

Carrie Study Guide

Carrie by Stephen King

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Plot Summary

Carrie, by Steven King, is the story of a young girl and the sudden discovery of her telekinetic abilities. Carrie has been abused, both physically and emotionally, all of her life by her mother and her peers at school. Upon discovering her abilities, Carrie decides that she will make them all pay, and she does.

Carrie White was raised by her mother, Margret White. Throughout Carrie's life she was treated poorly and was regularly locked in the hallway closet to pray for her sins. When Carrie started school she was the constant target of ridicule and practical jokes. Carrie was seventeen when she started her first menstruation cycle in the girls shower room at her high school. All the girls in the shower room laughed at Carrie and threw tampons at her. When Carrie realized she was bleeding, she became frantic. The gym teacher, Mrs. Desjardin, was angry with Carrie for a moment until she realized Carrie had no clue what was going on.

With the arrival of Carrie's first menstruation cycle, she began to notice that she could make things happen, such as lights going out and an ash tray that fell off a secure location. Carrie's mother comes home from work and is angry that Carrie has the curse upon her that all sinful women have and locks Carrie in the closet until Carrie asks for forgiveness for her sins.

Carrie begins to work with her ability to make things happen. Carrie just has to do a mental flex and she can levitate things. At first it is small things like her hair brush. These little things exhaust her at first, but within a few days Carrie can lift her bed with her on it and not get winded. Carrie has already begun to use her new abilities to stop her mother's abuse.

One of the girls at school, Sue Snell, that had made fun of Carrie in the shower room feels bad about what happened and convinces her boyfriend Tom Ross, to ask Carrie to the prom. Carrie accepts and goes to prom, but when she gets there she is the unfortunate one that is in the path of a deadly prank. Thinking it had been a trick from the front, Carrie uses her telekinetic powers to lock everyone in the prom and begins killing. Carrie heads home, killing everyone in her path. When Carrie White reaches her home, her mother is waiting with a knife to kill her demon possessed daughter. She manages to stab Carrie, but before Carrie dies she kills her mother. Carrie dies scared and feeling alone in the arms of Sue Snell with Sue knowing that because of Carrie, Tom Ross is dead.

The State Investigation Board of Maine reports after an analysis of the events that lead up to the Carrie White telekinetic attacks that it was an isolated incident that couldn't happen again.



Part 1: Page 1-74

Part 1: Page 1-74 Summary

Carrie, by Steven King, is the story of a young girl and the sudden discovery of her telekinetic abilities. Carrie has been abused, both physically and emotionally, all of her life by her mother and her peers at school. Upon discovering her abilities, Carrie decides that she will make them all pay, and she does.

There is a rain of stones reported on in August of 1966 on the house of Mrs. Margret White. Mrs. White lives in the house with her three-year-old daughter Carrie. Carrie is abused at home and tormented at school. What no one knows is that Carrie White is telekinetic.

Carrie White is in the girls shower at school following her gym class. The girls are talking about prom and other things when Carrie steps out of the shower and all of them see the blood running down her leg. The girls in the shower begin to yell obscene things at Carrie and throw tampons at her, telling her to plug it up. Carrie becomes hysterical, screaming that she is bleeding to death. The gym teacher Miss Desjardin enters as Sue Snell suddenly realizes in great shock that Carrie has never had her menstrual cycle before. It is believed that Carrie's late start with her menstrual cycle was the ignition for her hidden abilities. Miss Desjardin slaps Carrie to get her under control and the lights in the bathroom pop loudly and go out.

Miss Desjardin gets Carrie dressed and takes her to the assistant principle's office, Mr. Morton, where Miss Desjardin explains to the principle that Carrie needs to go home. The principle, being a man and not understanding the full extent of what has happened, allows Carrie to be excused and walk home. After Carrie is gone, Mr. Morton is openly shocked that Carrie has gotten her first period at the age of seventeen, and is more shocked that Carrie's mother didn't tell Carrie about such things until he learns that Carrie's mother is Margret White. Both Margret White and her late husband, Ralph, were fanatical religious zealots.

Carrie is walking home when a little boy on a bike begins to yell at Carrie, calling her a fart face. Carrie concentrates on the little boy's bike and something flexes in her mind. The kid topples over. She finds it to be a weak muscle, but one that she is suddenly able to use like it had been there all along.

Carrie's father, Ralph White, carried a .38 revolver to work every day along with his Bible. Ralph died shortly after Carrie was born. Margret White would yell at the neighbors because they were sinning and ungodly. One of the neighbors sent their daughter out in a bikini to sunbath just to upset Margret White. The teenager looked up and realized that a little bright-eyed Carrie White was looking at her and asked about her breasts. Carrie explained that her mother, Margret White, told her that only sinning women had breasts and that they were called "dirty pillows." When Margret White had



seen her daughter talking to the neighbor girl she began to scream and tear pieces of her own flesh off until the child ran to her. The neighbors watched and listened to the screams coming from the house and then rocks began to fly from the sky, hitting only the White house.

Carrie sits at home alone. Her mother Margret is at work. Carrie looks at the tampons and is angry with her mother for not warning her this would happen.

Sue Snell is in Tommy Ross's car and tells him about what she did to Carrie in the shower stalls. Tommy admits it is awful and Sue is torn over her feelings.

Back at the white house, Margret White arrives home. She tells Carrie she is a woman now and Carrie begins to cry and tell her mother about what the other girls did. Margret backhands Carrie and tells her to get up so that they can pray. Margret explains that if Carrie hadn't sinned then the curse of the blood wouldn't have come upon Carrie. Margret locks Carrie in the closet for several hours until Carrie swears that she has repented. Carrie threatens to call down the rocks again and Margret White is visibly shaken.

Margret White's father was killed when she was a young girl and her mother remarried. Margret left her home after she met Ralph White at a revival meeting. Margret refused to have anything to do with her mother, telling her that any intercourse, even that in marriage, was sinful. Margret claimed that her and her husband Ralph had managed to have a holy union without such filth. The year that Margret wrote the letter to her mother urging her to refrain from sex was the same year that Carrie was born.

