Sister Carrie

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THEODORE DREISER

Theodore Dreiser was born to a large, poor family in the American Midwest. His father was a millworker who struggled to find employment and a strict adherent to Roman Catholicism. This led Dreiser to associate his father's lack of productivity with religion. In this period, Dreiser also developed a profound desire for material wealth, something that would serve as inspiration for his works. After studying for a year at Indiana University, Dreiser became a reporter and moved to the East Coast. During these young adult years, he read T. H. Huxley, John Tyndall, and Herbert Spencer, and came to adopt a naturalistic worldview: humans are helpless and wholly subject to the influences of their environment. Dreiser married Sara White in 1898, but his extramarital affairs led them to permanently separate some 14 years later. Dreiser began to write *Sister Carrie* in 1899 and Doubleday published the book. However, the company was hesitant to do so, uncomfortable with the fact that the novel's main character is never punished for her immorality, and thus decided to limit advertising for the novel. Consequently, *Sister Carrie* sold fewer than 500 copies when it first came out. Dreiser's lack of success with the book and his marital troubles led him into a deep depression. Fortunately, his brother, Paul Dresser, arranged for Dreiser's treatment in a sanitarium. After recovering, Dreiser became a successful editor for women's magazines but was forced to resign after a scandal with his assistant's daughter. Dreiser returned to writing fiction and enjoyed some success until the Great Depression. Dreiser died soon after joining the American Communist Party.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Dreiser published *Sister Carrie* in 1900, a time when America was expanding rapidly. Cities were growing, the McCormick reaper made America the world's largest agricultural producer, and five railroad systems spanning the country allowed people to travel from coast to coast with relative ease. With this uptick in growth and mobility, people tried harder than ever before to move up the social ladder and fulfill the American dream—and that dream finally seemed accessible. Readers can see this mobility in *Sister Carrie*: Carrie starts out as a poor girl from a rural town and becomes a wealthy and popular actress that tours the world. At the turn of the century, social classes and the stratification of rich and poor were changing dramatically with the advent of new technological advancements and shifting social awareness. However, the late 1800s and early 1900s came with their fair share of problems, too, as labor conditions for the working class were notoriously bad—though rights for workers and better working conditions were slowly changing to catch up with the economic prosperity of industrialization.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Dreiser is known as one of the foremost American naturalists. The naturalist movement originates from the writings of French novelist Émile Zola during the late 19th century. In 1880, Zola published an essay entitled "The Experimental Novel," which draws a parallel between writing narratives and conducting experiments. Characters function as phenomena, wholly controlled by their environment. Other than *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* is also known for a naturalistic portrayal of human life. In both cases, the main character is subjected to and shaped by social forces. Other examples of American naturalism include Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat" and Jack London's "To Build a Fire," both of which deal with the idea of nature's indifference to humankind.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Sister Carrie*
- **When Written:** 1899
- **Where Written:** New York City
- **When Published:** 1900
- **Literary Period:** Realism and Naturalism
- **Genre:** Naturalism
- **Setting:** Chicago and New York City
- **Climax:** Hurstwood deceives Carrie into leaving Drouet.
- **Point of View:** Third Person

EXTRA CREDIT

Dreiser's Style. Dreiser received no formal education in fiction writing—he attended college for only one year before dropping out to be a journalist. Consequently, his prose is rather awkward, and critics often call him "the world's worst great writer." Dreiser's writing also contains numerous grammatical and syntactical mistakes. Nevertheless, his stylistic atrocity somewhat befits his work. *Sister Carrie* is about an uneducated young woman trying to find her way to the world of aristocracy, so it's fitting that Dreiser's prose attempts to be elegant yet falls flat, into the trap of gaudiness.

PLOT SUMMARY

Sister Carrie chronicles the ascent and downfall of Caroline "Carrie" Meeber, a young woman who moves from provincial Wisconsin to the big **city**.

At the beginning of the novel, Carrie is penniless. She takes a train from her hometown of Columbia City, Wisconsin, to Chicago in the hopes of finding work in the city. She is to live with her sister, Minnie, and brother-in-law, Hanson. On the train, Carrie meets a friendly, flirtatious, and well-dressed traveling salesman named Drouet. The two make tentative plans to meet. However, after arriving in Chicago and seeing her sister's shabby apartment, Carrie feels ashamed that Drouet should see her in such a place and writes to him, telling him not to visit. Shortly after moving in, Hanson makes it apparent that he expects Carrie to pay rent. Consequently, Carrie spends her first few days in Chicago looking for work in the wholesale district. As she wanders around, she becomes fascinated with the merchandise in the department stores and the well-dressed women bustling about, scarcely deigning to look at her.

Carrie struggles to find a business that would hire her, as she has no experience, but eventually lands a position as a manual laborer in a wholesale shoe house. Although she is initially elated at having a position, the tiresome nature of her work and low pay ultimately leave Carrie disillusioned. Minnie and Hanson's frugal way of life further exacerbates Carrie's unhappiness. During the winter, Carrie falls sick and her prolonged absence causes her to lose her job. After recovering, Carrie begins another job search, but her spirits are dampened and thoughts of not being able to pay rent and being forced to return to Wisconsin leave her in desperation.

After several days of fruitless searching, Carrie encounters Drouet. Friendly as ever, the salesman treats her to a lavish meal and offers her 20 dollars to buy new clothes. Carrie initially attempts to return the money, but Drouet only proceeds to buy her an array of fashionable clothes and accessories. Drouet, moved by Carrie's prettiness and poor state, offers to financially support her. After some mental tribulation, Carrie decides to become Drouet's mistress. She leaves Minnie a simple note and moves into the living quarters that Drouet has rented for her.

Drouet continues to show Carrie the various pleasures of the city. However, over time, Carrie begins to notice his faults: though he remains friendly, Drouet is noncommittal to the idea of marriage, always pushing it off to some later date, and lacks sensitivity. Around this time, Carrie makes the acquaintance of Mrs. Hale, a neighbor, who takes Carrie out driving in richer districts and speaks highly to her of the upper echelons of society, leading Carrie to desire more material wealth than Drouet can provide.

Around this time, Drouet introduces Carrie to Hurstwood, his friend and the manager of a popular, high-end saloon. Carrie finds the suave and sensitive Hurstwood a much more agreeable companion than Drouet. Unbeknownst to Carrie, Hurstwood is in the midst of experiencing some private family tensions: his wife and children are vain and uncaring, and he no longer feels like the true head of his household. Thus Hurstwood feels immediately drawn to Carrie's youthful innocence and beauty. After some persuading from Hurstwood, Carrie and the manager begin an affair behind Drouet's back. Shortly after the affair begins, Drouet finds Carrie a part in a play put on by the club that he and Hurstwood attend. On the evening of the show, Carrie puts on a spectacular, if uneven, performance that moves both of her lovers: Drouet resolves to marry Carrie and Hurstwood resolves to steal her away from Drouet.

The following day, Drouet learns from the chambermaid that Hurstwood has been visiting Carrie often—and that the pair are having an affair—so Drouet informs a horrified Carrie that Hurstwood is a married man. Carrie writes to Hurstwood in attempt to cut ties with him. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hurstwood learns from acquaintances that her husband has been driving around with another woman and threatens him with a divorce lawsuit. An agitated Hurstwood takes to drinking at his saloon. While closing up that night, Hurstwood discovers that the safe, which is loaded with cash, is unlocked. In his drunkenness, Hurstwood decides to steal the money in the safe and then tricks Carrie to leave town with him on a train by lying that Drouet has been injured at a faraway place.

After finding out Hurstwood's deception, Carrie is indignant but eventually acquiesces under the influence of her lover's passionate pleas and promise of marriage. Hurstwood, hunted by police and his own guilt, returns the majority of what he stole, though he still keeps a small fortune for himself. The couple settle in New York City as George and Carrie Wheeler. At first, Carrie enjoys her new life—Hurstwood finds a job at a common saloon and supports her on a modest yet sufficient salary. However, Carrie soon becomes friends with a neighbor, Mrs. Vance, and realizes that her situation pales in comparison to the lavish lifestyle that her new friend leads. After a while, Hurstwood's business fails and he loses his job. He asks Carrie to live more cheaply, inflaming the seeds of dissatisfaction planted before, and the two grow distant.

One night, Mr. Vance and his wife treat Carrie to a particularly lavish dinner at a luxurious restaurant. There, Carrie meets, Ames, Mrs. Vance's cousin, who suggest to her that wealth is not everything—rather, it is better to pursue art. Carrie finds Ames wiser and more admirable than Drouet and Hurstwood and is eager to gain his approval. To Carrie's dismay, Mrs. Vance soon moves away, and Carrie is left to endure a dull, lonely life with Hurstwood. Although initially eager to find another job, the aged Hurstwood soon loses motivation and simply sits at

home reading the newspaper. The money he stole from the saloon in Chicago runs out, and Hurstwood asks Carrie to find a job, placating her by saying that it would only be temporary, and he would soon have another business venture.

Remembering Ames's admiration for art, Carrie turns to theater and finds a job as a chorus girl, though the work is far less glamorous than she expected. Luckily, her talent allows her to quickly move up the ranks, and she soon secures a decent position within the company. Carrie meets and becomes friends with a fellow chorus girl, Lola, who asks if Carrie would be willing to move into an apartment with her as roommates. Feeling dissatisfied with Hurstwood's idleness and bound by household duties, Carrie decides to leave him and accept Lola's offer. She leaves Hurstwood a brief note, enclosing 20 dollars.

Now devoting herself wholly to work, Carrie soon gains recognition and before long becomes one of the company's stars. She soon gets paid more than she can spend, and her picture appears in the papers. Carrie eventually moves into a luxurious hotel as a patron, bringing Lola with her, and receives many notes from various admirers, though she's uninterested in all of them. Meanwhile, dejected and deeply impoverished, Hurstwood takes to the streets, wandering and begging, and, unbeknownst to Carrie, eventually commits suicide in a 15-cent boarding house. Mrs. Vance, Ames, and Drouet come to visit Carrie, and though Drouet tries to win Carrie over again, she rejects his advances. The novel closes with a wildly rich and famous Carrie contemplating life, disillusioned and unhappy.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Caroline "Carrie" Meeber – Carrie is the titular protagonist of the novel. She is the sister of Minnie Hanson and mistress of Drouet and, later, Hurstwood. Throughout the novel, Carrie is always chasing after happiness, be it through wealth, fame, or distinction. At the beginning of the novel, Carrie is a young woman from provincial Wisconsin who imagines that leading a cosmopolitan life will bring her happiness. After moving in with her penny-pinching sister and her husband, Sven Hanson, in Chicago, Carrie realizes that life in the city is quite dull without material wealth. After a short-lived attempt at earning her keep, she chooses to become the mistress of a wealthy man named Drouet, whom she met on the train to Chicago. While living with Drouet, Carrie encounters his friend Hurstwood, an even wealthier man, and later moves to New York with Hurstwood to be his mistress instead. In each of these cases, Carrie experiences certain qualms of conscience; nevertheless, her desire for wealth is always too great to overcome. Carrie eventually meets Ames, a well-educated and idealistic young man, and encounters for the first time the idea that wealth isn't everything and that it's better to pursue art. Soon after, she leaves Hurstwood to pursue acting, mainly for financial reasons—Hurstwood has run out of money and has no motivation to get a job—but also out of a desire to pursue distinction and self-sufficiency. As Carrie grows rich and famous, her esteem for material wealth deteriorates. By the end of the novel, she is disillusioned and will likely never achieve happiness: Carrie never finds happiness in what she has, but always yearns for something that is just beyond her reach.

George W. Hurstwood – Hurstwood is Carrie's lover, husband of Julia Hurstwood, and father to George Jr. and Jessica. At the beginning of the novel, Hurstwood's life is the very picture of the American dream: through hard work, he has acquired a picture-perfect family, a distinguished managerial position in a popular saloon, and a modest fortune. Nevertheless, through Hurstwood, readers learn just how hollow the American dream can be: although he has all the trappings of a successful life, Hurstwood's marriage is loveless and his family life is dreary. Initially, Hurstwood finds genuine happiness in Carrie's company, delighted by her innocence and beauty. Thus, he chooses to abandon his modest empire in Chicago—and his family—for a new life with Carrie in New York, stealing money from the saloon (though eventually returning most of it) to support them. Unfortunately, his wealth and passion for Carrie steadily decline, and his life disintegrates as he loses both his job and motivation. After Carrie leaves him, Hurstwood goes from bad to worse. The once rich, well-connected manager ultimately commits suicide as a vagrant in a 15-cent-a-day boarding house. The declining years of Hurstwood's life show just how fast the American dream can crumble. Towards the end of his life, Hurstwood mostly daydreams about his life and family back in Chicago rather that his time with Carrie in New York; although Hurstwood thought being with Carrie would bring him happiness, it seems that he was actually happier with his supposedly unbearable family.

Charles H. Drouet – Drouet is a traveling salesman with a cheerful personality and simple mind. He is Carrie's first lover and financial provider, and a frequent visitor of Hurstwood's saloon. When Carrie first meets Drouet, she is attracted to his modest wealth and joviality, as she was new to the **city** and living in Minnie and Hanson's poor, austere apartment at the time. After some hesitation, she accepts his offer to become his mistress, and she lets him shower her with material things. However, after meeting Hurstwood, Drouet's friend, Carrie notices that Drouet seems financially lacking and insensitive next to the wealthier, suave manager. Even though Carrie chooses Hurstwood, Drouet, nevertheless, holds one redeeming feature: his good nature. He never desires revenge on Carrie for her infidelity. Indeed, upon meeting Carrie again, he is eager to patch up their relationship. Unfortunately for him, Carrie has no interest in picking up where they left off.

Robert Ames – Ames is a well-educated, thoughtful young man that Carrie meets in New York. Although Ames is Mrs. Vance's cousin, he does not share her views on wealth and materiality: Ames deems luxury superficial and instead chooses to pursue the pleasures of art. Carrie looks up to Ames, viewing him as someone with better taste, and is eager to gain his approval. Indeed, Ames's respect for theater inspires Carrie to pursue a career as an actress. Ames is the only notable character who appears to be unaffected by the standards and glamour of the **city**.

Minnie Hanson – Carrie's sister who lives in Chicago with her husband, Sven Hanson. Minnie is a diligent housewife who subscribes to her husband's ideas of simplicity and economy. She spends her days at home doing housework, caring for her baby, and finding more ways to scrimp and save the family's meager funds. Carrie finds Minnie's life distasteful, and her unhappiness in Minnie and Hanson's household is a large reason why Carrie agrees to be Drouet's mistress.

Jessica Hurstwood – Hurstwood's daughter by Julia Hurstwood. Hurstwood had a tender spot for Jessica during her younger years but loses this affection as she grows vain and spoiled, turning into a woman not unlike her mother. Jessica spends most of her time scheming with her mother to marry into a wealthy family.

Mrs. Vance – Mr. Vance's wife. She lives across the hall from Carrie and Hurstwood in New York. She and Carrie become fast friends. Mrs. Vance is young, beautiful, and decked from head to toe in the latest fads. Carrie is jealous of Mrs. Vance's superior financial situation and, as a result, grows increasingly dissatisfied with Hurstwood's lack of ability to provide her with a life of luxury.

Mr. Vance – Mrs. Vance's husband. He and his wife live across the hall from Carrie and Hurstwood in New York. He is, presumably, a wealthy businessman and enjoys spending money on luxury experiences, as seen when he takes his wife, Carrie, and Ames to dine at Sherry's, an extravagant and overpriced restaurant.

Lola Osborne – A chorus girl in New York. Carrie becomes friends with her after joining the same theater company as a fellow chorus girl. After Carrie leaves Hurstwood, she lives with Lola for the remainder of the novel. Lola is optimistic, self-sufficient, and enjoys flirting with various young men in her social circles.

The Railroad Treasurer's Daughter – A girl who lives across the hall from Carrie and Drouet in Chicago. Although Carrie never directly interacts with her, the daughter's piano playing affects Carrie deeply, awakening in Carrie a desire for something more than material wealth. This vague desire later develops a more specific form under Ames's guidance.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Sven Hanson – Carrie's brother-in-law and Minnie's husband. He lives a rigid and frugal life working in the stock yards of Chicago, rarely spending money on entertainment. Hanson and Carrie do not get along because of their different views on spending money.

Mrs. Julia Hurstwood – Hurstwood's wife in Chicago and Jessica and George's mother. She is a vain woman who greatly values social position and wealth. Mrs. Hurstwood also demonstrates a certain amount of gumption: she extorts money from Hurstwood after learning about his infidelity.

George Hurstwood – Hurstwood's son by Julia Hurstwood. He appears to care little for his family.

Mrs. Hale – Carrie and Drouet's neighbor in Chicago. She becomes friends with Carrie. Mrs. Hale adores material wealth and speaks highly of the rich, fueling Carrie's own fascination with money.

Mr. Hale – Mrs. Hale's husband. He is a theater manager who lives in the same building as Carrie and Drouet in Chicago. He "[lives] respectably from hand to mouth" on "a salary of forty-five dollars a week."

Fitzgerald and Moy – The owners of the saloon that Hurstwood manages in Chicago. The two choose not to prosecute Hurstwood for his thievery when he steals thousands of dollars from the saloon's safe since he returns almost all of the money and apologizes for his actions.

The Chambermaid – The chambermaid at Ogden Place cleans Carrie and Drouet's apartment in Chicago. She indirectly informs Drouet of Carrie and Hurstwood's affair by telling that Hurstwood had often visited while Drouet was away.

Mr. Quincel – A member of the Freemasons. He directs the first play that Carrie acts in, back in Chicago.

Mr. Oeslogge – Carrie and Hurstwood's grocer in New York. Hurstwood comes to owe him a good deal of money.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

URBAN LIFE AND DECAY

At its core, *Sister Carrie* details a young girl's transition from provincial to **city** life. Caroline "Carrie" Meeber moves from rural Columbia City, Wisconsin, to Chicago and then to New York. Each move shows Carrie the complexities of living in a larger, more urban sphere. With each of these transitions, Carrie is eager to adapt and

conform to her new environment, and, consequently, grows increasingly sophisticated as she moves from one cosmopolitan city to another. At the same time, Carrie's growth in sophistication parallels her fall from innocence, as she goes from an enthusiastic girl from the country to, ultimately, a jaded city woman. In this way, Dreiser suggests that while urbanization may be conflated with progress, it also leads to decay—of innocence, morals, and spirit. As Carrie learns in the story, the trappings of urban life don't lead to a genuine increase in happiness.

Towards the beginning of the novel, Dreiser briefly theorizes as to what dangers may befall a young woman when she moves from the countryside to the city, painting the city as a dangerous place brimming with temptation and corruption. According to Dreiser, only two things can possibly happen when a young woman leaves her home: "Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse. Of an intermediate balance, under the circumstances, there is no possibility." The idea of having a "cosmopolitan standard of virtue" seems positive; such an idea connotes diversity, sophistication, and experience. However, Dreiser frames it as something that causes people to "[become] worse." This hints that Dreiser views the city as a place that causes degeneration despite the semblance of growth. Dreiser relates that "the city has its cunning wiles, no less than the infinitely smaller and more human tempter." The language in this sentence recalls the language typically used to describe the devil. The city's devilish nature is reinforced by an idea from the previous quotation, namely, that a young girl who travels to the city will necessarily "[become] worse" unless "she falls into saving hands and become better." In this way, Dreiser portrays the city as an alluring but destructive force. It is not the civilized place that many, including Carrie, believe it to be.

Upon moving from the countryside to Chicago, Carrie notices the cosmopolitan mannerisms of the people surrounding her and feels an urge to conform to city culture. However, even though she succeeds, she feels a sense of moral deficiency. Upon seeing department stores and the well-dressed women frequenting them, Carrie feels an instant desire to blend in: "A flame of envy lighted in her heart. She realised in a dim way how much the city held—wealth, fashion, ease—every adornment for women, and she longed for dress and beauty with a whole heart." Carrie's longings are reasonable and hardly morally reprehensible, considering the scanty and difficult life she leads in her sister Minnie's household. When Drouet, a financially stable salesman, asks Carrie to be his mistress, Carrie agrees, seeing it as a natural step towards gaining the "dress and beauty [she longed for] with a whole heart." Under Drouet's care, Carrie becomes "comfortably established—in the eyes of the starveling, beaten by every wind and gusty sheet of rain, she [is] safe in a halcyon harbour." In this way, Carrie becomes comparatively well off compared to people of lesser means, including Minnie and Hanson. But despite this, Carrie does not believe her life has progressed and feels "mournful misgivings" about her transformation from being an honest worker to a kept woman. Carrie has advanced in socioeconomic status yet still feels a sense of decline: "She looked into her glass and saw a prettier Carrie than she had seen before; she looked into her mind, a mirror prepared of her own and the world's opinions, and saw a worse." Becoming more cosmopolitan, Dreiser suggests, has led Carrie to moral decay.

Then, after moving from Chicago to New York, Carrie sets her sights on fame—another marker of cosmopolitan success—in addition to wealth. However, even though she becomes an actress and achieves stardom, her newfound celebrity strips her of her vitality and zest for life. When Carrie and her second lover, Hurstwood, run out of money in New York, Carrie looks to the stage for a job, "consider[ing] the stage as a door through which she might enter that gilded state which she had so much craved." Carrie quickly rises from chorus girl to lead actress, "getting in the metropolitan whirl of pleasure." As a burgeoning star, she receives letters from many suitors and admirers but this "incite[s] her only to coolness and indifference." Having had her fill of cosmopolitan men, Carrie simply dismisses them with weariness: "I don't want to go [out] with these people who write to me. I know what kind they are," she says in exhaustion. Even though being famous and surrounded by adoring suitors may seem exhilarating, it leaves Carrie empty and unsatisfied.

By the end of the novel, Carrie leads a thoroughly cosmopolitan life. Rich, beautiful, and famous, Carrie is the envy of all—except for herself. She has begun to see that nothing the city offers can make her happy: "Even had Hurstwood returned in his original beauty and glory, he could not now have allured her. She had learned that his world, as in her own present state, was not happiness." With this, readers realize that when Dreiser states that a "cosmopolitan standard of virtue" causes young women to "[become] worse," he does not necessarily refer to just moral degeneration; rather, it is a sort of decay of the spirit, whereby the young woman falls into a sort of despondency upon realizing the city will never bring genuine improvement to her life. Despite the glowing promises that a cosmopolitan life seems to offer, this lifestyle ultimately rings hollow.

MORALITY AND INSTINCT

In *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser objectively relates the narrative without pronouncing judgment on his characters. Carrie often internally wars over whether to follow conventional moral standards or her instinctual desires, and she almost always succumbs to the latter. Where a typical Victorian novel might render Carrie's narrative as that of a woman falling from grace and being shunned by society, Dreiser portrays Carrie as a woman who

rises to the upper echelons of society as a result of instinctual decisions that might be considered morally questionable. For Dreiser, instinct is neither morally good nor bad—it simply exists and wields considerable influence over human life. And because Carrie manages to climb the ranks by following her own instincts and desires rather that adhering to society's rigid moral code, Dreiser also subverts the Victorian idea that life rewards people for morally upstanding behavior.

According to the society that she lives in, Carrie's behavior is thoroughly immoral. Although she starts out with pure intentions, traveling to the city in hopes of finding honest work, she quickly feels unsatisfied with the low pay and slow grind of hard labor and instead chooses to become a kept woman. By the standards of turn-of-the-century America, such a decision stamps Carrie as a moral failure. Minnie's reaction to Carrie's departure reveals as much: suspecting that Carrie has become dependent on a man for financial support, Minnie remarks to her husband Hanson that Carrie "doesn't know what she has done [...] poor Sister Carrie!" Minnie then has a nightmare in which Carrie is drifting out of her reach and feels "more inexpressibly sad than she had ever been in life." From Minnie's reaction, readers can gather that Carrie's becoming a kept woman morally reprehensible by society's standards. Later, Drouet, out of a sense of propriety, introduces Carrie to Hurstwood as his wife, further suggesting that having a mistress is not kindly looked upon by proper society. And when Carrie decides to leave Drouet for Hurstwood, she insists that Hurstwood marry her, demonstrating her understanding that being a mistress is an undesirable and shameful thing, and that respectable society does not consider extramarital relations morally acceptable.

However, Dreiser does not frame Carrie's actions as either morally acceptable or morally inacceptable; rather, he frames them as the consequence of Carrie following her own instincts and desires. According to Dreiser, people are always torn between reason and instinct: "[Humans are] becoming too wise to hearken always to instincts and desires; he is still too weak to always prevail against them." Carrie is generally a follower of instinct: "In Carrie—as in how many of our worldlings do they not?—instinct and reason, desire and understanding, were at war for the mastery. She followed whither her craving led. She was as yet more drawn than she drew." Though initially torn by Drouet's offer, Carrie finds the promise of financial stability and modest material wealth is too compelling to abandon. Similarly, though unwilling to be ungrateful to Drouet, Carrie finds Hurstwood's passion and suave demeanor irresistible, and her instinct prevails.

Dreiser is careful to sidestep the dichotomy of good and evil that Victorian authors often subscribe to. He never declares Carrie's actions to be evil: though *society* may find her behavior morally reprehensible, Dreiser never claims that this judgment is warranted. In fact, Dreiser appears understanding of the urge to follow one's instincts. At one point, he likens humans to "a wisp in the wind, moved by every breath of passion, acting now by his will and now by his instincts," suggesting that though reason is present in humans' lives, instinct renders people defenseless "wisp[s]." Considering this lack of defense, it is difficult to attribute genuine evildoing to Carrie. It is not that good and evil do not exist, but that it is irrelevant to Carrie if she can only succumb to her instinct.

Even though Carrie's behavior is morally reprehensible by societal standards, Dreiser allows her to go unpunished. Indeed, in a certain sense, she is even rewarded for her moral missteps. Where the typical Victorian author might throw Carrie on the streets and leave her to die in the gutter, Dreiser allows her to climb to the height of high society, accruing wealth, fame, and hordes of adoring suitors. Carrie lives in utter luxury: "[...] she enjoyed the luxuries which money could buy. For her the doors of fine places seemed to open quite without asking [...] Men sent flowers, love notes, offers of fortune. And still her dreams ran riot." In the socioeconomic sense, Carrie is rewarded. Through Carrie's socioeconomic success, Dreiser demonstrates that there is no correlation between moral failure and socioeconomic failure. Following instinct may lead people to moral failure; however, moral failure does not always lead to reward or punishment, save for perhaps the fleeting experience of a guilty conscience. To Dreiser, life is much more indiscriminate than Victorian moralists would like to admit. Through *Sister Carrie*, he seems to suggest that authors should write narratives that neither reward nor punish characters based on moral rectitude. Instead, writers should depict life as it is: a struggle between reason and instinct that generates an unpredictable array of outcomes.

WEALTH AND CLASS

Over the course of *Sister Carrie*, Carrie comes to learn the complexities of wealth and class. Towards the beginning of the novel, Carrie only perceives that she, a jobless young woman, is poor, while Drouet, a businessman, is rich. After meeting an assortment of characters from different social backgrounds—including Hurstwood, Mrs. Hale, and Mrs. Vance—Carrie learns that the spectrum of wealth is exceedingly wide. At the same time, Ames shows Carrie that contrary to what she had thought, wealth does not necessarily define one's class—displays of wealth can, ironically, create the perception that one is of a lower class.

Carrie becomes aware of wealth and class as soon as she boards the train to Chicago. However, she only perceives an oversimplified binary: rich and poor. The first relatively wealthy person Carrie meets is Drouet, on the train to the **city**. Carrie immediately noticed Drouet's rich dress: "His suit was of a striped and crossed pattern of brown wool, new at the time [...] He was [...] attractive, and whatever he had to recommend him, you may be sure was not lost upon Carrie." As a result, Carrie

also becomes "conscious of an inequality" between the way she and Drouet dress: "Her own plain blue dress, with its black cotton trimmings, now seemed to her shabby. She felt the worn state of her shoes." In this first encounter, Carrie distinguishes only between rich and poor: Drouet is rich while she is poor. Readers can see that Carrie's rudimentary discernment of wealth continues throughout her first days in Chicago, through her experiences while job searching. While walking in the wholesale district, Carrie notices, "with a touch at the heart, the fine ladies who elbowed and ignored her, brushing past in utter disregard of her presence, themselves eagerly enlisted in the materials which the store contained." Here, Carrie only perceives that she notices these ladies while they hold her "in utter disregard," as her plain dress makes her seem poor and obscure, undeserving of notice; she has nothing while these ladies wear the glamorous merchandise of the department stores. In this way, Carrie again sees only in terms of rich and poor.

Carrie begins to notice that there are gradations in wealth when she meets Hurstwood, Mrs. Hale, and Mrs. Vance. Upon meeting Hurstwood, Carrie immediately notices that he is well dressed and notices the difference between Hurstwood's dress and Drouet's: "Hurstwood's shoes were of soft, black calf, polished only to a dull shine. Drouet wore patent leather, but Carrie could not help feeling that there was a distinction in favour of the soft leather, where all else was so rich." For the first time, Carrie notices a difference among the wealthy. While Drouet is rich compared to, say, Carrie's sister Minnie, Hurstwood, in his more distinguished-looking shoes, appears wealthier than Drouet. Initially, Carrie is relatively satisfied with the living quarters Drouet rents for her. Indeed, compared to her sister's apartment, the place is quite nice. However, after going on a drive to an especially rich neighborhood with Mrs. Hale, Carrie perceives the "comparative insignificance" of her rooms next to magnificent houses she saw earlier, with their "richly carved entrance-ways, where the globed and crystalled lamps shone upon panelled doors set with stained and designed panes of glass." After all, her apartment is "but three small rooms in a moderately well-furnished boarding house."

Carrie begins to notice that next to the poor, there is the wealthy, but there is also the wealthier. She no longer thinks in terms of the simple distinction between rich and poor: "She was not contrasting [her rooms] now with what she had had, but what she had so recently seen," understanding that there are distinct levels of wealth among the rich. When Carrie and Hurstwood first move to New York, the two live in a building for relatively wealthy people. Here, Carrie meets Mrs. Vance, a wealthy young woman who lives in the adjacent apartment. With Mrs. Vance, Carrie experiences for herself the wealth disparity among the rich. Carrie, Mrs. Vance, Mr. Vance, and Ames dine at a glamorous restaurant called Sherry's. Previously, only the newspapers "had given [Carrie] a distinct idea of the gorgeousness and luxury of this wonderful temple of gastronomy." Experiencing Sherry's firsthand leads Carrie to remember the time "she sat with Drouet in a good restaurant in Chicago." The difference between her scant meals at her sister's home and her meal with Drouet is big, but as is the difference between her nice meal with Drouet and her extravagant meal with Mrs. Vance. This marks Carrie's full realization of the vastness of the spectrum of wealth.

Carrie's socioeconomic education continues when she learns from Ames that shows of wealth and class do not share a purely positive correlation. Indeed, excessive shows of wealth can seem garish and, thus, of a lower class. Rather, what seems to elevate a person's class, at least according to Ames, is a keen appreciation for art. At one point during the dinner at Sherry's, Ames makes a remark to Carrie that takes her "by the faintest touch of surprise": "I sometimes think it is a shame for people to spend so much money this way [...] they pay so much more than these things are worth. They put on so much show." Carrie, feeling that Ames's mind is "better" than hers, takes these words into consideration. She begins to learn that brute wealth is not all that makes a person distinguished, and that spending excessive money is too ostentatious and borders on vulgarity. While attending the theater along with the Vances, Ames "mentioned things in the play which [Carrie] most approved of—things which swayed her deeply." After Ames mentions that he thinks art and "the theatre a great thing," Carrie develops a desire to be on **stage**, not out a desire to be wealthier, but out of a desire to be an artist that "such men as he would approve of her." While Carrie's understanding of wealth and class changes as she flits from city to city and one social circle to the next, she ultimately desires not simply to be wealthier, but also of a higher class, so that she can walk in the same circles as intellectuals like Ames.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE CITY

In the novel, the city represents disillusionment. A country girl who moves to Chicago and then New York, Carrie initially holds high expectations for the city, believing that the promise of romance, wealth, and fame that underpins cosmopolitan life will bring her happiness. However, all of the delights that Chicago and New York can offer her ultimately leave her unsatisfied. Romance in the city is disappointing: in Chicago, Carrie takes the cheerful and friendly Drouet as her lover; however, he is insensitive and unwilling to fully commit to her. In New York, Carrie then takes the sensitive and faithful Hurstwood as her lover, but he proves

to be far too old and idle. Wealth also falls flat. Even though Carrie initially admires fine clothing, great houses, or luxurious restaurants and grows rich after achieving success as an actress, Ames helps her realize that wealth does not bring her happiness. The third element of cosmopolitan life that Carrie chases after, approval and recognition, also proves empty. Although she achieves fame on **stage** as an actress in comedy shows, Carrie soon discovers that she wishes to be taken more seriously as an artist. Ultimately, happiness is always out of reach for Carrie. While Carrie once pinned her hopes for happiness on the dazzling sparkle and glamour of city life, she learns over the course of the novel that life in the city leads to profound disillusionment with these very things.

THE STAGE

In Carrie's world, the stage serves as an escape from reality and, in a way, a mirror for life. While living in Chicago, Carrie enjoys attending shows because it pulls her away from the difficulties she faces in real life. Later, after leaving Hurstwood in New York, Carrie throws herself into her acting career as a means to work her way up and away from the dreary life she led with her lover during the later stages of their relationship, making the stage a kind of escape.

However, the stage is also a place where spectators can see themselves and their own lives play out, making it an extension of real life. During her days in Chicago, Carrie attends a play with Drouet and Hurstwood. By this point, Carrie and Hurstwood are already having an affair, and the play coincidentally depicts a woman being unfaithful to her husband. While Carrie and Hurstwood see how the situation in the play reflects their reality, Drouet is painfully unaware and ironically berates the husband in the play for being so ignorant. In this way, the stage is both an escape from real life and a reflection of it, a way to escape one's daily life and relive it.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Dover Thrift Editions edition of *Sister Carrie* published in 2004.

