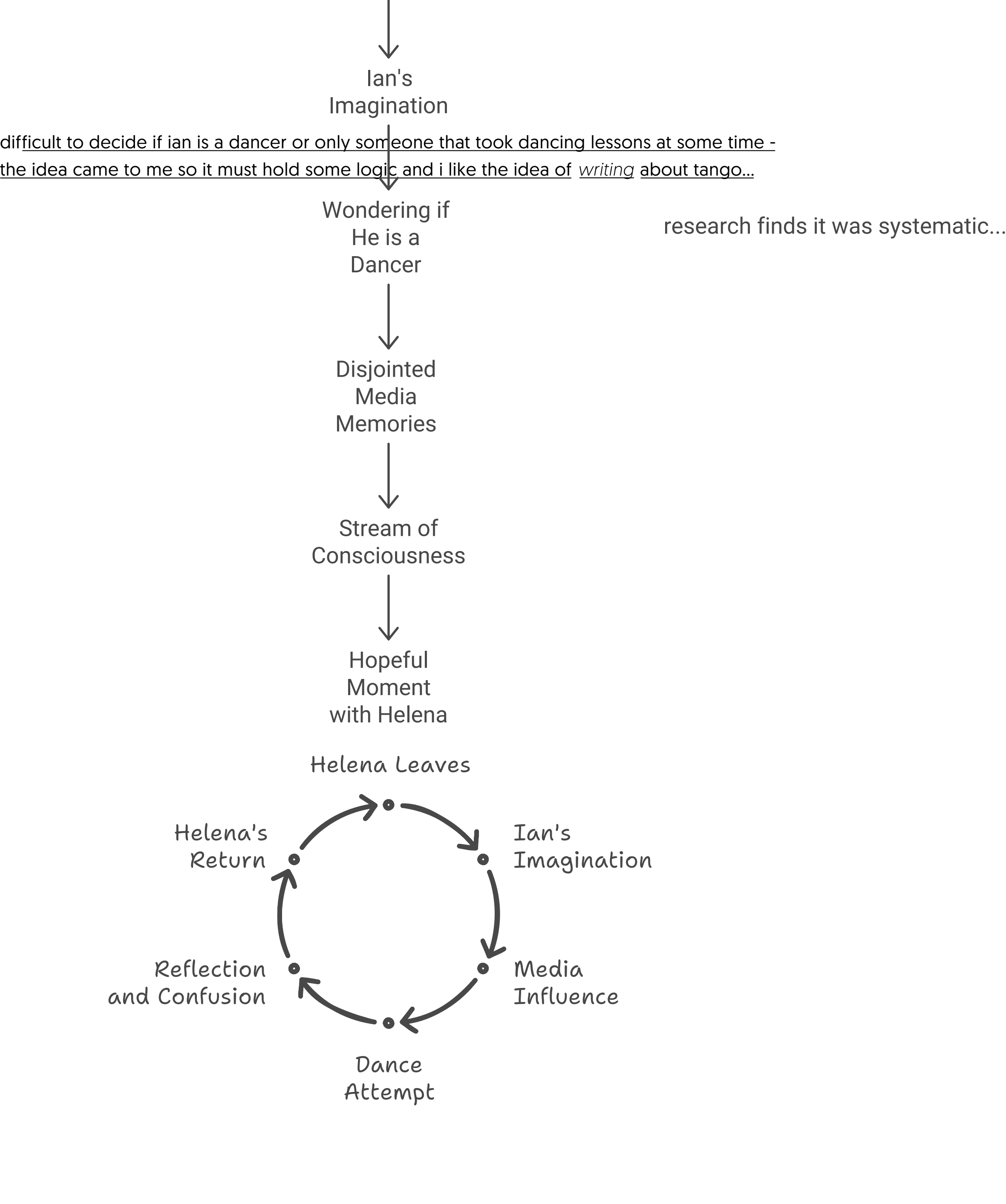


