

The Waste Lands Study Guide

The Waste Lands by Stephen King

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Plot Summary

Stephen King's novel "The Waste Lands" is the third book in a series that follows Roland's quest for the Dark Tower. Roland and his companions hope that by reaching this tower, they can set right the terrible changes that are occurring in Roland's world. Throughout their journey, Roland and his companions encounter insane mechanical bears, sick pirates, and a monorail train on a suicide mission. The novel ends with much left unfinished and the characters in a precarious situation.

In the beginning of their adventure, Roland and his traveling companions Eddie and Susannah are attacked by and kill an insane mechanical bear. Roland believes this bear was one of the Twelve Guardians. These guardians were created to guard the Twelve Portals. By following this bear's tracks, Roland and his companions are able to locate the Portal that the bear once guarded. From this location, they start their journey down the Beam toward the Dark Tower.

During their journey, Jake, a young man who had met Roland at a prior time at a way station, joins Eddie, Susannah, and Roland. Responding to the power of ka or fate, Jake is led to a place on Earth where he can be pulled into Roland's world. Before Jake is pulled into Roland's world, both he and Roland were suffering with a divided memory of their time at the way station. When Jake enters Roland's world, their memories are healed. After Jake is added to the group, they reach the town of River Crossing. The people of this town feed the travelers richly and offer blessings for their journey. During their short stay, the people of River Crossing give Roland and his group information about the city of Lud.

Conditions are different, however, when the group reaches the city of Lud. In this city, the Grays, one of the warring groups that live in Lud, take Jake captive. Roland, with the help of Oy, the billy-bumbler, frees Jake from the Grays. Once Roland, Jake, and Oy are reunited with Susannah and Eddie, they board the monorail, Blaine, who agrees to take them through the wastelands. Blaine, however, has set off poisonous gas in an effort to destroy all of the inhabitants of Lud. During their journey, Roland and his group learn that Blaine, who has some sort of intelligence and rudimentary emotions, plans to commit suicide and take his passengers to their deaths with him. Roland makes a bargain with the train that if they are able to come up with a riddle that Blaine is unable to answer, they will earn a safe passage. It is at this point that the novel ends.



Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 1-3

Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 1-3 Summary

In the opening of the book, Susannah and Roland have traveled about a mile from their campsite to a clearing where Roland is schooling Susannah in shooting technique. Susannah is at first not as serious about her shooting as Roland wants her to be. He cures this joviality by reminding Susannah of people who were cruel to her in the past. These memories anger Susannah and she shoots well, hitting five of the targets and clipping the final one. Roland is pleased with Susannah's shooting efforts but Susannah is angry with Roland for bringing to mind her past pain.

As they talk after the lesson, Susannah senses there is something wrong with Roland. After some consideration, Roland finally decides to tell Susannah the truth that he feels he is going crazy. He is interrupted, however, by the sound of a tree falling in the forest. As Susannah realizes the sound, along with that of more trees falling, came from the location of their camp, she tries to turn her wheelchair toward camp. Roland pulls her from the chair and runs with her toward the camp.

In Chapter 2, the reader is introduced to Mir, the age-old bear that has terrorized the great west woods for centuries. The bear, who is not only going mad, but is also infested with parasites, is headed toward Eddie, Susannah, and Roland's camp. In Chapter 3, Eddie has begun carving again for the first time since he was a child. He had stopped because his older brother had hated his carving and kidded him because of his talent. Eddie feels he must respect his older brother because his brother was in charge of watching out for Eddie. A drunk driver killed Eddie's older sister, Gloria Dean, when she was six. Eddie and Henry's mother tells them often that Gloria was killed because there was no one to watch out for her. She has given Henry the job of being sure that Eddie stays safe.

Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 1-3 Analysis

In Chapter 1, the reader begins to learn some of the background that connects Eddie, Roland and Susannah. Roland, an expert gunslinger, has injured his hand in some sort of attack by creatures called lobstrosities. While he is healing from the attack, Roland teaches Eddie and Susannah how to shoot, hunt, prepare game, and use every part of an animal to the fullest extent. Although Roland does not appear to be related to Eddie or Susannah, Eddie and Susannah seem to have a close relationship of some sort. It also appears the Roland knows Susannah from the past, at a point when she went by the name of Odetta or Detta Walker. He is also aware of a time in her life when she was abused by a group of people called honk mahfahs.

In this section Roland demonstrates his ability to teach well and bring out the best in his pupils. Susannah is not taking the lesson as seriously as he'd like so he reminds her of



the people who have hurt her in the past. Although Susannah is hurt by the memories, she uses her anger to shoot well. Notice also Roland's desire to tell Susannah that he is afraid that he is going insane.

Also, in this section of three chapters, each chapter is almost completely unrelated. Chapter 1 addresses Susannah's shooting lessons, with only a teaser at the end when trees begin to fall. Chapter 2 addresses the background of the bear. It is only at the end of this chapter that the reader begins to realize that it is this bear that is creating the disturbance that Susannah and Roland have heard in the first chapter. Chapter 3, on the other hand, discusses the relationship between Eddie and his older brother Henry, a topic that appears unrelated to the bear or Susannah's shooting lessons.

The relationship between Eddie and Henry is an interesting sidetrack that Stephen King takes in the third chapter. Eddie loves his brother dearly and does not want to do anything that would upset him. Because Henry has kidded Eddie both about his carving and abilities in basketball Eddie gives up both these activities to please his brother. The two have a sister who was killed by a drunk driver. As a result Henry has been put in charge of looking out for Eddie to make sure nothing happens to him. Notice that King capitalizes the words *Watching Out* when he refers to the assignment Henry is given. This use of capitalization enforces the importance of Henry's assignment. If anything were to happen to Eddie, it is insinuated that it would be Henry's fault.



Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 4 - 13

Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 4 - 13 Summary

In Chapter 4, Eddie finds a piece of wood in which he "sees" something that can be carved from the wood. Although Henry is dead and Eddie realizes he is free from his brother's kidding, he is still self-conscious when Susannah and Roland see him whittling. In Chapter 5, Eddie hears trees falling and realizes there is a huge creature headed straight toward him. Eddie debates for a moment whether he should run or try to kill the bear with one of Roland's guns. As he thinks, he realizes his best option is to climb a tree out of the bear's reach. When he finally reaches the safety of height, Eddie gets a good look at the monster. It is a huge bear with what appears to be a radar-dish growing out of its skull. The bear has the look of madness in its eye. It is sneezing worm-infested phlegm from its nose and mouth. As Eddie studies the bear, the bear begins to shake the tree in which Eddie is perched.

In Chapter 7, Susannah and Roland enter the clearing just in time to see the bear begin shaking the tree with Eddie perched at its top. Roland orders Susannah to shoot the bear in the rump. When it turns, Roland tells her to shoot the dish on the bear's head. Susannah shoots the bear twice in the backside and it turns to charge at her and Roland. She then shoots the object on the bear's head. As Chapter 8 opens, her bullet has hit the bear in its intended location and the three watch the bear die. In Chapter 9, they examine the bear and discover a metal tag, which identifies the bear as the property of North Central Positronics, LTD. Its name is Shardik. As Roland starts to make plans to move the camp, he falls to the ground with his head in his hands.

In Chapter 10, Roland begins talking about a boy, and then faints. In Chapter 11, Eddie and Susannah try to make Roland talk about what is causing his disturbances. In Chapter 12, Roland finally talks to Eddie and Susannah. He believes this bear or robot was one of Twelve Guardians built to guard one of the Twelve Portals leading in and out of the world. By drawing a diagram of these portals, Roland describes where the Dark Tower is located. In Chapter 13, Roland admits that he believed the stories of the Twelve Guardians were just fables. Now that he has proof that the Guardian exists, Roland hopes to backtrack the bear's path to the portal it guarded. Once he finds this portal, he hopes to locate the Dark Tower.

Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 4 - 13 Analysis

In this section of chapters, Roland finally begins to talk to Susannah and Eddie about what is going on in his mind. He first tells them about the stories he heard from his nursemaid and the household cook about the Twelve Guardians. He admits that he believed these stories were just fables. Now that he has proof that the Twelve Guardians existed, he also believes that he has proof that the Dark Tower exists. Roland tells Susannah and Eddie that his goal is to back track the bear's trail, and then



locate the tower. Although he has not told Eddie and Susannah much about the boy yet, the reader knows that Roland has some sort of division of the mind about whether or not the still unknown boy is alive or not.

Notice Susannah's reaction after she successfully kills the bear. Although she was at first afraid she would miss the animal, she is empowered by her successful shooting. Susannah feels the emotional coldness of her action of killing and wonders how Roland can stand the knowledge that he has killed so many. She keeps the unwanted knowledge that she would welcome the opportunity to use her shooting skills again to herself.



Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 14 - 32

Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 14 - 32 Summary

In Chapter 14, Roland tells Eddie and Susannah the story of tracking Walter. He comes to a way station where his memory divides. In one story, Roland stays only a night at the way station. In the other story, Roland meets a boy from New York City named Jake. The boy comes from New York to Roland's world when he is pushed in front of a car by Walter and killed. In Chapter 15, Roland tells Susannah and Eddie that after the boy was killed in his world, Roland caught up with Walter, but Walter was dead. At this point Roland took Walter's jawbone from his skull.

In Chapter 16, Eddie tries to convince Roland that he should try to forget the doubled or divided memories he is having. As they talk Roland throws the jawbone into the fire. In Chapter 17, Eddie watches as the jawbone turns into the shape of a key, and then a rose. In Chapter 18, Roland tells Eddie and Susannah that his father's voice told him to throw the bone into the fire. Only Eddie has noticed the shapes made by the burning bone. He feels a strong need to remember the shapes that he saw.

In Chapter 19, Eddie has a dream that he was in New York. He walks along a street carrying a book with the images of a key, a rose and a door stamped on it. He finds himself at Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. The door is locked, but Eddie has the key. Once the door is open, the deli turns into a field in which Eddie sees the Dark Tower. Eddie is wakened from his dream by the sound of the mechanical bear, Shardik, announcing its arrival at shutdown time. In Chapters 20 - 24, Eddie, Susannah, and Roland move away from their new campsite away from the bear's noise. They follow the bear's tracks back to the portal that it had been created to protect. In Chapter 25, the group begins hearing the noise of machinery. In Chapter 26, Eddie and Roland go to investigate the noises they hear. They discover a metal box like a subway station painted with yellow and black horizontal lines. In front of this box a variety of robotic animals move around. Roland has Eddie shoot all of these animals. In Chapter 27, Eddie goes after Susannah's wheelchair alone so that he can calm down after the excitement and rush of killing the mechanical animals.

In Chapter 28, Roland talks to Eddie and Susannah about the Beams. The Great Old Ones also created these Beams in an effort to bind their world together. By following the magnetism of these Beams, they will arrive at the Dark Tower. In Chapter 29, Susannah awakens Eddie from a dream about New York. Roland is talking in his sleep about the boy, Jake. In Chapter 30, Roland shows Eddie and Susannah how to determine the direction of the Beam, then they start off in the direction of the Dark Tower. In Chapter 31, Eddie stops the group to remove a piece of wood from a tree that he believes can be carved into the key that he saw in the fire and his dreams. In Chapter 32, Eddie begins work carving the key as Roland continues to fight with his doubled memories of the boy Jake.



