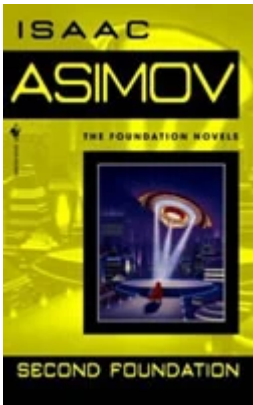


Second Foundation (novel)

Contributors to Asimov



Second Foundation is a science-fiction novel written by [Isaac Asimov](#). It is the last of the classic [Foundation trilogy](#) in the [Foundation series](#). The book is made up of two parts which were originally published separately in *Astounding Science Fiction*. The first part appeared in the January 1948 issue of *Astounding* under the title "Now You See It--", while the second appeared in the November 1949, December 1949, and January 1950 issues under the title "--And Now You Don't".



This article, **Second Foundation (novel)**, contains spoilers. **Be forewarned, plot and/or ending details follow.**

Asimov says *you* decide.

Search by the Mule[]

Chapter 1: Two Men And the Mule[]

Politically, the Union is quiet. Economically, it is prosperous. Few would care to exchange the peace of the Mule's steady grip for the chaos that had preceded. On the worlds that five years previously had known the Foundation, there might be a nostalgic regret, but no more. The Foundation's leaders were dead, where useless; and Converted, where useful. And of the Converted, the most useful was Han Pritcher, now lieutenant general. - State of the Galaxy in 300 FE

Five years after his defeat at the hands of Bayta Darell, who prevented him from learning where the elusive [Second Foundation](#) hides, [The Mule](#) keeps searching for it with the intention of destroying it, so he can forge a new Galactic Empire without opposition. His second in command is [Han Pritcher](#), former Captain of the Foundation's intelligence service and now General of the Mule's forces. During this time, Pritcher has led several unsuccessful expeditions to seek the Second Foundation, but now the Mule has him prepare for a new one, which will be led by up-and-coming military

prodigy [Bail Channis](#), telling Pritcher that, as Channis has not been mentally manipulated, he might be able to make an intuitive jump of logic that will guide him to the Second Foundation. At the same time, he tells Channis that he believes there are Second Foundation moles in his Union of Worlds, and needs him to prevent Pritcher from falling to those moles.

First Interlude[]

"We must allow the Mule to find us - in a sense." - The First Speaker, to the Executive Council

The Executive Council of Five Speakers of the Second Foundation is in session. Talking mentallically, they discuss the Mule's searches for them and how they can stop him. The First Speaker declares that they must allow the Mule to find them, 'in a sense'.

Chapter 2: Two Men Without the Mule[]

"That is Tazenda - Star's End." - Bail Channis, to Han Pritcher

Channis leads the search to a little known star nation called Tazenda, which is a plausible place for the Second Foundation to be hiding away based on Seldon's clue about it being hidden at the "Star's End". Meanwhile, he pretends they have not taken off to there yet while showing Pritcher the evidence. While on the way to Tazenda, he is told by Chief Engineer Huxlani that a hypertracer has been found on the communication circuit, and strangely tells him to put it back exactly were he found it.

Second Interlude[]

"So the Mule is on his way." - The First Speaker, to the Second Speaker

Just a few moments before passing into the Chamber to take up the business of the day, the First and Second Speakers share a quick mental exchange, arguing about the First Speaker's decision.

Chapter 3: Two Men and a Peasant[]

Rossem is one of those marginal worlds usually neglected in Galactic history and scarcely ever obtruding itself upon the notice of men in the myriad happier planets. - About Rossem

The history of Rossem, a planet controlled by Tazenda, is briefly told. Rather than going for the main planet, Pritcher and Channis visit Rossem. and meet Navori, who tells them some information about the planet. They prepare to meet the 'Elders'.

Third Interlude[]

But what of the Mule himself? - Private thoughts of the First Speaker

The First Speaker gazes at the night sky, noting that it now contains the Mule. The meeting off the Council was short and is over. There were the doubts and questionings inspired by the difficult mathematical problem of dealing with a mutant of uncertain makeup. The First Speaker wonders about his plan.

Chapter 4: Two Men and the Elders[]

The Elders of this particular region of Rossem were not exactly what one might have expected. They were not a mere extrapolation of the peasantry; older, more authoritative, less friendly. - The Elders

Channis and Pritcher meet the Elders - Pritcher dislikes them, whereas Channis quickly is accepted among them. After the meeting, Pritcher wonders whether he could be being controlled by the Second Foundation. Channis turns to face him, and knows that 'the farce is about over'.

