

# **Pulse Study Guide**

**Pulse by Patrick Carman**

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## Plot Summary

Patrick Carman's dystopian young adult novel "Pulse" takes place in the year 2051, where the world has been ravaged by global warming, and millions are dead. Nations have reverted vast portions of their landmass to wilderness, bottling people up inside massive, sprawling cities called States. In the United States, two massive States exist – the Eastern State and the Western State. While most of the population lives in either of these two States, many live beyond the borders, out in the ruins of old towns and in the wilderness. Some are people who just aren't ready to go the States; others are rebels; others are those trying to make a go of it on their own.

Sixteen year-old Faith Daniels, her best friend, Liz Brinn, and their families live about a hundred miles from the Western State. Faith is a tall, pretty girl, who has little interest in history, but an unabashed love of music, art, and boys. In their new school, Faith and Liz meet Hawk, a brilliant hacker, and Wade and Clara Quinn, twins who are popular and athletic. They are training for the yearly Field Games, and aren't nice at all. Faith also meets Dylan, a boy her age who keeps to himself.

It turns out that Faith is an Intel with a pulse, giving her telekinetic abilities, the descendent of an utterly brilliant man named Hotspur Chance who first concocted the idea of States. Chance was a telekinetic individual, who could move things with his mind. He discovered eleven others like him, whom he ultimately killed, going on to bind his own DNA to many other victims –the grandparents of Faith, Hawk, and Dylan, who are Drifters. Wade and Clara are part of a plot to destroy the State system, to return the world to the way it was before, and the Drifters are a force that is determined to stop them. Faith becomes a part of this struggle, going head-to-head with Clara, who also is a descendent of Chance. Dylan and Faith work together to subdue the twins temporarily, allowing the Drifters to escape to Valencia, California, where Faith discovers her second pulse –which acts as a defensive shield of sorts, protecting her against harm. Faith also comes to fall in love with Dylan.



# Part 1, Chapter 1 - Part 1, Chapter 4

## Summary

### Part 1, Chapter 1

While sleeping, Faith Daniels is unaware that things are moving around her room. Her blanket covers her foot. The door to the hallway closes. Faith's standard issue Tablet turns on, examining perhaps by some kind of phantom. The next day, she walks to school at Old Park Hill through rubble and ruins that had once been an open-air mall. In 2051, nearly everything done is done digitally. Faith purchases several shows on her Tablet, goes over her schedule, and sends a note to her mom. But real purchases, like jeans and t-shirts, are very expensive, and it is rare to buy those.

Faith doesn't care about the two States where a hundred million people live, or that people will not be coming back to the area in which she and others live. Faith also doesn't care about what made the city around her fall. She only cares about her Tablet, her music, her art, how tall she is, and boys. Faith loves songs because they make her feel things, and because they are cheap. Dozens of songs can be purchased for a single Coin. The jeans Faith wears cost 96 Coin, mostly because of shipping costs. As more and more people leave to the States, Faith and her family move as well to where there are other people, staying as long as they can. Faith also wants to fall in love.

Faith's friend, Liz Brinn, asks when they are going to get a car. Cars cost well over one million Coin. They have been best friends since Liz's boyfriend, Noah, vanished into the Western State. They have determined to stick by one another until the end, for they are always starting new schools in dying school districts. Liz is impressed with Faith's jeans, and the way they make her butt look good. The Old Park Hill School building was constructed in 1975, making it seventy-six years old. They head into the building, seeing some students they know, but mostly new kids. The principal, Mr. Reichert, greets everyone upon entry.

The school was originally built for 2000 students. In 2010, the school's became overcrowded. However, now there are only 133. There are only two teachers, and one janitor. Faith sees Amy down the hall. Amy is surrounded by a group of boys. Miss Newhouse handles Faith's first period, though teaching is done through Tablets, with lessons broadcast from the Western State, where teachers are millionaires. Teachers are also assisted by thousands of aides, who respond to questions on the teacher's behalf. Beginning her lesson, Faith receives a message on her tablet from a boy named Hawk, who has been able to hack the system and is able to send messages during lessons. Faith ignores his messages. She looks at the boys around the room and sees one who is writing with an actual pen in a notebook, ignoring his lesson. Hawk says the boy is Dylan Gilmore, and he isn't very nice. After class, Faith introduces herself to Hawk, who is thirteen. In the hall, Dylan points out Wade and Clara Quinn, two teenagers Faith's age, who are representing the outside in the Field Games. Faith



introduces herself to Wade, and Wade ignores Hawk. Faith is impressed with how tall the Quinn twins are. Later, Hawk tells Faith to steer clear of the Quinns, but Faith already has a crush on Wade.

### Part 1, Chapter 2

Faith lives in a formerly-upscale place called Bridgeport Commons, built around a lake, and full of trails for walking and riding. Mostly empty, Bridgeport Commons is home to workers who are cleaning up land in preparation for the expansion of the Western State. Faith and Liz walk along the lake, holding hands. They both feel lonely. A week has passed, and Faith thinks Wade doesn't like her, though Hawk doesn't leave her alone. Liz thinks Wade likes Faith. The two go to a playground, where only one swing is operational. They take turns swinging and pushing. They wonder why their families haven't relocated to the Western State, where wealth and prosperity are common.

They hear something in the distance, and wonder if it could be Drifters, groups of people who travel around and pick up strays. It turns out that it is Hawk, and not a Drifter. Faith is angry, but also curious as to how Hawk found her. He explains he used his Tablet to track Faith's Tablet to find her, because no one ever leaves their Tablets at home. Hawk also explains he can use his Tablet to track Faith if she is ever in trouble – and to get her three-coin Jeans. Hawk explains he has hacked into the State's shopping system, getting things at massive discounts and with free shipping. Meanwhile, another figure watches them and listens carefully.

### Part 1, Chapter 3

Faith and Liz bring Hawk to the old, abandoned Bridgeport grade school. Faith and Liz tell Hawk he must leave his Tablet behind with theirs, or it ruins the experience. Hawk consents when Liz offers him her hand. They bring him to the library. Faith and Liz are in love with physical books, and go there often to read and enjoy being alone. Hawk, meanwhile, finds both Faith and Liz incredibly attractive. Even though the books Liz and Faith read are children's books, they find them deeply moving, especially holding them in their hands. Hawk is even convinced to read a book by Dr. Seuss. He actually begins to enjoy reading a physical book. Faith draws a picture from "Green Eggs & Ham".

Suddenly, they hear sounds down the corridor, and believe it might be Drifters. They decide to leave. When they get back to where they have left their Tablets, Hawk's is gone, replaced by a note that reads, "Get used to living without it." Faith apologizes, but Hawk is beside himself, and runs out. Faith has a message on Hawk's tablet, asking her if she'll come to the gym the following day to watch him high-jump. Faith tries to make herself feel better with the thought that Hawk will have a better Tablet than his old one. Faith realizes, horrifyingly, that the note left for Hawk has come from the paper on which she had drawn in the library. Meanwhile, Hawk is at home, reading "The Sneetches", no longer worried about his Tablet.

### Part 1, Chapter 4



It takes sixteen year-old Faith Daniels a while to get to sleep, for she dreams of things moving around in her room. In the morning, Faith and Liz have messages from Hawk, saying he is back, and wants to hold hands. Faith realizes that it is now no longer just the two of them, but three of them as friends. Hawk is growing on them. Faith and Liz do try to figure out how a Tablet can just disappear, and then reappear.