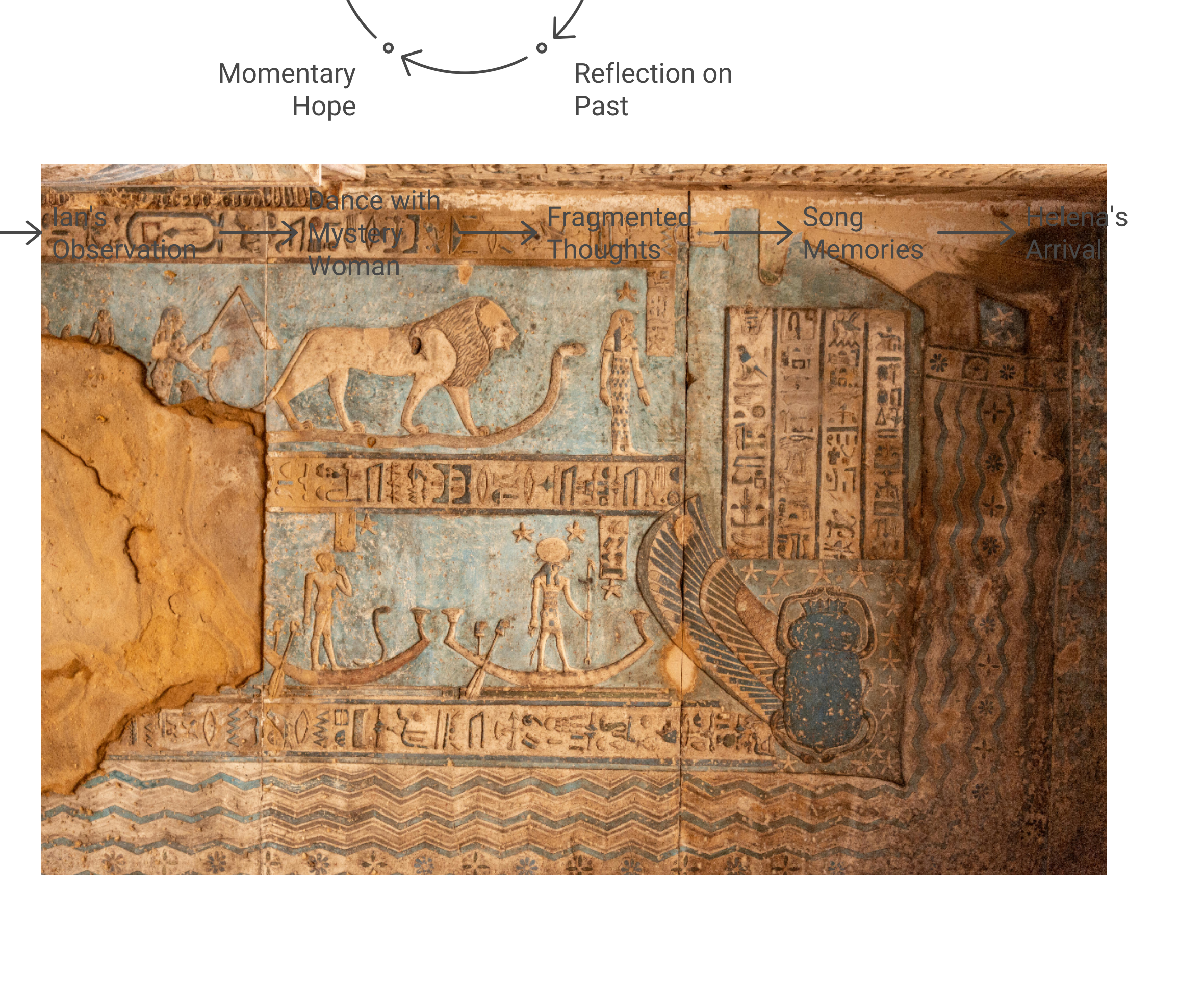
chapter two notes inkrealm...