Book 1, Part 1, Chapters 14 - 32 Analysis

In this conclusion of the first part of Book I it becomes very clear that much of the meaning and themes of the book will be based on fate and dreams. For instance, in the twenty-third chapter of this first part Roland introduces Eddie and Susannah to the idea of ka-tet. This word indicates a group of people brought together by fate or destiny. This might equate to the modern idea of being in the right place at the right time, the only difference being that Roland seems to believe that there is some force that draws people to the spot where they should be.

Dreams and visions also seem to be very important to the main theme of the book. For instance, it is through Roland's dreams that Eddie and Susannah realize how troubled he is concerning the matter of his doubled memories and the boy, Jake. In addition to Roland's dreams, Eddie also has dreams that appear to be full of symbolism. In one dream he is walking in New York and comes to a deli that he must have a key to open the door. The key required is the same key Eddie sees in the fire when Roland burns Walter's jawbone. Once Eddie opens the door, he finds the Dark Tower. This key and the need for Eddie to carve the key himself grow stronger as the section progresses.

Notice also that while dealing with his present problems, Eddie is also faced with dealing with the ghosts of his childhood. He feels self-conscious whittling because his older brother would heckle him and make fun of his talent. However, it appears that it is this very talent that will help the group to achieve their goals. With Susannah and Roland's help, Eddie begins to try to put the hateful voice of his older brother behind him and concentrate on the future.

Another theme that is introduced in this section is the idea of a world that is falling apart. Roland's world is built upon things created thousands of years ago by people with the intelligence of gods. Now these things, such as the binding ability of the Beams, are falling apart. The madness and parasite infection of the guardian bear Shardik is another example of this disintegration. Roland, Eddie and Susannah also hear evidence of the effect that time has had on the machinery of Roland's country when they stand before the portal once guarded by Shardik. The mechanical moaning and groaning coming from the portal are evidence the machinery is not running at peak effectiveness. The collection of broken and malfunctioning robot animals circling in front of the portal also gives evidence to the age and the dilapidated state of the equipment vital to the harmony of this world.



Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 1 - 15

Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 1 - 15 Summary

In this first chapter of Part 2 of the first book the reader is introduced to Roland's boy, Jake. Jake is a student in the affluent Piper School, but he feels he is going crazy. He is hearing voices in his head telling him conflicting stories of his past. He is being told by these voices he was hit by a car and killed. He also has some memory of a way station. In Chapter 2, Jake realizes the Final Essay he has written is nothing but the ranting of a mad person. On his title page, he has pasted a picture of a door and an Amtrak train. In Chapter 3 Jake reads the text of his essay, a collection of riddles and repetitive statements written in poem form. In his fear, Jake asks permission to leave the room, and never returns. In Chapter 4, Jake hears Roland's voice telling him that he was not crazy and that it was time for him to come home. Jake starts to walk and hopes he is going in the correct direction.

In Chapter 5, King details the events of May 9, 1977, the day on which Jack Mort pushed Jake in front of a car, killing him. As the event is described it appears that Jake already knew what was going to happen to him. It is at the point that Jake is standing on the sidewalk waiting for the priest to push him into the street that his memory divides. In Chapter 6, as Jake goes through his school day the day of the accident he has strange memories float to the surface of his mind. Although he is at school, he also knows what he is doing in Roland's world. It is at this point that Jake becomes obsessed with doors. Once at home, he becomes convinced that if he passes through the pantry door, he will be back with Roland. In Chapter 7, Jake continues to fight with the contradicting memories in his mind. Chapter 8 returns to the day when Jake left school during his finals. He admits that he has given up the battle against his divided memories.

In Chapter 9, Jake realizes what a beautiful day it is. He also realizes that the arguing voices have temporarily stopped. In Chapter 10, Jake identifies the joy he feels in his soul as a "whiteness." In Chapters 11 - 13, Jake walks, guided by ka-tet until he reaches a bookstore. He finds in this store the books Charlie the Choo-Choo and Riddle-De-Dum! Brain-Twisters and Puzzles for Everyone. In Chapter 14, Jake examines the riddle book when he leaves the bookstore. He discovers that the answers have been torn out of the back of the book. In Chapter 15, Jake continues to walk. He begins to realize he again knows what is going to happen in advance. As he keeps on walking, Jake suddenly realizes that the place he is going is a delicatessen. When he reaches the place he believes the deli should be, however, he finds that the building has been demolished.

Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 1 - 15 Analysis

Perhaps the most important things to note in this section of chapters is the parallelism between Eddie's dream of being in New York and Jake's actual walk through New York



after he leaves school. Remember that in his dream Eddie looks at himself in a mirror and sees himself as Jake, wearing Jake's unofficial school uniform, a blue blazer, white shirt, gray dress pants and a red tie. Like Jake, Eddie also visits Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. Unlike Jake, however, Eddie uses a key to unlock the deli and finds himself in a field where the Dark Tower is located. In Jake's time, however, the deli building has been demolished.

Like Roland, Jake is also having troubles with a doubled or divided memory. Jake has memories both of being killed and of not being killed. Jake, like Roland, hears voices arguing in his head. Jake's voices give him conflicting views of whether or not he is alive. The voices in Roland's head also argue whether Jake is alive or dead. The divided memories that the two men include the same set of circumstances. It appears that the two have possibly met each other since these conflicting memories involve each other.

A final interesting thing to note in this section is the contrast between the order and perfection of The Piper School and the confusion and disorder of Jake's mind. King makes a point to mention how proud Jake's father is when his son is accepted to attend The Piper School. Everything about the school is acceptable, polite, and mature. The students are not even allowed to voice their need to go to the restroom and they must instead ask to step out of the room for a moment. All of this etiquette is in stark contrast with the confusion and jumbled thinking going on in Jake's mind. He firmly believes that he will wind up in a sanitarium as a result of his behavior, which he considers to be very out of place at The Piper School.



Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 16 - 23

Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 16 - 23 Summary

In Chapter 16, Jake is at first dismayed to find the deli he had been expecting to find has been demolished. He climbs over the fence surrounding the remains of the building. Jake feels there is some sort of power in this lot. Everything in the lot seems to be radiating with some sort of inner glow. There is also a humming sound, like the sound of thousands of voices singing. Jake begins to realize he can see faces in the things that surround him. In Chapter 17, Jake picks up the key. It is the one he has seen in his dreams. He approaches the rose, which opens to display a blazing yellow light. Jake begins to get the feeling that there is something about to go terribly wrong. He feels a need to protect the rose.

In Chapter 18, Jake regains consciousness. Although he can remember the supernatural feeling of the empty lot, the magic is now gone and he sees only the remains of the deli around him. In Chapter 19, Jake returns to his home. For the first time, Jake stands up for himself against his father. In Chapter 20, the housekeeper Mrs. Shaw comes with Jake's dinner. She also shows Jake his graded Final Essay in English that Jake's French teacher brought to him. Ms. Avery has given Jake an A+ on this paper. The teacher's comment that the paper is "stunningly original and richly symbolic" makes Jake laugh madly. In Chapter 21, both of Jake's parents visit with him shortly in his room.

In Chapter 22, Jake looks through the book Charlie the Choo-Choo. He does not trust the smile on the face of the train pictured on the front of this book. In Chapter 23, Jake tries to sleep but is unable because the arguing voices in his head keep him awake. Jake has an idea and gets the silver key he found in the deserted lot out of his pants pocket. As soon as it is in his hand, the voices in Jake's head stop. In his head, Jake thinks to himself, as if he is speaking to someone else, to tell him to hold the key because it will stop the voices.

Book 1, Part 2, Chapters 16 - 23 Analysis

The focal point of this section of chapters is the time that Jake spends in the deserted lot where Tom and Gerry's Deli formerly stood. Remember that it was to this deli that Eddie traveled in his dream about New York in Chapter 19 of Book 1, Part 1. Eddie dreams of having a key that unlocks the door to the deli, revealing the Dark Tower. Jake, on the other hand, finds a key in this deserted lot. Although it is unsure what role this key will play, Jake does discover that when he has contact with the key, the voices arguing in his mind are silenced.

Notice also in this scene where Jake visits the lot of the former deli, there are many references to the things that he happened in Roland's world. For instance, there is a sign



that advertises Turtle Bay Luxury Condominiums. Someone has written in spray paint on the sign part of the lines that Roland recited about the turtle that served as a Guardian in his world. In these same spray painted lines are a reference to the Beam, which coincides with the Beam that Roland, Eddie and Susannah are following to the Dark Tower.

There are details in the Charlie the Choo-Choo story that will be important later in the book. First, note that the train belongs to the Mid-World Railway Company. The train's run goes to Topeka. As he scans the children's book, Jake's mind goes back to his Final Essay where he has written that he believes the Blaine is dangerous. This description of the animated train in the children's book appears to connect in Jake's brain with the Blaine that he has written about in his essay. Also note that the girl's name in the book is Susannah, the same as the lady who is now traveling with Roland and Eddie.

Consider also Jake's reaction to his teacher's high praise of his Final Essay. Jake believes this essay to be a collection of nonsense. His teacher, however, reads into the essay much more than even Jake intended. The teacher sees the work as being highly intelligent and symbolic. She believes the symbolism refers to Jake's school and home life. The essay is symbolic, but it is symbolic of things of which the teacher is not aware and things that not even Jake fully understands.



Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 1 - 15

Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 1 - 15 Summary

In Chapter 1, Eddie is awakened by a voice instructing him to tell Roland to hold the key because it will make the voices go away. Although Eddie does not know from whom this suggestion came, he is willing to try anything to help his friend recapture his sanity. When Roland takes the key, the voices stop, just as Jake had told Eddie they would. In Chapter 2, Roland sleeps with the key. It is his first night of sleep in several months. In Chapter 3, Jake dreams he finds a stone marker with the words "TRAVELER, BEYOND LIES MID-WORLD." He then moves on to a basketball game in progress in a setting similar to that of the portal the bear was protecting. The boy playing basketball tells Jake he is supposed to guide Jake. He tells Jake he must do his best and indicates that if all goes well, Jake may be reunited with the gunslinger he remembers from the way station.

Jake realizes when he wakes up in Chapter 4 that the boy in his dream gave him the answer to Aaron Deepneau's riddle. Jake also has fresh scratches on his knees, scratches he assumes he got during the dream. In Chapter 5, Jake gets ready and leaves the house before his parents wake. He packs only a change of clothes, the riddle book, and Charlie the Choo-Choo. Just before he leaves the house in Chapter 6, Jake takes his father's gun. Jake then sets out on his journey, unknowingly following the path of the Beam.

In Chapter 7, Eddie, Susannah and Roland discover a road they can follow. Roland suspects this may be the beginning of the Great Road. In this chapter, Roland also returns the key to Eddie so he can finish his work on it. Eddie admits he is afraid he will not carve the key correctly and it will not work when his group needs it to. Eddie also tells his friends he's been having dreams of The Mansion, a haunted house he and his brother once visited when he was a child. He tells them that Jake has been in his dreams. In Chapter 8, Eddie, Roland and Susannah discover the same gray stone Jake saw in his dream. In Chapter 9, Roland tells Eddie and Susannah a little of what he knows about Mid-World. In Chapter 10, Eddie is frustrated with his work on the key. When he sleeps, he has dreams of Jake and the Markey Avenue playground.