At school, rumors of a Wire Code have been floating around –a digital code which, looked at on a Tablet, causes drug-like highs and reactions. Miss Newhouse tells Dylan to empty his pockets, believing he has a Wire Code. Dylan's pockets are empty. Miss Newhouse then comes to investigate Faith, telling her to mind her own business. Faith thinks Dylan is cute, but believes he is trouble. Faith goes to the gym, expecting to find Wade, but finds Dylan shooting hoops instead. Faith says hello, and Dylan does too. As he leaves, she asks him if he is making Wire Codes, and Dylan says that they aren't his thing, that he tried them once, and it was enough. The Quinn twins come in, and Wade makes fun of Dylan's skills, but Dylan doesn't back down –and this impresses Clara that Dylan is standing up to her brother. It is clear to Faith that Dylan and Wade dislike each other intensely, and shoot hoops in a makeshift competition.

Mr. Reichert appears to set up the gym for jumping, and Faith assists him. Clara is an amazing jumper, and will do well in the Field Games. Faith wonders why she isn't living on the inside of the State, for there, she would be a celebrity. Wade explains that they are maybe both hiding out for a reason. Reichert says that what Wade means to say is that they are trying to stay under the radar. Wade's own abilities are extraordinary. As he attempts to clear eight feet, four inches, and fails, Faith offers him encouragement, to which he tells her to stick to drawing. Faith is unhappy about the comment. After Faith leaves, Wade clears the bar easily, and Clara tells him that Faith Daniels is not worth it. Wade, however, thinks she might be.

## Analysis

"Pulse," Patrick Carman's young adult novel, begins in the year 2051 when most of the population of the former United States is holed up in two massive cities on either side of the country. In this dystopian reality, few people live on the outside of either city, including Faith Daniels. Faith is a tall, talented, beautiful teenage girl who seems to exist without actually living. Like any teenager, she cares about little in the past or the present. While she loves art and reading, she is bored by history and nostalgia. She is excited about boys and wants to fall in love. Liz, her best friend, shares her love of reading and boys.

Indeed, through the early part of "Pulse," Faith's two greatest interests –reading and boys –take up much of her time and thoughts. Interestingly enough, while Faith is attracted to the muscular type, her love of reading is not a love of electronic reading – but old-fashioned, physical books. And the books she and Liz read are children's books, from an abandoned grade school. They love the smell and texture of books, and how books don't need to be interacted with in the same way as their Tablets. They can



simply read, and understand in a passive way, while also at the same time, their minds are stimulated in ways unlike the Tablets.

The boys that enter Faith's life this time around also seem to be different than all those of the past. There is Wade, the self-assured athlete; Dylan, the seemingly trouble-making loner; and Hawk, the younger and utterly intelligent admirer of Faith and Liz. Each one of these males brings something to the table that had not apparently been present in the past, for each of these boys has captured Faith's attention in some way. With Hawk, the attention is that of friendship. With Wade, the attention is that of physical attraction. With Dylan, the attraction seems to be a dangerous appeal. Regardless, each of these three males will direct Faith's life in ways previously unseen to her.

## Discussion Question 1

What is the appeal that Wade has for Faith? Why does Faith take such an instant liking to Wade? Do you believe this is wise? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 2

What do Faith and Liz enjoy reading? Why? How does it differ from reading things electronically? What is the importance of what Faith and Liz read?

## Discussion Question 3

Hawk adds another dimension to the friendship that had formerly been one between only Faith and Liz. What is this added dimension? What does Hawk bring to the friendship? Do you believe his insertion into the plot is accidental, non-incidental, or consequential? Why?

## Vocabulary

Nostalgia, suffice, morgue, elusive, oblong, simultaneously, isolation, dilemma, aloof, undeterred, languid.



# Part 1, Chapter 5 - Part 1, Chapter 8

## Summary

### Part 1, Chapter 5

Entire areas of Old Park Hill School have been shut down to use because there are so few students. But in one corridor, Wade does something he believes Faith will like. He injects himself into a conversation that she, Liz, and Hawk are having as Amy comes toward them. Faith, secretly melting inside that Hawk is inviting her to see something in another corridor, allows Hawk and Liz to make fun of Wade for the moment. Hawk and Liz insist on coming, and Faith won't go without them. Wade reluctantly consents. Hawk is a little nervous, because he knows how mean Wade has been to others. Liz is worried about going into a closed part of the school, but Wade shakes it off, saying their parents are crazy for making them live outside the State. Liz pulls Faith to the side to tell her that Wade is no good for her; and Faith tells Wade that he is cruel for being so mean toward parents. Liz and Hawk decide to leave.

Wade puts his arm around Faith, and she tells him that Liz has been going through a rough time, and it has been exhausting. Faith feels as if Liz has been clingy lately. Faith finds the abandoned halls sad; Wade finds them annoying, believing they are pointless, because everything they need they can get from their Tablets. Wade brings her to see a go-cart he has built, but which doesn't have pedals or an engine. Wade demonstrates the car is propelled like a giant slingshot. He explains he has had 37 crash-free launches in a row. Wade and Faith both get into the go-cart, which Faith finds romantic. Wade has her wrap her arms around his chest and then has her look into his tablet, into which he has typed a Wire Code. The drug-like high consumes Faith at once, and they kiss, and then they launch. Faith is thrilled, and wants to do it again. Wade tells her to remain where she is, no matter what happens. Suddenly, Drifters appear, and Faith's high plummets. But just as suddenly, they go flying down the halls, seeing their long trench coats and eagle symbols.

Faith wakes up three hours later in her bed, sad, and cries herself back to sleep. Outside, someone watches her window to see why she is so sad.

### Part 1, Chapter 6

Liz has been holding Faith's hand since her boyfriend left for the Western State. Liz had loved to hold Noah Logan's hands. She was in love with him, and his disappearance – for leaving for the State is sudden and unexpected – crushed her. When people are ready to enter the State, they contact the State, which sends out a drone-van, picking up people and bringing them to the State straight away. Liz wonders how Noah is doing inside the State, and wonders how long it will be before Faith has her own heartbroken. She is sitting outside an Old Navy store, when she receives a message telling her to





come home, and then her Tablet shuts off –the first signal that a move to the State has been planned.

Dylan interrupts Liz's thoughts, saying hello. Liz demands to know what his deal is, why he refuses to talk to anyone, but then decides to talk to her when her parents decide to leave. Dylan wants to know if Liz will leave a message for Faith and Hawk, and he would deliver it to them. Dylan tells her he has had to do it more than once. Liz tells Dylan to tell Faith and Hawk that she is sorry, that she will be waiting on the other side, and that she didn't choose what is happening.

Dylan tells Liz to be on the lookout for a message inside the State. A white van pulls up for Liz, who with tears in her eyes, gets in.

### Part 1, Chapter 7

Faith wakes up with a tremendous hangover, similar to the one she'd gotten after the only time she'd been drunk in her life. He gets reminders from her parents about picking up their monthly rations of food, and from Hawk, asking how she is. Hawk also messages her to tell her he is outside her door. Faith also sends off a message to Liz. She also wears her new skinny jeans, bought from the Eastern State, courtesy of Hawk. She makes him breakfast in exchange for them. Meanwhile, Faith tries desperately to remember the events of the night before. Hawk bears the bad news of Liz's departure, just before a message arrives on Faith's tablet, telling her that Liz has relocated, and her user account has been deactivated. Hawk's Tablet, on the other hand, has gone missing three times, and believes Wade is to blame.

Hawk confronts Wade; Wade claims he has no idea what Hawk is talking about. He says he is done making Wire Codes for Wade. Wade disagrees. Hawk also wants to know why Faith looks as if she has had her first Wire Code, and Clara believes Hawk is trying to blackmail Wade. Hawk wants to know how Wade could pass a Wire Code to Faith without her consent, and Wade tells him he is not taking Hawk's Tablet, and tells Hawk to be quiet about what happened with Faith. Wade counters, saying he will turn in Hawk for making Wire Codes; Hawk says he has information on everyone who has used the Wire Codes. They arrive at a stalemate, and decide to go about business as usual.