Chapter 1 Quotes

❝ When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse. Of an intermediate balance, under the circumstances, there is no possibility.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 1

Explanation and Analysis

At the beginning of the novel, Dreiser makes the aforementioned statement regarding provincial girls, like Carrie, who travel to the city. This quote relates two different fates that can befall Carrie: she will either become "better" or "worse." As Dreiser mentions "virtue," readers can gather that "better" and "worse" relates to a moral dichotomy. Dreiser explains that a girl will morally improve if she falls into "saving hands"; she will morally deteriorate if she takes to "the cosmopolitan standard of virtue." The connection between moral deterioration and cosmopolitan virtues paints the city as an immoral place, full of temptation and corruption. From this, readers can infer that Dreiser holds a negative view of the city.

At the end of the quote, Dreiser asserts that there is no "intermediate balance" that a girl can fall into—she must either become better or worse. This declaration connotes a certain helplessness on the part of the girl. She cannot filter the cosmopolitan virtues she encounters, deciding which ones to keep for herself and which ones to discard; rather these standards freely fill her, unless they are utterly stamped out by the "saving hands" of another, presumably a man. This picture of helplessness accords with the general strain of naturalism present in the novel: humans behave according to the influence of their environment.

Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ Not only did Carrie feel the drag of desire for all which was new and pleasing in apparel for women, but she noticed too, with a touch at the heart, the fine ladies who elbowed and ignored her, brushing past in utter disregard of her presence, themselves eagerly enlisted in the materials which the store contained.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 16

Explanation and Analysis

Walking the streets of Chicago, Carrie is captivated by the shows of material wealth unfolding all around her. The department stores in the city are filled with "all which was new and pleasing in apparel for woman," and Carrie cannot help but "feel the drag of desire." The department stores thus lead Carrie to develop her first vice: greed. The well-dressed women who walk past Carrie "in utter disregard of her presence" lead Carrie to feel "a touch at the heart" and develop her second vice: envy. These women are able to "eagerly [enlist] in the materials which the store contained"—they are able to easily attain the goods for which Carrie feels greed, and so jealousy bubbles up inside of her. In this way, Dreiser shows how the city can be a tempter and lead to moral deterioration. There seems to be nothing remarkable about these women save for their finery; still, Carrie wishes to be one of them and in this wish gains two vices.

Chapter 4 Quotes

❝ As Carrie listened to this and much more of similar familiar badinage among the men and girls, she instinctively withdrew into herself. She was not used to this type, and felt that there was something hard and low about it all. She feared that the young boys about would address such remarks to her—boys who, beside Drouet, seemed uncouth and ridiculous.

Related Characters: Charles H. Drouet, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 29

Explanation and Analysis

When Carrie finds a job as a laborer in a wholesale shoe factory, she finds both the work and her coworkers distasteful. Carrie's reaction to the other laborers demonstrate her capabilities in discernment and her taste for elegant companionship. With the environment at her new job, Carrie could assimilate with the other workers, presumably from similar socioeconomic background to herself. She could join in the "familiar badinage among the men and girls." Indeed, such assimilation might make her work more tolerable—at least she need not endure misery alone. Yet, Carrie discerns something "hard and low" in her fellow laborers and "instinctively [withdraws] into herself."

Carrie's instinct leads her towards those who are socioeconomically superior to her. At this point in the novel, that superior takes the form of Drouet, who makes her fellow laborers seem "uncouth and ridiculous." From Carrie's reaction to her coworkers, readers can gather that Carrie craves not merely wealth, but also elegance and class.

Chapter 6 Quotes

❝ On the first morning it rained [Carrie] found that she had no umbrella. Minnie loaned her one of hers, which was worn and faded. There was the kind of vanity in Carrie that troubled at this. She went to one of the great department stores and bought herself one, using a dollar and a quarter of her small store to pay for it.

"What did you do that for, Carrie?" asked Minnie, when she saw it.

"Oh, I need one," said Carrie.

"You foolish girl."

Carrie resented this, though she did not reply. She was not going to be a common shop-girl, she thought; they need not think it, either.

Related Characters: Minnie Hanson, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 39

Explanation and Analysis

After moving to Chicago, Carrie realizes that she holds a very different view from her sister, Minnie, with regards to spending money. From this passage, readers can gather that the difference in spending habits does not simply stem from greed on Carrie's part and frugality on Minnie's part, but from a difference in pride. Carrie is prideful when it comes to her appearance, and thus her "vanity" leads her to trouble over the "worn and faded" umbrella that Minnie lends her. Afraid that people might mistake her for "a common shop-girl," Carrie buys a new umbrella out of a sense of shame and the desire to preserve her pride and dignity—not just because she desired a new umbrella for its own sake. In contrast, Minnie has no such pride. Under the influence of her husband's ascetic way of life, Minnie never spends for the sake of appearances. Such prideful spending is simply "foolish."

Although Carrie and Minnie are sisters who hail from a similar provincial background, their views on spending

money are vastly different. From this, readers can gather that different environmental influences in Chicago have affected the sisters differently. Meeting Drouet has led Carrie to develop a taste for good appearance; living with Hanson has led Minnie to develop a self-denying nature. In this way, characters are ever so influenced by environment and experience.

Chapter 7 Quotes

❝ To [Carrie], and indeed to all the world, [Drouet] was a nice, good-hearted man. There was nothing evil in the fellow. He gave her the money out of a good heart—out of a realisation of her want. He would not have given the same amount to a poor young man, but we must not forget that a poor young man could not, in the nature of things, have appealed to him like a poor young girl. Femininity affected his feelings. He was the creature of an inborn desire.

Related Characters: Charles H. Drouet, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 45

Explanation and Analysis

After encountering a desperate Carrie on the street, Drouet displays an astounding amount of generosity, treating her to a meal and offering her 20 dollars—quite a hefty amount for the time that the novel takes place. Dreiser takes this moment to show that Drouet's generosity stems from neither moral uprightness nor depravity; rather, it stems from instinct. In this passage, Dreiser begins by stating that Drouet is "a nice, good-hearted man" in whom there is "nothing evil." However, Dreiser proceeds to qualify Drouet's goodness. Although he gives to Carrie "out of a realisation of her want," it's telling that he would not have done the same for "a poor young man." In other words, Drouet's good heart does not stem from a sense of moral duty to help the poor. Rather, he is generous because "femininity [affects] his feelings." Carrie's feminine helplessness spurs in Drouet an "inborn desire" to help. Through Drouet's generosity, Dreiser demonstrates that morality is somewhat irrelevant in the world of the novel. Generosity, good, evil, and the like do not stem from a proper or faulty morality, but from mere instinct.

Chapter 8 Quotes

❝ "Where do you suppose she's gone to?" said Minnie, thoroughly aroused.

"I don't know," a touch of cynicism lighting his eye. "Now she has gone and done it."

Minnie moved her head in a puzzled way.

"Oh, oh," she said, "she doesn't know what she has done."

"Well," said Hanson, after a while, sticking his hands out before him, "what can you do?"

Minnie's womanly nature was higher than this. She figured the possibilities in such cases.

"Oh," she said at last, "poor Sister Carrie!"

Related Characters: Sven Hanson, Minnie Hanson (speaker), Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 54

Explanation and Analysis

To the contemporary reader, Carrie's departure from her sister's household to that of Drouet hardly holds the same moral significance as it does to Dreiser and readers of his time. An unmarried girl living with a man and depending on him for her livelihood was considered a moral failure by late 19th- and early 20th-century standards. Readers can gather this much from the conversation between Minnie and Hanson after Carrie's departure. At first, Minnie holds no clue as to what Carrie has done and expresses her worry accordingly: "Where do you suppose she's gone to?" The idea of Carrie being a man's mistress does not even occur to her—it is unthinkable that a respectable young woman should become a man's mistress. Hanson broaches the idea by cynically and vaguely stating that "now [Carrie] has gone and done it." From this, readers can see that the idea of being a kept woman can only be brought up with ambiguity in conversations between respectable people. In this way, the quotation shows how the temptations and hardships of the city have led Carrie to, what is in the eyes of society, depravity.

Chapter 10 Quotes

Here, then, was Carrie, established in a pleasant fashion, free of certain difficulties which most ominously confronted her, laden with many new ones which were of a mental order, and altogether so turned about in all of her earthly relationships that she might well have been a new and different individual. She looked into her glass and saw a prettier Carrie than she had seen before; she looked into her mind, a mirror prepared of her own and the world's opinions, and saw a worse. Between these two images she wavered, hesitating which to believe.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 65-66

Explanation and Analysis

After becoming Drouet's mistress, Carrie starts questioning her own actions. Materially speaking, Carrie is much more comfortable now than she was at Minnie and Hanson's apartment—thanks to Drouet, she is "established in a pleasant fashion." With her new clothes and accessories, she even looks "prettier." Although free of worries regarding money and labor, Carrie is now laden with anxieties regarding her status as mistress: she is "worse" in both "her own and the world's opinions." Still, Carrie makes no move to remove herself from this morally questionable state: she simply "[wavers]" and "[hesitates]." Though she experiences guilt, she remains helpless in her situation and continues to serve as Drouet's mistress and accept the perks that come with her new role. Carrie's helplessness accords with the novel's naturalism, specifically, the idea that humans lack agency and behavior follows as the effect of some environmental cause. In Carrie's case, her lack of agency may stem from the material comfort of her surroundings, a comfort she severely lacked before.

Chapter 11 Quotes

[...] Carrie was naturally imitative. She began to get the hang of those little things which the pretty woman who has vanity invariably adopts. In short, her knowledge of grace doubled, and with it her appearance changed. She became a girl of considerable taste.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 74

Explanation and Analysis

Throughout the novel, Carrie demonstrates a desire to not only improve her appearance but also her manners. As she spends time around the upper crust, she learns that a person's class is not determined simply by the elegance of their clothing but also by the elegance and refinement of their behavior.

After moving in with Drouet, Carrie rapidly improves her appearance through new clothes and accessories. However, she perceives that more is needed to elevate her social status. As a "naturally imitative" young woman, Carrie begins to adopt the mannerisms "which the pretty woman who has vanity invariably adopts." She learns to blend in with a certain category of people, namely well-established and attractive women. In this way, Carrie becomes "a girl of considerable taste," and only in this way does she move up to a higher class. Through Carrie's ascent, the novel emphasizes that class is not determined only by shows of material wealth—there are elements of classiness that pertain to behavior and a "knowledge of grace."

Chapter 14 Quotes

[Drouet] was simply letting things drift because he preferred the free round of his present state to any legal trammellings. In contrast, Hurstwood appeared strong and sincere. He had no easy manner of putting her off. He sympathised with her and showed her what her true value was. He needed her, while Drouet did not care.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Charles H. Drouet, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 95

Explanation and Analysis

After living with Drouet for a while as his mistress, Carrie begins to worry that he will never propose. Drouet seems to enjoy the freedom of a noncommittal relationship without "any legal trammellings." In Carrie's eyes, Hurstwood appears to prioritize her—he seems willing to marry her because he has "no easy manner of putting her off" and "he [needs] her." These thoughts arise mostly from Carrie's instinct. They are not very reasonable: why should a well-established and rich manager who is experienced with life "[need]" a young girl any more than a young traveling

salesman? Carrie allows her instinct to convince her into a preference for Hurstwood. Furthermore, this instinct also leads her towards what would be by societal standards deeper immorality—not only is she already one man's mistress, but she is unfaithful to that man and engages in an affair with another. However, Dreiser does not demonize Carrie and criticize her on moral grounds—rather he chooses to simply show a girl following her romantic instincts. Again, morality is irrelevant to Dreiser: Carrie is utterly subject to her environment and instincts, factors which are blind to morality. This reiterates Dreiser's loyalty to naturalism.

Chapter 18 Quotes

❝ [Hurstwood] was evidently a light among them, reflecting in his personality the ambitions of those who greeted him. He was acknowledged, fawned upon, in a way lionised. Through it all one could see the standing of the man. It was greatness in a way, small as it was.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 124

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hurstwood enjoys the attentions of the many guests he has invited to see Carrie's play at the Freemasons' club. Readers learn from earlier in the novel that Hurstwood is comfortably established. He works as a manager at one of the most glamorous clubs in Chicago, where he meets many celebrities. Still, as a manager, he does not yet belong to the highest echelons of society—he only rubs elbows with these people. Yet, in Hurstwood's interactions with his guests in this passage, readers can see that he has achieved the highest social standing in his own circle of friends. In the company of his friends, Hurstwood is a "light" who finds himself "acknowledged, fawned upon, in a way lionised." Dreiser terms this "greatness in a way, small as it [is]." This passage highlights that there are many gradations when it comes to wealth and class. Even among a group of people with the same socioeconomic status, there are those who are more celebrated than others. Wealth and class, the novel repeatedly shows, are not simply a question of money.

Chapter 20 Quotes

❝ [Carrie] felt Hurstwood's passion as a delightful background to her own achievement, and she wondered what he would have to say [...] She was now experiencing the first shades of feeling of that subtle change which removes one out of the ranks of the suppliants into the lines of the dispensers of charity.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 137

Explanation and Analysis

In her relationships to Drouet and to Hurstwood, Carrie has always been the dependent—the socially inferior. However, after Carrie's moving performance in the play put on by the Freemasons' club, her two suitors regard her with newfound admiration, similar to how the public would admire a talented artist. This is how Carrie finds herself moving from "the ranks of the suppliants into the lines of the dispensers of charity." Carrie enjoys this newfound sense of power.

Significantly, Dreiser relates that Carrie "[feels] Hurstwood's passion as a delightful background to her own achievement." The word "background" indicates that in light of Carrie's recently discovered success, Hurstwood is only an accessory in Carrie's happiness—he's not the center of her world. In this way, readers can gather that Carrie does not truly love Hurstwood in that self-abandoning, romantic way that may have first seemed to be. Carrie's main source of happiness appears to be social elevation.

Chapter 26 Quotes

❝ Anyhow, there was one change for the better. She knew that she had improved in appearance. Her manner had vastly changed. Her clothes were becoming, and men—well-dressed men, some of the kind who before had gazed at her indifferently from behind their polished railings and imposing office partitions—now gazed into her face with a soft light in their eyes.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 171

Explanation and Analysis

Carrie's affair with Hurstwood—and her relationship with Drouet—comes to a halt after Drouet informs her that Hurstwood is married. Without financial support from these men, Carrie realizes she must look for a new source of income. During this second job search, Carrie is treated quite differently from her first job search. During the first job search, Carrie was poorly dressed and equipped with only provincial notions of manners. Now well-dressed and carrying an arsenal of feminine charms, Carrie receives more warmth from employers—male employers. Men who once looked at her "indifferently" now look at her "with a soft light in their eyes."

Through the improved treatment of male employers towards Carrie and the lack of good reasons for such an improvement, Dreiser shows that material wealth or lack thereof often leads people to form unfair impressions. After all, other than her changed appearance and manners, Carrie has not changed. She is just as inexperienced a worker as before. The only difference is that Carrie now looks better-off.

Chapter 27 Quotes

❝ The manager was no fool to be led blindly away by such an errant proposition as this, but his situation was peculiar. Wine was in his veins. It had crept up into his head and given him a warm view of the situation. It also coloured the possibilities of ten thousand for him. He could see great opportunities with that. He could get Carrie.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber, George W. Hurstwood

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 183

Explanation and Analysis

Hurstwood's life falls apart soon after the Freemasons' play: his wife blackmails him after finding out about the affair, and Carrie abandons him after finding out about his marriage. He takes to drinking heavily at his saloon and, at closing time, finds that the safe is unlocked, with thousands of dollars inside. The money poses as an immense temptation to the inebriated Hurstwood. While a sober Hurstwood would not follow "such an errant proposition," wine has effectively lowered Hurstwood's capacity for reason and awakened his more visceral instincts. Hurstwood's instinct is to take a "warm view" of "the possibilities of ten thousand," those irresistible "great opportunities." Furthermore, with the money, he could win over Carrie, who is his only current source of happiness, and be free of his aggravating wife. Through this unflattering portrayal of Hurstwood, Dreiser shows how instinct—especially when heightened by alcohol—can overcome reason.

Chapter 28 Quotes

❝ The progress of the train was having a great deal to do with the solution of this difficult situation. The speeding wheels and disappearing country put Chicago farther and farther behind. Carrie could feel that she was being borne a long distance off—that the engine was making an almost through run to some distant city. She felt at times as if she could cry out and make such a row that some one would come to her aid; at other times it seemed an almost useless thing—so far was she from any aid, no matter what she did. All the while Hurstwood was endeavouring to formulate his plea in such a way that it would strike home and bring her into sympathy with him.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 191

Explanation and Analysis

In order to persuade Carrie to leave with him, Hurstwood lies that Drouet is hurt. Though Carrie finds out about his deception on the train and initially shows vehement reluctance to follow through with Hurstwood's plan, she soon settles down for the reasons described in this passage. Reasonably, Carrie could easily inform the conductor of the train regarding Hurstwood's duplicity and, no doubt, find the means to return to Chicago. However, the environment of the train gives Carrie the feeling that return is out of reach, as she is "being borne a long distance off," a distance made longer each passing second by the "speeding wheels and disappearing country." The train gives Carrie a sense of helplessness, the feeling that "so far was she from any aid, no matter what she did." All the while, Hurstwood is exercising his persuasive powers on her. Once again, Dreiser's naturalism is clear in this passage: Carrie cannot help but succumb to the forces of her environment. Her capacity for reason is helpless when she must face forces of

the surrounding world.

Chapter 29 Quotes

This man, to whose bosom she was being pressed, was strong; he was passionate, he loved her, and she was alone. If she did not turn to him—accept of his love—where else might she go? Her resistance half dissolved in the flood of his strong feeling.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 196

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hurstwood and Carrie embrace upon arriving at a hotel in Montreal after a long train ride from Chicago. At this point, Carrie has for the most part accepted her situation and no longer plans to leave Hurstwood, largely due to helplessness. In this passage, Hurstwood envelops Carrie in his arms just as the environment and its forces have enveloped Carrie's consciousness. These forces are, like Hurstwood's embrace, strong and convincing. Consequently, Carrie feels that she must "turn to him—accept his love," for "where else might she go?" Hurstwood's embrace leads Carrie to feel that she is helpless without him. Dreiser likens Hurstwood's embrace and the "strong feeling" it represents to a "flood." This natural imagery hearkens back to Dreiser's naturalism: the author observes Carrie's behavior as a phenomenon utterly subject to factors in the surrounding environment. She can only but "half [dissolve]."

Chapter 30 Quotes

Whatever a man like Hurstwood could be in Chicago, it is very evident that he would be but an inconspicuous drop in an ocean like New York. In Chicago, whose population still ranged about 500,000, millionaires were not numerous. The rich had not become so conspicuously rich as to drown all moderate incomes in obscurity. [...] In Chicago the two roads to distinction were politics and trade. In New York the roads were any one of a half-hundred, and each had been diligently pursued by hundreds, so that celebrities were numerous. The sea was already full of whales. A common fish must needs disappear wholly from view—remain unseen. In other words, Hurstwood was nothing.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 204

Explanation and Analysis

In this quotation, Dreiser details how Hurstwood's social standing in New York differs from his social standing in Chicago. In Chicago, Hurstwood was well-established and among the upper echelons of society. As the manager of a popular and high-end saloon, he frequently came in contact with the rich and famous, and developed amicable relationships with them. Furthermore, Hurstwood was popular among his own set—those of modest wealth in Chicago, such as Drouet, treated Hurstwood with friendliness and deference.

However, in a larger, richer city like New York, Hurstwood is "but an inconspicuous drop." Dreiser once again resorts to natural imagery: while a "common fish" like Hurstwood might appear large in, say, a lake, he is hardly notable in an expansive ocean that is "already full of whales." Dreiser hints that Hurstwood might be negatively affected in this new and imposing environment. In an environment that tells Hurstwood he is "nothing," he will most likely internalize this message and become nothing. In this way, Dreiser shows how the city might lead to decay. While first impressions may be that a larger city signifies more opportunities for success, a larger city can also prove too overwhelming a place, where it is only too easy to lose confidence and one's sense of self.

Chapter 31 Quotes

[Carrie] could not, for the life of her, assume the attitude and smartness of Mrs. Vance, who, in her beauty, was all assurance. She could only imagine that it must be evident to many that she was the less handsomely dressed of the two. It cut her to the quick, and she resolved that she would not come here again until she looked better. At the same time she longed to feel the delight of parading here as an equal. Ah, then she would be happy!

Related Characters: Mrs. Vance, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 217

Explanation and Analysis

In New York, Carrie befriends Mrs. Vance, a rich and beautiful young woman with excellent taste in clothing and accessories. One day, when Carrie and Mrs. Vance stroll down Broadway on their way to a show, Carrie realizes how inferior she looks compared to Mrs. Vance and the other finely dressed women on the street. In Chicago, many, including Drouet and Hurstwood, admired Carrie for her fine appearance. However, in a bigger city like New York, Carrie's style falls short. Carrie realizes that she cannot "assume the attitude and smartness of Mrs. Vance" with her current material state. This "[cuts] her to the quick" and she resolves to return to Broadway only after improving her appearance. In this passage, Dreiser shows how, for Carrie, the material standards of New York quickly usurp the standards of Chicago. The city constantly brings new temptations and materialistic standards. Carrie cannot help but find herself adhering to these new standards, vain as they might be.

Chapter 32 Quotes

❝ In all Carrie's experience she had never seen anything like [Sherry's]. In the whole time she had been in New York Hurstwood's modified state had not permitted his bringing her to such a place. There was an almost indescribable atmosphere about it which convinced the newcomer that this was the proper thing. Here was the place where the matter of expense limited the patrons to the moneyed or pleasure- loving class.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 223

Explanation and Analysis

After Carrie and Hurstwood settle in New York for quite some time, Mr. and Mrs. Vance treat Carrie, along with Mrs. Vance's cousin Ames, to dinner at a luxurious restaurant called Sherry's. Here, Carrie undergoes one of the most extravagant experiences in the city. Carrie "had never seen anything like [Sherry's]," not in Chicago and definitely not in New York where Hurstwood must conserve funds. Sherry's educates Carrie in the values of the city: "there was an almost indescribable atmosphere about [the restaurant] which convinced the newcomer that this was the proper thing." In other words, dining at Sherry's seems to be the correct and posh thing to do. In this way, the experience at Sherry's gives the false sense that being a member of "moneyed or pleasure- loving class" is nothing less than a moral success, as it is only "proper" to dine in such luxury. In this way, the city imparts another questionable lesson on Carrie, in its suggestion to a susceptible young woman that having money and seeking pleasure are necessary for a "proper" life.

❝ [Carrie] felt as if she would like to be agreeable to [Ames], and also there came with it, or perhaps preceded it, the slightest shade of a feeling that he was better educated than she was—that his mind was better. He seemed to look it, and the saving grace in Carrie was that she could understand that people could be wiser.

Related Characters: Robert Ames, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 225-226

Explanation and Analysis

While dining with Mr. and Mrs. Vance at Sherry's, an extremely luxurious restaurant, Carrie enjoys a conversation with Ames, Mrs. Vance's cousin. For the first time, Carrie meets someone who does not admire wealth and luxury: Ames remarks to Carrie that he feels all the excess of Sherry's to be quite pointless and views food and service as an empty, overpriced show of extravagance. Carrie is intrigued by Ames's words. She realizes that the young man is "better educated" than she is and that "his mind [is] better"; consequently, she wishes to be "agreeable" to him and impress him. Dreiser relates that what saves Carrie from being completely corrupted by the city is that "she [can] understand that people [can] be wiser" than herself and her own hankerings after wealth can, as a result, be more foolish than she thought. The conversation between Carrie and Ames is a turning point in the novel: it marks the first occasion where Carrie realizes wealth is not necessarily a good thing. Indeed, she learns from Ames that in excess, wealth can be quite vulgar.

Chapter 35 Quotes

That night he felt a cold coming on and took quinine. He was feverish until morning, and sat about the next day while Carrie waited on him. He was a helpless creature in sickness, not very handsome in a dull-coloured bath gown and his hair uncombed. He looked haggard about the eyes and quite old. Carrie noticed this, and it did not appeal to her. She wanted to be good-natured and sympathetic, but something about the man held her aloof.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 246

Explanation and Analysis

Carrie and Hurstwood's relationship steadily declines during their time in New York. On one occasion, Hurstwood falls sick and his lack of appeal grows more obvious than ever before to Carrie. During his sickness, Carrie notices Hurstwood's helplessness, the fact that he is "not very handsome," especially when "in a dull-coloured bath gown and his hair uncombed." Furthermore, Carrie notices Hurstwood's age for the first time: "he looked haggard about the eyes and quite old." All this lack of appeal leads Hurstwood to hold Carrie "aloof." Dreiser portrays this occasion in a scientific—and naturalistic—manner: everything follows a sort of cause-and-effect sequence. In sickness, Hurstwood appears helpless, old, and unkempt; consequently, he is thoroughly unappealing to his young lover. Significantly, Dreiser does not criticize Carrie's heartlessness. Indeed, he relates that "she [wants] to be good-natured and sympathetic," but that Hurstwood's vulnerable state is simply too different from his powerful and suave manner in Chicago.

Chapter 39 Quotes

Her need of clothes—to say nothing of her desire for ornaments— grew rapidly as the fact developed that for all her work she was not to have them. The sympathy she felt for Hurstwood, at the time he asked her to tide him over, vanished with these newer urgings of decency. He was not always renewing his request, but this love of good appearance was. It insisted, and Carrie wished to satisfy it, wished more and more that Hurstwood was not in the way.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 271

Explanation and Analysis

After holding a position as the manager of a small establishment for a while, Hurstwood loses his job, forcing him and Carrie to scrimp and save what little money they have. This proves rather hard on Carrie, whose desire for clothes and accessories is as strong as ever, especially that now she has a position as a chorus girl and those around her are dressed well. Carrie's sympathy for Hurstwood rapidly depletes while her desire for a "good appearance" increases. Life in the city has taught Carrie that a "good appearance" is a matter of "decency." In other words, Carrie feels a sort of moral obligation to dress well, as materialistic and illusory as this obligation might be. Once again, Dreiser portrays what might have been viewed as Carrie's heartlessness and vanity in an exceedingly objective and scientific way, reinforcing the novel's ties to naturalism. Carrie merely wishes to "satisfy" what the city has taught her is a need, and Hurstwood is simply "in the way."

Chapter 42 Quotes

Carrie's little soldier friend. Miss Osborne, seeing her succeeding, had become a sort of satellite. Little Osborne could never of herself amount to anything. She seemed to realise it in a sort of pussy-like way and instinctively concluded to cling with her soft little claws to Carrie.

Related Characters: Lola Osborne, Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 300

Explanation and Analysis

During her first days with the theater company, Carrie becomes friends with a fellow chorus girl, Lola Osborne. The two remain friends as Carrie receives promotions while Lola remains a chorus girl. Jealousy and condescension never enter the relationship. Indeed, the relationship between Carrie and Lola is perhaps one of the healthiest

ones readers can find in the novel. Lola realizes that she "could never of herself amount to anything" and revolves around Carrie as "a sort of satellite." Dreiser relates that she "[clings] with her soft little claws to Carrie." Carrie enjoys the company and the two remain together past the end of the novel.

This is the first instance where readers can see women relying on each other for support. The city has taught Carrie many misleading values; however, through Lola, a city girl, Carrie also learns that she need not depend on men for her livelihood. For although Lola never achieves greatness, she never depends on men for a livelihood either. In this way, Dreiser shows that not all cosmopolitan standards are questionable—the modern world has brought forth some progress.

❝ [Carrie] had learned that men could change and fail. Flattery in its most palpable form had lost its force with her. It required superiority—kindly superiority—to move her—the superiority of a genius like Ames.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Page Number: 300-301

Explanation and Analysis

Lola Osborne introduces Carrie to a number of young men, many who are interested in impressing Carrie and winning her affections. However, Carrie, unlike Lola, does not enjoy these overtures. After her experiences with Drouet and Hurstwood, Carrie is quite disillusioned with men of the flattering sort. Men can "change and fail," and "flattery in its most palpable form" is nothing but mere words. Carrie desires "kindly superiority" and "genius" in a man. Ames presents in her mind as a sort of ideal.

In this passage, Dreiser shows that Carrie has made another distinction in class. Initially, she only perceived differences in manner: Drouet is of a higher class than the young men who worked in the wholesale shoe factory because of his jovial and gentlemanly demeanor; Hurstwood is of a higher class than Drouet because of the former's suave, caring, and sensitive nature. Now, Carrie sees that Ames is superior than all these men from before because of his superior intellect. In this way, Carrie continues to discover gradations in wealth and class.

Chapter 47 Quotes

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

"What's the use?" he said, weakly, as he stretched himself to rest.

Related Characters: George W. Hurstwood (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 350

Explanation and Analysis

After Carrie leaves Hurstwood, the latter slowly descends into poverty, spending his last days as a beggar. Though initially willing to work, Hurstwood eventually abandons any notions of improving his state and commits suicide in a fifteen-cent boarding house. Dreiser sets Hurstwood's death in the "blackness" of a flophouse. Emaciated and hopeless, he "[reviews] nothing" but only "[hesitates]" before committing suicide via a gas stove. The setting, a place of idleness and hopelessness, correlates with Hurstwood's mental state and the gas parallels his descent into poverty, silent and deadly.

Although Hurstwood's death is a depressing scene, Dreiser refrains from sentimentalism. Once again, the novelist takes an objective point of view. Dreiser neither relays Hurstwood's emotions nor blames Carrie for his death. Indeed, Carrie does not ever learn of his death. Hurstwood's death results from hopelessness, which arose from starvation, lack of employment, and so on. Hurstwood's death, Dreiser suggests, is simply a matter of cause and effect.

Oh, Carrie, Carrie! Oh, blind strivings of the human heart! Onward, onward, it saith, and where beauty leads, there it follows. Whether it be the tinkle of a lone sheep bell o'er some quiet landscape, or the glimmer of beauty in sylvan places, or the show of soul in some passing eye, the heart knows and makes answer, following. It is when the feet weary and hope seems vain that the heartaches and the longings arise. Know, then, that for you is neither surfeit nor content. In your rocking-chair, by your window dreaming, shall you long, alone. In your rocking-chair, by your window, shall you dream such happiness as you may never feel.

Related Characters: Caroline "Carrie" Meeber

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 352

Explanation and Analysis

Dreiser ends the novel on the note of desperation and hopelessness with regards to Carrie. In every step of her narrative, Carrie chases after the next best thing, be it new clothes and accessories, a better lover, or a more notable role in a play. Here, Dreiser switches from third person to second person narrative, addressing Carrie in an intimate way, telling her that she will find "neither surfeit nor content." In other words, happiness with never for a reality for Carrie—it will forever be an illusion, just out of reach. She will always "dream such happiness as [she] may never feel." In this way, Dreiser indicates that the city has instilled a sort of greed in Carrie, a desire to always move on to the next best thing in hopes of achieving happiness, which never comes to fruition. Indeed, the values that the city imparts forbids her to ever succeed. She can only dream, "alone."

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1 (THE MAGNET ATTRACTING: A WAIF AMID FORCES)

In August 1889, 18-year-old Caroline Meeber boards a train bound for Chicago, carrying small belongings and large hopes. Carrie does not seem particularly attached to her hometown, as all it takes is the forward-moving train for "the threads which bound her so lightly to girlhood and home" to be "irretrievably broken." Carrie is leaving from Columbia City, Wisconsin to join her sister in the **city**.

The novel opens on a note that is familiar to the English language literary canon: a young woman, on the brink of adulthood, travels to a new place to begin a new life. From this, readers can gather that the novel will most likely be a sort of coming-of-age narrative. As Carrie is traveling from the countryside to a large city, readers can also predict the book will be an urban novel, a work that deals with industrialization, labor, and the like.

When a young woman leaves home at age 18, the narrator explains, there are only two choices: she either finds a role model who makes her a better person, or she falls to the vices of the **city** and becomes worse. The narrator considers the city to be a great tempter with "cunning wiles": it breathes lies into "the unguarded ear" and "relaxes, then weakens, then perverts the simpler human perception."

It seems that the narrative of young Carrie can only take two turns: either the city will corrupt her, or someone will save her from the city's corruption. From this, readers can gather that the novel takes a generally negative view of the city, painting it as a sort of tempter and harbinger of corruption.

Carrie, "or Sister Carrie, as she had been half affectionately termed by the family," is the typical example of a middle-class girl: relatively simple, self-interested but not selfish, and carrying the potential to be beautiful. She is a "half-equipped little knight" venturing into the **city** with "wild dreams of some vague, far-off supremacy, which should make it prey and subject—the proper penitent, grovelling at a woman's slipper."

Carrie is an average young woman who seems to have neither damning vices nor redeeming features. Her normalcy coupled with her wild dreams of supremacy shows her inexperience with life. This inexperience, in turn, reinforces the novel as a sort of coming-of-age work. Carrie's desire for a "prey and subject" demonstrates a deep-seated desire for recognition and power.

A man approaches Carrie and begins to make polite conversation. He is a traveling salesman, "one whose dress or manners are calculated to elicit the admiration of susceptible young women." Carrie notices his fashionable dress. The narrator relates that Drouet's type is actuated by a "keen desire for the feminine" and "an insatiable love of variable pleasure." He is a sort of dandy. This well-dressed man causes Carrie to notice the shabbiness of her own attire.

Given that a dandy finds it easy to approach Carrie, readers can infer that the young woman gives off an aura of innocence and approachability. The fact that Carrie does not put him off highlights her inexperience with philandering men. Carrie seems especially observant when it comes to matters of dress: the dandy's fashionable attire forms a favorable impression on her and makes her self-conscious of her own plainness.