In Chapters 11 and 12 Jake wastes time while he waits for the time to come when he is supposed to meet the boy from his dreams. In Chapter 13 Jake has reached Co-op City. Meanwhile, in Chapter 14, Eddie, Roland and Susannah have reached a spot where they can see the city that Roland told them about. From a distance, this city reminds Eddie and Susannah of New York City. In Chapter 15, Eddie and Susannah notice that Roland is looking at what he calls a speaking ring, a ring of standing rocks. Eddie realizes it is this place where Jake will try to come back to Roland's world. Eddie becomes hysterical because he understands the key that he is unable to finish is needed to help Jake enter their world. Roland forces Eddie to face his fear and realize he must be in control of himself.



Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 1 - 15 Analysis

Up until this point in the story the stories of Eddie, Susannah and Roland, and that of Jake have been relatively divided. This division is shown most clearly by the structure of the book. Part 1 of this first book dealt with Susannah, Eddie and Roland while Part 2 dealt with Jake. In this third part of the first book, however, King begins to intersperse information about Eddie, Susannah and Roland with that of Jake. This structure exemplifies the idea that these people are growing closer and closer to one another. They will eventually reach a point where their paths will cross. It is also in this part of the book that Eddie realizes that he has been communicating with Jake through his dreams. He also realizes that this boy is the Jake that Roland has told them about. Although they are in two different worlds, Susannah, Eddie and Roland, and Jake are all traveling in the same direction along the Beam. In essence, they are all traveling toward a meeting point between the two worlds.

It is also important in this section that Roland forces Eddie to face his fear. Since his older brother treats him as a child, Eddie is still unsure about his whittling skills. He knows however that it is he that must finish the key that will allow the boy to come safely into Roland's world. At the point when Eddie and his group reach the speaking ring and Eddie realizes it is here that Jake will try to pass to their world, he becomes hysterical. Although Roland's actions may seem cruel, they are similar to his actions with Susannah when wanted her to shoot well. By bringing Eddie to a point where he had to face reality and turn his back on his childhood, Roland gives Eddie the clear mindedness he needs to finish the key properly.



Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 16 - 44

Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 16 - 44 Summary

In Chapter 16, Jake gets directions to Markey Avenue from an elderly gentleman. In Chapter 17, Roland builds a fire in order for Eddie to have light to work on the key. In Chapter 18, Eddie wishes on the first star of the night for the courage to finish the key. He returns to camp and finishes the key. Even when he is done, Eddie has the feeling it is not quite right. He then sharpens the end of a stick. In Chapter 19, Roland wakes Eddie and Susannah early to reach the speaking ring in time. As they travel they begin to hear a rhythmic sound coming from the city of Lud.

In Chapter 20, Jake meets up with the teenaged Eddie in front of The Majestic Theatre on Markey Avenue. In Chapter 21, Henry, Eddie's brother, is teasing the girl working the ticket booth at the Majestic. In Chapter 22, Jake hears Eddie ask Henry if they are still going to the haunted house known as the Mansion. After Eddie lets Henry win at a game of one-on-one basketball, Henry agrees to go with him to the Mansion. In Chapter 23, Susannah, Eddie and Roland have reached the speaking ring. Roland tells Eddie and Susannah that the ring is protected by a demon. Susannah must call out Detta Walker to help keep the demon from attacking Eddie as he helps bring Jake from the other world.

In Chapter 24, Jake recognizes The Mansion as the place that he must pass through to enter the other world. Jake fears the house because he feels that it is alive. As soon as Henry and Eddie leave, Jake approaches the house. In Chapter 25, the demon heads for the speaking ring as Eddie draws in the dirt in this ring with his stick. Susannah distracts the demon from Eddie with the offer of sex. As Susannah keeps the demon busy, Eddie draws a door in the dirt. In Chapters 26 and 27 Jake enters The Mansion and the door slams shut behind him. In Chapter 28, Susannah does not allow the demon to get the best of her. She uses her knowledge from her days as Detta Walker to keep the demon away from Eddie.

Back inside the haunted house in Chapter 29, Jake finds a door in the house with the words "THE BOY" written on it. As he finds this door, the doorkeeper, who has disguised himself as a haunted house, begins to come after Jake. As Jake tries desperately to reach the door and unlock it, he drops the key between two floorboards. In Chapter 30, Eddie realizes Jake is in trouble. Susannah continues to hold the demon in her sexual grip. In Chapter 31, as Eddie finishes drawing the door, it turns into a real door. Eddie peeks through the keyhole and sees Jake struggling to retrieve the key. In Chapter 32, as Jake struggles to get his key, the doorkeeper gets closer and closer to him. Jake suddenly hears Roland's voice telling him to try to pull free the other board to reach the key. In Chapter 33, onlookers watch as The Mansion begins to break apart as if in an earthquake.



In Chapter 34, Jake gets the key and unlocks the door as the doorkeeper moves closer and closer to him. When he opens the door, he sees only dirt. The doorkeeper grabs his leg. Eddie realizes in Chapter 35 that the time has come to use his key. When he tries it, however, the key does not work. In Chapter 36, Jake continues to fight with the doorkeeper. In Chapter 37, Eddie tries to clear his mind and looks at the key again. Eddie realizes his mistake and requests Roland's knife. He removes only a tiny sliver from the key. In Chapter 38, the doorkeeper grabs Jake around the hips and begins to drag the boy away from the door. Jake manages to get free of the monster, but loses his pants. As Jake reaches the door, the monster grabs him again. In Chapter 39, Eddie puts in the corrected key and the lock opens. Eddie pulls open the door and sees the monster dragging Jake back down the hallway.

In Chapter 40, Roland tells Susannah to let go of the demon. When she does so, Roland catches the demon and jumps through the door that Eddie has opened with it. In Chapter 41, the demon attacks the doorkeeper, who lets go of Eddie. Roland grabs Jake and heads for the door. The doorkeeper reaches for them and Roland shoots it. In Chapter 42, both Eddie and Susannah work to birth Roland and Jake from the other world. As soon as they are free from the other world, Roland commands Eddie to shut the door. As they recover from their efforts, Jake asks Roland if he will let him drop this time. Roland promises that he will not do so. In Chapters 43 and 44, the group assures themselves that everyone is all right and then introductions are made.

Book 1, Part 3, Chapters 16 - 44 Analysis

The action of Book 1 climaxes as Jake gets closer and closer to the joining point of the two worlds. This closeness is symbolized in King's writing by the shortening of intervals between chapters dedicated to Jake and those dedicated to Eddie, Susannah and Roland. For instance, the first two chapters in Part 3, the first one rather long, are dedicated to Eddie, Susannah and Roland. The next four chapters are dedicated to Jake. The next four chapters follow Roland's group, then the following three talk about Jake. At the end of Book 1 these transitions occur between every one or two chapters until Jake is pulled through the door and the stories of all four characters merge.

As Jake follows Henry and Eddie to The Mansion, he sees first-hand how Eddie is treated by Henry. Jake recognizes Henry as a cruel boy who enjoys picking on other children, particularly those who are smaller or weaker than he is. However, Jake also realizes that Eddie loves his older brother. Jake watches as Eddie intentionally loses a game of basketball so as to not damage his brother's ego. It is this action on Eddie's part that has given him the mind block that he has about carving. Because his brother always made fun of him and did not want him to do any more carving, Eddie did not carve any longer. It is this strong sense of devotion to his brother that causes Eddie to be uncomfortable carving, even though he is now an adult and his brother is dead.

Also note that when Jake is pulled into Roland's world, both his doubled memory and Roland's double memory is healed. Neither of them hears the voices again. Notice also that Jake asks Roland to promise him that he will not drop him again. Although Roland

promises, he wonders if he were put in a spot that he had to choose if he would choose Jake or his quest for the dark tower.

Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 1 - 10

Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 1 - 10 Summary

Four days after Jake enters Roland's world Jake is awakened by a billy-bumbler. To his surprise, the billy-bumbler responds to his question with the word "Oy." Roland is surprised that the bumbler still remembers humans and mimics their speech. Jake feeds the bumbler a bite of a gunslinger burrito. When Eddie wakes up and speaks, however, the animal runs away. Roland comforts Jake by telling him the animal will be back. As they talk, the sound of drums begins in the distance. In Chapter 2, as the group draws closer to the city, they discuss what type of people, if any, they might find there. They also discover that the bumbler is following them.

In Chapter 3, Eddie takes Jake's father's gun as the group nears a small town where Roland believes there may still be people living. Roland hopes if there are people there, they will be able to share some information about the city of Lud with their group. In Chapter 4, Susannah, along with Roland, has the feeling of being watched as they walk down the street of the town. To her surprise, Roland throws a rock at a metal box hanging over a street marker. This action reveals the workings of a rudimentary traffic signal. As the group examines this find, Roland realizes there are townspeople headed toward them. The extremely elderly couple that refer to themselves as Si and Mercy, are enthralled when they learn there is a gunslinger in the group of visitors. In Chapter 5, Oy barks as more people join the first two natives in greeting the gunslinger. The oldest woman, apparently the leader, invites Roland's group to have supper with them.

In Chapter 6, Aunt Talitha, leads the group through a neat kitchen beneath the old church then outside to a beautiful garden. Roland's group is first offered apple-beer to drink, and then Roland is called upon to offer what might be considered a toast. In Chapter 7, the party is served a variety of foods, which they enjoy fully. When they are finished Aunt Talitha commands Si, Bill, and Till to stay so they can have a talk with Roland and his group. The remainder respectfully bid farewell to Eddie, Susannah, Jake and especially Roland. Mercy hugs and kisses Roland along with blessing him. Roland allows the lady to "look" at his face with her hands and then kisses her in return. After Mercy leaves, Aunt Talitha tells Eddie that Mercy's eyes were put out with a branding iron twenty-five years ago.

In Chapter 8, Aunt Talitha begins to tell Roland's group what she knows about the city of Lud. Aunt Talitha describes the city as being evil and suggests they consider going around it. Jake responds that they are not supposed to go around the town and asks if the old people know about a train. Aunt Talitha does know about a train, Blaine the Mono, the same one about which Jake is talking. In Chapter 9, Bill and Till tell the story of Lud. The Great Old Ones built the city. Although some of the buildings still stand, it is doubtful if any of the machinery still runs. The city once had electricity and a plane once took off from the city. Roland's group learns there was once a steel bridge over the Send River leading to the city. In Chapter 10, Roland and his group hear about a civil



war that started the troubles in Lud. The armies turned into bands of harriers that made trade and travel dangerous. In Lud, war continues unabated. The people of River Crossing created hiding places. They allowed their city to deteriorate so that it would appear deserted. Aunt Talitha tells Roland that if they do go through the town, Eddie and Susannah would be kept for breeding purposes, Jake would be allowed to live because he is young and trainable, and Roland would probably be killed.

Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 1 - 10 Analysis

The tone in the first chapters of this book is at first tense as Roland's group enters the town of River Crossing. This tension changes to joy as they learn that the people of River Crossing are peaceful and greet them with respect. After the dinner party, the tone of the group turns somber and serious as they discuss the condition of Lud and the wisdom of Roland leading his group through this city.

