

# **Salem's Lot Study Guide**

## **Salem's Lot by Stephen King**

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## Plot Summary

In 1975, a vampire comes to the small town of Jerusalem's Lot, Maine. He converts some of the people to vampires, and they transform others into vampires, until almost the whole town is undead. Two people eventually kill the head vampire and flee, leaving a town full of vampires behind.

Ben Mears, a writer, goes to Jerusalem's Lot, a small town in Maine. He used to live in 'Salem's Lot when he was a child, and he is going back there now to write a book based on the town. People in the town avoid the "Marsten House" as a man once killed his wife there and then committed suicide there by hanging himself. As a child, Ben once had the frightening experience of going into that house and seeing the ghost of that man. Ben now goes to the Marsten House, but he does not go inside. When he gets there, he meets Susan, and they feel an instant connection, or at least a sense of fate. Ben would like to rent the Marsten House, so he asks if he may, but it has been sold already. So, he moves into Eva Miller's boarding house, instead. Ben and Susan begin dating.

The story flashes back to the previous year, when another newcomer to the town, Richard Straker, makes an offer to buy the "Marsten House" and the old laundromat. He and his business partner, Barlow, buy the properties. They turn the old laundromat into an antique store. Shortly after they arrive, however, odd things start to happen. For instance, the keeper at the graveyard finds a dead dog on the spikes at the top of the graveyard gate. Also, two little boys who are brothers, are walking in the forest to their friend Mark's house, and one goes missing. After the town members conduct a massive search for the boy, they presume him to be dead. His brother, Danny, has a mysterious illness, and he is taken to the hospital. Danny dies not much later, though he appears to be healthy and nobody can explain why he dies.

It turns out that Barlow is a vampire. He has bitten Danny and made him into a vampire. Barlow goes on to feed on many of the town members, and they, in turn, become vampires, too. The new vampires then continue the chain by feeding off from other people, usually their family members and friends, and eventually making them vampires. The people who have been bitten sometimes feel like they are sick for days before they die. They have pale skin and sleep all day. Although they feel terribly hungry, the taste of food makes them vomit. They often have no memory of being in contact with a vampire, or they remember being with a vampire, but they think it was a dream. Many of them just assume that they have the flu. After a few days of feeling sick, they die, and then they are reborn as vampires.

As the story progresses, more of the residents of Salem's Lot become vampires. Many of the people just seem to be "missing." Individuals and entire families are missed by the people who know them in their workplaces, their neighborhoods, their churches, and their schools. Bodies go missing from the morgue. There is no physical proof of what is really going on, though, so most people in the town and in the neighboring towns are



simply flustered. They look for non-supernatural explanations for the missing persons and odd occurrences.

Eventually, a coalition forms of people who believe in the vampires. They plot to stop the vampires. The coalition includes Ben Mears, Susan Norton, Mark Petrie, Matt Burke, Jimmy Cody, and Father Callahan. Susan is caught by Barlow and becomes a vampire. Ben later has to drive a stake through her heart. Matt, who is a schoolteacher and a new friend of Ben's, dies from a heart attack. Jimmy Cody, Matt's physician and former student, dies in a booby trap set up by the vampires. Father Callahan is "marked" as Barlow's by being forced to drink Barlow's blood. He escapes by leaving town on a bus. Ben and Mark survive and kill Barlow by driving a stake through his heart. They leave town and end up in Los Zapatos in Mexico. After almost a year, however, they come back to the town during the day when the vampires are sleeping. A draught has made the grass there very dry. Ben deliberately drops a lit cigarette into the grass, where it starts a fire that begins to spread and presumably later consumes the town.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

In 1975, a vampire comes to the small town of Jerusalem's Lot, Maine. He converts some of the people to vampires, and they transform others into vampires, until almost the whole town is undead. Two people eventually kill the head vampire and they flee, leaving a town full of vampires behind.

A tall man and a boy are taking a road trip across the country. The man is a writer, and he sends an outline of a book to his agent, who expresses interest in the book, but he will not give the tall man an advance to write the book. The tall man decides to write the book, anyway. Though the boy is polite, both the man and the boy are sullen, and they seem to be traveling away from something they fear. The man buys newspapers from Portland, Maine, and reads them as often as he can. He seems to be watching for news of something important. The man and the boy settle into a beach cottage off the coast of the Pacific for a while, but although their life seems tranquil, the boy has nightmares and he screams at night. He has not forgotten the horrible things that have happened in his past. The tall man eventually receives a letter from his agent offering him money for the book, and he quits his job. He and the boy move across the border in Mexico.

The tall man and the boy end up in a village called "Los Zapatos." While there, they live an uneventful life, except that they go to church once in a while. The tall man drives 40 miles once a week to get the Portland newspaper to continue to look for news of what is happening in Maine. After a short time, he sees a story relating to the town of Jerusalem's Lot where he and the boy used to live. The story reports that 'Salem's Lot has become a ghost town, and the reporter is unable to come up with an explanation for why all of the people have deserted the town.

A couple of months later, the boy goes to a church and makes a confession to the priest. Apparently, he has confessed something strange, because the priest comes to the tall man to verify the story. The tall man tells him that the boy is telling the truth. The priest says that he has seen some strange things in the world, and he apparently believes the boy's story. A week later, the tall man awakes from a nightmare and decides to go back to 'Salem's Lot.

The story flashes back to September 5, 1975. Ben Mears, the "tall man" referred to previously, is on a road trip, traveling through Maine. He is going to the town of Jerusalem's Lot, where he once lived for four years when he was a child. He has not been there in over twenty years, and as he approaches the town, he wonders how much it has changed. As he drives, he sees the Marsten House, and since he is familiar with the house, it soothes his mind a little that the town has not changed very much. The Marsten House, though, is creepy, not soothing. He has bad memories of it from his childhood.



Ben drives through town and realizes that things there have changed very little in the last twenty-five years. 'Salem's Lot is a tiny town, and many of the people there have become set in their ways. As Ben pulls up to the Marsten House to look at it, he sees that it is big, old, and not well cared for. Nobody is living there and nobody has been taking care of it. He thinks about leasing the house, but he does not go inside.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

The prologue sets the mood for the rest of the book. It clearly hints that something terrible has happened in the town of Jerusalem's Lot, Maine. Whatever happened has left the town empty of people, left the tall man and the boy on the run, and emotionally scarred for life. In addition, the prologue makes it clear that people outside of the town do not know what has happened. It is strange that so many people could go missing from one town, and yet no news story ever pops up to explain what happened. Although the prologue does not explicitly say what happened in the town, the conversation between the tall man and the priest's interpreter in Los Zapatos makes it clear that something supernatural and unholy has happened.

The boy is described as not being the tall man's son, yet the boy has a good relationship with the tall man, and the tall man obviously has not kidnapped him. It is odd and ominous that they should travel together and live together for such a long time, then. This leads the reader to suspect that something has happened to the rest of the boy's family.

In chapter one, the book begins to tell the story from its proper beginning from when Ben Mears comes back to 'Salem's Lot. Since Ben is driving the same car that the tall man was driving in the prologue, and since Ben has other characteristics in common with that character, the reader can deduce that Ben and the tall man from the prologue are the same person. Since, however, Ben does not seem overly terrified by the town yet, and since he does not think about the boy mentioned in the prologue, the reader can deduce that chapter one takes place before the prologue and before Ben becomes closely associated with the boy.

Once the reader discovers in chapter one that Ben Mears and the tall man from the prologue are the same person, the reader realizes that chapter one must have taken place at the chronological beginning of the story, and the prologue must have happened near the chronological end of the tale. Knowing this, the reader can deduce that the newspaper story in the prologue mentions many of the characters from the town that will be introduced later in the book. Although the reader does not know it, yet, "the boy" from the prologue will later be known as Mark Petrie.



# Chapter 2

## Chapter 2 Summary

Ben meets a girl at the park. She is probably in her twenties, and her name is Susan. She recognizes him because she has seen his photo on one of the books he wrote. Susan and Ben begin to talk, and then they go to Spencer's for an ice cream soda, where they talk more. He learns that she is an artist. She fills him in on some of the things that have been going on in the town, and he tells her a little about how he used to live there for four years with his Aunt Cindy when he was a child. After talking with Ben for a while longer, Susan says she has to go because she has some things to do, but they agree to meet at seven thirty.

Nolly Gardener and Parkins Gillespie, the town cops, happen to notice the two together. They privately discuss what they think about Ben, and they talk about how Susan already has a boyfriend, and how Ben wanted to lease the Marsten House from Larry Crockett, the same person who sold the laundromat. They seem to think it is odd of him to want to stay at the Marsten House.

Meanwhile, Susan Norton makes her way home and tells her mother, Ann, about Ben. Ann is cautious about her daughter meeting this stranger. She reminds Susan that she is already dating someone named Floyd Tibbits. Obviously, some tension has been building between Susan and Ann for a while. After talking to Susan, Ann gets on the phone with Mabel Werts, the town gossip, and finds out that Ben has been staying at Eva Miller's boardinghouse.

Later, Susan and Ben drive home from a movie and talk about the Marsten House. The house has a grim past. In 1939, the mail carrier Larry McLeod finds Hubert Marsten and his wife, Birdie, dead in the house. Hubert has killed his wife first, and then himself. The house is full of stacks of books, magazines, newspapers, and other old things. The town members find that Hubert Marsten set a booby trap that would kill anyone who entered the house through the front door. Fortunately, Larry McLeod comes in through the back door. Nobody has inhabited the house since the death of Hubert Marsten.

Susan has never been inside of the house, but Ben has. Ben tells Susan how he once went into the Marsten House when he was nine years old. He says he wanted to play with a group of other boys who were playing pirates, and that they said he could be a pirate if he went in the house, so he went inside and up the stairs. He says that in the upstairs, he went into the room where Hubert Marsten committed suicide, and he saw the ghost of Hubert Marsten hanging there and the ghost's eyes opened. He explains how he left the house screaming and ran far away. Ben admits to Susan that he may have hallucinated the whole thing, but he thinks it was probably real.

Ben and Susan come to Ben's place. According to the boardinghouse rules, Ben is not allowed to bring Susan inside, so she sits outside while he goes in and gets them both a





drink. When he comes back out, they both notice that there is a light on at the Marsten House. They sit, drink, and talk for a while, and he kisses her. She invites him to come over for dinner the next night and meet her parents, and he accepts her invitation and takes her home.

## Chapter 2 Analysis

Chapter 2 introduces Ben and Susan's relationship and shows how it rapidly starts to deepen. The talk between Susan and Ben shows that the Marsten House is more than just a creepy house, and that there may possibly be something supernatural about the house. It also helps explain why it was so important for Ben to come back to the town when he had not lived there for so long. Finally, when Nolly and Parkins talk, and when Ann talks to Mabel Werts, it demonstrates the tendency of the people in the town to gossip and spread news about each other.



# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3 Summary

At 4 a.m. the next day, Hal and Jack Griffen are beginning to milk their dad's dairy farm cows. At 4:30, the milkman Irwin "Win" Purinton is doing his milk route, and he leaves an extra carton of sour cream at the Norton house in response to Ann Norton's note.

5:15 comes, and Eva Miller is up in the boardinghouse making breakfast when Win gets there. She asks Win for extra milk and a gallon of lemonade. At 6:05, Sandy McDougall's baby is crying, and the noise wakes her up. She makes the baby a cold bottle, but the baby's cries bother her, and she starts screaming at him and punching him.

At around 6:45, Mike Ryerson, who is in charge of taking care of the town's three cemeteries, goes to work and finds Win's dog Doc hanging dead from one of the spikes at the top of the cemetery gate.

At 8 a.m., the school buses take the children to school. Charlie Rhodes, one of the bus drivers, notices a child passing a note to another child and makes both of the children get off the bus.

An hour later, Weasel Craig rolls out of his bed at the boardinghouse with a hangover. He goes downstairs and Eva asks him to help her do some chores today. Eva is a widow, and she and Weasel have had more than a friendship in the past, but she keeps this a secret and uses him as a housekeeper.

At 10:00, the children at Stanley Street Elementary School are having recess. Richie Bodden, a bully, starts a fight with Mark Petrie. Although Mark is much skinnier than Richie is, he stands up to Richie, fights him and wins.

At 11:15, Dud Rogers, the dump custodian, sets his usual fire at the dump and shoots the rats as they come out. At noon, the mid-day town whistle goes off. Larry Crockett sees a car up at the Marsten House, and he remembers that he sold the Marsten House and the laundromat over a year ago to some odd people under strange circumstances. He remembers that although he traded the properties for some much more valuable properties and he made a tremendous profit, he also promised to keep the deal a secret and to help the buyers out in certain ways in the future. Larry Crockett feels like he has made a deal with the devil.

At 1:00, Susan goes to the beauty salon. Jack and Hal Griffen's older sister Babs styles Susan's hair in preparation for her dinner date with Ben. At 3:00, Bonnie Sawyer's husband Reg is not home, and Bonnie has a young man named Corey Bryant come to her house for sex.



At 4:00, Ben finishes writing for the day. He looks up at the Marsten House and notices a car in the driveway. He also sees that two of the shutters have been replaced. At 5:00, Matt Burke, a high school English teacher, goes home from work. On the way home, he notices that the shutters are back up at the Marsten House. At 6:00, Ben goes to Susan's house and meets her parents, Ann and Bill. Although Ann does not warm up to Ben, Bill likes him. They talk and have dinner together.