### Part 1, Chapter 8

Faith goes back to bed, taking her Tablet with her, looking at all of the electronic drawings she has made with a stylus. She longs for the rare occasions when she draws with an actual pencil. She thinks she hears a pencil rolling toward her, but then chalks it up to the hangover playing games with her. Faith's sadness brings out the artist in her, and it makes her sad. She thinks she hears a pencil and paper now, and turns around to see a pencil and note card drop onto her carpet. She gets up and looks at the pencil and note card. On the note card, the words "You moved me" appear. Faith is shaken. She realizes Wade must have given her something, and she is hallucinating. She decides to go see Glory, who does tattoo work. She gets a small tattoo beneath her



hairline, at the back of her neck. It is of two hands holding one another, one of them resembling Glory's own tattooed hands. Faith looks at her other tattoo –the tattoo of a Drifter. Her parents, it is revealed, are Drifters, and will never be coming back. Faith is truly on her own.

## Analysis

As Patrick Carman's novel "Pulse" continues, the effect that each of the people in Faith's life –especially they boys –have on her, comes through forcefully. No one is clean, it seems –not even Hawk. Hawk is responsible for generating Wire Codes, which he sells to Wade exclusively for good pay. Wade then uses one of these Wire Codes on Faith without her consent, leading Faith into a drug-like trance. She crashes hard afterward, not only from the drug experience, but also from the knowledge that her best friend, Liz, is now no longer on the outside. She has gone to the State.

Perhaps the greatest revelation of the end of part one of the novel is that Faith's own parents are Drifters. Faith herself bears the tattoo of the Drifters' eagle on her neck near her hairline. This seems to be utterly confusing for the reader, as it appears in a previous chapter the Drifters are seeking to attack or capture her –only to be saved by an unknown force. Despite this, Faith reflects on the tattoos and emblazoned patches of the Drifters, not with malice, but with an almost strange sort of reverence and acceptance that the large bird in the tattoo is facing down evil –and not causing it.

Indeed, two other answers come to light for the reader within the conclusion of part one of the novel. The first is that Faith is seemingly alone and distant from her parents because she is literally alone, and literally distant from her parents, who only communicate with her through her Tablet. The second is that Faith is literally on her own. She may want to fall in love so badly because she doesn't want to be alone. The loss of Liz cripples Faith, for Liz, it seems, had been more like a sister, rather than a best friend to Faith.

## Discussion Question 1

What is it that Wade wants to show Faith in an abandoned part of the school? What does this reveal about his character? Is Wade an enemy, a misunderstood friend, or neither? Explain.

## Discussion Question 2

No character seems to be without some kind of fault or less-than-scrupulous ability. What is it that Hawk does that damages the credibility of his character? Is it possible to redeem himself? If so, how could this be done?



## Discussion Question 3

At the very end of the first part, some startling information is revealed to the reader about Faith's parents. What is this information? What does it mean for Faith?

## Vocabulary

Zany, procure, epic, subverting, equivalent, emblazoned, tactile, inevitable, mesmerized, imperceptibly.



## Part 2, Chapter 9 - Part 2, Chapter 12

### Summary

#### Part 2, Chapter 9

Meredith reads the field reports that come to her by way of hacked Tablets, verbal messages, and carriers. Ten Drifters are dead, seeming to signal the start of a new war. Meredith is hiding in an undisclosed location close to Old Park Hill. She figures she must be close to the front lines. Clooger, one of the Drifters, believes the others walked into a trap in an abandoned building. The only survivor, James, a recent recruit, escaped before the trouble began.

Wade and Clara, meanwhile, speak through their Tablet to an unknown female, who has a no-nonsense tone in her voice. Clara blames what happened on Wade; the voice tells Clara to go back to watch the door. Wade says it took two minutes to dispose of the Drifters, but longer to bury their bodies. It is revealed that Wade was using a Wire Code himself when he put down the Drifters, and gave another Wire Code to Faith to make her forget about everything that happened. The female voice tells Wade to stay away from Faith, that he doesn't need to be distracted. Much of what happened is a blur to Wade, but he figures something was different about the Wire Codes that night.

A man named Andre, and his wife, Gretchen, converse. They believe Wade has begun another war, with the games only a month away. Gretchen says they need to stick to the plan, and to encourage Wade in his ability to fight Drifters. Andre is worried this may set Meredith off, but Gretchen believes Meredith is running scared, and that Drifters will be of no help to her, as she once believed. Andre knows Meredith is more powerful than he is, and if things get tricky, the only hope they will have will be with the twins.

Hawk doesn't see Faith for a week. He goes to her house, and she looks thin. She has been keeping up with schoolwork on her Tablet. It has taken Faith six days to shake off the headaches fevers. Faith asks Hawk about Wire Codes, believing she was given one. Hawk skirts the subject, saying that she was definitely given one, but by whom, he doesn't know. Faith believes it was Wade, and Hawk pretends to not know why she was given one.

#### Part 2, Chapter 10

Hawk confronts Wade once more about why Wade slipped a Wire Code to Faith. Hawk threatens to send a message to the authorities about Wade's use of Wire Codes if Wade doesn't answer him. He wants to know if Faith is just a conquest, but Wade thinks Hawk has feelings for her. Wade and Clara smash Hawk's Tablet, and Wade says he is done with Wire Codes –especially Hawk's –because there is something wrong with them. Wade, who is grabbing Hawk firmly, is suddenly approached by Faith, demanding to know what is going on. Faith demands to know what Wade did to her while she was



under the influence of the Wire Code, but Wade stammers that he cannot explain what really happened.

Wade, instead, tells Faith that it was Hawk's creation, and Faith is horrified and angry. Wade insists he did nothing more than kiss Faith. Clara steps up beside her brother; and Dylan, from out of nowhere, steps up beside Faith. Faith ultimately slaps Wade across the face, telling him to leave Hawk alone, because Hawk is just a kid. Dylan follows Faith. Clara is envious. She wants Dylan badly, especially because he seems powerful. Clara realizes that Faith is standing between her and getting what she wants.

Hawk was a lonely child, always the smallest one in the room, but technologically proficient and able to verbally joust with anyone. He was quiet and watched like a hawk, and so that is how he got his nickname. But his confidence vanishes in middle school. But when he meets Wade, who offers him a lot of money for making Wire Codes, Hawk can't resist the chance to move up the social ladder. A week after the confrontation, Hawk stands outside Faith's home, watching her window. He taps, waking her up, and apologizes for the codes, saying he is forced to make them for Wade. Faith feels a little badly for Hawk, and lets him into her room. Faith realizes, as Hawk gets under the covers with her, that she didn't remember going to sleep with a blanket.

Hawk explains he is not a drug dealer, except for Wade. Faith asks Hawk if he put the blanket on her bed; Hawk says he did not. Faith says she dreamt she was cold and needed a blanket, and when she woke up, she has one. Hawk pretends to not know what she is talking about. Hawk brings out his brand-new Tablet, hacks through security, and brings Faith face-to-face with Liz and Noah. Liz says she is okay, and Faith apologizes for that night weeks before. Liz also says the State is great, but boring, and that she will love it there. Faith believes something real is missing in the State, some lack of grit of real life. Faith and Liz tell one another they love each other, and the transmission goes out.

Faith asks Hawk how he can do those things, and what would happen if he gets caught. Hawk says that hackers who get caught simply disappear. As they go to sleep, Hawk sets up his Tablet to record video in the direction of Faith's closet.

Dylan, meanwhile, is outside Faith's window, wondering why Hawk is in bed with her. Dylan feels hurt, the same as he did when Faith and Wade hooked up. Dylan brings the Tablet to himself through the air, deciding to watch what Hawk has recorded so far, which includes Faith drifting up to midair. He then deletes the video file. Dylan is proud of the work he has done, and now believes it is time to tell Faith Daniels the truth.

