds to the White House eager for updates. Yet, Arthur is deeply aware of his inadequacies in the face of potential leadership. The atmosphere is charged with tension reminiscent of the pre-Civil War era, underlining the profound societal unease.

As Garfield battles for his life, his health deteriorates due to infections compounded by medical mismanagement common in that era. Each setback in his condition leads to fluctuating waves of public hope and despair, as doctors struggle to save him.

Conversations about the transition of power begin to arise as Garfield's situation worsens. However, Arthur hesitates to claim the presidency, concerned about the implications for his political future and wary of the looming influence of Conkling's faction.

By September, Garfield's health declines sharply, prompting a move to Elberon, New Jersey, in a last-ditch effort for recovery. The nation holds its breath, united in collective sympathy as media coverage continuously chronicles Garfield's struggle.

Tragically, on September 19, Garfield succumbs to his injuries, eliciting a

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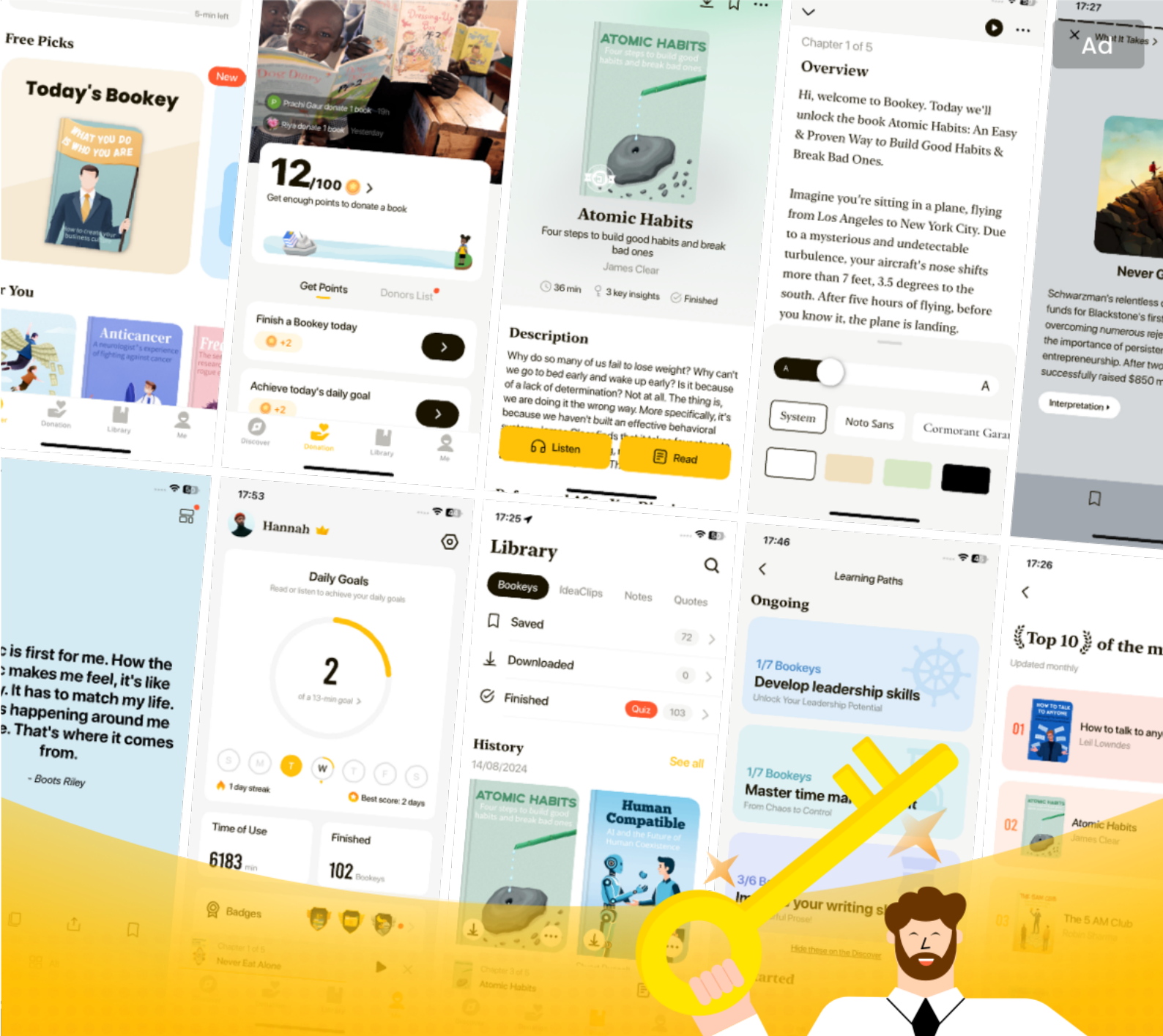
profound emotional outpouring across the country. Arthur receives the somber news and prepares for his upcoming inauguration, stepping into the role of president amidst a landscape marked by suspicion and political tumult.