The theme of the world moving on is developed quite a bit in this section. As Susannah, Eddie and Jake watch the elderly Aunt Talitha and Mercy greet Roland, they realize how respected gunslingers used to be in this world. Both these women deeply respect and admire Roland. As Susannah watches Roland interact with these ladies, she gets a feeling of how important gunslingers formerly were in the communities of this world. In addition to respect for gunslingers, peace is another aspect of society that appears to have moved on. The people of Lud are in constant battle. The inhabitants of River Crossing are in constant fear of being discovered and tortured by these warring people. The people of River Crossing interpret the coming of the gunslinger, Roland, as a sign that peace may be coming back.

Oy is a humorous and affectionate addition to Roland's group. After the trauma that Jake has been through it is comforting to see him find a friend that loves him unconditionally. In a way, Oy also symbolizes a return to the old ways. Roland and the inhabitants of River Crossing all remember when billy-bumblers were once great companions for humans. Now, most of these animals are wild and no longer seek human companionship. Oy seems to be the exception to this rule. Not only has Oy sought out companionship from Jake, he also mimics the speech of Jake and his human friends, another seemingly lost trait of these unusual animals.



Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 11 - 25

Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 11 - 25 Summary

In Chapter 11, Si responds to Jake's request to tell about Blaine. Si tells them that Blaine runs on a raised rail. Si says that the train does not run but did in his lifetime. Si reports that after the train passed, there was always a bang like an explosion. Eddie recognizes this bang as being a sonic boom. He says the train, which is the only machine made by the Great Old Ones that he saw running, was a work of the devil. In Chapter 12, Mercy surprises the group by joining in the conversation. Aunt Talitha allows her to join the group. Mercy tells them there are two monorails, one of which she heard running as recently as seven years ago. She tells them the train went into the wastelands on the other side of the city. In Chapter 13, Roland and his group say a final farewell to the people of River Crossing. Roland kneels before Aunt Talitha and asks her to bless him and his group. She gives Roland a silver cross to wear until he lays it down at the foot of the Dark Tower.

In Chapter 14, Eddie explains to Jake their group had to move on from River Crossing in order to reach the Dark Tower and help all people. By prolonging their stay with the elderly people, they would only have made their eventual farewells even more painful. In Chapter 15, Roland tells Jake he believes Oy was driven out his pack of billy-bumblers, possibly because of his intelligence. As they settle down for sleep, they hear the sounds of the drums again. Jake lies awake listening to the drums and thinking about Blaine and Charlie until the drums stop suddenly and he is able to sleep. In Chapter 16, Jake has a nightmare about the train, Blaine. He realizes this train is dangerous. In Chapter 17, Roland's group gets its first good look at the bridge over the Send River. Susannah and Eddie agree that it looks just like the George Washington Bridge. Even though they are still quite a long distance from the bridge, Roland realizes that the bridge is no longer level.

In Chapter 18, Roland, Eddie, Susannah and Jake exchange their stories with one another. During this discussion, which they refer to as a palaver, the group learns how important Roland and people like him were to the former society of Roland's world. In Chapter 19, Roland explains the nature of ka-tet and their purpose. Each member is capable of knowing each other's thoughts. Roland points out an instance in which he communicated with each of the others with his mind. He indicates that Oy may even be a part of this ka-tet. In Chapter 20, Eddie realizes as Roland talks how intertwined his life is with those of the others in his group. He has been especially close to Jake, so much so that they have almost lived the same life through their dreams. In Chapters 21 and 22, Roland tells his story up to the point Shardik attacks him, Susannah, and Eddie. Eddie tells the story up to the point they began following the Beam and then Susannah takes over the story from that point. Jake then tells his story.

In Chapter 23 and 24, Jake shows the others his Charlie the Choo-Choo book. They all agree that they don't trust the smile on the train's face. They also agree that the children



riding the train in the picture at the end of the book appear to be afraid and screaming to get off the train instead of being joyful. In Chapter 25, after the others have gone to sleep, Eddie tells Roland that he and the others not only have to be with Roland, they also want to be with him.

Book 2, Part 4, Chapters 11 - 25 Analysis

In this section, Roland and his group meet with some of the citizens of Mid-World. These elderly people have been hiding from harriers, Pubes and Grays in their desolate town of River Crossing for many years. They remember when Lud and River Crossing were once productive towns. These citizens also remember when the trains ran in and out of Lud. As they share what they know of the city with Roland and his group, the hopes of finding some intelligent civilization in Lud begins to fade. In fact, Roland is told that he should lead his group around the city and not risk traveling through it.

In addition to this warning by the citizens by the city of River Crossing that the city is too dangerous to travel through, there are other premonitions that Roland's group is headed for danger. For instance, Jake has a dream that he and Oy have a dangerous encounter with Blaine. Aunt Talitha, the elderly leader of the people of River Crossing, tells Roland that Blaine, the train that appears to be so important to his search for the Dark Tower, is evil, a work of the devil. Also, Roland associates the name Charlie in Charlie the Choo-Choo with the word "char" which means death. It is with this grim notation that Part 4 of this book ends.

The theme of ka-tet and the idea that all of the members of Roland's group are joined by this interconnected fate is another important aspect of this section of the book. As the members of the group share their stories, they begin to realize what strong connections they all actually do share. Roland has been able to communicate with each of them telepathically. Even while Jake was still in his world, he was able to communicate telepathically with Eddie. In addition, Eddie and Jake have been giving each other advice and sharing experiences with each other through their dreams. This knowledge of their strong connection is necessary for the group to face hardships they will probably go through once they are in Lud.

Finally, Roland's true talents and abilities as a leader really begin to shine in this section. Until Susannah and Eddie see the way Roland interacts with the people in River Crossing, they have no idea how deeply respected gunslingers actually were in Roland's society. Each of the elderly citizens of River Crossing, Mercy especially, shows great respect and awe for Roland. They believe that his coming to their town is a sign that the "white," a symbol of peace, is returning to their land. In addition, Susannah begins to realize that all during their trip, Roland has been carefully handling his followers and their conversations. She believes he has been doing this purposefully to help Jake heal from his trauma of passing from the other world. Roland picks the perfect time for the four of them to have their palaver. It is at this point that all of them can take the truth of their connections and backgrounds without being too badly shaken.



Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 1 - 14

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 1 - 14 Summary

Three days after their palaver Roland's group finds a downed airplane with the remains of David Quick inside. Jake identifies the plane as a German plane from his world. To back up his suspicion, Jake discovers a swastika hidden beneath a decal showing a fist and thunderbolt. In Chapter 2, Roland tells Jake he studied riddles as part of his formal education. In the remainder of the chapter they discuss the seriousness of riddling. In Chapter 3, the group tries to solve riddles as they sit around their fire. Also in this chapter Roland decides they need to take turns keeping watch as the others sleep. As Eddie keeps watch in Chapter 4, he tries to come up with an answer to a riddle from Jake's book. During his watch the drumming starts again. He realizes this rhythm is the backbeat to the Z.Z. Top song "Velcro Fly." The drumming stops as quickly as it began.

In Chapter 5, Roland and his group find a bunch of bees. Believing they might have honey for supper, they locate the beehive. These bees, however, are suffering with radiation poisoning. Roland explains it was a war or poisoning centuries ago that caused the buffalo to be born sterile and other animals deformed. Eddie speculates there Great Old Ones had some sort of nuclear war. Roland claims not to know what happened. In Chapter 6, Eddie asks Roland to tell his whole story, starting with his life in Gilead. Roland puts Eddie off, telling him that he will tell his story when the time is right. In Chapter 7, Jake wakes Eddie and they listen together to the sound of fighting coming from the city of Lud. Gunfire and explosions accompany this fighting. When the drums stop, the sounds of fighting are silenced also. Roland asks Jake if he still wants to go through the city. Jake insists they cannot go through the wastelands without the protection of Blaine. In Chapter 8, the Great Road drops down and is split by a divider. Concrete embankments block the view on either side of the road. Eddie suspects the road was built this way as a defensive measure but does not tell Jake this. As they journey on the concrete embankments disappear and the group is able to see the monorail train track leading out of the city. A portion of the track over the river has fallen in. There is a blue train sticking out of the river. Eddie believes this is Blaine, but Jake knows that it is not.

In Chapter 9, Roland and his group find a place where they believe they will be able to cross the ancient, crumbling bridge. In Chapters 10, 11 and 12, the group is progressing across the bridge well until Oy is pushed off the bridge by the wind. Jake reaches for his pet that sinks his teeth into Jake's hand in an effort to save his life. In Chapter 13, Eddie and Roland work together to pull Jake and Oy back onto the bridge. While they were handling the emergency with Jake, a man had walked up to the bridge and was now watching them. The man is dressed like a pirate with a head cloth, gold hoop earrings and an eye patch. In Chapter 14, the pirate, whose face is covered with the oozing sores of mandrus, holds a hand grenade. Gasher tells Roland if Roland will hand over Jake the rest of them can go free. Roland does so with the promise to Jake that he will



come after him. Gasher grabs Jake and runs with him toward a maze of junk before he throws the grenade. Oy follows them into the maze.

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 1 - 14 Analysis

In this section, Roland and his group reach the outskirts of Lud and cross the bridge. They are now aware that the residents do still have guns and firepower. They are still unaware of the meaning or cause of the drumming sounds that come from the city. As they travel closer and closer to the city, they begin to realize how decrepit the city really is. One train leading out of the city has fallen from its broken track into the river. The bridge is in such disrepair that Roland's group is nearly unable to cross it. They are finally able to see the city is in similar disrepair. The man who greets Roland and his group is sick, dirty and uneducated. However, he does brandish a grenade at the group, which Roland is afraid he will use because he has nothing to lose. The man calls his leader the Tick-Tock Man. Gasher is cruel and treats Jake roughly as he escorts the boy away from Roland, Eddie and Susannah.



Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 15 - 24

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 15 - 24 Summary

In Chapter 15, Roland goes to look for Jake while Susannah and Eddie try to find Blaine's cradle. In Chapter 16, Gasher continues to run Jake through his trash maze,. He hits and kicks Jake when he feels the boy needed extra incentive to run faster. They pause only long enough for Gasher to show Jake the proper way to pass through one of the Gray's booby traps. In Chapter 17, Roland approaches the maze that Gasher has taken Jake into and discovers that Oy is there also. Roland follows Oy into the maze with Oy tracking Jake's scent as a dog might.

In Chapter 18, Susannah and Eddie search the city for Blaine. They begin to notice speakers set on poles throughout the city. Susannah suddenly realizes these speakers were set up as a way to broadcast information during war times. Now, however, the only thing broadcast was the backbeat to the song "Velcro Fly" by Z.Z. Top. The people of Lud believed the only way to stop the music was to sacrifice their own people.