On Monday morning, Miss Desjardin gathers the girls that had taken part in Carrie's hazing and gives them all detention. If they don't come then they have to forgo prom. Chris Hargensen announces that she won't go to detention and that Miss Desjardin can't make her and walks out of class.

Chris Hargensen's father, a prominent lawyer in Chamberlain comes in to talk to the principle, Mr. Grayle, and tells him that the school will be sued if Chris isn't allowed to go to prom. Mr. Grayle goes over a list in Chris's school file of girls that have been harassed by Chris, one young girl almost lost her toes because of some firecrackers placed by Chris, and each time Chris's father has come and made the trouble disappear. Chris has been accepted to a very prestigious college despite the fact that her grades are no better than average and her academic aspirations are non-existent. Mr. Grayle informs Chris's father that if they want to sue the school then the school will countersue on behalf of Carrie White.

Part 1: Page 1-74 Analysis

The encounter in the principle's office gives the reader a very clear understanding of Chris Hargensen in regards to how she treats people she finds to be beneath her. Although Chris Hargensen doesn't force Carrie to kill anyone, the reader will see that it is likely that Chris Hargensen could be looked at as a trigger for the events that will



happen. It is possible that Chris Hargensen killed Tommy Ross, although that isn't fully explained. Chris Hargensen won't go to prom but Carrie will hunt her down and kill her.

Sue Snell was in on the incident in the girls shower room in reference to the tampons being thrown. The reader will see that it genuinely begins to bother Sue that she was a part of such a horrific group act. Sue never actually comes out and says that she is sorry to Carrie. The reader will continue to see that Sue feels bad but will admit to herself that she is trying to do good things for Carrie in order to make herself feel better. It will appear that Sue never actually wants to do anything to help Carrie as much as she wants to do something to make herself feel better. Despite her selfish reasons for trying to help Carrie, Sue and Tommy Ross will be two of the only characters that show Carrie any kindness.

Margret White has very violent ideas of how to atone for sin. The reader will see as the story continues that Margret will believe her daughter to be evil and a witch. By the end of the story, Margret will be ready to sacrifice her daughter in order to wash away the sin. Margret never fully states whether she wants to wash away her own sins for the sex she had with her husband and being too weak to kill Carrie earlier on in her life, or the sins that Carrie has committed. The reader has seen that telekinetic ability is thought to run in families and Margret's grandmother, Carrie's great-grandmother, had the ability as well. The reader will see one other place that telekinetic ability is passed down in families at the very end of the story.



Part 1: Page 74-120

Part 1: Page 74-120 Summary

Sue Snell goes to the local hangout to have a root beer and finds Chris Hargensen there. Chris is there with her boyfriend Billy Nolan. Chris's dad wasn't able to get her into prom but she thinks she is going to crash prom regardless. Chris gets angry with Sue for not walking out with hers knowing that Miss Desjardin couldn't punish them if they all refused to take the punishment. Sue says she took the punishment because they had earned it. Sue knows that this isn't true, that she had taken the punishment because she didn't want to chance missing prom. As Sue leaves Chris and Billy, she begins to cry at the thought of what kind of person she is.

A letter found written by Chris Hargensen tells her friend that she is going to do something so awful to the people at prom that they are going to get an awful big surprise.

Carrie White sits in her room and has been practicing flexing her muscle and making it stronger. She watches the brush on her dresser as it lifts up and hovers before she sets it back down. Carrie then lifts the bed with her own weight on it. The bed crashes down, but Carrie is getting stronger.

Sue Snell decides the way to make things right is to have Tommy Ross ask Carrie White to prom. Tommy agrees, telling Sue that he loves her. Thursday after lunch, Tommy Ross asks Carrie White to prom. At first Carrie is embarrassed and explains that she doesn't like jokes to be played on her, but Tommy insists that he is serious and Carrie eventually agrees. Tommy notices that Carrie is actually a pretty girl.

Since Tommy Ross died the night of prom it is unknown by those investigating if he took part in the events that befell Carrie White or not. Tommy Ross either was acting maliciously or unknowingly.

Carrie goes home and tells her mother that she is going to prom with a very nice young man that wants to come home and meet her. Margret White refuses to let Carrie go. When Carrie says she is going regardless, Margret slaps Carrie in the face. Margret raises her hand to slap Carrie again after Carrie refuses to get into the closet, when suddenly the pie pan on the table rises and flies across the room and then Margret's teacup shatters. Margret calls Carrie the Devil's child and a witch and that says that one doesn't suffer a witch to live. Margret White goes upstairs and is heard reciting the prayer of exorcism from Deuteronomy.

Wednesday afternoon, Sue Snell and other students are decorating for prom. Chris Hargensen comes in and talks secretively to one of her friends on the decorating committee. No one is sure what she is saying, but Sue is sure it isn't good. Sue Snell believes Chris Hargensen's main goal is the destruction of Carrie White.



Chris Hargensen enters the prom decoration committee area and asks her good friend to let her backstage to see something. After looking at the names on the list of possible candidates for prom queen and king, Chris knows that Tommy and Carrie actually have a chance at being crowned, and Chris is going to do everything possible to make sure it is those two up on stage on prom night.

Chris leaves the prom decorating party and goes to call Billy Nolan. Billy gathers together a bunch of his friends and they go to a local farm and kill the man's pigs and gather two big buckets of pig blood and put them on ice. Billy is really excited at the thought of giving pig blood to a pig.

Part 1: Page 74-120 Analysis

Billy Nolan is looked at a little more closely at this point in the book. Billy Nolan will become a confusing character. The reader has seen at this stage in the story that Billy Nolan says that everything is for Chris and that he would even kill for her. The reader has to keep in mind that just a matter of days later Billy is contemplating leaving the town and heading far away and leaving Chris behind because he can't stand her. Billy is just as responsible for the events that happen as Chris is. The difference between Chris and Billy Nolan is that Billy Nolan doesn't care who he hurts as long as it is someone that he considers a "pig". That will soon come to mean Chris as well.