## Part 2, Chapter 11

Having been five years since the Field Games were hosted in the U.S., the Western State has constructed a facility unlike any the world has ever seen. The games dominate the news and every possible show. Faith is bored of it. In the lead-up to the Games, only nineteen students remain in Faith's class. Amy is now in her class. She is excited to see Wade compete, though she knows that once you enter the State, you



don't leave. And superstars would never settle for someone like Amy. Amy's parents are clean-up contractors, who make good money for their work. Dylan smiles at Faith. She smiles back, disliking how he makes her feel uncomfortable.

Hawk sends Faith a message, saying he hasn't come in because his parents are having a tough day. They have heard rumors the State is going to stop letting people in. Other countries have done the same in the past with their States. The Western State in the United States sits over what had once been Nevada, taking up parts of other states as well. The Eastern State covers parts of Kentucky, Arkansas, Missouri, and Tennessee. Both States are slowly expanding.

Faith receives a message from Dylan, asking her to meet him in the old mall parking lot at 9 that night. She messages him back, asking him what is going on. Dylan does not respond. She meets him that night. He says he has two things he wants to show her, but Faith is cautious. She asks him if he is worried about Drifters, and he says that Drifters are misunderstood. Dylan brings her up onto the roof of the old Nordstrom's. He has her go up first, but when she gets up there, Dylan is already on the roof, lighting candles on a table beside a gas barbeque.

## Part 2, Chapter 12

Faith is feeling fearful, and wonders how Dylan managed to get ahead of her from behind. He explains there is another way up, and that he is making hamburgers. They can see lights in the distance, which Dylan reveals to be the Western State, now only a hundred miles away. Dylan serves the cheeseburgers, and he explains that the State is growing by ten miles a month in some places. Dylan figures that within a year, the land on which they now live will be consumed by the State. It is surrounded by movable energy field walls.

Dylan gets Faith to close her eyes, and think about the glass on the table. She imagines it tipping over and spilling water –which it does. Faith tells Dylan she is either crazy or drugged, and Dylan tells her she is neither. He tells her to set the glass back up, but Faith feels as if she is being taken advantage of. Faith, in a rage, thinks about smashing the glass, and it shoots up in the air and shatters. Faith is on the verge of tears, asking Dylan what he has done to her. She is so mad that she thinks of pushing Dylan off the roof, and he disappears from sight. But Dylan's voice emerges behind her, and he tells her that she is special. He tells her to jump; but she refuses, and ends up floating in the air. She begins crying and kicking hysterically. When she calms down, Dylan brings her down. She wants to know what is going on. Dylan decides to explain it to her.

## Analysis

As Patrick Carman's novel "Pulse" continues to unfold, alliances shift, friendships change, and startling new evidence about the dystopian world in which Faith lives makes itself known to the reader. The world itself has changed. All nations now have States, within which the vast majority of their populations live. Most of the world has been



reverted to wilderness. Many nations have turned their backs on the people who refuse to go into the States, shutting them out completely. In other places, those who refuse to go into the States are staunch rebels.

Despite Hawk's programming of Wire Codes, and his hacking abilities, and the danger in which he places himself constantly, he grows much closer to Faith, even coming to share her bed one night. Indeed, Liz tells Faith that Hawk will take care of her. Wade has emerged as a clear enemy to Faith, and parts of his background, known to the reader and not to Faith, give Wade an even more dangerous edge to his character. His sister's own desire to secure Dylan's affection, as well as seeing Faith as an obstacle to that affection, make things all the more dire for Faith.

And Faith's own evolution as a character is also striking, not just in that her moral character is expanding, but in that who she is as an individual is also expanding. It is clear, for some reason or another, that Faith has telekinetic powers, the ability to affect the world around her physically, through her mind. This both startles and horrifies her.

## Discussion Question 1

What is the motivation for Clara to view Faith as an enemy? Why do you believe this is? Does Faith view Clara as an enemy for the same reasons? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 2

How does the revelation that Hawk programs Wire Codes affect his friendship with Faith? How do you believe it affects her opinion of her? What is the result of Hawk's confession to Faith?

## Discussion Question 3

What is the truth about Faith's abilities? What are her abilities? Who trains her? What do you believe the revelation of her abilities portends for the rest of the novel?

## Vocabulary

Dubiously, apex, persona, reclusive, reverted, nomadic, allocate.





## Part 2, Chapter 13 - Part 2, Chapter 16

### Summary

#### Part 2, Chapter 13

Dylan informs Faith that she can move things with her mind. Faith sends a fork after Wade, but Dylan calls the fork back, telling Faith that the fork can only go where she tells it to go, if she knows where she wants it to go. Dylan asks Faith to recall history, beginning in 2025, when the California coastline slid into the ocean, killing three million people. Warning bells about global warming sound, and the brightest scientists from around the world are put into a building. They are not heard from for three years. They elect an Oklahoman scientist, Hotspur Chance, as their leader. He reveals the world is in trouble, and while some believe him, others don't, and New Orleans is hit next, along with a million people dead. The solution is States: devoid of fossil-fuels, with clean energy instead, full of most of the world's populations. By 2029, parts of China and Japan are under sea level, and a massive earthquake wakes more people up. By 2032, States have begun. Within the following twenty years, 90% of the global population live in States.

Faith's parents reject the States, for it is illegal to burn wood, drive, or have pets even. There is nowhere to be alone. Faith hates the conformist aspect of States. Dylan asks Faith if she has ever heard of the intelligence movement. He then says he will bring it up another time. He asks for Faith's hands, and Faith refuses, having trust issues after Wade. Dylan explains that a lot more went on behind closed doors with Hotspur Chance than anyone knew. Dylan levitates both himself and Faith hundreds of feet in the air. Faith is terrified. She grabs for Dylan. He brings her further up to see the Western State, and then brings her home. He tells her that he will have to train her, and that she shouldn't practice without him. Faith wants to know how long Dylan has been watching her, but he doesn't answer. They agree to meet on the roof the following night.

Dylan, however, watches out for Faith as she goes to sleep from outside. He knows there is a coming storm, and that there is something deep inside Faith that will give her the chance to survive through the coming dangers.

#### Part 2, Chapter 14

In school the next day, Mr. Recihert announces the school will be closing in two weeks in accordance with Western State wishes. Faith knows that the Western State forces schools to close, goading half of the student body each time to go to the Western State. They also lure people in with advertisements, and restricted things like entertainment. Miss Newhouse grants Wade's wish to have a party so long as schoolwork gets done. Dylan asks why Miss Newhouse stayed out so long. She explains she is a teacher, and wanted to teach. She also says that she is not needed. She pushes a button on her Tablet for the State to come and get her. She says that all the students need are their





Tablets. When she leaves, Wade says the party is on. Faith is disgusted by him, and resolves to stop attending school when Old Park Hill closes.

Faith looks down at her shoes, seeing one is untied, and thinking about it, one lace begins to move. A look from Dylan tells her to stop while she is ahead. Meanwhile, Clara senses a pulse- that someone has moved something, a pulse distinct from her own, and from her brother's. When she asks Wade about it, Wade tells her to stay focused on the Games, saying he doesn't remember exactly what he did in class. If Clara had discovered it was Faith, Faith would not have lived to see the party being thrown by Wade.

## Part 2, Chapter 15

Hawk goes to the abandoned parts of the building on campus to see what he can find. He finds blood smears and shotguns shells. He also finds Wade Quinn, who seems to move around him. Wade begins chasing him around. Hawk sneaks into one room, which contains all of the bodies from that fateful night. Hawk is forced to hide among the dead people to avoid Wade. When Wade gives up the search, Hawk sneaks out, knowing Wade is responsible for the bodies, and Dylan, having been watching to make sure Hawk is alright, heads out to meet Faith.