Carrie is drawn to the man's description of the **city**'s magnificence. By this point, the two are flirting, with "much more passing now than the mere words" they are saying to each other. Carrie and the man, Chas. H. Drouet, exchange names and addresses, and tentatively make plans to meet. Neither Carrie nor Drouet can tell if they made a strong enough impression on the other.

Despite her inexperience, Carrie flirts quite easily with the dandy, suggesting that she is neither meek nor particularly cautious. Drouet and Carrie appear to have a mutual interest in each other; however, neither is forward enough to directly show this interest. Evidently, Carrie is not too innocent to forwardly express her interest in a man.

The train approaches Chicago, and Carrie, seeing the marvels of the **city**, feels renewed interest. After Drouet points out different parts of Chicago, Carrie begins to feel scared about being away from home and "rushing into a great sea of life and endeavor." The train arrives in Chicago, and Carrie refuses Drouet when he offers to carry her things, saying, "I'd rather you wouldn't be with me when I meet my sister." Drouet tells Carrie he will be nearby in case her sister isn't at the station. The two exchange goodbyes.

Carrie's fear highlights the fact that she is still young and has not been to anywhere as cosmopolitan as the city. She is, in other words, quite provincial. Carrie's desire for Drouet to stay behind when meeting her sister shows her awareness that it is not entirely proper for a girl of her station to have formed a relationship with a dandy on a train ride. Readers can infer that Carrie's sister is a proper sort who might not look kindly upon forward behavior.

Carrie finds her sister, and immediately realizes that this ordinary-looking woman does not carry the **city**'s marvels, but "most of the grimness of shift and toil." Carrie notices the difference between how she feels when she is with Drouet and how she feels when she is with her sister: with Drouet, there was a sense of excitement and direction, while with her sister, there is only the feeling that she is "a lone figure in a tossing, thoughtless sea."

Carrie displays an attraction towards glamour and a distaste for "the grimness of shift and toil," before she has even labored herself. There is a certain sort of vanity in Carrie that drives her away from plainness and toward luxury. Carrie's loneliness in her sister's presence suggests that the two are not close and have very different mindsets.

CHAPTER 2 (WHAT POVERTY THREATENED: OF GRANITE AND BRASS)

Minnie, Carrie's sister, brings Carrie to her third-floor flat, where she lives with her husband and baby in a working-class neighborhood. Looking out the window, Carrie continues to marvel at the **city**. Minnie's husband, Hanson, is indifferent to Carrie and simply tells her that she will find work in a matter of days. He seems keen that she should find work as soon as possible. Hanson and Minnie expect Carrie to pay for board.

Minnie and Hanson are working class people who essentially live for labor. They do not think of taking Carrie around the city; indeed, Hanson wants Carrie to find work as soon as possible. Minnie and Hanson are evidently not financially comfortable—they expect Carrie, who is family, to pay rent as would a boarder.

As Minnie prepares dinner, Carrie inspects the apartment and finds it dull, indicative of "the drag of a lean and narrow life." At dinner, Hanson tells Carrie to look for work in the "big manufacturing houses" out east. Minnie appears to know little about the **city** in comparison to Hanson. Hanson retires early, and as Carrie and Minnie finish chores, Carrie notes again that "it was a steady round of toil with [Minnie]."

There is nothing glamourous about Minnie and Hanson's lives. Carrie finds everything about them dull. Furthermore, though Minnie has already lived in Chicago for a presumable extended amount of time, she knows little about the city, showing that she hardly goes out to enjoy cosmopolitan entertainment. Minnie appears to do nothing except for take care of the house and baby—she leads the opposite kind of life that Carrie wishes to lead.

Carrie decides that Drouet cannot visit her anytime soon, until she finds a job and "establish[es] herself." She writes to him, citing that the flat is too small. Carrie struggles with how to conclude the letter and ends up simply signing "sincerely" and her name. After looking at the streets some more, she goes to bed.

Carrie is too ashamed of Minnie's situation to allow Drouet to visit. She also perceives that there is no familial warmth from Minnie and Hanson and their flat is not really her home, as she does not feel it right to invite guests over before she has paid rent.

Carrie meets her sister in the dining room after waking up, and notes that Minnie has change a lot since they last saw each other: she is now "thin, though rugged," influenced by Hanson, and "fast hardening into narrower conceptions of pleasure and duty than had ever been hers in a thoroughly circumscribed youth." The narrator relates that Minnie only invited Carrie because she could work and pay board in the **city**, not because Minnie missed her sister. Carrie will most likely become a shop girl and keep the job "until something happen[s]," though neither woman knows what that "something" is. Carrie leaves to look for work.

Carrie expected city life to help her gain recognition and glamour. However, looking at Minnie, it has done quite the opposite—Minnie lives in obscurity and scarcity. The two sisters are as different as can be. Minnie does not show Carrie sisterly affection and merely treats her as a friendly tenant. Minnie expects her sister to find satisfaction in work until something happens, rather than for Carrie to actively make something of herself. In other words, she does not hold the same big dreams for Carrie as Carrie does for herself.

Chicago is a growing **city** whose population consists mainly of working-class people. The center of Chicago is "the vast wholesale and shopping district," which is a popular destination for those seeking work. This district's atmosphere is intimidating to the average applicant, and "make[s] the gulf between poverty and success seem both wide and deep."

Chicago is a city that is rapidly growing and expanding. Consequently, many workers flood to the Chicago in complete ignorance, not knowing where to go save for the wholesale and shopping districts. Carrie is one of these ignorant work-seekers who cannot help but feel overwhelmed by everything. The district gives workers the sense that the American Dream is quite out of reach.

Carrie arrives in this district, eager to find employment and "delayed at every step by the interest of the unfolding scene, and a sense of helplessness amid so much evidence of power and force which she d[oes] not understand." Everything in the district feels imposing and mysterious to Carrie. Memories of Columbia City "los[e] all significance in her little world." Carrie feels apprehensive that she can do anything in this big, strange, beautiful new world.

The city is an overwhelming place and Carrie realizes that it may not be as easy to gain recognition and power as she had imagined on the train. She is completely ignorant as to how things in the city work, having only lived in "her little world." Nevertheless, though apprehensive, Carrie appears to like the city and thinks it quite beautiful a place.

CHAPTER 3 (WE QUESTION OF FORTUNE: FOUR-FIFTY A WEEK)

Carrie walks around in the wholesale district looking for places to apply. She feels very self-conscious of being a "wage-seeker" and, "to avoid a certain indefinable shame […] at being caught spying about for a position," spends some time walking too fast to look at the manufacturing and wholesale houses properly. Realizing this won't work, she slows down and notices a great door with a brass sign. However, seeing through the window "a young man with a grey checked suit," she hurries away, "too overcome by shame to enter." She repeats this process of approach and retreat with Storm and King, a wholesale dry goods concern that employs women.

Carrie's innate moral standard equates wealth with goodness: she feels ashamed of seeking work, as if poverty is something disgraceful. The city continues to overwhelm Carrie. Coupled with her sense of shame, she is too embarrassed to enter any of the establishments in the wholesale district. Nevertheless, Carrie also demonstrates a certain amount of gumption, and finally enters the dry goods concern after retreating from several other establishments—despite her shame, Carrie is not meek.

Carrie's cowardice begins to dishearten her as she continues to walk, so she decides to return to Storm and King. On the way, she enters a wholesale shoe company, where an old gentleman gently declines her request for work. Encouraged by his kindness, she ventures into a clothing company and asks for work again, but this time she receives an abrupt "no." This rejection is "a severe setback to her recently pleased mental state." However, after a bowl of soup for lunch, she feels moderately restored and continues her search.

The city appears to be a booming place, full of opportunities for those who are looking for work. Nevertheless, here readers can see wage seekers often need more than just a will to work—they need experience or connections. In this way, the city is a harsher place than Carrie had imagined. Carrie's surroundings easily affect her resolve: kindness encourages her, and harshness easily breaks her down. She is a very impressionable young woman.

Carrie encounters Storm and King again and enters the building. She waits while the men conferring nearby ignore her, until a man at a desk directs her to Mr. McManus. McManus asks Carrie if she has experience in the wholesale dry goods business, stenography, or typing. Carrie replies no to each of these inquiries. McManus rejects her request for work, citing they only need "experienced help," but attracted by Carrie's "plaintive face," points her to the department stores that often need young women as clerks.

The industrial world is dominated by men—everyone in charge appears to male, and woman are only lower-tier workers. It is seemingly more difficult for women to find work than men, and all the more so if the woman, like Carrie, has no skills in sales, stenography, or typing. Regardless of how sweet and likeable Carrie is, her lack of skills and experience is damning in her job search.

McManus's words give Carrie courage, and after wandering for some time, she gets directions from a police officer to go to "The Fair," which is two blocks away. At the store, Carrie is drawn to all merchandise: "There [is] nothing there which she could not have used—nothing which she d[oes] not long to own." However, she also realizes that everything is beyond her reach, since she's unemployed. Carrie once again feels the shabbiness of her material state, especially next to the fine ladies shopping and even the female clerks "with whom she now [compares] poorly." She is envious and "[longs] for dress and beauty with a whole heart."

Carrie is drawn to the luxuries of the city and desires all the material goods in the department stores. These items form a stark contrast with Minnie's austere and frugal lifestyle. Carrie realizes that if she is to obtain these goods, then she must find a source of income. Carrie longs to be able to hold her head high next to all the finely dressed women around her, for even the female clerks are better dressed than she. In this way, readers can see that Carrie is instinctively drawn to wealth and luxury.


Carrie waits for 45 minutes before she is called in for an interview. After learning that she has no experience with working in stores, the interviewer rejects her and promptly asks her to leave. As an afterthought, he asks for her name and address, in case a position opens. After getting to the street, Carrie is on the brink of tears and, "feeling a certain safety and relief in mingling with the crowd," wanders along.

Many people are seeking jobs alongside Carrie, as evidenced by the 45 -minute wait before her interview. In this way, it seems that the wage-seekers outnumber the number of positions available. The city is not the booming place of opportunity that Carrie had imagined; indeed, it seems she does not know how to integrate into this urban system.

Walking along the street, Carrie sees an advertisement for female wrappers and stitchers for Speigelheim & Co., which produces boys' caps. She enters the building and observes the workspace to be dingy and the female workers to be "drabby-looking creatures." Carrie is sure she does not want to work in this place but waits until the foreman approaches her. Despite her lack of related work experience, the foreman offers her a job that pays $3.50 per week. Carrie leaves gratified at the offer but disappointed with the shop's dinginess and the low pay.

Despite her desperation, Carrie has a strong sense of pride. The wrapping and stitching establishment reeks of dinginess and poverty, no doubt forming a stark contrast to the department stores she saw before. Although she has received no offers thus far and has no experience, Carrie is still unwilling to work in a grimy place with low pay. In this way, Carrie has great expectations for herself and has double standards about menial work—she looks down on it, even though she herself isn't qualified to do anything else.


Carrie continues her search but is rejected with "chilling formality" from the more desirable, respectable places. She receives an especially cold rejection from a manufacturing cloak house, and so "with the wane of the afternoon went her hopes, her courage, and her strength." She begins to head back to her sister Minnie's house but feels "one of those forlorn impulses which often grow out of a fixed sense of defeat" and decides to make one more effort at a wholesale shoe house with a plate-glass window.

Carrie does not seem in touch with reality—she does not realize that her lack of experience forbids her from working in more desirable and respectable places. She feels only disappointment, rather than a resolve to start at a less than perfect establishment and work her way up to better places. Carrie's inexperience renders her far too idealistic and easy to disappoint.

The man behind the door at the shoe house tells Carrie they only employ book-keepers and typewriters, but tells her to ask for Mr. Brown upstairs. In "a portion of a stock room which gave no idea of the general character of the place," Mr. Brown offers Carrie a position that pays $4.50 per week. Though disappointed by the pay, Carrie accepts the offer and begins to feel more relaxed and hopeful. As she walks to Minnie's flat, she sees workers returning home with smiles and reassures herself that "she w[ill] have a better time than she ever had before—she w[ill] be happy."

Carrie is a disappointed at the low pay offered to her, despite knowing that she has no experience or redeemable work qualities. Nevertheless, she is hopeful and thinks that with the money, she can now be happy. At this point in the novel, Carrie equates wealth with happiness—she believes that money will lift her out of Minnie's sad, barren apartment and into a more luxurious and happier place. Carrie's idealistic views set her up for disappointment.

CHAPTER 4 (THE SPENDINGS OF FANCY: FACTS ANSWER WITH SNEERS)

For two days after receiving her job offer, Carrie dreams about spending her money on "every joy and bauble which the heart of woman may desire." Minnie is unaware of these thoughts. Indeed, in contrast to Carrie, Minnie spends her days doing housework and finding ways to save money. Hanson follows the same routine every day, and Carrie observes that his solemnity affects the atmosphere of the flat.

Carrie and Minnie, though sisters, are as different as can be. Carrie lives on dreams and ideals while Minnie lives pragmatically—so much so that she cannot even imagine the thoughts running through Carrie's head. Hanson is only a more severe version of Minnie. Indeed, he makes the atmosphere difficult for Carrie to bear.

Hanson brightens a bit after Carrie tells him about her job offer. As Carrie cheerfully talks about her company at dinner, Minnie grows happier as well and tells Carrie to explore Michigan Avenue. However, Carrie relays a desire to see plays at H. R. Jacobs, a theater showing melodramas. The atmosphere immediately chills: Hanson and Minnie disapprove of engaging in activities that require spending money. The subject is avoided, and Hanson leaves the room to read the paper.

Hanson and Minnie never go out—it appears their lives consist of unending labor. Their frugality clashes with Carrie's desire to spend money on entertainment. Furthermore, Hanson is cold to Carrie. Rather than explaining why he disapproves of her spending money, Hanson puts off Carrie's request and leaves. Minnie does not defend Carrie and appears to be completely under the influence of Hanson.

Alone, the two sisters enjoy "a somewhat freer conversation" and Carrie once again brings up the theater, asking Minnie to accompany her. Minnie is apprehensive, saying Hanson would not like it. Carrie offers to pay for Minnie and Hanson, but Minnie continues to refuse her invitation. Carrie pleads a reluctant Minnie to ask Hanson. Minnie goes to the next room to ask, but Hanson refuses with a shake of the head. She comes back and tells Carrie. Disappointed, Carrie exclaims to Minnie that she will stand at the foot of the stairs to observe **city** life. After Carrie leaves, Hanson expresses disapproval to Minnie regarding Carrie's desire to spend money at the theater.

Minnie appears to never think for herself. In everything, she simple adopts Hanson's beliefs and seems to need his approval regarding anything Carrie asks of her. Minnie treats her husband with complete deference while he appears to treat her as a subordinate rather than a partner. Upon closer investigation, Minnie does not herself disapprove of Carrie's desire to go to the theater at all; rather, all her disapproval stems from fear of what Hanson would think. The atmosphere in the flat can only be oppressive to Carrie—her own sister never stands up for Carrie or herself.

Carrie walks along Jackson Street, observing "the evidences of wealth," though the narrator notes that "there was, perhaps, not one person on the street worth more than a hundred thousand dollars." She also thinks of Drouet. Carrie feels liberated outside of the small, drab flat and hopes, with a certain apprehension, that Drouet would call on her on Monday.

Everything outside forms a stark contrast with Hanson's apartment: Jackson street is spacious and decorated with shows of wealth while the apartment is cramped and poorly decorated. Carrie's desire for Drouet to visit shows that she wants to be liberated from the grim atmosphere in the apartment.

On Monday, Carrie rises early for work. At breakfast, she thinks nervously about her new job and the "strange and untried duties confront[ing] her." She is, nevertheless, hopeful and vaguely feels that she will come in contact with great business owners and stylishly dressed men. As the car fare is 60 cents per week, Carrie walks to work under the reassuring sunlight. Seeing contemptuous girls her own age on the street makes Carrie nervous once again as "dread at her own inefficiency [creeps] upon her." She arrives at her new workplace feeling terrified.

Carrie is painfully unaware of what her job as a laborer entails—she believes that rather than slaving away in factory, she will be working next to rich businessmen. On the other hand, Carrie is painfully aware that her appearance is not up to par compared to many of the well-dressed women on the street. Her shame can only be exacerbated by the contempt that these girls show her.

After briefly reminding him of their encounter last week, Carrie follows Mr. Brown to the work room on the sixth floor. Mr. Brown hands her off to a foreman, who then hands her off to a girl. The girl teaches Carrie to punch eye-holes for shoes. Carrie is anxious and tries to keep up with the speed of the other workers, so as to not slow the assembly line. The other girls sense her feelings and try to help her by working slower. At one point, Carrie fumbles and the foreman immediately tells her to not "keep the line waiting." Carrie grows increasingly uncomfortable and observes the behavior of the youth around her. She finds the work extremely distasteful, but at lunch, she finds the behavior of the other workers so "hard and low" that she is relieved when work begins again.

Carrie's lack of experience shows during her performance at work, as she cannot keep up with the other workers. These workers are nice to her and even attempt to work slower to help Carrie. However, Carrie is not eager to make friends with these girls and the other male workers, as they appear unsophisticated and common. Carrie's disdain towards her coworkers highlight her instinctual preference for the manners and wealth of the upper classes. She is, by all standards, the same as the workers around her; however, she feels that she is better and not so "hard and low." Carrie is too idealistic to be content as a factory worker.

The rest of the workday feels impossibly long, and Carrie grows increasingly certain that she does not want to be friends with any of her coworkers. As Carrie leaves, several young men flirt with her, but she finds their advances vulgar. On the way home, she feels "ashamed in the face of better dressed girls who [go] by." Carrie "[feels] as though she should be better served," with "her heart [revolting]."

Work proves to be a disappointment to Carrie: the labor is difficult and boring, her coworkers are common, the men are vulgar, and her pay is low. Carrie has a sense of entitlement—for no reason at all, she believes that she deserves better, that she should be one to walk with the finely dressed women on the street.


CHAPTER 5 (A GLITTERING NIGHT FLOWER: THE USE OF A NAME)

Drouet never gets around to visiting Carrie. He is having a "gay time" dining at Rector's, "a restaurant of some local fame," and visiting Fitzgerald and Moy's, a high-class saloon. These establishments represent, for Drouet, a part of "high life—a fair sample of what the whole must be." Though Drouet is not "a moneyed man," he has a penchant for nice clothes, good food, and fine company—particularly that of ultra-successful men. He frequents these establishments because they stir his ambitions and put him in the same space as the wealthy.

Drouet proves himself a dandy—he has already forgotten Carrie and is too busy visiting various establishments around Chicago for entertainment. From these visits, readers can tell that he is most definitely more financially comfortable than Minnie and Hanson. Drouet is similar to Carrie in that he equates wealth with goodness. He enjoys being in the company of the rich and successful and longs to be a part of them.

Drouet meets G. W. Hurstwood, manager of Fitzgerald and Moy's, at Rector's. Hurstwood, a stylish man in his late thirties, is "a very successful and well-known man about town." Drouet considers him "some one worth knowing." With a combination of "perseverance and industry," Hurstwood was able to go from being a bartender at an ordinary saloon to his managerial position at Fitzgerald and Moy's.

Chicago is a place where connections are important. Drouet feels it necessary to be connected to Hurstwood because the manager himself is well connected and known "about town." It appears that in places like saloons, men can meet and form business connections with one another.


Hurstwood typically spends his time greeting people with tactfully, using more charm on "those noted or rich." However, Hurstwood finds his most favored form of companionship in those who are "neither rich nor poor, famous, nor yet remarkably successful, with whom he was friendly on the score of good fellowship." He has a wife and two children established on the north side of Lincoln park and is upper-class though not quite "luxuriously rich."

Hurstwood is the most comfortably established character in the novel thus far. He is rich, holds a good job, and has a family. He is, nevertheless, not yet among the richest. Hurstwood and Drouet's life form a sharp contrast with the lives of Carrie, Minnie, and Hanson. These two, like Hanson and Carrie, work; however, they also know the pleasures of leisure and entertainment.

Hurstwood likes Drouet for his amiability. The two drink together at the bar and briefly talk about Drouet's past and upcoming trips as well as their mutual acquaintances. The narrator marvels at how the saloon draws important men together. Drouet, for one, longs "to shine among his betters."

The saloon is an important place for men to find connections and raise their socioeconomic status. It is full of people who, unlike Carrie, understand how finding employment and wealth works in the city. The saloon is essentially the place that Carrie imagined the city itself to be—a place where one can find opportunities to better oneself.

The narrator explains that the vices of the **city** do not rise from places like the saloon, per se, but rather from within the individual's mind. The narrator likens the saloon to an "insect-infested" flower that draws more insects to it with its pleasurable scent.

Although the saloon is a place of opportunity, it is also the place that attracts and encourages immorality. In and of itself, the saloon is a neutral place where people can satisfy their ambitions, but given the natural human tendency towards greed, it becomes a place that cultivates vice.

Hurstwood briefly points out a "spiritualist," Jules Wallace, in attendance before telling Drouet he has something to show him at midnight. Before leaving for a show, Drouet briefly tells Hurstwood about Carrie, whom he describes as "a little peach" and "a little dandy" whom he must call on. Hurstwood seems indifferent. The narrator states that this conversation will lead Carrie's fate to unfold.

Hurstwood appears to be familiar with all the notable people about town and, consequently, is a valuable connection for Drouet. Although Hurstwood likes Drouet, he does not appear to be as much of a dandy, as he takes little interest in Drouet's story about Carrie. Despite the lack of interest, it appears that these two men will take important roles in Carrie's life.

CHAPTER 6 (THE MACHINE AND THE MAIDEN: A KNIGHT OF TO-DAY)

Carrie returns to the flat weary and disappointed, which irritates Hanson. Minnie is also disturbed. Carrie finds dinner "exceedingly gloomy," as she realizes that the Hansons view her "complaint as unwarranted." The narrator notes that a happy, welcoming environment and an appetizing meal would have brought Carrie relief. Minnie is too old to be a companion for Carrie and Hanson too emotionless and distant. There is no one to respond to Carrie's youthful feelings.

Carrie's idealism clashes with Hanson and Minnie's pragmatism. Indeed, in the eyes of the hardworking couple, Carrie has little reason to complain. However, Hanson and Minnie are excessively cold in their complete lack of sympathy for Carrie—they neglect to take into account her youth and inexperience. The apartment is an altogether unbearable place for the likes of Carrie.

After seeing Minnie and Hanson's unresponsiveness, Carrie decides to go outside and watch the passersby, and meet Drouet there if he comes. After she leaves, Hanson instructs Minnie to tell Carrie to keep the job and to stop standing downstairs. Hanson goes downstairs, and upon seeing Carrie, tells her he is buying bread, but Carrie realizes he's suspicious of her and feels "the first shade of real antipathy to him." After waiting and realizing that Drouet will not come, she returns to the flat and retires to bed.

Hanson is controlling of the women around him. He already has Minnie completely under his influence, and he also wants Carrie to adopt his pragmatic ways. Furthermore, he also has a suspicious personality, as seen by the fact that he goes down to check on Carrie. For a woman like Carrie with a mind of her own, Hanson is an obstacle to her freedom.

Carrie continues through the week, disgusted with her job and lonely at the flat. The narrator notes that it would have been easier on Carrie had she "not secured a position so quickly." One day, it rains, and Carrie, finding Minnie's umbrella shabby, buys a new one, a purchase for which Minnie chastises her. As Carrie's board costs $4, she only has 50 cents a week for "clothes and amusement," putting her "in a state of mental rebellion." At work, she realizes that even her seemingly crude female coworkers have young men who take them on dates. Of course, Carrie views these young men to be beneath her.

Carrie seems to believe that a good appearance is essential to her dignity, hence splurging on an umbrella to keep herself dry. In this respect, she clashes with Minnie, who holds little regard for personal appearance. Minnie's frugality and her lack of sympathy for Carrie lead to a rift between the two sisters. Carrie also feels a rift between her and her coworkers. There appears to be little reason for this, as these coworkers are most likely from the same background and social class as Carrie. Indeed, the only thing that sets Carrie apart from her coworkers is her condescending attitude and unrelenting idealism.

As "the first premonitory blast of winter [sweeps] over the **city**," Carrie realizes she has no winter clothes. Minnie allows her to keep a part of her money to buy a hat. However, without the protection of a jacket, Carrie falls sick one day after walking in the cold wind. Minnie is distressed and Hanson suggests that perhaps Carrie should go home. After three days, Carrie gets better, but missing work means that she's lost her position. She begins looking for another job, but her search this time around is even more difficult than the last. At the flat, Hanson's demeanor is cold, and Carrie realizes that soon, she will have to go home if she fails to find work.

Hanson does not have a lot of patience for Carrie. After something as small as a brief sickness, he desires for Carrie to return to Wisconsin. It is clear that Carrie is only wanted in the flat to help pay the rent. The job market is equally unforgiving—there is no such thing as a sick leave, and workers are simply fired if they miss their shifts. Carrie begins to grow desperate between these two unforgiving forces. Evidently, she does not want to return home to Wisconsin despite how much she's struggling in Chicago.

On the fourth day of her job search, a subdued Carrie encounters Drouet, who treats her to a lavish meal as she relays her present difficulties. With Drouet, Carrie feels cared for and begins to cheer up. Carrie contemplates Drouet's ostensible wealth and "[wonders] at his friendship and regard for her." Drouet lends her $20, instructs her to buy clothing, and tells her to meet him tomorrow for a matinée at the theater. Carrie, after a few protests, accepts his invitation. She leaves him "feeling as though a great arm had slipped out before her to draw off trouble."

Drouet's kindness forms a stark contrast with Hanson's coldness. Carrie is too naïve to realize that such generosity does not mean much for a dandy in Drouet's economic situation and, consequently, she suspects that he has a special regard for her. Carrie's gratefulness towards Drouet's small gesture highlights just how coldly she has been treated by Hanson and Minnie, who are supposed to be her family. The fact that Carrie accepts such help from a virtual stranger highlights her desperation.

CHAPTER 7 (THE LURE OF THE MATERIAL: BEAUTY SPEAKS FOR ITSELF)

The narrator states that money "should only be accepted as a moral due—that it should be paid out as honestly stored energy, and not a usurped privilege." Carrie has no such conception of money and simply views it as "something everybody else has and [she] must get." She feels better off with Drouet's $20, though she also feels ashamed. Carrie is eager to spend this money on new clothing.

Carrie has a certain sense of entitlement when it comes to wealth. Furthermore, she has a sense of pride—she does not like the feeling of accepting Drouet's charity. Still, her desire for material possessions conflicts with this sense of pride and leads her to debate whether to accept Drouet's money, which is several weeks' worth of wages from her previous job.

Drouet is "a nice, good-hearted man" in whom there was "nothing evil." He gave Carrie so much money, money that he would not have given to a male beggar, simply because "femininity [affects] his feelings." Carrie takes Drouet's money because he seems "open and commendable," with no ulterior motives. Drouet leaves Carrie to spend the money, feeling tender and lighthearted about the young girl.

Drouet seemingly does not have evil intentions when it comes to Carrie, but given the naïveté Carrie has shown thus far in the novel, the accuracy of her perception of Drouet as respectable remains to be seen.

Carrie arrives home in high spirits but worries about how she can buy new clothing without Minnie noticing. At the flat, she lies to Minnie about having a potential job. The two come to an agreement that if Carrie doesn't find a job, she will go home. Carrie realizes that Hanson and Minnie are unwilling to keep her if she is jobless, a thought that "[arouses] all the antagonism of her nature." The idea of going home to Columbia City depresses Carrie. Unable to come up with a way to spend Drouet's money without Minnie noticing, Carrie decides to return the money, though just having it gives her a sense of relief.

Once again, Carrie demonstrates her dislike for charity—she is unwilling to stay with Minnie and Hanson if they view her as a burden. And, upon further consideration, Carrie decides that she cannot accept Drouet's charity either. Still, despite her experience since then, Carrie holds the same expectations for wealth and glamour that she did on the train. Her unwillingness to return home demonstrates that she still clings to certain ideals about the city living.

The next morning, Carrie sets out to look for jobs once again, as the money in her pocket "ma[kes] the work question the least shade less terrible." However, she grows disheartened, and, after one last rejection, decides to give up. Carrie makes her way to the department store, desiring everything, but especially attracted by the jackets. She even picks out a particular jacket as the one she would buy. However, as noon approaches, she decides to meet Drouet to return the money.

Money seems to be an important source of security for Carrie, as Drouet's money gives her a sense of support she didn't have before. The temptation of material goods remains strong for Carrie, yet she is dignified enough not to spend Drouet's money. Carrie's pride and idealism seem to be in a constant scuffle with each other.

When Carrie tries to return the money to Drouet, he refuses to take the money back. He takes her out for lunch and tells her that he will take care of her. He persuades Carrie by saying that there isn't anything in Columbia City for her. In Chicago, she "can do something." Drouet proceeds to buy Carrie a jacket, shoes, a purse, gloves, and stockings. He also sets up some rooms for her in Wabash Avenue. After some convincing from Drouet, Carrie decides to leave her sister's flat that night and move into her new apartment. She briefly returns to the flat, leaves Minnie a note telling her not to worry, and goes to meet Drouet.

Drouet, as a well-connected man, realizes that the city is a place of opportunity for Carrie. It is just that she does not know where and how to look properly. He also evidently likes Carrie, buying her all those clothes and accessories, and offers to take care of her. At the same time, despite Drouet's good intentions, his mode of help is not particularly honorable—he is offering to make Carrie a kept woman who will be entirely dependent upon Drouet. The fact that Carrie accepts this offer shows her innocence and desperation.

CHAPTER 8 (INTIMATIONS BY WINTER: AN AMBASSADOR SUMMONED)

The narrator states that "among the forces which sweep and play throughout the universe, untutored man is but a wisp in the wind." Humans are different from animals in that they have reason in addition to instinct. At the same time, instinct often overcomes reason. In this way, the human is "a creature of incalculable variability." In Carrie, instinct and reason are "at war for the mastery." As of now, Carrie "[follows] whither her craving [leads]."

Carrie's inner turmoil regarding Drouet's offer stems from a battle between reason and instinct. Reason tells her that living as a kept woman is not respectable; however, her instinct tells her that Drouet will pave the path to glamour. Overall, it seems that for Carrie, the desire for wealth and status outweighs any moral scruples she has about being a kept woman.

Minnie is anxious about Carrie's sudden departure, but her anxiety is "not exactly touched by yearning, sorrow, or love." Upon finding Carrie's note, Hanson is mostly indifferent, and cynically says that Carrie "has gone and done it." On the other hand, Minnie, having a "womanly nature higher than [Hanson's indifference]," fears for Carrie, imagining the possibilities of what could happen to a young girl in Carrie's situation.

Minnie and Hanson have presumably inferred that Carrie has become a kept woman—how else could she afford to live on her own in the city? Hanson's cynicism and Minnie's fearful reaction indicates that Carrie's actions are symbolic of moral failure in the eyes of respectable, hardworking society.

Carrie, in her new apartment, is eager to find something to do and also wonders what Drouet plans to do with her. The narrator relates that Drouet plans to "delight himself with Carrie," without suffering much from matters of conscience. Life in the apartment is hardly a solitary one for Carrie, as Drouet is always around, taking her out to eat, shop, and sightsee. Carrie, in her new clothes and situation, begins to perceive herself as pretty and, in this way, "[feels] her first thrill of power."

Carrie is too innocent to realize that being a kept woman entails trading sexual favors for financial support—Drouet plans to make her his mistress. Carrie does not seem to care that her position is a dependent one—she is completely in the hands of Drouet—and, quite ironically, feels powerful with her new clothes. From this, readers can gather than Carrie equates money with power: now that she has more money in her hands, she is more powerful even though she has not earned that wealth herself.

One evening, after seeing "The Mikado," an opera, Carrie and Drouet briefly bump into a girl with whom Carrie once worked at the shoe factory. The girl's shabby dress contrasts with Carrie, who now dons a boa. Carrie and Drouet proceed to dine and attend the theater, with Carrie basking in all the luxury surrounding her. During the after-theater lunch, Carry briefly thinks it's too late, but having no responsibilities or accountability to consider, falls "victim [to] the **city**'s hypnotic influence." Drouet then walks Carrie home. The two are now intimate friends.

The city is a place where people can change in social station quite rapidly. Just days before, Carrie was worse off than the girl at the shoe factory. She was just as shabbily dressed as the girl she runs into outside of the opera, and also unemployed. Virtually overnight, Carrie has become the girl's social superior. On a different note, it appears that Carrie's childhood did little to instill values in her—she has neither habits nor scruples to curb her desire for entertainment. The city is free to fill her with new values and ideas, with little defense on Carrie's part.

At about the same time that Drouet is walking Carrie home, Minnie has a dream about Carrie. In the dream, Carrie is swallowed first by shadow and then by water, drifting out of Minnie's sight and reach. Minnie feels as though "she ha[s] lost something," and is "more inexpressibly sad than she had ever been in life." In Minnie's last dream, Carrie slips and falls from a large rock. Hanson eventually wakes Minnie up, as she has been talking in her sleep.

Minnie's dream symbolizes that Carrie is now a "fallen woman," a Victorian term for a woman who has sex outside of wedlock or otherwise acts dishonorably. But the dream also demonstrates that the two sisters are out of touch with each other—they are so different that they cannot understand each other's desires. Minnie's sadness shows that unlike Hanson, she did have some affection for Carrie after all.

Meanwhile, after seeing Carrie home, Drouet makes his way to Fitzgerald and Moy's to visit Hurstwood. After exchanging greetings, Drouet, "as if struck by a sudden idea," invites Hurstwood to his house. Hurstwood is puzzled but accepts the invitation. The two make plans to play euchre and drink wine. Drouet mysteriously tells Hurstwood, "I'll introduce you."