The buckets of pig blood are meant to simply ruin the fun at the prom and embarrass whomever happens to be crowned king and queen of prom. The reader will see later on that when Chris pulls the strings, that one of the buckets lands on Tommy Ross' head and kills Tommy.

Most of the people involved with prom realize that Chris Hargensen is most likely going to try and do something at prom to ruin the event for everyone else, but no one says anything to her. The principle stood up to Chris Hargensen's father, but the reader will see that Chris is someone who seemingly gets away with anything that she wants to do. The fact that no one has ever told Chris Hargensen no and put boundaries could logically be attributed to what Chris Hargensen and many more people contribute to.

Later on in the story Carrie will talk about her mother. Carrie appears to earnestly love her mother, and although she never says so, she seemingly wants her mother's love despite the fact that Margret calls Carrie a witch. Carrie doesn't seem to understand at this point that her mother intends to kill her. Later on in the story, Carrie appears to blame Sue and the others who convinced her to go to prom for the death of Margret White, although Carrie is admittedly the one that kills Margret White.



Part 2: Page 121-188

Part 2: Page 121-188 Summary

Carrie tries on her dress for the prom that she has worked so hard on. Carrie has on a special bra and as she looks at her reflection in the window Carrie feels both shame and excited. Carrie's mother refers to Carrie's display of her breasts as her dirty pillows. Carrie stops her mother, saying that every woman has breasts. Her mother begins to tear at her skin, making herself bleed, but Carrie refuses to skip the prom. Carrie's door flies open by itself and Margaret White begins to slide backward against her own will. Carrie apologizes to her mother, but refuses to skip prom.

Carrie waits for Tommy Ross to arrive. Margaret White has locked herself in her home worship center and is praying loudly. Carrie waits for Tommy, watching the clock and counting every minute. At two minutes until the time for Tommy to show up, Carrie has begun to convince herself that he isn't going to come and that it would be better if he didn't come. She worries that it is a practical joke, but when Tommy Ross arrives, Carrie is overjoyed. When Carrie answers the door and asks how she looks, Tommy honestly tells her that she is beautiful.

Outside the prom, Chris Hargensen and Billy Nolan are waiting for the prom to start. Chris and Billy had found where to situate the buckets so that they are over the exact spot that the prom queen and king will be standing, whoever is crowned. Billy doesn't care who is crowned, but Chris has arranged it so that all of her friends will vote for Tommy and Carrie. Billy has begun to hate Chris and thinks of her as only an object to be used for sex. Chris is becoming unsure of Billy since he is the first boyfriend she has ever had that she can't control. Billy tells her again that pig blood for a pig is a good idea.

Carrie and Tommy arrive at prom and Carrie is beautiful. People are nice and several girls ask Carrie where she got her dress. Things are going wonderfully. The majority of the people at prom have less than two hours to live.

Billy Nolan had had help with every step of the plan. Billy didn't fully trust anyone. Billy had made sure that none of his friends wore gloves when they touched the buckets that were placed on the beam above the perch for the prom royalty. Billy had also made sure that he wore gloves. Waiting now for the moment to pull the strings that had been placed where he and Chris would be waiting for the announcement of the prom royalty, he decides that he will have Chris pull the trigger. This will be one more way to ensure that he isn't the one responsible for the charges that will be brought.

Carrie and Tommy Ross are having a great time at prom, even though Carrie is nervous about the situation. At the White residence, Margaret is sitting, waiting on Carrie to get home. Margaret is thinking about her grandmother who had had the same devil power that her daughter Carrie has. Margaret had known her daughter had the devil's power



when Carrie's bottle would float in the air in front of her. Margret had tried to kill the child then, but Ralph had stopped her. Margret had tried to kill Carrie once more when Carrie was three, but had been too weak to complete the task. Margret sits with a knife, waiting for Carrie to get home, determined she won't be weak this time.

Carrie is at prom, thinking about how sinful everything happening here is, from the music to the girls' dresses, and enjoying it all. Miss Desjardin comes up and tells Carrie how pretty Carrie is. Carrie feels that Miss Desjardin is trying to apologize. Sue Snell is sitting at home, thinking about Tommy at prom with Carrie and unable to take a hard look at her own motives, knowing that they aren't completely selfless regardless of the fact that Sue is trying to do something nice for Carrie. Sue is thinking about Tommy and suddenly realizes that her period is almost a full week late and she has never been late.

Billy and Chris are standing outside listening to what is going on inside the prom, waiting on the clapping and cheering to signify that a queen and king have been crowned so that they can pull the strings attached to the pig blood buckets. Carrie is inside and surprised to find that her name is on the ballot with Tommy's. Everyone votes, and there is a tie between Tommy and Carrie and another couple. The students are instructed to vote again in a run off between the two couples. Carrie tells Tommy not to vote for them because she doesn't want to go onstage, but Tommy tells her that she deserves this and casts his vote. Tommy and Carrie win by one vote.

Sue is at home when she glances out the window and sees the fire at the school. She has gone to go get her jacket when she suddenly hears an earthshaking explosion.

Suddenly there is a splash with red color flying all over everything and Carrie and Tommy are covered with a red liquid. One of the buckets hits Tommy in the head with a sickening sound. Carrie stands on the stage and people begin to laugh. Carrie leaps down when one of the teachers tries to make her way to Carrie. Miss Desjardin is thrown backward by an unseen force. Before Carrie can clear the crowd, someone sticks out their foot and trips her. Carrie picks herself up and runs out of the prom. Someone runs up on stage and checks on Tommy, but Tommy isn't responding. Someone yells for a doctor to be called. Someone announces that Carrie is back and the doors to prom slam shut simultaneously. Carrie, drenched in the pig blood, is smiling while people bang on the doors trying to get out. A few get out through the back doors, and those are the only ones that live. The sprinklers suddenly go off and prom goers are suddenly being electrocuted throughout the prom as fires begin.