At 7:00, Floyd Tibbits goes to a local bar called "Dell's" to have some beers. Delbert "Dell" Markay, the bartender and owner, tells Floyd that somebody has killed Floyd's uncle Win's dog and that Mike Ryerson found the dog hung on the cemetery gate. He says that Mike took the corpse to Parkins, the constable. Dell thinks that devil worshippers may have killed Doc.

At 7:30, Danny Glick and his brother Ralphie walk through the woods to their friend Mark Petrie's house. On the way there, they think they hear something or someone in the woods near them, and they get scared.

At 9:00, Mabel Werts, the town gossip, is at home. She watches the Marsten House through her binoculars, but she cannot see much. She sets down the binoculars, picks up the phone receiver, and secretly listens to a conversation two other women are already having.

At 11:59, a dark figure stands alone in the Harmony Hill Cemetery and speaks to someone unseen whom he calls "Lord of Flies." The dark figure makes an offering of what appears to be a child.

## Chapter 3 Analysis

Chapter 3 has several purposes. First, it introduces the reader to several characters who will have continued roles later in the story. Second, the conversation between Floyd Tibbits and Dell and the conversations between Parkins and Nolly emphasize that in this small town where everyone is connected in one way or another. News gets around quickly.

The time stamps through Chapter 3 show exactly how quickly the story is progressing. Although the people in the town are doing "business as usual" and are largely oblivious to what is going on, the dog on the cemetery gate, the missing child, and the sacrifice in the cemetery all happen within twenty-four hours.



# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

Ralphie and Danny Glick are supposed to be home by nine. At ten past nine, Marjorie Glick calls the Petrie house to find out why they are not home yet. The Petries tell the Glicks that the Glick boys have not been there. Danny Glick soon stumbles into the yard and collapses. He cannot remember what happened in the woods. He knows that something bad happened, but he does not remember what it was, and he does not know where his brother is. Ralphie's parents are worried, but Parkins Gillespie thinks that Ralphie probably just wandered off the path and he does not think that there is any sense in searching the woods yet. Instead, he and a few men ride along the street calling for Ralphie with bullhorns. The next morning, however, a massive search for Ralphie begins. The search lasts for days and involves both police and volunteers. On the fifth day after Ralphie disappears, Danny Glick collapses, and he is taken to the hospital. The doctor is not sure what is wrong with him.

The story flashes back to the third day of the search, when Susan comes to the boardinghouse and cooks something for Ben to eat. Ben is one of the volunteers from the search party. He and Susan talk about whether or not Ralphie Glick is dead. Susan says that her dad wants Ben to come over the next day, and Ben agrees to come.

Larry Crockett is sitting in his office. The telephone rings, and it is Straker calling. He has not heard from Straker since he and Straker made the deal involving the laundromat and the Marsten House. Straker tells Larry to hire a couple of movers to go to the docks that night and pick up a dozen boxes. The movers are to drop most of the boxes off at the former laundromat, drop one last box off in the cellar of the Marsten House, and then lock up behind them with padlocks, leaving the keys to the locks on the basement table. Larry hires Royal Snow and Hank Peters to move the boxes.

That night, Royal and Hank go to the docks and get the boxes. One box is very heavy and is not marked by customs, which seems unusual. Nevertheless, they load up the boxes and drive to the former laundromat. When they go inside, they notice an offensive odor. They leave the boxes there, lock the door with a padlock, and drive to the Marsten House. Both of the men feel the evilness of the house, and they are reluctant to go inside. Nevertheless, they take the heavy package into the cellar and leave it there. They are terrified, although they are not sure why, so they run outside, but they have forgotten to put the locks on and leave the keys on the table.

Hank and Royal force themselves to put the padlocks on the back door, the front door, and the shed, but they argue over who will go back down into the cellar to leave the keys on the table. They flip a coin for it, and Hank loses. Hank forces himself to go back down in the cellar. On his way to the table, he sees what looks like a child's clothes. He hears something snap behind him, and the noise scares him. He panics, throws the



keys onto the table, runs outside, slams the bulkhead doors, closes the lock, and runs to the truck. They leave as quickly as possible.

When Hank and Royal go to Larry to be paid, they look so shaken up that he gives them each an extra ten dollars. Later, Hank goes back alone to Larry's office to talk to him, and he tells Larry that there were clothes in the basement that looked like they fit the description of what Ralphie Glick was wearing when he went missing. Hank says that maybe he should call the police. Larry advises against it, though, saying that having the police involved might allow them to dig into Hank's past and make certain things public that Hank does not want anyone to know about. Larry discreetly bribes Hank to be quiet by giving him fifty dollars. He also lets Hank take home the rest of the bottle of liquor that they are drinking. Hank goes home and has nightmares that night.

At Milt Crossen's Agricultural Store, several local people are in the store who see Straker come in to buy groceries. They see him pay for his purchases with very old paper money, and then lift a thirty-pound carton of groceries with no effort. He is apparently very strong. After he leaves, the locals discuss what they have seen him do.

Ben is writing in his room when Parkins Gillespie comes to him and asks him some questions. He is investigating Ralphie Glick's disappearance. Although he says that Ben is not a suspect, he asks Ben questions that make Ben feel like a suspect. Parkins also has a copy of one of Ben's books with him and asks Ben to autograph it.

After visiting Ben, Gillespie goes to the laundromat. He acts as if he is there simply to meet Straker. He asks to meet Barlow, but Barlow is not there. Although their conversation is short and cordial, Straker seems cold and distant. It is clear that he does not want the visitor.

When Parkins gets back to the Municipal Building, Nolly is not there. Parkins has privacy, so he calls the FBI and requests background checks on Ben Mears, Richard Straker, and Kurt Barlow. On September 24, the nurse finds Danny Glick dead on the floor of his hospital room. He looks oddly healthy.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

This chapter starts with Danny Glick's appearance and ends with his death. In between the two events, the author shows the progression of suspicion in the town. When Straker goes into the store, the locals talk about him. Ralphie Glick is missing, and Parkins Gillespie investigates Ben, Straker, and Barlow. This shows the town's mistrust of newcomers and the people's tendency to keep company only with those they know well. That will later help explain why people in neighboring towns do not figure out that 'Salem's Lot is infested with vampires.

Hank and Royal sense the evil of the Marsten House. Hank sees a child's clothes in the basement and suspects Straker and Barlow of having had something to do with Ralphie Glick's disappearance. Although Larry Crockett has told Straker that he will not defend Straker and Barlow if they are doing something shady, when Hank comes to him with



the news about Ralphie's clothes being in the basement, Larry pays Hank to be quiet. This is important. If Larry would have called the police, instead, the whole vampire infestation could have ended up being averted. The reader is left thinking that Larry probably covers this up because Larry senses Barlow's power and fears him, even from a distance. The heavy box that Hank and Royal deliver to the cellar of the Marsten House is undoubtedly a coffin with Barlow inside. This marks Barlow's entrance to 'Salem's Lot. The way that Larry, Hank, and Royal instinctively know to be afraid foreshadows Barlow's power.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

On September 25, Ben eats dinner with Susan and her parents again. After dinner, Ben and Susan say they are leaving to walk down to Spencer's to get a soda. Instead of going to Spencer's, though, they walk to the park, where they make love on the grass. Afterward, they go for a walk, and Susan asks Ben about his book. He tells her that the book is about the Marsten House. He says that during the time that Hubert Marsten was living in that house, four children came up missing and were never found. Ben and Susan discuss the possibility that Hubert Marsten's evilness may still live in that house.

Ben walks Susan home, and before she goes inside, she tells him that she loves him. He goes back to the boardinghouse, but he cannot seem to write or sleep, so he drives out to Dell's bar. Once there, he sees Weasel and he sits with him. They talk a little, and Weasel sees Matt Burke and invites him over to sit with them. Ben and Matt talk and get to know each other a little. Matt asks Ben to come to one of his classes and talk about himself as a guest speaker, and Ben agrees. Ben and Matt realize that Weasel has disappeared for a while, so they look for him and find him passed out in the bathroom. Ben takes Weasel home and brings him into the house, where he runs into Eva, who says she will take him up to his room and take care of him. She has done it many times before.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

This chapter shows the intensification of the relationship between Ben and Susan. This will make it more difficult for him to drive the stake through her heart when she is a vampire. The conversation that Ben and Susan have about Hubert Marsten reveals that the house itself may be evil independently of the vampire who now lives there. It also helps explain how Straker and Barlow came to such a small town as 'Salem's Lot. The missing children from Hubert Marsten's time suggest that Marsten may have been using the children for a similar purpose that Straker used Ralphie Glick. The bar scene at the end of the chapter introduces Matt, who will be an important character in the book.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Danny Glick is buried in Harmony Hill Cemetery on September 28. Mike Ryerson and Royal Snow dig Danny's grave in the morning. Many people from the community are there for the funeral. Father Callahan gives a short service during which Danny's father has a complete breakdown and shouts at Danny to quit pretending that he is dead. After the funeral is over and the people leave, Mike waits a while for Royal Snow because Royal is supposed to help him fill in the grave. As Mike waits, he feels as if someone is watching him. Royal does not show up, so Mike eventually begins to fill the grave in by himself, but he still feels like he is being watched, and he is afraid. He tries to fill the grave in as quickly as possible so that he can leave before dark, but he loses track of time. His mind seems to be drifting beyond his control. Dusk is coming quickly, and he has not managed to fill in the grave yet, but he feels a strange compulsion to dig up the coffin. He feels as if Danny Glick's eyes are open, although they should be closed. Although it is almost dark, he digs up the coffin and opens it. He is right. Danny Glick's eyes are open.

Mark Petrie is at home. He is working on a model of Frankenstein's monster. The monster is part of a nice set of similar horror monsters. Mark likes horror monsters and he knows all about them.

Roy McDougall gets home and his house is dirty, as usual. He catches his wife with a guilty, surprised look on her face. She has just hit the baby and made his nose bleed.

Nolly and Parkins are at the Municipal building when the phone rings. Parkins answers, and it is the FBI calling with the information he asked for. The background check reveals that Ben used to be an activist and that he was once in a motorcycle accident in which his wife died, but that he was not drunk at the time and that he was not responsible for the crash. Barlow, who is from England, was born in Germany. He has been in the import-export business since 1945. His business partner, Straker, is also from England. About 18 months ago, they both applied for visas to spend a while in the United States. The FBI report does not say anything negative or unusual about Barlow or Straker.

Dud Rogers is at work at the dump again. He sees Barlow there, who strikes up a conversation with him. The dump is closed, and Dud wants Barlow to leave. He asks him to leave several times. Barlow ignores his requests, and they continue to talk. As they talk, Dud falls into a kind of trance. Barlow ends up biting him, and Dud does not resist.

Father Callahan spills some scotch on the floor and very carefully cleans it up so that his housekeeper does not find it. He notices that the lights are on at the Marsten House. He is doing some deep thinking about how he wants to fight real evil, rather than just the day-to-day small town problems that he always hears about in the confessionals.





## Chapter 6 Analysis

In this chapter, the author shows that Barlow has possibly made Danny Glick his first vampire in 'Salem's Lot. Since Royal Snow is missing, he may possibly be the second new vampire in the town. Although Danny's father is probably just insane from anguish when he tells his son to quit pretending to be dead, it is possible that Mr. Petrie has seen Danny as a vampire since his death. The way that Mike falls into a trance as he digs and the way Barlow talks to Dud until Dud loses resistance shows that vampires have powers to put people into a trance and alter their thinking.

The chapter introduces Mark Petrie's knowledge of horror monsters. That knowledge will come in handy later in the story. The story also shows the vampirism beginning to spread, as Danny and Barlow begin to "recruit" Mike and Dud. The background check reveals that Ben was not responsible for his wife's death, and probably makes Parkins less suspicious of him. The lack of information on Straker and Barlow shows that they have covered their tracks in the past and that the town probably cannot rely on much help from people outside the town. Finally, the chapter introduces the important character Father Callahan and his flaws, personality, and desire to fight evil.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

Ben gives his talk to the children in Matt's English class. That night, Ben goes to Matt's house for supper. After they have spaghetti, they go into the living room, where Matt asks Ben about the book that he is writing. They talk about the disappearances that happened when Hubert Marsten lived in the Marsten House and the odd things that have been happening since Straker came to town. As Ben leaves, they decide that on the following Friday they will take Susan with them and go to the Marsten House to meet Straker and check things out.

Thursday night, Matt goes to Dell's, where he joins Mike Ryerson. Mike complains that he has been sleepy and sick ever since Danny Glick's funeral. He says that he blacked out after the funeral and woke up the next morning wanting to get out of the sun. He says that he went down into the woods and fell asleep in the leaves and that he has been sleeping most of the week. He tells Matt that he had a dream that a friend was at his window and that he let the friend in. Matt is concerned about him and asks him to come to his house and spend the night in the guest room.