Drouet views Carrie as property rather than a person. He wants to show her off to Hurstwood as one of his possessions. The fact that Carrie is something for Drouet to brag about demonstrates that she at least has the potential to become a fine lady in the eyes of high society. Despite Carrie's innocence and lack of success without Drouet's help, it seems she has enough redeeming qualities to rise from the common crowd.

CHAPTER 9 (CONVENTION'S OWN TINDER-BOX: THE EYE THAT IS GREEN)

Hurstwood lives in a brick building on the North Side, near Lincoln Park, in a 10-room apartment with a yard and stable. He lives with his wife, Julia, and son and daughter, George Jr. and Jessica. The family employs a maidservant whom Mrs. Hurstwood often switches, as she is fussy and hard to please. The household, though finely furnished, "[lacks] that toleration and regard without which the home is nothing." Hurstwood is generally reserved and uninvolved in the domestic sphere, preferring to step away and ignore family problems rather than argue about them.

From the outsider's perspective, Hurstwood's situation in life is very comfortable. Materially speaking, he has everything that Carrie desires: a large house, fine furniture, honest occupation, and, presumably, fine clothes and accessories as well. However, it seems that Hurstwood finds an equally cold family as Carrie did in Minnie and Hanson. Though his relationship with his family does not appear strained, it is hardly warm.

Hurstwood used to be fond of his daughter, Jessica. Unfortunately, as she grew older, the now 18-year-old Jessica developed "notions of life which were decidedly those of a patrician," and became a seeker of only fine clothes and company. Hurstwood's 20-year-old son, though "connected in a promising capacity with a large real estate firm," is vain and does not particularly care for his family. Mrs. Hurstwood is a social-climbing type who cares for nothing but socioeconomic status. On one occasion, when Jessica relates that a certain Martha Griswold was cast in a school performance, Mrs. Hurstwood simply remarks that "her family doesn't amount to anything."

It seems that the main problem that Hurstwood has with his family can be attributed to their vanity. Jessica, like Carrie, yearns for a life of glamour, and desires fine clothes and sophisticated company. The difference lies in the fact that Carrie is less vocal about these desires. On the other hand, Mrs. Hurstwood, in addition to sharing Jessica's desire for glamour, appears to also be a judgmental type who looks down on those who are less fortunate. The mother and daughter generally appear vain and intolerant. Given Carrie's condescending attitude toward her former coworkers at Speigelheim & Co., Jessica and Mrs. Hurstwood serve as a harrowing picture of who Carrie could become.

Hurstwood has lived in this sort of household atmosphere for years, but is not tempted by other women unless they are "immediately and sharply contrasted" with his own marriage. On occasions that he meets "a woman whose youth, sprightliness, and humour [...] make his wife seem rather deficient by contrast," he refrains from doing anything scandalous. Hurstwood believed in having "a dignified manner, a clean record, a respectable home anchorage." Thus, he still often goes to social gatherings with his wife.

Hurstwood, being comfortable, does not find it necessary to make changes in his household. He usually has nothing better to compare his family to. Furthermore, his desire to remain respectable keeps him from finding joy in affairs—Hurstwood prioritizes his own dignity. Still, Hurstwood does not appear to happy, as he seems to be leading life the way he does simply because he is used to it.

Recently, expenses have been rather high for the Hurstwood household, given Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica's spending habits. Hurstwood, irritated with his household, decides to accept an invitation for an aldermanic junket in Philadelphia. He enjoys the trip and is sorry to go home. The narrator interjects that the kind of household atmosphere the Hurstwoods have can only "become dryer and dryer," and will "eventually be tinder, easily lighted and destroyed."

Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica appear to have no relationship with Hurstwood—they simply spend his money. The fact that Hurstwood does not want to return home after the junket shows that, perhaps unbeknownst even to himself, he has grown to dislike his family. Given this dislike, Hurstwood's home life is more fragile than he imagines.

CHAPTER 10 (THE COUNSEL OF WINTER: FORTUNE'S AMBASSADOR CALLS)

The narrator relates that society judges its citizens using a "conventional standard": "All men should be good, all women virtuous." In light of this standard, Carrie feels she has failed. Though "comfortably established" and relatively carefree, Carrie is "laden with many new [difficulties] of a mental order." Carrie feels prettier and improved but felt that in "her own and the world's opinions," she is worse. Though Drouet praises her, Carrie cannot help but feel guilty for being a kept woman. The dreariness of winter amplifies these feelings.

Carrie is aware that respectable society does not condone kept women—such women are considered moral failures. However, Carrie does not feel that she has failed, as her living situation and appearance have both drastically improved. In this way, Carrie's sense of reason is at war with her instinct: reason tells her that she is not respectable, yet her instinct tells her that she has improved. The fact that she stays with Drouet shows that, to a certain extent, instinct has prevailed in Carrie.


Drouet continues to dote on Carrie, taking her out and spending money on her. One morning, Drouet tells Carrie that he has invited Hurstwood to spend the evening with them and tells Carrie he will introduce her as Mrs. Drouet. Carrie feels this to be "slightly inconsiderate" and tells Drouet they ought to get married. Drouet responds he plans to, "just as soon as [he] gets this little deal of [his] closed up." He sets a tentative date for January. Carrie accepts this "as basis for hope—it was a sort of salve to her conscience, a pleasant way out."

Although Drouet has no evil intentions when it comes to Carrie, he doesn't have particularly honorable intentions either. He has no solid plans to marry Carrie and take her out of a morally questionable situation. It seems that Drouet does not truly love Carrie—he merely likes her and enjoys her companionship. Furthermore, he is rather insensitive when it comes to Carrie's feelings, planning to introduce Carrie as his wife without asking for her permission to do so.

Carrie "really [is] not enamoured of Drouet," being "more clever than he," and thus begins to see Drouet's faults. The narrator claims that if Carrie were less clever, then she would be worse off because "she would [adore] him" and, consequently, his noncommittal behavior would be more hurtful. Because she is cleverer than Drouet, Carrie feels comfortable waiting to get married. Overall, Carrie is unsure what she thinks of Drouet or what she wants to do.

Carrie does not appear to truly love Drouet either. Consequently, she is lucid and sensitive enough to perceive that he is not an ideal partner for marriage. Both Carrie and Drouet view each other as temporary companions—neither are as committed as people in love would be. Neither Carrie nor Drouet are in a position where they'll hurt each other if the relationship ends.

When Hurstwood visits, Carrie meets "a man who [is] more clever than Drouet in a hundred ways." Respectful and attentive, Hurstwood is calm and confident, "giving the impression that he [wishes] to be of service only—to do something which would make the lady more pleased." On the other hand, Drouet is too egotistical to embody the same essence as Hurstwood. Drouet succeeds only with women who lack experience and refinement. Had Carrie been more experienced, Drouet would wouldn't have a chance with her.

Hurstwood appears superior to Drouet in all aspects—he is smarter and more sensitive to Carrie's feelings. The fact that Carrie notices shows that she is also Drouet's superior, and had she met someone like Hurstwood first, she would never have become Drouet's mistress. Just as Hanson appeared cold next to Drouet's warmth, Drouet appears foolish next to Hurstwood's sensitivity.

For Carrie, Hurstwood is delightful company. He displays better taste than Drouet, his soft calf leather shoes much more distinguished than Drouet's patent leather. The three play euchre, with Hurstwood directing Carrie, as she does not know how to play. Carrie feels comfortable and amused in Hurstwood's presence.

Hurstwood has better taste than Drouet, indicating that he is of a higher class. Carrie's immediate attraction to Hurstwood's manner of dressing reinforces the idea that she has an instinctual leaning towards the ways of the upper classes. Hurstwood appears to be a better match for Carrie than Drouet.

After the euchre game, the three dine and Hurstwood invites Carrie and Drouet to attend the theater with him. Before leaving, Hurstwood observes to Drouet, "when you leave your wife alone, you must let me show her around a little." Drouet readily agrees. Carrie is "thoroughly impressed" by the behavior Hurstwood displayed this evening: "she had never come in contact with such grace."

Hurstwood's invitation and desire to show Carrie around Chicago indicates that he is also quite impressed by Carrie and wishes to spend more time with her. Drouet's willingness to let her go shows that he is in complete ignorance of the mutual interest between Carrie and Drouet. Indeed, for Carrie, Hurstwood becomes a new sort of masculine ideal, next to which Drouet, no doubt, appears insufficient.

CHAPTER 11 (THE PERSUASION OF FASHION: FEELING GUARDS O'ER ITS OWN)

Carrie is "an apt student of fortune's ways—of fortune's superficialities." For Carrie, fine clothes are "a vast persuasion"—she would rather go hungry than to forgo her appearance. Drouet's company feeds Carrie's eagerness to learn about the finer world. She takes his praise "at its full value" and pays attention to other women he praises in order to imitate their grace. Although Drouet's comments are not tactful and considerate of Carrie, she takes them "affably." However, because "his admiration is so pointedly and generously distributed," Carrie also thinks less of Drouet.

Carrie appears to prioritize a fine appearance over everything else. In this way, she holds innocently superficial values. Her desire to improve her appearance leads her to be particularly sensitive to those with a fine appearance around her. Drouet's praise for women around Carrie shows his lack of regard for Carrie's feelings and his inability to be a sensitive lover. He seems to like women on the whole a bit too much. In this way, Drouet is quite similar to the catcalling men from the shoe factory, just less brazen.

Others in Carrie's apartment building are also a source of education for Carrie. Mrs. Hale, the wife of a theater manager, often gossips with Carrie, helping her younger friend find her way and formulate her perspective. Carrie is confused by Mrs. Hale's traditional sense of morality and emphasis on "trivialities" and wealth. Her own feelings act as "a corrective influence," pushing her away from Mrs. Hale's teachings.

Mrs. Hale's superficiality and praise for wealth recalls the vanity of Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica. Like the females of the Hurstwood family, Mrs. Hale talks about wealth as if it were the only thing worth having in the world. Although Carrie, too, desires wealth, the fact that she shows some mental resistance to Mrs. Hale's teachings demonstrate that Carrie has the potential to rise above superficiality and pursue a life with more depth.

In addition to Mrs. Hale, the wife and daughter of a railroad treasurer from Indiana also live in the apartment building. The daughter studies music in Chicago while her mother keeps her company. Although Carrie does not make their acquaintance, the piano music that drifts into her apartment affects her deeply: "her nervous composition [responds] to certain strains, much as certain strings of a harp vibrate when a corresponding key of a piano is struck." One evening, while Drouet is out, Carrie hears a particularly "soulful and tender" piece, and, becomes "for the moment a repentant."

Carrie shows an instinctual appreciation for art—the railroad treasurer's daughter's music cultivates this. Carrie's appreciation for music reinforces the idea that she can rise into someone who is not simply impressed by wealth—she desires something akin to beauty in her life. Indeed, the fact that the music makes Carrie feel repentant shows that art may pave the way for Carrie to transcend the superficiality around her.

Drouet returns and sees Carrie crying. He assumes that his absence caused this sadness and suggests they waltz to the music. The narrator relates that this is Drouet's "first great mistake": his suggestion to waltz "made clear to Carrie that he could not sympathize with her." On the other hand, Drouet's opinion of Carrie is rising. Carrie observes Drouet's remarks about the railroad treasurer's daughter's grace and implemented "those little modish ways" into her own bearing. This leads Drouet to admire her more.

Evidently, Drouet does not display the same artistic sensitivity that Carrie does. In contrast to Carrie's melancholic appreciation, Drouet's suggestion to waltz shows that he has a rather superficial understanding for the finer—the more artistic—things in life. On the other hand, Drouet is sensitive to the improvements in Carrie and observant when it comes to how women carry themselves.

Because of Carrie's constant efforts toward self-improvement, the Carrie that Drouet first met is very different from the Carrie that Hurstwood first met: "the primary defects of dress and manner had passed." Indeed, Hurstwood, upon leaving Carrie's residence, wondered how Drouet had won her over, as he perceives Carrie to be superior to her supposed husband. Hurstwood plans to bring her a bouquet sometime, unafraid of offending Drouet.

On the outside, Carrie is a different person from the girl on the train at the novel's beginning: she is now well-dressed and well-mannered. She understands how an attractive woman is supposed to act and has implemented that understanding in her behavior. Consequently, she is now thoroughly out of Drouet's league. The fact that a fine man like Hurstwood is attracted to Carrie shows that her looks and behavior fit right in with women of the upper classes.

A few weeks later, Drouet encounters one of his "well-dressed lady acquaintances" and takes her to dine. Hurstwood, happening to be in the same restaurant, sees them and thinks of how this flirtation is unfair to Carrie. Drouet feels no misgiving until he notices that Hurstwood is "cautiously pretending not to see." Drouet then feels troubled, sees his companion to her car, and approaches Hurstwood, telling him the lady is just "an old acquaintance." Hurstwood remarks on the lady's beauty and Drouet denies having feelings of attraction for her. Hurstwood then invites Drouet and Carrie to the theater to see Joe Jefferson. Unbeknownst to the ignorantly jovial Drouet, Hurstwood wishes to expose Drouet's infidelity to Carrie.

The fact that Drouet has no scruples about meeting other women in public, in front of people who know him to have a "wife," demonstrates a lack of social acuity. More importantly, it shows a lack of regard for Carrie. Hurstwood's discomfort at seeing Drouet with another woman indicates that Hurstwood has an abundance of social tact. His desire to expose Drouet to Carrie also shows that Hurstwood has a sense of justice. The two men, though friends, are as different as can be: Drouet appears to be a foolish dandy while Hurstwood is prudent and well-behaved.

One evening, Drouet tells Carrie that he will take her to the show. At first, Carrie refuses the invitation, saying that she has promised to attend the Inter-State Industrial Exposition with Mrs. Hale. A maidservant then brings a note from Hurstwood, inviting Drouet and Carrie to see Joe Jefferson. Carrie then agrees to break the engagement with Mrs. Hale, as "it seem[s] that the combination of Hurstwood, Drouet, and herself [i]s more agreeable than anything else that had been suggested." Carrie proceeds to dress herself and arrange her hair very carefully.

Carrie's initial refusal of Drouet's invitation shows that she is already tiring of his company. Indeed, she is more willing to spend time with the vain Mrs. Hale. The fact that Carrie agrees to see a show on Hurstwood's invitation shows that, although she may not realize it, she is already interested in Hurstwood. This interest is reinforced by the way that Carrie dresses herself in a way that is, no doubt, intended to impress Hurstwood.

At the theater, Hurstwood compliments Carrie. During their time in the theater box, Hurstwood spends his time leaning towards Carrie and speaking to her about Jefferson. Carrie finds Hurstwood's elegance and her surroundings pleasant "beyond expression." Hurstwood and Carrie enjoy a nebulous flirtation by sneaking glances at each other, which fills Carrie with "a flood of feeling as she had never before experienced." Drouet is dull in comparison, and by the end of the third act, Carrie finds him defective. The evening ends with Drouet utterly unaware that "a battle had been fought and his defences weakened."

Drouet's ignorance when it comes to the flirtation between Carrie and Hurstwood shows a lack of acuity and reinforces the idea that he is not clever enough for Carrie. The fact that Hurstwood invites Carrie to the theater and flirts with her shows that Carrie has attractive enough qualities to garner the attentions of an upper-class gentleman. Carrie has made a thoroughly beautiful woman of herself, and her attraction to Hurstwood in the presence of Drouet indicates that at this point she presumably holds little to no regard for Drouet as a lover.

CHAPTER 12 (OF THE LAMPS OF THE MANSIONS: THE AMBASSADOR'S PLEA)

Mrs. Hurstwood is "cold," "self-centered," and guarded—she never reveals her thoughts. Hurstwood senses this in his wife on some level, but does not let himself acknowledge it. The two generally lived together peacefully. He is not afraid of her, and she still takes "a faint pride in him" because he allows her to maintain her lifestyle and social status. Still, Hurstwood is careful around her, as "he [cannot] be sure of anything once she bec[omes] dissatisfied."

Mrs. Hurstwood's coldness toward Hurstwood recalls Hanson's coldness toward Carrie. Hurstwood does not find warmth in his home life just as Carrie did not find warmth at Minnie and Hanson's apartment. However, Hurstwood is not dependent on his wife as Carrie was dependent on Hanson and Minnie. Consequently, he avoids conflict not out of deference, but out of a desire to avoid trouble.

On the night that Hurstwood attended the theater with Drouet and Carrie, his son, George Jr., also happened to be there. Hurstwood did not see his son, but George saw his father. The morning after, at breakfast, George makes a remark about seeing his father at the theater, raising Mrs. Hurstwood's suspicion. She asks Hurstwood what he saw and who he was with, and Hurstwood answers honestly. The narrator notes that because of the nature of Hurstwood's job, his wife typically does not question his social movements. However, Hurstwood has lately used his work as an excuse to avoid going out with his wife—this is the explanation he gave about "the very evening in question only the morning before." Hurstwood relates to her that he simply "couldn't help the interruption" and "made up for it afterward by working until two."

Hurstwood and George did not know that they were attending the same show, indicating that father and son are not particularly close. Hurstwood's honesty shows that he does not believe himself to have done anything wrong. However, Mrs. Hurstwood is still dissatisfied. Although the love between the Hurstwood couple has long gone, Mrs. Hurstwood still expects Hurstwood to make a show that that they have a loving relationship. Evidently, Mrs. Hurstwood has a strong sense of pride and believes in the importance of keeping up pretense for the public, but Hurstwood does not seem as interested in their public image.

Hurstwood's excuse "[settles] the discussion for the time being, but there [is] a residue of opinion which [is] not satisfactory." Hurstwood feels that her claims were "unsatisfactorily pushed." For years, his affection for her has been waning and her company is always "dull." After meeting Carrie, Hurstwood finds his wife all the more "irksome." However, Mrs. Hurstwood is still intent on having "a complete fulfillment of the letter of their relationship, though the spirit might be wanting."

Mrs. Hurstwood appears very unattractive next to Carrie. Although both women desire fine clothes and luxury, Mrs. Hurstwood's frankness on the subject, obvious disdain for the less fortunate, and sense of entitlement cuts her a more vulgar figure than Carrie. The relationship between Hurstwood and his wife was evidently crumbling before Carrie ever entered the picture—meeting Carrie has simply allowed Hurstwood to notice this crumbling relationship in a newer, harsher light.

Mrs. Hurstwood tells Hurstwood to accompany her on a visit to Mr. Phillips and his wife. Hurstwood grudgingly agrees with "short grace," thinking that he ought "not to bothered fooling around with visitors when [he] has work to do." A short while later, Mrs. Hurstwood asks for his accompaniment to a matinée, an invitation that Hurstwood declines. Overall, "the feeling of mutual antagonism [is] increased" between husband and wife. At the same time, Hurstwood's interest in Carrie grows.

Mrs. Hurstwood does not appear to like Hurstwood very much either. She remains attached to Hurstwood only to use him as an accessory—to flaunt her successful, "loving" husband in front of acquaintances. On the other hand, Hurstwood does not seem to think flaunting his wife necessary. This difference in opinion, coupled with Hurstwood's interest in Carrie, creates a rift between the couple.

At this point in time, Carrie has "the aptitude of the struggler who seeks emancipation." Under Mrs. Hale's tutelage, Carrie learns the distinction "between degrees of wealth." Mrs. Hale enjoys driving in wealthy neighborhoods to look at houses she cannot afford. One afternoon, she invites Carrie to take a drive with her. On this drive, Carrie feels drawn to all the wealth she sees, and upon arriving back at her own rooms, notices that they look meager by comparison. Carrie perceives that there is a bigger, more cosmopolitan life than that which she shares with Drouet. She feels "as if all her state [is] one of loneliness and forsakenness."

Mrs. Hale shows Carrie that though Carrie is wealthy compared to the shop girls and workers in factories, she is still quite a long way from belonging to the upper class. Drouet is comfortable, but hardly wealthy. Carrie's desire for wealth evolves under the influence of Mrs. Hale: where she once wanted fine clothes and accessories, she now longs for the great houses in wealthy neighborhoods. Carrie realizes that there is more to the city than she had previously known possible and begins to dream of improvement as she did while living with Minnie and Hanson.

A servant arrives and tells Carrie that Hurstwood has come to visit. Carrie assumes that Hurstwood does not know Drouet is out of town. Carrie has seen little of Hurstwood during the winter but was "constantly in mind of him by one thing and another, principally by the strong impression he had made." Carrie goes to see Hurstwood, and tells him Drouet is out of town, but Hurstwood does not mind. He entertains Carrie with "general topics" of interest. Carrie notices the surprising ease with which Hurstwood conducts a conversation and takes pleasure in all he says. Carrie "could not shut out the consciousness of his individuality and presence for a moment." Under Hurstwood's influence, Carrie brightens up.

Hurstwood's visit to Carrie marks his first break from decorum. He visits Drouet's "wife" while knowing that the latter is away. It seems that Hurstwood is interested in deepening his relationship with Carrie, a decision that is, no doubt, influenced by the dreariness of his home life. Carrie reciprocates Hurstwood's attentions, as Drouet has made life rather insufferable for her with his lack of sensitivity. These two unsatisfied figures are essentially drawn together by not just attraction, but also by loneliness.

Carrie perceives that she has special feelings for Hurstwood, the likes of which she has not felt for Drouet. For Carrie, "Hurstwood's glance [is] as effective as the spoken words of a lover, and more." She also feels Hurstwood's growing attraction to her. Carrie feels no distress over this, as this desire is "invisible" and carries no "tangibility."

Carrie feels a connection with Hurstwood that never existed between her and Drouet. Nevertheless, she stops short of saying that she is in love with Hurstwood. Carrie feels no guilt in her attraction to Hurstwood, emphasizing her lack of regard for Drouet—she does not believe Drouet's feelings to be a necessary consideration when it comes to her interactions with Hurstwood.

As they talk, Hurstwood remarks that Carrie is not happy, and Carrie weakly agrees. Hurstwood sees that he is "the master of the situation" and reaches out to touch her hand. Carrie jumps away, but neither runs away nor stops their meeting. Hurstwood makes reassuring statements while holding her hand. Carrie neither accepts nor rejects these advances. Hurstwood leaves and Carrie feels troubled that she is "getting terrible." On the other hand, Hurstwood leaves feeling assured that Carrie likes him, whistling an old song all the way to his office.

Hurstwood is more experienced with life than Carrie. Furthermore, he is extremely sensitive to Carrie's feelings. This experience and sensitivity allow Hurstwood to manipulate Carrie as he pleases, and Carrie is still too innocent to recognize this as manipulation. Hurstwood, however, does recognizes his power over Carrie—her supplication to him contrasts with his wife's constant demands for attention. The two are dangerously close to a full-blown affair.

CHAPTER 13 (HIS CREDENTIALS ACCEPTED: A BABEL OF TONGUES)

After his last visit with Carrie, Hurstwood thinks about her constantly. His interest in Carrie is "a flowering out of feelings which had been withering in dry and almost barren soil for many years." Mrs. Hurstwood and all the "selfish, ignorant, flashy" women he courted before their marriage lowered Hurstwood's regard for women. In meeting Carrie, "a young, unsophisticated, innocent soul," Hurstwood cannot help but be fascinated. Carrie has surpassed Hurstwood's expectations for women. Now, Hurstwood wants "to win Carrie because he thought her fate mingled with his was better than if it were united with Drouet's," as she is superior to Drouet.

Carrie's relative provincialism proves to be an attractive point for Hurstwood. He is sick of the vain women of the city who appear brazen and garish next to the innocent Carrie. It is evident that Hurstwood held little regard for womankind prior to meeting Carrie, as all the women he courted before Carrie have been gaudy and superficial. This attraction is ironic, as the Carrie that Hurstwood encounters at this point in the novel is far from the truly provincial woman she was before.


After Hurstwood's departure, Carrie is confused and cannot make sense of her feelings. Carrie is grateful to Drouet for helping her but does not feel particularly bound to him. The narrator relates that given his "lightsome manner and unstable fancy," Drouet is unlikely to commit long term to any woman, including Carrie. On the other hand, Hurstwood is determined to have Carrie confess her feelings for him.

Carrie, beyond being attracted to wealth and fine manners, is also attracted to the idea of commitment. Drouet's noncommittal nature appears distasteful next to what seems to be Hurstwood's desire to commit. Carrie is not yet experienced enough to understand that words alone are not enough to demonstrate commitment.

Hurstwood's position gives him ample opportunity to take evenings off. He is a faithful worker and follows the owners' directions with regards to taking care of his saloon. On Friday afternoon, two days after his last visit, Hurstwood visits Carrie again. Carrie, startled, cannot tell if she is upset or delighted to see Hurstwood, and only feels that she must be careful. Hurstwood is nervous but becomes confident upon seeing Carrie's nervousness. The two go on a walk.

Hurstwood, despite having a job, appears to be a man of leisure. This reinforces the idea that he is quite well-off, much more so than Drouet who is always travelling on business. He begins to pursue Carrie in a way that he has pursued no woman after marriage. In other words, he is falling fast into immorality.


Hurstwood feels nervous regarding the "publicity" of their walk and finds a more private setting by renting a horse and cart. He teaches Carrie to drive and looks for "a break in the conversation when he could give it a serious turn." Hurstwood begins by relating to Carrie that he has "spent the happiest evenings in years" since meeting her. Carrie is excited but maintains an "assumed airiness." Hurstwood then confesses his love, which Carrie weakly rejects. Hurstwood proceeds to relate his current pitiable state: he is alone, surrounded by people and concerns that mean nothing to him. He tells Carrie that he needs her love, and Carrie begins to feel sympathetic.

Hurstwood realizes that being caught with Carrie would entail a scandal; consequently, he tries to carefully keep the relationship under wraps. Carrie's utter ignorance with regards to his caution demonstrates her innocence and lack of experience with mature men. Carrie reasons that she should reject Hurstwood, as having an affair would be unfair to Drouet. However, her instinct prevails—Hurstwood is simply too kind, too sensitive, and too fine a gentleman to resist. Carrie has no defense mechanism when it comes to men, especially men who claim to "need" her. Carrie enjoys the feeling of being recognized as a necessity and not an accessory.

Hurstwood strikes a chord with Carrie when he expresses his desire for sympathy, since she knows what it's like to be with people who don't care about her. Hurstwood relates that he would be content if he had Carrie's love, and she is moved by his expression of loneliness. The two share a kiss, and Carrie wordlessly admits that Hurstwood has won her affections by laying her head on his shoulder.

Hurstwood's claim to loneliness also awakens Carrie's empathy, for she knows very well the feeling of what it is to be alone. Hurstwood great rhetorical capacity heightens Carrie's image of his loneliness. Carrie's wordless acceptance of Hurstwood's advances shows that she does not really have a say in the matter—everything influencing her decision is out of her control.

CHAPTER 14 (WITH EYES AND NOT SEEING: ONE INFLUENCE WANES)

That night, Carrie is "in a fine glow, physically and mentally." She rejoices in her affection for Hurstwood and looks forward to meeting him Sunday night. Mrs. Hale and the chambermaid notice that Carrie has gone to meet another man when Drouet is out of town and people in the house begin to gossip. Carrie thinks little of Drouet. This afternoon "was the first time her sympathies had ever been thoroughly aroused," and Carrie feels a sense of initiative. She considers Hurstwood to be "a way out" and "a drag in the direction of honour."

Carrie rejoices in her relationship with Hurstwood with little guilt—she does not deem Drouet's feelings worthy of consideration. Carrie sees Hurstwood as a way out of her life with Drouet, just as she saw Drouet as a way out of her life with Minnie and Hanson. Carrie's behavior is clearly improper by late 19th-century standards, as both Mrs. Hale and the chambermaid find her meetings with Hurstwood suspicious.


On the other hand, Hurstwood only thinks of "pleasure without responsibility." He does not think that a relationship with Carrie will disturb his home life. Hurstwood realizes that Carrie is more serious about his love than he expected, so he resists pursuing her too enthusiastically. He suggests they meet again on Tuesday, but Carrie rejects meeting "so soon." The two decide to write to each other.

Hurstwood's intentions are not as honorable as Carrie thinks—he has no plans to leave his life behind and marry her. In other words, his intentions towards Carrie are the same as those of Drouet. Carrie is too naïve to realize that this is the case. Indeed, her innocence and high expectations for Hurstwood take him by surprise and lead him to back off a bit. This shows that Hurstwood does not truly love Carrie—she is merely a pleasant diversion from his unbearable home life.

The next afternoon, Hurstwood sees Drouet at the resort. After exchanging cordial greetings, Hurstwood relays that he "called once" on Carrie and tells Drouet to visit her, as she is "rather anxious about [him]." Drouet leaves thinking Hurstwood is a "nice fellow," while Hurstwood thinks to himself that Drouet is a "good fellow" but "no man for Carrie."

Drouet's complete ignorance with regards to Hurstwood and Carrie's affair shows not only his senselessness, but also his amiableness: he is too good-natured to suspect that there can be something unpleasant going on between his lover and his friend.

Drouet returns to Carrie's rooms and greets her as usual, but Carrie "[responds] to his kiss with a tremour of opposition." They briefly talk about Drouet's sales in La Crosse and his plans to get a raise in a few months. Drouet then claims that if his real estate deal goes through, he will marry Carrie. Carrie responds that she believes Drouet has no intentions to marry her, as he's been making such claims for a long time. Drouet reassures Carrie that he will marry her, but Carrie perceives how naïve her initial hopes about Drouet had been. In contrast to Drouet, Hurstwood seems "strong and sincere." Drouet's "easy manner of putting her off" gives Carrie a sense of justification with regards to her affair with Hurstwood.

Carrie indifference towards Drouet has shifted towards a sort distaste. Indeed, after realizing in full that Drouet has no plans to marry her, Carrie begins to attribute negative values to the salesman and sees Hurstwood all the more positively. This gives her a false sense of justice with regards to the affair. Carrie's emotions toward Drouet and Hurstwood are too strong and keep her from assessing the situation objectively. Although she might not be wrong with regards to Drouet's lack of commitment, she is utterly mistaken with regards to Hurstwood's supposed desire to make a respectable woman out of her.

Drouet then relates that he met Hurstwood, who invited them to attend the theater. Carrie accepts this invitation with reserve, which Drouet attributes to their earlier conversation regarding marriage. Drouet states that he heard Hurstwood visited once. Carrie accidentally reveals that Hurstwood visited twice. Drouet displays some confusion but imagines that "he must have misunderstood his friend" and "[does] not attach particular importance to the information." Indeed, upon learning from Carrie that Hurstwood was attempting to alleviate her loneliness and ask after her supposed husband, Drouet is "rather gratified by his conception of the manager's interest."

Hurstwood evidently has little respect for Drouet—he invites the salesman and Carrie to the theater with no sense of guilt, and has no scruples when it comes to making a fool out of Drouet. Carrie's reserve shows that she has enough respect for Drouet to feel uncomfortable about being with her lover in his presence. Drouet's good nature prevents him from suspecting that there is something unpleasant going on even after learning that Hurstwood visited more often than he claimed.

After seeing Drouet's return, Hurstwood immediately writes to Carrie saying that he claimed to have visited once. Carrie writes back saying she accidentally revealed that Hurstwood visited twice, but Drouet seemed not to mind. Hurstwood tells Carrie not to worry and that they will arrange something so that she "won't have to deceive any one." Carrie thinks this means that Hurstwood means to marry her soon and decides to "make the best of the situation" until Drouet leaves again.

The lovers are careful to keep their affair hidden from Drouet. Nevertheless, it appears that they do not want to keep the relationship under wraps forever—Hurstwood does not want to make Carrie feel that they are deceiving Drouet. Carrie is too innocent to think that this entails living openly as Hurstwood's mistress, and instead thinks that Hurstwood plans to marry her.

At the theater, Carrie and Hurstwood secretly flirt. Carrie almost forgets about Drouet, "who babble[s] on as if he were the host." Hurstwood is careful and does not "give the slightest indication of a change." The play proves rather "an ironical situation" that is "due to Drouet alone": in the play, a wife is seduced by another man in the absence of her husband, and Drouet claims that he hasn't "any pity for a man who would be such a chump as that." On the way out, the three encounter a beggar who asks for. Hurstwood hardly notices this, but Drouet gives a dime "with an upwelling feeling of pity in his heart." and Carrie "quickly [forgets]" the occurrence.

The stage parallels reality—it is an extension of real life. The play essentially portrays the love triangle of Carrie, Hurstwood, and Drouet. Carrie and Hurstwood, of course, realize the situation. Drouet remains ignorant, just as the man being cheated on in the play remains ignorant, and ironically calls the man in the play a fool. The incident with the beggar shows that although Carrie thinks Hurstwood superior to Drouet in all ways possible, Drouet, in truth, has a kinder heart. Hurstwood is not as great as he seems, and Drouet is not as terrible as he seems.

CHAPTER 15 (THE IRK OF THE OLD TIES: THE MAGIC OF YOUTH)

The narrator relates that "the complete ignoring of Hurstwood by his own home came with the growth of his affection for Carrie." Hurstwood's interactions with his family are "of the most perfunctory kind," as they share no common interests. With Carrie, he feels young and "blissful." Hurstwood looks forward to spending his evenings with Carrie. At the same time, his wife's requests and "the insistent demands of matrimony" begin to make him feel annoyed and constrained.

Carrie, unbeknownst to herself, is the catalyst to the crumbling of Hurstwood's home life. While Hurstwood had feelings of complete indifference prior to meeting Carrie, he now regards his family, and especially his wife, with more pronounced resentment. In Hurstwood's eyes, Mrs. Hurstwood pales in comparison to Carrie, just as in Carrie's eyes, Drouet pales in comparison to Hurstwood.

