Sister Carrie Study Guide

Sister Carrie by Theodore Dreiser

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites".

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers".

Contents

Introduction

Sister Carrie shocked the public when Doubleday, Page and Company published it in 1900. In fact, it was so controversial, it almost missed being printed at all. Harpers refused the first copy, and the book went to Frank Doubleday. After the Doubleday printers typeset the book one of the partners' wives read it and so strongly opposed its sexual nature that the publisher produced only a few editions.

In addition to the book's theme of sexual impropriety, the public disliked the fact that Theodore Dreiser presented a side of life that proper Americans did not care to acknowledge. Even worse, Dreiser made no moral judgements on his characters' actions. He wrote about infidelity and prostitution as natural occurrences in the course of human relationships. Dreiser wrote about his characters with pity, compassion, and a sense of awe.

While the book appalled Americans, the English appreciated it. William Heinemann published an English version of the book in 1901. While the book sold well in England, *Sister Carrie* did not enjoy much success in the United States, even though B. W. Dodge & Co. had reprinted it. In order to make ends meet Dreiser worked at other literary jobs. In 1911, when the magazine where he was employed stopped publication and he was out of work, he began to write nonstop to complete his next novel, *Jennie Gerhardt.* Critics liked *Jennie Gerhardt* so much that they began to reconsider the merits of *Sister Carrie.* A new edition of *Sister Carrie* was published, and it became Dreiser's most successful novel.

Author Biography

Theodore Dreiser was born in Terre Haute, Indiana, on August 27, 1871. Dreiser's father, John Paul, fled to America from Germany to avoid the draft. Although the elder Dreiser had mastered weaving in Germany, he found that employers in his new country did not appreciate his skill. He tried to earn a living in Terre Haute while his wife and children moved from place to place looking for other work and more affordable living. Mr. Dreiser and his wife of Moravian descent raised their family on very little money, with the stringent morals and rules of the old country. They communicated with each other in German and followed strict Catholic practices.

One of ten children, next-to-the-youngest Theodore Dreiser felt the influence of his older brothers and sisters who seemed to always find themselves in trouble. For example, one brother, Paul, robbed a saloon in his teens, kept company with a brothel madam, and died of alcoholism and related depression. Two of Theodore's sisters were prostitutes. Because Theodore saw his father's distress over his children's antics, the younger Dreiser learned early how to avoid being caught for his many misadventures. Fortunately, Dreiser loved reading. His fondness for words led him to writing; writing kept him fed and out of trouble. When Dreiser turned sixteen, he left the family and began working at a variety of odd jobs to try to support himself. He lived for a while with a brother in Chicago, then returned to Indiana to attend Indiana University. He left after a year, however, returning to Chicago where, in 1892, he made his writing debut as a reporter for the *Daily Globe.* After having been a reporter in Chicago, St. Louis, and Pittsburgh, Dreiser began to discover that he was better at writing impressions than he was at reporting the facts. While working in New York, Dreiser wrote several short stories that quickly sold. Slightly encouraged by this success and the urging of a friend, Dreiser penned *Sister Carrie.* Based on his sisters' lives, the novel became Dreiser's best-known work. Critics today credit Dreiser with being the first writer to portray nineteenth-century American life in a realistic way. Dreiser died in Los Angeles, California, in 1945.

Plot Summary

PartI

Sister Carrie opens in 1889 with eighteen-year-old Caroline Meeber on her way from her small hometown to the big city of Chicago. She is frightened to leave home, but determined to make her way in the city. An attractive, yet naive young woman, Carrie finds herself in the company of Charles Drouet, a "drummer," or traveling salesman. Drouet, well dressed and flashy, engages Carrie in a long conversation. When they part at the train station, they agree to meet the following week in Chicago.

After Drouet leaves, Carrie, feeling alone and bereft in this big city, waits for her sister Minnie to meet her at the station. Carrie will stay with Minnie and her husband Sven Hanson, who live in a small, meagerly furnished apartment. They expect Carrie's wages to help them make their rent payments. Carrie sits in their rocking chair sorting out her thoughts□a position of repose she will often repeat throughout the novel. Realizing how small the apartment is, Carrie then writes to Drouet telling him she cannot see him because there is no room for visitors.

Carrie finally finds a job but the wages are low and when she wants to go to the theatre or enjoy life in the city, her sister disapproves. Carrie's job on the assembly line is dreadful and nearly all her wages go to her sister at the end of each week. Without enough money to buy warm clothes, when the cold weather comes she turns ill and loses her job. When Carrie recovers from her illness she searches for a new job, but without much success. By accident, she bumps into Drouet, who gives her twenty dollars for new clothes; when she decides to leave her sister's home, Drouet establishes her in a furnished room of her own in another part of the city. After several days of sightseeing and shopping, Carrie and Drouet begin living together.

Drouet invites his friend George Hurstwood, the manager of a prosperous saloon, to visit their home. The visit goes well for Carrie and Hurstwood, who is unhappy with his home life. They seem attracted to each other and Drouet suffers by comparison with the older man. Carrie continues to interest Hurstwood and he decides to pursue her when he sees Drouet out with another woman. When he turns his full attention to courting Carrie he ignores his own wife and family.

Meanwhile, Drouet promises his lodge brothers that he will find an actress for their upcoming stage show. He convinces Carrie to take the part. Although the other actors are not good, Carrie herself rises to the occasion and turns in an excellent performance. This renews both Drouet's and Hurstwood's interest in her; Carrie agrees to leave Drouet if Hurstwood will marry her and he agrees.

Hurstwood's wife, aware of the affair with Carrie, hounds him for money and begins divorce proceedings. At the time the novel is set, a man exposed as an adulterer would not only lose his marriage, he would also lose his job and social standing in the

community. As Hurstwood ponders what his next step should be, he discovers a large sum of money in the saloon's safe and steals it. He then goes to Carrie telling her that Drouet has been injured and persuades her to board a train that will supposedly take her to Drouet. However, once on board, Hurstwood reveals his true purpose.

Part II

Carrie and Hurstwood marry illegally under the assumed name of Wheeler and move to New York City. Carrie soon comes to realize that she does not love Hurstwood, and has used him to escape her life in Chicago. Nonetheless, she stays and keeps house for Hurstwood, who buys an interest in a New York saloon. As the years pass, their routine becomes predictable and monotonous, and Carrie grows increasingly discontented with her shabby clothes and frugal lifestyle.

Mrs. Vance, an elegant and wealthy woman who befriends Carrie, begins to take her to the theatre and helps her pick out new clothes. Carrie then meets Mrs. Vance's cousin, Bob Ames, who convinces her that wealth is not necessarily the means to all happiness. Carrie comes to see Ames as the ideal man.

Meanwhile, Hurstwood grows older and more depressed. He loses the lease on his business and spends his days in hotel lobbies, watching the rich and famous pass by him. This, and reading the morning and afternoon papers, comprise his entire routine. When money grows increasingly scarce the couple move into a cheaper apartment and Hurstwood gambles away the last of their cash.

Carrie then decides to find a job in the theatre. Under the name Carrie Madenda, she takes a job in a chorus line at the Casino theatre and is soon promoted and earning good money. Preferring to spend her time with theatre friends, Carrie increasingly stays away from the apartment and Hurstwood.

Hurstwood eventually finds work as a scab, working on a Brooklyn trolley line where workers are striking. Although he is not seriously wounded, he is shot and beaten but the experience causes him to sink ever deeper into depression. On the other hand, Carrie wins a speaking part in her show and earns more money. She is tired of supporting Hurstwood, and leaves him.

Carrie's career continues to grow. She moves into a new hotel with her friend Lola Osborne and lives the life she has always dreamed yet still finds herself unhappy. Meanwhile, Hurstwood continues to sink. He works in a hotel as an errand boy where he catches pneumonia and takes many months in the hospital to recover.

Around this time, Drouet appears, hoping to win Carrie back, but sees that she has changed and they are no longer on the same level. Following Drouet's appearance, Hurstwood approaches Carrie after a performance asking for money. She gives him all that she has with her. Finally, when Ames comes to New York, telling her she ought to consider other roles, she becomes troubled. Carrie takes to her rocker, where she rocks and trys to sort through her life.

In the final chapter, Dreiser briefly revisits his characters. Hurstwood is now a homeless, itinerant man whose mind has gone. Carrie can be seen reading a serious novel□one that Ames recommends. And Drouet is in the lobby of a grand hotel. Dreiser also describes the Hurstwood family on their way to a vacation in Italy and then returns to Hurstwood himself and the final scene where he commits suicide in a Bowery flophouse by turning on the gas jet and going to sleep.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

Sister Carrie is Theodore Dreiser's first novel. *Sister Carrie,* a novel about a young woman who found success as an actress in New York, proved to be so controversial in its original form that the publishers forced Dreiser to edit it heavily before it could be published. Even in this severely edited version, the novel continued to be seen as racy and inappropriate. However, the novel has been credited with breaking new ground in its genre and opening doors for many authors who came after Dreiser. A novel of passion and ambition, *Sister Carrie,* now available in a fully restored version, changed the way an entire generation viewed the modern novel.

Carrie Meeber is traveling on a train from Wisconsin to Chicago in 1889 in order to stay with her sister and look for work in the big city. Carrie has great dreams of her future, but is worried about the possibility of finding work. On the train, Carrie meets a charming man named Charles Drouet. Drouet is a man who likes a pretty woman and often shows his attention to many women in the course of a single day. Carrie is inexperienced with men, but finds Drouet quite charming. By the time the train arrives in Chicago, Carrie finds herself giving Drouet her address and arranging for him to come visit her the following Monday. Then Carrie asks Drouet not to walk her to the platform, afraid of what her sister will think. Carrie meets her sister and sees Drouet watching from a distance. She feels the loss when he walks away.

Chapter 1 Analysis

In this chapter, the reader is introduced to Carrie Meeber, or Sister Carrie, the heroine of the story. Carrie is an innocent midwestern girl who is traveling to Chicago in order to make a life for herself in the big city. Carrie is young, only eighteen, and properly naive, though she appears open to the charms of an older man when one comes along. Carrie finds Drouet fascinating in his charm, but is wise enough to not allow him to walk her to the platform where her sister can see, afraid of the opinion her sister would form if she saw her young sister has meet a man already. This sets the tone of propriety for the reader, letting the reader know how people felt toward activities of this sort, suggesting some foreshadowing of trouble in the future in this arena. The meeting between Carrie and Drouet is also foreshadowing, suggesting Drouet will become a part of the story further down the line. Also set out in this chapter is the setting of the novel. The novel is not only set in Chicago at this point, but it is also set in the year 1889, suggesting a time of innocence, a time when a young woman spending time alone with an older, charming man was not always acceptable behavior. Again, this foreshadows tension later in the novel.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Carrie is taken to her sister's apartment where she meets her sister's husband, Sven Hanson. Hanson is a cold man who spends much of his time either reading the paper or playing with the couple's young child. The only reason Hanson has agreed to have Carrie stay with them is that Carrie has agreed to pay four dollars a month for rent. Carrie attempts to fit into the household and helps with the domestic chores, but is largely ignored by Hanson. Over dinner, Carrie asks where she should go to find work and receives little help except to be pushed in a general direction. Hanson goes to bed early because he has to be at work early. The next morning, Carrie rises after Hanson has left and goes in search of work. Carrie is so shy that she fails to enter the first few businesses she passes.

Chapter 2 Analysis

This chapter introduces the Hanson family and immediately sets up tension as Carrie finds Mr. Hanson cold and hard to get along with. Carrie wants this to work and wants to be a good girl, but finds it increasingly difficult to relate to this family who seem to have no joy in their lives. Finally, Carrie goes out to find work without the support of her sister and her husband and finds that she is almost too shy to ask for a job at any of the wholesale businesses where she has attempted to find work. This foreshadows the next chapter in which the reader gets to follow Carrie through her search and hope she finds the courage to do what she needs to do.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Carrie walks through the wholesale district, attempting to get her nerve up to enter a business and ask for a job, but chickens out several times. Finally, Carrie gets her courage up and enters a business, yet is turned away. However, the gentleman was so nice about it that Carrie has found some courage. The next place she goes, however, Carrie again losses her will when the people there are rude. Someone suggests to Carrie that she try at a department store due to her lack of job experience. Carrie spends a great deal of time at The Fair, a local department store, only to be told they only want girls with experience. Carrie then finds a business that is advertising a need for girls to stitch hats. Carrie goes there and is offered a job, but it is for less money than she would like. Finally, Carrie goes to a shoe factory and is again offered a job for a dollar more than the last.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Carrie is a shy young lady, afraid to approach anyone about a job, but soon she finds courage and gets not one job offer, but two. This shows the reader the depth of Carrie's determination not to return to Wisconsin and her strength of character. Also shown in this chapter is Carrie's love of fine things as she walks through the department store where she intends to ask for a job and finds herself staring at all the fine clothing and jewelry on display. This foreshadows a time when Carrie will find herself in a position to buy such things after making a moral choice that will change her life forever.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Over the weekend, Carrie imagines all the ways she will spend her new salary, such as it on clothing and nights out, and gives no thought to savings. Carrie also imagines she will ride the streetcars to and from work, but will soon realize that these things take more money than she will have. On Monday, Carrie rises early, much too early, and prepares to leave for work. At the factory, Carrie finds that her job will be to work the machine that punches holes into leather for the shoe ties. Carrie finds the work tedious and boring. Not only is the work monotonous, but her co-workers are unsophisticated and the men are rude. Carrie is revolted and miserable.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Carrie has found a job, but it is a menial job and one that she does not like. Carrie also feels she is better then the people working around her, which shows the reader another piece of her personality. Carrie is a young woman who believes herself to have high morals and sophistication, and is deserving something much better than this low job. This foreshadows a time when Carrie will compromise her morals in order to find another way to get the things she wants without having to do such a low job.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Drouet dines at a fine restaurant that night, happy to brush elbows with famous and rich people. Afterward, Drouet goes to a local resort to have a few drinks with the manager, Hurstwood, who is a friend of his. They discuss many of the people who had attended at the club that night, before Hurstwood introduces Drouet to another friend. Later, Drouet decides to see a show. Hurstwood tells him to come by afterward so he can introduce him to a woman. Drouet then tells Hurstwood about Carrie, but does not seem serious about her.

Chapter 5 Analysis

This chapter reintroduces Drouet, the charming gentleman Carrie met on the train. Drouet is a man who likes to rub elbows with the rich and famous, though the reader gets the impression that he is only moderately successful himself. This chapter clearly shows his ambition, however. This chapter also introduces another character, Hurstwood, the manager of an exclusive resort there in Chicago where many of the rich and famous hang out. This introduction may not seem important at this point, but it foreshadows a time when the author will return to Hurstwood who will become an important part of the plot's development.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Carrie's sister and her husband are not impressed with Carrie's unhappiness, and insist she stick with the job, already excited about the extra money Carrie will bring into the household. Carrie decides to go downstairs and watch the street in case Drouet comes, despite a note she sent him asking him not to. Hanson does not approve of Carrie's behavior and decides to get bread at the bakery in the first floor of the building so he can check on Carrie. Carrie decides she does not like Hanson because he is nosey. Carrie goes to work the next day and listens to the other girls talk about their nights out and finds herself to be jealous. The Hanson's never go out and never like to spend money, but Carrie would like to be able to go to the theater every once in a while.

At the end of the week, Carrie pays her four dollars to her sister. Later, she decides to go for a walk despite Hanson's displeasure at the idea. Several weeks go by and Carrie finds herself depressed by her lack of funds, since her payments to her sister leave her with only fifty cents a week. When the weather turns cold, Carrie asks her sister if she could keep her money to buy winter clothes, and manages to talk her into allowing Carrie two dollars. With this, Carrie buys a new hat. A little while later, a cold day causes Carrie to catch a cold. Carrie loses her job due to her illness and must look for employment again. This time she has little luck. Carrie runs into Drouet who offers to buy her lunch. Over lunch, Drouet learns that Carrie is out of work and might have to return to Wisconsin. Drouet gives Carrie twenty dollars and tells her to buy a jacket with it.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Carrie has found work to be tedious and no fun, while she has also found the Hanson family to be boring. Carrie wants to go out and have fun like the girls she works with, but instead finds herself stuck in an unhappy household with no one to relate to. Not only this, but Carrie also finds that she simply does not like her sister's husband, which causes tension in the Hanson household. Carrie has also found that having no money is a problem, especially as winter is coming on and she cannot buy herself any winter clothing. Her lack of money becomes a most terrible situation when Carrie comes down with an illness and loses her job. Now Carrie must hunt for work again. Before Carrie had been too shy to look for work, but now that she knows what working is really like, she does not want to find a job. However, she does not want to go back to Wisconsin, either. The Hanson's want Carrie to go home so she will no longer be their responsibility or in their way. This again adds to the tension in an already tense situation. When Carrie meets up with Drouet on the street, it is a fortuitous meeting; one that foreshadows a time when Drouet will make an offer that will change Carrie's life.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Carrie returns to the Hanson home with the money that Drouet has given her; however, she is unable to buy herself a jacket for fear her sister will ask where she got the money. Carrie does not want her sister to know about the gift from Drouet. However, Carrie is sure she will not be able to find work and will have to return home, so she wants to save the money for a train ticket, but is again not sure how to explain the found money to her sister. Finally, Carrie decides she must return the money to Drouet when they meet the next day. However, before their meeting, Carrie goes to The Fair and looks at all the beautiful things the money could buy, spending it three times over in her imagination. When Carrie meets Drouet, he will not accept her decision not to buy herself a new jacket. Drouet takes Carrie to lunch and then to another department store to buy the jacket. They also buy shoes and a hat set. Carrie is afraid to go home with her new things, so Drouet talks her into allowing him to rent her a furnished room. Carrie allows herself to be talked into this and later to be talked into moving in that night. Finally, Carrie goes home and sneaks out in the late evening, leaving a note for her sister that explains her decision to leave.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Again, Carrie's character is revealed here. Carrie is well aware of the expectations of the Hanson household and knows that if she tells her sister that a man has given her money that she will be looked down upon. However, this does not stop Carrie from dreaming about the money and imagining what she might do with it should she be allowed to keep it. This suggests right up front that Carrie might be willing to compromise her morals in order to have nice things. Later, when Carrie meets with Drouet and he refuses to take the money back, Carrie finds herself talked into buying a nice jacket, shoes, and a hat set. However, this again causes Carrie a moral dilemma. How could Carrie hide these things to prevent questions at home? Drouet seems to have an answer for everything. Drouet suggests Carrie rent a room to hide the things in, and she finds herself quickly talked into moving into the room, a situation that ends the tension that Carrie has found in the Hanson household, satisfying some foreshadowing in previous chapters. However, now Carrie is in a moral dilemma again, having compromised her virtue to have nice things. This foreshadows later chapters in which Carrie will decide if she should get a job to pay Drouet back or to continue living off his kindness.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

Carrie's sister finds the note that tells the Hanson's that she has left. Carrie's sister feels badly, enough that she has a nightmare about the situation, but Hanson seems glad to have Carrie gone. Carrie and Drouet spend many nights going out, despite Carrie's desire for Drouet to help her find a job. Carrie and Drouet both admire the coaches that the rich ride in and Drouet promises that someday he will find a way for them to have one. Weeks later, Drouet invites Hurstwood to visit him at his home.