That night, Mike is in the guest room when Matt brings him a pair of pajamas and notices puncture marks on his neck. Matt goes to bed suspecting that a vampire has gotten to Mike at Mike's home. While Matt is trying to fall asleep, he hears Mike in the guest room saying, "Yes. Come in." He hears the window open in the guest room, followed by an evil-sounding child's laugh and sucking noises.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

In this chapter, Ben and Matt become closer friends, and they reveal their suspicions about Straker and Barlow. They also make themselves key protagonists in the story by intending to go up to the Marsten House and investigate. Matt involves himself in the matter even further by offering hospitality and protection to Mike, whom he suspects has been meddled with by unfriendly forces. Matt's suspicions are confirmed when he hears the vampire in his guest room, and this draws him firmly into the story as a believer in vampires.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

It is late at night and Ben is at home asleep when Eva wakes him up with a call from Matt. Matt wants him to come over right away and bring a crucifix, a rosary, or a St. Christopher's medallion. Eva loans Ben her husband's crucifix, and Ben goes to Matt's house. Matt explains everything that Mike told him and everything that has happened. Matt says he thinks that Mike is dead, but he has not checked yet.

Matt and Ben go upstairs into the guest room. Mike looks so lifelike that it is difficult for Ben to believe that Mike is not sleeping. He is unable to rouse him, however, and finally admits that Mike is dead. Oddly, there are no longer any puncture marks on Mike's neck. Matt and Ben go back to the kitchen table to talk about what they should do. After discussing it for a while, they finally decide that Matt should call the police and call his doctor.

Matt and Ben decide that Matt should tell Parkins everything he knows except for the part about what he heard happen in the guest room during the night. Parkins arrives first, and then Jimmy. Jimmy examines the body and says that Mike is dead. Brent Norbert, the assistant medical examiner, comes with a photographer. A couple of hours later, Ben and Matt are the only two people left at the house again. They agree that they will go to the Marsten House with Susan that night.

When Ben gets back to the boardinghouse, Eva asks Ben why Matt wanted a crucifix, and Ben says he thinks that Matt must have thought that Mike was a Catholic. Ben is tired, so he goes up to his room to take a nap, and he wakes up at 4:15. When he tries to leave for Spencer's, Floyd Tibbits is waiting for him inside the car. Floyd gets out and says he is going to kill Ben.

## Chapter 8 Analysis

Matt's request for a rosary demonstrates his desire to use certain items traditionally used to ward off vampires. When the police officer and the others arrive, Matt and Ben do not tell him that they suspect a vampire killed Mike. When Eva asks Ben about the rosary, Ben does not tell her about Ben and Matt's suspicion of vampires. He does not tell her because he does not think that she will believe him. This sets an example that Ben and the other believers in vampires will follow for most of the book. They are unable to warn people as they know that most people will not believe them. This explains how the vampirism can spread through the town. The vampires' biggest strength is that most people do not believe in vampires and will refuse to do anything to protect themselves from vampires until they have conclusive proof of the existence of vampires. By the time that people see vampires and are convinced that vampires are real, however, it is usually too late.



# Chapter 9

## Chapter 9 Summary

When Susan gets home around three in the afternoon, her mom tells her the news about Mike Ryerson. She tells Susan that Ben was at Matt's house when the police came for Mike's body, and she insinuates that there is something strange or sinister about Ben and that Susan would be better off dating Floyd again. Ann and Susan have a heated argument and Susan ends up slapping her across the face and telling her that she will be moving out. After they talk a little more, Susan apologizes to Ann for slapping her, but she says she is still going to move out.

Susan goes up to her room and falls asleep, and her mom wakes her and says that she has a phone call. Eva Miller is on the phone, and she tells Susan that Floyd and Ben got in a fight and that Ben is in the hospital. Susan goes to the hospital to visit Ben, and he tells her to go to Matt and tell him to tell her everything and ask him if he knows Father Callahan. When Susan gets back to the waiting room, Weasel and Eva Miller are there. Eva tells Susan that she saw Floyd before he attacked Ben, and that Floyd was dressed in strange clothes and acting dazed and confused.

Susan goes to Matt's house to talk to him, and he tells her everything that has been going on, but she is skeptical. Matt hears a sound upstairs, so he goes up to investigate and finds the vampire Mike Ryerson in the guest room. He drives Mike backward out the window with his crucifix. As Mike is falling out the window, he calls out, "I will see you sleep like the dead, teacher," and Susan hears him. When Matt turns to leave, he collapses from a heart attack. While Susan is waiting for the ambulance to come, she goes into the guest room and finds Mike's high school class ring on the floor.

## Chapter 9 Analysis

The argument between Ann and Susan shows Ben's continued dedication to Ben, regardless of the rumors that surround him. It also shows Susan's rebellious streak, which will later allow her to go try to investigate the Marsten House by herself. Although Susan is skeptical of what Matt tells her, her skepticism begins to diminish as she hears the commotion of the guest room and finds Mike's ring. She is being drawn into the group of believers.

Floyd's odd clothes and odd manner suggest that he may have been under the influence of a vampire. Susan admits that it is not like Floyd to attack anyone. He has probably already been bitten and has begun to transform into a vampire. The odd clothes he wears when he attacks Ben cover up most of his body, allowing him to be out in the sunlight.



# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

Sandy McDougall wakes up late and realizes that something is wrong. Usually, Randy has woken her up by now. She goes to check on the baby and finds him dead. Although he is usually bruised up from her abuse, his bruises have all healed and he looks beautifully lifelike. Terrified, she refuses to believe he is dead. She shakes him, yells his name several times, and even stuffs him into his high chair and feeds him. When the food plops out of his mouth, however, she finally starts screaming.

At the Glick home, Marjorie is sick and she falls down in the living room. Her husband, Tony, thinks that she is sick. He wants to call the doctor, but Marjorie asks him not to. Although neither Tony nor Marjorie realize it, she shows all of the typical signs of having been bitten by a vampire. Her teeth are more prominent than usual, the sunlight burns her, and she is pale and very tired. She even tells Tony that she looked at herself in the mirror and thought she saw right through herself. She also tells him that she had a dream that her son Danny came to her and nursed at her breast, but it felt like he was nipping at her.

Susan visits Ben at the hospital and tells Ben that Matt is in the hospital, too, and that he has had a heart attack. They discuss everything that Matt told Susan about the possibility of vampires, but she is still not sure what to believe. Susan tells Ben that Parkins put Floyd in the "drunk tank" and that he will turn Floyd over to the county if Ben wants to press charges, but Ben tells her he does not wish to do so.

At the jail, Nolly brings Floyd some food, but Floyd is sleeping and Nolly cannot seem to wake him up. Parkins shakes Floyd's shoulder and discovers that Floyd is dead.

Franklin Bodden and Virgil Rathburn drive a load of junk up to the dump. When they get there, the dump is closed, even though it should be open on this day of the week, so they get angry and they drive right through the gate. They can tell that Dud has not plowed or burned garbage in about a week, and they do not see Dud, so they go to his shack to look for him. They knock on the door, but nobody answers. The door is latched on the inside. That is strange because when the door is latched on the inside, there is no other way Dud could have gotten out of the shack, as the window is too small for him to get through. Frank and Virgil are too drunk to figure out that Dud must be unconscious or dead inside the shack.

Back at the hospital, Ben goes up to Matt's room to visit him, but Matt is sleeping. Ben puts a cross around Matt's neck.

Corey Bryant is at Bonnie Sawyer's house again. She greets him topless at the door. They get to the bed and Corey is undressing her when they realize that Bonnie's husband Reg is standing there holding a rifle. Corey is so frightened that he pees his



pants. Reg takes Corey into the living room and has Corey kneel down and put the rifle barrels in his mouth. Corey is so scared that his bowels let go. Reg pulls the trigger. The chambers are empty, and Corey is unharmed, but he faints.

Later, Reg tells Corey to leave town and not to come back if he wants to stay alive. As Corey stumbles down the road smelling like urine and feces and thinking about what he is going to do, he runs into Barlow. They talk a bit, and Barlow seduces Corey with the idea that he will not have to leave town, after all. Barlow's eyes hypnotize Corey, and Barlow bites Corey and turns him into a vampire.

Susan calls Ben at the hospital and tells him that Floyd Tibbits and Randy McDougall are dead and that Carl Foreman is missing. Ben tells her to make a cross. They plan to go the next day to Matt's room and tell him what has happened and tell Jimmy Cody about everything.

At the county morgue in Portland, the employees notice that two of the corpses are missing. One is the body of Floyd Tibbits. The other is the body of the infant Randy McDougall.

At the Petrie house, Danny Glick goes to Mark Petrie's bedroom window and asks to come in. Mark Petrie remembers what he knows about vampires, so he does not invite Danny into the house. Danny persists, and he begins to try to hypnotize Mark, but Mark resists him. Finally, Mark feels himself starting to give in, so picks up a cross and invites Danny in. When Danny comes in, Mark touches Danny's cheek with the cross and Danny retreats, diving out the window. Mark's parents hear the commotion, and when his father asks him what happened, Mark lies and says that he was having a nightmare.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

Randy McDougall, Marjorie Glick, Dud Rogers, Corey Bryant, Carl Foreman, and Floyd Tibbits are now vampires. The vampirism is spreading and the people in 'Salem's Lot are beginning to notice that something odd is happening. This chapter allows Mark to demonstrate his ability to deal with vampires on his own. In this situation, most children would tell their parents what happened and hope that their parents would protect them. Mark is different, however, because he lies to his parents instead of telling them about the vampire. This shows that he does not think that they would believe him if he told them the truth about the vampire.



# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

The next morning, Susan and Ben go up to Matt's room and they update Matt on what has been happening. Matt says he will ask the librarian to open the library for him and bring him some books on the subject of vampires. They plan to ask Jimmy Cody to have Danny Glick's boy exhumed. If he does not agree, they plan to go to Danny Glick's grave and see if anything unusual is going on there. Matt tells them they should go to Father Callahan and get some holy water first. Jimmy Cody enters the room to check on Matt, and he agrees to come in after his rounds at eleven so Matt can talk to him more.

Later, when Jim comes back to Matt's room, Jim tells them about the bodies that are missing from the morgue. Ben, Matt, and Susan tell Jim about the odd things that have been happening and about the possibility that there are vampires causing the problems. Jim is open-minded about the idea of the vampires and agrees to have Danny Glick's body exhumed. Ben and Jim go to the Glick house that afternoon to talk to Danny Glick's parents to ask their permission to exhume the body. Nobody answers their knock, so they go to the neighbor's house. The neighbor tells them that Mrs. Glick died that morning and that Tony Glick is in the hospital being treated for shock. Ben and Matt decide to drive out to Cumberland to look at Mrs. Glick's corpse.

Susan is at home. She decides to drive out to the Marsten House to check things out. On the way, she stops and makes a crude stake from a picket. She also drives over to a small store and buys a crucifix and a newspaper. She drives out toward the Marsten House, but parks off the side of the road before she gets there, gets out of her car, and sneaks through the woods while holding the stake. When she gets to the edge of the woods, she stops and spies on the house from behind some trees, and she sees Straker drive away from the house in a car. She feels somebody standing behind her, and then someone puts a hand on her shoulder.

Ben and Jimmy are at the mortuary. Jimmy knows Maury, the man who works there. Jimmy asks Maury to let him sit up with the body, and Maury agrees. While Ben and Jim sit with the body, they make a cross from two tongue depressors and Ben blesses the cross. Sunset comes, and the vampire Mrs. Glick begins to rise and the cross begins to glow. At first, Mrs. Glick is looking for Danny, but then she notices Ben and Jim and she goes after them. Ben holds up the cross and she backs away from it. Jimmy has no weapon, though, so she bites him, and Ben goes after her and touches her with the cross. He chases her away, and she leaves the room by seeping into the pores of the wall. Jimmy cleans his wound and takes a tetanus shot, hoping it will keep him from becoming a vampire. Ben tests Jimmy for vampirism by holding the cross up, but the cross does not glow, so Jimmy must be clean.

Jimmy realizes that the police might think that he and Ben stole Mrs. Glick's body, so he puts together a cover story for them to tell the cops. He punches Ben, and then he says



that they will say that an intruder came in, attacked them, and then stole the body. Jimmy and Ben call Maury Green and the sheriff. When the sheriff gets there, he does not believe the story, but he lets them go and tells them to go to his office in the morning to make their statements. Ben goes back to his room at the boardinghouse to spend the night.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

During this chapter, Jimmy Cody gets involved with Ben and Matt's plans and becomes a believer in the vampires. More people outside 'Salem's Lot become suspicious, yet they remain unaware of the vampires. Susan shows her hard-won willingness to believe in the vampires by making a stake, buying a crucifix, and going to the Marsten House. Matt's investigation of vampire lore turns him into the group leader as he helps form their plans. Jimmy and Ben's cross that they have made from tongue depressors symbolizes their faith and takes power from their faith. It works only as Ben believes it will work.





# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

Mark Petrie, carrying a stake and a small gun, sneaks up on the Marsten House and he sees Susan standing in the woods holding a stake and watching the house. He surmises that she knows about the vampires, so he reaches out, puts his hand on her shoulder, and greets her and they talk. He tells her that Danny Glick is a vampire and that Danny came to him last night and tried to bite him. At first, Susan is skeptical, but then she realizes he is telling the truth. He tells her that he is planning to kill the vampire who is in the Marsten House. Susan decides to go with him, and they sneak up to the house together. He breaks the lock on the shutters, opens the shutters, breaks the window, and opens the window. They crawl into the house through the window.

The house smells bad, and they feel a presence in the house. They are deciding whether to go into the cellar when they see Straker standing near them. Straker hits Mark and knocks him out.