One day, Mrs. Hurstwood asks for a season ticket to the races, claiming she wants to attend every race. This is the first time Mrs. Hurstwood has asked for a season ticket, and she makes the request because certain members of high society have bought season tickets and because she wishes to exhibit Jessica, in hopes of marrying her to "a man of means." Hurstwood and Mrs. Hurstwood briefly bicker about whether a season ticket is necessary, before Mrs. Hurstwood snaps, "I want the ticket and that's all there is to it." Hurstwood does not join the family at dinner that evening.

Mrs. Hurstwood appears to do everything for the sake of social climbing. She has no genuine interest in racing merely wants to take the opportunity to have Jessica win the affections of some unsuspecting, rich young man. Mrs. Hurstwood appears to have no relationship with her husband and merely uses him as a source of money. Hurstwood has no such wishes for Jessica and, consequently, sees little reason to comply to Mrs. Hurstwood's request.

The next morning, Hurstwood is less irritated and the season ticket is secured, but this "did not heal matters." Jessica is annoyed about an acquaintance, Georgine, who is going to Europe and who "put on more airs about it." Hurstwood is irritated at his daughter's display of disdain and envy. Another day, Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica relate to an uninformed Hurstwood that George has gone to Wheaton for a tennis match. Hurstwood, who "had never before been kept in ignorance concerning departures," feels that he is losing importance in the eyes of his family members.

Jessica takes after Mrs. Hurstwood and does little to hide her envy for a classmate who is going to Europe. Hurstwood's irritation is quite ironic, as Carrie is just as much of a social climber and envious type as Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica—Carrie merely keeps her thoughts and feelings to herself. The fact that Hurstwood is unaware of George's whereabouts while Mrs. Hurstwood and Jessica know further shows that Hurstwood is the outsider in his family.

Hurstwood finds comfort in the idea that he is important to Carrie. He begins to write to her every day. He thinks Carrie is "worthy of all the affection he could [express in his letters]." Carrie is not yet disillusioned by life and not yet self-assured enough to show the sort of domination present in Mrs. Hurstwood. Carrier also shows compassion towards those less fortunate, and though Hurstwood "did not know, but it was this in her, after all, which attracted him." Carrie is also getting prettier and better dressed.

The fact that Hurstwood comforts himself with thoughts of Carrie shows that she is becoming more than a mere diversion—she is becoming an important source of solace for him. In addition to preferring Carrie's youth and looks, Hurstwood also appears to prefer Carrie's seemingly subordinate nature over Mrs. Hurstwood's outspokenness—he has rather bigoted ideals for women.

On one late-Spring day, Hurstwood arranges to meet Carrie in the park. Hurstwood feels that he is "back in fancy to the old Hurstwood, who was neither married nor fixed in a solid position for life." Carrie arrives and the two casually chat before Hurstwood asks her to "come away and leave [Drouet]." Carrie replies that in the case that she leaves Drouet, she should like to leave Chicago as she shouldn't like to marry when Drouet is still present. Hurstwood realizes that Carrie is looking for marriage.

Hurstwood's frustration with his home life leads him to grow more serious about Carrie—he now wishes to have her all to himself. However, he is still not as serious as Carrie is about their affair. Hurstwood is surprised when she broaches the topic of marriage and realizes that in order to maintain a relationship with Carrie, he must prepare for a big change in his life.

Hurstwood replies that they are wasting time in their current situation and exclaims that he cannot live without Carrie. Carrie feels touched and asks Hurstwood to be patient and arrange a plan "to go somewhere." Hurstwood asks Carrie if she would leave Chicago with him if he had to leave and couldn't come back. Carrie says yes, if they could get married at the end of the journey. Hurstwood jokingly declares that he will "come and get [Carrie] one of these evenings." The two then stroll about in the park.

Hurstwood realizes that he needs Carrie as much as Carrie seems to need him and finally makes plans to abandon his family. Furthermore, it appears that Hurstwood has grown less cautious with regards to the affair: where he once hid his interactions with Carrie in a carriage, he now freely strolls with her in the park, in plain view of anyone who might be there.

CHAPTER 16 (A WITLESS ALADDIN: THE GATE TO THE WORLD)

Drouet is back in Chicago and spends some time with his secret society, the Freemasons, as another salesman he met during his trip told him that being "a way-up Mason" is something "that goes a long way." A prominent member, Harry Quincel, asks Drouet to find a young lady to play a part in a fundraising play that the society plans to put on. The play in question is to be "Under the Gaslight." Drouet agrees to find a young woman for the part of Laura but forgets "the moment Mr. Quincel [ceased] talking."

Drouet is also a social climbing type: although not as brazen about it as Mrs. Hurstwood, he, too, desires to travel up the socioeconomic ladder. Drouet's interaction with Quincel shows an innocent yet faulty side of his character. Drouet is always eager to please in the moment, as seen by his ready assent to help Quincel find an actress. However, he is also noncommittal—he immediately forgets about the request after leaving Quincel's presence. This encounter recalls Drouet's relationship with Carrie— he is always eager to please her in the moment, but cannot commit in the long term.

Soon after, a letter announcing the first rehearsal arrives and Drouet realizes he forgot to find a young woman to play Laura. He makes plans to ask someone but forgets again until he sees a note regarding the play in the newspaper. He asks Carrie to take the part over dinner. Carrie is insecure but drawn towards the position. After some convincing from Drouet, she agrees to play the part.

Drouet does not seem to consider Carrie's feelings when asking her to play the part of Laura. He merely wants to fulfill his request to Quincel. This highlights the fact that though Drouet is kind, he can be quite inconsiderate and insensitive to others' thoughts and feelings.

Little does Drouet know that Carrie has long been drawn to the idea of being an actress; she loves to repeat the lines of a "distressed heroine." After hearing Drouet's reassurance, Carrie "[feels] that she [can] do things if only she had a chance." Carrie begins to imagine being an actress and loses herself in visions of the "luxury and refinement" that could await her.

Here, readers learn something completely new about Carrie: she is drawn to the idea of acting and theater. This reinforces the idea that Carrie wishes to be recognized and shine in front of an audience. Once again, Carrie falls to dreaming, just as she did while she was living with Minnie and Hanson. Carrie is young and her dreams are constantly evolving depending on new experiences. Still, one dream remains the same: Carrie wishes to live in luxury. Even in her fantasies about theater, Carrie imagines only "luxury and refinement."

Drouet tells Quincel that he has found a young woman called Carrie Madenda to play Laura, as "the lodge members knew him to be single." Quincel gives Drouet the part to give to Carrie. Drouet tells Carrie that he gave the lodge the name Carrie Madenda, something Carrie finds strange. Drouet explains that he gave such a name in case that she "didn't make a hit," and Carrie is "rather pleased now with his caution." Drouet then relates that he didn't want to introduce Carrie as his wife because then she'd "feel worse than if [she] didn't go." Carrie does not mind, only feeling "determined now to have a try at the fascinating game." Drouet is glad that the two evaded the topic of marriage.

Drouet does not introduce Carrie as his wife to the lodge members, showing that he is unwilling to show himself as a taken man in front of the general public. Once again, readers can perceive Drouet's noncommittal nature. Indeed, he is glad that the two no longer talk about marriage. Carrie is too innocent to realize Drouet's purpose in giving her false name and readily accepts his excuse. Despite her interactions with Drouet and Hurstwood, Carrie is still ignorant when it comes to men.

Carrie finds that the part of Laura is "one of suffering and tears." She is surprised at the brevity of the part but concludes that she can play Laura. By the time Drouet visits the next night, Carrie already has the part memorized. She performs a certain scene for Drouet, "letting herself rise to a fine state of feeling." Drouet is moved and exclaims that he "never knew [Carrie] could do anything like that." He assures her that she "won't fail."

The fact that Carrie memorizes her part so quickly shows that contrary to what might have seemed earlier in the novel, Carrie is willing to work if the work is to her liking. Drouet, presumably a frequent visitor of theaters, finds Carrie's performance mesmerizing. This indicates that Carrie indeed has potential to be a good actress.

CHAPTER 17 (A GLIMPSE THOUGHT THE GATEWAY: HOPE LIGHTENS THE EYE)

Carrie writes to Hurstwood and tells him about receiving a part in the play. Hurstwood is pleased and "charmed by the development of the fact that the girl had capabilities." Both Drouet and Hurstwood admire Carrie more, and their feelings for her make her aspirations seem more noble to the men.

Talent and ambition appear to be attractive qualities for both Drouet and Hurstwood. This is ironic given the fact that both men primarily intend to keep Carrie within the confines of domestic life. Neither men encourage Carrie to find a vocation. This acting stint happens completely by chance.

Hurstwood is of high standing among the masons and plans to make the play "a dress-suit affair and give the little girl a chance." In the next day or so, Drouet visits Hurstwood's resort and, after brief greetings, Hurstwood asks Drouet about the play in an offhand manner. He relates that the masons sent some tickets. In broaching the topic, Hurstwood makes it so that "if he should appear on the scene with a few friends, he could say that he had been urged to come along." Drouet tells Hurstwood that Carrie is to be in the play, and Hurstwood offers to plan a send-off and supper after the play. Drouet is grateful for Hurstwood's "good-nature."

Hurstwood cares for Carrie enough to try to make the play a success. However, another reason to advertise the play stems from a desire to keep Drouet ignorant regarding his affair with Carrie—if Hurstwood attends with friends, he will appear less suspicious. Drouet remains in complete ignorance regarding the affair, even after Hurstwood offers to plan a celebratory meal after the play. Indeed, because of his own good nature, Drouet attributes Hurstwood's behavior to the other man's good nature.

Carrie attends the first rehearsal for the play. Mr. Quincel directs the volunteer actors with gusto. Carrie doesn't really appreciate his suggestions, but she acquiesces to his requests out of "a desire to do anything rather than make a failure." She also realizes that not all members of the company seem to know their lines.

None of the other actors and actresses in the play are as prepared as Carrie. Carrie did not realize prior to attending rehearsal that the play is only an amateur affair. Still, she complies to the suggestions of Quincel and does her best, proving that she can be dedicated and hardworking when she wants to.

During one particular scene, Carrie demonstrates her acting potential, embodying the part with "grace" that fascinates those around her. Her performance gains the notice of the director, who later approaches and praises Carrie. Carrie leaves rehearsal satisfied and excited to relate her experiences to Hurstwood and even Drouet, who, at this time, is still "an object for her confidences."

Evidently, Carrie stands out from the other actors and actresses—she has potential to become a professional. The fact that Carrie is excited about the director's praise reinforces the idea that she thrives on recognition. Indeed, she desires approval and reassurance from both Hurstwood and Drouet.

Unfortunately for Carrie, Drouet is distracted and does not pay attention to her when she tries to tell him about her experience at rehearsal. He drops the subject, which irritates Carrie. She now feels that Hurstwood is "the only friend she [has] on earth." She receives a letter from Hurstwood, requesting to meet in the park.

Once again, Drouet proves himself insensitive—he does not realize how excited Carrie is and how important the play is to her. This decreases Carrie's opinion of Drouet and increases her opinion of Hurstwood, although there is no good reason to change her opinion of him at all. Carrie has an idealistic view of Hurstwood.

For the lately irritated Carrie, Hurstwood is as "the morning sun." He attentively listens to her as she "[relates] the incidents of the rehearsal, warming up as she proceeded." Hurstwood encourages her: "Just remember that I want you to succeed. We will make the performance worth while. You do that now." Carrie is happy with this new endeavor and feels hopeful regarding the future.

Hurstwood does prove himself to be a better listener than Drouet—he is sensitive enough to realize the importance of the play to his lover. Hurstwood offers Carrie the encouragement and recognition that she craves. In this way, the reader can see that Carrie is dangerously close to having a fallout with Drouet.

CHAPTER 18 ("JUST OVER THE BORDER: A HAIL AND FAREWELL")

Hurstwood works subtly in the background to spread the word about Carrie's showing. He tells influential friends about the show and pulls strings with a newspaper friend to have advertisements printed in the local papers. As a result, ticket sales are unusually high. Indeed, "the members of the Custer Lodge [can] scarcely understand why their little affair [is] taking so well."

Hurstwood, despite not belonging to the wealthiest tier in society, holds a lot of influence. He has many powerful connections who, presumably, have other powerful connections. In this way, readers can see that the city is a place that thrives on networking—knowing people is the key to success.

Carrie has "mastered her part to her own satisfaction" but remains nervous about performing. She finds comfort in the atmosphere of the dressing room and the opportunity for "disguise" that it offers. Her new environment as an actress is "more friendly," welcoming her like the people and places of her newly affluent lifestyle never have. During her time in the dressing room, Carrie thinks how wonderful it will be if she can perform well and establish herself as a "real actress."

Carrie is quite drawn to the atmosphere of theater, even more so than she is drawn to shows of luxury. The fact that she is drawn to the disguise of her role parallels her desire to disguise her provincial origins and present herself as a sophisticated, well-dressed city girl. Carrie feels at home in the theater, much more so than she has anywhere else. Indeed, it seems that through this amateur experience, Carrie has discovered a potential calling for herself.

Because of Hurstwood's promotion of the play, this showing became a "full-dress affair." The attendees are all wealthy and of high status. Hurstwood is of the more well-known members of this social circle, and he holds immense influence and an image of "solid financial prosperity." At the showing, Hurstwood is "in his element" and enjoys small talk with many of the gentlemen present. When one man brings up Mrs. Hurstwood's absence, Hurstwood simply replies that she's feeling under the weather.

The audience is filled with members of the upper classes. In this way, Hurstwood has brought Carrie her ideal audience—she has the opportunity to be recognized by those whom she considers to be superiors. The fact that Hurstwood outright lies about his wife's absence shows that he is growing less cautious about the affair—less afraid that she might find out that he is no longer interested in maintaining any sort of relationship with her.

The theater is full of "successful voices" and "fine clothes" due to Hurstwood's outreach, and Hurstwood stands as the "member of an eminent group." People regarded him with respect and reverence. The narrator considers Hurstwood's standing to be a sort of greatness, "small as it [is]."

Hurstwood is a great man—he has achieved the American dream. Although he is not yet a part of the American aristocracy, Hurstwood is well-regarded and has attained the very recognition for which Carrie yearns. Among his own social tier, Hurstwood is at the top, as evidence by his power to entice successful people into attending an amateur play.

CHAPTER 19 (AN HOUR IN ELFLAND: A CLAMOUR HALF HEARD)

The play begins. Hurstwood and Drouet both notice that Carrie is not on **stage** and continue whispering in their box. The actors and actresses perform rather poorly. Hurstwood expected the performance to be "worthless" and looks on with "indifference," only hoping to endure it so that he can congratulate Carrie afterward. By the time Carrie comes on stage, the play is "dull in the extreme."

Both Drouet and Hurstwood are only attending the play for Carrie—neither man is interested in the production itself. The fact that Hurstwood expected the play to be "worthless" yet still invited all his friends shows that he cares for Carrie. However, his plan to endure the show for Carrie's sake suggests that sees her as somewhat pathetic—not as his equal.

Both Hurstwood and Drouet notice that Carrie is nervous. During her first appearance, she performs with a feeble and monotonous voice and seems doomed to fail. Drouet looks away from Carrie, while Hurstwood feels sorry for her and stares at her "as if to hypnotise her into doing better."

Inexperience gets the best of Carrie, as it did during her job search. The fact that Carrie is nervous shows that she thinks of the amateur production as a real chance to get started as an actress—she is too innocent to realize that her performance doesn't matter much to anyone besides her.

Drouet remarks to Hurstwood that Carrie is "too nervous" and decides to visit her backstage. Drouet comforts Carrie, telling her not to be nervous. He lies that she didn't "do so very bad" and "all [she] needs is a little more ginger." The prompter then calls Carrie for her next appearance. Carrie is calmer during her next appearance, although still not up to the standard of her performance at rehearsal. She returns backstage to Drouet, who continues to encourage her up until the ballroom scene.

Despite all his shortcomings, it is undeniable that Drouet is kind to Carrie. He does not give any hint to Carrie that she has done poorly, giving only encouragement. Drouet's words prove helpful to Carrie, as she returns to the stage feeling less nervous. Drouet cuts a paradoxical figure: he is, at once, both caring and clueless.

During the ballroom scene, Carrie "[begins] to feel the bitterness of the situation" her character is in and her performance drastically improves. She captures the attention of the audience, including Hurstwood, who "realise[s] he [is] seeing something extraordinarily good." The first act of the play concludes and Hurstwood's opinion of Carrie rises; he recognizes her beauty and is proud that she is associated with him.

Carrie's true potential shows during one particular scene, and her talent astounds Hurstwood. This shows that Hurstwood had low expectations for Carrie as an artist—he was not prepared to see her perform well. For the first time in the novel, Hurstwood thinks of Carrie as more than a source of comfort. She has the potential to be an artist—something greater than a mistress.


Hurstwood goes backstage to see Carrie. She is still with Drouet, "whose affection [is] also rapidly reviving." Hurstwood feels jealous that Drouet can be intimate with Carrie in this important moment while Hurstwood can only "congratulate Carrie as a friend." Carrie also wishes she could be alone with Hurstwood. After going back to his box, Hurstwood ruminates over "his wretched situation."

For the first time in the novel, Hurstwood feels jealous of Drouet's claim to Carrie. He is no longer content to keep the affair hidden—he wants to get rid of Drouet and have Carrie all to himself. For Hurstwood, jealousy is a compelling stimulant for passion—seeing Drouet and Carrie together deepens his desire for Carrie.

In the second act, Carrie is "easily the centre of interest." She never performs with as much feeling as she did at the end of the first act but still plays her part well. Both Hurstwood and Drouet's feelings for Carrie rise. Toward the end of the last act, Hurstwood notices that her former conviction has returned. By the play's conclusion, Hurstwood "[can] hardly restrain the tears for sorrow over the hopeless, pathetic, and yet dainty and appealing woman whom he loved." Drouet decides that he will marry Carrie. Both men are "in the most harrowed state of affection."

Carrie has solidified herself as the production's star. Although she does not perform as well as during that particular scene again, her effect on Drouet and Hurstwood is irreversible. Carrie's talent, more than anything else, compel the two men to commit to her: Hurstwood decides that he must have her to himself and Drouet decides that Carrie is worth marrying and settling down for. In other words, unbeknownst to themselves, Drouet and Hurstwood are attracted to the independent side of Carrie—and perhaps feel threatened by it.


After the play, Hurstwood puts a great deal of effort into restraining himself from showing affection to Carrie. Carrie realizes that the dynamic between her and the two men have changed: now *she* is "the admired, the sought-for," rather than the one doing the admiring. The only intimate interaction between Carrie and Hurstwood is a brief squeeze of the hand, something that causes Hurstwood to be "beside himself with affection." He whispers to Carrie to meet tomorrow, and "now [hates] Drouet" for keeping them apart. On the other hand, Drouet feels a renewed admiration for Carrie. She's simply "the dandiest little girl on earth."

Carrie gets the first taste of recognition that she has craved for so long—she now has the upper hand in her relationships with Hurstwood and Drouet. Indeed, where Hurstwood once manipulated her, Carrie is now in control of Hurstwood, who is completely infatuated with his young lover. Similarly, Drouet no longer views Carrie as simply his dependent and possession—she is someone who needs to be sought after and pursued. In the span of one night, Carrie's dynamic with her lovers has completely changed.

CHAPTER 20 (THE LURE OF THE SPIRIT: THE FLESH IN PURSUIT)

Hurstwood experiences a new, profound agitation with regards to Carrie and Drouet, tortured by the thought of his lover being held by another man. He begins to think about taking Carrie away in "an arrangement which would dispose of Drouet effectually and forever."

Hurstwood no longer views Carrie as his mistress and a mere source for pleasure—he views her as his love, someone whom he wants as his exclusive partner. Because of this new passion, Hurstwood develops antipathy for Drouet where he previously only felt indifference.

Hurstwood barely pays any attention to his family at breakfast. Mrs. Hurstwood snaps at the new servant, which irritates Hurstwood. She then asks Hurstwood about planning the annual family vacation and he replies that he is busy. The conversation escalates into an argument, as Hurstwood is irritated that his wife has so many requests and Mrs. Hurstwood is irritated that Hurstwood doesn't immediately comply with her requests. Mrs. Hurstwood replies that the family will vacation without him. Breakfast ends on a sour note.

Mrs. Hurstwood, given her penchant for dismissing servants, is not a patient woman. It can only be expected that given Hurstwood's lack of attention, she is troubled and short-tempered with him. Hurstwood no longer agrees to his wife's requests as he did before—a shift has happened within him. He no longer views it necessary to maintain his household: he will, presumably, soon abandon it.

Mrs. Hurstwood had not been expecting such an argument. She was "a little out of sorts" because attending the races had proved a rather unsuccessful affair with regards to finding Jessica a suitor. Her husband's inattentiveness leads Mrs. Hurstwood to decide that "she would have more lady-like treatment or she would know why." On the other hand, Hurstwood thinks all the more about meeting Carrie: "she must and should be his."

Mrs. Hurstwood did not realize the extent of Hurstwood's disinterest until this argument. Rather than showing fear or deference towards her husband, she becomes more demanding. Hurstwood's resent for his wife grows with his affection for Carrie, as the difference between the two women is simply too great to be ignored.

Carrie has been in "a world of fancy and feeling" since leaving Hurstwood the night before. This feeling is mostly regarding her own performance, however, as she feels that Hurstwood's affections are a "a delightful background to her own achievement." Carrie also feels that she now has the upper hand in her relationships—she is now a "[dispenser] of charity."

Carrie does not love Hurstwood as passionately as he does her—he is merely a nice addition to her own success. From this, readers can gather that Carrie values her vocation more than her relationship with her lover. She enjoys the feeling of power that being a performer gives her, and prefers being powerful over being a dependent.

Drouet feels that he needs to rebuild his relationship with Carrie and brings up the idea of marrying after closing a deal. Carrie jokingly replies that he won't marry her. Carrie's joking tone leads Drouet to realize that she is no longer "helpless" and dependent upon him. He feels that something is going to happen. Drouet then departs for work and Carrie leaves shortly after to meet Hurstwood.

Drouet sees new value in Carrie after her performance on stage—she is a woman to be desired, acquired, and treasured. He salesman also realizes that Carrie is no longer the dependent young woman whom he rescued from the streets of Chicago. She now possesses to the foundational capabilities and knowledge for living on her own.

Drouet returns to the house to pick up some forgotten bills and finds only the chambermaid, who tells him Carrie has gone out. Drouet and the chambermaid chat rather flirtatiously before she casually remarks that Hurstwood had called "more than half a dozen times" on Carrie while Drouet was on business. Drouet then begins to doubt Carrie's fidelity.

Drouet, despite his newfound commitment to marry Carrie, cannot help but be a dandy. This appears to be an irreparable fault in him. However, he is also good-natured enough not to suspect an affair until the chambermaid effectively tells him that Hurstwood has been frequently visiting Carrie while he is away.

Drouet heads out and encounters the chambermaid again. He asks her more regarding Hurstwood's visits and learns that sometimes Hurstwood spends evenings with Carrie. Through all this, he is "yet not wholly unconscious of the fact that he was making a most excellent impression upon the chambermaid." Feeling that he had been "unduly wronged," Drouet vows to find out if he has been betrayed.

Drouet still remains uncertain as to whether an affair has really transpired. He is too innocent and kind to believe that his friend and his lover would do such a thing behind his back. Drouet's ignorance and uncertainty also demonstrates an overestimation of Carrie's esteem for him—he still believes her to respect and have affection for him.

CHAPTER 21 (THE LURE OF THE SPIRIT: THE FLESH IN PURSUIT)

Carrie and Hurstwood meet. Hurstwood is enchanted by her beauty, while Carrie enjoys the "glow" of his affection and encouragement. The two begin casually chatting until Hurstwood asks Carrie to run away with him.

Hurstwood enjoys Carrie's attractiveness while Carrie enjoys Hurstwood's encouraging presence. It seems that both of them are enamored with certain qualities in the other person rather than in love with the person themselves. However, the two believe they're in love, especially Hurstwood, who proposes they run away together.

Carrie is confused and does not know how to answer. She's in a tight position: she likes Hurstwood but is afraid that Hurstwood will not marry her. Still, she delights in Hurstwood's love and finds herself "on a borderless sea of speculation." Hurstwood realizes that his proposal "was a wretched thing to have dragged in."

Carrie's experience with Drouet has taught her that men who express interest in marriage are not necessarily committed to following through on their word. However, she likes Hurstwood enough to consider his proposal. Hurstwood realizes that Carrie is hesitant, leading him to question her affection for him.

Hurstwood asks Carrie if she is willing to leave with him on Saturday. Carrie asks, "when will we be married?" Hurstwood is startled but replies "any time you say" with ease. He is unwilling to dampen the mood with these details. Looking at Carrie, he resolves to "accept the situation with all its difficulties" and effectively ignore the difficult reality of their relationship.

Hurstwood tests Carrie's commitment by proposing a solid date to run away. Carrie's reply shows Hurstwood that she is no longer willing to be a mistress—if she runs away, she intends to be a respectable woman. Consequently, Hurstwood realizes that if he is to win Carrie, he must seriously consider marrying her.

Carrie tells Hurstwood that she will try to prepare herself. They make plans to meet the following day to solidify plans. Carrie is incredibly enthusiastic, "believing herself to be deeply in love" and that she and Hurstwood will "be happy."

Carrie believes Hurstwood's agreement to marriage, showing that she is still rather innocent and unsuspecting. The narrator's comment that Carrie believes *herself to be in love hints that she is not truly in love with Hurstwood. Carrie returns to her familiar line of thought that the next thing to happen will finally bring her happiness.*

CHAPTER 22 (THE BLAZE OF THE TINDER: FLESH WARS WITH THE FLESH)

Although Mrs. Hurstwood no longer loves her husband, she is still jealous. For women, says the narrator, lack of attention is a worse offense than an actual crime. Mrs. Hurstwood is now "resentful and suspicious," sensing impending danger. Hurstwood's neglect of his "duties" and "open snarls," coupled with the argument at breakfast, causes Mrs. Hurstwood to "[rage] inwardly."

Mrs. Hurstwood, though cold and superficial, is hardly stupid: she notices that Hurstwood has changed and no longer pays her any attention. Mrs. Hurstwood treats her husband as a sort of suppliant rather than a partner—she expects him to cater to her demands for attention. Rather than feeling sadness at the loss of her husband's affection, Mrs. Hurstwood shows anger, indicating that she does not love Hurstwood.

Mrs. Hurstwood finds Jessica in her dressing room after Hurstwood leaves the house and expresses her displeasure at Jessica's tardiness for breakfast. The two engage in a minor argument before Jessica haughtily leaves. This type of argument becomes "all too frequent" in the Hurstwood household.

Mrs. Hurstwood is not necessarily in an alliance with her children. It seems that all members of the Hurstwood household are self-serving—they use each other to achieve their own goals. Jessica's haughtiness toward Mrs. Hurstwood shows that she is no closer to her mother than to her father.

Hurstwood becomes increasingly irritated "to find himself more and more by a world upon which he had no hold, and of which he had a lessening understanding." He realizes that he is now a follower, and not leader, in his household. His family now seems to be "a most irritating drag upon all his desires and opportunities." Still, Hurstwood maintains "the semblance of leadership and control."

Hurstwood is a man who needs a sense of control. Even after losing control, he still feels a need to maintain a semblance of it. In this way, he is similar to his wife: the couple both feel a need to keep up a pretense, though in separate spheres. Mrs. Hurstwood needs to show that her husband is still paying attention to her, while Hurstwood needs to show that he is still in control of his household.

Mrs. Hurstwood decides to look for proof of Hurstwood's infidelity. One day, Dr. Beale, a physician, remarks to Mrs. Hurstwood that he saw Hurstwood driving with a woman who he thought was either Mrs. Hurstwood or Jessica. Mrs. Hurstwood remarks that it must have been Jessica to save face, but now privately knows that Hurstwood was driving with another woman "after announcing himself as busy to her." For Mrs. Hurstwood, "the atmosphere of distrust and ill-feeling was strengthened."

Mrs. Hurstwood, unlike Drouet, is not unsuspecting enough to deny potential infidelity. In her conversation with Dr. Beale, she shows that she holds the same social adeptness as her husband: she carefully maneuvers the conversation in order to obtain information without revealing anything to the other party or losing face.

At the races, Mrs. Hurstwood learns from an acquaintance that Hurstwood went to a play without her and told the other attendees that she wasn't feeling well. Mrs. Hurstwood then asks another one of her husband's friends about the play. She learns that the house was full and many of her friends were in attendance. Mrs. Hurstwood grows more suspicious.

Mrs. Hurstwood is a reasonable woman. She knows that she cannot approach her husband with accusations of infidelity without evidence; consequently, she goes around gathering proof. Mrs. Hurstwood's method of doing so differs from that of Drouet in that she never reveals her own jealousy—she is too clever to risk exposing her intentions.

By the time Hurstwood returns home, Mrs. Hurstwood "had brooded herself into a state of sullen desire for explanation and revenge." On the other hand, Hurstwood is "in the sunniest mood." He means to be forgiving to his wife. This cheerfulness, however, irritates Mrs. Hurstwood, thinking him audacious for presenting himself this way despite his cynicism, indifference, and neglect." Hurstwood wishes to find an outlet for his good humor but receives only cold responses from his wife and daughter.

Passion for Carrie has blunted Hurstwood's capabilities for discernment. In this way, the novel shows that emotions can lead one to err in unanticipated ways. Hurstwood feels no guilt with regards to his affair, indicating that by this point in the novel, he has no regard for his wife. The Hurstwood couple has no redeemable qualities in their relationship—it has been based on pretense since long before Carrie even arrived.

The narrator relates that had Hurstwood been less mentally occupied, he would have noticed that his household was not in good spirits. He attempts to patch things up with Mrs. Hurstwood by declaring that she can go on vacation to Waukesha if she wishes. Mrs. Hurstwood gives a sharp reply: "So you can stay here and trifle around with some one else?" Hurstwood, shocked, pretends to be confused. Mrs. Hurstwood coldly demands money for the trip. The couple begins to argue. Mrs. Hurstwood's "upper-handish manner" infuriates Hurstwood. Hurstwood leaves after declaring to his wife, "I'll have nothing more to do with you.

Mrs. Hurstwood shows no anger or despair at the fact that Hurstwood no longer loves her and is pursuing another woman—she uses her husband's affair as an opportunity to extort money from him. Mrs. Hurstwood appears to be completely cold, calculating, and unfeeling. On the other hand, Hurstwood does not feel apologetic at all towards his wife. He feels only anger at the fact that she now has control over him—he is now the suppliant rather than the provider.


CHAPTER 23 (A SPIRIT IN TRAVAIL: ONE RUNG PUT BEHIND)

Carrie begins to doubt her decision to leave with Hurstwood. She feels sorry about leaving Drouet, as he had helped her during a difficult time. Furthermore, she is now living a comfortable life, and is afraid of being poor again. She has not yet fully "[agreed]" to Hurstwood's plan, though she "[is] listening, smiling, approving." The narrator relates that Carrie is not actually in love with Hurstwood; she is only "imagining herself in love."

Stability and comfort are still new for Carrie. Consequently, she is not eager to make drastic changes that may take them away. Carrie is reasonable enough to realize that running away with Hurstwood does not entail a luxurious, fairytale life. Furthermore, she also has enough of a conscience to feel guilty regarding leaving Drouet. As inconsiderate as he might be, he is still the one who brought her out of a life of relative poverty.

Carrie remains absorbed in her thoughts until Drouet's return. Drouet is "flushed and excited and full of determination to know all about her relations with Hurstwood." Drouet begins to question Carrie and, after a while, Carrie "[begins] to see now that he knew something." However, "she saw that he himself was hesitating, and with a woman's intuition realised that there was no occasion for great alarm."

Drouet's excitement while confronting Carrie contrasts with Mrs. Hurstwood's cool wrath while confronting her husband. His passion shows that he still likes—perhaps loves—Carrie, and is unwilling to let her go so easily. Because he still likes her and hesitates while confronting her, Carrie realizes that she is in control of the situation.

Carrie and Drouet begin to talk about Hurstwood. Carrie denies Hurstwood's visits; however, she grows increasingly guilty, "flushing scarlet to the roots of her hair." Drouet then relays that Hurstwood is married, shocking Carrie. Carrie "[makes] a most miserable showing" but the "feelings [...] generating within her were anything but crumbling cowardice." Carrie feels indignant that Drouet had not informed her earlier regarding Hurstwood's marriage and proclaims that Drouet hasn't done anything for her.

Carrie blames Drouet for not telling her about Hurstwood's marriage, as unreasonable as that is. Carrie displays a sort of entitlement. In her passionate disappointment, she loses her capacity for reason: she declares that Drouet has done nothing for her despite contemplating just moments before about how he brought her out of a hard life. Although she is in the wrong, she declares Drouet as the guilty party.

Drouet, though irritated, is "fascinated" by Carrie's show of feeling. He protests against Carrie's anger by saying that he's given her clothes and taken her everywhere. He also begins to feel angry "at the sense of his own approaching loss," accusing Carrie of "[using]" him and then leaving.

Drouet proves himself a good sport. He reasons with Carrie and does not lose his temper with her. His accusations are lucid and reasonable. The fact that he feels angry at his impending loss shows that unlike Mrs. Hurstwood, he still likes his partner.

Carrie, mortified, tries to leave the house. Drouet is still sympathetic and tries to prevent her from leaving, as the thought of losing her makes him emotional despite his anger. Carrie is overwhelmed by the situation, and she tries to leave again before bursting into tears. Drouet declared that he will leave instead. He tells Carrie that she can stay until the end of the month and attempts to persuade her not to immediately leave. Carrie "[can] not bring herself to answer reasonably."

Despite Carrie's wrongdoing and unreasonable accusations, Drouet remains kind to her—her prevents her from leaving, knowing that she does not have a home and has no place to go. Furthermore, given the situation, his offer to allow Carrie to stay until the end of the month is more than gentlemanly. The fact that Carrie has no answer shows that she realizes she has no other option save the one Drouet just presented.