Tommy Ross had been hit on the head and died quickly and is one of the few that didn't suffer.

Mr. Tom Quillian gives a testimony to the White Commission Report, stating that he saw Carrie White the night of the prom from his room over the pool hall where he works. Carrie walked by and fire hydrants exploded all over the place with Carrie just grinning. Quillian can't explain it but he knew what Carrie was thinking.



Part 2: Page 121-188 Analysis

Tom Quillian explained what he saw and said that he knew what Carrie was thinking. The reader will see in the testimony given by other individuals that everyone that survived their contact with Carrie White seemed to know what she was thinking. People knew that Carrie White was responsible for the prom fire and the death of all those people. Carrie seemed to think that Tom was responsible in some way for the pig blood being dumped on her. Sue will believe that Carrie is responsible for the death of Tom. It might be possible that Tom could have lived if Carrie hadn't suddenly began attacking people, but the exacts of this aren't told to the reader.

The reader has seen one testimony taken by the White Commission Report. The White Commission Report will show up many more times in the continuation of this part of the story. The conclusion reached by the committee won't be explained until part three of the story.

Chris Hargensen and Billy Nolan have left prom thinking simply that they drenched people in pig blood and have ruined prom. They will go back to Billy's place and fall asleep and the next time the reader sees them they will have no idea of the murders that are taking place or what is happening. By the time that Billy realizes that they need to leave and that they are in danger, Carrie will already be to them.

Margret White is sitting at home waiting on her daughter. If Carrie hadn't insisted on going to prom, her mother might not insist on killing her daughter, but it appears that Margret White has convinced herself that the only way to rid herself of the evil that comes from Carrie is by spilling Carrie's blood. Margret continues to quote scripture and has likened herself to Abraham and the fact that God called Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac on the altar. Margret uses the Bible scriptures where it suits her to control her daughter and when it fails, Margret seems to lose the last of her self control. It isn't explained if Margret would have let Carrie live if Carrie had stayed home, but Carrie would have had to bend to her mother's will fully from what the reader has seen of the mother.



Part 2: Page 188-242

Part 2: Page 188-242 Summary

Carrie is aware first of the loud metallic noise before she is actually hit with the pig blood. She covers her eyes and hears people laughing at her. Carrie had been right. All of this was a trick to make her look foolish in front of everyone. Carry tries to run out of the prom, throwing Miss Desjardin with a flex of her mind. Before Carrie can get out of the dance someone trips her, and Carrie is down on the floor ,waiting for someone to kick her in her, but but no one does. Carrie begins to run home to her mother and then stops. Carrie would spend the rest of her life with the cuckoo clock and the closet and the praying for repentance, and so she turns around and walks back toward the prom. Carrie flexes and the doors slam shut. Carrie flexes and the pipes begin to spring open from the water sprinklers. Carrie is smiling watching those that had tormented her. Carry begins to kill the people in the gym through electrical shock. She sensed the people escaping out the back but decided she would find them and kill them later. Carrie sets the building on fire and slams all the doors shut mentally as she heads off back towards town to make sure they can't put the fire out. Carrie flexes and twists the hydrants open so that there is no pressure left for the school. Every gas station that Carrie comes to she uses as a massive gasoline bomb.

The testimony of Sheriff Otis Doyle that he gave to the White Commission Report states that he was outside the town when the trouble began and by the time he got back, one of his officers was already dead. Sue Snell found the Sheriff but was hysterical crying that it was Carrie that did it because they hurt Carrie.

Various parts of Chamberlain are blown up as Carrie makes her way through town, leaving dead people behind her. Carrie goes into a church to pray. God doesn't answer her and she she leaves to go find her mother. Outside, Carrie sees the parents and people of Chamberlain and begins to kill them all. There is only a person or two left alive.

Mrs. Cora Simard, one of the parents that survived Carrie's attack outside the church, gives testimony to the White Commission Report. Cora Simard had never seen Carrie White before, but knew who she was when Carrie stepped out of the church. Cora also knew that Carrie was responsible for the things that were happening. The people around Cora began to burn alive and Carrie just smiled and walked on. Cora managed to get over the electrical wires that Carrie had thrown them on the ground. When Cora got to the school, they told her her daughter was dead. Cora blames Carrie and wants to know what they are going to do to make sure there aren't any more dangerous people like Carrie White in the world.

Looking at a map a person can look at the damage that was done to Chamberlain and see that it leads from the school to Carrie White's home. Margret is sitting in the living room with the butcher knife, waiting on Carrie to come home. Margret tells Carrie that



when Ralf, Margret's husband, had sex with her she should have killed herself. Margret had thought she had cancer at first, and then Carrie came. Margret had intended to kill Carrie when she was born but she didn't. Carrie admits that she came home to kill her mother and that she knows her mother is waiting to kill her. Carrie asks for help and her mother stabs the knife into Carrie's back up to the hilt of the knife. Carrie then uses her abilities to stop her mother's heart.

Billy Nolan and Chris Hargensen are asleep when someone wakes them up, telling them that the whole town is on fire and Carrie White is responsible. Billy decides to skip town. Chris asks to go with him but Billy is done with her. They get in the car to leave but Carrie is waiting for them. Carrie causes Billy's car to crash. Billy is speared by the steering column and Chris is thrown into the dashboard as the car catches on fire. Carrie has lost a lot of blood and lays down on the ground.

Sue Snell is investigated by the White Commission Report more than once, being unsatisfied by her answers. They want to know how Sue knew where Carrie White was at but Sue can't explain how she knew, just that she knew.

Carrie was weak when Sue found her and couldn't turn herself over. Sue is able to communicate with Carrie telepathically. Sue begs Carrie to look in her and see that Sue had nothing to do with what happened. Carrie finds that Sue was disgusted by Carrie but didn't hate her and had no plan to get her or play a joke on her. Carrie hangs on to Sue as she begins to die, leaving Sue frightened and feeling like she is being pulled with Carrie. Sue lays with Carrie while she dies, and when Carrie leaves, Sue begins her menstrual cycle.