Dylan meets Faith up on the roof of Nordstrom's. She wants to know what is going on, why her shoelace in school was such a dangerous thing. Dylan consents to giving her more information in exchange for her practicing to hone her skills. She agrees. As she practices moving balls across the surface of the table and into cups, Dylan explains that where they practice is safe, because they are high enough up so that other carriers cannot feel their pulse. The pulse, a signal, doesn't go up or down, but only side to side. Faith is a good student, and she and Dylan begin working together every night. Dylan later explains that he and Faith have a special kind of pulse, one that is far more rare than others. All carriers have a second pulse, that is buried deep down inside. He has Faith throw a ball at his head as hard as she can, which bounds off Dylan without Dylan wincing. He explains that the first pulse is used to move things; the second pulse is used to sense things. It is able to tell when something will hurt, and deflects it.

Dylan flies up into the sky and drives down like a missile, crashing through the roof, and then drifts back up, unharmed, but dusty. Dylan tells her that she only has half of what she needs, having only the first pulse. She needs her second pulse, but Faith wants to know why anyone would want to hurt her, unless Dylan is recruiting her for something. Dylan refuses to answer.

Hawk, meanwhile, is jealous of Faith sneaking off with Dylan all the time. Dylan has forbidden Faith from telling Hawk about what is going on. Hawk wants to come to the rooftop at least, but Faith says no. Clara becomes antagonistic toward Faith because of Dylan. She tells Faith to stay away from Dylan, because when she comes back from the Field Games, she will have gold medals to impress him. Clara tells Amy and Hawk to leave, which they do. Faith imagines slamming Clara into the lockers, which happens. Clara then comes back at Faith, choking her out. Clara tells Faith to stay away from



Dylan. Faith concludes three things: First, she cannot tell Dylan what has happened; second, she knows Clara has a pulse; third, she needs to develop her second pulse to destroy Clara if she ever comes back.

## Part 2, Chapter 16

The Field Games begin. Even the outsiders watch them. Wade and Clara arrive in the Western State nearly unnoticed. Wade is impressed by the sleek State, and how everything is in white. The stadium holds 100,000, and the buildings around the stadium have seating for an additional 50,000. Hundreds of millions would watch the games worldwide. Wade and Clara go to see Mr. Reichert and Miss Newhouse –in reality, Andre Quinn and Gretchen Quinn, their father and stepmother. They remind their children they will have to throw some events to keep in step with the plan, but that by the following year, the Games will not matter at all, and they will have more power than they know what to do with. The plan is not to win, but to do a job. They have the power to mold the world into what it should be, not to waste such power. Clara asks Gretchen if her old friend, Liz Brinn, could attend the game with a friend. Gretchen consents grudgingly.

Andre and Gretchen head back to an area ten miles north of Old Park Hill, to watch the games. They talk about how they shouldn't treat the twins like children anymore, because they are both nearly seventeen. Clara and Wade, meanwhile, warm up for the decathlon. Clara wants to know why they have to fight a war for their parents, a war that is not their own.

Liz is meanwhile amazed she has two field level tickets to the Games, supposedly a gift from the Field Games Committee. Noah is her date for the Games. She is amazed to find out that the tickets are real. It is also revealed that punishment for such crimes as fraud includes job positions changing without warning –one might be an entertainer one day, and a window washer the next. The media is on fire with talk about Wade and Clara, who have made it to the finals, as they are only outsiders. Clara surprises everyone by walking right up to Liz, asking her if she enjoys her tickets. She has cut her hair short, and looks muscular and powerful. She tells Liz she will try not to embarrass her too much. Nearly 100 yards away is the Western State president, who waves to the crowds. Wade has also cut his hair, as Liz later discovers.

Wade's events leave him placing somewhere in the middle, as he has to fight hard not to win. His sister's poisonous words about fighting the wars of others has almost gotten to him, he knows. Clara, meanwhile, does well enough in the events to earn respect, which is her primary purpose. She meets Fleet Sanders, a six-foot-six woman who is built like a tank. Fleet thinks Clara is making fun of her, so she pushes Clara. Clara turns the tables on Fleet, coming to stand over top of her, forcing Fleet onto her back. Fleet vows revenge. When she throws the hammer in her event, a sudden, strange burst of wind throws her hammer out of bounds, killing someone. In reality, the hammer had been meant for the president, but Clara's hatred for Faith Daniels, and being controlled by her stepmother, causes her to go rogue. Wade congratulates her for it, but



warns her that Gretchen is going to be angry. Clara says she has been ready for that for a while.

## Analysis

An interesting dichotomy emerges in Patrick Carman’s novel “Pulse” as it continues on: not only does the friction between Faith and Clara intensify to the point where there is open conflict between them in the form of a fight, but friction is fast emerging between Clara and her stepmother, Gretchen, A.K.A., Miss Newhouse. Clara, as it becomes obvious, is a lot more like Faith than some might give her credit for, or realize. Both girls have been born into a system not of their own choosing. For Faith, it is that she must deal with her parents being Drifters; for Clara, it is being a pawn in an unknown war, orchestrated by her parents. Both of them are seeking love and acceptance above all else. Unfortunately, both girls have their eye on the same individual –Dylan Gilmore.

Faith, meanwhile, embraces her telekinetic abilities, consenting to daily training with Dylan, for whom she is also fast developing a crush. If there is one thing that Faith clearly cannot control in her life at this point, it is her emotions. They consistently get the better of her, from foolishly trusting Wade to throwing down with Clara at school. However, she is learning to trust her instincts over her emotions. Only hesitantly, and cautiously, does she fall in league with Dylan, remembering her experiences with Wade all too well.

Further information is also revealed about the Western State. Beyond all of the luxuries the insiders enjoy, and beyond the limits on certain freedoms they have, their very lives are further defined and controlled by the State. For example, most glaringly is that insiders don’t even get to choose their own jobs –the State does it for them. Insiders are assigned and reassigned as the State sees fit. It is fast becoming clear that the freedom insiders enjoy –access to television shows, movies, music, better technology, and so on –are all illusions of freedom, while the greater aspects of human freedom –such as choosing what to do for work –is not a choice at all in the end.

## Discussion Question 1

Why is it that Wade and Clara have gone to participate in the Field Games? What does Clara do to compromise this? Why?

## Discussion Question 2

What is the danger of Faith using her pulse abilities around others? What almost happens in class? Do you believe Faith would have been justified in using her abilities in class? Why or why not?



## Discussion Question 3

Clara is unhappy that she and her brother have to fight the war of their parents, a war that they did not choose. Why?

## Vocabulary

Mystifying, catastrophe, definitively, recon, intuitive, defective, menacingly, harrowing, diligently, banter, exuberance, bravado.



## Part 3, Chapter 17 - Postscript

### Summary

#### Part 3, Chapter 17

Heading toward the mall, Faith feels sad and depressed. School, and life at Old Park Hill, is finished. She especially misses Liz, and the fact that she can't tell Faith about her dream where she skinny-dipped with Dylan. Faith heads out to meet Dylan, only to discover Clooger there instead. He has come to get her, not because of her parents, but because of everything she's been practicing. Faith wonders if Dylan and the Drifters are connected, somehow. He brings her to the abandoned mall, where the Drifters have a fortified hideout. Dylan is there, and gives Faith a half-hug. Faith has had to leave her Tablet behind, because it isn't modified the way that Dylan's, or the others, are. Dylan tells Faith that that is how they are controlled –by the Tablets. Faith thinks Dylan sounds like her parents.

Dylan explains that Faith's training began the day after her parents left, and it is why they left. They have been searching for Faith for years. Dylan has been helping to draw the power out of Faith's subconscious, while she was asleep. He says he has felt her pulse long before they met. Faith feels used by her parents, and Dylan tells her not to blame them. Dylan brings Faith to see a woman, and Faith sits down to listen to the woman speak.