When Mark regains consciousness, Straker is carrying him up the stairs. Straker realizes that Mark is pretending to be unconscious and he dumps Mark on the floor. Straker tells him that Susan is in the cellar and that Barlow will see her tonight. Straker forces Mark to crawl into the room where Hubert Marsten committed suicide. He is going to tie Mark up.

Mark thinks about his options. He decides that it is useless to try to resist because, if he jumps out the window, the fall may kill him, so he lets Straker tie him up. Straker leaves the room. Mark knows that the secret to getting free is to relax so that the ropes will loosen up a little. He puts his mind into a meditative, calm state, and he loosens the ropes a little at a time until he is free. Just as he gets free, he hears Straker coming upstairs. Mark unscrews the steel leg of a cot. When Straker walks in, Mark hits him twice in the head with the cot leg. He thinks Straker is dead, but as he tries to leave, Straker grabs his ankle. Mark uses the cot leg to smash Straker's hand, and then he breaks free and runs.

Mark goes to the cellar door and begins to go downstairs to rescue Susan, but it is dark in the cellar and the sun is going down outside. Mark is terrified. He tells Susan to run, and Susan calls back that she cannot see. Mark hears her scream. Barlow invites him to come down, but Mark flees and runs home, where he finds his mom waiting for him, worried about where he has been. Mark lies to his parents and tells them that he fell down in the woods and that time simply got away from him. Later that night, Susan comes to Mark's bedroom window as a vampire and asks him to let her into his room, but he sends her away.



## Chapter 12 Analysis

Mark has already proven that he is remarkable by chasing away a vampire. Now he shows his brains and cunning throughout the whole chapter. First, he realizes who the head vampire is. Then, instead of hiding in fear or asking an adult for help, he goes to the Marsten House alone, intent on killing the vampire. When he sees Susan holding the stake and sneaking around in the woods, he correctly deduces that she must know about the vampires, too. He shows his bravery by telling her that he will go on alone if she is too afraid to come with him. He shows courage again by being the one to break into the house and open the window. When Straker is going to tie him up, he demonstrates his ability to think clearly under pressure by formulating a plan to escape. When he finally escapes, he goes to rescue Susan instead of just running away. That shows his tendency to do what is morally right. When he gets home, he sensibly lies to his parents about where he has been, because he knows that they will not believe the truth. This shows that he can correctly judge human character. This chapter with its demonstration of Mark's personal strengths makes Mark's later survival more believable.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

Father Callahan goes to Matt's hospital room, where he sees that the librarian has brought Matt many books concerning the supernatural. Matt asks Father Callahan if he has noticed anything unusual lately. Father Callahan says that actually, he has noticed some people missing, and some other odd things going on. At first, he thinks that Matt is going crazy from his illness, but after a while, Matt tells him everything, and he says he does not think Matt is crazy. He tells Matt a story he heard from another priest named Father Bissonette, who presided over the funeral of a young girl. The girl's family told Father Bissonette that a vampire had killed the girl. Matt asks Father Callahan to join the group of believers who will try to fight Barlow. Callahan walks back to St. Andrews and tries to call Ben, but Eva answers and says that Ben is not home.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

It is natural for Matt to seek a priest to help fight the vampires. Father Callahan is the token priest. He is fit for the role because, unlike many other priests, he still believes in true evil. He has a flaw, however. He has a drinking problem. This flaw shows that he is human and is not a blameless, perfect priest. His imperfect faith will later keep him from becoming the hero of the story.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

Larry Crockett wakes up very late showing symptoms of having been bitten by a vampire. His wife is already a vampire and is hiding asleep for the day in the cellar. Their daughter Ruthie is missing, but Larry does not realize it as he thinks that she is at school. She is actually asleep in a freezer next to Dud Rogers.

The Crockett family is not the only new group of vampires in town. Loretta Starcher, Virgil Rathburn, and Weasel Craig are all missing, and Frank Boddin feels sick. Danny Glick turns Jack Griffen into a vampire, who then turns his brother Hal into a vampire. In addition, Susan's parents figure out that Susan is missing and report it to Homer McCaslin. When he comes to investigate, he finds her car on the side of the road. Susan and another vampire find him there and attack him. Later, the vampire Susan visits her mother and drinks her blood but leaves her alive, intending to feed off from her again later.

Mark Petrie goes to the boardinghouse looking for Ben, and Eva tells him that Ben is sleeping, so Mark asks to wait for him. When Ben wakes up, Mark tells him what happened to Susan, and they go for a drive so they can talk. They find Susan's car parked beside the road with Homer's gun on the ground nearby. The situation is not as they expected it to be, so Ben decides they will go to the hospital and ask Matt for advice before they go kill Barlow.

Jimmy Cody is in Matt's room when Ben and Mark get to the hospital. Ben and Mark tell him what they know. Ben wants to attack Barlow today, and Jimmy agrees to go with him. The four of them talk together about some of the things that have been happening, and Matt gives them instructions on how to destroy Barlow.

Ben, Jimmy, and Mark go talk to Father Callahan and tell him what they are going to do. He listens to their confessions, and they all do their atonement in order to be pure before they go hunt the vampire. The four of them collect the various weapons they will need to ward off vampires. They have holy water, a hammer and stake to pound into Barlow's heart, and plenty of garlic, but there are no roses in the flower shop because Straker has already bought them all.

Ben, Jimmy, Callahan, and Mark drive to the Marsten place and get out of the vehicle. When Callahan smites the door with his crucifix, the house reacts violently and the lock breaks off. They go inside and find Straker upstairs hanging upside down, dead. They go down to the cellar to look for Barlow. He is not there, but they find a note that he has left there for them. It says that they can find Susan there in the basement.

Ben, Jimmy, Callahan, and Mark find the vampire Susan sleeping. Ben forces himself to drive the stake through her heart. She shrieks and writhes as blood pours out of the



wound, but after a few minutes, a shadow of something comes out of her body, and she settles back down and becomes still.

Jimmy and Ben go to the hospital and talk to Matt while Mark and Father Callahan go to Mark's house to talk to Mark's parents. Ben and Jimmy show Barlow's letter to Matt and they discuss the situation. Matt tells them that the four of them should spend the night with him at the hospital, and that they should leave him there the next day and go hunt down Barlow and the rest of the vampires. Jimmy tries to call Mark Petrie's house, but Mark's phone is out of service.

The story flashes back to when Mark and Father Callahan go to Mark's house. Mark's father absolutely refuses to believe in vampires. Father Callahan and Mr. Petrie argue, but Mr. Petrie agrees to call Matt and talk to him. When Mr. Petrie tries to make the phone call, though, the line is dead. The electric goes out, and Barlow comes in and smashes Mark's parents' heads together, killing them instantly. Father Callahan tries to force him away by holding up a cross, but Barlow grabs Mark and threatens to kill him. Barlow agrees to let Mark go if Callahan will throw the cross away and face him with faith alone. Callahan hesitates, but then agrees. Barlow gives up Mark, but Callahan hesitates again, afraid to give up the cross. As he hesitates, the cross's glow fades and goes out. Barlow tells Callahan that if Callahan had thrown away the cross, he probably would have been successful in fighting Barlow. Barlow overpowers him and forces him to drink Barlow's blood.

Meanwhile, Ann Norton feels tired and sick. Barlow has control of her mind, and she goes to the hospital with a gun, intent on going into Matt's room and murdering someone, probably Ben and his friends. She sees a nurse and, planning to knock the nurse out, asks her to turn around. An orderly and another man standing near her get the gun away from her and knock her unconscious. Around the same time, Mark goes to Matt's room where he tells Matt, Ben, and Jimmy that his parents are dead, and that he does not know what happened to Father Callahan because he ran as soon as Barlow released him.

Back at 'Salem's Lot, Father Callahan walks to St. Andrews and he tries to go inside, but when he touches the door handle, it burns his hand. He is unclean and cannot go into the church. Because he drank Barlow's blood, he is marked as Barlow's, and no other vampire will touch him. He knows Barlow will eventually come for him, so he buys a bus ticket from Miss Coogan and takes the first bus out of town. He plans to ride the bus as far away as it will go. When the bus stops, he bribes the bus driver into buying him some alcohol.

At the hospital, Matt, Jimmy, Mark, and Ben are talking in Matt's hospital room, and Matt advises them to make hundreds of stakes and kill as many vampires as they can during the daylight, continuing the quest each day until all of the vampires are gone. As they talk about how to find Barlow, Mark remembers that he saw some blue chalk on Barlow, so they think Barlow might be staying at the Brock Street School.

Ann Norton dies at the hospital.



Charles Rhodes wakes up in the middle of the night because he hears somebody honking his bus's horn. It turns out to be a bus full of children who have turned into vampires, and they attack him.

Weasel Craig goes to Eva and turns her into a vampire, and Barlow instructs them to set up a booby trap.

Reggie Sawyer wakes up at 4:15 in the morning because Corey Bryant is knocking on his door. Reggie threatens Corey with a rifle again and tells him it is loaded, but Corey comes in, anyway. Reggie shoots him, but the shots have no effect. Corey goes to Bonnie, and she welcomes him, looking both lustful and terrified.

Ben, Jimmy, and Mark leave the hospital at sunrise and head toward 'Salem's Lot. They stop at Straker and Barlow's antique furniture store and find the vampire Mike Ryerson hiding from the sun asleep in a crate. Mark and Jimmy leave Ben at the Petrie house to make stakes from the woodpile while they look for vampires' hiding spots. They go to the McDougall home first and find the McDougalls sleeping under the trailer. Jimmy pulls Roy McDougall into the sunlight to see if it will kill him. Roy thrashes around in the sunlight as the moisture leaves his body, but he climbs back under the trailer and becomes still again. They go to the neighbors' house next and find another vampire family sleeping there. While they are there, Jimmy sees a toy pool table and he suddenly remembers another place where he has seen blue chalk.

He tells Mark that pool halls have blue chalk. There is no pool hall in 'Salem's Lot, but Eva Miller has a pool table in her basement, so he thinks Barlow may be in Eva's cellar. They call Eva's, but nobody answers, which is extremely odd since there are nine boarders who live there.

Jimmy and Ben go to Eva's boardinghouse. The place is quiet, the shades are drawn, and the house smells funny. Jimmy goes to the cellar door and he tries to turn on the light in the cellar, but the light is not working. While Mark goes to look for a flashlight, Jimmy falls into a booby trap and Mark hears him scream. The vampires have removed all of the stairs except the top two steps. With no light, the stairs look normal from the door. Jimmy has fallen down the stairs, landing on knives that the vampires pushed through plywood squares.

Mark gets in the car and drives it to the Petrie house to get Ben. This is difficult because he is twelve years old and he has never driven before. When he finds Ben, he explains what has happened, and they leave. Ben wants to consult with Matt before they go to Barlow, but when Ben calls the hospital, he finds out that Matt is dead from a heart attack. They find Parkins Gillespie and talk to him, perhaps hoping that he will join them. He knows what is going on, but he is leaving town. They realize they will have to kill Barlow on their own, but first they go to St. Andrews for holy water. They wash their hands and face with it. While they are there, they talk to Rhoda Curless, who urges them to hurry. Sundown is coming.



Ben and Mark go into the cellar of Eva's boardinghouse and move Jimmy's body and cover it up. They do not see Barlow yet, but Ben has a hunch, so they knock over a dresser and find the locked door to the root cellar behind it. Ben finds an axe, douses it with holy water, and uses it to hack through the door into the root cellar, where they find Barlow and several other vampires sleeping. The sun is almost down.

Ben and Mark drag Barlow's coffin into the main cellar and open it. Mark accidentally makes eye contact with the vampire, giving Barlow control of him. Mark attacks Ben, and Ben tries to ward him off, but Mark persists, so Ben punches Mark twice and Mark collapses. The sun is going down and Barlow begins to sit up in his coffin. At the last possible minute, Ben drives the stake through Barlow's heart. Barlow jerks around, the blood gushes from him, and his body eventually dissolves, leaving only his teeth behind.

The other vampires wake up and start to come out of the root cellar, but Mark and Ben escape the cellar by climbing up a board. When they get out, Mark faints, Ben puts him in the car, and they drive away. As they leave 'Salem's Lot, vampires walk the streets.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Ben's act of killing Susan is symbolic. She is his first love since his wife, who died in a motorcycle accident. Although he was not at fault for the accident, he feels like her death was his fault. Susan is already dead, and her death was not his fault, either, yet Ben feels reluctant to kill the vampire she has become, even though he logically knows that killing the vampire will actually set Susan free. Any of the men could kill the vampire Susan. By killing her, Ben is doing something that is extremely difficult and painful for him. Killing the vampire Susan gives him the motivation to stay in town and take revenge by killing Barlow.

As the chapter progresses, it shows that the vampire takeover of the town is beyond hope. Although Mark, Jimmy, Ben, Matt, and Callahan at first hope to be able to rid the town of vampires, it becomes clear after a while that there are simply too many of them. Once Callahan, Matt, and Jimmy are gone, Ben and Mark realize that the town cannot be saved and that they must concentrate only on killing Barlow.

At the end of the chapter, the glow of the holy water begins to fade as Ben's faith and strength begin to fade. This shows that Ben has shortcomings. He is not a superhero. He will not be able to stay and slay all of the vampires in one night. He has to leave. Mark, too, loses his nerve and wants to leave. Although he was earlier a strong, brave, cunning little boy, he has his limits. The deaths of Susan, Jimmy, and his parents finally work on his nerves and make it difficult for him to help Ben. Mark and Ben have limits, so leave town rather than stay to fight.