9.9.2024

Helena had left. Left had Helena to a place she only mentioned as her best friend's house. A brown handbag bizzarely adorned with wooden clothes pins was left behind as if to haunt Ian, to remind him that she was intent on returning to finish this homemade fixing, this drying glue at some of the worn edges that had come to resemble little leather mouths attempting conversations beyond the purse. Within the purity of his newfound unknowingness, he imagined them, the clothes pin, as worms which indeed felt to his ear as if speaking... Well, not the words which he kept trying to comprehend as they revolved in his thoughts as if needing to be mused over, memorized, to be the only music he could dance to - The thought stopped his thinking. A dancer? Was he a dancer? He couldn't be sure. Suddenly an impulse to attempt a sliding sort of tango giro step into a split led him to grab the energetic mystery woman from the couch potato creature she had become while Helena was away... His legs tingled as he dared to revolt against the put together pixels scrambling his thoughts which she seemed to love... He pulled her as if possessed and her legs followed his with a sort of upsidedown smile that refused to give any hint of herself, but Ian didn't care what she might make of this boldness, of this carefree exploration, of this forced gesture...He jolted himself as he felt a return to when the television felt friendly as in the dream of his ex or even "Service Deluxe," still the noise that had crept in while Helena was gone held sway in his bloodstream as if they had outnumbered oxygen in the air... Stil, he was shaking them off; The scenes had already surrendered to his blendersque mind which turned ----- the awfully dizzying "My First Film," the innuendo riddled "Rain," (wherein he actually saw himself as Joan Crawford) the sexually charged Russian "Succubus," a series of orgiastic news teasers along with actual news of Taylor Swift doing nothing anyone could logically explain given the already overflowing library of Swifties thisy that and the other tidbits - given the death tolls that were broadcast without any celebrity urgency...what was a tanker explosion overseas...what were forty thousand dead Palestinians...what was Ukraine without an after tour press spree? a show called "The Bear" with an actual man more ursidaen than human save for a moustache, some debate over accepting an obviously inept candidate or burning down the country in which he couldn't help but giggle as he recalled some distant history lesson where the buffalo were exterminated to starve the native indians, Ian thought, the war of Independence was burning down England and maybe France too, the Civil war was even worse and these talking heads would rather vote for idiots well - sinister flimflam professionals posing as idiots, he corrected his train of thought - terribly selfish fools would rather hold the party line than rebuild the land...



A band called the Presidential debate played last, the heavy makeup weighing the notes down, it was a man and a woman but neither of them said anything that would cause a revolution, they didn't even talk fast as would be the norm say in a bar or a dorm - no, in fact when flustered their speech slowed as if trying to serve that one soundbyte which would get their finger on the bomb... boom -----into a weird, expanding, collage, instead of entertainment and politics (although nobody could tell the two classes apart) with another clown presidency on the way. Did they even need to Charlie Alpha Red signal the secret for some gung ho military honcho to put his head down and press that end of world party button or could they merely imagine it and bang...Yes, sure, Ian judged, it was like having a million dollars but still taking the bus simply for the vibe. The energetic mystery woman detonated into a split alongside Ian who took a long couple of seconds to slide his hand gently from her thigh to her ankle as the suddenly upturned skirt waited to leave the wild scene it encountered by surprise as Ian realized he might be a dancer or at least someone that had taken enough lessons to easily perform a forward cross and drag his partner into a nearly full split. The mystery woman remained silent through it all, ruffling down the rifled cloth that covered her legs down to the knees, she stood only to sit again in front of the glowing sound box which kept having something to offer hour after hour, day after day. Her skin, to his touch, had felt neither hot nor cold. It was like touching a vape which smoked out without a reaction in itself. The ashes in his mind's eye scattered, that media cigarette made his soul cough and it resonated in his brain's hearing as an echo without purpose. A strange repetition of nonsense or even songs he didn't exactly like...A fast food commercial jingle juggled against 'never gonna give you up' which he couldn't decide what it might mean - mafia vows? his ex in a telepathic seance telling him forever? Some of the other lyrics were 'We've known each other for so long /Your heart's been aching, but you're too shy to say it Inside, we both know what's been going on We know the game and we're gonna play it...' But they would have been foreign to him like French in a Greek diner. DO I LOOK LIKE I GOT A BAGUETTE, MONSIOUR? YOU WANT I SHOULD CHECK THE INSIDE OF MY BUTT FOR SOME BREAD, HUH - He must have heard the song at some point, somewhere...He didn't think it might have been a tune from his earliest days, from his infancy. Heard it through his mom... Yet, he only associated her with Jethro Tull. But it had to be from those days before he was aware of himself, before he realized what he was and what he wasn't and started hiding it. For a minute, in the middle of that echoing, it all felt so silly...What was the next line? Never gonna give you up or hurry you or hurt you or who knows...Truly even tortured he could only guess. He didn't have to guess about hope, however, the world was hope in the telephone, that phone call to his mother...Oh, no that was only him pleasing himself. A masturbation of the emotions to ejaculate into even more masks. Was he, even now, telling himself he was a dancer so he wouldn't have to tell himself he was a drug addict. A drug addict now holding a double need with the desire for Helena and even for her worms. The world met another midnight and she made the front door's opening and closing clatter sound like magic. Like magic, Helena had arrived while a smile broke through Ian's present mask.