Drouet pretends to pack while Carrie watches him. Carrie realizes that "throughout this argument [Drouet] had said nothing very harsh." She resents Hurstwood's deception more than that of Drouet. While pretending to pack, Drouet thinks of ways "to patch up a peace and shut out Hurstwood forever," as he still "felt an attraction to Carrie which would not down." Drouet asks Carrie if she plans to become an actress and, for "his own peace of mind," if she had "much to do with [Hurstwood]."

Carrie is reasonable enough to realize that Hurstwood is much more in the wrong than Drouet, though she does not vocalize this thought. The fact that Drouet is thinking of ways to make up with Carrie shows that he has already forgiven her infidelity—now all he wants is to win her back. In asking Carrie about her interactions with Hurstwood, Drouet shows that he still likes Carrie enough to be jealous.

Carrie remains tightlipped and continues to blame Drouet, telling him "whatever has happened is your own fault." Drouet becomes angry and leaves. Carrie is "astonished" at his impassioned reaction. The narrator states that "too often jealousy is the quality upon which [love] feeds."

Despite knowing in her head that Drouet has committed no wrong, Carrie continues to blame him. These unfair accusations stem from a sense of pride—Carrie feels that if she admits that she is wrong, then Drouet will hold power over her. By leaving in a storm, Drouet shows that despite his kindness, his patience is also limited.

CHAPTER 24 (ASHES OF TINDER: A FACE AT THE WINDOW)

After arguing with his wife, Hurstwood stays in a hotel for the night. He is anxious as to what his wife plans to do. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hurstwood decides that she will use the information she's discovered about Hurstwood's affair to get what she wants out of him, resolving to hire a lawyer and a detective.

While Drouet wants to forgive and make up with Carrie, Mrs. Hurstwood plans to make her relationship with her husband irreparable. Mrs. Hurstwood is a woman of action—she makes immediate plans to separate from Hurstwood and take money from him. Evidently, she has no residual feelings of affection for her husband.

Hurstwood contemplates the properties he purchased under his wife's name. He also thinks of his position at the saloon: if Mrs. Hurstwood "raises a row," then his boss "[will] come and confer with him and there would be the devil to pay." Seeing "no solution of anything," Hurstwood begins to grow desperate. He comforts himself by thinking of Carrie, as "[she] was the one pleasing thing in this whole rout of trouble."

Hurstwood is a man who values dignity—he is afraid that if Mrs. Hurstwood causes a scandal, he will lose face in front of his employers and acquaintances. The prospect of losing dignity puts Hurstwood in a dire strait, where the only comfort he has comes from thoughts of Carrie. In the span of a day, a relationship with Carrie now appears to be the only thing Hurstwood has under control.

Hurstwood checks his mailbox in the morning and finds nothing. He sets out to the park to meet Carrie, but she does not come. Hurstwood grows worried that something happened to her but soon "[decides] that it was perhaps nothing" and goes back to his office to see if Carrie sent him a letter. Finding no such letter, nor any letters from his wife, Hurstwood feels exceedingly troubled.

Hurstwood's anxiety arises from waiting and not knowing more than anything else. Waiting creates the sense that all is unknown, and nothing is in control. Such a feeling is the worst thing possible for a man like Hurstwood, who prioritizes control. Hurstwood thrives on using connections and information to maintain control. Without connections and information, he is lost.

Hurstwood goes out to lunch. After returning, a boy delivers a letter from his wife demanding money to be sent back with the boy. Hurstwood, angry, tells the boy that there will be no reply. Hurstwood resolves to "make [his wife] change her tone." In the afternoon, another letter from Mrs. Hurstwood arrives, declaring that "if the money was not forthcoming that evening the matter would be laid before Fitzgerald and Moy on the morrow, and other steps would be taken to get it." Hurstwood wavers as to whether to send the money, and ultimately decides to deliver the money himself. He returns home but finds that his family has locked him out. Hurstwood feels both "relieved and distressed."

Mrs. Hurstwood wants only money from Hurstwood, emphasizing her utter superficiality. Even her husband's affair is an opportunity to improve her financial circumstances. Mrs. Hurstwood's threats against Hurstwood shows that she is angry enough to cause a scandal and lose face. The fact that Hurstwood cannot enter his own home shows that Mrs. Hurstwood is now in control of the household and their children. In this way, Hurstwood's status as an outsider in his own home is solidified.

CHAPTER 25 (ASHES OF TINDER: THE LOOSING OF STAYS)

Hurstwood returns to his office more distressed than ever. He begins to worry about Carrie: "What could be the trouble in that quarter?" He spends the evening in a state of "great mental perturbation." He eventually sends money to his wife through the hands of the boy. Hurstwood drinks with his friends and "[tries] to get the interest of things about him, but it was not to be." The boy returns with a message from Mrs. Hurstwood: "She said it was high time." Hurstwood retires, "brooding," to his hotel.

Hurstwood had thought that his relationship with Carrie was the only thing under control. Now, he realizes that absolutely nothing is under his control. Hurstwood grows desperate and the fact that he sends money to his wife demonstrates that he concedes that she now has the upper hand. Sending the money does not calm the tension between Hurstwood and his wife—it only reinforces Mrs. Hurstwood's sense of power.

The next day, Hurstwood receives letters from neither Carrie nor his wife. He begins to worry more and more about Carrie: "His pain at her failure to meet or write him rapidly increase[s] as he devote[s] himself to this subject." No mail comes for Hurstwood over the next two days, Saturday and Sunday. On Monday, he receives a letter from the law office informing him that Mrs. Hurstwood wishes "to adjust certain matters which related to her sustenance and property rights." Hurstwood feels as if "his family troubles [are] just beginning." He is also "quite certain now that [Carrie] kn[ows] he was married and is angered at his perfidy." He makes plans to plead with Carrie "until she [will] forgive him."

Carrie's silence indicates to Hurstwood that something has gone horribly wrong. Evidently, Carrie is honorable enough to reject the idea of being a mistress to a married man. Still, Hurstwood remains hopeful that he can repair the relationship—though now he would admittedly have to marry Carrie. The fact that Mrs. Hurstwood has armed herself with professional help indicates that she plans to show no remorse toward her husband, even after he sends the money. Mrs. Hurstwood's cruelty toward Hurstwood forms a sharp contrast with Drouet's kindness and leniency towards Carrie.

On Tuesday, Hurstwood visits Carrie's apartment but leaves after "he [thinks] he [sees] a man watching him." On the way back to his office, he passes the building where his son works and feels sad since neither of his children seem to care about his absence. After going out to dinner, Hurstwood receives another letter from the law office declaring that his wife wishes to file a suit "for divorce and alimony." If Hurstwood does not reply, they will assume he does "not wish to compromise the matter in any way," and the office will "act accordingly." Furious, Hurstwood leaves to take a walk around the block.

Now that Hurstwood has effectively lost his family, he begins to miss them, particularly his children, even though they do not seem to miss him. The fact that neither of his children contact him shows that they did not have a good enough relationship with their father—indeed, they have seemingly chosen to side with their mother. The letters from the law office reinforce Mrs. Hurstwood's cold, unforgiving, and unrelenting nature. Though both sides have found out about the affair, Hurstwood is in a much more painful situation than Carrie.

CHAPTER 26 (THE AMBASSADOR FALLEN: A SEARCH FOR THE GATE)

After Drouet storms out of the apartment, Carrie begins to think about how she can support herself—"to her credit [...] she never once counted on Hurstwood." She only thinks about him with "a pang of sorrow." After eating, Carrie checks her wallet and finds that she only has seven dollars and some change. Carrie perceives that Drouet "did not seem seriously angry" and "would come back." She also realizes that she could patch things up with Drouet; however, Carrie feels that "it would be impossible for her to live with him" again.

Carrie's conscience forbids her from seeking out Hurstwood for help. Her sadness shows that she genuinely cared for him and feels betrayed by the fact that he pursued her while married. Carrie's pride forbids her from making up with Drouet—she knows that if she tries, Drouet will readily accept her. Like Hurstwood, Carrie has lost her lover and her stability in the course of a day. The two lovers are in parallel situations. However, while Hurstwood despairs, Carrie hopes and plans.

Carrie remembers the meeting she planned with Hurstwood, and "in her nervousness and stress of mind she fe[els] it necessary to act." She walks to the business district to look for work—she wants nothing to do with Drouet or Hurstwood, and decides she wants to earn her own money. As she wanders among the businesses, Carrie realizes that she has become more attractive and that men who once ignored her now show her attention. In this, Carrie feels "power and satisfaction." Still, she wishes to make an honest living rather than to take illegitimate favors from men.

Carrie's second time looking for work is a drastically different experience from her first time. Now, Carrie is well-dressed and well-mannered—she is attractive and fits with the ideals of the city. In other words, she now wields a power over men that she didn't have before. The fact that men now treat her with more kindness shows that cosmopolitan society forms judgments based on appearance. Carrie's desire to make an honest living shows that she was never satisfied with being a mere mistress—she wants to be self-sufficient.

Carrie gives up around noon, deciding "that it would be no use to seek further to-day." She takes a car to Lincoln Park to enjoy "the flowers, the animals, the lake." Carrie tells herself she will resume her search after the weekend passes, on Monday. Carrie spends the weekend oscillating between "vagaries of mind and spirit" and feeling that "things were not so bad." She remembers Drouet's advice about becoming an actress, and decides "to take up that opportunity on the morrow."

Carrie is not as desperate as Hurstwood, as she has less to lose. Furthermore, she is young. The fact that Carrie considers becoming an actress after acting in one amateur play shows her innocence with regards to the world of employment and labor. Although she now has the appearance and manners of a city woman, she still lacks the knowledge needed to be self-sufficient.

On Monday, Carrie decides to inquire after theater managers. She goes to the Chicago Opera House, a place "considerably in the public eye," but "the air of distinction and prosperity [overawes] her" and she leaves. She spends the rest of the day looking at various opera houses from the outside. Carrie is discouraged, realizing that despite her improvement, she still had only insignificant "claims upon society."

As Carrie was once drawn to the larger wholesale houses in the business district, she is drawn to the notable theaters in the area. In all circumstances, Carrie seeks to be part of a distinguished, less common crowd. This job search teaches Carrie that she still has a lot to learn when it comes to living on her own in the city.

That night, Carrie finds distraction in the company of Mrs. Hale. However, she falls into "gloomy forebodings" again before sleeping. Carrie realizes that she is running out of funds rather quickly, having already spent a dollar. She also thinks about her sister, her home in Columbia City, and, quite sadly, of Hurstwood.

Where difficult circumstances lead Hurstwood to panic, difficult circumstances lead Carrie to find distraction and reflect. Carrie's sadness with regards to Hurstwood shows that despite his deception, she still has feelings for him.

On Tuesday, Carrie visits the Chicago Opera House again and works up the courage to ask the clerk about the manager. The clerk, impressed by Carrie's appearance, replies that the manager is not there at the moment, but will be in after two o'clock. Carrie then visits the Grand Opera House, where the manager tells her that without any experience, her best bet is to start out in New York. Impressed by Carrie's looks, the manager asks Carrie to lunch to "talk it over." With "the whole motive of the man flashing on her at once," Carrie declares herself preoccupied and leaves. The manager, offended at the rejection, remarks to a friend sitting nearby that Carrie would "never make an actress [...] Just another chorus girl." Lastly, Carrie visits McVickar's, but the manager isn't there.

Chicago is a large city, but evidently not large enough for an aspiring actress to get started. It is not as established as a city like New York. The fact that the clerk is impressed with Carrie's appearance—having, no doubt, seen plenty of fine women—shows that Carrie has become exceedingly attractive. Carrie's recognition that the manager has less than honorable intentions shows that she has gotten more shrewd at interpreting the behavior of men. Carrie's rejection of the manager contrasts with her eagerness to form an acquaintance with Drouet on the train to Chicago.

Carrie starts to head home, heart sore and soul withered. She stops by the post office and picks up some letters from Hurstwood. She reads them with mingled feelings, as "that he loved her was evident enough." Carrie writes a letter informing Hurstwood that "it [is] all over between them." She mails the letter the next morning, before going downtown to continue her job search. The department stores treat her "with more consideration than was usually accorded to young women applicants, owing to her neat and attractive appearance." Unfortunately for Carrie, the stores are in their dull season and inform her that they might like to hire her later.

Carrie's resolve when it comes to Hurstwood shows that she has a strong desire to be a respectable woman—she is done with living life as a mistress. This resolve is also shown in her desire to find a job: she does not want to depend on men for her livelihood. At the department stores, Carrie is no longer rejected for the same reasons as before. While living with Minnie, the stores rejected Carrie for her provincial appearance and manners. Now, the stores reject Carrie because they are not in hiring season, hinting that she is now hirable material.


After returning home, Carrie discovers that Drouet took some of his things, "so his going was crystallising into staying." Carrie feels that she is "alone, very much alone" and cries in desperation. The narrator relates that Drouet actually came "with a very different mind from that which Carrie had imagined": he'd wanted to find her and reconcile. Finding Carrie gone, Drouet waited, but grew restless and left. Before leaving, Drouet saw a picture of Carrie and "looked into the eyes of it with a rather rare feeling for him." Despite Carrie's infidelity, Drouet still misses her.

Although Carrie has no romantic affection for Drouet anymore, her crying indicates that she found a family member in him. Without him, she feels lonely. Drouet is evidently still interested in Carrie romantically, but he has also come to view her as family. She is not just another girl with whom he enjoyed a romance—he has a "rare feeling" with regards to Carrie. Indeed, the relationship between Carrie and Drouet is much more familial than the relationship Hurstwood has with his family members.

CHAPTER 27 (WHEN WATERS ENGULF US WE REACH FOR A STAR)

Hurstwood returns from his agitated stroll and finds Carrie's letter. He is depressed by its contents and tone, yet finds comfort it the fact that Carrie wrote at all, since this at least indicates that she still cares on some level. The narrator relates that "there [is] something exceedingly human—if not pathetic—in his being thus relieved by a clearly worded reproof." For the moment, he forgets about the letter from the law office and thinks of Carrie. Hurstwood's "whole thought was the possibility of persuading Carrie" to leave with him.

For Hurstwood, the fact that Carrie sent him a message, even if it is one of reproof, demonstrates that he is still on her mind. Furthermore, it demonstrates that Hurstwood is aware that their affair was morally reprehensible. Still, the message is enough for Hurstwood to consider winning her back. The only thing that Hurstwood can be sure of is the fact that he can no longer return to his family, but Carrie still cares for him.

Hurstwood remembers his need for clean linen and goes out to purchase ties before returning to the hotel. He glimpses Drouet going up the stairs and asks the clerk whether Drouet is staying alone; the clerk says yes. Hurstwood is pleased that Drouet and Carrie have argued. He decides to call on Carrie after finding out from the desk clerk that Drouet is staying in the hotel for the night.

Hurstwood does not worry about Carrie as a romantic partner would. He finds the fact that Drouet and Carrie had an argument relieving and does not worry about what that might entail for Carrie considering that Drouet was Carrie's only source of financial stability. From this, the reader can see that Hurstwood views Carrie more as a possession than a person.

Hurstwood finds out from the chambermaid that Carrie has gone out. The chambermaid, having "no idea where [Carrie] had gone, but not liking Hurstwood, and wishing to cause him trouble," lies that Carrie has gone to a theater. This dampens Hurstwood's spirits. He visits the resort to drink with friends and grows slightly intoxicated. Eventually, "some actors [begin] to drop in—among them some notabilities." Hurstwood finds some comfort in the companionship of these "notabilities."

The chambermaid does not like Hurstwood but likes Drouet. This subtly indicates that Drouet is kinder to those in service or those who are socioeconomically beneath him than Hurstwood. Their differing relationships with the chambermaid recall the time that Drouet noticed the homeless man outside the theater while Hurstwood paid him no attention. Drouet is, at his core, a kinder man than Hurstwood.

Midnight arrives and the resort closes. Hurstwood is "very roseate physically" and "[feels] as if his troubles [are] not very serious." While checking to see that everything is closed up, Hurstwood discovers that the safe is open and filled with a large amount of cash. In his drunkenness, Hurstwood begins to "see great opportunities" that such a sum would offer him. As "not a soul [is] present," Hurstwood's conscience begins to waver. He puts the money back but then takes the bills out again. Hurstwood ultimately decides to take everything within the safe.

Wine heightens Hurstwood's instinct while decreasing his capacity for reason. Where a sober Hurstwood might have reasoned that such an act would be foolish, a drunken Hurstwood listens mostly to his desperate emotions, leading him to behave as never before. The fact that Hurstwood considers such a criminal act highlights just how desperate he is—he apparently does not think it feasible to continue life in a bearable way in Chicago.

Hurstwood accidentally locks the safe with the money outside of it—he realizes he can no longer put it back. Feeling desperate, Hurstwood, a "man of action," puts on his jacket, puts the money in a satchel, and leaves. He calls the train station and learns that the next train for Detroit leaves at three o'clock in the morning. He then takes a cab to Carrie's apartment and informs her that Drouet "is hurt and in the hospital" and wants to see her. Carrie dresses rapidly and leaves with Hurstwood. Hurstwood tells the cab driver, without letting Carrie hear, to go to the Michigan Central depot.

Hurstwood deception of Carrie shows that he does not respect her enough to consider her thoughts and emotions—he merely views her as a possession that he must have for his own well-being. Indeed, his treatment of Carrie contrasts with that of Drouet, who, in spite of the affair, still treats Carrie kindly and allows her to stay in the apartment that he pays for. The fact that Carrie leaves after hearing about Drouet's supposed injury shows that she still cares about him as a person—after all, he has become the closest thing to family for Carrie.

CHAPTER 28 (A PILGRIM, AN OUTLAW: THE SPIRIT DETAINED)

Carrie continuously asks Hurstwood about Drouet's location and injury. Hurstwood responds with only vague replies. As Hurstwood seems serious, Carrie believes him. They reach the depot and board the train to Detroit. Carrie begins to think the situation "curious" but is anxious to find out what's wrong with Drouet.

Carrie is still innocent when it comes to outright deception. Despite knowing that Hurstwood has deceived her before, she still believes him. Furthermore, she demonstrates genuine concern for Drouet, showing that she still has affection for him, even if that affection is not romantic in nature.

Hurstwood, now sober, begins to feel the weight of his mistake. He becomes intent to reach Canada and "make the best of it." As they travel beyond **city** limits, Carrie grows increasingly nervous and begins to doubt that they are going to see Drouet. To Carrie's surprise, Hurstwood that they aren't and declares that he wants to go to another city with her. Carrie is "appalled at the man's audacity" and attempts to push out of the aisle. Hurstwood restrains her and tries "the art of persuasion with all his powers aroused," telling her she cannot get off a moving train. Carrie "[seems] not to listen." Nevertheless, she makes no move when the conductor walks by.

As Hurstwood grows sober, his capacity for reason begins to increase, leading him to realize the foolishness of his behavior. His emotional instinct is now sufficiently suppressed by logical reason, and the situation seem dangerous in this light. The fact that Carrie does not relay her situation to the conductor demonstrates that despite being appalled at Hurstwood's second deception, she still wants to give the manager a chance to explain himself. Her decision to remain silent may also stem from a realization that there is nothing in Chicago for her anymore.

Carrie is furious at Hurstwood for his deception. Hurstwood attempts to calm her by proclaiming his love for her. Carrie thinks of his marriage; nevertheless, "there is something in such daring and power which is fascinating to a woman, especially if she can be made to feel that it is all prompted by love of her." The moving train also leads Carrie to feel that Chicago is falling far away. Hurstwood continues to persuade Carrie to stay with him. He finally manages to slightly appease her by saying that she is free to return to Chicago if she wishes. This, for Carrie, is a "temporary amnesty."

Carrie thrives on recognition, and the fact that Hurstwood is willing to leave his family and career behind for her is, to Carrie, a show of great recognition. After all, Carrie does not know about Hurstwood's theft. She does not know that Hurstwood is only persuading her because he, too, has nothing left for him back in Chicago. The fact that Hurstwood and Carrie reach a "temporary amnesty" indicates that Carrie is willing to give Hurstwood a second chance in their relationship.

Hurstwood inquires after Carrie's comfort and Carrie "[begins] to notice what she had always felt—his thoughtfulness." Carrie starts to calm down. On the other hand, Hurstwood's condition is "bitter in the extreme": now that he has convinced Carrie to come with him, he dwells on his own mistakes. Hurstwood does not want the stolen money and thinks of explaining things to his superiors at the saloon.

Hurstwood is still the same, considerate man that he was in Chicago, and this helps persuade Carrie that he is worth a second chance. The fact that Hurstwood does not want the money he has stolen shows that the manager has a sense of pride as well as a sense of right and wrong. Hurstwood may be willing to deceive Carrie, but he is not willing to deceive his superiors at the saloon.

The train arrives in Detroit and Hurstwood purchases tickets for Montreal. He is nervous, as "the police must be on his track by now." Hurstwood appeases Carrie by telling her that she can buy all she wants as soon as they reach Canada. After being ferried over, Hurstwood feels relieved. With Carrie calm and having escaped from the police, Hurstwood begins to feel hungry and looks for the dining car.

Carrie is innocent enough to be appeased by the idea of material goods. She still has the same desire for fine clothes and accessories as before. Furthermore, she is innocent enough not to notice that Hurstwood is in a ruffled state. From this, readers can gather that Carrie still has a lot to learn.

CHAPTER 29 (THE SOLACE OF TRAVEL: THE BOATS OF THE SEA)

Carrie finds comfort in the sensation of traveling and "almost [forgets] that she had been tricked into this long journey against her will." They arrive in Montreal and Hurstwood gets rooms at a hotel under a false name. Carrie is pleased with the "lovely chamber" but remembers Hurstwood's deception and remains aloof.

Carrie is easily influenced by the environment—the strangeness of her surroundings is enough to make her temporarily forget about her situation. A lovely chamber is enough to convince Carrie to stay with Hurstwood despite his deception.

Hurstwood traps Carrie in an embrace and asks her to be his wife. Carrie begins to remember "her old affection for him […] so handsome, so daring!" Carrie asks Hurstwood if he will marry her and he replies, "this very day." With this promise, Carrie fully accepts Hurstwood and no longer feels resentment towards him.

Carrie has gained some experience with men, but evidently not enough to allow her to see Hurstwood's deception as the indication of an unworthy man. She is also innocent enough to believe that if she marries Hurstwood, she will be a respectable woman, even though Hurstwood already has a wife.

Hurstwood goes out to look for a barber shop and bumps into a friend from Chicago. This unnerves him and he realizes that "he forgot in his triumph with Carrie […] the possibility of soon being known for what he was, in this man's eyes, a safebreaker." Hurstwood decides to have breakfast with Carrie "in some more inconspicuous place."

Hurstwood is a man of pride—he dreads the idea of being known as a thief, even if he will not see any of the people who know. Evidently, leaving behind his life in Chicago and starting anew will be more difficult than Hurstwood anticipated.

On his way back from the barber shop, Hurstwood notices a detective in the lobby of his hotel. He begins "to trouble concerning the extradition law" and feels a desire to leave Montreal. Hurstwood finds Carrie refreshed but cold towards him once again. On their way out to breakfast, Hurstwood notices the detective again. At breakfast, Hurstwood tells Carrie they will go to New York.

The fact that Hurstwood does not tell Carrie about his theft shows that he does not trust and respect her as a partner—she is more of a pet to appease and keep under wraps. To Hurstwood, Carrie is not his equal. The fact that Hurstwood desires to go to New York shows that he does not plan to keep the money—he will return it for a safe passage back to America.

Hurstwood grows increasingly anxious regarding his crime. He finds a small addendum describing it in the papers and decides to keep Carrie from finding him out. The detective knocks on the door to Hurstwood and Carrie's hotel rooms. The two speak quietly outside and the detective attempts to find out whether Hurstwood will give the money back. Hurstwood feels frustrated at being treated as a thief and does not give the detective a straight answer.

Hurstwood's pride keeps him from even admitting that he is a thief. His desire to keep the theft from Carrie's knowledge shows that he believes that Carrie's opinion for him would be irrevocably lowered if she were to know. He does not believe Carrie is understanding enough to take the problem in stride and help him come up with ideas.

After returning to his rooms, Hurstwood tells Carrie that the detective is a friend from Chicago. He then decides to send the money back and, wondering if his superiors could forgive him, sends them a letter. At the same time, Hurstwood "[accepts] his present situation with Carrie, getting what joy out of it he could." He tells Carrie to stay with him from now on. Carrie solemnly listens and agrees but maintains that Hurstwood must marry her. The two then marry as George and Carrie Wheeler "by a Baptist minister, the first divine they found convenient."

Hurstwood uses Carrie as an escape from his problems rather than respecting her as a partner. On the other hand, Carrie's desire to marry Hurstwood shows that she wants to be his partner, his equal, and share in his troubles. Carrie is innocent enough to believe that a hasty exchange of vows before a convenient minister means that Hurstwood is now married to her and no longer tied to his wife.

Hurstwood's superiors from Chicago reply, expressing astonishment. Fortunately for Hurstwood, they firm declares that "if the money were returned, they would not trouble to prosecute him, as they really bore him no ill-will." Hurstwood returns $9,500, keeping $1,300 for his own use. Still, he is anxious that he might be arrested upon returning to the States. Hurstwood and Carrie board the train to New York. Carrie, blissful in ignorance, enjoys the train ride. Furthermore, she "had heard of the Hudson River, the great **city** of New York, and now she looked out, filling her mind with the wonder of it."

Hurstwood's superiors are unwilling to prosecute him, showing that he made a good enough impression in Chicago to render him deserving of mercy. Carrie's blissful ignorance highlights her innocence—she does not realize the hardships that come from starting life in a new city and being married for the first time. Carrie spends a train ride dreaming about the big city that is too come, recalling the beginning of the novel. Once again, she expects glamour rather than difficulty.

When Carrie and Hurstwood arrive in New York, Hurstwood finally feels relieved after finding no one at the station to arrest him. Hurstwood decides to stay at the Belford, "knowing it to be less frequented by those whom he knew." Hurstwood tells Carrie that there are no lawns in New York and Carrie expresses her disapproval—she "was coming to have a few opinions of her own."

Carrie, though still innocent, is not as naïve as before. She no longer simply absorbs information; rather, she now has a certain independence of mind. Carrie's new display of autonomy shows that life in Chicago was a sort of education. From this, readers can expect that life in New York will form the second part of this education.

CHAPTER 30 (THE KINGDOM OF GREATNESS: THE PILGRIM ADREAM)

Although Hurstwood is considered wealthy in Chicago, he is "but an inconspicuous drop in an ocean like New York." The atmosphere in New York "could not incite in him the cravings of a boy of eighteen, but in so far as they were excited, the lack of hope made them proportionately bitter." Hurstwood also begins to feel his age. He quickly decides that he needs a job, and begins to look for one in the morning papers.

New York is a bigger city than Chicago, and the wealth gap in here is also much bigger. Consequently, while Hurstwood was rich in Chicago, he is nowhere near rich in New York. Furthermore, Hurstwood, unlike Carrie, is not young. He no longer has the youthful energy to start life anew with great enthusiasm and hopes. In this way, the narrator reminds readers that Carrie and Hurstwood are quite far apart in age.

Carrie and Hurstwood find an apartment and Carrie notices that the rooms are smaller than the rooms in Chicago. Hurstwood explains new houses in New Work are always small. The couple settle into their house, with Carrie having "enough of the instincts of a housewife to take great satisfaction" in the newness and bright woodwork of the apartment.

It seems that things in New York are going to be more expensive than they were in Chicago. Carrie appears to be enthusiastic about starting a new life with Hurstwood. Her immediate instinct to manage a household shows that society has taught Carrie that women ought to be domestic.

Hurstwood begins his job hunt. After working in the luxurious saloon in Chicago, "he [cannot] stomach the commonplace saloons which he [finds] advertised." Finally, he finds a resort in Warren Street "which seem[s] an excellent venture." Hurstwood would get a third of the interest in return for $1,000 and managerial ability. Hurstwood makes plans to improve the resort so that he can get paid more. He returns home to tell Carrie, elated.

Hurstwood's pride forbids him from taking a lower-tier job and working up from there. Furthermore, given his age, Hurstwood does not have as much time and energy to work his way up as a young man would. The fact that Hurstwood does not want to work in a common saloon shows that he is used to being distinguished, used to interacting with the upper classes.

Over time, Hurstwood discovers his business partner to be drunk and disagreeable. He also finds that his customers are "nothing like the class of patronage which he had enjoyed in Chicago." Hurstwood misses the celebrities that frequented his old resort. Furthermore, the business does not particularly pay well—he will have to monitor his expenses, which he finds mortifying.

Hurstwood is used to interacting with celebrities and other members of the American aristocracy. However, his saloon in New York is hardly notable enough to attract such celebrated individuals. Hurstwood's disappointment shows ignorance regarding his own social standing: he is no longer the manager of a great saloon, but of a relatively common establishment.

Hurstwood initially enjoys his time at home with Carrie, "but the novelty of this wane[s] after a time, and he beg[ins] to feel the drag of his duties." He tells Carrie to put off buying a dress for the sake of saving money. Then, "other things followed from time to time, little things of the same sort, which in their cumulative effect were eventually equal to a full revelation." Carrie notices the change in Hurstwood and realizes that "she [is] not in his confidence."

Hurstwood does not truly love Carrie. He grows tired of her as time passes, as she was always more of a pet and plaything than a partner. Furthermore, he is no longer the man of leisure that he was in Chicago: he and Carrie must economize. Carrie finally realizes that Hurstwood does not view her as his equal—he does not share important information with her.

Hurstwood is resistant to his new lifestyle and cannot help contrasting his current state with his former one in Chicago. Furthermore, Hurstwood is afraid of meeting old acquaintances. He encountered an old buyer who had "extended his hand with an evident mixture of feeling and a lack of plausible interest." Hurstwood increasingly desires more money. He hopes to "keep up his pretensions sufficiently long without exposure to make good, and then all [will] be well." The narrator relates that Hurstwood failed "to take account of the frailties of human nature—the difficulties of matrimonial life."

Hurstwood realizes that life with Carrie is not as great as he imagined. Indeed, on the whole, his life in Chicago was much better. Hurstwood has the same sense of pride that he had in Chicago, when he was a great manager; however, now that he is common, he no longer has the qualities to substantiate that pride. In other words, Hurstwood now realizes that his escape with Carrie was a mistake: he has lost much more than he gained. Unfortunately, because of his theft, he can no longer return to Chicago. Hurstwood is in a more difficult situation than he ever anticipated.

CHAPTER 31 (A PET OF GOOD FORTUNE: BROADWAY FLAUNTS ITS JOYS)

Carrie soon "[accepts] the things fortune provided with the most genial good-nature." She finds pleasure in directing her own household and finally feels settled, like she has a place in society for the first time. Carrie's relationship with Hurstwood is also pleasant, for "troubled as he was, he never expose[s] his difficulties to her." The first few months are without trouble, and Carrie even learns how to cook.

Carrie enjoys independence, for although her role is domestic, she can now take charge of her own household affairs. She is still innocent with regards to her marriage with Hurstwood; Carrie hardly suspects that their marriage cannot be legal, as Hurstwood still has a wife in Chicago. Given this innocence, Carrie's conscience is clear.

Hurstwood's business is not lucrative during the first year. He "content[s] himself with a very moderate allowance of personal apparel, and rarely suggest[s] anything for Carrie." During the second year, Hurstwood's salary stabilizes, but Carrie has already formed negative judgments of him, and he has failed to build up a social circle in New York. Carrie accepts her situation passively, as they still would go to the theater "once in a while."

Hurstwood's financial situation is far from what it was in Chicago: he barely has any savings and his job does not pay well. He no longer treats Carrie so freely to clothing and accessories with his money. Instead, his selfishness shows: he spends the money on himself, in order to give a semblance of financial well-being to his acquaintances. Hurstwood values his pride more than Carrie.

With business picking up, Hurstwood begins to buy more clothes for himself but also begins to neglect Carrie. As Carrie is passive, Hurstwood "[begins] to imagine that she was of the thoroughly domestic type of mind." He "[feels] attracted to the outer world, but did not think she would care to go along." Carrie remains placid, as "she [gives Hurstwood] credit for having the usual allurements of men," though "she did not care to be neglected herself."

Hurstwood prioritizes his own pride over Carrie's well-being. Compared to Drouet, he is neglectful. He not only spends less money on Carrie, he also spends less time with her. Hurstwood believes that Carrie is content as a housewife and does not consider the fact that even housewives enjoy life outside of the domestic sphere. Carrie remains passive, showing that she does not believe herself to have a say in the matter.

During the second year in New York, a couple by the name of Vance move across the hall. Carrie catches a glimpse of Mrs. Vance, who is "so pretty and good-natured that Carrie instantly [conceives] a liking for her." She asks Hurstwood about the new couple, but he is unenthusiastic: "Some of these people are pretty bad company."

Hurstwood is inconsiderate of Carrie's feelings. He does not think that without his company, she might grow lonely. His comment about Mrs. Vance shows that he does not believe Carrie needs to have friends—she ought to be satisfied with his company alone. This is a double standard, as Hurstwood has plenty of acquaintances apart from Carrie and frequently spends time with them.

After bumping into Mrs. Vance a few more times, Carrie becomes friends with her, finding her "an agreeable companion." Carrie finds that the Vances' flat is more luxurious. The two young women often visit each other. One day, Hurstwood also visits and Carrie sees "again what she for some time had sub-consciously missed in Hurstwood—the adroitness and flattery of which he was capable." Carrie also notices that she is "not nearly as well dressed" as Mrs. Vance. For Carrie, "the old helpful, urging melancholy was restored." Carrie begins to seek the companionship of Mrs. Vance more and more to appease her loneliness.