Chapter 8 Analysis

The Hanson's are not happy to see Carrie gone because of the financial blow, but Hanson is glad not to have his sister-in-law to be responsible for any longer. Carrie's sister, however, is worried for her; she is certain that Carrie is compromising her morals by being able to move out the way she has. However, Carrie's sister will not do anything about it due to her husband's lack of interest. Carrie and Drouet grow close, apparently finding a kindred spirit in each other in their mutual desire to be rich one day. Carrie at first insists on getting a job, but soon appears to have lost interest in the idea. Finally, Drouet invites Hurstwood to meet Carrie, foreshadowing a meeting that could change things for Carrie.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Hurstwood lives in a nice home with his wife and two children. Hurstwood feels that appearance is of great importance so he continues in a marriage that he no longer finds satisfying. Hurstwood feels his wife is more interested in the children, especially their teenage daughter, than in him. Hurstwood also feels that his wife and daughter spend much of the day spending his hard-earned money in order to keep up with their much more successful friends. Hurstwood would never have an affair that would cause public scandal, but he does indulge in the occasional dalliance.

Chapter 9 Analysis

This chapter introduces Hurstwood in deeper detail, suggesting he will be a larger part of the plot development soon. Hurstwood seems to be a typical upper middle class man who works hard to give the appearance of being wealthier in order to keep up with his neighbors and friends. Hurstwood stresses in this chapter that he would never have a scandalous affair, suggesting two things to the reader. First, that Hurstwood is terribly unhappy in his marriage. Second, that Hurstwood might find himself in a position to be in a scandalous affair, foreshadowing this possibility for future chapters.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Carrie is now living in a very nice three-room apartment with Drouet. Carrie feels very guilty about this situation, knowing that it compromises her virtue, but Carrie cannot give up the fine things that Drouet has bought for her. Carrie finds that, although she once thought she would like to marry Drouet, she now accepts that their relationship is temporary. Hurstwood comes to visit one evening, after being told that Carrie was Drouet's wife, and is quite charming to Carrie, teaching her how to play a card game. Hurstwood is quite taken with Carrie and promises to visit her the next time Drouet is out of town on business.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Carrie and Drouet have moved in together, something that would have been very scandalous at the time. Carrie feels guilt over this arrangement, but finds that she cannot give up the nice clothes and the money Drouet gives her. When Hurstwood comes to visit, there is an instant attraction between him and Carrie, suggesting that Carrie might give up on Drouet someday, foreshadowing a possible relationship between Carrie and Hurstwood.

Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

Carrie and Drouet's relationship has changed somewhat. Carrie finds that Drouet often compares her to finer women on the street, critiquing her way of dress or her look. Drouet has also made it clear that he desires a woman other than Carrie, perhaps a richer woman. Drouet is not faithful to Carrie on his business trips and often lusts after women in front of her. Carrie does not seem to mind. Carrie is busy making herself better, imitating a young woman who lives across the hall from them who is clearly more sophisticated. Hurstwood thinks of Carrie often and does not deny his interest in her.

Chapter 11 Analysis

Carrie is learning a lot about appearance through Drouet and his criticism of her dress, foreshadowing a time when Carrie will use this information to better herself. Carrie is also watching other women, imitating them in order to learn how to conduct herself to appear more refined, more sophisticated. All this foreshadows a time when Carrie will appear to be more refined than she really is. Hurstwood also admits to affection for Carrie while the author tells the reader that Drouet is not faithful to Carrie. These things together suggest that Carrie and Hurstwood might have an affair, foreshadowing the beginning of this possible relationship in the next few chapters.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Hurstwood catches Drouet having lunch with a woman other than Carrie and calls him out on it, pretending to accept his excuse that the woman was simply being a friend. Hurstwood then invites Carrie and Drouet out to the theater, spending much of his time charming Carrie. Drouet does nothing to stop the growing attraction between Carrie and Hurstwood.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Hurstwood catches Drouet cheating on Carrie, showing Hurstwood that his interest in Carrie would not violate his friendship with Drouet since he obviously does not take the relationship seriously anyway, foreshadowing a time when Hurstwood will attempt to romance Carrie. Later, Hurstwood takes Carrie and Drouet to the theater and a romance appears to bloom under Droeut's nose. Drouet does nothing to stop it, suggesting he is ready to move on. This too foreshadows the next few chapters in which a change in relationships should occur.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Hurstwood and his wife have grown apart with Mrs. Hurstwood more concerned with the children and Mr. Hurstwood drawing his pleasure from the resort. One morning shortly after Hurstwood took Carrie and Drouet to the theater, his son announces at the breakfast table that he had seen them. Mrs. Hurstwood shows interest in this story only as far as she is curious whom Mr. Hurstwood attended the play with. Mrs. Hurstwood does not like that her husband goes out at night and does not take her with him, so she makes her displeasure known during this conversation, especially when Mr. Hurstwood refuses to take her out that evening, claiming that he is too busy. A few days later, Mrs. Hurstwood insists that Mr. Hurstwood assist her in showing some friends around town. Again, Mr. Hurstwood refuses, causing Mrs. Hurstwood to become angry, which causes Mr. Hurstwood to notice another character flaw in his wife that is not apparent in Carrie.

Carrie has gone on a carriage ride through the expensive side of town with her neighbor, Mrs. Hale, and finds herself depressed that she does not have the luxuries that these other people have. Mr. Hurstwood comes to visit Carrie while she is in this mood. Hurstwood senses Carrie's depression and reaches out to her with affection, clearly allowing Carrie to see that his feelings run deeper than friendship. She does not openly refuse him.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Mr. Hurstwood is clearly unhappy in his marriage, seeing his wife as more of a roommate and the caretaker of his children than as a romantic companion. Hurstwood does not even like spending time with his wife anymore; in this chapter, he twice makes an excuse as to why he cannot socialize with her. This shows that Hurstwood is unsatisfied and open to a new situation. It also touches on the theme of marriage and commitment, showing Hurstwood's lack of respect for the institution of marriage. Carrie, on the other hand, is unhappy with her situation because of her lack of financial success, and finds that she would rather live as a rich person lives on the better side of town than in the apartments that Drouet has provided for her. While dwelling on this desire, Carrie meets with Hurstwood and learns of his affection for her. Carrie sees Hurstwood as a rich man who could possibly give her everything she desires; therefore, she finds herself open to his affections. This foreshadows a development in their relationship as well as touching on the theme of ambition, as Carrie will do whatever it takes to get what she wants.

Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

Hurstwood sees Carrie as a woman far better than he sees himself, a woman who could better him by being his constant companion. Hurstwood sees a relationship with Carrie as both a step up the social ladder and as a means to get the riches he feels he deserves. Carrie's relationship with Drouet does not bother Hurstwood because he believes that Drouet neither loves Carrie nor deserves her. Hurstwood's job allows him a flexibility of schedule. Hurstwood must only be at the resort at closing to be certain all is safe and that all the employees have gone. Otherwise, Hurstwood has the flexibility of leaving at all hours of the day or night when his wife believes him to be working. Hurstwood takes advantage of this flexibility to spend time with Carrie.

Hurstwood stops by Carrie's just as she is about to go for a walk and decides to join her. They walk in Carrie's neighborhood for a short time, but Hurstwood becomes aware of the number of people in this neighborhood he is acquainted with through his job and suggests they rent a carriage for a ride down the newly constructed boulevard. On the ride, Hurstwood confesses his love to Carrie, who is reluctant to respond. Hurstwood continues to attempt to convince her to tell him his feelings, finally accepting from a kiss that she loves him as well.

Chapter 14 Analysis

Hurstwood is in love with Carrie because he sees her as a way up in the world, as a way to prove himself a more sophisticated and rich man. This is ironic because Carrie sees Hurstwood as a rich man who could provide her with the luxuries she craves. These two people claim to care about each other when they are really only using one another to get what they want from life. This touches on the theme of ambition, as both characters have a desire to better themselves and see in each other a means to reach this goal. Later, Hurstwood and Carrie go for a walk so that Hurstwood can announce his affections for Carrie, but Hurstwood soon realizes that they could walk into someone who knows he is married and can report his actions back to his wife, touching on the theme of social morals. Hurstwood is anxious to be with Carrie, but he neither wants his wife to know and cause a possible scandal, nor for Carrie to learn of his marriage and subsequent unavailability. Finally, Hurstwood announces his affections for Carrie. Carrie does not immediately respond, which leaves Hurstwood to assume from her behavior how she feels. This foreshadows future chapters in which the reader will slowly learn Carrie's true heart.

Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Carrie is very happy when she returns home after her ride with Hurstwood, excited at the possibilities that Hurstwood's affection present to her. Hurstwood, on the other hand, is simply thinking of the pleasures he will gain from his relationship with Carrie, not a possible commitment. That Sunday, Carrie and Hurstwood have dinner at a quiet resort where neither is well known. Carrie insists on being home early and hesitates when Hurstwood asks to see her again, since Drouet is expected home. Hurstwood comes up with the idea of her writing to him in care of a local post office to let him know when it will be safe to see her again.

The next day, Hurstwood sees Drouet at the resort and speaks politely to him as usual, informing Drouet that he visited Carrie during his absence and then inviting Drouet and Carrie out to a show later in the week. When Drouet goes home, after Carrie accuses him of never intending to marry her, Drouet asks Carrie about Hurstwood in order to change the subject. Carrie tells Drouet that Hurstwood visited her twice; surprising Drouet since Hurstwood implied it was only once. Carrie and Hurstwood share this information in letters written in care of the local post office, attempting to get their stories straight. Later in the week, the three go to a show together and Drouet is oblivious to the changes between Carrie and Hurstwood.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Carrie and Hurstwood begin a clandestine relationship; meeting while Drouet is out of town. When Drouet returns, they must rush to get their stories straight so that Drouet will not be curious why Hurstwood has been spending time with Carrie. This touches on the theme of social morals as Hurstwood and Carrie both attempt to cover up their relationship, suggesting they know that what they are doing is wrong and simply do not wish to be caught. This episode also foreshadows a time later in the novel when Drouet will learn the truth about Carrie and Hurstwood's new relationship. Later, the three go out to a show and Drouet appears oblivious to what is going on between Hurstwood and Carrie, suggesting his trusting nature and the idea that he does not suspect Carrie capable of anything like an affair.

Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Hurstwood begins neglecting his wife and children while spending the majority of his time thinking about and wooing Carrie. Mrs. Hurstwood insists one morning that Hurstwood get her and their daughter season tickets for the races since she has been told that this is the place to be this year. Hurstwood resists, telling his wife that these tickets are not easy to get, but Mrs. Hurstwood insists. Later, Jessica tells her mother about the European trip a friend of hers is to take that year, causing them both to feel the limitations of their financial situation. Hurstwood barely pays attention to this conversation, his thoughts filled with Carrie. Hurstwood has begun writing to Carrie most every day, anxiously awaiting her replies.

Finally, Hurstwood cannot stand being kept from Carrie and asks her to meet him in the park. At this meeting, Hurstwood asks Carrie if she would consider leaving Drouet to be with him. Carrie says they would have to leave Chicago because she could not remain in a city that reminds her of Drouet. Hurstwood is reluctant to agree to this, having hoped Carrie would be willing to live alone while he continued his life with his family and visited her when he could. Carrie would rather get married, however. This causes Hurstwood fear because a scandal such as a divorce would not do well for his position and would cause him to lose many of his assets. Besides, Carrie does not know he is married. Finally, Hurstwood is happy to get Carrie to agree to go off with him should he one day appear on her doorstep and insist they leave immediately.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Hurstwood has grown distant within his own family, unhappy with his wife's monetary demands and his responsibilities. Hurstwood thinks of Carrie constantly, wishing he were free so that he could be with her. Hurstwood's family is ambitious, attempting to keep up with their rich neighbors, foreshadowing a time when their ambitions could cause heartache for Hurstwood. However, Hurstwood's main concern seems to be Carrie and his desire to be with her. Hurstwood meets Carrie in the park and attempts to get her to leave Drouet, since this relationship is a source of stress for Hurstwood. Carrie refuses, however, insisting instead that she and Hurstwood not only leave town, but that they get married. Hurstwood is frightened by this demand because he does not want a public scandal to affect his job, touching on the theme of social morals, and also because Carrie does not know he is married and he does not know how to tell her. This foreshadows a time when Carrie will learn about Hurstwood's marriage and it will cause tension in their relationship.

Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

While in Chicago, Drouet returns to his Mason group. At one of the meetings, a member tells Drouet that the club will be putting on a play in order to raise money, and asks him to find a young woman to play one of the parts. Drouet does not take this request seriously until the man repeats his request. Finally, Drouet tells Carrie about it and asks her if she would be interested. Carrie hesitates at first because she has never acted before, but soon agrees. Drouet goes to his club to inform them of Carrie's desire to take the part and gives them her name as Madenda because no one knows of their relationship or the implication Drouet has given others that Carrie is his wife.

Carrie is given the role of Laura in the play. The play is about a young woman, Laura, who is about to be married when it becomes public knowledge that she was once a street urchin who was taken in at the age of six by a wealthy couple. Carrie plays the part very well in her rehearsals at home, impressing Drouet beyond flattery.

Chapter 17 Analysis

Drouet arranges for Carrie to act in a play, showing the reader that Carrie has a natural talent for acting, foreshadowing a possible career choice later in the novel. Drouet also provides Carrie with a false name in order to hide his relationship with her, since Carrie has been using his name after moving in with him despite their lack of marriage certificate in order to keep questions from neighbors to a minimum, again touching on the theme of social morals. This false name not only foreshadows a time later in the novel when Carrie will use it again, but also suggests that Drouet's affection for Carrie is not as deep as it might appear. At the end of the chapter, Carrie plays the part quite well with Drouet as her only audience, but the reader is left to wonder if she will do this well when the play is put on the stage.

Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

Carrie tells Hurstwood about the play and he decides he must attend to support her. Carrie is afraid of him coming without Drouet being the one to tell him, so Hurstwood promises he will arrange a conversation in which Drouet will be able to inform him himself. A few days later Drouet comes into the resort where Hurstwood works and tells him about the play with little prodding, even asking Hurstwood to attend. Not only does Hurstwood agree to attend, but also promises to spread the word so that they play will bring in enough money to meet the goals of the club.

Carrie begins attending rehearsals that are being run by a man with some unexplained directing experience. The director is very tough on the actors, causing one man to quit. Carrie, however, does quite well, earning the jealousy of the other actors. Drouet shows little interest in Carrie's part in the play, whereas Hurstwood supports her and assures her that he believes she will do well.

Chapter 18 Analysis

A contrast between the two men in Carrie's life begins to make itself known in this chapter. Hurstwood is immediately supportive of Carrie's desire to do the play, telling her he will come and will arrange for others to come to see her. Hurstwood wants Carrie to do well and has faith that she will. Drouet, on the other hand, is bored with talk of the play and does not seem to care whether Carrie does well, making Hurstwood more appealing in Carrie's eyes. Carrie does well during the rehearsals, foreshadowing her part on the night of the play where the reader will discover if Carrie is a natural actress or not.

Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Hurstwood has spread the word about the play and encouraged a great number of his rich friends from the resort to attend. Not only this, but Hurstwood also encourages his friends to come to the play in formal dress, changing the entire atmosphere of the play. Hurstwood himself buys out an entire box for himself, Drouet, and a number of friends. Carrie is very nervous the day of the play, despite Hurstwood's assurances at the rehearsal. That night while the theater fills with people, Carrie prepares for the play, growing more nervous by the minute. Hurstwood has had a dramatic effect on the audience, bringing in a larger and more affluent crowd than the club had expected, providing far more than what the club had hoped for. Hurstwood greets his friends, telling one gentleman that his wife could not attend because she was ill. Hurstwood, when asked about the quality of the play, suggests that the audience should not expect much but should be happy they are providing money for a good cause.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Hurstwood is so proud of Carrie that he has invited all of his rich friends to the play, showing the reader how deep his influence over these people goes. However, while he is showing her support, he is also suggesting to all of his friends that the play will be a bad one, but that they are there for charity. This suggests that while Hurstwood wants to support Carrie, he does not truly believe in her acting abilities. Carrie is nervous, suggesting to the reader that she will not do as well on the stage as she did in private for Drouet. This leaves the reader to wonder if Hurstwood is not correct about his take on the situation.

Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

The play begins and Drouet and Hurstwood both watch with baited breath. Carrie is clearly still nervous, unable to play her part with much emotion and speaking so low the audience can barely hear her. Hurstwood suggests that Drouet go back and speak to Carrie in order to bolster her courage, all the while wishing he could go to her instead. Drouet does go, speaking to Carrie with affection that gives her some more confidence, but she is still not as good as she was in rehearsals. In the third act, however, Carrie finds herself becoming less nervous and more capable of feeling the emotion of the part, acting the scene so well that Hurstwood finds himself unable to stay in his seat. Hurstwood rushes backstage to congratulate her and finds himself jealous of Drouet's presence. For the rest of the play, Carrie draws on her feelings for her two lovers to feel the deeper emotion of the character she is playing, doing such a good job that the play is a success. Afterward, Carrie enjoys the attention she gets from the audience as well from as her two lovers. Hurstwood insists on taking Carrie and Drouet to dinner, finding himself deeply jealous of Drouet's newfound admiration of Carrie.

Chapter 20 Analysis

The play is a success despite having a rocky beginning. Carrie draws on her feelings for her lovers to find the motivation that drives her character and to be a success on the stage. This is important because it begins a love affair with the stage that will stay with Carrie throughout the novel. Also important in this chapter is Hurstwood's deep jealousy of Drouet. Drouet is the one who goes backstage to encourage Carrie, and is the one that Carrie turns to not only for support but also to celebrate her success. Hurstwood wants to be in Drouet's place and finds Drouet's presence to be an obstacle he is ready to be rid of. This suggests that Hurstwood will once again consider running away in order to be with Carrie, despite his deep fear of a public scandal and divorce. It also touches on the theme of marriage and commitment as Hurstwood considers throwing away one marriage to make another with Carrie.

Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

The next morning Hurstwood's wife annoys him with questions about their vacation, hoping to be able to take a vacation at the same time as all the other influential families in town. Hurstwood says he is too busy just now. Besides, he reminds her, there are the season tickets to the races to consider. Mrs. Hurstwood announces that the races are not what they thought they would be this year and they would rather go on vacation. Meanwhile, Drouet discusses marriage with Carrie, suggesting that he will finish a large project soon that will enable him to be available to marry her. Carrie says she does not believe he ever intended to marry her. Drouet goes off to work a few minutes later and Carrie rushes out to meet Hurstwood in the park. Drouet has forgotten something, however, and returns to the apartment to find a maid cleaning the bedroom. When Drouet asks about Carrie, the maid not only tells him she has gone out, but tells him about the number of visits Hurstwood has made to the apartment in his absences, telling him that they were far more numerous than he originally suspected. Drouet becomes enraged, believing that Carrie has cheated on him.

Chapter 21 Analysis

Hurstwood and his wife argue, with Hurstwood annoyed by his wife's obsession with keeping up with their rich friends. This is ironic, since Hurstwood does the same thing in his business and in his hopes for his relationship with Carrie. Drouet, in the meantime, is promising to marry Carrie, although she does not believe him since he has made this promise since they first moved in together. Later, Drouet learns that Hurstwood has been a frequent visitor to the apartment in his absence, suggesting to him that Carrie is having an affair. Ironically, because of his own bent toward cheating in Carrie's absence, Drouet becomes enraged, intending to learn the truth from Carrie. This foreshadows the next few chapters in which this knowledge plays out between the two characters, suggesting a change in their relationship.

Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

Carrie and Hurstwood meet in the park. Hurstwood is still upset about Drouet's attentions to Carrie the day before and pushes Carrie to tell him how she feels about him. Again, Hurstwood suggests that she leave Drouet, thinking he might be able to leave his wife despite his fear of public scandal, and suggesting they run away together. Carrie again insists that they be married should they run off together. Finally, Carrie agrees to run away with Hurstwood that Saturday as long as he promises they will marry right away.

Chapter 22 Analysis

Carrie and Hurstwood are both lying to each other, beginning their relationship without the trust essential to a good relationship. Carrie has not told Hurstwood that she and Drouet are not really married, showing her fear that he will not want her after he knows because of social morals that make a girl like her unacceptable in social circles. Hurstwood has not told Carrie that he is married, suggesting his fear that she would not want him should she know he was unfaithful, again touching on the theme of social morals. However, without knowing the whole story, Carrie agrees to run away with Hurstwood that Saturday, hoping for a better life with him than the one Drouet has given her, because Hurstwood promises to marry her. This foreshadows the next few chapters, as the truth slowly becomes known between these two characters.

Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

That morning Mrs. Hurstwood had a feeling that something was not right with her husband, but did not know what. Hurstwood's behavior that morning when she asked him about their vacation left her tense. Later that morning she remembered a meeting with a neighbor who asked her why she did not say hello when she passed him on the new boulevard in a carriage with her husband. Since it was not Mrs. Hurstwood but Carrie who was in the carriage, Mrs. Hurstwood did not know what the neighbor was referring to and pretended that it had been her daughter in the carriage. Then that same morning while at the horse races, Mrs. Hurstwood runs into an acquaintance of her husband's who tells her he missed her at the play the night before and was sorry to hear of her illness.

By the time Hurstwood came home that night, his wife was convinced she knew what her husband has been up to. Hurstwood finds her in the bedroom where he normally retires to read the paper at night, and settles down despite his displeasure at her presence. Mrs. Hurstwood refuses to speak to him even when he attempts to draw her out, causing him to talk to her. Finally, Hurstwood apologizes for their quarrel that morning and Mrs. Hurstwood lets it be known that she is aware of his affair. Hurstwood becomes annoyed when Mrs. Hurstwood lets him know that she will continue to expect financial support but no longer expects him to act like a husband in other ways. Hurstwood becomes angry and stomps out of the house after his wife threatens to hire a lawyer to learn her rights.

Chapter 23 Analysis

Mrs. Hurstwood learns of her husband's infidelity despite his caution at being seen with Carrie by people he knows. Mrs. Hurstwood is upset about this turn of events; not by the loss of affection, but more by the social scandal that her husband's actions will cause, proving she is more like him than Hurstwood ever has acknowledged. Mrs. Hurstwood confronts her husband and threatens him with divorce if he does not continue to live in her home as her husband and provider. Hurstwood becomes so angry that he leaves the home, unconcerned about his wife's power to hurt him. This foreshadows a time later in the novel when Mr. Hurstwood will regret leaving his wife and the subsequent actions that this situation caused.

Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

Carrie returns home and spends much of the day thinking about Hurstwood and Drouet. Carrie is worried that Hurstwood will question her desire to be married when he believes her already married. Carrie also worries about leaving Drouet because she does have some feeling for him. When Drouet comes home, he asks her about her outing, quickly accusing her of being involved with Hurstwood. Carrie denies the allegations until Drouet tells her that Hurstwood is married. Carrie is devastated by this news, causing her to admit her relationship with Hurstwood to Drouet. Carrie defends herself by pointing out that Drouet is not faithful to her when he leaves town on business, a fact that causes Drouet to become angry. Carrie threatens to leave the apartment, but Drouet still feels affection for her, so he begs her to stay. Drouet finally agrees to move out himself until the end of the month when Carrie will have a chance to decide what it is she wants to do. Before he goes, Drouet insists that Carrie tell him her true feelings toward Hurstwood. When she refuses, Drouet assumes Carrie loves Hurstwood and leaves angrier than before.

Chapter 24 Analysis

Just as Mrs. Hurstwood is throwing Mr. Hurstwood out, Drouet returns home to confront Carrie about Hurstwood. At first Carrie manages to avoid telling the truth, but the shock of learning that Hurstwood is married so soon after he has promised to run away with her devastates Carrie and she cannot help but allow Drouet to see the truth in her emotions. Then Carrie, in an ironic twist, blames Drouet for her infidelity, claiming it is his habit of dating other women while he is away that has caused her to become lonely and in need of male companionship. Carrie then threatens to leave, despite having little money of her own, until Drouet, showing some uncharacteristic compassion, begs her to stay while he moves out. This is not a true love match by any means, but there is clear affection from Drouet that foreshadows a time late in the novel when he shows this affection clearly.

Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

That night Hurstwood takes a room at the Palmer House, hoping his absence will cause his wife some remorse. However, Hurstwood's wife does not care if he comes home or not. It is that night that Hurstwood also recalls that the bulk of his property is in his wife's name, meaning she has all of his assets even without a divorce. Hurstwood knows he is in a desperate situation and his only bright light is Carrie. However, Carrie does not write to him and does not meet him in the park the next morning. Hurstwood checks the mail carefully for word from Carrie and is disappointed to find nothing. A message does come from his wife, however, asking for the money necessary to go on vacation. Hurstwood refuses to acknowledge the message. Another note comes later in the day and being aware that his employers would not look kindly on a scandal, Hurstwood decides to go home and talk to his wife. However, the locks have been changed.

Chapter 25 Analysis

Kicked out of his home, Hurstwood finds himself in a more difficult situation than he at first imagined. Since all of his assets are in his wife's name, Hurstwood has very little with which to negotiate during a divorce. Hurstwood is at his wife's mercy. Hurstwood is afraid of a public scandal that could cause him to lose his job, so he attempts to play nice with his wife after first ignoring a message from her. However, Mrs. Hurstwood clearly does not want to play nice and has locked Hurstwood out of his home. This not only touches on the theme of marriage and commitment, but also foreshadows Hurstwood's future as he deals with this new turn of events.

Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

Hurstwood spends a lot of time considering his options with his wife and worrying about Carrie's silence. Finally, Hurstwood decides he had best send his wife the money she has requested. Hurstwood decides that by sending the money he has given himself a few weeks to figure things out. In the meantime, he spends another night at the Palmer House and searches the mail for a letter from Carrie, still not finding anything. The weekend passes and their plans of running away appear to have ended. On Monday, Hurstwood gets a letter from a law firm that has taken his wife's case against him. They want a response, but Hurstwood ignores the letter. Another letter comes Wednesday, but Hurstwood again ignores it, still worried over Carrie. Hurstwood is becoming desperate regarding his situation.

Chapter 26 Analysis

Hurstwood thought he would have several weeks to figure out his situation with his wife, but quickly receives several letters from her lawyer as she intends to sue him for divorce. Hurstwood is so unsure of what to do that he ignores these letters, leaving himself open to be sued. Hurstwood is more concerned over Carrie's sudden silence, afraid that he has lost her as well. Hurstwood has become depressed and unable to act, two character flaws that foreshadow Hurstwood's behavior when another crisis comes up in his life later in the development of the plot.

Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

After Drouet left Carrie, she came to realize that had she left him, she would have left with only a few dollars and no idea of where to go. Now Carrie has the apartment to herself and the rent is paid, but she begins to worry about what will happen at the end of the month. Carrie has no money to pay the rent, let alone buy food. Carrie has no way of knowing if Drouet will come back, and she cannot trust Hurstwood any longer. Carrie is miserable and so is Drouet. Drouet has affection for Carrie and wants to return to her, but is afraid to look like a fool if she is in love with another man, so he has checked into the Palmer House. In the meantime, Carrie decides she must look for work in case Drouet does not return. Carrie does not want to return to the shoe factory job she had before, so she thinks she might become an actress. Carrie goes to several theaters over the next few days to find out how to get on the stage, but is told she should go to New York if she wants to be an actress.

Chapter 27 Analysis

Carrie shows the reader a deeper side to her character, a strength that was hinted at earlier in the novel but not shown quite like this. Carrie knows that Drouet may not come back and Hurstwood is not reliable, so she must take care of herself. Immediately, in contrast to previous Hurstwood's behavior, Carrie goes out and searches for work. Carrie does not want to go back to the menial work she did once before, so she goes to theaters, hoping for work as an actress. This may seem somewhat naive, but it shows strength and drive, touching on the theme of ambition. Carrie is a strong, driven character who gives the impression that she will survive no matter what life hands her.

Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

Carrie goes to two more theaters looking to be an actress, but her results are the same as before. On the way home, Carrie stops at the post office and picks up her mail, finding a letter from Hurstwood. Carrie is not happy by the letter, still upset at him for lying to her. Carrie writes him, telling him these things, and saying goodbye. Later, Carrie goes downtown and searches for work in a few department stores. However, it is the slow season and no store is hiring. Carrie is finally offered a job, but believes the man has only offered it with hopes of winning her affections. When Carrie returns home she discovers that Drouet has been by to retrieve the rest of his stuff. What Carrie cannot know is that Drouet came home to speak to her and only took his things when he became irritated at her for being gone so long, imagining her out with Hurstwood.

Chapter 28 Analysis

Carrie continues to look for work even though the theaters do not appear to work out. Carrie is finally offered a job but can see the man who offers it is only interested in her for her looks. Carrie is showing her intelligence in spotting this fact, despite being too napve to see it with Drouet. Carrie has also sent Hurstwood a letter telling him their relationship is over and that he should move on without her. Drouet, however, does not know this. In a change in point of view, Drouet is seen by the reader returning home to see Carrie and to make amends, only to become irritated by her outing, and leaving with the remainder of his things, leaving Carrie to believe there is no hope for reconciliation.

Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

Hurstwood returns from a walk he took to clear his head and finds Carrie's letter waiting for him. Hurstwood has also allowed the lawyer's deadline to pass him by, leaving himself open to be sued for divorce. That night, Hurstwood buys himself some supplies and returns to his hotel just in time to see Drouet climbing the steps to his own room. Hurstwood learns that Drouet has been staying at the hotel for several days and decides to go see Carrie, but learns she is out for the evening. That night, Hurstwood returns to the resort and ends up drinking too much with some of his customers. After the resort is closed, Hurstwood makes his rounds, checking the doors and windows and the safe. When Hurstwood checks the safe, he finds that it is open. Inside there is more than ten thousand dollars, totally unprotected. Hurstwood thinks about taking the money, but he knows the owners will know he did it so he puts it back. However, Hurstwood cannot leave the money and eventually decides to take it. Hurstwood checks the train schedules, then rushes to Carrie's and tells her that Drouet is injured, needing to see her.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Hurstwood does nothing about his wife's lawyer, allowing a deadline to pass that means he will be sued for divorce in a public affair that will most likely cost him his job. Hurstwood is depressed over this, but the impact of Carrie's letter ending their relationship hits him much harder. Hurstwood wants to convince Carrie not to end the relationship, but does not have the courage to face her under Drouet's observation. This shows a part of Hurstwood's character that the reader may not have been aware of earlier; in addition, it also foreshadows Hurstwood's reaction later in the novel when another adversity presents itself. Later, Hurstwood steals money from his employer and rushes to Carrie, hoping to take her into hiding with him. This sets up a turn in the plot development that will take the novel toward its eventual climax.

Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

Carrie wants to know what is wrong with Drouet, is told he has been in an accident, and is in a hospital in the country; therefore, they will need to take a train to get to him. Carrie goes along with this, not suspicious when Hurstwood buys the tickets in secret and rushes her aboard a train. It is not until the train conductor begins to settle the train for the long trip that Carrie begins to question Hurstwood. Even as he regrets his decisions, Hurstwood begs Carrie to stay with him. However, Hurstwood does not tell Carrie why he is running away. Finally, Carrie gives Hurstwood the impression she has elected to stay and he arranges a Pullman car for the rest of their night's journey.

Chapter 30 Analysis

Hurstwood has tricked Carrie into getting on a train with him, leaving Chicago behind. This opens the reader to many questions, wondering if Carrie will remain with Hurstwood and if Chicago will be revisited. The first question seems to be answered to Hurstwood's satisfaction at the end of the chapter when she refuses to get off the train, but Carrie never really answers Hurstwood's pleas to remain at his side. This foreshadows the next chapter in which Carrie will finally make a decision as to what she plans to do about this trick Hurstwood has perpetrated on her. This chapter continues to be a turning point in the novel's plot development, forcing Carrie to pick between her two lovers and changing the entire tone of the novel.

Chapter 31

Chapter 31 Summary

Carrie and Hurstwood spend the night each deep in thought about their circumstances, Carrie upset at Hurstwood for tricking her and Hurstwood regretting his actions and thinking of the people he will miss in his absence, especially his children. Hurstwood again begs Carrie to remain with him and she relents, although she is still clearly unhappy with the situation. They change trains in Detroit and begin the journey to Canada. Hurstwood watches closely for anyone who might be looking for him but sees no one. They board the train for Canada without trouble and search out a dining car.