Ben's hands and axe glow and Father Callahan's cross glows because of their faith. Just like the cross that Jimmy and Ben make from tongue depressors, the holy water

and the crucifixes are only symbols of faith. Without faith, none of these symbols will have any effect on the vampires. The faith is what really drives the vampires away.





## Chapter 15

### Chapter 15 Summary

Twenty miles later, Mark wakes up for a moment, locks the car doors, and goes back to sleep. He and Ben spend the night in a hotel room. Meanwhile, in 'Salem's Lot, vampires continue to turn their friends and family members into vampires.

The next day, Ben stops on the way back to 'Salem's Lot and buys a pick and a spade. In his room at Eva's, he burns his book manuscript and breaks the paperweight he grabbed from the Marsten House when he was a boy. He goes into the cellar and brings Jimmy's body out and takes it to the Petrie house. He digs a grave out behind the house, puts the bodies of Jimmy and Mark's parents into the grave, fills the grave in, and leaves town.

### Chapter 15 Analysis

When Ben burns the manuscript and breaks the paperweight, he is breaking his connections to 'Salem's Lot. By burying the bodies, he is tying up what he believes are his own personal loose ends in town before leaving again. He wants to be able to leave everything behind him.



# Epilogue

## Epilogue Summary

Ben keeps a scrapbook of newspaper clippings about 'Salem's Lot. One article reports that a family who just bought a farm in 'Salem's Lot is leaving as they hear funny noises. Another article is about a car crash in 'Salem's Lot. The people who were in the car are all missing. A third article talks about a missing woman, and a fourth reports a man dying of unknown causes. An article dated May 20, 1976 talks about some mutilated sheep. A May article reports an entire family who has come up missing. Another article dated a few days later says that their neighbor is in the hospital from a heart attack after seeing a face grinning in through her window.

In September, Ben and Mark return to Maine and stay in a hotel for a few weeks. They drive to 'Salem's Lot, get out of the car, and walk through the woods for a while. When they stop, Ben tells Mark that this is where the big fire that destroyed half the town started back in 1951. He lights a cigarette and explains that a fire would chase some of the vampires out of their hiding places, making them easier for people to find. It has not rained in 'Salem's Lot for weeks, and the fire index is high, so Ben deliberately drops his cigarette into some dead brush, and it begins to burn. They watch it until it burns a little stronger, and then they leave.

## Epilogue Analysis

The newspaper clippings show that a year after Ben and Mark leave town, the vampires are still in 'Salem's Lot. That Ben and Mark stay in the hotel for weeks before starting the fire shows that they plan the fire very carefully. Ben starts a fire and hopes to be able to burn some of the vampires and get the rest of them to run away and make their presence obvious. This hints at an end to the story, but leaves the reader unsure of what will happen next.



# Characters

## Ben Mears

Ben is the main character. He is tall, black-haired, lanky, and agile-looking, with what the author describes as "finely-drawn features." He is a fairly popular and well-recognized writer, and he is used to giving out his autograph to his fans. He lives with his Aunt Cindy in 'Salem's Lot for four years as a child after his father dies and his mother has a nervous breakdown. While he is in 'Salem's Lot, a group of boys talks him into going into the Marsten House as part of his initiation into their group. Once inside the house, he encounters the ghost of Hubert Marsten, and this memory haunts him for many years. As a young adult, he is something of an activist and participates in peace marches and protests. Although he is not at fault in the motorcycle crash in which his wife, Miranda, dies in 1973, he still feels a little guilty because he was the one driving the motorcycle. Two years after his wife's death, he comes back to 'Salem's Lot in order to write a new novel and possibly to overcome some of his fears created in the past by his encounter with the ghost in the Marsten House.

At the end of the book, he ends up killing the main antagonist, the vampire Barlow. He also comes back a year later to burn the town and send the vampires out of hiding. Ben shows courage and leadership in his role as a vampire slayer in the book. Although he has no real ties to the town other than a new girlfriend whom he has only been dating for a couple of weeks, he chooses to stay in the town and fight the vampire rather than leave town. It is also interesting that he falls in love with Susan so quickly. Her presence in his life probably helps ease his loneliness and distracts him from the grief he still feels over Miranda.

## Mark Petrie

Mark Petrie is possibly the second most important protagonist in the story. He is skinny, graceful, delicate, and feminine-looking. He is a slightly small, light-skinned, twelve-year-old boy who comes from a well-educated, upper-middle-class family. He is well-cared-for. He is extremely intelligent for his age. He thinks clearly and has self-control. Except for a few skirmishes with bullies, he has few problems at school. He is very brave in the face of danger until the situation finally becomes completely overwhelming to him. He likes to play with his horror monster models and has no problem believing in vampires when he encounters them. Mark takes it upon himself to try to go alone to kill Barlow at first. He escapes from Straker on his own. Later, he teams up with Ben, Jimmy, and Father Callahan to form a team to hunt down Barlow. At the end of the story, Mark and Ben are alone together, and they come back to 'Salem's Lot to start a fire that they hope will drive the vampires out of the town.



## **Amy Rawcliffe**

Amy Rawcliffe is one of Susan Norton's childhood friends. She has a playhouse in which the girls sit and tell scary tales about the Marsten House.

## **Ann Norton**

Ann Norton is Susan Norton's mother. She is a medium-tall, moderately well-dressed, well-groomed woman. She and Susan argue quite a bit over Ben. Ann believes that Ben is not good for Susan and that Susan would be much better off with her old boyfriend, Floyd Tibbits.

## **Audie James**

Audie James is one of the vampires that Charlie Rhodes finds on his school bus in the middle of the night.

## **Audrey Hersey**

Audrey Hersey is an elderly woman and a local gossip.

## **Agent Hanrahan**

Agent Hanrahan is the FBI agent who gets information on Ben Mears, Richard Straker, and Kurt Barlow for Parkins Gillespie.

## **Babs Griffen**

Babs Griffen is the sister of Jack Griffen and Hal Griffen. She is a hairdresser, and Susan goes to her to get her hair fixed for her date with Ben.

## **Bannock**

Bannock is the vampire who kills the girl at whose funeral Father Bissonette attends.

## **Bill Norton**

Bill Norton is Susan Norton's father and 'Salem's Lot's first selectman. He is large, black-haired, and muscular. He likes to watch sports on television. He is not anti-intellectual, but he dislikes artistic men. He does not consider Ben to be the artistic type.



Unlike Susan's mother, Bill likes Ben and invites him over on more than one occasion to eat, talk, and hang out.

## **Birdie Marsten**

Birdie Marsten is Hubert Marsten's wife. She begs him to kill her, and he does so before killing himself.

## **Bonnie Sawyer**

Bonnie Sawyer is the knockout wife of Reggie Sawyer. She has been Miss Cumberland County 1973. She is having an affair with Corey Bryant.

## **Brent Norbert**

Brent Norbert, an amateur geologist, is the assistant medical examiner who comes to examine Mike Ryerson's corpse at Matt's house after Mike dies.

## **Brent Tenney**

Brent Tenney is one of the children that Charlie Rhodes kicks off from the bus. As a vampire, he and a group of other kids take over the school bus, and Charlie finds them there in the middle of the night.

## **Buddy Bascomb and Bob Greenberg**

Buddy Bascomb and Bob Greenberg are the employees at the county morgue who realize that the bodies of Floyd Tibbits and Randy McDougall are missing.

## **Carl Foreman**

Carl Foreman is the town's undertaker.

## **Charles Belknap Tanner**

Charles Belknap Tanner is the owner of the pig, Jerusalem, after which Jerusalem's Lot has been named.



## **Charles Griffen**

Charles Griffen is the father of Babs, Hal, and Jack Griffen. He is a dairy farmer who believes that education is important but that knowing people is the secret of running a successful business.

## **Charles**

Charles "Sonny" James, a small man with a crew cut and a receding hairline, owns an Exxon gas station on Jointner Avenue. As a child, he is part of the group of boys that sends Ben into the Marsten House.

## **Charlie Rhodes**

Charlie Rhodes is an unreasonably strict and not well-liked bus driver.

## **Clyde Corliss**

Clyde Corliss is one of the local men who are at the agricultural store when Straker comes in to buy groceries. He likes to argue with Vinnie Upshaw.

## **Corey Bryant**

Corey Bryant is a 22-year-old man who works for the phone company. He is having an affair with Reggie Sawyer's wife. He wants her, yet he is afraid her husband will catch them. Once Reggie Sawyer catches Corey and tells him to leave town, Corey gets revenge by coming back as a vampire and going to Bonnie right in front of Reggie.

## **Coretta Simons**

Coretta Simons takes no part in the action of the story. The narrator mentions her in passing as a widow who is dying of intestinal cancer. She has hidden thirty thousand dollars cash behind the wallpaper of her home.

## **Cynthia Stowens**

Cynthia Stowens is Ben's Aunt Cindy. She takes care of him after his father dies and his mother has a nervous breakdown when he is young.



## **Daniel Holloway and His Family**

Daniel Holloway and his family come up missing during the year following the day that Ben and Mark leave 'Salem's Lot.

## **Danny Glick**

Danny Glick is a 12-year-old child and friend of Mark Petrie. He is probably the second person in 'Salem's Lot to die because of Barlow, and he is probably the first vampire that Barlow makes in that town. He is Ralphie Glick's older brother.

## **David Evans and His Family**

David Evans and his family live next door to the McDougall family. After visiting the McDougalls, Jimmy and Mark go next door to the Evans house and find that David Evans, his wife, and their children are vampires, and that they are asleep, hiding from the daylight, just like the McDougalls.

## **Davie Barclay**

Davie Barclay is one of Ben's childhood friends. He comes up with the idea of sending Ben into the Marsten House as part of Ben's initiation.

## **Delbert**

Delbert "Dell" Markey, "a hawklike man with his hair greased back," is the owner and bartender of the tavern where Ben meets Matt.

## **Derek Boddin**

Derek Boddin is Richie Boddin's father and Franklin Boddin's brother.

## **Dr. G. M. Gorby**

Dr. G. M. Gorby is in charge of Danny Glick's care after he collapses.

## **Dud Rogers**

Dud Rogers is the strong, hunch-backed custodian at the dump. He enjoys his job and finds it very profitable. He likes to start fires and shoot the rats as they come out of the garbage.



## **Ed**

Ed "Weasel" Craig used to be Eva's lover. He now lives in her boardinghouse and helps her do chores. He is a 67-year-old alcoholic.

## **Elaine Tremont**

Elaine Tremont has a heart attack after she sees the face of a vampire grinning in through her window.

## **Elias Jointner**

Elias Jointner is the man after whom Jointner Avenue is named.

## **Elsie Purinton**

Elsie Purinton is Win's hateful, inconsiderate wife who falls down the cellar stairs, breaks her neck, and dies in 1973.

## **Eva Miller**

Eva Miller is a widow and the owner of the boardinghouse where Ben, Weasel, and about eight other men reside. She is a large woman. She works hard to keep the boardinghouse spotless. She is a decent woman who will not put up with any hanky-panky in her boardinghouse. She does not allow the boarders to have unrelated women in their rooms. She has previously had a very discreet physical relationship with Weasel Craig, but now they have a friendship and an understanding that he will help her do chores in exchange for reduced room and board.

## **Father Donald Callahan**

Father Donald Callahan is the 53-year-old parish priest of St. Andrew's Catholic Church. He has silver hair, blue eyes, a slightly cleft chin, a firm mouth, and laugh lines on his face and around his eyes. He is a handsome man with a rich, rolling voice. He is a good man, but he describes himself as being a lousy priest as he gets drunk a lot. He tries to hide his drinking problem, but many people see it, including his housekeeper, Rhoda Curless. He becoming slightly pessimistic, as he is tired of hearing about the petty, moderately evil acts that his parishioners tell him about in the confessional. He has the desire to comment on society's shortcomings, but he sees no place for that in his profession. Nevertheless, he would like to battle true evil, and he makes a strong ally to Matt, Ben, Mark, and Jimmy for a while. Father Callahan battles Barlow one-on-one, allowing Mark to go free. Callahan's faith is not strong enough, though, and Barlow





wins, forcing Callahan to drink Barlow's blood, marking him and making him unclean. Callahan leaves town on a bus.

## **Father Gracon**

Father Gracon is the village priest in Los Zapatos to whom Mark Petrie confesses everything that he has done in 'Salem's Lot, including his encounters with vampires. Father Gracon is open-minded about the vampires and has heard of similar things before. He is concerned about Mark and Ben and offers to pray for them.

## **Father Raymond Bissonette**

Father Raymond Bissonette is Father Callahan's friend. Although he does not appear directly in the story, Father Callahan refers to him as the priest who told him a story about presiding over the funeral of a girl who was killed by an incubus.

## **Fiona Coggins**

Fiona Coggins is a shut-in and a widow who comes up missing after Ben and Mark leave 'Salem's Lot.

## **Floyd Tibbits**

Floyd Tibbits is Susan's boyfriend for a year and a half before Ben comes to town. He is a hometown boy and a moderately seriously-minded executive at the Falmouth Grant's. He is also one member of the group of boys who send Ben into the Marsten House as a child. He feels angry that Ben has taken Susan from him. Although he is not naturally a violent person, Floyd is under the influence of a vampire. He attacks Ben at Ben's car, putting Ben in the hospital.