Arthur is finally inaugurated in a private ceremony, a reluctant leader assuming the presidency during a time of national sorrow and uncertainty. He reflects on the implications of his unexpected ascendance and the challenges that lie ahead, as he strives to navigate the complexities of his new role against the backdrop of recent turmoil.

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Chapter 17 Summary: Dark Horse Chapter 15 - Arthur

Summary of Chapter 17 from "Dark Horse" by Kenneth D. Ackerman

Arthur's Ascension to the Presidency

In the wake of President James A. Garfield's tragic assassination, Chester Alan Arthur took on the presidency under profoundly difficult circumstances. Accompanying Garfield's body to Washington, Arthur swore his oath of office in the presence of dignitaries, embodying national grief. His respectful leadership and organization of memorial events even garnered unexpected sympathy from critics, setting a somber yet hopeful tone for his administration.

Historical Context of Vice Presidents Taking Office

Arthur was only the fourth vice president to ascend to the presidency due to a predecessor's death, following notable figures like Andrew Johnson, John Tyler, and Millard Fillmore. Each had faced their own political challenges, often struggling to maintain power amid tumult. Recognizing the delicate state of the nation, Arthur aimed to unify and stabilize a fractured political

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landscape, stepping into a legacy fraught with difficulties.

Decision-Making and Political Allies

Seeking to promote harmony, Arthur initially retained Garfield's cabinet members but soon found himself in conflict with Roscoe Conkling, an influential New York senator. Conkling's demand for loyalty and political favors led to a significant rift, particularly over the dismissal of William H. Robertson, a key official. Arthur's refusal to capitulate marked a defining moment in his presidency, symbolizing his determination to assert independence from the entrenched New York political machine, known as the Stalwarts.

Political Consequences and Legacy

This confrontation alienated Arthur from the Stalwarts, yet he carved out a reputation for effective governance through moderate policies, notably the Pendleton Civil Service Act, which reformed federal employment practices as a direct response to Garfield's assassination. Despite these achievements, Arthur faced challenges, including his declining health and an inability to secure nomination for re-election in 1884, overshadowing his legacy.

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Guiteau's Trial and Reaction to Garfield's Death

The trial of Charles Guiteau, who assassinated Garfield, became a national spectacle. Defending his actions with claims of insanity and mistreatment, Guiteau's dramatic courtroom antics captured widespread attention. His conviction and execution underscored the complex societal issues that arose following Garfield's untimely death, illustrating the era's tensions and the public's demand for justice.

Enduring Impact of Garfield's Assassination

The assassination served as a catalyst for sweeping civil service reforms, paving the way for modern governance structures. Although Arthur's presidency was brief and characterized by internal party conflicts, it altered perceptions of political accountability and efficiency in a tumultuous time. The factional rivalry between the Stalwarts and Half-Breeds began to fade, leaving behind a detailed narrative of political maneuvering that belied the simplicity often attributed to it.

Conclusion

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Chapter 17 of "Dark Horse" encapsulates Chester A. Arthur's tumultuous presidency, highlighting his struggle to find political identity following Garfield's assassination. His resilient efforts toward reform and navigation of a shifting political landscape reflect the complex governance issues of a significant era in American history.

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