Part 2: Page 188-242 Analysis

The reader has seen in this part the retelling of the events that happened at the prom from the view point of Carrie. The people in the prom that saw things begin. They knew that nothing touched Miss Desjardin, but they didn't know what had happened and it didn't really register as being important. The reader sees that from the view point of Carrie there is suddenly something that snaps and Carrie knows that her choices are being harassed by people like those in the prom or going home and being a prisoner. Carrie seemed to honestly feel that there wasn't a choice left to her. Carrie killed a lot of people that night. It isn't explained if Carrie knew that Sue was pregnant but it is clear that Sue starts her menstrual cycle the moment that Carrie finishes dying. It isn't explained if Carrie kills off Tom's baby as punishment to Sue or if the pull that Carrie had on Sue as she lay dying pulled the child with her.

The reader will see later on that Sue was able to come to some peace in regards to Carrie and doesn't hold her any ill will. There will be signs and things written around town about Carrie White burning in hell. It will appear that people hate her just as much after her death as they did when she was alive. One of the mothers wants to know what people are going to do to make sure that there aren't any more people like Carrie White out there. If Carrie had had someone, or somewhere to go as a safe haven, it is



possible that she wouldn't have turned around and faced the prom. Even after Carrie got home and had killed so many people, and knew that her mother was waiting there to kill, Carrie still asks for her mother to help her.

The reader isn't told if Chris Hargensen or Billy Nolan were alive when the car began to burn. The two that were responsible for so much of the trouble that happened were two of the last people that Carrie White killed. The reader doesn't learn what becomes of Chris' father, who had been so quick to try and cover up all the trouble that his daughter would get into.



Part 3

Part 3 Summary

The report of death for Carrie White states the cause of death possible, hemorrhage, shock, coronary occlusion and/or coronary thrombosis. The death toll in Chamberlain was 409, with forty-nine people still missing. So many people were killed and families destroyed by the events that happened on prom night that the town has never fully recovered. Much of the town has rebuilt, but people aren't the same and the town's main business has been funerals, with new bodies being found on a constant basis with the clean up of the town. The principal Henry Grayle submits his resignation because he feels he might could have done something to stop the events on that night. Likewise, Miss Desjardin submits her resignation, stating she can never teach again wondering if she could have reached out to Carrie and made a difference.

There is a sign that has been painted on the past residence of the White's stating that Carrie White is burning in hell.

Sue Snell has written a book in the hopes that she can use the money from it to move somewhere that she isn't associated with Carrie White and the murders that occurred in Chamberlain.

The State Investigatory Board of Maine that conducted the White Commission Report concluded, in regards to Carrie White, that they found no proof or reason to believe that any repeat of the events that happened on prom night in 1979 in Chamberlain, Maine would be likely or possible to happen again.

A letter dated 1988 from the Jenks family describes their beautiful little girl, Annie Jenks, and her amazing abilities, much like the ones her great-grandmother had. Annie can sit and play with her brothers marbles and make them levitate. Annie's mother is a little scared but has high hopes for her daughter's future.

Part 3 Analysis

The State Investigatory Board of Maine for the White Commission Report ultimately declared that there was no reason to think that anything like this would ever happen again. The story doesn't explain if they honestly believe that to be the case or are trying to calm what is left of the people of Chamberlain, Maine.

The last part of the book goes into detail explaining the gaping hole that was left in the town emotionally. The reader will see that companies began to fold and most people, if they could, seemingly found a way to leave the town. The reader isn't told about the families of the teenagers that were significant characters in the book, such as Billy Nolan, Chris Hargensen, and Tommy Ross, if they left the town after their children's death. Also the reader is told that the principal of the school and Miss Desjardin



resigned, but it isn't explained if they stayed in the town of Chamberlain. It appears that both of those educators felt in retrospect that they should have done something, or perhaps have foreseen that something had the potential of happening that night.

If Chris Hargensen hadn't pulled the string, striking Tommy Ross and embarrassing Carrie White, it is possible that Carrie's world would have changed after that evening. She was having a good time and it appeared that there were people being genuinely nice to her. Upon feeling like she was the brunt of the joke, once again, Carrie suddenly felt like she had been pushed to the point that she couldn't run any longer.

The overall consensus of the town appears to be that Carrie White is a devil and the murderer of their children. The only character still living that seems to feel anything for Carrie White other than hate is Sue Snell. It is also Sue Snell that is blamed for much of what happened by the State Investigatory Board of Maine. It isn't told what happened to Sue in regards to her suspected collaboration in the prank that happened that night but it appears that she wasn't convicted of anything.

The letter at the end of the book stands as nothing more than proof of the wrong conclusion of the State Board of Maine.



Characters

Carrie White

Carrie White is the main character in the story. Carrie White's father died many years ago and Carrie's mother has always thought that Carrie was a curse from God and explains that more than once in Carrie's life she started to kill Carrie. Carrie feels like no one cares for her. She is a target for pranks and jokes at school. Teachers and peers all seem to look at Carrie like she is someone that is pathetic and grotesque.

When Tom asks Carrie to the prom at first Carrie is upset and believes that he is asking her only to play a joke on her. Carrie is so quick to assume that people are out to get her that she never realizes that the pig blood at the prom wasn't necessarily meant for her. Carrie has been so abused by the people that should have cared for her, or at least looked out for her, that she can't comprehend how to properly act with people in many respects. While Carrie is at Prom, the reader will find that she looks at everything in reference to how sinful it is. Carrie has heard her mother call everything sinful for so long that Carrie finally decides that she doesn't care if it is sinful or not. Carrie will even admit that she doesn't care who her gift came from, God or the Devil. Carrie kills almost everyone that comes across her path the night of the prom.

Sue Snell

Sue Snell is first introduced in the story as one of the girls that is making fun of Carrie when Carrie gets her first menstruation cycle. Sue later will feel guilty over her actions and tries in some respect to make it up to Carrie. Sue Snell daydreams about her future and what it will be like. The reader will be able to see how much her idea's of what her future will be like will change as the story progresses.