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post-chapter curve addition

The American Century: A Case Study in Interconnectedness and Unintended Consequences by Dr. Emily Finch

As a historian seeking to understand the complex interplay of global events, I find myself drawn to the American century, a period marked by both unparalleled progress and profound upheaval. This era, characterized by American global dominance following World War II, presents a fascinating case study in interconnectedness and unintended consequences. To accurately assess its impact on England, we must delve into the intricate web of events that unfolded across the Atlantic, examining both the perceived good and the undeniable bad. My initial research focused on the tragic decimation of the American bison, a seemingly isolated event with far-reaching consequences. The systematic extermination of this iconic species, driven by greed, westward expansion, and a desire to subdue Native American populations, was not a spontaneous occurrence. It was a deliberate policy of extermination, fueled by a combination of factors, including the relentless hunt for hides, the introduction of diseases by settlers, and the disruption of migration patterns through railroad construction. This policy, endorsed by the US government, aimed to cripple Native American resistance by eliminating their primary food source. The impact resonated across the Atlantic, disrupting the lucrative trade of bison hides, a cornerstone of many English merchant enterprises. This economic disruption served as a stark reminder of the interconnectedness of global economies and the unforeseen consequences of American actions. The American Revolution, a pivotal moment in the nation's history, further underscored this interconnectedness. While the Americans fought for independence, their success sparked a wave of revolutionary fervor across Europe, including England. The ideals of liberty and self-determination, championed by the American revolutionaries, resonated deeply with segments of English society, fueling calls for greater representation and reform. This, in turn, led to a period of political instability in England as the ruling class, fearing the spread of revolutionary sentiment, implemented stricter social control measures, increased surveillance, and cracked down on dissent. Key figures like Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine, a staunch critic of the French Revolution, warned of the dangers of radicalism, while Paine, a fervent supporter of both the American and French revolutions, advocated for democratic reforms in England. The American Civil War, a brutal conflict over the issue of slavery, further deepened the entanglement of the two nations. While many English citizens were appalled by the institution of slavery, the war had a profound impact on their livelihoods. The Union blockade of Southern ports, aimed at crippling the Confederacy's economy, disrupted the flow of cotton imports to England, leading to widespread unemployment in the textile industry. This economic disruption, coupled with the loss of a key trading partner, significantly impacted the British economy, highlighting the fragility of international trade networks and the interconnectedness of nations. Furthermore, the war divided public opinion in England, with many supporting the Union and others sympathizing with the Confederacy, underscoring the complexity of international relations. However, the American century did not end with the Civil War. The United States emerged from the conflict as a powerful nation, its influence extending to every corner of the globe. This rise to global power marked a significant shift in the balance of power, with England's influence waning as the United States emerged as a leading economic and military force. This era saw the rise of new international institutions, like the United Nations, heavily influenced by American ideals. These institutions, while often seen as positive developments, also represented a shift in the global order, with the United States playing a dominant role in shaping their agenda. The post-American century era, though marked by a less direct influence, still saw the ripple effects of America's rise. The US played a key role in rebuilding Europe after World War II and contributed to the spread of democratic ideals around the world. However, American foreign policy, driven by Cold War tensions, also led to interventions in various countries, often resulting in instability and conflict. The American century, therefore, presents a complex and nuanced historical narrative. The impact on England, far from being simple or unidirectional, was a complex interplay of economic disruptions, political upheavals, and a changing global order. While the period brought forth significant challenges, it also served as a catalyst for social and political reforms in England and contributed to the rise of new international institutions. It is challenging to declare definitively whether the overall impact of the American century on England was primarily positive or negative. The answer lies in understanding the intricate web of interconnected events, the unintended consequences, and the complex interplay of forces that shaped this era. Further research is needed to fully comprehend the long-term effects and assess whether the gains outweighed the losses. This understanding, however, is crucial to informing our understanding of globalization and the intricate dance of nations in a world increasingly interconnected.