#### Part 3, Chapter 18

A green apple sits on one chair, and a wax-sealed envelope on another. The woman before Faith is Meredith. Meredith says she lives underground because it is safe. Meredith asks Faith to demonstrate her power, which she seems unable to do. She focuses on the apple, her emotions twisting, and the apple slams into the wall, bursting apart. Meredith begins to speak of Hotspur Chance, saying that Chance was an utterly brilliant man who understood things in ways no one else ever did. His morals were compromised, and he was given power no man should ever have. Because of his brilliance, he unlocked the pulse, and discovered that he was one of twelve who had it. Hotspur was also able to find the second pulse, and within a week, the other eleven were dead.

Chance also crafted the State plan, and used other people to bind his DNA to, like a parasite to hosts, for more brain power. Those hosts are called Intels. Without the Intels, Meredith explains, there would be no States. Meredith further does not know how many people "they" have that are like Meredith, Dylan, and Faith. Two more people come into the room. Dylan and Hawk enter, with Hawk carrying a bag. Faith asks where her parents are. Dylan tells her that her parents were among the Drifters that Wade killed. They had come to check up on Faith, to see if she was alright. Wade also has the pulse.



Faith is enraged, but Meredith tells her to control her rage. The wax-sealed envelope is from them.

Furthermore, Meredith reveals the individual killed by the hammer during the Field Games was actually Liz. Dylan reveals Clara Quinn was on the field at the time. Dylan tells Faith that everyone in that room is on her side, but Faith is enraged. Dylan holds onto her as she kicks and screams and thrashes about, until she settles. She believes her parents are dead because of her. Hawk, who has been sitting beneath a piece of red fabric, takes it off. Hawk takes something out of his bag for Faith. It is “The Sneetches”. He has brought it for her.

Meredith goes on to explain that, despite all the wrongs committed by Hotspur Chance, the States are a good thing, and have saved mankind. The States must be saved. Dylan, it is revealed, is a third-generation Intel. Faith also has the gift, but she needs to find her second pulse. If she can, the tide of the coming war will be turned. A plan to move the Drifters south is underway. Faith has an hour to herself to be alone, so she goes up onto the roof to think. Hawk gives Faith her old Tablet, which has now been made safe for her use. Hawk himself is an Intel. As Faith leaves, the others know that if they don't help her find her second pulse, they don't stand a chance.

### Part 3, Chapter 19

Faith, alone up on the roof, apologizes to her parents, and to Liz, for not being there to protect them. Faith screams as loudly as she can, and falls off the roof. As she falls, she thinks of the word “faith”, then “hope”, then “revenge”. She stops herself from falling. She reads “The Sneetches”. She tears the pages from the book, and lets them float around in the wind. A message comes to Faith's Tablet, from Clara, challenging her to finish what has been started. Faith goes to Old Hill Park after Clara.

Clooger reports to Dylan and Hawk, telling them that Faith is gone. The Drifters, it is revealed, all have first pulses, but only a select few have second pulses. Dylan takes off in flight while Hawk combs through Faith's Tablet. Hawk reveals that Clara is back, and is at Old Park Hill. Hawk and Dylan are tasked with protecting Faith at all costs. They decide to use the State drone-vans to their advantage, directing Clooger to put them on the football field.

Faith, meanwhile, confronts Clara in the courtyard of the school. Faith pins Clara with a tree, and demands to know if she killed Liz. Clara says she never misses what she is aiming for. Faith breaks glass to use as daggers, but Clara turns them around on Faith. Clara tells Faith she is stronger than expected. Faith suddenly wonders if she, Dylan, Meredith, Clooger, and Hawk are all on one side. If so, then who is on the other side? It turns out that Clara's weakness is when living things are used against her, like trees. She wants to know who has taught Faith to do things. Dylan arrives then. He says they have to get rid of Clara before she kills Faith. He tells Faith to stay where she is after he brings her to the roof, then returns to Clara.



Dylan tells Clara they will be leaving, that there is no reason to fight. The other Drifters arrive, including Clooger, and they all stand protectively around Faith. Clara says her backup is better. Wade arrives, using cement slabs as weapons. Dylan throws Clara and Wade through a glass window and down a corridor. The twins use desks and chairs as weapons, but the Drifters fight off the assault. Faith lifts herself up a hundred feet in the air to see what is going on. She can see the vans in the football field.

Faith goes to the aid of an injured Drifter, while the others lose track of her. Dylan draws Clara and Wade toward the football field, ordering Clooger and his men to go. Faith holds the injured Drifter as he dies, who tells Faith that her parents loved her, that they always come two by two, and that he will tell them she was worth it. Faith remembers the tattoo on her neck, and then knows what to do.

Dylan, meanwhile, knows he must protect the States because, if nothing else, there will be millions of casualties. Clara and Wade confront Dylan on the field. Clara tells Dylan to join them, because he doesn't want to be on the wrong side of what is coming. Dylan uses the vans to assault Clara and Wade. He pummels Wade into the bleachers, and pins Clara to the ground with a goalpost. Clara sends the goalpost flying, and as she gets up, she realizes she is bleeding from her head. It is a first. She is enraged. She uses stadium lights to fight Dylan, as does Wade. They are both stunned that Dylan has a second pulse. Fighting him together, Dylan knows he cannot win. As his second pulse weakens, Faith arrives with ivy from the old grade school building, fashioned into a net, and pummels Wade and Clara with it. But as Faith and Dylan try to flee, Clara focuses on a hammer in the gym, sending it into the back of Faith's head.

### Part 3, Chapter 20

The Drifters travel to Valencia, California, now on the California coast. Hawk believes they have at least four months' time. Among the Drifters are Hawk's parents, second-generation Intels, who are slowly losing their minds. Hawk faces the same danger some day. Faith, meanwhile, is in a coma. Dylan tries to coax Faith awake. Meredith is Dylan's mother. And Clara Quinn, it is revealed, has all three: first pulse, second pulse, and Intel. Clara doesn't even know it, yet.

## Analysis

As Patrick Carman's novel "Pulse" comes to a close, events have transpired far faster than anyone –either Faith, the Drifters, or Wade and Clara –would have ever imagined possible. That Faith has been able to hone and direct her skills as well as she has in such a short amount of time is incredibly impressive, surprising Wade and Clara themselves. It takes a combined effort on the part of all of the Drifters to save Faith from Wade and Clara.

The end of the novel takes some very unexpected turns, as well. In a heartbreaking series of revelations, Faith learns that her parents and her best friend are all dead, courtesy of Wade and Clara. It is also revealed that Faith's parents knew what she was,



which is why they left her behind, having wanted to protect her as long as possible. Interestingly enough, it is through love that Faith comes to discover her second pulse – through love of her lost parents, and through love of Dylan.

But a further question must be answered in succeeding volumes of the series: If the Drifters are doing what they can to protect the State, why are they not directly allied, in league with, or living in the State?

## **Discussion Question 1**

How is it that Faith comes to discover her second pulse? Why do you believe it is in this fashion that she discovers it?

## **Discussion Question 2**

How was it that Faith's parents decided to leave Faith? Why did they choose to do this? Do you believe Faith forgives them for having done so? Why or why not?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Why do you believe, if the Drifters are sworn to defend the State, they are not living in, allied with, or in league in some fashion, with the State?

## **Vocabulary**

Manipulated, ghastly, intrigued, quarantine, belittled, intangible, careened.





# Characters

## Faith Daniels

Tall, pretty, and sixteen, Faith Daniels is the main character and principal protagonist in the novel “Pulse” by Patrick Carman. Faith is best friends with Liz Brinn, and lives on her own, for her parents are Drifters who disappeared some months before. Faith has little interest in the past, though she loves music, reading actual books, art, and boys. Faith is determined that she will fall in love in the coming school year, and early on, develops a crush on Wade Quinn, though she is warned against it by Hawk. Wade slips Faith two Wire Codes without her consent while he uses his telekinetic abilities to murder ten Drifters, including Faith’s parents.