Chapter 31 Analysis

Carrie is very angry with Hurstwood for tricking her and is unsure about what she wants to do in this situation. Hurstwood also regrets his actions and is worried about losing his job. This regret is ironic if the reader stops to think that Hurstwood has brought these problems on himself by stealing the money, not to mention he most likely would have lost his job through the course of his divorce anyway. Carrie refuses to commit to staying with Hurstwood but continues to travel with him anyway, suggesting that she feels as though she has nowhere else to go. In another ironic twist, Hurstwood stealing Carrie away has solved some of Carrie's problems; namely, her need to find some sort of income to replace the support Drouet provided. Finally, the couple boards a train to Canada, foreshadowing the remainder of their trip and their arrival in this country.

Chapter 32

Chapter 32 Summary

Carrie finds some joy in the journey, staring out the window of the train at new sights. When they arrive in Montreal, Hurstwood takes them immediately to a hotel he is familiar with. Hurstwood sits Carrie down and gets the room himself, finding the best room available for her comfort and registering under a false name. Hurstwood begs Carrie once more to love him and to allow him the chance to make things up to her. Carrie resists, but slowly comes to warm up to him. Hurstwood leaves Carrie to bathe while he goes down to get a shave. In the lobby, Hurstwood runs into an acquaintance from the resort back in Chicago. Unnerved by this turn of events, Hurstwood decides they must move on as quickly as possible. Moments later, Hurstwood notices a man who has taken a great interest in him. Hurstwood recognizes that this man is a detective and is afraid he is caught.

Hurstwood takes Carrie out to breakfast and then to buy some clothes. Back at the hotel, the detective comes to the door and Hurstwood assures him that he has already begun an attempt to settle the matter with the owners of the resort. The man leaves and Hurstwood does as he has already claimed to have done, writes a letter to the owners, promising the return of the money and hinting that he would like his job back. Hurstwood later convinces Carrie to marry him under a false name and the following morning they are married. Hurstwood then decides that he will take Carrie to New York and attempt to find a saloon there that he can buy an interest in. A response from his letter makes it clear he has nothing left in Chicago. Hurstwood sends back all but thirteen hundred dollars and takes Carrie to New York to begin a new life.

Chapter 32 Analysis

Hurstwood and Carrie arrive in Montreal. At first, Carrie remains angry with Hurstwood, but when he promises to marry her, Carrie is no longer upset by her change in circumstances. Carrie has only wanted to be married all along, first to Drouet and now to Hurstwood, and he has promised to give her this gift along with a name change. However, Carrie still does not know about the stolen money, and Hurstwood goes to great lengths to keep this knowledge from her, including keeping the detective who has found him from speaking in front of Carrie. This foreshadows a time later in the novel when Carrie will learn the truth.

Hurstwood finally decides to send the money back so that he and Carrie can settle in New York. Hurstwood keeps a part of the money in order to buy a saloon in New York, foreshadowing his new career there and possible success. Hurstwood and Carrie marry and move to New York to start a new life, once again showing a transition in the direction of the story, moving Carrie into a situation she has wanted and making the readers wonder if she will finally be satisfied by her life. An astute reader may realize

that this may not go as planned, however, as the author repeatedly points out that Carrie and Hurstwood are not passionately in love with each other and the cloud under which Hurstwood must live may cause trouble for the couple.

Chapter 33

Chapter 33 Summary

Carrie and Hurstwood find a flat immediately, purchasing furniture on a credit plan. Hurstwood finds a situation in which he can buy third interest in a bar for a thousand dollars. The situation is not ideal, but it will make enough money for Hurstwood and Carrie to live comfortably. However, Hurstwood worries about money in a way he has never done before and discourages Carrie from buying clothing and other extras. Hurstwood has trouble adjusting to his new life, finding himself in a lesser social position than he was in Chicago. When Hurstwood runs into a friend from Chicago, he finds himself ashamed and humiliated by the knowledge that his friend knows what he has done and thinks little of him for it.

Chapter 33 Analysis

Hurstwood is finally realizing how deeply his actions have ruined his reputation. Hurstwood is now a common saloonkeeper rather than the well-respected manager he was in Chicago. Not only this, but Hurstwood finds himself now forced to keep company with people he might have shunned in Chicago. Hurstwood is having difficulty adjusting to this new situation, especially to the idea of having to be frugal with his money, and this causes him a great deal of depression. This depression suggests a time later in the novel when Hurstwood will find life difficult to deal with on a day-to-day basis. However, Hurstwood has established himself in a good job and gotten he and Carrie a respectable place to live, settling their lives into a domestic situation that will prove to change their previous relationship.

Chapter 34

Chapter 34 Summary

Hurstwood struggles with his new life, depressed over the loss of his respect and social standing in Chicago. Having Carrie to come home to does help keep his spirits up, but soon the domesticity of the situation begins to be a bore and Hurstwood stops coming home for dinner. Carrie is lonely and bored, spending much of her time either cleaning the flat or reading. Carrie has no friends in New York, so when a new couple move in across the hall, Carrie is eager to befriend the woman. After a few casual conversations, the woman, Mrs. Vance, invites Carrie to play cards with her and her husband. Carrie finds them both to be delightful. Some time later, Carrie goes to a matinee with Mrs. Vance and finds herself walking down Broadway during what was traditionally a stroll for fashionable ladies to show off the latest fashions. Carrie's old desires are awakened and she begins to yearn for the luxuries of the rich.

Chapter 34 Analysis

Hurstwood settles into his life, somewhat depressed by his change in circumstances. Hurstwood becomes so wrapped up in his new job that he begins to neglect Carrie, causing her to reach out to a stranger for companionship. This stranger, a new neighbor, shows Carrie the world that she once yearned to be a part of, awakening again these desires. Carrie wants the fine clothes and the trips to the theater that women like her new friend, Mrs. Vance, take for granted. This foreshadows tension in the novel's development as Carrie begins to search for ways to be as grand as Mrs. Vance.

Chapter 35

Chapter 35 Summary

A month later, Mrs. Vance invites Carrie to go to the theater and dinner one night. When Carrie arrives at Mrs. Vance's apartment, she finds that the Vance's have also invited a Mr. Ames to come along. Carrie immediately finds herself drawn to Mr. Ames. The foursome has dinner at an exclusive restaurant where Mr. Ames expresses his distaste for popular fiction and criticizes in particular a novel that Carrie has read. Carrie finds Mr. Ames's intelligence fascinating and she hangs on his every word, especially when he tells her that he thinks the career of an actress is highly respectable. When the night ends and Mr. Ames must leave, Carrie is deeply disappointed not to be able to spend a few more minutes with him.

Chapter 35 Analysis

Carrie finds herself dropped into the very world she has always admired and wanted to be a part of. Carrie soaks it in, enjoying every minute of it. Mr. Ames serves to only enhance the evening. Carrie has always been a sponge for learning the mannerisms of people she admires and here Mr. Ames represents an intelligence that Carrie admires and wants to emulate. This marks a change in Carrie and her desires, suggesting trouble for Carrie and Hurstwood later in the novel. Not only this, but it again shows Carrie's strength in adapting to her new life without the depression that has Hurstwood failing to enjoy the marriage that he longed so deeply to have.

Chapter 36

Chapter 36 Summary

Over the next six months, Carrie goes on as before. Hurstwood has found some success in his business and spends the extra money on himself while still telling Carrie that their finances are too tight for her to splurge on clothing. However, Hurstwood is quickly losing interest in his work and losing his enthusiasm for improving the place. Hurstwood begins to scheme to buy a place of his own, convincing Carrie that they should move to a smaller flat in order for him to attempt to save the money necessary to buy another place. Carrie agrees, moving to a much smaller flat that did not appeal to Carrie as much as the last. Soon after, Hurstwood learns that the man who owns the building where his current saloon is located has sold it and the new owner intends to tear the existing building down to build a more modern one. Hurstwood's partner does not want to start over and tells Hurstwood that their partnership will be dissolved the following year. Hurstwood promises Carrie he will try to find another job.

Chapter 36 Analysis

Hurstwood does not show Carrie the respect due a wife, refusing to allow her to buy anything for herself while he spends all his extra money on clothing for himself. Carrie does not argue with him, though this behavior does not go unnoticed. Hurstwood then convinces Carrie to move to a less desirable flat while he saves money to buy a saloon of his own, but soon learns that he will be out of work in less than a year when the saloon in which he works now closes. Carrie is not happy by this turn of events, but Hurstwood does not seem upset. This foreshadows the next few chapters as the reader learns what will happen when Hurstwood is out of work and follow him on his new adventure of attempting to find work.

Chapter 37

Chapter 37 Summary

After the dissolution of Hurstwood's partnership, he walks away with about seven hundred dollars. Hurstwood spends the first few days out of work, searching for a new situation, but quickly figures out that seven hundred dollars will not buy his share of a decent bar and that he is not qualified for much of anything else. Hurstwood begins to sit in hotel lobbies to avoid the humiliation of looking for work, finding solace in reading the paper upon returning home.

Chapter 37 Analysis

Hurstwood has high ideals about his abilities in the work market and finds himself unable to find the situation he wants, so he simply gives up. This character flaw was shown earlier in the novel and appears again, leaving the reader to wonder how deep this flaw goes and if it will cause Hurstwood to fail in his attempts to find a job.

Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary

Hurstwood goes to a few bars over the next few days to look for a partnership, but again realizes that he cannot find a decent deal with the money that he has. Hurstwood falls into the habit of stopping in hotel lobbies to rest and reading the papers at night, finding solace in other people's troubles. Soon, Hurstwood stays in because of a bad storm. When he is finally able to go out again, Hurstwood runs into a friend from Chicago and is humiliated by the reminder of everything he has lost. Hurstwood returns to the flat early that night and falls ill the next day. When he is able to go out again, Hurstwood finds himself returning home earlier and earlier until finally he stops searching for work at all. Soon Hurstwood begins helping Carrie with the chores in an attempt to keep their household costs down and begins wearing his older clothes rather than bothering to dress up. Carrie watches the deterioration of Hurstwood's self respect and finally begins to sleep in another bedroom rather than share a bed with Hurstwood.

Chapter 38 Analysis

Hurstwood is depressed and does not want to look for work since it only serves to remind him of all he has left behind in Chicago. Hurstwood finds solace only in reading the papers and soon does not even attempt to find work, but sits at home and reads. When he is not reading, Hurstwood is nagging Carrie about the money she spends and doing her shopping for her to keep their costs of living down. This change causes tension between Carrie and Hurstwood, and causes Carrie to stop sharing Hurstwood's bed. Hurstwood does not seem terribly bothered by this change in their relationship because he is so depressed he cannot even get up the enthusiasm to worry about Carrie. This touches on the theme of ambition, though this is an example of a lack of ambition. Hurstwood has no desire to do anything; he simply wants to be left alone to dwell on the difficulties of his life. This foreshadows the rest of the novel as Hurstwood begins his downward slide and the reader begins to wonder if Carrie will slide down with him.

Chapter 39

Chapter 39 Summary

Carrie runs into Mrs. Vance one afternoon in town and is embarrassed to tell her friend her new address. Carrie rushes home and begs Hurstwood not to allow himself to be seen when Mrs. Vance stops by for a visit. Hurstwood continues to pretend to be looking for work, but spends most of his afternoons playing poker, losing a great deal of money in several games. A few days after Carrie runs into Mrs. Vance, Mrs. Vance stops by the flat while Carrie is out and speaks to Hurstwood. Carrie is mortified to learn that Mrs. Vance saw Hurstwood in his old clothes, unshaven. Carrie and Hurstwood fight and Hurstwood tells Carrie that their marriage was not legal, a fact she apparently was not aware of. This argument causes Hurstwood to leave the flat in an attempt to find work; but instead, he ends up gambling again, losing a greater portion of their remaining money. A few days later, the rent must be paid, leaving the couple with only one hundred dollars.

Chapter 39 Analysis

Carrie is living a poor life, but still admires and hopes for a richer life. This is why she is terribly embarrassed when Mrs. Vance learns that she has fallen so far in her economic situation. Hurstwood does not help the situation by refusing to dress in his nice clothes, refusing to have a shave more than once a week, and by answering the door in this unkempt state. Carrie is mortified, resorting for the first time to accusing Hurstwood of not trying to find work. Hurstwood responds not only by announcing that their marriage is not legal, but also by going out and gambling away a large portion of their last bit of savings. The reader must now realize what dire straits Carrie and Hurstwood are in now. This is not the life either of them expected, but Carrie has thus far attempted to be a good sport about it for Hurstwood's sake, but is quickly coming to her breaking point, foreshadowing the next few chapters in which Carrie takes it upon herself to change their circumstances.

Chapter 40

Chapter 40 Summary

When Hurstwood informs Carrie that they have almost reached the end of their resources, Carrie begins to think about finding a job herself, perhaps on the stage. Carrie goes to a theater to look for work and is told to get an agent through a trade paper. Carrie takes the paper home and Hurstwood picks out a few potential agents for her, amused by her attempts. Carrie goes to each of these agents, but is told that she needs experience and money. Carrie decides to try some theatrical managers. Hurstwood sits back and allows Carrie to look for work.

Chapter 40 Analysis

Carrie, again proving her strength of character, takes it upon herself to find work when the last of the money is reached. Carrie is determined to be an actress, just like when Drouet left her in Chicago, and begins to search for an agent to represent her. However, Carrie is not discouraged when no agent will represent her without payment and experience. Carrie is determined to find work while Hurstwood sits back and watches her attempts. This shows the contrast between the two characters as well as the beginnings of another turn in the plot.

Chapter 41

Chapter 41 Summary

Carrie attempts to talk to the managers running the chorus lines at the various theaters, but has no luck without an appointment. The next day, however, Carrie manages to see the manager at the Casino and is given a part in the chorus line there. Carrie thinks this was all very easy compared to what Hurstwood has made her think and pressures him to find a job. Carrie begins rehearsals the following week, thinking how easy the actors' jobs were, and continues to work around the flat, while Hurstwood spends his days reading the paper and harassing her about the money she spends. Hurstwood has run out of money except for a few dollars he hid away for his papers, and expects Carrie's salary to pay for their rent and living expenses.

Chapter 41 Analysis

Carrie has found a job after only a week of looking while Hurstwood has been unable to find a job in more than a year looking. Carrie thinks he must be lying to her about his attempts to find work, but does not nag him a lot about it. Carrie is now the breadwinner in the family and this foreshadows a time when this fact will bring tension to the family. Not only this, but Carrie is now following her career choice and she clearly thinks that she could move from the chorus line to being an actress fairly easily, not only foreshadowing the development of the plot in the area, but touching on the theme of ambition.

Chapter 42

Chapter 42 Summary

Carrie is becoming resentful of having to pay the living costs of her and Hurstwood's home when all the other chorus girls have less to worry about and more money to buy clothes. Hurstwood begins to arrange credit at the grocery store and the butcher to keep from having to ask Carrie for so much money. Carrie makes friends with one of the other girls in the chorus and begins to spend time away from home to be with this friend. Carrie does not tell anyone at the theater that she is married. Carrie has success at work, being moved up to the lead of her line in the chorus, including a pay raise. Carrie does not tell Hurstwood about the raise and instead uses the extra money to buy shoes. Carrie later goes out with Lola and a couple of her male friends, discovering that she likes the freedom of single life.

Chapter 42 Analysis

Carrie is beginning to resent Hurstwood for not only taking all her money to survive, but for being a drain on her social life. Carrie no longer cares deeply for Hurstwood and she is ready to move on with her life. Carrie has ambitions that she wishes to fulfill that do not include Hurstwood, touching on a theme of the novel. This foreshadows the possibility that Carrie will move beyond Hurstwood and follow her ambitions. Hurstwood, in the meantime, continues to read the paper and is now racking up credit bills at all the local grocers in order to keep from asking Carrie for money, suggesting a cause for some tension that might enter the relationship in the following chapters.

Chapter 43

Chapter 43 Summary

Carrie is home one day when the grocer comes to the flat looking for payment on Hurstwood's bill. Carrie is shocked and angry, unable to pay the bill because it is so large. Carrie yells at Hurstwood and again suggests he get a job. While Carrie is at work, Hurstwood reads about a labor strike among the motormen and conductors of the Brooklyn trolleys. Hurstwood, feeling somewhat ashamed of Carrie's anger at him over the credit bill, decides to go to Brooklyn and apply to drive a trolley. Hurstwood arrives in Brooklyn early in the morning and faces a group of angry strikers when he applies for the job.

Chapter 43 Analysis

Hurstwood is ashamed of his behavior when the grocer comes looking for his money, suggesting that he still cares what Carrie thinks of him. Hurstwood decides to try something. However, the strike seems like a dangerous prospect and this feeling is underscored when Hurstwood comes upon a group of angry strikers when he applies for the job. This foreshadows the following chapter as Hurstwood takes the job, suggesting perhaps some trouble between Hurstwood and the strikers.

Chapter 44

Chapter 44 Summary

Hurstwood spends the day learning how to drive the trolley. That night he elects to stay in the train station instead of attempting to return home. The next morning, Hurstwood is given a train to drive. The first time out he comes up against a road block and witnesses a fight between the strikers and the cops. Several more times during the day, Hurstwood is faced with angry mobs. At the end of the day, a mob pulls Hurstwood out of the train and attempts to beat him, but the cops intervene. Scared, Hurstwood returns home feeling as if he has done his part in attempting to find a job.