The reader will see that Sue Snell appears to be trying to make things up to Carrie, but she admits to herself that she doesn't want to examine her own motives too closely because she isn't sure she is going to like what she sees in herself. Sue will be brought before a committee to explain her part in the events that happen the night of the prom. Sue will deny any wrongdoing, but it appears that ultimately she isn't convinced that she didn't do something wrong. Sue cared for her boyfriend Tom Ross and it is thought that Sue was pregnant by Tom. Sue will be the one to hold Carrie while she dies. With Tom dead, because Sue asked him to take Carrie to prom, Sue will blame herself for his death and then, perhaps because of Carrie, Sue will loose the baby.

Sue had thought that she would stay in her hometown and make a future there just like many of the other girls in her class. After the events of prom night, Sue's ideas about her future change to the point that she isn't sure what she wants. Sue Snell will write a book with the hopes that it gives her enough money to get away from her hometown and find what she wants to do with the rest of her life.



Chris Hargensen

Chris is the girl that hated Carrie White and wanted to teach her a lesson. She had been banned from prom for her part in tormenting Carrie in the girls shower room after Carrie began her first menstruation cycle. Chris and her boyfriend will die in a fiery car crash.

Margret White

Margret White is Carrie White's mother. Margret is a religious fanatic who believes that engaging in intercourse, even in marriage, is a sin and that Carrie is God's punishment to Margret for sleeping with her husband. Margret had tried to kill Carrie more than twice over the span of Carrie's life. Carrie will stop her mother's heart with her telekinetic ability.

Miss Desjardin

Miss Desjardin is the teacher that punishes the girls that made fun of Carrie in the shower. Miss Desjardin tries to help Carrie to a small extent but doesn't really reach out to Carrie. After the prom night deaths, Miss Desjardin will resign, feeling that if she had reached out to Carrie White or done something differently then people might not have died.

Tom Ross

Tom is Sue Snell's boyfriend and is in love with Sue. Tom asks Carrie to prom because Sue asked Tom to. Tom is hit on the head with one of the buckets that was filled with pig blood. Tom dies before Carrie started her attacks.

Ralph White

Ralph White was Carrie White's father. He had been out drinking and came home and forced Margret to have sex with him, leading Margret to think that Carrie was her punishment for their sin. Ralph died at his construction site job.

Billy Nolan

Billy Nolan is Chris Hargensen's boyfriend. It is Billy who goes and kills the pigs and gathers their blood for the prank at the prom. Billy will die in a car accident.



Sheriff Otis Doyle

Sherriff Doyle is Chamberlain town sheriff when the events concerning Carrie White take place. Sheriff Doyle will testify for the State Investigatory Board in regards to the White Commission Report.

Mrs. Cora Simard

Mrs. Cora Simard will give her testimony about what she saw of Carrie White in regards to the prom night. Mrs. Simard's daughter was at the prom, and when she learns that the building is on fire she tries to make her way there. She and several other parents encounter Carrie on the way there. Carrie will kill most of the parents, with Cora Simard being one of the only ones left alive.

Annie Jenks

Annie Jenks is the name of the baby that is described as having telekinetic abilities as an infant.



Objects/Places

Telekinetic

Carrie White is telekinetic and has the ability to move objects with her mind. It will be her telekinetic ability that she uses to kill people.

Pig Blood

Pig blood is what filled the two buckets that were placed to drop on the queen and king at prom. One of these buckets kills Tom. It is what is done with the pig blood that starts Carrie killing.

Carlin Street

Carrie White and her mother Margret live on Carlin Street. After Carrie kills the people at prom, she makes her way back to Carlin Street.

Dirty Pillows

Carrie's mother tells her that a woman's breasts are dirty pillows and that good girls don't have them. Carrie will associate her breasts with the phrase dirty pillows throughout the story.

Blue Ribbon Laundry

The laundry where Margret White works. She is at work here when Carrie comes home from school after starting her first menstruation cycle.

Ewan Consolidated High School

The high school where Carrie attended. It is here that Carrie attends prom and it will be this school that Carrie sets on fire.

Flex

Flex is the word that appears to signify Carrie using her telekinetic abilities. It signifies the effort that it requires of Carrie just as flexing your arm muscle requires an effort.



The White Commission Report

The White Commission Report is put together after the attack by Carrie White in order to try and find out what happened. The council concludes that they don't believe that an occurrence of this nature could ever happen again.

Amelia Jenks' Letter

The letter from Amelia Jenks is one in which she describes her infant daughter's unusual abilities. Amelia explains that her daughter can cause things to float in the air in front of her and make marbles fly. This letter is shown after the White Commission Report explains that nothing like the Carrie White incident is likely to ever happen again.

Prom

Tom Ross takes Carrie to prom. It will be at prom that Carrie White is the unfortunate subject of a horrible prank. In retaliation for the abuse, Carrie will use her telekinetic abilities to begin killing people and will destroy a large portion of her town and kill hundreds.



Themes

The Need for Love

Carrie is ultimately a story of a young girl that is in desperate need of acceptance and love. Carrie doesn't seek out people to hurt, but she looks for a way to protect herself. She didn't get any protection, or love, from her mother or from any of her teachers at school. Everyone seemed to look at Carrie and see the fact that she was pathetic and disgusting. It isn't until Tom Ross that someone sees her as beautiful. It is possible that Tom's death signified the death of the only person that had had a positive feeling about Carrie.

The reader will find at the end of the book that Carrie cared for her mother even though her mother had tried to kill her more than once. Carrie had been alone and frightened. The gym teacher, Miss Desjardin, explains in her letter to the school board that she can't bear the thought of teaching any longer. Miss Desjardin appears to have realized that if someone had taken the time to care for Carrie that things might have turned out differently. Miss Desjardin had tried to help Carrie in a few ways but never actually reached out to her. The reader will find that there were other people that tried to do nice things for Carrie but seemingly from a distance. The principle, Henry Gale, had stood up to Chris Hargensen's father in regards to the way that Chris treated Carrie but didn't do anything for Carrie past that. Even Carrie's next door neighbor had cried when they saw the way that Carrie was being treated as a girl by her own mother.