Hurstwood has stopped putting up a smooth façade with Carrie—he no longer desires her as before. Carrie still finds herself drawn to luxury. By the standards of Chicago, Carrie is relatively well-dressed and attractive. However, the standards in New York are higher. Carrie notices this through Mrs. Vance's fine attire and, once again, grows discontent with her own appearance. Carrie's standards are always shifting depending on the environment she is in.

One day, Carrie and Mrs. Vance go to a matinee. Carrie notices that though she "had gotten herself up charmingly enough," Mrs. Vance "pained her by contrast." Walking down Broadway, with "all the woman who love a showy parade," Carrie notices that "Mrs. Vance's manner had rather stiffened under the gaze of handsome men and elegantly dressed ladies." Carrie feels that she does not belong in this street that "[bears] the flavour of riches and show" and "[longs] to feel the delight of parading here as an equal."

Displays of wealth in New York are much more extravagant than displays of wealth in Chicago, as evidenced by the finely dressed women on Broadway. This incident recalls the time that Carrie felt inferior next to the shop girls in Chicago. Carrie has a consistent desire to be recognized, and believes her plain clothing is preventing her from achieving her potential.

CHAPTER 32 (THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR: A SEER TO TRANSLATE)

Carrie's experience on Broadway makes her emotional and receptive to the contents of the play. As she watches, she remembers her acting stint in Chicago and desires "to be a part of [the actors]." Carrie also dwells on the fine women she saw on Broadway and "it ached her to know that she was not one of them." The play is about "charmingly overdressed ladies and gentlemen [suffering] the pangs of jealousy amid gilded surroundings." Carrie wants to bring her own suffering to that gilded world.

For Carrie, the stage is an escape from reality. While watching a play, she can forget about her own troubles and dwell on the art before her. The fact that Carrie wishes to bring her own suffering into more luxurious surroundings shows her continuing innocence—she does not realize that her troubles will follow her regardless of the environment she's in.

Walking down Broadway teaches Carrie "a sharper lesson": she will not have live until she has achieved her dream of becoming an actress. After returning home, her apartment seems to be "a commonplace thing." Carrie keeps revisiting the scenes of the play, creating in her a yearning to be an actress. By the time Hurstwood arrives at home, Carrie is exceedingly moody.

Carrie's greed for wealth resurfaces once again. She grows discontent with her life with Hurstwood after seeing Broadway, as she once grew discontent with her life with Drouet after seeing the great houses in Chicago. For Carrie, happiness is always out of reach—she continually desires the next best thing.

Hurstwood inquires after Carrie's moodiness, and Carrie replies that she doesn't feel well. Hurstwood invites her to see a show but Carrie refuses, citing that she already saw one. Carrie changes her mind after eating, as "a little food in the stomach does wonders." Nevertheless, Carrie's thoughts of discontent often resurface.

The fact that eating food can change Carrie's mind shows that she is easily affected by her surroundings. Carrie can only helplessly succumb to the influences of the environment. This reinforces the novel's status as a naturalistic work, as the naturalist movement sought to show how people were subject to the whims of larger forces around them.


About a month after this experience, Mrs. Vance invites Carrie to the theater. Hurstwood is busy. Carrie dresses according to Mrs. Vance's good-natured suggestions. Hurstwood notices this "new tendency on Carrie's part." He does not object to the purchases, but "her requests were not a delight to him." On this occasion, Carrie "had on her best, but there was comfort in the thought that if she must confine herself to a best, it was neat and fitting.

Carrie follows Mrs. Vance's suggestions as she once imitated the railroad treasurer's daughter in Chicago. Carrie is always attempting to follow the example of the women she perceives as superior to herself. Hurstwood's displeasure with Carrie's spending contrasts with Drouet's good-natured cheerfulness when Carrie wore pretty clothes in Chicago. Ironically, it seems that Drouet was a better man to Carrie than Hurstwood is to her.


Carrie meets Mrs. Vance's cousin, Ames. She finds him "an exceedingly genial soul." Ames demonstrates a platonic attention towards Carrie: "He was interested to find her so young a wife, and so pretty, though it was only a respectful interest [...] He had respect for the married state, and thought only of some pretty marriageable girls in Indianapolis." Carrie, Mr. Vance and Mrs. Vance, and Ames take a coach to Sherry's, a luxurious "temple of gastronomy." Carrie feels envious of Mrs. Vance: "What a wonderful thing it was to be rich."

Ames appears honorable next to Hurstwood. Carrie was introduced as another man's wife to both Ames and Hurstwood; however, where Hurstwood tried to win her, Ames thinks of no such thing even though he finds Carrie attractive. The fact that Carrie goes to Sherry's without Hurstwood shows that the couple is growing distant—their social lives are not intertwined.


Vance leads the way through the luxurious tables at Sherry's. Carrie "[is] keenly aware of all the little things that were done" in the restaurant." The prices at Sherry's are uncommonly high. Carrie remembers the "far different occasion" when she dined with Drouet and the times when she was "poor, hungry, drifting at her wits' ends." The waiters demonstrate "exclusively personal attention." Vance orders liberally for the group.

Carrie's recollection about eating with Drouet highlights the fact that her standards have changed. She once found eating in that good but common restaurant with Drouet a luxury; now, she needs a much more luxurious restaurant to impress her. Carrie standards are always shifting depending on her experiences and the environment that she is in.

Ames remarks to Carrie that "it is a shame for people to spend so much money this way." Carrie feels surprised, as "he seemed to be thinking about something over which she had never pondered." Carrie takes Ames's words seriously, as she feels that "he [is] better educated that she [is]." Over dinner, the table discusses literature. Ames unknowingly denounces a book that Carrie has read, and Carrie, for the first time, "[feels] the pain of not understanding."

Ames is the first individual in the novel to introduce the idea that wealth is not necessarily good. Indeed, excessive wealth can be quite vulgar. The fact that Carrie does not understand Ames highlights her ignorance. However, the fact that she listens to him and takes him seriously shows that Carrie is aware that people can have better taste, and that her own tastes may be unrefined.

As Carrie talks to Ames, she feels that "he [seems] wiser than Hurstwood, saner and brighter than Drouet." Ames relates his indifference toward wealth, a new concept for Carrie. There is something about Ames that appeals to Carrie, an on the way out, Carrie asks Ames for his opinion on acting. He expresses his approval, which "[sets] Carrie's heart bounding." Carrie wishes to be an actress, so that "such men as [Ames] would approve of her."

Carrie's male ideal is constantly evolving. Drouet was who she fantasized about when she was working among the brazen youth at the shoe factory. Hurstwood became the object of her affection when she grew tired of Drouet's lack of sensitivity. Now, Ames is her new ideal. He appears smarter than all the men that she met before. Ames is the first individual whom Carrie finds impressive for reasons unrelated to wealth—she is beginning to realize that money is not everything.

Much to Carrie's disappointment, Ames leaves the company early. Carrie finds Hurstwood at home sleeping, with "his clothes […] scattered loosely about." She finds this "disagreeable" and sits in the dining room to think. The narrator relates that "through a fog of longing and conflicting desires [Carrie is] beginning to see."

Hurstwood's relationship with Carrie is disintegrating. As Hurstwood ages and grows less suave and considerate, he is also growing less attractive in Carrie's eyes. Carrie begins to realize her mistake in running away with Hurstwood, and, under the influence of Ames, begins to see that wealth is not the way to happiness.

CHAPTER 33 (WITHOUT THE WALLED CITY: THE SLOPE OF THE YEARS)

Carrie does not see Ames anymore and goes on leading life as usual. Still, Ames becomes "an ideal to contrast men by—particularly men close to her." During this time, Hurstwood's financial situation remains stable; however, his psychological situation declines. He is aging and "[feels] the depression of it." Furthermore, Hurstwood always compares his current state to his old state. His friends are no longer celebrities and his "step [is] not as sharp and firm." He is "left to brood." Every day, Hurstwood reads the papers and often sees announcements about those he knew from Chicago. He feels "forgotten."

Hurstwood and Carrie's age gap becomes apparent as Hurstwood begins to feel the drag of old age. This age gap becomes more pronounced to Carrie after she meets the young Ames. After the first passionate throes of romance have passed, Hurstwood begins to realize that life with Carrie is hardly ideal—as an aged man, he lacks the energy to build life in a new city from scratch. On the other hand, Carrie is now thoroughly aware that Hurstwood is hardly an ideal partner.

During the third year in New York, Hurstwood's business declines: "The tide of patronage dropped a little below what it had been at its best since he had been there." This irritates him. He finally confesses to Carrie that he is losing money and tells her to spend less. Carrie perceives that "[Hurstwood] did not seem to consult her about buying clothes for himself." She acquiesces to Hurstwood but with rebellious thoughts.

Hurstwood's confession to Carrie regarding his financial trouble highlights that he no longer cares so much about Carrie's opinion of him. Furthermore, Hurstwood continues to buy clothes for himself while neglecting Carrie, showing that he no longer treats her with the same consideration that he did in Chicago.

Carrie depends on the Vances "for her enjoyment." Unfortunately for Carrie, Mrs. Vance moves during the spring. Carrie feels "genuine sorrow," as "she had enjoyed Mrs. Vance's company so much." At the same time, Hurstwood is in a gloom over decreased profits. With the departure of Mrs. Vance and Hurstwood's mood, Carrie grows dissatisfied.

Without Mrs. Vance, Carrie loses not only a companion but also her only source of entertainment. Consequently, life becomes rather unbearable. The departure of Mrs. Vance can only worsen Carrie's relationship with Hurstwood, as the gloomy man is the only person she can turn to for company.

One night, Hurstwood, "after thinking about a way to modify Carrie's desire for clothes and the general strain upon his ability to provide," tells Carrie that he wants to open a place of his own and, thus, needs to save money. Hurstwood suggests a smaller flat. Carrie agrees, though she thinks "a smaller flat [sounds] like poverty."

Carrie is not understanding of Hurstwood's troubles. In this way, she is just as inconsiderate to Hurstwood as he is to her. The fact that Carrie does not think of finding work to help their financial situation shows that society has taught her to expect men to earn money.

This affects Carrie "more seriously than anything that had yet happened." Carrie starts to see Hurstwood's flaws and also begins "to feel that she had made a mistake." The new apartment and neighborhood do not appeal to Carrie. She makes the new home "charming enough, but could not make it delight her."

Financial difficulties are evidently a sore spot for Carrie. No doubt, they remind her too much of her modest upbringing and early days in Chicago with Minnie and Hanson. The fact that Carrie believes she had made a mistake demonstrates that she now realizes that Hurstwood is not superior to Drouet.

Hurstwood tries to show Carrie that "there [is] no cause for financial alarm, but only congratulation over the chance he would have at the end of the year by taking her rather more frequently to the theater and by providing a liberal table." Hurstwood wishes more and more to think alone. He begins to brood and finds less joy in Carrie: "The delight of love had again slipped away. It was a case of live, now, making the best you can out of a very commonplace station in life."

Hurstwood is still not honest to Carrie about their financial situation—although he has stopped valuing her esteem so much, he still does not view her as an equal with whom he can share his troubles. The fact that Hurstwood broods rather than plans shows that he is no longer young enough to consider starting life anew. Furthermore, it seems that the romance in Hurstwood and Carrie's relationship has officially come to an end.

Hurstwood's business partner, Shaughnessy, finds Hurstwood's gloominess disagreeable and "[begins] to wish that Hurstwood was out of [the business]." However, "the owner of the land [arranges] things even more effectually than ill-will could have schemed": the owner sells the land to a new man who plans tear down the saloon for a "modern office building." Shaughnessy does not wish to start another business with Hurstwood. Hurstwood grows worried at "the loss of his thousand dollars" and becomes depressed.

Hurstwood no longer puts up a pretense of charm, even in public, as seen by the fact that his business partner finds him disagreeable. The fact that Hurstwood's saloon is being torn down for a "modern office building" shows that the world Hurstwood knew is fading away, and a new world is coming. Hurstwood does not seem enthusiastic to join in this new world—he is too old and too weary to join the ranks of the modern world.

Hurstwood begins to look for other jobs, "but opportunities [are] not numerous." By the end, of the business, Hurstwood is still jobless. Hurstwood informs Carrie that he is "going to get the worst of [his] deal." Carrie asks if he thinks he can find another job. She can see that Hurstwood is "broke." Hurstwood responds with a solemn, "I can try."

While Hurstwood had many connections in Chicago, he has none in New York. His difficulty in finding a position recalls Carrie's difficulty in finding a job in Chicago—she, too, lacked connections back then. Hurstwood's despondency leads Carrie to see that the world is leaving him behind.

CHAPTER 34 (THE GRIND OF THE MILLSTONES: A SAMPLE OF CHAFF)

Carrie "[ponders] over this situation as consistently as Hurstwood, once she got the facts adjusted in her mind." She disdains poverty and desires a way out. Carrie also thinks of Ames and his ideas: "riches [are] not everything" as well as "the **stage** [is] good, and the literature she read poor." The difference between Hurstwood and Ames is painful to Carrie.

This occasion marks the first instance where Carrie disdains not only poverty—she also disdains Hurstwood because he appears foolish next to Ames. Carrie begins to realize that in order to be recognized and distinguished by superior men like Ames, she must improve her mind.

During the last three months before his saloon closes, Hurstwood looks for jobs. Unfortunately, Hurstwood no longer has enough money to invest in a business. Furthermore, the newspapers "were announcing hardships, and there was a general feeling of hard times in the air." Hurstwood begins to dwell on depressing items in the news, as "these things were like grey clouds hovering along the horizon of a clear day." Hurstwood also begins to think about his wife and family—"he began to wonder what she was doing, how his children were getting along" in his absence. For Hurstwood, "it seemed only yesterday [...] since he was comfortable and well-to-do."

Hurstwood no longer resents his family back home. Indeed, the fact that he thinks of his family members in a familiar way shows that he misses his life back in Chicago. At this point in the novel, Hurstwood begins to realize that his life with his family in Chicago is superior to his life with Carrie in New York. In Chicago, he had no familial warmth, but he had wealth, distinction, and friends. Now that his relationship with Carrie is strained, he has nothing in New York either.

Hurstwood visits various places advertised in the papers. The first place looks "cheap" and he does not enter. The second place asks for $3,000 to buy a half interest, far beyond what Hurstwood can afford. The third place informs Hurstwood that they are no longer selling. Dejected, Hurstwood returns home.

Hurstwood's pride forbids him from applying to common job openings—he still hopes to be the manager of some relatively nice saloon. His preference in jobs recalls Carrie's preference to work as a shop girl in a fancy department store rather than a laborer in a dim factory. In both cases, the job seeker holds great expectations despite having little to recommend them for a good job.

Carrie finds Hurstwood disagreeable, as "he was not so handsome when gloomy." At dinner, Carrie is frustrated by Hurstwood's curtness and the two briefly argue. Hurstwood goes out downtown, leaving an angry Carrie at home. Carrie grows indifferent to Hurstwood. Her manner makes "friendly intercourse" impossible for him.

Carrie and Hurstwood have their first argument, showing that neither person plans to put up a pretense of an amicable relationship anymore. At this point in the novel, Carrie and Hurstwood no longer have any romantic feelings or affection for each other.

The last day of work arrives for Hurstwood. He starts the day in good humor; however, Shaughnessy's "coolly business-like" manner depresses Hurstwood. By dinnertime, Hurstwood is "in a solemn and reflective mood." He tells Carrie that in order to start a business, he will "have to get something else and save up."

Like Carrie, Hurstwood is easily affected by his surroundings—a cool word from an acquaintance can depress him. The fact that Hurstwood tells Carrie outright that they have to save indicates that he no longer cares what Carrie thinks of him—she is just someone whom he must live with.

For the next several days, Hurstwood sets out to look for jobs. However, he realizes that if he were to pay several hundred for a position, he would have nothing left for monthly expenses, as "it was costing him nearly eighty dollars a month to live." Hurstwood begins to wonder what sort of job he can take.

Hurstwood realizes that his options are not as great as he had anticipated. In addition to having no money, he also has no friends or connections to help him out. Furthermore, Hurstwood's initial ignorance about living expenses shows that he has not had to worry about his finances for a long time.

Despite his anxieties, Hurstwood still dresses well and his appearance is "still excellent." This causes people to "[take] him for better off than he [is]," in a way that hinders his search. His fine appearance prohibits him from asking at an office in person. At one point, Hurstwood steps into a hotel for warmth from cold weather and feels ashamed that "he should come to this" and be one of the "chair-warmers." He considers being a bartender but finds it too shameful for an "ex-manager."

Hurstwood no longer feels the need to maintain his pride in front of Carrie; however, he still feels the need to maintain his pride in public. Consequently, he still dresses well. He is too prideful to dress in a way that reflects the reality of his situation. Furthermore, despite his narrowing options, Hurstwood is still too proud to work a less respectable job—he is not willing to compromise.

After Hurstwood returns home, Carrie informs him that rent is due. Hurstwood experiences "the first taste of paying out when nothing is coming in." Hurstwood then escapes from his worries through reading the papers.

Hurstwood and Carrie have begun to live on savings—they no longer have an income. The fact that Hurstwood chooses to escape into reading rather than to plan show that, in a way, he has grown passive. He is no longer young enough to plan a whole new venture for his life.

CHAPTER 35 (THE PASSING OF EFFORT: THE VISAGE OF CARE)

The next morning, Hurstwood notices two advertisements: one as a cashier in a furniture house and another as a salesman for a whiskey house. The latter interests him and he sets forth immediately. Hurstwood informs the manager that he once managed liquor houses. The manager is doubtful that Hurstwood would want such a position but tells him to send his references.

Hurstwood has decreased his standards for a potential job. Indeed, he is now applying to be a salesman, the same occupation as Drouet, who was his socioeconomic inferior in Chicago. The reality of his financial situation and prospects has finally dawned on Hurstwood. However, he is still too proud to dress in a way that matches his situation; consequently, employers view Hurstwood as an overqualified applicant.

Hurstwood then visits the furniture house but finds the place small and insignificant. He leaves thinking, "They want a girl, probably, at ten a week." Hurstwood eats and then sits in the lobby of another hotel. Despite the "slight consolation [of] the few hundred dollars he had in his purse," Hurstwood is "still gloomy and disheartened." He returns to the apartment at four in the afternoon.

Hurstwood's pride consistently gets in the way of finding a successful job. Furthermore, Hurstwood realizes that a low-paying job would not allow him to keep his current standard of living and appease Carrie; consequently, his already small pool of options is made only smaller.

Hurstwood is afraid that Carrie will think he's lazy if he comes home early. He finds Carrie reading alone in the dark apartment and tells her about the whiskey house. Carrie is pleased. Hurstwood spends the evening reading newspapers. While reading, "his difficulties vanished in the items he so well loved to read."

Carrie does not consider finding a job to help with her and Hurstwood's financial situation: she has grown accustomed to the idea of a man providing for her. Furthermore, Hurstwood also views Carrie from a domestic standpoint—the idea of Carrie finding a job does not cross his mind.

The next day is difficult, as Hurstwood cannot think of where to go. Carrie asks him to leave money for the week, and Hurstwood complies, leaving twelve dollars with a feeling of dread. Carrie can feel that "to pay her would soon become a distressing thing." Carrie feels no sympathy for Hurstwood: "What have I got to do with it [...] why should I be made to worry?"

Carrie does not compromise with regards to her allowance, showing her ignorance with regards to financial affairs. Furthermore, her lack of sympathy for Hurstwood shows that she no longer cares for the man, even as a friend. Indeed, at this point in the novel, a certain antipathy is developing between Hurstwood and Carrie.

That day, Hurstwood merely gets a shave and sits in a hotel. This continues: "each day disgust, depression, shamefacedness [drive] him into lobby idleness." Then, "three days [come] in which a storm [prevails]." Hurstwood stays home and runs domestic errands for Carrie, spending the remaining time reading by the radiator. Carrie observes this "ease with some misgiving."

Hurstwood has, in effect, given up on finding employment. He is not hopeless, but simply takes a passive stance. The fact that Hurstwood is now carrying out domestic errands represents his decline from breadwinner and head of the household to a mere helper, which Carrie does not appreciate.

On the fourth day, Hurstwood leaves the house at noon. However, after reaching a saloon that had advertised, he changes his mind, thinking that he couldn't afford buying into it anyway. He then proceeds to sit in a hotel lobby.

Hurstwood no longer tries to get a position. His days outside are only intended to deceive and appease Carrie. Hurstwood is still too prideful to consider taking a lower-tier position.

In the lobby, Hurstwood encounters Cargill, an acquaintance from Chicago. He remembers how "this individual brought up his wife to shake hands" at a hall. Hurstwood feels "greatly abashed." The two chat awkwardly before Cargill leaves. Hurstwood feels frustrated by this encounter.

Hurstwood now remembers his life in Chicago with nostalgia—he no longer seems to resent his wife. Indeed, his encounter with this acquaintance highlights just how much he has fallen down the socioeconomic ladder.

Feeling cold, Hurstwood returns home to a surprised Carrie at a quarter after three. Hurstwood falls sick and Carrie takes care of him. Carrie notices that "he looked haggard about the eyes and quite old" and this "did not appeal to her." Carrie feels quite despondent and cries. Hurstwood sees and simply tells her, "Things will come out all right."

Hurstwood's sickness allows Carrie to notice just how old, feeble, and thoroughly unattractive he is—even Drouet was never this unattractive to her. Hurstwood comforts Carrie with only vague promises of financial improvement—he no longer promises specific things.

Hurstwood shortly recovers but remains indoors, as the weather is rough. He leaves the house a few times after, but comes home early every day and soon "made no pretense of going anywhere." Hurstwood begins to notice that Carrie is "far from perfect in household methods and economy." He begins to suggest options for cheaper living, which Carrie dislikes. Carrie soon loses the weekly payment of twelve dollars and feels only "gnawing contempt" for Hurstwood.

Hurstwood has completely abandoned his pride in front of Carrie. Furthermore, he has abandoned the hope of finding a suitable position. The fact that Carrie is unwilling to resort to cheaper methods of living shows that she still views basic wealth as a sign of dignity—cheap living would bring her a sense of shame. Carrie's contempt for Hurstwood highlights the fact that she has no sympathy for him.

With only $500 left, Hurstwood becomes even more frugal and decides "to wear some old clothes he had." This becomes permanent. He also cuts shaving to once a week, so that "on Saturday he was a sight to see." As Hurstwood loses self-respect, Carrie also loses respect for him. Carrie resents Hurstwood for not trying, as "she had never ceased trying" during hard times in Chicago. Carrie and Hurstwood begin to sleep separately.

Hurstwood has now lost all of his pride—he no longer keeps up his appearance. Carrie's contempt for Hurstwood and the fact that she compares his situation to her job-seeking days in Chicago shows that she has forgotten to account for Hurstwood's age—he is much older than she is. Through sleeping apart from Hurstwood, Carrie also shows that she will no longer put up a pretense of still liking him.

CHAPTER 36 (A GRIM IMPRESSION: THE PHANTOM OF CHANCE)

The Vances come back, but Mrs. Vance does not visit Carrie as she does not know the new address. Carrie has been avoiding communicating with Mrs. Vance for fear that "the latter would take [the move] as an indication of reduced circumstances." The two coincidentally meet while shopping and exchange addresses.

Carrie is ashamed of Hurstwood and her new living situation. Although Hurstwood lost his pride, she has not lost hers. Carrie's pride is enough to keep her from seeking Mrs. Vance's companionship, despite her loneliness and dissatisfaction.

Carrie returns home and feels that "her situation [is] becoming unbearable," as Hurstwood still looks unkempt and Carrie is afraid that Mrs. Vance might visit and see him. Carrie tries to hint to Hurstwood that he ought to clean up; however, Hurstwood is indifferent.

Hurstwood's indifference to Carrie's suggestion shows that he no longer cares about what Carrie thinks of him. Furthermore, his indifference to cleaning up shows his lack of consideration for Carrie: he does not think about the pain that his behavior is bringing her.

Hurstwood has become "knavish" and looks defeated, a shell of his former self. Hurstwood still dresses up and "sall[ies] forth quite actively" on occasion but without "any definite aim." After glimpsing poker rooms a few times, Hurstwood tries to gamble for the first time. Hurstwood loses $60 and decides to play no more. He now has only $340 left.

Hurstwood no longer deems it necessary to continue his job search—he has become utterly passive. However, he is not completely hopeless. The fact that Hurstwood gambles shows that he is expecting some miraculous turn of events that will straighten out his life and financial situation.

One day, Carrie finds Hurstwood in his old clothes and, "remembering Mrs. Vance's promise to call," directly asks him to change. Hurstwood is nonchalant and claims that Mrs. Vance does not need to see him. Carrie demonstrates a new dislike for Hurstwood: "This lack of pride and interest made Carrie almost hate him."

Hurstwood and Carrie's relationship is now one of complete antipathy: Carrie dislikes him for his idleness and unkempt appearance while Hurstwood dislikes Carrie for her bothersome requests. Indeed, his relationship with Carrie is now almost as strained as his relationship with his wife in Chicago.

One day, Mrs. Vance calls while Carrie is away and Hurstwood opens the door. Mrs. Vance is shocked by Hurstwood's changed appearance and hurries away. Hurstwood feels ashamed and guilty. When Carrie returns and learns of the encounter, she voices her shame and anger to Hurstwood. The two argue and Carrie asks him to look for work. Hurstwood is indignant. Carrie asks him why he married her, and Hurstwood responds that he didn't marry her. Carrie is shocked as "she had believed it was all legal and binding enough." She runs out of the room, sobbing.

Mrs. Vance's shock with regards to Hurstwood's appearance indicates just how much he has physically changed since the early days in New York. From this encounter, readers can tell that Hurstwood still has enough dignity to feel ashamed about his unkempt appearance in front of acquaintances. Carrie finally learns that Hurstwood lied to her never had the intention to make her an honorable woman, making him worse than Drouet who never deceived her outright.

Hurstwood dresses and leaves. For a moment, Carrie is afraid he has taken the money but then sees that Hurstwood is only taking a stroll. Hurstwood is indignant about the events that transpired during the day and spends a significant amount on an extravagant dinner. The narrator relates that Hurstwood "was becoming addicted to his ease." Hurstwood then gambles again and loses $75 dollars. There are now only $190 left.

Hurstwood does not know how to live as a man of little means. Based on the extravagant meal and gambling, he evidently is either in denial or utterly hopeless with regards to his financial situation. The fact that he does not consider Carrie's well-being in all of this shows the continuation of a selfish streak.

In the morning, Carrie does not speak to him. For the next two days, Hurstwood continues to live as a gentleman. He loses thirty dollars before coming "down to cold, bitter sense again." Three days later, Carrie indifferently tells Hurstwood that rent is due. Hurstwood exclaims that rent is much too expensive before getting out his purse in "despair." The narrator states that Hurstwood "was nearing his last hundred dollars."

Hurstwood's reckless spending shows that he has lost his capacity for reason—he is now living according to only instinct. The fact that Carrie does not speak to Hurstwood yet still depends on him for money demonstrates a sort of ignorance and entitlement—she still expects him to take care of her despite their antagonistic relationship.

CHAPTER 37 (THE SPIRIT AWAKENS: NEW SEARCH FOR THE GATE)

Hurstwood's funds are rapidly depleting and "in due time the last fifty dollars was in sight." One day, Hurstwood hints to Carrie that they ought to spend less, as "all but a hundred" remains. Hurstwood looks "so disconsolate" that it scares Carrie, and she asks him to look for a position. Hurstwood replies that he "can't do anything more than look." Carrie begins to think about looking for a job, as "something must be done if he did not get work soon."

Hurstwood remains tightlipped in front of Carrie regarding their financial situation—he does not think it might be helpful to discuss it with her. Nevertheless, Carrie is observant enough to realize that they are in a dire strait. Hurstwood's hopeless reply to Carrie about finding a job shows that he has completely given up on the idea of finding employment.

A morning or two later, Carrie asks Hurstwood how people get on the **stage**. Hurstwood replies that "there must be dramatic agents" but is apprehensive that Carrie should get on the stage again, as he no longer thinks she has the potential to be an actress. To Hurstwood, Carrie seems "too simple, too yielding." He expresses this apprehension to Carrie, who feels indignant, considering she "did real well in Chicago." Hurstwood replies that there is a big difference between Chicago and New York. Carrie feels "slightly aroused" and "hurt."

Hurstwood no longer sees anything special in Carrie—she is now thoroughly domestic and common in his eyes. Carrie also realizes that Hurstwood does not think her special anymore. For the first time in the novel, Carrie considers relying on herself rather than the men around her. Carrie has realized that Hurstwood is no longer reliable. He can no longer provide for her. Consequently, she must learn to fend for herself.

Hurstwood momentarily "[thinks] he [foresees] the result of this thing […] Carrie would get on the **stage** in some cheap way and forsake him." Hurstwood underestimates Carrie because "he [does] not understand the nature of emotional greatness." Hurstwood tells Carrie that acting is "not much of a profession for a woman." Carrie retorts that "it's better than going hungry" and that if Hurstwood does not want her to work, then he ought to get a job. Hurstwood indifferently tells Carrie to "let up."

The fact that Hurstwood thinks that Carrie would resort to a "cheap way" of getting on stage shows that he has no respect for her—he doesn't view her as someone who needs dignity. Furthermore, he does not believe that she possesses any potential to be successful. Hurstwood no longer makes any pretense that he still likes Carrie, romantically or otherwise.

Carrie secretly resolves to get on the **stage**, thinking that she will not sacrifice herself and fall into poverty just to appease Hurstwood. Interestingly, Hurstwood also begins to think that Carrie ought to act, since the money she would earn would supplement his lack of income. Hurstwood tells Carrie that a friend is going to open a hotel and he'd get "fourteen hundred a year" if he could only get through the summer. He also relates that only fifty dollars remain and "maybe [Carrie] could get something in the stage line." Carrie is glad that Hurstwood finally approves of the idea.

Carrie's resolution to get on stage contrasts with Hurstwood's resignation with regards to finding a job. This showcases the fact that Carrie is still young and has the energy needed to start a new line of work and climb the company ladder. The fact that Hurstwood also thinks of having Carrie find employment shows that he no longer views himself as head of the household. Indeed, he has lost his pride completely—he is considering being Carrie's kept man for the time being.

One morning, Carrie dresses neatly and heads for Broadway. She stops at the Madison Square Theater to ask for agents. The clerk tells her to look in the "Clipper," a newspaper that advertises dramatic agents. Carrie purchases the paper and looks it over, but the streets where the agents reside are "a number of blocks off." She returns home, "carrying the precious paper and regretting the waste of time." Hurstwood is at home and, upon seeing the paper, tells Carrie that he could have told her the addresses of the agents. Carrie asks, "Why didn't you?" and Hurstwood responds, "You never asked me."

Carrie is still ignorant when it comes to finding a job. Her search for agents recalls the time she searched for jobs in Chicago without any idea of where to start. This occurrence involving the "Clipper" shows that Carrie and Hurstwood are no longer on speaking terms. They do not work together, but rather lead their lives separately, save for the occasions when they talk about financial difficulties. They are only people living under the same roof.

Carrie looks through the paper, all the while distracted by Hurstwood's indifference to her. Carrie tears up but does not cry. Hurstwood "[notices] something" and asks to look. Carrie hands him the paper and he writes three addresses of agents down for Carrie. Carrie immediately leaves to look for these agents and Hurstwood feels "some faint stirrings of shame." Hurstwood sits a while but feels it to be "too much" and leaves the house, "strolling nowhere in particular."

The fact that Carrie tears up shows that although she no longer cares for Hurstwood, she still finds his complete indifference hurtful. She does not cry because she no longer views Hurstwood as someone in front of whom she can cry—they no longer have any intimacy between them. Hurstwood's shame shows that in spite of his indifference, he still has a conscience. However, his guilt is not enough to bring him to action.

Carrie visits the first agent, Mrs. Bermudez, who tells Carrie that she "doesn't know of anything" for a young lady with no legitimate acting experience. Carrie feels dejected but leaves her name with the office as "Mrs. George Wheeler."

Carrie faces the same problem that she faced while job searching in Chicago: she has no experience and no notable qualities to recommend her. Carrie's performance in Chicago is hardly enough to qualify as professional experience.

Carrie then visits the second agent, Mr. Jenks. After Carrie tells him that she'd "like to get a part in a play," Mr. Jenks respond that "it'll cost [her] something to do that." As Carrie asks him regarding this payment, Mr. Jenks realizes that "he [is] dealing with an inexperienced soul" and tells her that she would "want to deposit fifty dollars." Carrie feels hopeful but upon learning that it would take a week to a month to get a position, leaves with a "[half-smile] to be agreeable."

Carrie does not have enough experience in the real world: she does not realize that Mr. Jenks is most likely a scammer. Her innocence makes her an easy target for deception. The fact that Carrie cannot deposit even $50 (which is slightly above twice the $20 pittance that Drouet gave her in Chicago) indicates that her and Hurstwood's financial problems are quite serious.

Carrie considers selling her jewelry so that she could get fifty dollars. Carrie meets Hurstwood at home and tells him regarding her experiences, relating her need for fifty dollars. Hurstwood advises Carrie against paying the sum, "as if he were deciding, money in hand." Carrie responds that she may "try some of the managers." Hurstwood "[chews] at his finger," defeated and "dead to the horror of [his condition]."

Carrie places a great value on her appearance; consequently, the fact that she considers selling her jewelry shows that her circumstances are quite desperate. The horror of their financial situation is beginning to dawn on Hurstwood in full—their scanty funds mean that he cannot allow Carrie to spend $50, even if it means getting a job.

CHAPTER 38 (IN ELF LAND DISPORTING: THE GRIM WORLD WITHOUT)

Carrie visits the Casino the next day and "[finds] that in the opera chorus, as in other fields, employment is difficult to secure": "Girls who can stand in a line and look pretty are as numerous as labourers who can swing a pick." There is nothing about Carrie that immediately stands out from the other applicants to the naked eye.