Chapter 44 Analysis

Hurstwood works at the job of a motorman, going out into the dangerous streets of Brooklyn several times even after watching the police break up an angry mob. This shows some bravery on Hurstwood's part, suggesting that perhaps there is still some strength of character left in him, and touching on the theme of ambition as Hurstwood shows some desire to do well. However, when things get difficult and he is almost injured, Hurstwood runs home and settles back with his paper, content that he has done all he can to find a job, and that it is not his fault that it did not work out. This foreshadows the idea that Hurstwood will no longer even try to find a job, suggesting possible destitution for him in the future. This also leaves the reader wondering where all this will lead Carrie.

Chapter 45

Chapter 45 Summary

Carrie speaks ad lib during a play one night and finds herself given a good laugh and encouragement from the actor. Lola encourages Carrie to find another job with her since the company they are currently with will be leaving town soon. Carrie does and is offered an acting job in an opera, making twice what she had been before. Lola is thrilled for her and talks her into moving into an apartment with her. Carrie feels regret at leaving Hurstwood, so when she goes she leaves him twenty dollars in a note to soothe her conscience. Hurstwood is saddened by her departure when he finally notices, but feels as though he has done all he could.

Chapter 45 Analysis

Carrie is finding great success in the theater, touching on the theme of ambition. However, she is unhappy with Hurstwood, so when an opportunity to leave him comes up, Carrie does. Hurstwood does not notice her absence at first. When he does, he is saddened, but feels as though he did all he could do for her. Hurstwood is so depressed that even Carrie's leaving does nothing to change his attitude, foreshadowing a bleak future for the ex-manager.

Chapter 46

Chapter 46 Summary

With Carrie gone, Hurstwood sells their furniture and moves into a cheap hotel in order to conserve his money. Carrie worries about Hurstwood at first, but soon forgets about him in the excitement of her career. After a successful part in one play, Carrie gets another part in a new play as a silent character. At first Carrie is unhappy with the part because it has no lines, but soon she becomes the hit of the play and is offered a large contract by the theater. Hurstwood reads in the paper about Carrie's success and decides not to bother her about it.

Chapter 46 Analysis

In the theme of ambition, Carrie's work has finally taken her to the heights she has dreamed of since the little play she was in back in Chicago. Now Carrie not only is successful, but she is becoming famous as the critics write about her in the papers. Carrie has become a success, just as she'd always wanted. First she'd tried through Drouet, and then through Hurstwood, but she ultimately becomes a success on her own. Hurstwood reads this about her and thinks of all the money she must be making, but decides not to bother her since he still has money of his own. This foreshadows the possibility of Hurstwood coming to see Carrie at some point down the road.

Chapter 47

Chapter 47 Summary

With new success, Carrie finds all kinds of perks. A hotel room in an exclusive hotel is offered to her for practically nothing. Carrie takes it and moves in with Lola. A few days later, Mrs. Vance comes to visit Carrie at the theater and they rekindle their old friendship. Carrie also begins to get tons of letters from admirers and men who want to marry her even before meeting her. Lola teases Carrie about not dating, but Carrie knows the type of men who write those letters and does not want to end up with another Drouet or Hurstwood.

Chapter 47 Analysis

Again, the theme of ambition is clear in this chapter as Carrie begins to enjoy the perks of success. Mrs. Vance comes back into the picture, suggesting that she and Carrie will once again become friends. Carrie refuses to date any of her admirers, which causes her friend Lola to tease her. However, Carrie has matured and become wise when it comes to men and does not want to find herself making the same mistakes she made with Drouet and Hurstwood.

Chapter 48

Chapter 48 Summary

Hurstwood has become a daydreamer, reliving his days in Chicago in his mind. Hurstwood's money quickly runs out and he has no recourse but to search for work since Carrie has left town with her play. Hurstwood finds a sympathetic manager at a hotel who gives him a job even though one was not open. Hurstwood works and lives here for a while until he comes down with pneumonia and must spend several months in the hospital. Hurstwood is now homeless as well as unemployed. Hurstwood learns that Carrie is back in town and goes to stand outside the theater in order to speak to her. While waiting, a man on the corner begins to beg passers by for money to help give the homeless a bed. Hurstwood joins these men and is given a room for the night.

Chapter 48 Analysis

Hurstwood has become worse than he was before, but finally gets a job. However, Hurstwood becomes ill and loses this job while being treated in the hospital. Now Hurstwood is not only unemployed, he is also homeless. Hurstwood turns to the only person who can help him, Carrie, but cannot get to her because their stations in life have changed so dramatically. Carrie is rich and famous; Hurstwood is poor and homeless, paralleling her life in a dramatic fashion. Hurstwood gets a job thanks to the generosity of a kind man, foreshadowing the rest of his time on the streets.

Chapter 49

Chapter 49 Summary

Carrie is getting ready to leave for the night when Drouet appears at the theater. Carrie is uncomfortable, but Drouet acts as if nothing bad has come between them. Carrie is polite, talked into having dinner with him. At dinner, Carrie learns of the ten thousand dollars Hurstwood stole before leaving Chicago, causing her to feel less pity for her ex-boyfriend. Carrie's show is traveling to Europe and Carrie is so lost in the preparations that she nearly turns down an invitation to go to Mrs. Vance's. However, when Carrie learns that Mr. Ames is in New York and will be in attendance, she changes her mind. Mr. Ames is just as intelligent and captivating as before and Carrie spends the entire night speaking to him. There is clear attracting between the two by the end of the evening.

Chapter 49 Analysis

Carrie meets Drouet again and it is clear she no longer has feelings for him. Carrie learns of Hurstwood's theft and is shocked, though now she no longer feels regret for leaving him. Later, Carrie attends a party at Mrs. Vance's and meets Mr. Ames again, the man whom she felt was so different from the other men she had known and so intelligent. Carrie is drawn to Mr. Ames and it is clear by the end of the night that the affection is mutual, suggesting that Carrie might have a future with Mr. Ames at the closing of the novel.

Chapter 50

Chapter 50 Summary

Hurstwood has discovered all the charities throughout the city and patronizes most of them, including many cheap hotels and restaurant that hands out fresh bread after midnight. Hurstwood has also begun to beg in the streets, becoming suicidal when he does not receive the money he had hoped for. However, when he does get a good bit of change, he vows to continue on for a while longer. While Hurstwood struggles, Carrie is living in luxury in a hotel and Drouet is back to his old tricks, seducing pretty girls. Hurstwood's daughter has married a rich man and she and his wife are on their way to Rome. Hurstwood finally gives in to his depression and kills himself with gas in a cheap hotel room.

Chapter 50 Analysis

Hurstwood has hit rock bottom and no longer has the strength to go on. All the other characters within the novel are doing well by comparison. Drouet is back to his old tricks, seducing women, and Hurstwood's wife and daughter are living in the style that they had always dreamed of. Carrie lives in a fancy hotel and is dreaming of a life with Mr. Ames. Hurstwood, however, is at the bottom, worse off than Carrie ever was. Hurstwood finally ends his pain with suicide, ending the novel on a tragic note that symbolizes the end of the past and the beginning of the future for Carrie.

Characters

Bob Ames

Carrie meets Bob Ames at Mrs. Vance's. Ames has a high forehead and a rather large nose, but Carrie finds him handsome. She likes even more his boyish nature and nice smile. Mr. and Mrs. Vance and Carrie and Ames have dinner together, and Carrie enjoys Ames's scholarly manner. He discusses topics that seem of great importance to Carrie, and admits to her that money possesses little value to him. Carrie is intrigued by this unusual person and views her own life as insignificant in comparison.

Charles Drouet

Charles Drouet travels around the country as a salesman, or drummer, for a dry goods firm. He meets Carrie on the train on her first venture from the farm to the city. Drouet perceives himself as quite a lady's man. Dressed in a vested suit with shiny gold buttons on his sleeves, he fits the 1880 slang term of a "masher," or a person who dresses to attract young women. He starts a conversation with Carrie, and she cannot help but notice his pink cheeks, mustache, and fancy hat. In addition to his fine dress and good looks, he possesses an easygoing nature that puts people, especially women, at ease. Drouet manages to learn where Carrie is going and to arrange to meet her on the following Monday.

Although the two do not meet on that Monday, Drouet thinks of Carrie often while he enjoys his clubs, the theatre, and having drinks with friends, such as George Hurstwood. He brags to Hurstwood one night about meeting Carrie, "I struck a little peach coming in on the train Friday." Drouet vows to Hurstwood that he will see Carrie again before he goes out of town.

Drouet runs into Carrie on the street and takes her out to dinner. He impresses her with his lavish spending and worldliness. He gives Carrie money to buy clothes. Carrie sees him as a kind person; Drouet simply enjoys women. He finally convinces Carrie to move in with him. He is thrilled with his "delicious ... conquest."

Unable to keep his conquest to himself, Drouet introduces Hurstwood to Carrie. When Hurstwood and Carrie become too involved with one another, though, Drouet shows his jealousy. He cannot understand why Carrie would be interested in Hurstwood when he, himself, has done so much for her. Carrie resents this and threatens to leave. Drouet leaves instead, angry that Carrie has used him.

Drouet and Carrie do not meet again until he arrives at her dressing room in New York. He tries to act as if nothing has happened, expecting to be able to win back Carrie's fond regard. Carrie, however, ignores his advances and leaves town without telling him. He tries to tell himself that he does not care, but he feels a new sense of rejection.

Mrs. Hale

Mrs. Hale lives with her husband in the apartment above the one Carrie and Drouet occupy. Mrs. Hale is an attractive, thirty-five-year-old woman who is Carrie's Chicago friend. Carrie often accompanies Mrs. Hale on buggy rides to view the mansions neither of them can afford. Mrs. Hale gossips frequently, and Carrie becomes an object of her gossip when Mrs. Hale sees her with Hurstwood while Drouet is out of town.

Minnie Hanson

Minnie, Carrie's sister, meets Carrie at the train station when Carrie arrives in Chicago. Minnie dresses plainly and shows the wear and tear of a woman who has to work hard. Her face is lean and unsmiling. Only twenty-seven years old, Minnie appears older. She views her lot in life as duty to her family and sees no room for the pleasures that people around her enjoy. She disapproves of Carrie's desire to experience the many distractions that Chicago offers. When Carrie leaves Chicago, Minnie is angry at first and then concerned for her sister's welfare.

Sven Hanson

An American son of a Swedish father, Sven Hanson is Minnie's husband and Carrie's brother-in-law. He works hard cleaning refrigerator cars at the stockyards and intends to provide a better life for his family in the future. The money he makes goes toward payments on a piece of property where he will someday build their home. Sven expects Carrie to not only do her share of work, but also to contribute to the family's well-being. While he generally demonstrates a serious nature, he handles his baby gently and patiently. He is a caring and ambitious person who sees no room for nonsense in his life.

George Hurstwood Jr.

George Hurstwood Jr., the twenty-year-old son of George Sr. and Julia, works for a real-estate firm but still lives at home. He does not contribute to household expenses and communicates infrequently with his parents. He comes and goes as he pleases, doing little as a family member but reaping the benefits of free room and board.

George Hurstwood Sr.

At the beginning of the novel, Hurstwood imagines himself a man of distinction. While not yet forty years old, he has managed to achieve a certain level of success as the manager of Fitzgerald and Moy's, an elaborately appointed saloon where the best clientele come to socialize. Given his position in the establishment, Hurstwood knows all the right people and can greet most of them in an informal manner. He dresses the part

of an important person, too. His tailored suits sport the stiff lapels of imported goods, and his vests advertise the latest patterned fabrics. He complements his suits with mother-of-pearl buttons and soft, calfskin shoes; he wears an engraved watch attached to a solid gold chain. Hurstwood exudes a sense of self-confidence and notoriety.

Hurstwood impresses Carrie the first time they meet. Not only does Hurstwood's appearance hint at class, but he also charms Carrie with his gentlemanly deference and refined manners. Carrie feels an immediate attraction to Hurstwood.

While Hurstwood associates with Drouet and Carrie as freely as if he were single, he does have a wife and children. At home, Hurstwood displays little of his public geniality although he is always the gentleman. The family revolves about him, generally intent on their own matters but enjoying the status Hurstwood provides for them.

Hurstwood's downfall begins when Carrie discovers that he is married. Shortly after that, upset that Carrie wants nothing to do with him, he has a brief lapse of integrity and takes money from his employer's safe. He tricks Carrie into leaving Chicago with him, and the two eventually settle in New York.

New York life brings Hurstwood the realization that he will not enjoy the same preference he had known in Chicago. The status to which he was accustomed in Chicago would cost him more in New York. When he looks for jobs, Hurstwood finds nothing comparable to his position in Chicago. He goes into business with a man whom he later finds to be less than desirable. The business begins failing. With it, Hurstwood's confidence begins to flag, and his conscience nags him about his crime.

Hurstwood's business fails, and he squanders the money he stole. The stress begins to wear on him, and he shows signs of depression. As money becomes tighter and Hurstwood acts more strangely, Carrie feels more dissatisfied. After meeting Bob Ames, a man who represents an entirely different ideal than the men she has always known, Carrie begins to imagine a different life than the one she has with Hurstwood. At the same time, Hurstwood's psychological state further deteriorates. Eventually, he finds no reason to get dressed. When a friend offers to share an apartment with Carrie, Carrie moves out. After Carrie leaves him, Hurstwood wanders aimlessly through life, one of New York's homeless, until he can no longer will himself to live.

Jessica Hurstwood

Seventeen-year-old Jessica, daughter of George and Julia, displays too much independence to suit her parents. Accustomed to having the latest fashions, she insists on replenishing her wardrobe with the change of the seasons. She has high aspirations for herself, picturing a future wherein she will be loved and further pampered by a rich husband.

Mrs. Julia Hurstwood

A vain person, Mrs. Hurstwood dresses in the latest fashions and enjoys all the luxuries her husband's success allows her. She is not an overly affectionate woman and finds pleasure in her relationship with her children rather than with her husband. She oversees the housework done by a succession of maids with whom she always finds fault. Mrs. Hurstwood has little faith in mankind and does not hesitate to point out people's faults. She knows, however, that finding fault with her husband will do nothing to serve her position in life, even though much of the family's property is in her name.

Carrie Madenda

See Caroline Meeber

Caroline Meeber

Carrie, the main character of the story, allows others to guide her actions. This is particularly true of her relationships with men. At the opening of the novel, eighteen-year-old Carrie sits on a train bound for Chicago from the rural Midwest. A Wisconsin farm girl, Carrie dresses true to her ordinary circumstances. She wears a plain blue dress and old shoes, and demonstrates a reserved, lady-like nature. She feels slightly regretful at telling her parents good-bye and leaving the only home and safety she has known, but she looks forward with curiosity and anticipation to her new life in the city.

When a salesman named Charles Drouet starts a conversation with her on the train, Carrie does not know how to be coy and is, instead, simply direct in her responses to him. It is this first bold encounter with Drouet that establishes Carrie's fate in the world that exists beyond her farm home. Her exchange with Drouet sets the precedent for her relationship with him and other men she meets.

Carrie lives with her sister and brother-in-law until they are no longer willing to support her. Having run into Drouet on the street and renewed her acquaintance with him, Carrie accepts his invitation to take care of her. While her upbringing rings a cautionary bell in her subconscious, Carrie can see only the advantages to having Drouet provide her with room and board. Drouet offers all that Carrie desires□nights at the theatre, beautiful clothes, and delicious restaurant dinners. Carrie ignores her misgivings and enjoys Drouet's attentions.

These same enticements guide Carrie's actions after she meets George Hurstwood. His expensive dress and money impress her. At about the same Carrie gains confidence in herself through Hurstwood's attentions and the response she gets from her first audience. She eventually leaves Drouet behind.

Carrie and Hurstwood settle in New York. From this point on in the story, Carrie lives for the good things in life that money and fame can bring her. When Hurstwood fails to

provide her with these, she leaves him. As Carrie Madenda, the actress, she lives for herself.

Sister Carrie

See Caroline Meeber

Mrs. Vance

Mrs. Vance is Carrie's New York friend. She lives with her husband across the hall from Carrie and Hurstwood, and Carrie delights in Mrs. Vance's piano playing. She and Mrs. Vance visit one another and often walk along Broadway to see and be seen. Mrs. Vance introduces Carrie to Bob Ames.

Carrie Wheeler

See Caroline Meeber

Objects/Places

Shoe Factory

Carrie's first job upon arriving in Chicago is working in a shoe factory; hard menial labor that Carrie finds deeply unsatisfactory and will remember throughout the novel.

Clothing

It is Carrie's deep desire for nice clothing at the beginning of the novel that leads her to agree to moving out of her sister's place and putting herself in the debt of Drouet.

Under the Gas Light

Under the Gas Light is the name of the play Carrie stars in as Laura while living with Drouet in Chicago.

Letters

Carrie and Hurstwood write letters to one another during their affair in care of a local post office in order to keep a proper distance from one another. It is in a letter that Carrie attempts to end the affair.

Hannah and Hogg

Hannah and Hogg is the name of the resort, or bar, where Hurstwood is a manager in the first half of the novel.

Casino Theater

The Casino Theater is where Carrie gets her first part in a chorus line in her attempts to become a New York actress.

Waldorf-Astoria Hotel

The end of the novel finds Carrie and Lola living at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel thanks to Carrie's fame as an actress.