In Chapter 19, Gasher points out another booby trap to Jake. It is Jake's discarded pack that keeps Roland from setting off the first booby trap in Chapter 20. In Chapter 21, Susannah kills a dwarf holding a grenade. An armed group heads toward Eddie and Susannah. Eddie and Susannah fire into the group until the remaining members are subdued. They convince a couple from the group to take them to Blaine's cradle. In Chapter 22, Jake and Gasher hear a crash and believe that Roland has triggered one of the booby traps. In Chapter 23, however, the reader learns that Roland triggered the trap purposefully and is still in pursuit of Jake and his captor. In Chapter 24, Eddie and Susannah have reached Blaine's Cradle.

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 15 - 24 Analysis

In this section, the reader begins to learn about the true condition of Lud. The once modern city has been taken over by the Grays and Pubes, which are basically warring gangs. Although the city is full of machinery built by the Great Old Ones, no one in Lud knows how to run them any longer. The only machine that appears to be working is the speaker system. These speakers, which were apparently once used to broadcast information during wartime, intermittently broadcast the backbeat from a Z.Z. Top song.

The people of the city believe this drumbeat is the work of some monster that lives in the city. They think the only way to stop the noise is to sacrifice their own people. They choose people to be sacrificed based on a lottery system where those who "win" the lottery are killed. The streets are full of dead bodies and carnage from the fighting.

Also in this section Roland and his group of friends are separated. Jake is kidnapped by one of the Grays. Roland, true to his promise not to drop Jake again, goes in search of him. Oy joins Roland in his pursuit of Jake. Eddie and Susannah, meanwhile, go in



search of Blaine. Eddie and Susannah find the people of the city are scared of Blaine and refuse to enter the train's cradle. These people will only take Susannah and Eddie to a certain point past, which they will not go. The separation of the group is displayed in King's writing by his method of rotating chapter topics. One or two chapters are dedicated to Jake, then one or two are dedicated to Roland and Oy, and then one or two chapters are dedicated to Eddie and Susannah and so forth.

Finally, Oy begins to develop as a character in this section. First, Oy discovers where Jake has gone. He begins to go after Jake, but comes back when Roland calls for him. Roland soon discovers that Oy's tracking abilities are as good as any bloodhound. After their close encounter with the first booby trap, Roland commands Oy to walk closer to him. Surprisingly, Oy heels just as well as most any dog would. Although Oy is not comfortable being close to anyone but Jake, he allows Roland to pick him up and hold him as necessary. Oy seems to understand that his cooperation is necessary for Jake's safety.



Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 25 - 29

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 25 - 29 Summary

In Chapter 25, Gasher and Jake enter a lower tunnel with fresh air and lights. Once they arrive at a locked door, Gasher shows Jake a slip of paper and Jake reads the password so they can be admitted to the locked room. In Chapter 26, Roland and Oy follow Jake and Gasher into the lighted tunnel. In Chapter 27, Eddie and Susannah enter Blaine's cradle and discover an intercom box. Eddie uses this box to try to wake Blaine and communicate with him. At first, it is only Little Blaine who talks to Eddie. Little Blaine begs Eddie to leave Blaine asleep. They realize it is Big Blaine who is the one operating the machines. Blaine wakes and asks for introductions. In Chapter 28, Jake meets the Tick-Tock Man. Jake watches as this man kills a woman for laughing. The Tick-Tock Man then asks for Jake's watch. Although Jake does not believe his eyes, he sees Oy's eyes behind one of the ventilator grilles. In Chapter 29, Roland sends Oy through the ventilation grille to see what is going on in the room where Jake is being held. When Oy returns, he gives Roland an accurate count of how many people are in the room with Jake. At the conclusion of this chapter, Roland asks Oy to complete a task, which may mean death for the bumbler.

Book 2, Part 5, Chapters 25 - 29 Analysis

In this section, Jake finds a possible weakness in Gasher, his captor. Even though Gasher is not afraid of death, Jake determines that the man is afraid of appearing to be an idiot in front of the Tick-Tock Man. Although Tick-Tock does not appear to have any feeling toward his followers, Gasher shows signs of having a real respect for and desire to please his master. Jake realizes that the Tick-Tock man is a relative of David Quick, the man found dead in the airplane. Tick-Tock affirms that this man was his great-grandfather. However, he appears more interested in Jake's watch than anything else.

In this section, Roland gets an idea how intelligent Oy really is. Roland sends the bumbler through the ventilation system to check out what is going on in the locked room. To his surprise, Oy comes back, as requested, and even provides the gunslinger with an accurate count of how many people are in the room. Roland then whispers a mission to Oy who runs to complete the deed as instructed.

Also, notice the difference in the underground world as opposed to the street level of the city. Although the city has deteriorated to nothing but a bunch of ruined buildings and rubble, the area below the city or "undercity" is still quite sophisticated. Apparently this undercity bunker that Tick-Tock has set up his headquarters in is one of the few working contributions of the Great Old Ones. After experiencing the maze of junk and rubble set with two amateur booby traps, it is obvious the Grays are not intelligent enough to create underground ventilation or a speaker and lock system such as the one found on the bunker.



Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 30 - 40

Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 30 - 40 Summary

In Chapter 30, Eddie tries to determine what it is Blaine wants them to ask him. They finally determine Blaine wants to hear riddles. Blaine gives them a riddle to solve in order to get a ride through the wastelands. In Chapter 31, Tick-Tock grills Jake on what he knows about machinery. Tick-Tock finally tells Jake he wants to be able to run all of the computers under the city, but doesn't know enough about them. At this point Roland manages to get through to Jake. He tells the boy to distract the other men in the room, and then try to open the door. Jake distracts the men by telling them about Gasher's inability to remember the password. As the men argue, Oy jumps from the ventilator shaft.

In Chapter 32, Roland tries to connect with Jake again through his mind but is unable. In Chapter 33, Jake grabs a machine gun and opens fire on Tick-Tock, who is trying to kill Oy. The machine gun malfunctions. Jake finds a revolver and uses it to finish Tick-Tock. As Jake is trying to reach the door to let Roland in, Gasher grabs Jake around the neck. In Chapter 34, the door opens and Roland kills Gasher and the remaining Grays. As Roland finishes the Grays, an alarm sounds. In Chapter 35, Eddie and Susannah hear the alarm also. As Eddie asks Blaine what the sirens mean, the train's engines begin to run. In Chapter 36, all the residents of the city, Grays and Pubes alike, are frightened by the sound of the alarms. In Chapter 37, Roland gets Jake a drink. As Roland tries to decide what to do next, he hears a voice calling his name. The voice also asks Jake if he still has his riddle book. Blaine sends Roland and Jake a silver ball to follow to location where Eddie and Susannah are. In Chapter 38, Jake and Roland decide it was Blaine that let Roland into the locked room. Roland also realizes that it is Blaine who is in charge of all of the mechanical awakenings that are happening within the city. These same mechanical awakenings cause both the Grays and the Pubes to go crazy and kill themselves.

In Chapter 39, Eddie and Susannah begin to hear motors starting up beneath them. A slot in the floor opens and an escalator appears. Susannah recognizes Eddie and Jake coming up the moving stairs. After their reunion is finished, Blaine tells the group that a deadly gas will be released into the city in twelve minutes. In response to Susannah's plea, Blaine turns off the alarm. In Chapter 40, the Ageless stranger or the Wizard, asks Andrew Quick, also known as the Tick-Tock Man, if he wants to help him get even with Roland, Jake and Oy.

Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 30 - 40 Analysis

In this section, the reader learns the Tick-Tock man's real interest in Jake. His hope is that Jake can teach him how to run the computer systems that control the city. Tick-Tock believes that by learning these systems, he can have complete and total control of the

city, and perhaps overcome the Pubes once and for all. Tick-Tock does not realize, however, that he has a competitor for control of the city. It becomes apparent when the locked door opens without Jake pushing the correct button that there is someone else who is already controlling some parts of the city.

Also in this section, the reader learns of the close bond between Jake and Oy. When Oy jumps into the room, with the intention of saving Jake, it is Jake's first impulse to save his friend. Although he has tried to push the correct button to open the door and let Roland in, Jake loses all interest in letting the gunslinger in when he sees that his friend is in trouble. Note that when Jake shoots the Tick-Tock man, the book indicates that his skin peels back like wallpaper. This peeling skin may indicate that the Tick-Tock man is not fully human but is also part robot or android.



Book 2, Part 6, Chapters 1 - 10

Book 2, Part 6, Chapters 1 - 10 Summary

In Chapters 1, 2, and 3 Roland and the group, with the help of Detta, decipher Blaine's riddle by pushing the buttons of all prime numbers between one and one hundred on the number pad backwards starting with the biggest number. In Chapter 4, the group boards Blaine just as the gas explosions occur. They marvel at the luxury of Blaine's cabin. In Chapters 5 and 6 Blaine becomes translucent so his passengers can see the city, and the cloud of purple gas, around them. In Chapters 7 and 8, the train moves through a hole in the city wall of Lud into the true wastelands. When Blaine get to the point that he generally speeds up, he returns the walls and his passengers are no longer able to see the desolation and destruction below them. Jake tells the mono that he knows that the train plans to commit suicide and take everyone on board with him.

In Chapter 9, Blaine tells Roland and his group that he is going insane as well as suffering from mechanical and spiritual issues. He tells them his companion mono Patricia committed suicide a month ago when he freed her from his mechanical control. Blaine asks for more riddles but Roland refuses to comply. In Chapter 10, Roland makes a deal with Blaine. If Roland and his group are able to tell Blaine a riddle he cannot answer, Blaine must take them to their destination safely. If Blaine is able to correctly answer all the riddles, he will be allowed to kill himself and his passengers. Blaine agrees to these terms.

Book 2, Part 6, Chapters 1 - 10 Analysis

In this section, Roland and his group have proven themselves to Blaine and have been allowed to get on board the train. Once they are on this train, however, they realize how precarious their situation has become. It is Blaine's intention to commit suicide and take them with him. First, however, he plans to have a little fun at their expense. In fact, Blaine seems to enjoy shocking and offending his passengers. He has rigged the city with poisonous gas that is set off just as Roland and his group are safely aboard. It appears that for years Blaine, which is actually the brain of the city, the complex computer system created by the Great Old Ones that has been controlling things all along. It is this brain that has been playing the drumming music and causing the people of Lud to sacrifice one another. Blaine, however, feels that he has been serving the people by giving them a god that they could worship. It appears that now Blaine has grown tired of his pastime of manipulating the people and wants to end his existence and their existence. He tells his passengers that he is suffering with some sort of mechanical problem, which he refers to as insanity, that he has been unable to diagnose or fix.

Roland gives Blaine an ultimatum. Blaine loves riddles and wants his passengers to entertain him with these puzzles on their way to their deaths. Roland agrees to tell the

riddles only if Blaine will agree to let them off safely if they come up with a riddle Blaine cannot answer. The book ends just as the riddle competition begins. This ending leaves the reader in doubt as to what might happen to the characters, but also opens the way to the next installment of this sequence of novels.



Characters

Roland of Gilead

Roland is one of the main characters of this novel. He is originally from Gilead, in the world where the Dark Tower is located. This book is one in a series that details Roland's quest for the Dark Tower. Roland was raised hearing stories about the Twelve Guardians, the Beams and the Dark Tower. Up until the time that he encounters Shardik in the Great West Woods, Roland is not entirely convinced that the guardians exist. He does, however, know enough about the guardians to instruct Susannah to shoot for the radar dish on top of the bear's head in order to destroy it. Because he has lived in this world all of his life Roland has the knowledge about his world that Eddie and Susannah do not have.