## **Francis Walsh**

Francis Walsh is Larry Crockett's lawyer in Boston. Larry thinks that his association with Walsh is a secret, but Straker somehow knows about it.

## **Franklin Boddin and Virgil Rathburn**

Franklin Boddin and Virgil Rathburn are the two forgettable drunken men who go to the dump, find it closed, and drive right over the gate. They go to Dud's shack to investigate and find it locked from the inside, yet they do not report anything wrong to the authorities. Franklin is Richie Boddin's uncle.



## **George Boyer**

George Boyer works the three-to-eleven shift at the Gate mill.

## **George Middler**

George Middler owns the hardware store. He is secretly a cross-dresser.

## **Glynis Mayberry**

Glynis Mayberry is one of the women that Mabel Werts eavesdrops on over the phone. She is married to Paul Mayberry. She is an elderly woman.

## **Grover Verrill**

Grover Verrill is probably one of the nine boarders at Eva's boardinghouse.

## **Gordon Phillips and His Family**

Gordon Phillips and his family get into a car crash while driving through 'Salem's Lot. They come up missing.

## **Hal Griffen**

Hal Griffen is eighteen-years-old and does work for his dad milking cows on their farm while he finishes high school. He is a sullen, not-bright boy who hates school and wants to quit despite his father's wishes. When Hal becomes a vampire, Charlie Rhodes finds him sitting in Charlie's school bus in the middle of the night with a group of kids.

## **Hank Peters**

Hank Peters, who once fought in Vietnam and was dishonorably discharged, goes with Royal Snow to deliver boxes to the former laundromat and the basement of the Marsten House. He sees Ralphie Glick's clothes in the basement and asks Larry Crockett whether he should tell the police about it. He later has nightmares about it. Hank Peters has in the past had some sort of association, possibly an affair, with Jackie, the server at Dell's.



## Harold Rauberson

Harold Rauberson is one member of the group of boys that sends Ben into the Marsten House as a child. He dies of leukemia.

## Henry Petrie

Henry Petrie, Mark Petrie's father, is an ambitious, confident Prudential Insurance Company executive who hopes to hold a high post in the federal government within a few years. He is well-educated and a good father. He is too smart for his own good, however. He is so logical that he refuses to believe in vampires, even in the face of overwhelming evidence of their existence. As Mark's parents refuse to believe in vampires, they are unable to prepare to fight Barlow, and Barlow overcomes and kills them easily.

## Herbert-or-Harold

Herbert-or-Harold is the visitor who drops in at Matt's hospital room and visits him just before Matt dies from a heart attack. He is an old student of Matt's.

## Homer McCaslin

Homer McCaslin is the county sheriff. He is a tall, balding, intelligent man who chews tobacco. He knows that Ben and Jimmy are lying about what happened to Mrs. Glick's body, but he lets them go as he thinks that they look afraid and that they are not lying, because they have done anything wrong. He later goes out to Susan's parents' house to investigate Susan's disappearance. He is overcome by Susan and another vampire while investigating Susan's car beside the road.

## Horris

Horris is an elderly man with whom Father Callahan speaks. Father Callahan believes that Horris is psychotic, and that the psychosis is due to Horris's illness.

## Hubert

Hubert Marsten lives from 1889 to 1939. He is an evil man, a devil-worshipper, a mobster, a bootlegger, and a hit man who uses his position as the president of a large New England trucking company as a cover-up for his dirty deeds. He lives as a hermit in the Marsten House with his wife, Birdie. Four children come up missing from 'Salem's Lot while Hubert lives in the Marsten house. Hubert is so evil that his evil lives on in the house after he dies.



## **Irwin**

Irwin "Win" Purinton is a 61-year-old milkman. He delivers milk and other groceries to the residents of 'Salem's Lot early in the morning. He is a little sour, possibly due to living for years with an inconsiderate, angry wife.

## **Jack Griffen**

Jack Griffen is sixteen-years-old. He is the brother of Hal Griffen. Like Hal, he does work on their father's farm. He is a bookworm and his father's favorite child. When Jack becomes a vampire, Charlie Rhodes finds him and his brother Hal sitting in Charlie's school bus in the middle of the night with a group of kids.

## **Jackie**

Jackie is the server at Dell's who waits on Ben, Weasel, and Matt.

## **Jackson Hersey**

Jackson Hersey is Audrey Hersey's eldest brother. He finds dollar bills taped to the pages of one of Hubert Marsten's Saturday Evening Post magazines.

## **Jerusalem**

Jerusalem is the pig for which Jerusalem's Lot was named.

## **Jesus de la rey Munoz**

Jesus de la rey Munoz wears a city suit and wears his hair parted in the middle and greased back. He is the person who acts as an interpreter when Father Gracon wants to talk to Ben.

## **James**

Jimmy Cody is Matt's doctor. Ben describes him as, "a little heller then, a good doctor now." He is the typical good doctor and is very professional, yet friendly, in caring for Matt and Ben. He becomes a major member of the group of allies who attempt to stamp out the vampires. He and Ben sit up with Mrs. Glick's body when Mrs. Glick rises and becomes a vampire. He later dies by falling into a booby trap set up by the vampires.



## Joe Crane

Joe Crane is at Milt Crossen's Agricultural Store when Straker comes in to buy groceries. He has a heart attack and dies on October 6, making him the only person in town to die a natural death that day.

## John Farrington

John Farrington is an elderly farmer who dies of unknown causes during the year after which Ben and Mark leave 'Salem's Lot.

## Kurt Barlow

Kurt Barlow is the main antagonist in the story. He is the head vampire. He literally smells evil. He has a black moustache, deep eyes, high cheekbones, a bony forehead, and dark hair that he combs straight back. He has the appearance of a middle-aged man, but he is thousands of years old, as he claims to have been around since long before the dawn of the Catholic Church. He is extremely intelligent and he always seems to be thinking one step ahead of the group of people who is trying to destroy him and save the town. He is quite arrogant and he has a group of following vampires who are happy to do his bidding, probably more because of his ability to control their minds than out of true loyalty. The exception is Straker, who tells Mark that Barlow has the capacity for kindness. Barlow pretends to be pleasant, friendly, and gracious, but he has an awful temper. Barlow corresponds in letters with Hubert Marsten for twelve years before Hubert commits suicide.

## Lawrence

Lawrence "Larry" Crockett, a local real estate agent, is 'Salem's Lot's second selectman and the richest man in 'Salem's Lot, although some of the upper-class members of the town regard him as being nearly shiftless. He is responsible for having started the trailer section of the town. He sells the laundromat and the Marsten House to Straker and Barlow. He later bribes Hank Peters to keep him from telling the cops about seeing Ralphie Glick's clothes in the basement. This shows that he is morally corrupt in certain ways and is willing to do immoral things to make or keep money. He is married and the father of Ruthie Crockett.

## Larry McLeod

Larry McLeod is the mail carrier who discovers Hubert Marsten and his wife Birdie dead in the Marsten House.



## Lester and Harriet Durham

Lester and Harriet Durham both work at Gates Mill and Weaving. They take no active part in the story, but they are mentioned in passing.

## Lord of Flies

Lord of Flies is the mysterious evil entity to which Straker sacrifices Ralphie Glick and is the same entity to which Hubert Marsten may have previously sacrificed four children back in the 1930s. Lord of Flies is probably Satan or a demon and may be a source of strength for evil men such as Hubert Marsten and Barlow.

## Loretta Starcher

Loretta Starcher is the librarian in 'Salem's Lot. She is an unmarried woman. She has a fondness for Matt and agrees to open the library for him on Sunday and brings the books that he asks for directly to his hospital room.

## Mabel Werts

Mabel Werts, the town gossip, is a widow. She is a very fat 74-year-old woman who likes to watch what is going on with her binoculars and listen in on phone conversations on the party line. She is active at the church and frequently takes part in social functions.

## Marjorie Glick

Marjorie Glick is Danny and Ralphie Glick's mother. She is naturally distraught over the loss of her sons. She faints at Danny's funeral. She later becomes the vampire who bites Jimmy Cody before Ben drives her away with a cross made of tongue depressors.

## The Pritchett Family

The Pritchett family buys Charles Griffen's farm after he leaves 'Salem's Lot, but they soon move out.

## Mary Kate Griegson

Mary Kate Griegson is one of the children that Charlie Rhodes throws off from the bus. Later, when she is a vampire, he finds her sitting on his school bus in the middle of the night with a group of other kids.



## **Matt Burke**

Matt Burke is a competent, kindly, dedicated high school English teacher who is not loved or revered by his students. He has been teaching for over thirty years. He is a 63-year-old man, near retirement. For an older man, he is a little spunky. He likes rock and roll. He is wise and witty and he believes that nobody truly ever gets ahead of the game of life. He has an intelligent, dreamy face. Ben thinks Matt has "the figure of an aging track coach." Matt owns a small house on Taggart Stream Road. He keeps it very clean and is a gracious host, but he has few guests. He is a solitary man who has never married and who has only one family member, a brother with whom he almost never talks. He becomes the leader of the group of protagonists who will try to hunt down and kill the other vampires, especially Barlow. His particular role is to research vampire lore and tell the group what they can do to ward off the vampires. He helps them plan how to hunt down and kill the vampires. He ends up dying in the hospital of a heart attack before the group gets to Barlow.

## **Maury Green**

Maury Green is a small Jewish man who owns the mortuary where Mrs. Glick's body has been taken. He is an old friend of Jimmy's, and Jimmy once saved his son's life. He allows Jimmy and Ben to sit up with Mrs. Glick's body.

## **Milt Crossen**

Milt Crossen is an elderly man and long-time town resident. He owns the agricultural store from which Straker buys some groceries.

## **Miranda**

Miranda, Ben's wife, dies in a motorcycle accident.

## **Michael**

Mike Ryerson takes care of the three cemeteries in 'Salem's Lot. He finds Doc's corpse hanging from the cemetery gate. He later feels like he is sick and goes to stay with Matt Burke in the guest room, but the vampire who has been feeding off from him finds him there and kills him during the night. Mike later returns to Matt's home as a vampire, only to be driven away.

## **Mike Philbrook**

Mike Philbrook is one of the vampires that Charlie Rhodes finds on his school bus in the middle of the night.



## **Minella Corey**

Minella Corey is Birdie Marsten's 79-year-old, senile sister. She gives Ben information on Hubert Marsten and tells him that Hubert was one of the two most evil people that she has ever heard of, the other most evil man being Adolph Hitler. She has a paranormal experience the day that her sister dies that allows her to sense her sister's death.

## **Miss Coogan**

Miss Coogan, a tall, skinny woman with blue-rinsed hair who works at Spencer's drugstore, sells Father Callahan his bus ticket. His appearance frightens her, though, and she insists that he wait outside for the bus.

## **Mr. Labree**

Mr. Labree is the pharmacist at Spencer's.

## **Nolly Gardener**

Nolly Gardener is the local deputy and proud of it. He is a good person, friendly and slow to anger, but not very bright. He is a big man who sweats easily. He is a decent bowler and a weekend barhopper. He would like to have Parkins Gillespie's job.

## **Norris Varney**

Norris Varney is constable at the time that Hubert and Birdie Marsten are found dead in the Marsten House.

## **Pat Middler**

Pat Middler is one of the men who are hanging out at the agricultural store when Straker comes to buy supplies.

## **Patterson**

Patterson is the crazy leader of the local Mormon Church.





## **Pauline Dickens**

Paula Dickens, a server who is part-owner of the Excellent Café, is the Glick family's neighbor. She informs Ben and Jimmy that Mrs. Glick is dead. She seems to have an idea of what may have really happened to Mrs. Glick, although she does not say so.

## **Parkins Gillespie**

Parkins is the town's slightly gruff Pall Mall-smoking constable. He investigates Ben, Straker, and Barlow after Ralphie Glick disappears. When he figures out that Barlow is a vampire, he decides to leave town instead of staying to fight.

## **Pete Cook**

Pete Cook works at Sonny's gas station part-time.

## **Ralphie Glick**

Ralphie Glick is Danny Glick's younger brother. He is the first person to die as a result of Barlow coming to 'Salem's Lot. Straker uses Ralphie as a sacrifice to "Lord of Flies."

## **Ralph Miller**

Ralph Miller is Eva Miller's husband. He is in line to take over the presidency of the sawmill before his death in a sawmill accident in 1959. During the fire of 1951, he organizes the employees into a fire-fighting force and manages to save the sawmill.

## **Randy McDougall**

Randy McDougall is Sandy McDougall's ten-month-old baby. He is a sickly, developmentally slow baby who frequently shows bruises from his mother's abuse. He is so used to abuse that he becomes complacent quickly.

## **Reggie Sawyer**

Reggie Sawyer finds his wife having an affair with Corey Bryant. To punish Corey, he puts a double-barrel shotgun into Corey's mouth and pulls the trigger, making Corey faint. To punish his wife, he beats her and repeatedly rapes her. He finds his rifle has no effect on Corey once Corey becomes a vampire.



## Reverend John Groggins

Reverend John Groggins is the hypocritical Methodist minister whom Matt thinks is "the asshole of the Western world."