Faith later learns of her own abilities through Dylan, who trains her, and brings Faith to his mother, Meredith, who seems to be the leader of the Drifters. Faith decides she will join the Drifters, and later battles Wade and Clara. Faith is almost killed by Clara, but is saved by the emergence of her second pulse, brought on by her love of Dylan. At the end of the novel, Faith and the Drifters have relocated to Valencia, California.

## Liz Brinn

Short, pretty, and sixteen, Elizabeth “Liz” Brinn is the best friend of Faith Daniels. Liz often holds hands with Faith, though there is no romance between them. Liz is deeply saddened by the decision of her boyfriend, Noah, and his family, to leave the wild for the Western State. She desperately wants to see him again, and is reunited with him when she and her family move to the State. Liz is later killed by Clara during the Field Games, when Clara causes a thrown hammer to hit Liz.

## Hawk

A brilliant thirteen year-old hacker, Hawk is a third-generation Intel who has the ability of pulse. Bullied by Wade, Hawk programs Wire Codes for him. Hawk has a major crush on Faith. He does his best to impress her and help her along in her journey through the course of the novel. Hawk’s own parents, second-generation Intels, have lost their minds, and this constantly hurts and haunts Hawk –especially the knowledge that he may end up the same way.

## Dylan Gilmore

A sixteen year-old loner, Dylan Gilmore is the son of Meredith. Ultimately, he is the love interest of Faith. Dylan has the rare combination of having a first and second pulse, and he works with Faith to draw her pulse out, and to train her. Dylan falls for Faith quickly,



and ends up falling in love with her in the end. His love for her helps bring her out of a coma, stirring the second pulse within her.

## Wade Quinn

Wade Quinn is the nearly-seventeen year-old twin brother of Clara Quinn, and the son of Andre Quinn. Wade is cocky, arrogant, smug, and a tremendous athlete. He has the abilities of first and second pulse, and is incredibly powerful. He is a frequent user of Wire Codes, and plays right into the plans that his father and stepmother have for destroying the Western State.

## Clara Quinn

Clara Quinn is the nearly-seventeen year-old twin sister of Wade Quinn, and the daughter of Andre Quinn. Clara is pretty, but immensely dangerous, powerful, and vindictive. She has the abilities of first and second pulse, and uses them to her advantage. She absolutely hates Faith because Faith has managed to win Dylan's heart; and Clara resents being a part of the plans of her father and stepmother. Clara ultimately kills Liz Brinn to hurt Faith, and to spite her parents.

## Andre Quinn

Little is known about Andre Quinn, the father of Wade and Clara Quinn, except that he is immensely powerful and influential. He plans to destroy the State system in the United States, to revert things to how they were before the States existed. He likewise has no qualms about using his children to that end.

## Meredith

Meredith is the apparent leader of the Drifters. She is thin, pale, and pretty. She is the mother of Dylan. It is with her blessings and encouragement that Dylan trains Faith.

## Gretchen Quinn

Gretchen Quinn is the wife of Andre Quinn and the stepmother of Wade and Clara. She is cold and calculating, struggling to maintain some sort of parental relationship with Clara, especially. She doubts that either Wade or Clara will be of immediate help to their plan following the Field Games.

## Hotspur Chance

A deeply brilliant and cruel scientist from Oklahoma with the ability to pulse, Hotspur Chance concocted the State system to combat global warming, and subsequently murders the eleven other known telekinetics in the world. Chance goes on to bind his DNA to numerous individuals, to draw on their brain power, and to produce offspring –of which Faith, Dylan, Hawk, Meredith, many of the Drifters, and the Quinns, are all a part. Hotspur Chance's fate remains unknown in the novel.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Tablet

Given to every citizen within and outside the State, Tablets are essentially the world of human individuals, managing everything from music and shows to messages, schedules, and education. They are used as bank accounts, and to order clothes and other things. They are difficult to destroy, can self-repair, and can be modified for use by hackers, Drifters, and others. Every character, from Faith to Clara to Hawk, has a Tablet.

## Skinny Jeans

Skinny jeans are incredibly expensive articles of clothing for outsiders, and are coveted by them –especially the teenagers. Skinny jeans can cost 93 Coin a pair, with most of the cost of a pair of jeans being shipping. In order to impress Faith and Liz, Hawk orders jeans for them for a price of 3 Coin.

## White Vans

White vans, which run like drones on autopilot, are used to traverse the land between the States, picking up anyone who wants to move into the State. In the end of the novel, they are used as weapons against Wade and Clara by Dylan.

## Books

Nearly all reading material in 2051 is electronic, and can be found on Tablets. But Faith and Liz prefer to read physical books, composed of paper. They love the smell, the feel of the book in their hands, and that the book doesn't respond to their touch the way a Tablet does. Hawk ultimately comes around to love books as well, giving Faith the gift of the book "The Sneetches" by Dr. Seuss at the end of the novel.

## Letter

A letter, sealed with wax, is given to Meredith for Faith by Faith's parents. The letter reveals the truth about why Faith's parents left, and about who Faith really is. The letter is signed with love, and Faith lets the letter float out to sea on the wind after reading it.



# Settings

## The Western State

Located across Nevada and various other former states, the Western State comprises tens of millions of people, packed together in a technologically-advanced, utopian-like city where mass transport and severe restrictions on human actions are commonplace. For example, burning wood is illegal, and the State chooses at will the jobs that various people have. Freedom is severely limited, if it exists at all in the Western State. It is run by a president, and rumors are that it will one day shut off entry to outsiders.

## The Eastern State

Not much is revealed about the Eastern State, except that it serves the same functions as the Western State. The Eastern State exists over the western parts of the East, including Kentucky and Tennessee.

## Old Park Hill

Nearly a hundred miles from the Western State, Old Park Hill is a school campus that has long been abandoned. Nearby are the homes where students and their families live, and nearby is the old shopping mall. Old Park Hill is where Faith is slipped two Wire Codes by Wade, and where she later battles Wade and Clara.

## The Old Shopping Mall

The old shopping mall, located near Old Park Hill, is where Dylan trains Faith to hone her skills of pulse. Ironically, it is also the secret base of the Drifters and where Faith's parents went to hide out before being killed.

## Valencia, California

Valencia is an abandoned city in California, which, following the destruction of the coast, now sits on the new coastline. Valencia is where Faith, Dylan, Hawk, and the other Drifters relocate following their escape from the old shopping mall.



# Themes and Motifs

## Friendship

Friendship is a major theme in Patrick Carman's novel, "Pulse." Friendship, involves mutual affection, loyalty, compassion, caring, and kindness between two or more individuals. Friendship appears for Faith in two characters, Liz and Hawk. Each ultimately helps Faith in different ways.

Faith's friendship with Liz warrants that of best friend status. It is to Liz that Faith reveals her innermost secrets and beliefs, and spends time with like no other. Liz, in turn, does the same. Liz's companionship helps Faith get through the decision of her parents to simply leave; and Faith's companionship helps Liz to get over the absence of Noah from her life. Both girls frequently hold hands, because in a sense, they are more than friends. They might as well be sisters because each is a rock for the other. This is especially true when it comes to emotional things.

Faith's friendship with Hawk is slow to catch, but once it does, it sticks –primarily through Hawk's insistence. Hawk, who also has a crush on Faith, seeks to impress her and Liz through his ability to hack. Yet, his emerging love of old books helps to endear him to Faith and to Liz. It is Hawk who is ultimately able to trace Faith's location at the end of the novel, allowing Dylan and the other Drifters to come to her rescue. It is also Hawk who is able to establish contact with Liz so Faith can speak to her after Liz heads into the State. Because of Hawk, Faith and Liz are able to mend the difference between them before Liz is killed.

## Love

Love is an underlying theme in Patrick Carman's novel, "Pulse." Love appears in two forms, familial and romantic. Both forms of love affect the characters of Faith, Liz, and Dylan in different ways.