When the story opens Roland is just recovering from his attack by the lobstrosities. These creatures took two fingers from his right hand. He teaches both Susannah and Eddie the art of shooting so that they can help him on his quest for the Dark Tower. During a shooting lesson Roland and Susannah hear the bear crashing through the woods. Roland carries Susannah to the place where the bear is so that she can shoot it. When Roland recognizes this bear as a guardian, he follows its path back to the portal it was intended to protect. By finding this portal, Roland locates the Beam that will eventually take him and his companions to the Dark Tower.

Roland is a gunslinger. Although his purpose in society is not as important as it was in prior years, Roland is still respected by many people. Susannah and Eddie witness this respect when they see Roland with the people of River Crossing. Roland is viewed almost as a god by these elderly people who remembered when gunslingers kept the peace in their world. These elderly people bow before Roland and seek his blessings. The only one person that Roland refuses to bless is the elderly Aunt Talitha. He instead requests that the elderly lady bless him.

Edward

Eddie is another of the main characters of this novel. He has just recently joined Roland in his quest for the Dark Tower. Eddie has come from New York City and part of him still wants to return to his hometown. He is the husband of Susannah, who is also from New York. In order to help Roland with his quest, Eddie must overcome his fear of his older brother Henry. Henry continually made fun of Eddie and Eddie's love of carving. For this reason Eddie feels self-conscious about carving or allowing other people to see him carving. In order to help Jake join Roland and his group, Eddie must carve a key that will allow him to unlock a door and let Jake into their world.

Another of Eddie's purposes in the novel is to help guide Jake into Roland's world. Eddie has a dream where he sees himself as Jake walking through the streets of New



York. Jake later takes this same walk as he travels to the former lot of Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. Meanwhile Jake has a dream in which he meets and talks to the teenaged Eddie. The next day this teenaged Eddie leads Jake to the house which will serve as Jake's portal into Roland's world. It is also Eddie that draws the door and births Jake into this other world.

Susannah Dean, Detta Walker, Odetta Susannah Holmes

Susannah Dean, like Eddie, has just joined Roland on his quest for the Dark Tower. Susannah is also from New York City, but comes from a different time than Eddie. In a past book in this same series Jack Mort pushed Susannah in front of a train where both of her legs were severed below the knee. For this reason, much of Susannah's traveling must be done either in a wheelchair with someone pushing her or in a sling strapped to someone's back. She has, however, adopted a form of motion that allows her to move quickly over short distances. Susannah is a black lady. She is Eddie's wife. There are several indications toward the end of the novel that Susannah may be pregnant with Eddie's child.

Susannah's job in the novel is to first kill the bear, then later to solve Blaine's riddle so they can get a ride out of town. Susannah also distracts the demon that lives in the speaking ring so that Eddie can draw Jake into Roland's world. In order to complete this feat, Susannah calls on her former personality Detta Walker, to help her get through his ordeal. It is this same personality that helps Susannah to solve Blaine's riddle which involves determining which numbers are prime and which aren't.

John

Jake is the final major character in this novel. Jake and Roland have met before in another novel where Roland apparently let the boy fall into a mountain chasm resulting in his death. Roland has a conflicting memory of whether he killed Jake or not. Jake, meanwhile, also has a conflicting memory of whether or not he is really alive. Jake follows the guidance of ka to the former lot of Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli where he finds the key and the rose. Jake then follows the teenaged Eddie to the haunted mansion where Jake is able to cross from Earth to Roland's world.

Of the four main characters, Jake is the one with the most knowledge of Blaine. He brings the book, Charlie the Choo-Choo, from his world to Roland's world. When Jake reads this book to Eddie, Susannah and Roland, they all share the same feelings of distrust toward the train. In Jake's mind this train in this children's book is somehow related to Blaine. In fact, Jake believes that the writer of Charlie the Choo-Choo might have known Blaine.



Oy

Oy is a billy-bumbler that adopts Jake just a few days after Jake enters Roland's world. This animal is described as a cross between a badger and raccoon. These animals have gold-rimmed eyes and a coiled tail like a corkscrew. It is Oy who falls off the bridge and distracts the group from noticing that Gasher has approached. However, it is also Oy who leads Roland through the maze and helps him free Jake. Oy has the ability to talk, or at least copy the sounds made by other people. As Roland learns while the two are trying to locate Jake, Oy also has the ability to follow directions as well as the ability to count.

Shardik, Mir

Shardik, also called Mir, is a bear/robot created by the North Central Positronics, LTD. Roland identifies this bear as one of the Twelve Guardians created by the Great Old Ones to Guard one of the Twelve Portals. Roland suspects that the bear is several hundred or perhaps thousands of years old. At the time when Roland, Susannah and Eddie encounter the bear, it is infested with worms and is showing signs of insanity. Susannah kills this bear by shooting it in the radar dish or antenna that grows from its head.

Gasher

Gasher is the Gray that kidnaps Jake and takes him below the city to Tick-Tock's underground fortress. Gasher is not afraid of dying because he is near the point of death anyway. Jake does learn, however, that the man is afraid of being embarrassed in front of his friends and leader. In fact, Gasher tries to strangle Jake because Jake tells the Tick-Tock man that Gasher had the secret password to the underground fortress written down on a slip of paper in his head wrap. Gasher is killed by Roland when Roland is finally able to enter the locked room.

The Tick-Tock Man

The Tick-Tock Man is the leader of the Grays. He is the great-grandson of David Quick, the man who led a group of outlaws into Lud. Tick-Tock appears to be part human and part robot because of his super human strength. Also, when Jake shoots Tick-Tock his skin peels like wallpaper showing that he is possibly not fully human. This Tick-Tock man is obsessed with clocks. This is shown by the fact that he wears a clock around his neck. He also asks Jake if he can have Jake's Seiko wristwatch. The Tick-Tock man hopes that Jake can teach him how to control the numerous computers that control the entire city of Lud. By being able to work these computers, Tick-Tock would have complete control of the city.



Henry Dean

Henry Dean is Eddie's older brother by four years. Henry caused Eddie a lifetime of guilt for his ability to carve and also his ability to play basketball better than Henry. Henry had become a junkie and is dead at the time of this novel. When Jake follows Eddie to the haunted house, he gets a firsthand look at the way Henry treated his own brother as well as other people. Jake considers Henry to be a bully who picks on people who are smaller and weaker than himself. Jake also notices that Eddie plays dumb, especially when playing basketball, to keep his brother happy.

The Great Old Ones

These Great Old Ones were people with the wisdom of gods. These people were the ones who created the Twelve Guardians. They also built the city of Lud and its machinery. Although there are no written records of these people or the time period in which they lived, there is information about them passed down generation to generation. According to legend, the Great Old Ones remade the world in some attempt to make it better. However, these Great Old Ones destroyed themselves, either through pride or some sort of nuclear war. The creations of these Great Old Ones are now breaking down and coming apart. Some examples of these machines that are going haywire include the bear, Blaine and Patricia.

Walter - The Man in Black

Roland at first believes it is Walter who pushed Jake in front of the car and caused his death. Later, however, he decides that it was not Walter but Jack Mort that caused the boy's accident. Roland is following Walter when he meets with Jake at the way station. Later Roland wakes up with the dead body of Walter beside him. He takes Walter's jawbone as a token, which he keeps with him until he throws it into the fire. In the fire, Walter's jawbone burns and shows Eddie the image of the rose and the key.

Jack Mort

Jack Mort is one of the people who tormented Susannah in the past. He pushed her in front of a train causing her legs to be amputated below the knee. Mort also dropped a brick on Susannah causing her to develop a separate personality. Although Jake first believed it was Walter that pushed him in front of the car, it was actually Jack Mort that did so.



Elmer Chambers

Elmer Chambers is Jake's father. Jake's father loves and respects his son only when Jake is achieving as Jake's father would like for him to achieve. On his last day in this world, Jake finally stands up to his father and asks that he be left alone.

Greta Shaw

Gretta Shaw is the housekeeper for the Chambers household. Greta treats Jake more kindly than his own parents do.

Blaine the Mono

Blaine is the monorail train that takes Roland and his group out of Lud into the wastelands. Although Blaine is a machine, he has some sort of artificial intelligence. This intelligence allows him to control the computers in the city, in fact, Blaine is the one who opens the door and allows Roland into the locked room. Blaine is suffering with some sort of mechanical malfunction that has made him angry, sullen and mean.

Aunt Talitha Unwin

Aunt Talitha is the leader of the group of elderly people who are still living at River Crossing. When Roland and his group leave River Crossing, Talitha gives Roland and a silver cross which she asks him to place at the foot of the Dark Tower.

Si and Mercy

Si and Mercy are the elderly couple who first step out and greet Roland and his group when they enter River Crossing. Mercy's eyes were burnt out with a branding iron by harriers passing through the town.

Bill and Till Tudbury

Bill and Till are the albino twins who help to tell the story of Lud to Roland and his group. Bill and Till are residents of the town of River Crossing.

David Quick

David Quick is the leader of the largest band of outlaws to enter Lud. He was the original leader of the Grays. His great grandson, Andrew Quick, is the current leader of these outlaws. Roland and his group realize the stories that David Quick fell to his death



from the sky in an airplane are correct when they discover the man's dead body in a Nazi aircraft.

Gloria Dean

Gloria is Henry and Eddie's middle sister who was killed by a drunk driver on the streets of New York City when Eddie was only two.



Objects/Places

Lobstrosities

The lobstrosities are the creatures that attacked Roland and injured his right hand.

Gunbelt and Revolver

This holster and gun used to belong to Roland but he has altered the belt so that Susannah can use it to learn to shoot.

Honk Mahfahs

The honk mahfahs were people who tormented Susannah and her friends in Oxford Town. Roland reminds Susannah of the deeds of these people when he tries to make her angry enough to shoot well.

Susannah's Wheelchair

This wheelchair was purchased from a medical supply house in New York in 1962. Roland and his group carry it with them through their journey along the beam to the Dark Tower. The wheelchair is accidentally left behind when the group boards Blaine the Mono.

Great West Woods

The great west woods is where Roland, Eddie, and Susannah first set up camp and where they encounter the bear.

The Twelve Guardians

These Twelve Guardians were created by the Great Old Ones to stand guard at the twelve portals leading into and out of the world. The bear that Eddie, Susannah, and Roland encounter is one of these Twelve Guardians.

Jawbone

Roland carries this bone with him through the first part of this novel. It is Walter's jawbone. When Roland throws this bone into the fire, Eddie sees the image of the key and the rose.



Great Portal

This portal lies at the center of all of the other portals. It is at this Great Portal where the Dark Tower is located.

The Dark Tower

This Dark Tower is located at the point where the six Beams cross.

Robocop

Eddie uses the movie Robocop whose main character is part-robot and part-human to describe what the bear is like.

Way Station

This way station is where Roland first meets Jake.

The Drawers

The drawers are the equivalent of the wastelands.

Ka-tet

Ka-tet is described as a group of people whose lives are joined by fate. Roland, Eddie, Susannah, Jake, and Oy are ka-tet.