Chicago, Illinois

Carrie moves to Chicago in order to find a job and a new life, living with her sister and her family until she is faced with the possibility of having to return home in shame. Carrie then moves in with Mr. Drouet, a friend who has elected to help support her in her time of need.

Montreal, Canada

Hurstwood takes Carrie and escapes to Montreal after stealing money from the safe of the resort where he is a manager. It is here that Carrie and Hurstwood marry in an illegal ceremony since Hurstwood is still legally married.

New York City

Carrie and Hurstwood move to New York City shortly after they marry in Canada.

Themes

American Dream

Each of Dreiser's characters in *Sister Carrie* search for their own "American Dreams"□the ones offered by a growing and prosperous democratic country. Carrie, a poor country girl, arrives in Chicago, filled with the expectations of acquiring the finer things in life. She imagines the elegant clothes she will wear, the exciting places to which she will go, and the fashionable people with whom she will associate, thinking that everyone who lives beyond the boundaries of her Midwestern state has achieved that higher status. Drouet seeks his own version of the American Dream. He has achieved a certain station in life and wears the clothes to prove it. He frequents the important establishments in town and has befriended many of the right people. Yet, he pursues the other appointments that represent his dream, such as a beautiful woman to adorn his arm and his own home. Hurstwood has the woman, the established home and family, and a good position. He, though, wants more. He knows that his employers leave him out of important decision making, and he knows his friends like him for his position. He seeks love, appreciation, and more prestige.

Change and Transformation

Carrie and Hurstwood undergo dramatic changes from the beginning of the novel to the end. Though gradual, their transformations create immediate repercussions along the way. Carrie's metamorphosis takes her from country bumpkin to glamorous actress. In her wake, she leaves her disillusioned sister, an angry suitor, and a broken-down man. Hurstwood's transition moves him from prominent and trusted businessman, husband, and father to homeless street beggar. Behind him survive robbed employers, a dysfunctional family, and a self-satisfied woman.

Choices and Consequences

Hurstwood makes one choice that dramatically affects the rest of his life. While all choices result in consequences, those consequences can be positive or negative. Hurstwood's decision to take the money from his employer's safe starts his downward spiral to his eventual suicide.

Wealth and Poverty

Industrial growth brought the United States a period of prosperity during the late 1800s and early 1900s. With factories flourishing, job opportunities were abundant. People made good money in factory management positions and other white-collar jobs. Factory workers, however, not only earned low incomes, but they also worked long hours. Consequently, a wide division existed between the wealthy and the poor.

Carrie comes from a lower-middle-class background and determines that she will rise above it.

Her sister's family, however, maintain the same struggling existence Carrie has always known. They have no time to enjoy leisure activities and no money to spend on them. Carrie wants more for herself.

Throughout *Sister Carrie,* the distinction between social classes is obvious. The clothes people wear, the homes in which they live, and the activities in which they are involved distinguish the rich from the poor. The wealthy wear stylish clothes and attend elaborate performances of the arts. The poor buy factory-made clothes and jeans and are lucky to go to the penny arcade or the local dance pavilion. In the final chapter, the description of Hurstwood's last days offers a vivid picture of the ultimate plight of the poorest.

Identity

Experiences contribute greatly to shaping people's identities. Carrie's transformation from the beginning of the novel to the end occurs as a result of her responses to her experiences. The Carrie who boards the train in Columbia City sits primly, trying to ignore the glances of the man seated near her. Having certain morals, Carrie hesitates to acknowledge Drouet's presence. Yet, she responds quickly to his initial comments to her and makes direct eye contact with him when she senses his interest in her. From this point on, Carrie allows herself to act in whatever manner benefits her. Leaving her sister's home and moving in with Drouet, for example, goes against all propriety her parents have taught her. She sees, though, that this action will get her closer to having what she wants. As she understands her value to others, she changes her identity accordingly. As a result, she never really has an identity but adjusts her "act" to fit the situation. In the end, this ability gains her recognition as an acclaimed actress but does not result in her achieving happiness.

Sex

In the early 1900s, the morals and virtues of the Victorian era still guided people's actions. People with proper upbringing did not speak of sex. The public was shocked that Dreiser's characters so openly participated in explicit relationships and that Dreiser seemed to condone it.

Carrie uses sex to gain status for herself. She sees nothing wrong in living with Drouet to get the clothes she wants and to have opportunities to move in Chicago's affluent circles. Later, Carrie sees that Hurstwood can offer her an even higher standard of living. She ignores the fact that he is already married and the two of them will be committing adultery. With no regard for Drouet's emotions, she breaks off their relationship and pursues one with Hurstwood. After living with Hurstwood for some time, she realizes she can no longer benefit from the arrangement and leaves him, too.

Marriage and Commitment

At the time this novel was written, marriage and commitment to a man was the highest level of social acceptability a woman could hope to achieve. However, from the very beginning, the reader can see that it is not Carrie's wish to reach this most important height. Carrie sees the marriage between her sister and her husband and finds them both boring. Carrie does not want to be saddled with marriage, with children, and with a life with no excitement. Carrie wants passion and excitement in her life. However, society has taught Carrie that this is the best she can expect from life so she spends several years either hoping one man would marry her or attempting to be a good wife to another.

Marriage was a means to climb the social ladder during the time this novel is set. Mrs. Hurstwood clearly understands this principle and has made the best marriage for herself, not based on love but based on what her husband's social standing and money can do for her own social standing. Hurstwood looks at his wife across from the breakfast table, feels absolutely no passion for her, and wonders if there was ever passion between them. It is not until Hurstwood meets Carrie that he finally knows what passion is like, but by then it is too late because a divorce would mean scandal and most likely the loss of his job, which is the source of all his social ambition. However, the decision is taken out of Hurstwood's hands when his wife finds out about his infidelity and he finds himself in a position to choose between a rock and a hard place.

Marriage and commitment can also mean the end to freedom for some men. Drouet looks at marriage this way. Despite having moved in with him and despite the social uproar this situation can cause, Drouet refuses to marry Carrie. Drouet likes women; he likes lots of women and the freedom to pursue any woman he likes. Although Drouet has strong feelings for Carrie, he is not willing to give up the freedom to spend his time with the woman of his choosing. Even when Drouet learns that Carrie has been carrying on an affair behind his back and is devastated and willing to fight for Carrie, he is still unwilling to marry her. In the end, Drouet is content with his life and content with not having Carrie in it.

Ambition

Every character in this novel has strong ambitions to achieve their own personal dream. Carrie wants to be rich. Carrie has experienced what it is like to live with little money and with the inability to buy the things she feels that she needs. Carrie has decided she would rather not live that way ever again. However, for a woman to achieve financial freedom on her own in the time this novel was written was highly unusual, and Carrie finds herself relying on the men around her to provide her with the lifestyle she desires. First, despite the moral repugnance of the situation, Carrie moves in with Drouet after he promises to care for her and spends thousands of dollars buying her clothing and allowing her to life in the type of apartment she has desired. Carrie is happy with this situation despite knowing she does not love Drouet and that Drouet will never marry her.

However, when Hurstwood comes around with the appearance of having much more money than Drouet, Carrie allows herself to fall for his romantic spell.

Hurstwood has lied to Carrie, however, and not only does he have little money, but he is married to someone else and cannot legally commit to Carrie. Carrie believes them to be married just the same and she spends several years attempting to make a bad marriage work not out of love but out of respect for the institution of marriage. When Hurstwood fails Carrie by losing his job and refusing to find another, Carrie steps out on her own to achieve her dreams. Carrie fights to get a job as an actress, a job she believes herself to be quite good at and can enjoy immensely. As Carrie's star takes off and she is able to achieve everything she desires, Hurstwood slips into a deep depression, giving Carrie no alternative but to leave him behind.

Hurstwood wants nothing but what he already has, social dominance and money. However, when Hurstwood meets Carrie, the only thing he can think of is making her his own. Hurstwood becomes obsessed with Carrie and will not let her go no matter how his lies hurt her. Carrie attempts to end her relationship with Hurstwood upon learning about his wife, but Hurstwood tricks Carrie into running away with him. Carrie goes willingly when he marries her, but does not realize that this marriage is not only illegal, but will also lead to Hurstwood's ultimate downfall.

Drouet too has ambition. Drouet wants to be rich and he wants to spend his time with as many women as possible. Drouet achieves the latter, dating as many women as he can when on trips away from Carrie, but always coming back to Carrie. Drouet also achieves financial success, becoming successful in his business. However, it is Carrie that Drouet ultimately wants and Carrie that Drouet will have to give up. Drouet is not unhappy with this situation, though, because without Carrie around, no one has to know that she cheated on him once before, leaving his reputation as a lady's man intact.

Social Morals

Another theme in this novel is the idea of social morals. In the late nineteenth century when this novel is set, people had certain expectations regarding others. Marriage is the only acceptable way a woman might move up in social circles and living together is simply not something men and women did without marriage. Carrie comes to Chicago in this era of high social standards, intent on finding a good job in order to make a decent life for herself until such a time that she can make an acceptable marriage. However, Carrie finds work difficult to find and most difficult to do. Carrie does not want to return home a failure, but has no way to support herself without a job she knows she will hate. Therefore, when Drouet comes along and offers to buy her fine clothing and provide her with an apartment of her own, Carrie jumps at the chance despite the social opinions against such an arrangement.

Later, Carrie moves in with Drouet, suggesting a sexual relationship that would be highly unusual during that time. Carrie takes Drouet's last name, hoping the neighbors will believe them married in order to protect Carrie's social reputation. This rouse works

so well that when Carrie falls in love with Hurstwood, she cannot figure out a way to tell him she is not married to Drouet, fearing the truth will tarnish Hurstwood's opinion of her. Later, when Carrie runs away with Hurstwood, she insists on marriage, hoping to finally be respectable, unaware that the marriage is illegal due to Hurstwood's first marriage.

Carrie commits many sins in the course of this novel, from living with a man to becoming an actress, which caused uproar at the time the novel was published. Although this type of story line is old and tired in modern opinion, it was so unusual at the time of publication that the publishers had the writer remove many references to Drouet's sexual prowess and Carrie's home life from the novel. This is most likely an impact the writer was going for at the time, in order to create a scandal that would keep his novel on the top of the best seller lists, not unlike Carrie and her ambitions that were stronger than her desire to achieve social acceptance.

Style

Point of View

Dreiser uses a third person omniscient point of view to tell the story of his heroine, Carrie. Through this point of view, Dreiser provides readers with insight into not only Carrie's thoughts but also those of all his characters. One example of this is found in chapter twenty-seven, when Hurstwood discovers a note from Carrie and later steals money from his employer's safe. Dreiser portrays Hurst-wood's distorted thinking as well as Carrie's confusion over Hurstwood's actions.

Setting

Early twentieth-century, newly urbanized America provides the backdrop for *Sister Carrie.* At the start of the story, Carrie travels by train to Chicago, a city of opportunity for not only country girls like herself, but also for immigrants from all over the world. The Chicago that Carrie finds offers an abundance of factory jobs for both men and women. In addition, numerous opportunities for enjoyment of the arts present themselves in the form of theatre, opera, symphonies, and so on. Carrie enjoys the fashionably dressed people around her and her own ownership of the latest styles. The same prosperity exists in New York City, where Carrie and Hurstwood find themselves at the end of the story. Yet here, the less fortunate in this materialistic culture appear more obviously, begging on street corners and seeking refuge in homeless shelters. While upper- and middle-class Americans are envisioning a future full of promise, those at the lower end of the spectrum are suffering the negative repercussions of a stratified society.

Structure

Critics recognize Dreiser for the extensive detail he uses in his writing. The hallmark of Dreiser's fiction, his journalistic style, receives criticism for being an "endless piling up of minutiae," H. L. Mencken notes in his Commentary to *Sister Carrie.* Mencken goes on to say that he wonders if Dreiser actually enjoys creating his collections of words that do not reflect any beauty or even a particular style.

Although Dreiser recieves negative appraisal for his rambling style, he earns accolades for his ability to write realistically. Mencken acknowledges that Dreiser's writing reflects the influences of Thomas Hardy and Honoré de Balzac in its ability to portray drama in the most mundane of life's daily routines. A greater strength, though, is that Dreiser goes beyond the drama of the moment to immerse his characters in humankind's eternal struggles. The portrayal of Carrie's obsession with fashion, for example, merely demonstrates her attempts to escape from physical miseries in her search for true happiness. Dreiser's descriptions, set in underlying universal themes, arouse readers' emotions. As a result, Dreiser is viewed as a pivotal force in changing the direction of twentieth-century literature.

Realism

Many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writers tried to portray life as it actually existed. Their scenes, characters, and actions reflect daily activities in people's lives, whether noteworthy or not. Literary experts call these writers "realists." Realists who take their writing to the extreme□discussing even life's coarse, brutal, or disgusting aspects□are "naturalists." Critics categorize Dreiser as a naturalist. Sister Carrie's blatant prostitution and supposed marital infidelity shocked people when the novel first appeared. Also shocking is that Dreiser makes no attempt to apologize for his heroine's actions. He sympathizes with Carrie's efforts to survive in a modern world given her lower-middle-class background and less-than-genteel upbringing. Dreiser's Carrie and the settings in which he put her render a vivid and realistic picture of a newly urbanized America populated by people from all walks of life.

Determinism

Dreiser writes from a philosophic doctrine known as "determinism." Determinists believe that man's actions are not his own; they are determined by inherited or environmental influences. Viewed from this philosophy, Carrie cannot avoid her experiences; her world runs on sex and chance. Neither does Hurstwood deserve his fate. His downfall results only from circumstances around him. The two characters' destinies have nothing to do with morals: They simply happen.

Tragedy

Tragedy describes characters who have survived numerous struggles only to fail in the end. They fail, however, in such a way as to become heroes and heroines, evoking sympathy from readers. Dreiser's Carrie and Hurstwood both portray tragic characters. Carrie struggles to overcome her meager existence and her naivete. Though she gains security, ease, and a taste of the finer things in life, Carrie never fully realizes the happiness she seeks. Hurstwood, on the other hand, represents the average middle-class American struggling to maintain his place in a mercurial class system. One moment of poor judgment ruins the rest of his life. The tragedy of Hurstwood's life is his undeserved punishment.

Point of View

The point of view of this novel is third person omniscient. The author tells his story from the point of view of the three main characters, shifting from point of view throughout each chapter, sometimes moving from character to character in the middle of a chapter in order to highlight an important point. The writer also uses an authorial voice, occasionally interjecting comments in the first person point of view that clearly come from the writer's own voice. These comments serve to illustrate a dramatic point or to

show the reader a piece of scenery that may or may not have changed since the time in which the novel is set.

This point of view works because the author tells the story through the eyes of the three main characters who are most affected by the events described within the plot. The novel would have a lesser meaning if Carrie's voice were not heard, especially in moments of extreme stress, since Carrie is the heroine. There are also moments in the end of the story where Hurstwood's voice is very important for the reader to understand the impact of his change in circumstances. Drouet too is important, mostly at the beginning of the novel when the writer uses him to introduce Hurstwood and the world in which Hurstwood lived in Chicago. The authorial voice is interesting to the reader because it illustrates many points within the novel, most notably the changes that have taken place in the city of New York since the time the novel is set and the year in which the writer wrote the novel. A city like New York changes constantly, and these comments help to orient the reader to the landscape that the writer is attempting to describe.

Setting

The novel is set in two major cities, Chicago and New York, at the end of the nineteenth century. Chicago is still a smaller town at this time, continuing with its large growth at the time that Carrie lives there. The author mentions growth that will take over the next few years, including the migration of some very rich and influence people to the area. New York, too, is also in a state of flux at the time of the novel's setting, constantly changing as the author mentions hotels being built that the modern reader knows still stand and have stood in glory for many years. These cities are major metropolises that are the fashion hubs of the country, lending fuel to Carrie's desire to be rich and beautifully dressed. Not only this, but both cities had a flourishing theater community, encouraging Carrie's desire to be an actress.

The largest part of the setting to have an effect on the novel, however, is the date in which it is set. The end of the nineteenth century was a socially moral period in which women did not live with men without the benefit of marriage, nor did they have affairs with married men. Carrie does both. The period of the novel sets the stage for Carrie's moral dilemmas as well as her need to make these decisions in order to survive in a world that was not kind to women. If the novel were to be set in a more modern time, it would not have the effect that this novel had at the time of its release. For these reasons, the setting of *Sister Carrie* works well within the plot.

Language and Meaning

The novel is written in what was plain, simple English at its time. However, the modern reader may find the language stiff and somewhat irregular, especially dialogue that seems to be more complicated than the plot requires. This is standard of the period in which the novel was written. This stiff language also includes many passages in which the writer makes long speeches on the behaviors or attitudes of his characters. This is

also common in the period in which the piece was written and serves to enhance the reader's understanding of the plot.

Taken as a whole, the novel is written in clear and concise language, using slang common to the time only when necessary to relate to the characters or to enhance the understanding of the reader. The language works because it is what one would expect of a novel of this type and because it is clear enough that the reader can follow the story without having to drag out a dictionary or other means in order to comprehend the complicated and antiquated language. For a reader familiar with the period in which the novel is written, the language is delightful.

Structure

The novel is divided into fifty chapters. Each chapter is seen from the point of view of a single character with the occasional dip into another's conscience or a comment from the writer. The novel has been enhanced from its original version using copies of the writer's original manuscript in order to return it to the form in which it was originally intended. At the time of the novel's initial publication, many sections were removed for fear that readers at the time would be offended by the content. The new enhanced version also includes some photographs of Chicago and New York within the novel's period in order to aid the modern reader in orienting themselves with the geography in which Carrie existed.