## Rhoda Curless

Rhoda Curless is Father Callahan's housekeeper, and she is worried about him. She does not understand exactly what is going on, but she knows that Father Callahan is a good man despite his drinking problem and suspects that he is fixing what "ails this town." She urges the allies to hurry up with the mission.

## Richard Throckett Straker

Richard Throckett Straker is Barlow's tall, suit-wearing servant and his business partner. There are rumors that he is also Barlow's lover. He is a human, not a vampire, but he is an evil man. People describe him as being an older man, outwardly courtly, gracious, helpful, charming, and sexually attractive. He is also described as being "a dandy dresser, extremely graceful, and totally bald." Not everyone is fooled by his charms, though. Many people can feel the coldness underneath his smile. He catches Susan and Mark at the Marsten house, and he places Susan in the basement with Barlow while he ties up Mark and leaves him upstairs. He is Barlow's familiar and takes care of things for Barlow that Barlow cannot take care of, such as interacting with other human beings and doing things in broad daylight. He sets up the furniture business for Barlow as a cover story for being in 'Salem's Lot. Matt describes him as Barlow's "human watchdog and bodyguard."

## Richie Boddin

Richie Boddin is the 11-year-old, 140-pound bully who tries to beat Mark Petrie up. He is one of the vampires that Charlie Rhodes finds in his bus.

## Royce

Royce "Roy" McDougall works at the mill and spends his evenings drinking and playing poker with his friends from the gas station. He is far in debt. He is the husband of Sandy McDougall and the father of Randy McDougall. He may be a decent person, but he seems to ignore evidence of the way that Sandy abuses their baby, Randy.

## Royal Snow

Royal Snow is the local garbage man. He and Hank Peters deliver boxes to the former laundromat and deliver the box containing Barlow's coffin and body to the basement of



the Marsten House. He later helps Mike Ryerson dig Danny Glick's grave, but he does not show up later to help Mike fill in the grave.

## Ruthie Crockett

Ruthie Crockett is Larry Crockett's daughter. She is one of Matt's students. She wears sexy, tight clothes, and apparently she wears no bra underneath her sweater. She talks with a little-girl lisp. Many of the men desire her.

## Sandy McDougall

Sandy McDougall is a 17-year-old mother who lives in a trailer with her husband of one year and her ten-month-old son. She is thin, but she is not pretty. Although she once expected good things to come from her marriage, she has had to drop out of high school and give up her dreams of becoming a model in order to take care of her son. She is angry about the way her life has turned out, and she beats her baby. She does not take good care of her home, her son, or her husband.

## Sheldon Corson

Sheldon Corson helps Weasel drag Floyd off from Ben when Floyd attacks Ben. Sheldon is probably one of the boarders at Eva's boardinghouse.

## Susan Norton

Susan Norton becomes Ben's girlfriend in the book. She stops dating Floyd Tibbits in order to date Ben, and she and Ben fall in love quickly. She is a very pretty girl with light blonde hair. She has a bachelor's degree in art and is on the verge of moving out of her parents' house. She is intelligent, but she is not particularly ambitious, and when she runs into the 12-year-old Mark Petrie outside of the Marsten House, she allows him to take the lead in the adventure that will quickly lead to her death. She is a sensible person who finds it difficult to believe in vampires.

## Tommy Rathburn

Tommy Rathburn is Virgil Rathburn's brother. He is drunk and accidentally staggers off from the edge of what is later called Drunk's Leap.

## Tony Glick

Tony Glick is Danny Glick's father. He has a nervous breakdown during Danny's funeral, begging Danny's corpse to quit pretending that he is dead.



## **Vinnie Upshaw**

Vinnie Upshaw is one of the boarders at Eva's boardinghouse. He likes to hang out at the Milt Crossen's Agricultural Store and argue with Clyde Corliss. He is there when Straker comes in to buy groceries.

## **Win's Dog Doc**

Win's dog Doc is a half-cocker mongrel. Mike Ryerson finds his corpse hanging from the cemetery gate. Straker kills Doc as Doc has white patches over his eyes that make him useful in frightening away vampires.



# Objects/Places

## The Marsten House

The Marsten House sits on top of a hill. From the Marsten House, one has a view of much of what goes on in the town. The Marsten House was once occupied by Hubert and Birdie Marsten, thus its name. Hubert kills Birdie and then himself in 1939, and the mail carrier finds Hubert and Birdie dead in the house. From that time until roughly the beginning of the story in 1975, nobody inhabits the house.

It is probable that upon or before Hubert Marsten's death, he manages to infuse his evil into the house so that it lives on after him. People avoid the house. It makes the members of the town feel creepy. Hank Peters and Royal Snow, for example, can feel the evil of the house and quite sensibly but illogically are afraid to go inside to deliver a package to the basement. Children make up stories about the house and dare each other to go inside the house.

As a nine-year-old, Ben's friends dare him to go into the house as an initiation into their group. Ben accepts the dare and goes in, but he sees the ghost of Hubert Marsten and he runs back outside. This event affects him so deeply that he goes back to the town as an adult to try to rent the house and write a book there. The first time that Ben sees the Marsten House when he comes back to 'Salem's Lot, his skin breaks out in goose bumps. The house later becomes Barlow's home until he is forced to leave by Mark, Ben, Jimmy, and Father Callahan, who go there to destroy him. Even after Ben kills Barlow, the vampires apparently turn the house into a sort of headquarters, as evidenced by the path they have beaten to it through the grass.

## The Tongue Depressor Cross

When Jimmy and Ben sit up with the corpse of Mrs. Glick, they decide they need something to defend themselves with in case Mrs. Glick rises. It is almost sundown, and they do not have much time, so they make a cross out of tongue depressors bound together with Red Cross tape. Jimmy has Ben bless the cross with a prayer. The cross works when Ben uses it. It drives away the vampire. It works as Ben has faith in it. It symbolizes Ben's faith.

## Ben's Paperweight

When Ben is nine-years-old, he goes into the Marsten House and grabs an item to take back outside with him to show the other boys to prove that he was in the house. The item he grabs is a paperweight. It is a snow globe with "a little gingerbread house with a path leading up to it" inside. When he shakes the globe, it looks like it is snowing inside. After Ben and Mark destroy Barlow, Ben goes back to his room at the boardinghouse



the next day. He sees the snow globe, throws it and breaks it. The snow globe symbolizes his connection to the Marsten House.

## **Barlow's Letter to Mark, Ben, Jimmy, and Father Callahan**

When Mark, Ben, Jimmy, and Father Callahan go to the Marsten House to kill Barlow, he is not there. He has left a note for them. It is a rich vellum sheet in a matching rich yellow vellum envelope. Barlow has written it with his own hand. His handwriting is described as being "an elegant, spider-thin hand." He addresses the group as "My Dear Young Friends." He uses cordial, polite language throughout the letter, speaking to them as if they are guests. Barlow addresses Ben directly in the letter and tells Ben that he has left the vampire Susan there in the basement for Ben to destroy. Barlow then speaks directly to Mark in the letter, telling him that he caused him to kill Straker. Barlow wants revenge for having lost his faithful servant, and he writes that he will destroy Mark's parents and then kill Mark. Barlow writes to Father Callahan, telling him that Father Callahan will end up undoing himself. Near the end of the letter, he addresses all four of them once again by name. He has even anticipated that Jimmy Cody would be there.

## **The Big Box**

Hank Peters and Royal Snow notice that the big box that they are to deliver to the basement of the Marsten House is strange. It does not have any of the usual customs stamps, it is heavy, and it has an evil aura that makes Hank and Royal feel uneasy and fearful and takes the heart out of them. They deliver the box to the basement and leave, but they make the delivery reluctantly and in a big hurry. The story does not explicitly say what the box contains, but it is obvious that Barlow and his coffin are inside the box.

## **Mike Ryerson's High School Ring**

After Matt chases the vampire Mike Ryerson out the window, Matt has a heart attack. Susan runs upstairs to check on him. She goes into the guest room to get a blanket for him. There, on the floor of the guest room, she sees Mike Ryerson's high school ring glittering on the floor. It is a Cumberland Consolidated High School class ring, engraved with the initials M.C.R., which stand for Michael Corey Ryerson. Hearing the vampire call out, "I will see you sleep like the dead, teacher," and finding the ring make her begin to suspect that there may be real vampires.

## **The Blue Chalk**

When Father Callahan and Mark Petrie encounter Barlow at Mark's house, Barlow grabs Mark and threatens to kill him unless Father Callahan drops his crucifix. While



Barlow is holding Mark, Mark notices small smears of blue chalk on two of Barlow's fingers. Later, when Mark, Jimmy, Matt, and Ben are trying to figure out where Barlow is hiding, Mark mentions the blue chalk. At first, they think that the blue chalk is school chalk and that Barlow is hiding in a school. After Jimmy sees a toy pool table in the home of a vampire family, however, he realizes that the blue chalk is probably from a pool table. Jimmy and Mark remember that there is a pool table in the cellar of Eva's boardinghouse and realize that Barlow is hiding there. The blue chalk is the clue that allows Jimmy and Mark to find Barlow and allows Ben to destroy Barlow in the end.

## **The Steel Cot Leg**

After Mark Petrie unbinds himself from the ropes that Straker has tied him up with, Mark unscrews a steel leg from a cot and uses it as a weapon against Straker. He hits Straker in the head with the cot leg twice, knocking Straker to the floor. When Straker grabs Mark's ankle, Mark smashes Straker's hand with it, beating his hand until Straker finally releases him. Mark is only twelve years old, so he needs a weapon to overpower a fully-grown man. The steel cot leg is a crude weapon, but it works. The steel cot leg symbolizes Mark's ability to survive using little other than his wits.

## **The Roses**

When Mark, Jimmy, Ben, and Father Callahan prepare to hunt down the vampires, they go to a flower store, the Northern Belle Flower Shop, searching for roses to use to repel the vampires. When they get there, the person who works there tells them that a man who matches Straker's description has already bought all of the roses. Mark, Jimmy, Ben, and Father Callahan know that Straker did this to keep them from having the roses as a defensive weapon. Straker and Barlow have obviously anticipated that people would want to use the roses to ward off vampires. The lack of the roses symbolizes Barlow's cunning and his ability to stay one step ahead of his enemies.

## **Ben's Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings**

The newspaper clippings in Ben's scrapbook are all about 'Salem's Lot. They tell of odd happenings that are taking place in 'Salem's Lot. Although each one investigated alone by a person from outside the town may look simply like an unconnected event, every event is almost certainly due to the work of a vampire. Ben is keeping the scrapbook to help him keep track of the vampires of 'Salem's Lot while he is not there to find out whether they are gaining strength, dieing out, or being found out.

## **The Cigarette That Ben Drops**

In the epilogue at the very end of the book, Ben and Mark go back to 'Salem's Lot and stand in the approximate spot where a fire once started that burned down half of the town. Ben takes out a Pall Mall cigarette and lights it with a match. Ben has not had a



cigarette for months. He smokes this cigarette for a special purpose. There has not been any rain here for weeks, and the grass and plants are all dry. Ben drops the cigarette and leaves it to start a fire. After he and Mark watch the fire and make sure it has caught, they leave. They have started this fire hoping that it will burn the town again. They hope that it will burn some of the vampires and will send the rest of them on the run, making them hide badly so that they will be easy for people to find and kill. The cigarette symbolizes Ben's final act in destroying the vampires.





# Themes

## Belief

Throughout the book, the theme of belief comes into play. Belief protects certain characters. It leads others to their destruction. For the most part, the characters that believe most readily in the existence of the vampires and in the power of traditional remedies to ward them off are the ones who survive the longest.

Mark Petrie is the most obvious example. Mark has a set of horror monster models that he enjoys playing with. He knows quite a bit about monsters from watching horror movies. He knows about the most popular ways to ward off vampires. When Danny Glick and Susan Norton each separately come to Mark's bedroom window, he knows that the vampires can only come into his house if someone invites them in. Unlike the adults, when the vampire Danny Glick attempts to control his mind, Mark knows what is happening and he attempts to fight it. When Danny actually does come into the house, Mark easily drives him away by using a cross. If Mark were older, he probably would not believe in vampires so easily. Without believing in vampires, he would stop to think about what is happening. He would hesitate before using the cross. He would not realize that the vampire was controlling his mind, because that would be illogical. He would probably think that Danny Glick was hanging outside of his window by some sort of trick and he would probably let him in because they are, after all, friends. Mark is twelve years old, so he automatically thinks of vampires when he sees vampires, and he is able to believe that they are actually vampires.

Other characters who readily believe in vampires without needing much persuasion are Ben, Father Callahan, and Matt. Ben and Father Callahan both survive the story. Although Matt dies, he does so as the result of a heart attack rather than as the result of being killed by a vampire. These characters are adults, though. Why do they believe in vampires so easily? Ben believes because he has seen a ghost as a child and has experienced the evil of the Marsten House before. Father Callahan believes simply because he is a priest and it is, as he says, his job to deal with the supernatural. Matt is a schoolteacher, so one would think that he would be more logical and it would be difficult for him to believe. Perhaps this logic saves him. He sees the odd things that are happening and he evaluates them and follows them to their logical conclusion. He teaches English, too, so perhaps his familiarity with and fondness for drama makes him more susceptible to believing in vampires.