Beams

The Beams each connect two Portals that lie opposite each other. These Beams, which serve as some sort of bonding force, are losing their strength and allowing the destruction that is being seen in Roland's world.

Gilead

Gilead is the place from where Roland originally comes.



The Mansion

The Mansion is a haunted house from Eddie's childhood. This Mansion turns out to be the doorkeeper of a portal in disguise. It is through this haunted house that Jake enters Roland's world.

May 31, 1977

May 31, 1977 is the day which Jake leaves school to find the rose and key in the empty lot where Tom and Gerry's once stood.

The Piper School

The Piper School is the affluent school in which Jake is enrolled.

May 9, 1977

May 9, 1977 is the day that Jake was supposedly hit by the car and killed.

My Understanding of the Truth

My Understanding of the Truth is the topic of Jake's Final Essay for his English Composition Class.

The White

This color name is used in this novel to describe the coming of better times or more peaceful times.

The Manhattan Restaurant of the Mind

The Manhattan Restaurant of the Mind is the store where Jake buys the books Charlie the Choo-Choo and Riddle-De-Dum!

Turtle Bay Luxury Condominiums

These condominiums are advertised as the replacement for Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli.



The Key

Eddie first sees this key in the fire when Roland throws Walter's jawbone into the blaze. He then carves a copy of the key that allows him to open a door and allow Jake into Roland's world. Jake finds an identical key in the lot where Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli was once located that allows him to open the door on his side to leave Earth and join Roland.

The Rose

Jake finds an enchanted rose in the lot of Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. Similarly in Eddie's dream he enters the deli building and discovers a field of roses in which the Dark Tower is located.

Seiko Watch

This watch was given to Jake as a gift from his mother and father. Once in Roland's world, the watch begins to run backward erratically. The Tick-Tock Man asks Jake for this watch as a gift.

Khef

A person's khef is their life force.

A .44 Ruger Automatic

It is this gun that Jake takes from his father's desk before he leaves his home for the last time.

Send River

The Send River is the river that Roland and his friends must cross before entering the city of Lud.

Lud

Lud is a large and formerly modern and prosperous city located in Mid-World. The city has become a place of death and destruction as it has been taken over by two warring gangs, the Grays and the Pubes.



The Speaking Ring

This speaking ring, which is compared to Stonehenge, is the place where Jake is brought from his world into Roland's.

Keflex

Keflex is the antibiotic given to Jake for the spider bite he received while in the haunted mansion.

River Crossing

River Crossing is the seemingly deserted town where a group of elderly people have hidden out for years from the cruel inhabitants of Lud.

The Church of the Blood Everlasting

The elderly people of River Crossing have set up a neat and orderly kitchen below this church. Behind the church, there is a beautiful hidden garden.

Grays

The Grays are the "older" people of Lud. They are led by Andrew Quick, the great-grandson of David Quick. These Grays rule the underworld of Lud.

Pubes

The Pubes are the "younger" people of Lud. It is these people who sacrifice their own people whenever the drumming is broadcast over the speaker system in the city. These people live in the city streets of Lud.

Sonic Boom

A Sonic Boom is the noise made by an object, generally an aircraft, when it reaches supersonic speed. In this novel, it is written that Blaine was capable of traveling faster than the speed of sound. The residents of River Crossing remember hearing the train's sonic boom.



George Washington Bridge

The George Washington Bridge is a bridge in America similar to the one that crosses the Send River in Mid-World.

Z.Z. Top Song

It is the drumbeat of this hard rock song that broadcasts over the speaker system in Lud.

The Net of Eratosthenes

Susannah tells Roland and her other friends that she will catch them a train ride with this net. This "net" allows her to separate prime numbers from non-prime numbers.

Topeka

Topeka is the city where Blaine's track ends. Topeka is also the culminating city of Charlie the Choo-Choo's run.



Themes

Theme of Ka-tet

Ka-tet is the glue that holds both this novel and its group of characters together. Ka-tet is a word from Roland's world that indicates a group of people joined by fate. Roland explains that the ka-tet cannot be changed to reflect any one person's desires. Once a group is joined by ka-tet the only way this group can be broken is by death or treachery.

Roland indicates that it is this ka-tet that allows the members of the group to communicate telepathically with each other. This telepathic communication occurs between all of the members of the group at one point or the other. Roland also credits that it is that ka-tet that have allowed Eddie and Jake to communicate with each other even while Jake is still on Earth and Eddie is in Roland's world. In this ka-tet Eddie, as a teenager, leads Jake to The Mansion, the spot on Earth that houses the portal to Roland's world.

In addition to the aspect of ka-tet that allows members of the group to communicate with each other, these members also receive information about their surroundings through this strange form of communication. Generally the character is unaware of how they have learned the information, they are just suddenly aware of it. For instance, while traveling through Lud, Susannah suddenly becomes aware that the speakers were part of a system used to broadcast information during times of war. In the same way it is this ka guides Jake as he walks through New York and arrives at the abandoned lot of Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli.

Recurring Symbols

The use of recurring symbols is very important to the story line of this novel. These recurring symbols or images include the image of the train, the key, the rose, doors, and the turtle. The image of the train is one that permeates the novel from beginning to end. The train is important because it is the vehicle that will carry Roland and his group through the wastelands. The reader learns that it is a train that took Susannah's legs. In Eddie's dream of New York, Jack Mort tells Eddie about a train that is hard to start and harder to shut down. Jake's essay is full of images of the train. During his walk through New York, Jake buys the book *Charlie the Choo-Choo*, which is obviously about a train. Much of the talk in *River Crossing* deals with the train that formerly ran to and from Lud. Blaine, the real train, is encountered in the final part of the novel.

The key is another image that appears often in this novel. This key is important because both Eddie and Jake must have a key in order for Jake to cross into Roland's world. This key also helps save Jake and Roland's sanity because while they are holding they key, the arguing voices in their heads are silenced. The image of this key first appears when Roland throws Walter's jawbone in the fire. Eddie's dream includes the same



image of the key. In his dream Eddie uses this key to unlock the door to Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. Eddie must carve a copy of this key in order to allow Jake to move from his world to Roland's world.

The images of a rose and a door are associated with the image of the key. For instance, when Roland throws Walter's jawbone into the fire, he sees both the image of the key and a rose in the fire. In addition, when Jake goes to the lot of the former Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli, he finds a key and a rose. In addition, in his dream, Eddie uses the key to unlock the door to the deli, where he finds the Dark Tower in a field of roses.

The image of the turtle is one that appears often in the novel. It is known that the Portal of the Turtle lies directly across from the Portal of the Bear. It is the Beam that runs between these two portals that Roland and his group travel along. It is the Portal of the Turtle for which Roland remembers the rhyme he was taught as a child. This rhyme is copied in the graffiti that Jake reads in the lot at the former Tom and Gerry's Artistic Deli. The buildings planned to replace the deli will be called the Turtle Bay Condominiums. In the city of Lud there is a street called the Street of the Turtle. This street most closely follows the path of the Beam. A huge stone turtle guards this street.

The World Has Moved On

Throughout the course of this novel is the idea that the world has moved on. The first time this phrase is used is found in Roland's thoughts as he stands over the dead mechanical bear. Roland is pleased that this time it is the bear that has been the victim of time moving on. Later when trying to explain to Eddie and Susannah about the changes in his world, Roland says simply that the world has moved on. He explains that it is this condition that has led to the destruction and desolation of his world.

When Roland and the others locate the Portal the Bear was designed to guard, he goes on to explain that the saying "the world has moved on" means more in his world than Susannah and Eddie's. The idea that the world has moved on does not indicate the progression and modernization of the world, but instead the mechanical wearing out of the world as the Great Old Ones created it. This includes the breaking down of the Beams and the unraveling of the substructure of this world. The elderly people in the town of River Crossing also refer to the idea that the "world has moved on." They also realize that this phrase means that the world has regressed instead of progressing. Their idea of regression includes the fact that the once prosperous and modern city of Lud has dissolved into a place of desolation and fighting.

It is important to note that this quote "the world has moved on" is also a phrase from the book *Charlie the Choo-Choo*. As Jake reads this book this phrase seems to call to him. As the group converses with Blaine, this train also indicates that the world has moved on. Even Blaine is feeling the effects of the breaking down of Roland's world. The train is no longer able to communicate with the monitoring equipment in the End-World. Therefore, he is no longer able to tell the difference between truth and fiction. He is also

suffering with a problem that he refers to as a spiritual malaise that causes him difficulties.

Style

Point of View

This story is told from a third person point of view by an omniscient narrator who is not a character in the novel. This point of view is important since many times in the novel the characters are not in the same place or the same time. For instance, in the beginning of the novel, the story deals with Jake, who is not in Roland's world yet, and Roland and his group, who are in Roland's world. The story would not be as effective if it were told from the point of view of one character in particular. Even though the characters do seem to communicate with each other telepathically, these telepathic thoughts would not be adequate to let the reader know the events and circumstances of each character's experience if there were only one character who narrated the novel.

The story is told through both dialogue and exposition. Although a great deal is learned about each character through their dialogue with the other characters, almost as much is learned through the things that are not said. King has a way of capturing not only the voiced thoughts of each character, but also their thoughts. In addition, King describes the scenery and settings of each part of the story with careful detail. Sometimes these settings tell as much about the story as the dialogue does. For instance, King's description of Lud lets the reader know how backward the people of Lud have become without actually having to tell the reader in words.

Setting

King presents an unusual combination of both reality and fantasy in his settings for this story. The majority of this story takes place in a fictional place called Mid-World, a section of the world that Roland comes from. In the beginning of the story, characters Susannah, Eddie and Roland are in the Great West Woods, just outside of Mid-World. It is in these woods that they encounter the bear, and then follow its tracks back to the Portal. From this Portal, the friends follow the path of the Beam to Mid-World, through the town of River Crossing to the city of Lud. Meanwhile, Jake is going to school and living with his parents on the real Earth. There are doors that allow people to cross between Roland's world and the real Earth. These doors, or portals, are located in the haunted house in Jake's world and the speaking ring in Roland's world. Although these are separate worlds, there are some interesting parallels between Roland's world and the real Earth. For instance, the bridge over the Send River is much like the George Washington Bridge in America. In the same way, the city sky line of Lud reminds Eddie and Susannah of New York City.

Although the physical setting of the story is interesting in its own rights, the time setting is even more interesting. For instance, Susannah, Eddie and Jake are all from three different times. For instance, Susannah came from the year of 1963, Eddie came from 1987 and Jake came from 1977. All these characters are able to come together in



Roland's world at the ages that they were in the years that they left the real Earth. Time in Roland's world, however, seems to move differently from time on the real Earth. When Jake is trying to enter into Roland's world, for instance, it is difficult for Eddie to judge what time the boy will come over since time moves differently in each of the worlds.

Language and Meaning

Most readers are familiar with King as a writer of horror stories. While this is not a horror story in the literal sense, there are sections that are suspenseful with a touch of King's trademark horror. The sequence with the bear, for instance, is highly descriptive of the horror and grotesqueness of this mechanical, insane, wormy bear. The reader should beware, however, that there are some sections where King uses graphic and profane language.