Fourth Interlude[]

"May we live to see the dawn!" - Third Speaker, to the Second Speaker

The Second and Third Speaker pass each other on the road. The Third Speaker says he has a message for the First: 'intersection point'.

Chapter 5: One Man and the Mule[]

"Channis, I'm afraid you're a Second Foundationer yourself!" - The Mule, to Bail Channis

Pritcher comes to the conclusion that Channis is a member of the Second Foundation and tries to arrest him, but Channis manipulates him into believing that that's what the Second Foundation wants. The Mule appears then, and tells Channis he knows he is from the Second Foundation, as he proved himself to have mental powers during their initial audience. A standoff forms when Channis undoes the Mule's manipulation of Pritcher while keeping him at hold.

Chapter 6: One Man, The Mule - and Another[]

"Wake up Pritcher, we're going home." - The Mule, after being mentally altered by the First Speaker

The Mule acquiesces to a truce, but soon reveals that he has sent his fleet against Tazenda, believing it to be the home of the Second Foundation, but while mentally torturing Channis, the member of the Second Foundation stutters that Tazenda is just a veil, as Rossem is the actual world of the Second Foundation. The [First Speaker](#) of the Second Foundation joins the conversation, and he surprises the Mule with a number of revelations: Rossem is *not* the Second Foundation's homeworld, and the only reason Channis believes so is because he was mentally manipulated by the Foundation before going into his mission. And, worse of all, the Second Foundation's moles in the Mule's navy are ready to undo the mental manipulation suffered by the Union's high-ranking officers, destroying his empire and ensuring he won't be able to rebuild it. This makes the Mule drop his mental defenses for a second, enough to allow the First Speaker to modify his mind so he will stop trying to create a Galactic Empire, remaining content with what he has.

Last Interlude[]

Channis awakens, back as his original self. He now realises that the true location of the Second Foundation is not Rossem.

Search by Foundation[]

Fourteen year old and precocious Arcadia Darell (preferred name "Arkady") meet Dr. Anthor by the door, claiming to

have a meeting with her father, Dr. Darell. Two men, Semic and Munn, also arrive and the four discuss encephology, its applications, and the "threat" of the Second Foundation due to their apparent superiority over the Foundation.

Munn, being a Mule scholar, goes to Kalgan to learn more about the Mule and hopefully find the location of the Second Foundation. Arkady follows Munn to the ship, and the two go to Kalgan, meeting the authority (First Citizen) Strettin and his partner Callia. Arkday manages to persuade Strettin via Callia to let Munn go into the forbidden Mule's palace. Callia tells Arkady that Strettin wants to engage with her. Horrified and also scared that Callia is of the Second Foundation, Arkady runs to the space port and tries to go to Trantor with the help of Peter Palver and his wife.

Meanwhile, Kalgan and the Foundation are at war. Palver, asked to deliver food the the Foundation and a message to Dr. Darell, is imprisoned but is released after the war ended, with the Foundation winning.

Dr. Darell's group of four try to determine the location of the second foundation. But with Palver's delivered the message "A circle has no end," Darell thinks that the Second Foundation is on Terminus itself. He uses a technology known as the "Mind Static Device" to try to eliminate all Second Foundationers from Terminus. It turns out the Anthon is a Second Foundationer, and he tricks them to believe that the Second Foundation is defeated. All seems to go back to normal after Arkady returns from Trantor.

Unknown to them, though, the Second Foundation lives: the events that have happened in the last decade and a half have been part of a long-range plot developed by Preem Palver, the First Speaker of the Second Foundation, to both give the First Foundation the confidence of being able to stand on their own while the Second Foundation returns to hiding in the shadows, as was expected.

At the end, the First Speaker reveals that the Second Foundation is actually on Trantor. He tells the Student about how the recent events helped bring Seldon's plan back on the track. For instance, the war in Kalgan helped boost self-esteem. The First Speaker amuses himself that the Foundation citizens don't take Seldon's words "At the other end of the galaxy" in the perspective of Seldon as a social scientist. Instead, they think about their own physical science: that it is literally 180 degrees opposite from Terminus, or all the way around. The real meaning is that of the social perspective. While the first foundation was established where the empire was weakest, the second is where the empire is strongest: at Trantor itself. The first speaker, later revealed as Peter Palver, recalls the words "All roads lead to Trantor, and that is where all stars end."

See Also[]

[List of Books by Isaac Asimov](#)