The structure of the novel is appropriate for the work and makes it reader friendly for the modern reader. Each chapter is about twenty pages, not too long to handle in one sitting but not so short as to cause difficulty with attention span. The time line is linear and simple to follow, though there are several places in which several months or years pass without the reader being aware until the point of view character makes a casual observance of the passing time. The structure of the novel as a whole works well with the plot and creates a work that is lengthy but easy to read.

Historical Context

Late-Nineteenth- Century Industrialism

The United States experienced a huge growth in manufacturing in the late 1800s that resulted in prosperity for many but virtual poverty for others. As a result of improved technology and an increase in the number of people in the workforce, including experienced businessmen, factories could produce more goods at a faster rate than ever before. In addition, changes in government policy and the availability of resources contributed to the expansion of manufacturing. Factory jobs were plentiful, but the wages were not always sufficient. Many workers enjoyed a better standard of living, while others struggled to make ends meet.

Factory conditions varied from workplace to workplace, yet the challenge of the type of work remained the same. First, the work was boring. A factory worker generally stood at an assembly line performing the same job repeatedly and to a degree of perfection. Factory work also meant long hours. Workers often averaged ten hours per day, six days per week with few breaks and little flexibility. People who were accustomed to working on farms or to creating their own handcrafted goods found factory schedules a difficult adjustment. Next, the factories themselves lacked safe working conditions and were often dark, dirty, and poorly ventilated. Illnesses, injuries, and even death were not uncommon. Finally, factory workers' wages varied. Often, women, like Carrie, and children worked at factory jobs because they agreed to lower wages than men did. As a result, men moved from workplace to workplace seeking better conditions and wages or joined labor unions to try to improve their lives at work.

From Tradition and Gentility to Modernism

The last years of the 1800s ushered in a sense of optimism and confidence felt by most Americans in the beginning of the twentieth century, the time period of *Sister Carrie.* The United States enjoyed a position as a leading world power, and the country's industrial growth and resulting stable economy provided the American people with a great measure of security. They believed that the 1900s would continue to offer them the best of that which had occurred in the previous century. Continued technological advances would make life even easier. Work would take less of people's time; play could take more. People would nurture the same genteel morals, and the arts would reflect their refined tastes. Americans felt that nothing could shake the status quo.

While many Americans basked in their country's success, others lived a less comfortable existence. The cities were comprised of distinct socioeconomic classes: highbrow, middlebrow, and lowbrow. The very technology that had made the country prosperous also created a huge division between the "haves" and the "have nots." The upper and middle classes, secure in their positions and comforts, were content to continue their lives as they had always known them; they ignored the less fortunate

people around them and supported the same traditions in the arts and letters that they had in the past. At the same time, some members of the arts community began to address the realities of the twentieth century and to gain an audience for works that depicted the facts of life. These creative people□painters, writers, musicians, and architects□began the movement that would mark the beginning of modernism in America.

Social Class and Status

Social class distinction revealed itself not only through the disparity in wages earned but also through the kinds of leisure activities people enjoyed and the fashions they wore. In *Sister Carrie,* Carrie strove to attend the events of the wealthier set as well as wear their fashions, hoping she would one day be part of high society.

As technology in the early twentieth century helped create a variety of paying jobs for workers and production methods improved, workers were allowed more time to pursue leisure activities. Sports and show business became amusement favorites for everyone; the kinds of events people attended reflected their socioeconomic status. In addition, the trend towards healthy activities dictated clothing styles.

Organized sports heralded amusement activities for the wealthy. Baseball, the most popular sport for years, was enjoyed only by upper and middle classes until 1876. After that, spectators and participants of all classes became involved in it, although it appealed more to men than to women. Women preferred croquet and bicycling. Croquet and bicycling allowed middle- and upper-class men and women to socialize. Tennis and golf appealed to the wealthy of both sexes. Football began as a sport for privileged college students but soon became as popular as baseball. Women became more involved in sports such as rowing, track, swimming, and basketball as a result of being exposed to these sports in college.

While sporting events drew the interest of mostly wealthy people, show business entertained the common people. As railroad travel improved, circuses reached small towns across the country and prospered. In the cities, popular drama, musical comedy, and vaudeville provided Americans with a means of escape from their daily trials.

Very early on, fashions made a statement about social status. As the times changed, though, the clothes people wore said less about them and more about changes in society. Before the Civil War, only the wealthiest people could afford finely tailored clothes; others wore hand-sewn clothes. Because of changes in the textile industry to accommodate the mass production of Civil War uniforms, however, clothing became more available and affordable to everyone. Clothing continued to indicate social status. Department stores appeared and catered to the wealthy. Chain stores, like the "five and dime," met the needs of the general public. In order to look like everyone else, poorer people bought cheap factory-made clothes. The working poor wore the first blue jeans. The wealthy, though, stood out. The men wore three-piece suits in somber colors; the

women wore restrictive underclothes and elaborate dresses and hats made of bright, luxurious fabrics.

As women became increasingly involved in sports and new occupations, clothing became more comfortable and sensible. Women needed freedom to move, so Victorian-style dresses and tight corsets gave way to "shirtwaist" styles, loose undergarments, and shoes with shorter heels. No longer did plain dress indicate low socioeconomic status.

Critical Overview

Dreiser wrote successfully for years as a newspaper reporter. Yet readers appreciated his stories not for their exact reporting of the events, but for their relating of personal impressions about people, places, and happenings. Dreiser grew to understand that providing his readers with realistic impressions was his strength and began to cultivate it. When critics read his early fiction, they did not at first appreciate his truthful portrayal of life in America. Only later did they applaud this in Dreiser's writing. Critics did, however, immediately praise his sensitivity and viewed it as a powerful storytelling tool. While reviewers did not particularly like his style of writing, they did like the content.

The very characteristic that disturbed the public about *Sister Carrie* when the book first came out is the same characteristic that critics now recognize as a strength in Dreiser's work. That characteristic is Dreiser's realistic treatment of real-life occurrences. At the time that *Sister Carrie* appeared, fiction seldom touched upon the darker side of human endeavors and relationships. Prostitution, for example, might occur in the real world, but authors did not make it an overt part of their plots. For Dreiser's Carrie, though, prostitution was a way of life. She would not have been able to survive without using men to get to her next level of existence. Dreiser writes about Carrie's lifestyle in a matter-of-fact manner. The public was appalled that Dreiser viewed it so lightly. Today, however, readers are not as shocked by Carrie's way of life. While readers may not approve of it, they understand how a woman of that period might feel compelled to seek her independence in this manner.

In addition to being known for his realistic treatment of topics that most other writers of his time considered taboo, Dreiser also receives acclaim for his sensitivity to his characters' predicaments. H. L. Mencken says in his Commentary in the 1999 Modern Library Edition of *Sister Carrie* that what Dreiser lacks in style in comparison to other novelists, he makes up for in his serious consideration of human nature. Mencken says, "What they lack, great and small, is the gesture of pity, the note of awe, the profound sense of wonder ... which even the most stupid cannot escape in Dreiser."

Dreiser started *Sister Carrie* at the urging of his friend, Arthur Henry. While Dreiser had written for years as a newspaper reporter, and had recently completed and sold four short stories, he doubted that he had the talent to write a novel. He sat down to write *Sister Carrie* with the image of his own siblings in mind. His sister, Emma, who had run away with her married lover, served as Dreiser's model for Carrie. Dreiser wrote about Carrie from a sense of feeling, rather than from a sense of purposeful problem-solving. That is, he wrote as if he were experiencing the events and their effects as they occurred. Critics have often noted this artistic passion in Dreiser's writing. For example, Mencken compares Dreiser to Franz Schubert. Mencken says that Schubert knew little of the technique of music but had such an artistic sense of the music he was able to create musical works of art. Dreiser, says Mencken, has the same ability to create stories from his sense of the world around him.

While Dreiser possessed a sense of the world around him and could write about it realistically, he lacked the ability to create beauty with his words. His writing style is highly criticized by experts as being too verbose, and the words too commonplace. Mencken, even as one of Dreiser's first advocates, agrees with this assessment. In his *Commentary* he describes Dreiser's writing as a "dogged accumulation of threadbare, undistinguished, uninspiring nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, participles, and conjunctions." Most writers work to find the perfect words to communicate ideas to their readers. Dreiser does not appear to bother. Critics see this as a fault in Dreiser's works. They consider his writing less precise and less elegant than the works of other writers. Not only do experts discredit Dreiser's style, they also disapprove of his contradictory conveyance of a deterministic philosophy. While Dreiser believed that life results from blind chance, he still evoked sympathy for this characters.

Even though Dreiser did not immediately find success as a writer, he did not get discouraged. Dreiser wrote prolifically for more than forty years. Over the years, critics saw more value in Dreiser's writing. They set aside their problems with his style to appreciate the lasting influences his messages portrayed. Today, critics note that Dreiser's greatest influences were to pave the path for writers to convey realistic images of American life and to help launch modern naturalism. Jack Salzman said in *Theodore Dreiser: The Critical Reception,* that Dreiser's "significance in the history of American letters is no longer a matter for dispute. We may continue to debate his merits as an artist, but his importance to American literature has been well established."

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2

Critical Essay #1

Henningfeld is an associate professor at Adrian College. She holds a Ph.D. in literature and writes widely for educational publishers. In this essay she examines Sister Carrie *as a tragic novel, focusing on Carrie's use of sex as capital.*

Sister Carrie, written by Theodore Dreiser from 1899 to 1900, was published by Doubleday,

Page in 1900. The novel created a stir from the moment of its publication, caused in part by a supposed attempt by the publisher to suppress the novel. The truth behind the "suppression" of *Sister Carrie* is difficult to uncover. Regardless, the novel met with mixed reviews from contemporary readers, who found the book unpleasant and gloomy. Some critics suggest that these initial negative reviews were because *Sister Carrie* was a novel ahead of its time. The novel has grown in stature over the years until it has come to be considered one of the most important American novels of the twentieth century.

Sister Carrie is the story of young Carrie Meeber, who comes to Chicago in 1889 to make her fortune. Chicago is not as she envisions it, however. In her desire for material possessions and success, she begins and leaves two different illicit affairs. By the close of the book, she is in New York, having embarked on a highly successful stage career. Even this success does not bring her happiness; the novel closes with Carrie rocking in her chair, considering her sense that there is more to life than she has experienced.

While the book received many negative reviews upon publication, it nonetheless attracted the attention of the literary establishment, igniting a controversy that still has fire. Stuart P. Sherman, in the famous and much-anthologized essay "The Barbaric Naturalism of Mr. Dreiser," takes Dreiser to task for his naturalism. He distinguishes between realism and naturalism, finding realism an acceptable form of literature and naturalism unacceptable. He writes,

A realistic novel is a representation based upon a theory of human conduct. If the theory of human conduct is adequate, the representation constitutes an addition to literature and to social history. A naturalistic novel is a representation based upon a theory of animal behavior. Since a theory of animal behavior can never be an adequate basis for a representation of the life of man in contemporary society, such a representation is a blunder.

H. L. Mencken, one of Dreiser's earliest supporters, wrote at length in response to Sherman and about *Sister Carrie* and its contribution to American literature. He writes of Sherman's criticism in "The Dreiser Bugaboo," "Only a glance is needed to show the vacuity of all this irate flubdub," before going on to connect Dreiser's realism with the classical Greek writers. He argues, "In the midst of democratic cocksureness and Christian sentimentalism, of doctrinaire shallowness and professorial smugness, he

stands for a point of view which at least has something honest and courageous about it; here, at all events, he is a realist."

It is important to understand what these writers mean when they use the term "naturalism." *The Harper Handbook to Literature* states that naturalism, a literary movement of the late nineteenth century, grew out of realism, but preferred to focus on "the fringes of society, the criminal, the fallen, the down-and-out, earning as one definition ... the phrase *sordid realism."* Further, naturalism grew as an interest in science and Darwinism grew. "Darwinism was especially important, as the naturalists perceived a person's fate as the product of blind external or biological forces, chiefly heredity and environment, but in the typical naturalistic novel chance played a large part as well." Dreiser's novels are nearly always critiqued through the naturalistic lens. Critics point to Carrie's upward rise and Hurstwood's downward spiral as the result of forces beyond their control. The chance event, such as the open safe at Hurstwood's saloon, lead him to take actions resulting in negative consequences. Carrie's chance meeting with Drouet on the street when she is out of money and looking for a job leads to her involvement with both Drouet and Hurstwood.

Although it cannot be denied that *Sister Carrie* is a good example of early twentieth-century naturalism, it is also possible for the novel to be read in different ways. Karl F. Zender, for example, argues, in *Studies in the Novel,* that the emphasis on circumstance and the de-emphasis on character "is adequate neither to the artistic power nor to the culture implications of *Sister Carrie."* Zender goes on to examine the novel as a tragedy of character caused by emotional repression. Other critics have examined the tragic nature of the novel as well. However, in general, critics see the novel as the story of Hurstwood's tragedy. It is possible to examine the novel as a tragedy in another way, one that focuses on Carrie as capitalist, engaged in the exchange of goods.

The circumstances that swirl Carrie through the novel are largely economic. The great life she imagines for herself in Chicago centers on the attainment of material goods. It is this desire that drives her away from her small town in Wisconsin and toward the bright lights of Chicago. Once in Chicago, she discovers that her sister and her husband see her as the means for their own economic security. In exchange for her small room, Carrie must produce enough capital to help her sister meet their rent.

Carrie has few resources to produce this capital. She hits the streets of Chicago, looking for work. She finally finds a job, producing shoes on an assembly line. The assembly line, as a means of production, removes the worker from the product. She is responsible for running a machine that punches the lace holes in the right upper half of a man's shoe. She becomes a machine herself, fitting leather to machine, over and over. In exchange for the mechanization of her life, she receives four dollars and fifty cents per week. She must turn over four dollars per week to her sister, leaving her with little capital or hope for economic advancement.

If, therefore, it is economic forces that allow a person to rise or fall in the culture presented in the novel, Carrie's problem becomes one of economics. What does she

have that can be exchanged for the goods she wants? Clearly the money she earns at the factory will never keep up with her material desires. When Carrie accepts the astronomical sum of twenty dollars from the drummer Drouet, she is doing more than accepting a loan. She is embarking on an economic arrangement, the first step in an exchange of capital. Quite simply, Carrie discovers that she has capital in the form of sex. In a materialistic society, sex becomes a commodity, something that can be bought, sold, and exchanged for goods.

Carrie's rise, then, is directly linked to the way she barters her sexual capital. Her appearance in the lodge theatre performance offers her the opportunity to market her sexual capital. The men in the audience all represent potential buyers. The competition for Carrie's capital renders her as a more attractive commodity to Hurstwood. As a result of her appearance on stage, Carrie finds that she can trade upward. Hurstwood offers better material conditions than those she enjoys with Drouet.

While it is true that Carrie continues to trade in on her own sexual capital throughout the book, leading eventually to her rise as a famous stage star, the story is nonetheless a tragedy. Looking at the novel as Hurstwood's tragedy, however, is too limiting. The novel as a whole can be read as the tragic results of making sex a commodity.

Dramatic literature can usually be divided into two categories, comedy and tragedy. Comedy is characterized by young love, sex, fertility, marriage, spring, and birth. Tragedy, on the other hand, is characterized by sterility, waste, and death. While comedy rejoices in each new generation, tragedy marks the end of the generation without progeny. The tragedy of *Sister Carrie* is one of sterility and death. Although sex is at the foundation of the novel, there are no pregnancies and no births. Carrie's sister and her husband are childless, and Carrie remains childless and unmarried throughout the novel. Carrie's rocking chair, in this reading, takes on new significance. Rocking chairs are often associated with nursing mothers. Carrie, however, rocks incessantly in her chair without purpose. While she wants marriage, what she obtains in exchange for her sexual capital is a place to live and clothes to wear. Her liaisons with Drouet and Hurstwood are sterile. Although there is a hint that she would like to start a relationship with Ames, that relationship remains platonic. Indeed, it is Ames himself who tells Carrie that he sees her more as the star of a drama than of the comedies she has been playing. Ames reads Carrie well. As the novel ends, Carrie is in her rocking chair, reading a tragic novel. While Hurstwood's suicide seems the more apparent tragedy, Carrie, too, is a tragic figure, locked in sterile longing and futile hope.

In sum, it is possible to read *Sister Carrie* as a cautionary tale, a lesson in what happens when a culture reduces all human interactions to the exchange of capital. In such a culture, intimate emotional and physical bonds are reduced to tradable commodities, sex can be traded for material goods, and comedy is no longer possible. Instead, what remains is a bleak and desolate picture of a fallen society, a landscape of waste and sterility.

Source: Diane Andrews Henningfeld, in an essay for *Novels for Students,* Gale, 2000.

Critical Essay #2

In the following essay, Bucco presents an overview of Sister Carrie.