Susan, on the other hand, is presented with overwhelming evidence of the existence of vampires, yet she does not believe. Even when she goes to the Marsten House and she stands outside with a stake and a crucifix, when Mark tells her a vampire visited him, she still does not believe at first. Her hesitation to believe and accept what is happening is probably what allows her to stay in the cellar of the Marsten House in the dark in fear without trying to escape, and this ultimately leads to her death.



## Faith

Faith gives protection from the vampires. Mark Petrie uses a cross with full faith that it will work because he has seen it work in movies and he believes. His faith in the power of the cross allows him to use the cross to drive away the vampire Danny Glick. When Ben Mears and Jimmy Cody make a cross from simple tongue depressors, their faith in the power of that cross turns the tongue depressors into a weapon that drives away the vampire. Near the end of the book, when Ben and Mark splash themselves with holy water, the holy water drives away the vampires and gives Ben unusual strength because Ben and Mark have faith that the holy water will work. The holy water that Ben puts on the axe strengthens the axe, too, making it work unusually well. There is nothing special about the crosses, the tongue depressors, or the water, other than that people have faith in their ability to work. The faith channels through these things to drive back the vampires. Faith and evil cannot exist in the same place.

On the other hand, when Father Callahan holds up his cross, it only drives back Barlow until Father Callahan is afraid to put down the cross and battle Barlow without it. When Father Callahan hesitates, he is showing that he is not sure that his faith is enough to drive away Barlow. As soon as he falters, then the glow of the cross goes out and Barlow is able to take the cross from him. Doubting the strength of the power of his own faith is enough to reduce his faith, and that allows Barlow to win against him. The cross only symbolizes faith. It is not faith and has no real power without faith.

## Evil

Evil is pervasive in 'Salem's Lot. One character says that Hubert Marsten and Hitler are the two most evil people she knows of. None of the characters knows exactly what happened to Hubert Marsten, why he killed himself and his wife, why he booby-trapped the house, or why four children came up missing while he lived in that house. Hubert Marsten, however, was a contract killer who participated in many murders.

The Marsten House seems to have absorbed the evil from Hubert Marsten. The evil of the house is so thick that children instinctively fear the house for many years after Hubert and Birdie Marsten are gone. Although nobody lives in the house and Barlow is not even in the house, Hank Peters and Royal Snow are terrified of it. For no logical reason, they do not want to go inside. When they leave, they are shaken up for hours, and Hank has nightmares. Perhaps the only good explanation for this is that the house itself is evil.

The vampires seem to exude a similar evil aura. People can feel the evil of the vampires even when they do not know that the vampires are near. The evil feeling leaves them cautious and fearful. Father Callahan understands this evil perhaps better than the other people do. To him, it is Evil with a capital "E" rather than the ordinary, everyday evil of a mother beating her child.



Perhaps the evil residing in the Marsten House allows the nine-year-old child Ben Mears to see Hubert Marsten's ghost. Perhaps this evil attracts the vampire Barlow to the house, or at least allows Barlow to exist comfortably there. Barlow's association with the evil human Straker eases Barlow's entry into 'Salem's Lot. The most evil character, however, is "Lord of Flies." This character may be a demon or may even be Satan, himself. Straker's sacrifice of Ralphie Glick to "Lord of Flies" seems to prepare 'Salem's Lot so that Barlow may reside there and so that Straker may "do his work." Perhaps Hubert Marsten sacrificed four children to this same "Lord of Flies."

# Style

## Point of View

Throughout the book, the author tells the story from the third person point of view. The scope of the narrator varies, however, as does the narrator's familiarity with the characters. In the main part of the book consisting of everything but the epilogue and the prologue, the narrator narrates what is happening in the lives of many of the people of 'Salem's Lot. Instead of following just one group of characters closely throughout the story, the narrator flits from one location to another or from one character to another, telling what is happening at that location or with that character at that particular time. The narrator is able to look into the minds of the characters and tell the reader what the characters are thinking.

Although the narrator looks into many minds this way, the narrator does not use this technique to reveal what the main antagonists Barlow and Straker are doing. The reader only knows about the feelings and actions of Barlow and Straker by hearing about what the other characters have seen or what the other characters are guessing.

The epilogue and the prologue, in particular, are narrated differently from much of the rest of the book. In the prologue, the narrator refers to the two main characters impersonally as "the tall man" and the boy and follows their actions as if from a distance, looking little into their minds, showing their feelings mostly through their actions. In the epilogue, the narrator follows the action in the first section simply by reprinting sections of newspaper clippings from Ben's scrapbook. The second section of the epilogue reverts to referring to Ben and Mark as "the tall man" and the "boy," perhaps to emphasize their anonymity while they are outside of 'Salem's Lot. In the third part of the epilogue, however, they return to 'Salem's Lot with the narrator once again referring to them by their names and following their actions more closely, narrating what they are doing in more detail.

## Setting

The story is set in a small town in rural Maine. The main part of the story starts on September 5, 1975, and lasts about a month. The epilogue shows a few newspaper clippings of things that happen over the next year after that time as well as Ben and Mark's return to Maine, which lasts for a few weeks. The book ends with Ben and Mark's return to 'Salem's Lot on October 6, 1976.

The town is named after a pig named Jerusalem that lived back in the 18th century. The main roads in the town are Brock Street and Jointner, which divide the town into quadrants. The Marsten House is in the northwest quadrant. The northeast quadrant is mostly full of open land. The southeast quadrant holds farms. The southwest quadrant holds trailers.



'Salem's Lot is an old, small town. Many of the people there are set in their ways and are distrustful of change. They welcome newcomers slowly, and anybody that has not been there for at least twenty years is a newcomer. There are not many roads in 'Salem's Lot. The Marsten House, the evil house inhabited by the ghost or memory of Hubert Marsten, stands on a hill overlooking everything.

In 'Salem's Lot, everyone knows everyone else. Everybody also knows much about what is happening in the other townspeople's lives. The town gets much of their news by passing gossip around on a party line on the telephone. Mabel Werts is the queen of gossip in 'Salem's Lot. She makes it her business to know what is happening, and she eagerly tells people who will listen what she knows.

In some ways, 'Salem's Lot is quaint. Locals like to sit around at the agricultural store and argue and gossip. A milkman still makes the rounds each morning. People still govern the town by town meetings. People in 'Salem's Lot know the names of their mailman, their police officers, and their librarian. For such a small town, 'Salem's Lot has a shaded past. In 1939, Hubert Marsten kills his wife and then commits suicide. He and his wife are found dead in their home. Twelve years later, a fire burns through 'Salem's Lot and destroys half of the town.

## Language and Meaning

The narrator's style varies through the story, as do the characters' styles of speech. The narrator narrates quite a bit of the story as an interested onlooker would, reporting the action with adjectives and adverbs that demonstrate the narrator's slight bias, showing sympathy for good characters who are in pain and bluntly reporting the truth of what the antagonists have done and how their actions affect the townspeople. At no time does the narrator seem to feel sorry for the vampires, except perhaps for one moment in reporting that the vampire Susan looks very unhappy.

Barlow adopts an educated, slightly arrogant, and at times outraged tone. Mark Petrie's father is educated, and he sounds it. Matt is an English teacher, and he appropriately uses figurative language. Ben is a writer, and he often talks the way that he writes. In fact, Susan even makes a comment that Ben talks the way that he writes. Sandy McDougall and several of the other characters are not well-educated and speak using simple language and frequent colloquialisms. Even though the characters have different language styles, the style changes do not impede the progress of the story. For the most part, the book is easy to read and uses few unfamiliar words.

## Structure

The book contains three pages of praise for some of the author's other books, a title page, a page of acknowledgments for allowing the author to use snippets from other copyrighted works, a dedication page with a very short dedication, a very short and possibly inadequate table of contents, an author's note page containing more acknowledgments, an introduction, a prologue, fifteen chapters, and an epilogue.

The prologue is disharmonious with the rest of the book as it is out of order. The rest of the book is more or less written in broken chronological order of the sequence of events, with the exception of a few flashbacks and a few pages about the town's history. The prologue, however, gives details of events that happen after the last chapter but before the epilogue.

The chapters are broken up into three sections. Section one, titled "The Marsten House," contains the first seven chapters. These chapters contain a significant amount of action. The main protagonists get to know each other and all become suspicious of Barlow's activities, but they do not have solid evidence as a group of the existence of vampires in 'Salem's Lot until the end of Part One. Part Two is called "The Emperor of Ice Cream" and consists of Chapters 8 through 13. During Part Two, the main group of protagonists consisting of Matt, Ben, Mark, Jimmy, and Father Callahan begin to see hard evidence that people are turning into vampires in the town. They come up with a plan to save the town. Part Three consists of Chapters 14 and 15. Part Three takes place in just two days and contains the climax of the book, the downfall of Barlow, and the escape of Ben, Mark, and Father Callahan, as well as Ben's return to the town to tie up a few loose ends before he and Mark leave the country for a year.

The epilogue briefly covers a few newspaper clippings about 'Salem's Lot over the next year, as well as the return of Ben and Mark to 'Salem's Lot to start the fire that will hopefully drive the vampires from the town. It closes the book, but leaves room for the reader to wonder what happens next.



## Quotes

"I will see you sleep like the dead, teacher." Chapter 9, page 308.

"Even now one laughs! Even now your circle is smaller!" Chapter 11, page 400.

"At moments like this he suspected that Hitler had been nothing but a harried bureaucrat and Satan himself a mental defective with a rudimentary sense of humor—the kind that finds feeding firecrackers wrapped in bread to seagulls unutterably funny." Chapter 6, page 233.

"Dark, don't catch me here." Chapter 6, page 209.

"I think it's relatively easy for people to accept something like telepathy or precognition or teleplasm because their willingness to believe doesn't cost them anything. It doesn't keep them awake nights. But the idea that the evil that men do lives after than is more unsettling." Chapter 5, page 176.

"It was a moment he remembered for years after, as though a special small slice had been cut from the cake of time. If nothing fires between two people, such an instant simply falls back into the general wrack of memory." Chapter 2, page 25.

"She said that there are evil men in the world, truly evil men. Sometimes we hear of them, but more often they work in absolute darkness. She said she had been cursed with a knowledge of two such men in her lifetime. One was Adolph Hitler. The other was her brother-in-law, Hubert Marsten." Chapter 5, page 175.

"His logic was the logic of nerve endings, and unlike Ben's or Matt's, it was resistless." Chapter 12, page 416.

"The best-educated doctor in the world is standing on a low island in the middle of a sea of ignorance." Chapter 11, page 375.

"That was the value in not crying. Crying was like pissing everything out on the ground." Chapter 6, page 215.

"It became unspeakable." Chapter 3, page 119.

"He thought: This town has the wrong name. It ought to be Time." Chapter 5, page 170.

"...his breath alone could have made Milwaukee famous." Chapter 5, page 180.

"No, I don't think you're crazy. After all, I am in the business of dealing with the supernatural. If I may be allowed a small pun, it is my bread and wine." Chapter 13, page 449.

"Power, humming up his arms like volts." Chapter 14, page 603.



"Probably I was so keyed up that I hallucinated the whole thing. On the other hand, there may be some truth in that idea that houses absorb the emotions that are spent in them, that they hold a kind of... dry charge. Perhaps the right personality, that of an imaginative boy, for instance, could act as a catalyst on that dry charge, and cause it to produce an active manifestation of... of something. I'm not talking about ghosts, precisely. I'm talking about a kind of psychic television in three dimensions. Perhaps even something alive. A monster, if you like." Chapter 2, page 56.

"And so the argument was begun, progressing more in the silences, than in the speeches, like a chess game played by mail." Chapter 4, page 151.





## Topics for Discussion

Why does the author refer to Ben and Mark as "the tall man" and "the boy" in the epilogue?

Why did the author put the end of the story in the epilogue? After all, it does give away some of the ending, and tells that Ben and Mark will survive.

In what ways are the vampires in the book like "classic" vampires? How are they different from humans?

This story is set in 1975. The book was first published around the same time. The technologies and cultural trends from the book are authentic to what a small town would have been like during that period. How would the story have been different if it had been set in the current year (in the 21st century)?

How is Barlow different from the rest of the vampires? Why is he different from the rest of the vampires?

What are some possible ways that Barlow, Hubert Marsten, the Marsten House, and "Lord of Flies" are connected?

Straker is a human, yet he is obviously serving Barlow. In separate places in the book, characters speculate on the relationship between Barlow and Straker. Can Barlow and Straker be lovers? Why would Barlow want to keep a human around without turning him into a vampire? Why would Straker want to serve Barlow?

In Barlow's letter, he claims to have deliberately left the vampire Susan for Ben to destroy. Is he telling the truth? If so, then why does he want Ben to destroy Susan?

Straker is Barlow's faithful servant. Why does Barlow kill Straker and leave him the way he does? What does this say about Barlow's personality?

It is clear from the second chapter that the author intends Susan to be an important character, yet she dies relatively early in the story. Why does the author kill her off in the middle of the story rather than closer to the climax of the story? For that matter, why does he kill her off at all?

In the story, people in neighboring towns do not understand why Jerusalem's Lot becomes a ghost town. They do not realize there are vampires there, and no story about vampires hits the news. Imagine that Jerusalem's Lot was real and that vampires really did begin to spread through the town. How could nobody near the town know about it? Would somebody leak the story to the press? Would the press believe them? Why did the author choose to write that what happened in Salem's Lot was a mystery in nearby towns?