Familial love is exhibited in tense form between Faith and her missing parents. While Faith is alone and on her own, her parents message her frequently with reminders to take care of herself. Their love of Faith comes in that they tried to protect her from who she was for as long as they could, and giving their lives in the process of checking up on her to make sure she is okay. Familial love also affects the character of Liz, who hates that Wade calls all of their parents crazy. It is clear that Liz deeply loves her family, and doesn't find them crazy at all. This sort of parental defense is striking given that no one else defends parents among the younger characters in the novel.

Romantic love exists in a very powerful form between Faith and Dylan, and Liz and Noah. Dylan falls in love with Faith pretty quickly, but reeling from her bad experience with Wade, Faith takes a little longer to fall in love with Dylan. It is Dylan's love for Faith that helps to bring about her second pulse, saving Faith's life. The love that exists



between Liz and Noah is just as strong and powerful. When Noah leaves for the State, Liz's heart breaks, and she feels lost and alone without him. When she and her family relocated to the State, she finds Noah again, and their love is instantly rekindled. It is the only thing that keeps Liz from hurting too much from not having her best friend, Faith, around.

## Coming of Age

Coming of age is a major theme in Patrick Carman's novel "Pulse." Coming of age involves the maturation of a young character through moral, emotional, spiritual, and mental growth, often through real world experiences and encounters with others. In the novel "Pulse", the theme of coming of age primarily revolves around the character of Faith Daniels.

When the novel begins, Faith can be defined in relatively straightforward ways. She is tall, pretty, kind, and her identity is simple. She is bored of history, cares little for anything in the past, loves to read, loves music, loves art, and is obsessed with finding a boy and falling in love in the coming year of school. She is innocent, too trusting, and careless. However, she is loyal and courageous as well.

As the novel progresses and concludes, Faith evolves and matures in dramatic and far reaching ways. Her carelessness and innocence come back to haunt her when Wade lures her into an abandoned part of Old Park Hill to slip her two Wireless Codes, kissing her in the process. This breaks her trust of Wade and allows her to be more cautious and discerning in the future. Faith's rejection of the past is broken apart by the crucial need to understand the past, including the fact that she is a descendent of Hotspur Chance, and has the first and second pulse. Yet, her desire to find love is brought to fruition through Dylan, whose own love of Faith allows Faith to find her second pulse. In the end, Faith is a stronger human being for everything she has been through.



# Styles

## Point of View

Patrick Carman tells his novel “Pulse” in the third-person omniscient narrative, with most of the narrative focused around Faith. This is done for primarily two reasons, both integral to the plot. The first is that the novel deals with the experiences of Faith as she learns her abilities to pulse, and discovers her abilities to second pulse, all the while dealing with the death of her parents, her best friend, and the discovery of love with Dylan, so the narrative should be focused around Faith. The second reason is that the back story to the novel is immense, and events occurring at the same time as Faith’s story unfolds, also need to be told. The first-person narrative in limited omniscient could not handle allowing the reader to follow parallel plots, but the third-person omniscient narrative does just that.

## Language and Meaning

Patrick Carman tells his novel “Pulse” in language that is simple, brisk, and straightforward. This is done for at least two important reasons. The first is that the novel is expansive, taking in a lot of territory between the plot, side stories, and backstories, and so a brisk, easy-to-read narrative allows the reader to learn without being slowed down as the reader follows the central plot. The second reason is that the novel deals with teenagers, and is written for teenagers, so language that is straightforward and familiar engages readers, and makes the characters in the novel all the more believable.

## Structure

Patrick Carman divides his novel, “Pulse,” into three major parts, and each part into chapters. Each part deals with major transitions or revelations in Faith’s life, and each chapter deals with minor transitions, events, and revelations in Faith’s life. Part 1, for example, concludes with the revelation that Faith lives alone because her parents are Drifters. Part 2 concludes with the ratcheting up of the plan hatched by the Quinns. The entire novel itself is capped by a Postscript, wherein the Quinns prepare to unleash the fullness of their plan to destroy the States.





## Quotes

Once everyone had a Tablet, no one wanted these anymore. But there's something different about holding them in your hands.

-- Faith (Chapter 3 paragraph p. 40)

**Importance:** Faith, speaking to Hawk about books, explains how different it is to hold a book in one's hands, rather than reading electronically. It demonstrates that, although Faith admires much of modern technology, there is something also timeless about her, about her love of reading physical books, setting her apart from most other people. This makes Faith unique.

It was no longer just the two of them; it was the three of them.

-- Narrator (Chapter 4 paragraph p. 51)

**Importance:** Here, Faith and Liz realize that Hawk has become a fixture in their lives already. Whereas it had always been the two of them –Faith and Liz –it is now the three of them, with Hawk as well.

And on that arm, looking up at her, was the tattered eagle on the branch, the tattooed symbol of the Drifters. It was the image of a powerful bird lost in a broken world, ever defiant against a coming evil.

-- Narrator (Chapter 5 paragraph p. 88)

**Importance:** Here, having been saved from the Drifters by an unknown cause, a sense of ambiguity pervades the terrifying ordeal. The supposedly evil Drifters bear symbols and tattoos that are not representative of evil, but seek to face evil instead.

It was sad, really, that the world had to turn so dark to bring out her true talent.

-- Narrator (Chapter 7 paragraph p. 116)

**Importance:** Faith, beyond her love of reading old books and boys, loves to draw. She loves art, and revels in it. But it is also saddening to her that her love of art is only spurred on by her hatred of sadness, of the horrors and darkness of the world. But at least through art, she has an outlet for her grief.

They'd seen plenty of videos of the Western State, but they'd always concluded that it lacked the grit of real life. Something real was missing.

-- Narrator (Chapter 10 paragraph p. 165)

**Importance:** In communication with Liz in the Western State by way of Tablet, courtesy of Hawk, Faith reflects on hearing about the Western State years before. Faith and Liz always believed there was something incomplete about the Western State, as if it were too good to be true.



You can move things with your mind. Not with any kind of precision or skill, but you can do it.

-- Dylan (Chapter 13 paragraph p. 197)

**Importance:** Here Dylan reveals to Faith that she has telekinetic powers. This is incredibly important because it makes the realization and explanation of an integral part of Faith's identity as a character in the novel. The mystery of moving blankets, pencils, and messages, all comes clear to her in this statement.

Freedom is pricey.

-- Dylan (Chapter 13 paragraph p. 204)

**Importance:** Dylan, speaking to Faith about life inside and outside the State, reveals that living on the outside has its consequences, and its costs –but that freedom is not free. It comes with a price. And living on the outside means that certain luxuries those on the inside enjoy, are not theirs to have.

It's not our problem, Wade. It's not our war; it's theirs. I don't see why we have to be pawns on someone's chess board.

-- Clara (Chapter 16 paragraph p. 261)

**Importance:** Here, Clara wonders why she and her brother are being forced to participate in things that are beyond their control. She feels a lack of freedom and justice in having to do the dirty work for somebody else. It is wearing thin on Clara.

To her surprise, Faith eventually realized that it was she, not Liz, who needed the hand to hold on to.

-- Narrator (Chapter 17 paragraph p. 285)

**Importance:** With Liz gone and in the State, Faith feels lost. She has no one to talk to about intimate or personal things anymore. She also realizes that, for all the time she held hands with Liz, it was really Faith, and not Liz, who needed to hold hands.

Nothing is perfect, but without the States, humankind would be in far worse condition and only getting worse. They're a brilliant invention, and they need to be protected at all cost.

-- Meredith (Chapter 18 paragraph p. 317)

**Importance:** Meredith, a powerful individual with the gift of pulse, explains that the States are a good thing, because they have saved mankind. The States must be protected no matter what. The Drifters aren't trying to rebel against the State, it seems, but to protect them.