In *Sister Carrie* Theodore Dreiser went beyond the Hoosier romanticism of Meredith Nicholson's "Alice of Old Vincennes" (1900) and the genteel realism of Booth Tarkington's *The Gentleman from Indiana* (1899). Growing up poor in Indiana, the day dreamy Dreiser envied the escape to the metropolis of his older brothers and sisters. Later, he drifted from one newspaper to another□Chicago, St. Louis, Pittsburgh. Charged with Balzac's *Come-die humaine,* Herbert Spencer's *First Principles,* and his own vivid memories, Dreiser began *Sister Carrie* in New York in 1899. The author based his first novel partly on his sister, Emma, who in 1886 had fled from the law with a saloon clerk. Because of the novel's sexual frankness, Dreiser's own publisher (Doubleday Page) did not promote it; but the senior reader, the writer Frank Norris, zealously sent out review copies. WhenB.W. Dodge (in 1907) and Grosset and Dunlap (in 1908) reissued the controversial book, *Sister Carrie* reached a larger public.

The novel has an hourglass structure. Carrie Meeber□pretty, eighteen, penniless, full of illusions□leaves her dull Wisconsin home in 1889 for Chicago. On the train Charles Drouet, a jaunty traveling salesman, impresses her with his worldliness and affluence. In Chicago, Carrie lives in a cramped flat with her sister and brother-in-law. Her job at a shoe factory is physically and spiritually crushing. After a period of unemployment, she allows Drouet to "keep" her. During his absences, however, she falls under the influence of Drouet's friend, a suave, middle-aged bar manager. George Hurstwood deserts his family, robs his employers, and elopes with Carrie, first to Montreal and then, after returning most of the money, to New York, where they live together for several years. As Hurstwood declines, Carrie develops. To earn money, she goes on stage, rising from chorus girl to minor acting parts. When Hurstwood, failing to find decent work, becomes too great a burden, Carrie deserts him. In time, she becomes a star of musical comedies. Meanwhile, Hurstwood sinks into beggary and suicide. In spite of her freedom and success, Carrie is lonely and unhappy.

Critics have labeled the novel's biological-environmental determinism, graphic fidelity, and compassionate point of view as the work of, respectively, a "naturalist," a "realist," a "romanticist." Consistently, Dreiser intermingles the world-as-it-is, -seems, and -should-be. Like Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Jack London, he creates characters caught in the web of causation and chance. In one of his numerous philosophical asides, the narrator informs us that physico-chemical laws underlie all activity: "Now it has been shown experimentally that a constantly subdued frame of mind produces certain poisons in the blood called katastates, just as virtuous feelings of pleasure and delight produce helpful chemicals called anastates." To evoke the illusion of mechanical motion and spiritual drift, Dreiser relies on metaphor and symbol□Carrie attracted to the magnetic city, Carrie tossed about in the sea of humanity, Carrie rocking in a chair. Against baffling forces, she is a "half-equipped little knight," a "little soldier of fortune." And as fortune propels Carrie upward, so it spins Hurstwood downward. Though the narrator avows glorious reason at the end of human evolution, at the end of the novel

he pictures a discontented Car-riefated to remain in the clutch of her powerful opportunistic instincts.

Dreiser's network of dramatic contrasts, parallels, foreshadowings, and ironies (not to mention the cryptic chapter headings his publishers requested) help unify this episodic novel. The sheer mass of detail obscures the chiasmic symmetry of Carrie's rise and Hurstwood's fall, as it screens somewhat the improbability of Hurstwood's "accidental" theft of money and his calculated "abduction" of Carrie. Still, Hurstwood's destitution and matter-of-fact death seem less melodramatic than the tacked on apostrophe sentimentalizing Carrie as no Saved Sinner or Lost Soul but rather as the Beautiful Dreamer. The awkwardness, repetition, and cliches of Dreiserian prose often grate on fine-tuned sensibilities□as when the narrator informs us that Carrie had "four dollars in money" or when a chapter begins: "The, to Carrie, very important theatrical performance was to take place at the Avery on conditions which were to make it more noteworthy than was at first anticipated." For all this, the author retains the power to endow his factories, hotels, department stores, slums, theaters, and restaurants with an extraordinary sense of life.

At first, *Sister Carrie* (in the 1901 abridged Heinemann edition) was better received in Britain than in America, though the myth of its "suppression" contributed to later interest both in America and abroad. Through *Sister Carrie* Dreiser led so-cio-literary novelists in the first decade of the 20th century into the creation of closer ties between American life and American literature. Although Dreiser did not receive the Nobel Prize, *Sister Carrie* and *An American Tragedy* are among the truly important novels in American literature. *Sister Carrie* is now available in the Pennsylvania edition (1981), which restores the novel as closely as possible to the author's more complex original manuscript. Whatever one might say about Dreiser's graceless genius, the raw integrity of *Sister Carrie* helped pave the way for the more candid, more crafted American masterpieces of the 1920s.

Source: Martin Bucco, *"Sister Carrie,* "in *Reference Guide to American Literature,* third edition, edited by Jim Kamp, St. James Press, 1994.

Quotes

"When Caroline Meeber boarded the afternoon train for Chicago her total outfit consisted of a small trunk, which was checked in the baggage car, a cheap imitation alligator skin satchel holding some minor details of the toilet, a small lunch in a paper box and a yellow leather snap purse, containing her ticket, a scrap of paper with her sister's address in Van Buren Street, and four dollars in money. It was August, 1889. She was eighteen years of age, bright, timid and full of the illusions of ignorance and youth." Chapter 1, p. 3

"For the next two days Carrie indulged in the most high-flown speculations. An excellent essay on the art of high living might well be compiled out of the thoughts of those who, like her, are anxiously anticipating the arrival of a small income. In such cases, want runs swiftly before gathering imaginative delights and privileges." Chapter 4, p. 33

"Among the forces which sweep and play throughout the universe, untutored man is but a wisp in the wind." Chapter 8, p. 81

"In considering Carrie's mental state, the culmination of reasoning which held her at anchorage in so strange a harbor, we must fail of a just appreciation if we do not give due weight to those subtle influences, not human, which environ and appeal to the young imagination when it drifts. Trite though it may seem, it is well to remember that in life, after all, we are most wholly controlled by desire." Chapter 11, p. 108

"Just then Hurstwood came in. Instinctively he felt the change in Drouet. He saw that the drummer was near to Carrie, and jealousy leaped alight in his bosom. In a flash of thought he reproached himself for having sent him back. Also, he hated him as an intruder." Chapter 19, p. 213

"To understand the power of Hurstwood's affection one must understand the man of the world. He was no longer young. He was no longer youthful in spirit, but he carried in his memory some old fancies which were of the day of his love time." Chapter 22, p. 232

"It was not for her to see the wellspring of human passion. A real flame of love is a subtle thing. It burns as a will-o'-the-wisp, dancing onward to fairy lands of delight. It roars as a furnace. Too often jealousy is the quality upon which it feeds." Chapter 24, p. 265

"Those who have never heard that solemn voice of the ghostly clock of the mind which ticks with awful distinctness 'thou shalt,' 'thou shalt not,' 'thou shalt,' 'thou shalt not,' are in not position to judge." Chapter 29, p. 306

"How to go about getting anything was a bitter thought. Would he have to go personally and ask; wait outside an office door, and then, distinguished and affluent-looking, announce that he was looking for something to do? He strained painfully at the thought. No, he could not do that." Chapter 37, p. 403

"What Hurstwood got as a result of this determination was more self-assurances that each particular day was not the day. His clothes took on a shabbier tinge and by September first he was rather poorly dressed at his best. At the same time Carrie passed with him through thirty gray days of mental distress." Chapter 42, p. 454

"Then something like bereaved affection and self-pity swept over him.

'She needn't have gone away,' he said. 'I'd have got something.' He sat a long while without rocking, and then added quite clearly to himself—'I tried, didn't I?'" Chapter 45, p. 507

"It seemed as if he thought for awhile for now he arose and turned the gas out, standing calmly in the blackness, hidden from view. After a few moments in which he reviewed nothing, but merely hesitated, he turned the gas on again, but applying no match. Even then he stood there, hidden wholly in that kindness which is night, while the uprising fumes filled the room. When the odor reached his nostrils he quit his attitude and fumbled for the bed.

'What's the use,' he said wearily, as he stretched himself to rest." Chapter 50, p. 575

Adaptations

Blackstone Audio Books offers *Sister Carrie* on audiocassette, which was produced in 1989.

time, she has her first acting experience under the stage name Drouet has given her, "Carrie Madenda."

Topics for Further Study

Andrew Delbanco notes in his introduction to the 1999 Modern Library's Edition of *Sister Carrie* that "Carrie's fate ... has been set in motion ... by her failure to understand ... that a woman does not look a strange man steadily in the eye without signaling to him that she is ready to be included in the system of exchange." Psychologists today would call Carrie's eye contact a form of nonverbal communication. Research the forms of nonverbal communication psychologists have identified. Give examples of the types of messages psychologists believe people are sending when they use different nonverbal clues. What kind of nonverbal clue could Carrie have sent if she did not want to interact with Drouet?

Today, critics credit Dreiser with paving the way for writers who came after him to write realistically about life in America. Research late nineteenth-century life in America. Make at least three comparisons between Carrie's life and the life of a typical nineteenth-century American that would support critics' view of Dreiser's realistic portrayal of the American way of life.

Carrie was most impressed by the clothes people wore. During the late 1800s, fashions actually did make a statement about a person's socioeconomic status. Read about fashion and social status in the late nineteenth century. Write a paper that discusses the differences in clothes among lower, middle, and upper class people; the changes in the clothing industry that allowed for new looks in clothing; and the changes in women's fashions in particular.

Draw three portraits of Carrie that portray the three distinct periods in her life: before Drouet's influence, as a kept woman, and as an actress. Your drawings must accurately reflect both knowledge of Carrie's life and an understanding of the relationship between fashion and a person's status.

Depict through illustrations Carrie's rise to and Hurstwood's fall from social acceptance. Be sure that your drawings are accurate representations of the time in which events took place.

Dreiser is said to have been an "agnostic." What is an agnostic? What personal beliefs do you find in Dreiser's biographical sketches that would support his being an agnostic? How do you see Dreiser's agnosticism influencing his work in *Sister Carrie?*

Many reviewers describe Dreiser's work using such descriptive nouns as Darwinian, pessimistic determinism, naturalism, and agnosticism. Compare and contrast these terms. Describe specific events from *Sister Carrie* that would support or repudiate the use of any of these terms in describing this work.

Carrie often felt the effects of gender inequity in her endeavors. While women's rights were just beginning to be an issue at the time this book was published, there were certain events occurring that brought the idea of equal rights for women to the forefront.

Trace the history of the women's rights movement beginning with the first political convention held in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, and ending with the current decade.

Compare and Contrast

Late 1800s: Women's fashions favor Victorian styles. Dress indicates a woman's status. Upper-and middle-class women wear constrictive underclothing (corsets), high-heeled shoes, and elaborate, vividly colored dresses made of luxurious fabrics.

Early 1900s: As women become more involved in leisure activities, such as sports, and take on new roles in society, such as office workers and students, their fashions evolve to freer, less structured styles. The styles include loose bloomers instead of corsets, less bulky skirts, and shirtwaist blouses. Shoes are flatter and more feminine.

Late 1900s: Women become more health conscious and involved in professional careers; they begin to define their own unique styles of fashion. Clothing varies from jeans to pants to short and full-length skirts. Form-fitting clothes that show off a woman's figure are popular.

Late 1800s: The arts become a popular form of entertainment. Drama, musical comedy, and vaudeville acts proliferate. Modern art and architecture reflect simplicity and realism. A movement from tradition and gentility begins.

Early 1900s: The Progressive Era begins. Artists bring social relevancy to their work.

Blacks, immigrants and women contribute in unprecedented ways, breaking color, cultural, and gender barriers.

Late 1900s: Art becomes a bigger cultural presence: bigger in scope, ambition, theme, budget, and promotion. Media coverage makes all forms of art more accessible than ever before. People have more money to spend as a result of the healthy economy, and they are ready to enjoy themselves. They buy fine art and electronic gadgets; they enjoy huge film and television productions. Overall, arts and leisure of the late 1900s reflect America's obsession with wealth and success.

Late 1800s: The United States is considered the leader in manufacturing and has the largest economy in the world.

Early 1900s: Automotive leader Henry Ford introduces the moving assembly line, which results in greater productivity, more consistent quality, higher wages for workers, and lower prices for the consumer.

Late 1900s: Advanced technology, such as computers, aid in greater information access and allow for expansion of commerce and economy

What Do I Read Next?

Like *Sister Carrie,* Dreiser's second novel, *Jennie Gerhardt,* draws from experiences in Dreiser's sisters' lives. Published in 1911, the story centers on Jennie, the poor and immoral daughter of an immigrant who detests the methods by which his daughter tries to achieve happiness.

Jennie Gerhardt has been compared to Thomas Hardy's 1919 classic, *Tess of the D 'Urbervilles,* if only because of the similarities between their main characters. Like Jennie, Tess comes from a common background. She admits to her husband that she has had a child out of wedlock, who died in infancy. Her husband leaves her. In order to save her family, she goes to live as the mistress of the wealthy Alec D'Urberville, the father of the dead child.

Jude the Obscure, another of Thomas Hardy's books, is similar to *Sister Carrie.* Published in 1919, the story is about a young man and his unhappy experiences with love, sex, destiny, and social status.

The Awakening, Kate Chopin's highly controversial novel published in 1899, tells the story of Edna Pontellier, a married woman who experiences a summer romance and returns to the city a changed woman. She turns her back on her old life□family, social involvement, and traditional morals□to search for self-fulfillment through new love, life ventures, and sexual activity.

Further Study

Theodore Dreiser, *Letters of Theodore Dreiser,* edited by Robert H. Elias, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959. Contains Dreiser's communications with friends over the years. Especially pertinent are the references to Doubleday's suppression of *Sister Carrie* after it was already in print.

Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie,* University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

This work expands characters Carrie and Hurstwood through a research team's efforts to reconstruct portions of the novel that reviewers edited in the publishing process.

Philip L. Gerber, *Plots and Characters in the Fiction of*

Theodore Dreiser, Archon, 1977.

A quick reference for students providing a synopsis of every short story and novel by Dreiser as well as details about every character.

Philip L. Gerber, *Theodore Dreiser,* Twayne, 1964. A good introduction to the life and literature of Dreiser, providing biographical detail as well as critical analysis.

Herbert G. Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America,* Knopf, 1976.

As a historian, Gutman offers a critical view of the beliefs and behaviors of various labor groups throughout American history in relationship to class, race, religion, and ideology.

New Essays on Sister Carrie, edited by Donald Pizer, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

A collection of late-twentieth-century essays on *Sister Carrie,* including a useful bibliography.

Donald Pizer, *Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature,* revised edition, Southern Illinois University Press, 1984.

An important study of a literary period by a major

scholar of Dreiser's work.

Joan L. Severa, et. al., *Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion, 1840-1900,* Kent State University Press, 1997.

The author presents fashions through photographs arranged by decades and comments on the effects of material culture, expectations of society, and socioeconomic conditions that affected choices of style.

Bibliography

Theodore Dreiser: The Critical Reception, edited by Jack Salzman, David Lewis, 1972.

H. L. Mencken, Commentary in *Sister Carrie,* Modern Library Paperback Edition, 1999, pp. xxxvii-lxxx.

H. L. Mencken, "The Dreiser Bugaboo," in *The Stature of Theodore Dreiser,* edited by Alfred Kazin and Charles Shapiro, Indiana University Press, 1955, pp. 84-91.

"Naturalism," in *The Harper Handbook to Literature,* edited by Northrup Frye, et. al., Longman, 1997, pp. 313-14.

Stuart P. Sherman, "The Barbaric Naturalism of Mr. Dreiser," in *The Stature of Theodore Dreiser,* edited by Alfred Kazin and Charles Shapiro, Indiana University Press, 1955, pp. 71-80.

Karl F. Zender, "Walking Away from the Impossible Thing: Identity and Denial in *Sister Carrie,* "in *Studies in the Novel,* Vol. 30, No. 1, Spring, 1998, pp. 63-76.

Copyright Information

This Premium Study Guide is an offprint from *Novels for Students*.

Project Editor
David Galens

Editorial
Sara Constantakis, Elizabeth A. Cranston, Kristen A. Dorsch, Anne Marie Hacht, Madeline S. Harris, Arlene Johnson, Michelle Kazensky, Ira Mark Milne, Polly Rapp, Pam Revitzer, Mary Ruby, Kathy Sauer, Jennifer Smith, Daniel Toronto, Carol Ullmann

Research
Michelle Campbell, Nicodemus Ford, Sarah Genik, Tamara C. Nott, Tracie Richardson

Data Capture
Beverly Jendrowski

Permissions
Mary Ann Bahr, Margaret Chamberlain, Kim Davis, Debra Freitas, Lori Hines, Jackie Jones, Jacqueline Key, Shalice Shah-Caldwell

Imaging and Multimedia
Randy Bassett, Dean Dauphinais, Robert Duncan, Leitha Etheridge-Sims, Mary Grimes, Lezlie Light, Jeffrey Matlock, Dan Newell, Dave Oblender, Christine O'Bryan, Kelly A. Quin, Luke Rademacher, Robyn V. Young

Product Design
Michelle DiMercurio, Pamela A. E. Galbreath, Michael Logusz

Manufacturing
Stacy Melson

For more information, contact
The Gale Group, Inc
27500 Drake Rd.
Farmington Hills, MI 48334-3535
Or you can visit our Internet site at
http://www.gale.com

Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

Editor, Novels for Students
Gale Group
27500 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535