Often in his writing, King uses different text types to portray meaning in his writing. For instance, King uses italics to indicate a person is thinking something, but not saying it. King also uses italics to differentiate the speech of Little Blaine at the end of the novel. This use of italics indicates that Little Blaine is somehow representative of Big Blaine's subconscious thoughts. Meanwhile, King uses all capital letters for Blaine's speech. All uses of the Internet recognize this use of all capitals is the equivalent of shouting. This form of writing is considered rude and unmannerly, two terms that describe Blaine perfectly.

Structure

King uses the structure of his novel to make his story easy to understand. This structure also helps to illustrate changes in time, place and character. King's book is first divided into two books. The first book deals with details of helping Jake cross over into Roland's world. Book 1, titled *Jake, Fear in a Handful of Dust*, closes just after Jake has joined Roland and the others. Book 2, titled *Lud; A Heap of Broken Images*, deals with the group's journey to Lud, their quest for Blaine and their journey into the waste lands.

Within each of these two books, the text is divided into parts. These parts are then subdivided into chapters. Each of the six parts bears a title that names two important images in the following part. For instance, Part 1 is titled *Bear and Bone*. It is in this part that Susannah shoots and kills the mechanical bear. Roland identifies this bear as one of the Twelve Guardians. The discovery of the bear allows Roland and his group to find the bear's portal, then start on their journey along the Beam. The bone is significant because Roland carries it with him through this section of the novel. When Roland throws the bone into the fire, it creates the image of the key, which Eddie later carves. It is this key that allows Eddie to unlock the door and let Jake into Roland's world.

King uses his chapters as a way to help the reader distinguish when changes are made from character to character or place to place. For instance, in Part 3 King deals with both the actions of Jake in his world and Roland and the group in Roland's world.

Instead of combining information about each of these characters in each chapter, King divides his information so that one chapter deals with Jake while the next deals with Roland and so forth.



Quotes

"Beating heroin was child's play compared to beating your childhood" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter 4, pg. 31.)

"He felt like two men existing inside one skull. Each man had his own set of memories, and when they began to argue, each insisting that his memories were the true ones, the gunslinger felt as if he were being ripped in two" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter 5, pg. 37.)

"With the trigger as yet unpulled, she saw the bullet go home, guided from muzzle to target by nothing more or less than her heart's fierce desire that it should fly true" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter 7, pg. 40.)

"This is my punishment for letting a boy who never existed fall to his death" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter 13, pg. 54.)

"'The Drawers are places of desolation,' he said. 'The Drawers are the waste lands'" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter 14, pg. 61.)

"Yet now I am living in those times, and I don't believe they affect my world alone. They affect yours, Eddie and Susannah; they may affect a billion others. The Beams are breaking down" (Book I, Part 1, Chapter 28, pg. 103.)

"Go, then, there are other worlds than these" (Book 1, Part 1, Chapter , pg. 108.)

"The fact is, money doesn't get anyone into The Piper School, his father had told him during that Bicentennial Summer, the summer of blue skies and bunting and Tall Ships, a summer which seemed golden in Jake's memory because he had not yet begun to lose his mind and all he had to worry about was whether or not he could cut the mustard at The Piper School, which sounded like a nest for newly hatched geniuses" (Book 1, Part 2, Chapter 1, pg. 122.)

"The ship was his sanity, and it was sinking" (Book 1, Part 2, Chapter 1, pg. 127.)

"He had hoped the memories would stop when he reached the point in them where the man named Roland had allowed him to drop into the chasm under the mountains, but they didn't" (Book 1, Part 2, Chapter 8, pg. 149.)

"This decision did not feel random, and it wasn't. He was moving southeast, along the path of the Beam, resuming his own interrupted quest for the Dark Tower" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 6, pg. 216.)

"It sounded easy when you said it right out like that, but neither of them really understood the bottom line. The bottom line was this: seventy percent or eighty or even ninety-eight and a half percent just wouldn't do. Not this time. And if he did screw up, he couldn't just toss the thing over his shoulder and walk away" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 7, pg. 219.)



"Because he hears the voices, just like you, Roland. And because he's sharing my dreams, and I'm sharing his. I think that what I remember is what's happening now, in Jake's when. The kid is trying to come back here" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 7, pg. 222.)

"In New York - the New York of her own time, at least - they would have been objects of scorn and anger, the butt of every idiot's cruel jokes: a black woman of twenty-six and her whitebred lover who was three years younger and who had a tendency to talk like dis and dat when he got excited" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 14, pg. 234.)

"Time...it isn't the same over here as it is where the kid is. It goes slower in his when and where" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 15, pg. 238.)

"Susannah had come from 1963. Eddie had come from 1987. Between them...Jake. Trying to come over. Trying to be born" (Book 1, Part 3, Chapter 18, pg. 246.)

"Behold ye, the return of the White! After evil ways and evil days, the White comes again! Be of good heart and hold up your heads, for ye have lived to see the wheel of ka begin to turn once more" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 5, pg. 320.)

"The war had originally been the harriers and outlaws against a loose confederation of artisans and "manufactories" who lived in the city. The residents had decided to fight instead of allowing the harriers to loot them, burn their shops, and then turn the survivors out into the Big Empty, where they would almost certainly die" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 10, pg. 336.)

"He's a living remnant of a past they only knew from stories, Susannah thought. They look at him the way religious people would look at one of the saints - Peter or Paul or Matthew - if he decided to drop by the Saturday night bean supper and tell them stories of how it was, traipsing around the Sea of Galilee with Jesus the Carpenter" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 13, pg. 344.)

"I've worn this day and night for over a hundred years, gunslinger. Now you shall wear it, and lay it at the foot of the Dark Tower, and speak the name of Talitha Unwin at the far end of the earth" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 13, pg. 345.)

"While we were helping the twenty or thirty people left in River Crossing, twenty or thirty thousand more might be suffering or dying somewhere else. And if there is any place in the universe where these things can be set right, it's at the Dark Tower" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 14, pg. 348.)

"It was clear to all of them that his experience in the vacant lot where Tom and Gerry's once had stood was the secret heart of the ka-tet they shared" (Book 2, Part 4, Chapter 22, pg. 365.)

"The same thing that has emptied this whole land; the thing that's still causing many of the buffalo to be born as sterile freaks. I've heard it call the Old War, the Great Fire, the Cataclysm, and the Great Poisoning" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 5, pg. 393.)



"These Great Old One you like to talk about...they blew their great old asses straight to hell. Didn't they?" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 5, pg. 393.)

"Blaine is a pain, but we have to take the train. And the city's the only place we can get on" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 7, pg. 395.)

"Jutting out of the water below the hole was a streamlined piece of metal. Once it had been bright blue, but now the color had been dimmed by spreading scales of rust. It looked very small from this distance" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 8, pg. 398.)

"I'm sure there's a God, but I don't think He has much if anything to do with us these days; I believe that after we killed His son, He finally got it through His head that there wasn't nothing to be done with the sons of Adam or the daughters of Eve, and He washed His hands of us" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 18, pg. 430.)

"And now, when the drums began to throb through these hundreds or thousands of speakers - a hammering back-beat which was only the percussion to a Z.Z. Top song called "Velcro Fly," if Eddie was right-it became their signal to unlimber the hang-ropes and run a few folks up the nearest speaker-posts" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 18, pg. 431.)

"It was Spanker's stone what come out of the hat and we set hit to dance. She remembered reading Shirley Jackson's story "The Lottery" in college and understood that these people, the degenerate descendants of the original Pubes, were living Jackson's nightmare" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 22, pg. 445.)

"Jake thought it more likely that Roland had tripped the fountain on purpose, to lull Gasher and perhaps slow him down" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 25, pg. 464.)

"He knew instinctively, without even thinking about it, that this tunnel (which had to be at least seventy feet under Lud) also followed the path of the Beam. And somewhere up ahead-Jake was sure of this, although he couldn't have said why-the train they had come looking for lay directly about it" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 25, pg. 467.)

"In spite of his brave words, Gasher was watching Jake with real anxiety, and Jake realized a potentially powerful fact: Gasher might not be afraid of dying...but he was afraid of being humiliated" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 26, pg. 470.)

"All of Mid-World had become one vast haunted mansion in these strange latter days; all of Mid-World had become The Drawers; all of Mid-World had become a waste land, haunting and haunted" (Book 2, Part 5, Chapter 27, pg. 481.)

"Ka was a wheel, its one purpose to turn, and in the end it always came back to the place where it had started. So it had ever been and so it was now; Susannah was once again facing the bear, and her face said she knew it" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 1, pg. 544.)

"Beyond the Great Wall of Lud, the real waste lands began" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 6, pg. 560.)



"I'M BORED. ALSO I AM PERFECTLY AWARE THAT I AM SUFFERING A DEGENERATIVE DISEASE WHICH HUMANS CALL GOING INSANE, LOSING TOUCH WITH REALITY, GOING LOONYTUNES, BLOWING A FUSE, NOT PLAYING WITH A FULL DECK, ET CETERA. REPEATED DIAGNOSTIC CHECKS HAVE FAILED TO REVEAL THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM. I CAN ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THIS IS A SPIRITUAL MALAISE BEYOND MY ABILITY TO REPAIR" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 9, pg. 566.)

"I can call you a faithless creature who let your only companion kill herself, a coward who has delighted in the torture of the foolish and the slaughter of the innocent, a lost and bleating mechanical goblin" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 9, pg. 573.)

"If, when we come to Topeka, you have solved every one of our riddles, you may carry out your original plan and kill us. That is your goose. But if we stump you - if there is a riddle either in Jake's book or one of our heads which you don't know and can't answer- you must take up to Topeka and then free us to pursue our quest. That is our goose" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 10, pg. 579.)

"YOU ARE KA-TET, ONE FROM MANY. SO AM I. WHOSE KA-TET IS THE STRONGER IS SOMETHING WE MUST NOW PROVE" (Book 2, Part 6, Chapter 10, loc. 9891.)



Topics for Discussion

Consider what Eddie says in Book 1, Chapter 4, "Beating heroin was child's play compared to beating your childhood." Why is it so important that Eddie overcome his childhood? Do you believe he was successful in overcoming his elder brother's influence? Why or why not?

At the time of this novel Eddie has overcome a heroin addiction, however, he wishes for heroin when he is trying to finish the carving work on the key. Would this drug have helped or hindered his work? Why was it important for him to work with a clear mind?

What is Roland's role in the action of this novel? Is he part of the ka-tet or is his just a guide?

Compare and contrast the conditions of the city of Lud and the town of River Crossing. Although both cities had experienced similar situations in their past, why is River Crossing so different from Lud?

How much of Lud's destruction is orchestrated by Blaine? How much is brought on by the people themselves?

Who or what does little Blaine represent? What is his significance?

What does the rose represent? What is its significance in the novel?

Compare and contrast the story of Charlie the Choo-Choo with that of Blaine. Do you believe writer of Charlie knew Blaine or was it just an ironic coincidence that the stories are so much alike?

Jake's essay is a premonition of what will happen to him in Roland's world. Read through the essay again and point out the ways in which these premonitions were fulfilled.

Consider the ending of this novel. Why does King stop when he does? Is the ending satisfactory? Why or why not?

Do you believe it is possible for a machine to become insane? In what ways do you think Blaine's insanity lead to the turmoil in Lud?