Nature Versus Nurture

Nature versus nurture can be looked at in the case of Carrie White in reference to her mother. When Margret White gave birth to Carrie she did it at home. When she was found, the police stated that she was holding a butcher knife. The reader will learn later on in the story that Margret White was sure that Carrie was punishment for her sinful lust that she had accepted with her husband Ralph White. Because Margret was sure that Carrie was punishment for her sin, she intended to kill Carrie. Later on Margret will explain that she was going to kill Carrie later at other points in Carrie's life but each time was stopped, once even by Carrie who had used her telekinetic ability.

When Carrie started school she never had a friend and often was singled out as someone the other children would taunt and tease. Even the teachers seem to have a unanimous dislike for Carrie. The reader will see that Carrie seems desperate for love and kindness but has been treated badly so long that when she is at prom and is the subject of another practical joke Carrie begins to kill, feeling like the whole world is against her.

The reader will see in the story that Carrie's great-grandmother had the "gift". Margret White will talk about the gift and link it to witchcraft. In addition to Carrie's great-



grandmother, the reader will find another child, Annie Jenks, who apparently has telekinetic abilities. Carrie White's great-grandmother wasn't a killer and Annie Jenks appears to have a mother that loves her and isn't completely frightened of the strange abilities her daughter has. It is unknown if Carrie White would have turned out any different if she hadn't been so emotionally battered by her own mother.

Good Versus Evil

The reader will see that most of the people in the story that were in the town of Chamberlain talk about Carrie White as if she were a monster. There is a note that is left in reference to Carrie White, saying that she is burning in hell. By the time that Carrie was using her power at the fullest, there wasn't a person that didn't call Carrie a monster and a killer. While Carrie took the lives of hundreds of people that night, it is noteworthy to look at the other people in the story that took action in some form and their motives.

Chris Hargensen was one of the popular girls and her father was a prominent lawyer. It is Chris Hargensen that is responsible for the pig blood buckets that came crashing down on Carrie at the prom. This is ultimately the final straw that begins Carrie's rampage, although there is only a small official mention made of Chris' part in the prom night events. Margret White is a woman who everyone agrees was a religious fanatic who abused her daughter emotionally, but in the White Commission Report, no mention is made of the effect that Margret White's upbringing would have caused on a child. The reader will also see that while Sue Snell and Tom Ross were trying to do something nice for Carrie White, their motives were selfish rather than selfless. Sue Snell seemingly was trying to atone for the transgressions she had committed against Carrie rather than simply doing something nice for Carrie.

No one person could have been blamed for the actions that Carrie White took, but the question remains how many selfless acts would it have taken for Carrie White's actions to have been avoided.

Style

Point of View

The point of view in *Carrie* is written in third person past tense. The story's perspective is given from the viewpoint of someone doing research on the events that immediately preceded the prom night deaths involving Carrie White. Despite the fact that the story is given from the point of view of someone doing research, the reader will have Carrie White and other characters' emotions and state of mind known at different intervals in the story. The story will also give the reader interviews with people directly connected with Carrie and her mother, Margret White, to provide additional information.

The point of view is omniscient, with the reader being able to follow the thoughts and intents of the main characters, Carrie White, Sue Snell, and Margret White, as well as other minor characters such as Billy Nolan and Miss Desjardin. The insights into the minor characters in the story will give the reader a better understanding of Carrie White and how others perceive her as well as the motives behind many of the actions that befall Carrie. While Carrie is the main character in the book, the reader will be told the story from the point of view of many other people, but a lot of the story will be explained with pieces of newspaper articles and other research done on the subject of telekinesis and Carrie White. The reader will also be shown a letter from a woman who is discussing the amazing things her small daughter can do such as levitate marbles.

Setting

The story takes place in the town of Chamberlain, Maine in the mid 1970s. The setting of the book is realistic and easily accepted as a normal standard for the year. There is very little that is unusual about the town other than the fact that one of its citizens has telekinetic powers. The reader will see many things in the story that are within believability, such as the children in the school picking a child to pick on who is poor and socially unskilled, as well as the social cliques that are established in regard to Carrie's peers. When Carrie begins to destroy the town, the author relates her path back home through the town and explains the path of destruction that Carrie leaves as she makes her way back to the street where her own house is located.

While the author uses Chamberlain, Maine as the setting for the story the reader will learn of the names of the neighboring towns and be given information that came from research groups, newspapers, magazines, and university studies that don't pertain to the town of Chamberlain. There will be a White Commission Report retrieved by the State Investigatory Board of Maine. Some of the people that happened to encounter Carrie White on the night of the prom will be called forward in this setting to answer questions. Some of these characters had no other role in the story other than to tell what they witnessed that night. The exact location of this council isn't described in the story.



Language and Meaning

The story is told in a style that takes excerpts from newspapers, magazines, investigative committees, letters, study groups, and other pieces of information as well. In addition to these resources, the reader will get the information from some of the individual characters. Since the author uses such a wide variety of mediums, the reader will find many different types of language in the story. Some will be very stiff and formal and will deal greatly with the facts at hand. The reader will see in some of these stiff and formal proceedings that the people conducting the investigation insist on the characters being interviewed only recalling what they saw and not what they felt. When the author allows the reader to follow the characters, the reader will get a more in-depth look at emotions and feelings. Since many of the characters are high school students, these moments in the book will be much more informal and contain slang and be consistent with the talk of high school students during that period in time.

The reader will also find that Carrie begins to talk, or think, in her own mind, and the reader will be allowed to see these interactions. They will be jumbled and at times hard to identify the end of one thought and the beginning of the next because there is no punctuation and no capital letters to signify the end of one thought and the start of a new one. This will create a feeling of what it must be like for Carrie with her newfound abilities. There is also a letter at the end of the book containing information about a little girl named Annie Jenks. Annie will never be formally introduced in the story, but the literary ability of the mother writing the letter explains a little about the world that Annie will grow up in. The letter is full of spelling mistakes and makes the family sound of low education. The author uses things like this to show the nature of the different characters.

Structure

The story of Carrie consists of 253 pages. The book is divided into three different parts. Each part has a name that foreshadows what will happen within the different parts. The parts are named Blood Sport, in reference to Carrie getting her period, Prom Night, the evening that Tom Ross takes Carrie to prom, and Wreckage, named for the destruction that was left after Carrie was done. The first two sections of the book consist of roughly 120 pages, but the third section of the book takes up less than ten pages with one page being a copy of Carrie's death certificate. The story is divided in such a way that makes it easy to follow. The author uses different medium to explain the circumstances that happened on the night that is being recalled. There are even moments in the story when the author uses a song by Bob Dylan.

The story is relatively straightforward, with the main plot being Carrie's struggle in her emotional life. The reader will find that Sue Snell becomes a subplot with her feelings and her desire to be a better person and her growing relationship with Tom Ross. Another subplot in the story is the study of the telekinetic abilities that Carrie White possessed. The board that investigated the events concluded that it was not likely to

happen again and that it was obviously a fluke. Immediately after this, the reader is given the last piece of information, a letter in regards to Annie Jenks and her growing telekinetic abilities and Annie's mother's hopes for her daughter's future. Carrie was a single book and so there are no sequels to answer an questions that the reader may have in regards to other telekinetic children.

Quotes

"What none of them knew, of course, was that Carrie White was telekinetic." Part 1, p. 4

"Both medical and psychological writers on the subject are in agreement that Carrie White's exceptionally late and traumatic commencement of the menstrual cycle might well have provided the trigger for her latent talent." Part 1, p. 10

"If only it would be today and Jesus coming not with a lamb and a shepherd's crook, but with a boulder in each hand to crush the laughter and the snickers, to root out the evil and destroy it screaming- a terrible Jesus of blood and righteousness. And if only she could be His sword and His arm." Part 1: Page 23

"'O Lord,' Mamma declaimed hugely, her head thrown back, 'help this sinning woman beside me here see the sin of her days and ways. Show her that if she had remained sinless the Curse of Blood never would have come on her.'" Part 1, p. 57

"There were only twelve survivors of what has become known in the popular press as Prom Night." Part 1, p. 93

"But what can you say for Chris Hargensen herself? It seems to me that from first to last, her one and only object in view was the complete and total destruction of Carrie White." Part 2, p. 111

"This is the girl they keep calling a monster. I want you to keep that firmly in mind. The girl who could be satisfied with a hamburger and a dime root beer after her only school dance so her momma wouldn't be worried." Part 2, p. 149

"The only way to kill sin, true black sin, was to drown it in the blood of (she must be sacrificed) a repentant heart. Surely God understood that, and had laid His finger upon her. Had not God Himself commanded Abraham to take his son Isaac up upon the mountain?" Part 2, p. 154

"She paused on the lower step, looking at the flocks of people streaming toward the center of town. Animals. Let them burn, then. Let the streets be filled with the smell of their sacrifice. Let this place be called racca, ichabod, wormwood. Flex." Part 2, p. 208

"When the pains began I went and got a knife-this knife-' she held it up '-and waited for you to come so I could make my sacrifice. But I was weak and backsliding. I took this knife in hand again when you were three, and I backslid again. So now the devil has come home.'" Part 2, p. 218

"Able to start fires, pull down electric cables, able to kill almost by thought alone; lying here unable to turn herself over." Part 2, p. 238



"...and so we must conclude that , while an autopsy performed on the subject indicates some cellular changes which may indicate the presence of some paranormal power, we find no reason to believe that a recurrence is likely or even possible..." Part 3, p. 252

"The other day wile she was playin in the dirt beside the house I sneeked around and saw the funnyest thing. Annie was playin with her brothers marbles only they were mooving around all by themselfs." Part 3, p. 252



Topics for Discussion

Carrie's great-grandmother apparently had the same telekinetic ability that Carrie had and there is no proof that she killed anyone with it. Given what we know of the mother of Annie Jenks versus that of Margret White, is there any reason to think that Annie will be a killer? Explain.

Billy Nolan seemed to really like Chris when the reader is first introduced. Speculate on what happens that causes him to begin to look at her differently? Why would he feel like he would be willing to kill for her before the prom and then after the act refuse to take her with him when he left town? Why did Chris want to go with Billy even after he began treating her badly?

Chris Hargensen appears to be wealthy and powerful in the community of Chamberlain. Speculate on the reasons, given what the reader knows of her, on why she would hate Carrie White so much.

Sue Snell's character seemed to be more caring than the others. Describe why what she did for Carrie was good, and why it was bad. Speculate on whether Carrie intend to make Sue miscarry? Why?

Margret White appeared at times to enjoy tormenting her daughter. Given what is known about Margret, did she care for Carrie in any way? Why was she determined to kill Carrie from birth? If Carrie was the result of her sin, why would Margret not kill herself but kill Carrie?

Explain the reasons that the investigation conducted by the State Board of Maine stated that this would not be possible to happen again. Were they simply saying what they thought was right or what would put people at rest? Explain. If they were telling the truth, would they have told the people if they earnestly thought it might be possible that it could happen again? What would warning the people have accomplished, if anything?

Look at the motives of the characters. Tommy Ross and Sue Snell weren't trying to do anything to hurt Carrie. Were they in any way responsible for the events that happened that night? Explain. Those who noticed that Carrie was in emotional distress, such as Miss Desjardin or the next door neighbor that saw Margret hurting the very young Carrie, did they have a responsibility to try and help? Could they have helped? Explain.

Sue was the only person that came into direct contact with Carrie that night who wasn't killed. Explain the connection or similarities in the characters, if any. Why did Carrie allow Sue to live? Was it simply that Carrie was too weak by that point in time, or were there other reasons? Explain.