By the standards of New York, Carrie's appearance is common. Though pretty, Carry has no outstanding beauty to set her apart. Furthermore, she has neither experience nor skill. In other words, Carrie is hardly qualified to obtain a position as an actress.

Carrie asks the doorman for Mr. Gray, but the doorman responds that Mr. Gray is busy, and Carrie needs to call his office to make an appointment. Carrie decides "to employ the intermediate hours in search." She finds that other managers are also busy. So goes "the dismal story of ventures in other places."

People in New York all seem to be very busy. Any person of importance will not have time to speak with a common girl like Carrie. Carrie is too inexperienced to realize that employers are not willing to meet her.

Carrie then goes to the Empire Theater, where she finds "a hive of peculiarly listless and indifferent individuals." At the Lyceum, she "[feels] the greatness of all positions of authority" and leaves "wearily, somewhat more abashed for her pains." Carrie tells Hurstwood about her unsuccessful search; Hurstwood "only [looks] at her."

Carrie is overwhelmed by the size and intimidating nature of these large theater companies. She realizes that her chances of even finding an employer to talk to are slim. Hurstwood's indifference shows that he cares little about Carrie's state of mind—he only wants her to earn money.

The next day, Carrie sees the manager at the Casino, who tells her to "come around [...] the first of next week." The manager sees that because "Carrie [is] pretty and graceful [...] she might be put in [the chorus] even if she did not have any experience." Carrie returns home but worries, as "the first day of next week [is] some days off yet" and rent is due soon.

Carrie obtains the possibility of an offer by luck. Despite having a relatively common appearance, she is pretty enough to be a chorus girl. By this point in the novel, Carrie and Hurstwood are running extremely low on funds, enough for Carrie to worry about paying for one month of rent.

Carrie asks Hurstwood if he "really [looks] for anything when [he goes] out." Hurstwood responds that he does, "troubling only a little over the disgrace of the insinuation." Carrie looks "the picture of despair" and Hurstwood decides to look for a job again and take any position he can get. Unfortunately, the next day, he receives only "two slight rebuffs" and loses hope.

Hurstwood does not feel too poorly after Carrie accuses him of being idle, showing that he has resigned to his undignified state. The fact that he receives rebuffs rather than deferrals shows that by this point in the novel, Hurstwood's appearance has become quite poor.

Carrie tells Hurstwood that she could not find a position with the variety managers, and Hurstwood lies that he may gain in a position "in two or three weeks." Hurstwood's lie stems from his sense that "he had to make some showing" considering Carrie's distress.

Hurstwood continues to deceive Carrie. However, this time, it is not out of a desire for her, but out of a desire to prevent her from bothering him. Throughout the novel, Hurstwood never stops deceiving Carrie.

On Monday Carrie returns to the Casino. The manager has forgotten her, but after a reminder from Carrie, tells her to "come around to the theatre to-morrow morning." Carrie feels hopeful as "she could see he wanted her." The manager tells her to be there "promptly," as she will "be dropped if [she is] not." Carrie is elated, and at first is "almost anxious to tell Hurstwood," but then "[begins] to think of the anomaly of her finding work in several weeks and his lounging in idleness for a number of months." The narrator relates that Carrie has forgotten "the handicap of age."

Carrie finds a job after only days of searching, while Hurstwood does not find one despite having searched for months. Carrie forgets that Hurstwood is old. However, she also forgets that he has higher standards when it comes to jobs—he was once the manager of a successful saloon. Hurstwood does not want to start a job that compares poorly to his previous position. Carrie, however, has nothing to compare her job to, save for the brief stint at the shoe factory.

Still, Carrie tells Hurstwood that she has a place at the Casino. That night, there is "a good dinner," due to "the mere lifting of the terrible strain." The next day, Carrie heads to the Casino and is "given a place in the line." Under the influence of the "wondrous reality" of the **stage**, Carrie feels that she can be happy. Carrie gives her name as "Carrie Madenda." The manager is harsh, but Carrie feels excited and is determined to practice her dancing, for "she would not err in any way, if she could help it."

Once again, Carrie looks to the future thinking that the next best thing will bring her happiness. However, this time that future does not involve men—it involves herself finding a vocation. This job marks Carrie's first taste of true independence. The fact that Carrie gives her name as Carrie Madenda shows that she no longer wishes to tie herself to Hurstwood in the public sphere.

Carrie returns home and Hurstwood is not there. She eats only "a mouthful" before practicing, "sustained by visions of freedom from financial distress." After Hurstwood returns, Carrie is "obliged to drop practice and get dinner." Carrie is irritated and decides that Hurstwood is to "take his meals out" from now on.

Carrie's excitement recalls her enthusiasm while practicing for her part in the Freemason's play. The fact that Carrie still cooks meals indicates that she now has to carry both the financial and domestic burden. Hurstwood's lack of desire to help highlights his inconsideration towards Carrie.

Carrie finds that "it [is] not such a wonderful thing to be in the chorus." Furthermore, she only gets paid twelve dollars a week. Carrie feels that next to the "leading ladies," she is "absolutely nothing at all." Hurstwood's idleness also irritates Carrie more and more. Carrie still finds that "she could not talk to him as she had to Drouet," as "there was something in the man's manner of which she had always stood in awe."

Carrie is once again disillusioned by the thing that she thought would bring her happiness. As someone who craves recognition, being among a crowd of chorus girls is not enough for her. The fact that Carrie finds it difficult to communicate with Hurstwood shows that the former manager still behaves as if he were Carrie's superior, which is ironic given the fact that he is essentially dependent upon Carrie now.

One day, Hurstwood tells Carrie that he only has "rent and thirteen dollars more." They would have to scrimp even more than they already are, something Carrie disdains. Carrie also remembers that she wants to buy some clothes for herself. She thinks to herself that she cannot "keep up" the apartment and buy clothes for herself at the same time. Carrie feels indignant that Hurstwood still has not found a job.

Carrie's desire for fine clothes never stops, no matter the situation that she is in—a part of her vanity remains even after meeting Ames. Carrie begins to feel that it is unfair that she should need to deal with both financial and domestic burdens. Hurstwood himself is becoming a burden to Carrie.

Carrie does not invite Hurstwood to her first performance, as she has only a small part and "it would only be money wasted." During this performance, Carrie has **stage** fright at first, but quickly calms down after realizing the "painful insignificance of [her] part." As she watches the leading ladies, she cannot help "noting how poorly some of the women of alleged ability did." Carrie feels that she could do better. After the performance, the manager scolds some of the chorus girls but does not scold Carrie. After the show, many "correct youths in attractive clothing" are waiting outside. Carrie realizes that "the flutter of an eyelash would have brought her a companion" but chooses to head home.

Hurstwood demonstrates no support for Carrie and the latter takes this in stride. Neither person puts up a pretense of friendliness any longer. Carrie realizes that she has more talent than many of the more notable actresses, indicating that the world of theater is hardly just. These actresses must have obtained their part through connections or the like. The fact that Carrie does not seek a male companion after the performance shows that she is now disillusioned with men, excepting the brilliant ones like Ames.

At the end of the week, Carrie asks Hurstwood if he has heard back from the supposed job at the brewery. Hurstwood says he hasn't. Seeing that Carrie is unhappy yet "good-natured," Hurstwood decides to further appeal to her for financial help. On the day the rent is due, Hurstwood asks Carrie to help him until his friend opens a hotel in September. Carrie acquiesces, feeling "handicapped by fate." Hurstwood reassure Carrie that he will find something to do, just about "anything," including "[digging] on the streets."

Hurstwood's further appeal for financial support from Carrie indicates that he has not only lost his pride but his self-respect—he is willing to live off of his lover's earnings without doing anything to help or support her. The fact that Hurstwood claims he is willing to take any job shows just how far the former manager has fallen—he is no longer in a position to be choosy. Hurstwood has become a sort of bum.

CHAPTER 39 (OF LIGHTS AND OF SHADOWS: THE PARTING OF WORLDS)

Carrie endures a month of mental distress: she must pay the rent, yet there are so many desirable clothes and ornaments that she wants to buy. Carrie wishes "more and more that Hurstwood was not in the way." Hurstwood, upon reaching his last $10, lies to Carrie that there is no money left, hoping to save "a little pocket change" for himself. From then on, Carrie pays for the groceries and Hurstwood runs errands. On these occasions, Carrie attempts to justify Hurstwood's actions by noting that he had not kept the change for himself—"he had no vices."

Carrie's desire for fine clothes and accessories grows with her increasing contact with the outside world. Living with only Hurstwood as a companion led Carrie to forget her original standards and ambitions. Seeing people at the theater brings her back. Hurstwood no longer deceives Carrie about anything: he does not promise her that he will find a job and does not take her money. The fact that he runs errands shows that Hurstwood is now taking over some of Carrie's domestic duties—their roles have reversed.

One evening while heading to work at the theater, Carrie notices a fellow chorus girl "arrayed in a pretty mottled tweed suit." Carrie is envious that the girl can afford to dress well and resolves to buy herself a pair of shoes, thinking, "I don't care what happens."

Carrie, being the breadwinner, feels entitled to treat herself to fine clothes without considering Hurstwood, as Hurstwood once bought fine clothes for himself without considering Carrie when he was supporting them both. In this sense, Carrie and Hurstwood's behaviors parallel each other.

A fellow chorus girl makes friends with Carrie "because in Carrie she found nothing to frighten her away." The girl relates to Carrie that "the show is going on the road next month" and advises her to find another show to perform in. She tells Carrie that traveling "will cost you everything you make to live" and there are always "too many shows going on" in New York anyways. The girl also tells Carrie that she is underpaid, as the girl herself gets $15 a week. The two make plans to job search together on Broadway. Carrie is grateful to "this little gaslight soldier"—"She seemed so experienced and self-reliant."

The chorus girl's opinion of Carrie demonstrates that Carrie is approachable and has no air of haughtiness. This girl contrasts with Carrie in that she seems well-informed about the theater industry and the world—she is knowledgeable and self-sufficient. This marks the first time in the novel that Carrie relies on a fellow woman rather than a man for help. Carrie begins to realize that women can be self-sufficient as long as they understand how the world works.

In the morning, Carrie's mood has dampened, as she must perform her "household duties" and deal with Hurstwood. Carrie realizes, after buying "the shoes and some other things," that they won't be able to pay the rent. She tells Hurstwood and asks him if the hotel is opening anytime soon. Hurstwood gives a vague answer before telling her that they can ask the grocer to wait, as they've "traded there long enough to make him trust [them] for a week or two."

Although Hurstwood runs errands, Carrie still performs other domestic duties. This shows that neither Hurstwood nor Carrie is accustomed to the idea of a man fully taking over domestic duties. Gender roles are still quite prominent in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. The fact that Hurstwood is willing to be in a man's debt marks a new low in his pride.

Hurstwood asks the grocer, Oeslogge, to "[carry his] account until the end of every week" and the grocer agrees. The narrator relates that "the game of a desperate man had begun." Hurstwood manages by paying from the ten dollars he hid from Carrie and the money Carrie leaves him at the end of the week. Carrie feels that "Hurstwood [does] not seem to realise that she had a right to anything." Hurstwood's gloominess and untidiness leads Carrie to seek relief in other places.

Hurstwood is now a desperate man. He has no job and no desire to look for one. Although Hurstwood has lost his pride, he has developed a sense of entitlement—he expects Carrie to leave money for him and to take care of the cooking and other household duties. Hurstwood has now become a sort of parasite for Carrie. He lives off of her, helping her neither financially not emotionally.

Carrie becomes close friends with the fellow chorus girl she had spoken with, Lola. Carrie, ashamed to say that she is married, lies to Lola that she lives "with some relatives." Carrie begins to go out with Lola and neglect her husband. Hurstwood notices but feels "in no position to quarrel with her." Hurstwood casually asks Carrie if she has afternoon rehearsals and Carrie replies that she has been looking for another position. Carrie feels "this question to be an infringement on her liberty." Hurstwood has "enough decency" not to make an "effectual protest."

The fact that Carrie is ashamed to say that she is married shows that she is now ashamed of Hurstwood and views him as something about her life that she ought to hide from the public sphere. The way that Carrie goes out with Lola and neglects Hurstwood mirrors how Hurstwood used to go out with acquaintances and neglect Carrie during the early days in New York. Hurstwood realizes that he is now in Carrie's care and has no right to have a say in anything that she does.

One day, the theater manager notices Carrie's grace and good looks and has her lead the chorus line. Carrie has "a chic way of tossing her head to one side, and holding her arms as if for action [...] in the front of the line this [shows] up even more effectually." On another evening, the manager notices Carrie again and promotes her to head another line, a position that grants her a stunning costume and a salary raise to eighteen dollars. Carrie does not tell Hurstwood about any of this. Instead, she uses the extra money to "[buy] for herself as recklessly as she dared."

Carrie's belief in her own potential is not a delusion: she gains the manager's attention, indicating that she does, indeed, have talent. Carrie hides her raise from Hurstwood as Hurstwood once hid his financial difficulties from Carrie. This shows that Carrie now views Hurstwood as her inferior, someone whom she needs to take care of but nothing more than that. She is entitled to spend her own money as she pleases.

Hurstwood notices ways that Carrie has been changing: "He had seen the new things she was buying; the way she was neglecting household duties; the readiness with which she was slipping out afternoons and staying." On day, he asks Carrie for money for the grocer. Carrie snaps and tells Hurstwood that she doesn't "earn enough." The two argue regarding how much effort Hurstwood put into his job search. The argument ends with Carrie's "anger [melting]" and pitying Hurstwood. She gives him the money. A short while later, the two's bitter thoughts for each other return. Hurstwood is bitter that Carrie makes more money than she lets on. Carrie is bitter that Hurstwood cannot find a job.

The fact that Carrie grows to pity Hurstwood during a brief moment emphasizes just how far Hurstwood has fallen—he used to be a man whom Carrie held in awe and admired. Their bitter spat recalls the argument that Hurstwood once had with his wife in Chicago. This is ironic, as Hurstwood left his wife for Carrie because she appeared to be someone docile, who would listen to him without challenging him. The fact that Carrie does not hide her new purchases from Hurstwood shows that she is unafraid of his criticism—and, in fact, that he has no right to criticize her.

Lola introduces Carrie to several "gay and festive" young men. Carrie is unenthusiastic: "After Drouet and Hurstwood, there was the least touch of cynicism in her attitude toward young men." One day, Carrie goes on a drive with them and, seeing the "show of wealth" in New York, temporarily drowns in her troubles and forgets about Hurstwood. She remembers too late and decides to dine with Lola and the youths. This is the first time she dines out without informing Hurstwood.

Carrie is utterly disillusioned when it comes to charming men. She has learned from experience that charm means nothing when it comes to finding a partner. On the other hand, although Lola appears experienced when it comes to finding employment, she appears naïve when it comes to men. Now that Carrie has found a job, the next best thing for her is wealth—her troubles appear to go away in the face of luxury.

The dinner leads Carrie to recall Ames and "his ideals [burn] in her heart." Carrie begins to think about her occupation—"What sort of actress was she?"—but forgets about this question and is "merry." One youth invites Carrie to the theater but she refuses, citing a "previous engagement." The youth pleads with Carrie but is unsuccessful.

Another thing that Carrie begins to yearn for is intelligence and discernment, for now she has at least enough wealth to satisfy her immediate desire for fine clothing and accessories. She begins to think about more philosophical questions regarding her career.

CHAPTER 40 (A PUBLIC DISSENSION: A FINAL APPEAL)

The next morning, Carrie apologizes to Hurstwood. Hurstwood relates that he "[doesn't] care," feeding Carrie's indifference towards him. He grows to hate asking Carrie for money and, consequently, runs up a $16 grocery bill. He begins to switch grocers and butchers to avoid the bills, all unbeknownst to Carrie. September passes in this way. Carrie asks several times about the hotel that Hurstwood's friend is opening and every time Hurstwood tells her that his friend "won't do it before October." Carrie becomes disgusted with Hurstwood and spends more time out visiting and shopping.

Hurstwood does not enjoy the feeling of being dependent on Carrie—his situation is, no doubt, degrading for him. The way Hurstwood switches grocers indicates that he is no longer afraid of gaining an unsavory reputation. Carrie is disgusted Hurstwood because she knows that his claims about having a job opportunity are most likely lies—she has learned from Hurstwood's previous deceptions and is no longer the innocent and gullible girl from before.

Carrie's opera plans to depart in two weeks. She applies at another company and gets a job at twenty dollars a week, which assuages her gloomy feelings: "She began to feel that she had a place in the world. People recognised ability." Carrie's state is "so changed" that the poverty and dreariness of life at the apartment seems impossible. Carrie only sleeps there and does "a fair amount of work" to keep it in order. Hurstwood spends his time sitting and reading: "he folded his hands and waited—for what, he could not anticipate." Soon, it is winter.

Carrie is slowly climbing her way up in the world of theater while Hurstwood's life is falling completely apart. Carrie's success deepens the rift between her and Hurstwood. Carrie has escaped from domestic life and is now a modern, working woman. Hurstwood's passivity shows that he has given up and thinks only of escape from the harshness of his reality through reading.

One day, Oeslogge the grocer comes to claim his bill. Carrie answers the door and is shocked to learn that they owe sixteen dollars. This sort of "bad and commonplace" occurrence is distressing to both Carrie and Hurstwood. The two argue and Carrie tells Hurstwood that she "oughtn't [...] be made to pay for it." She goes out and Hurstwood resolves "to do something."

Carrie and Hurstwood both have enough a sense of propriety to be embarrassed by Oeslogge's visit. Hurstwood's resolve "to do something" shows that Carrie's disdain and criticism still come as a blow to him—she had never been so vocal about her dislike for their current situation prior to the grocer's visit.

At this time, there are "rumours and notices of an approaching strike on the trolley lines in Brooklyn" in the newspapers. This catches Hurstwood's eye and he sympathizes with the demands of the workers. One day, after his argument with Carrie, a notice appears, advertising for a motorman position. Despite his sympathies and scruples regarding safety, Hurstwood decides to give the position a try.

Once the manager of a successful and glamorous saloon, Hurstwood now considers being a temporary laborer for the trolley lines. In other words, he has fallen from the upper echelons of society to the bottom. Hurstwood has completely lost his pride—the man who once disdained the idea of managing a lesser establishment now wants to try working as a common laborer.

In the morning, Hurstwood puts on his "best clothes, which were poor enough" and gets ready to head to Brooklyn. Carrie, interested in the change, asks him where he is going. After hearing Hurstwood's answer, Carrie warns him that men have been hurt, but Hurstwood is determined "in a desolate sort of way." Carrie feels sorry for him. Nevertheless, she sees "the least shadow of what was once shrewd and pleasant" and does not oppose.

The fact that even Hurstwood's best clothes are now poor indicates that an extended amount of time has passed since he and Carrie first moved to New York. Hurstwood's determination demonstrates his last drop of pride. Carrie does not find this new job surprising, indicating just how far Hurstwood has fallen in her eyes.

Hurstwood leaves before Carrie and makes his way to the office of the railroad building. The day is cold. An officer directs him to the building. Though the officer's face is "neutral," "in his heart of hearts, he sympathised with the strikers and hated this 'scab.'" Hurstwood meets the clerk, who asks if he's a motorman. Hurstwood replies, "no; I'm not anything." The clerk gives him a job regardless and gives Hurstwood a card to take to the "barns." On his way out, officers who had been in strikes before quietly whisper to each other that Hurstwood will "get his fill."

Hurstwood is ignorant when it comes to menial labor—he does not know what it means to work such a job during a strike. His ignorance mirrors that of Carrie during her initial job search. Financial constraint has forced both Carrie and Hurstwood to enter new worlds. Hurstwood's reply that he is "not anything" shows that he no longer has any self-esteem, nor does he have any pride-related scruples when it comes to being a temporary motorman.

CHAPTER 41 (THE STRIKE)

The barn that Hurstwood works in is "exceedingly shorthanded" and his fellow workers are all "queer, hungry-looking men, who looked as if want had driven them to desperate means." Hurstwood overhears from several men that despite the militia, a worker was hit "in the ear with a cinder." The narrator relates that "Hurstwood hearkened without much mental comment." The men continue to talk and Hurstwood overhears that one once worked in a paper factory and the other had a job in Newark. Hurstwood feels "a little superior to these two—a little better off," as these men are "ignorant and commonplace, poor sheep in a driver's hand."

Hurstwood has fallen into a crowd with "queer, hungry-looking men," hinting that he himself may be edging on looking queer and hungry. He has fallen quite a long way from his time in Chicago—his appearance is no longer suave and fine. The fact that Hurstwood shows no reaction to news of violence indicates just how indifferent toward life he has grown. Hurstwood views himself as superior to the other workers—he hails from a higher socioeconomic background—although he has little reason to, given his current state.

Hurstwood's turn on the platform arrives and "the instructor [takes] it for granted that no preliminaries [are] needed." The instructor's directions are simple and Hurstwood feels "sure he could do as well [as practiced motormen], with a very little practice." However, Hurstwood soon realizes that the job is not so easy and practices from morning until one o'clock in the afternoon. He grows hungry and cold. For lunch, Hurstwood has only dry bread and contemplates the "miserably disagreeable" state of the job.

Hurstwood's false sense of knowledge comes from his perception that he is superior to the other motormen. Because of this elitist viewpoint, he does not realize that though common, these men have skills that he does not have. Hurstwood previously worked a job of relative leisure; now, he is slaving away with time for only a short lunch break. His conditions have vastly changed.

After eating, Hurstwood spends most of the afternoon waiting before practicing again. When evening comes, Hurstwood decides to spend the night near the barns to save time and money. He eats in a "cheap restaurant" and sleeps in a cot with a group of other men, "[making] the best of a bad lot by keeping on his clothes and pushing away the dirty covering from his head." That night, he has a pleasant dream: "He had been back in Chicago in fancy, in his own comfortable home. Jessica had been arranging to go somewhere, and he had been talking with her about it." Hurstwood awakens to a cold and bitter reality.

Hurstwood now does everything on the cheap. His dream about life in Chicago hints that he misses that life—he misses his uncaring son, his superficial daughter, and his unbearable wife. The horrible nature of his current situation is beyond what he could have imagined in Chicago. Running away with Carrie has proved a disastrous decision—it marks the point at which everything in Hurstwood's life began to go downhill.


The foreman tells Hurstwood to eat breakfast, as the "car won't be ready for a little while." Hurstwood hesitates, then asks for a meal ticket. After breakfasting on "some fried steak and bad coffee," Hurstwood waits on the platform. Unbeknownst to him, the strike situation "had taken a turn for the worse" and the strikers are now violent. Hurstwood gets on the car with two policemen. The foreman leaves Hurstwood with a warning: "Don't stop for any one who doesn't look like a real passenger."

Hurstwood now relies on the charity of others—he lives off of Carrie's earnings and uses meal tickets. Hurstwood's uncertainty of what he is going into with regards to the strike parallels how he was uncertain of what he was getting into by running away with Carrie. In both cases, Hurstwood does not realize that he is walking into a disaster.

Hurstwood feels cold and the officers are condescending. As the car proceeds, protestors emerge and insult Hurstwood. At the first stop, the crowd grows violent and the officers and protestors begin to beat each other. The officer directs Hurstwood to move some stones off the track so that the car can proceed. The crowd insults him as he works. After Hurstwood gets back on the car, the crowd begins to throw rocks. Hurstwood considers this to be an "astonishing experience" and resolves the finish the job: "The fact that he had suffered this much now rather operated to arouse a stolid determination to stick it out."

The officers are now condescending to Hurstwood because of his poor looks—the old Hurstwood would have commanded their respect with his imposing appearance and fine manners. Hurstwood encounters a new world with the strike—this world is vulgar and full of physical violence. It is the opposite to the world of his saloon back in Chicago. Hurstwood's determination indicates that he is still a man with gumption. Although he has lost his family, money, and pride, Hurstwood has not lost his capacity to be stubborn.

For the rest of the trip, protestors continue to yell insults but no longer attack the car. Hurstwood is relieved upon reaching the barns; however, he is soon sent out again. Hurstwood is cold and distressed. Thoughts of Carrie's insults keep him going. Hurstwood makes three trips and returns to a miserable dinner. One of the barnmen, pitying Hurstwood, lends him "a pair of sheepskin gloves" and for once, Hurstwood is "extremely thankful."

Working as temporary motorman is akin to an endless cycle of torture. Each trip entails insults and the danger of a beating. The fact that Carrie's insults keep Hurstwood going shows that he is determined to prove her wrong—he is determined to show her that he can obtain a position and earn money.

During the second trip Hurstwood "[runs] into a crowd [...] that had blocked the car's progress with an old telegraph pole." The protestors are violent, and a young Irishman directs a blow at Hurstwood, who "[ducks] and [catches] it on the shoulder instead of the jaw." Hurstwood's resolution begins to waver. Hurstwood encounters another mob near the end of his course. After being knocked off the car by a "wrathful" young woman, "kicks and blows [rain] on him." Hurstwood is cut and becomes "very cold and frightened."

Hurstwood is hardly accustomed to the world of mobs and violence; consequently a few hits and insults are enough to cause his determination to waver. The fact that he can be knocked off the car by a young woman shows that he is now physically weak. Hurstwood is easily affected by his surroundings—if the environment makes it difficult for him to stay, then he will crumble. Hurstwood is too inexperienced with hard labor and violence to endure working as a motorman.

After being grazed on the shoulder by a bullet, Hurstwood decides to return home, exclaiming, "this is too much for me." He braves the "blinding snowstorm" to the ferry and "[trudges] doggedly on" until he reaches the apartment. Hurstwood cleans up and eats, then sits down to read his newspaper, finding it "a wonderful relief." Hurstwood reads about the riots in Brooklyn with "absorbing interest."

By this point in the novel, Hurstwood craves comfort above all else—the former manager has become idle. He is willing to brave a snowstorm in order to achieve comfort. His evenings with the newspaper are an escape from a harsh, uncomfortable reality—reading is his only source of joy.

CHAPTER 42 (A TOUCH OF SPRING: THE EMPTY SHELL)

The narrator relates readers will realize "the negative influence on [Hurstwood] of the fact that he had tried and failed"; however, Carrie gets the wrong impression. Hurstwood had not related his experiences. Thus, Carrie "[imagines that] he had encountered nothing worse than the ordinary roughness—quitting so soon in the face of this seemed trifling."

Hurstwood does not communicate the reasons for his unsuccessful return. He either cares little for her sympathy or does not think that she would be understanding. This lack of communication deepens the rift between Carrie and Hurstwood, as Carrie begins to think that Hurstwood is a man with no determination when, to a certain extent, he is.

Carrie has a part in a show as "one of a group of oriental beauties who […] were paraded by the vizier before the new potentate as the treasures of his harem." On the day that Hurstwood is laboring, the "leading comedian and star, feeling exceedingly facetious," asks "well, who are you?" at the point that Carrie happens to be "courtesying before him." Carrie gives a witty response—"I am yours truly"—that causes the audience to "[laugh] heartily." Carrie is scared "for her daring"; fortunately, the comedian likes the line and tells Carrie to "leave that in hereafter." Everyone in the company sees that Carrie "got a start."

Carrie has a natural flair for the stage. She knows what to say to please the audience, as seen by the audience's laughter and the leading comedian's approval of her line. Furthermore, her line was improvised on the spot, as the comedian's question was not initially in the script. Carrie's innovation allows her to get ahead of the other chorus girls. In this way, while Hurstwood is falling further behind, Carrie is rising in life. The two are beginning to have a disparity in class.

Seeing Hurstwood dampens Carrie's mood again, "[replacing her merry thoughts] with sharp longings for an end of distress." The next day, Carrie asks Hurstwood about his "venture" and Hurstwood responds that the car company doesn't "want anybody just now." Hurstwood continues to seem "apathetic" to Carrie. Hurstwood spends his days reading on end and daydreaming about his old life in Chicago. He also begins to avoid the "grocery man, baker, and coal man," becoming "deft in excuse" before "[becoming] bold, [pretending] to be out, or [waving] them off."

Hurstwood is slowly becoming the bane of Carrie's existence. Without his presence, Carrie could be free to completely concentrate on her work and do as she likes. Hurstwood's daydreaming recalls Carrie's bouts of daydreaming earlier in the novel. Both dream about better times; however, where Carrie dreamt of potential luxury in the future, Hurstwood dreams about the luxury in his past.

Carrie's friend Lola begins to cling to Carrie, realizing that she "could never of herself amount to anything." Carrie is "strong in capability" and no longer relies on men, realizing "that men could change and fail." Carrie expresses to Lola her dislike for the actors in the company.

Carrie was dependent on Lola to help her find jobs earlier in her acting career; now, Lola is dependent on Carrie to keep advancing. This shift allows Carrie to realize that she has no need for men to take care of her—she can take care of herself.

One day, Lola asks Carrie if she is willing to share an apartment, "the loveliest room and bath." After Hurstwood's apathetic return and her success with the comedic line, Carrie begins "to feel as if she must be free." Carrie soon lands a part as a "modest sweetheart" after an actress gives leave, and receives a salary raise to thirty-five dollars a week. Lola tells Carrie that she is still being underpaid and that she ought to buy more clothes. Lola offers to lend twenty-five dollars to Carrie, which the latter refuses. With this development in her career and rent day drawing near, Carrie decides that she can no longer live with Hurstwood, who "said less and drooped more than ever."

Carrie keeps rising on the socioeconomic ladder while Hurstwood stays at a steady low. With the gap between them growing wider, Carrie cannot help but feel that she must soon leave him. Furthermore, Carrie is maturing while Hurstwood is aging. The fact that Carrie lands a bigger part shows that she is quite a talented actress: she has distinguished herself from the rest of the chorus girls. Carrie is finally getting the recognition and the distinction that she craved earlier in the novel.

One day, Hurstwood expresses to Carrie that he thinks they are paying too much rent and ought to get a "smaller place." This is the last straw for Carrie and "that very day" she agrees to move in with Lola. They decide to move on Friday, which is two days away. Carrie begins to feel "very much like a criminal," as "along with the disagreeableness of [Hurstwood's] attitude, there was something pathetic." Carrie notices his "old and poor" appearance and his pride—he never takes more of Carrie's money than is needed for groceries.

Hurstwood's request to move into an even smaller place shows that he has no intentions of finding another job and expects to keep declining. Carrie feels guilty about leaving Hurstwood because he has become an object of pity—he has become a sort of dependent that she feels somewhat responsible for. The way that Carrie views Hurstwood is almost more akin to how one would view a bothersome, aging father rather than a former lover.

Carrie borrows $25 from Lola that she had refused earlier, claiming that she "[wants] to get some other things." On Friday, Hurstwood goes out after lunch. Carrie asks if he will be back for lunch and Hurstwood says he won't. Hurstwood spends the day idling warm weather before heading back to the apartment at half past five. He sees that Carrie is gone and finds an envelope, enclosing a good-bye letter and $20. In the letter, Carrie is honest: "I wouldn't mind helping you, if I could, but I can't support us both, and pay the rent. I need what little I make to pay for my clothes."

The way that Carrie leaves Hurstwood $20 parallels the way that Drouet once gave her $20 in Chicago. However, while the money that Drouet gave her was a sort of greeting and beginning, the money that Carrie gives Hurstwood is a goodbye and an ending. Carrie has come full circle from being the suppliant to the dispenser of charity. Carrie's note marks the most honest and open communication that she and Hurstwood have had for a long while.

Hurstwood looks around the apartment and finds that all of Carrie's things are gone. The flat seems to him "wonderfully deserted." Hurstwood tells himself, "I'll get out of this." The "sheer loneliness of his situation" rushes upon Hurstwood and he spends the rest of the night sitting in his rocking chair. Hurstwood comforts himself by thinking that at least he "tried." At midnight, Hurstwood is still in his chair, "staring at the floor."

Hurstwood's loneliness and determination to escape mirrors Carrie's loneliness and determination to escape while she was living with Minnie and Hanson. The fact that Hurstwood spends the rest of the day sitting in his rocking chair shows that his determination to escape is only an empty promise to himself—he has no solid plans for action.

CHAPTER 43 (THE WORLD TURNS FLATTERER: AN EYE IN THE DARK)

Carrie is now installed in her "comfortable room." She fears bumping into Hurstwood, but "as day after day [passes]" without his appearance, Carrie forgets him and becomes fully absorbed in her work. With Lola's help, Carrie becomes "wise in theatrical lore." As she reads "newspaper notices" about the opera, Carrie begins to wish for fame: "She longed to be renowned like others." At this time, newspapers and magazines begin to print pictures of "the faces and forms of well-known theatrical celebrities." Carrie wonders if "some paper [would] think her photo worth while." One day, Carrie sees that the papers have printed a notice about her part as a country maid and is thrilled. Lola encourages her and Carrie begins "to think the world was taking note of her."

Carrie throws herself into work as she once threw herself into the arms of Drouet and, later, Hurstwood. Work becomes the main object of her life. Under the tutelage of Lola, Carrie gains the worldly wisdom she lacked while being taken care of by her lover. Carrie achieves what she had dreamed of when she acted in the amateur play in Chicago: she is now a professional actress. However, rather than rejoicing, Carrie begins to desire the next best thing: namely, more renown. Once again, readers can perceive Carrie's constant craving for recognition.

Carrie's new salary is more than she can spend: she "found her purse bursting with good green bills of comfortable denominations." Carrie buys many "pretty clothes and pleasing trinkets," in addition to eating well and decorating her room. She meets a few young men, one who takes an interest in her, but Carrie does not return his interest. The young man notices that Carrie is "not so inexperienced as she looks." Nevertheless, Carrie "could not help sharing in Lola's love for a good time" and immerses herself in "the metropolitan whirl of pleasure."

Carrie also achieves another dream that she had dreamed of back in Chicago: wealth. Although her pay is still modest, it is far more than Carrie can spend. She can buy all the fine clothes and eat in all the luxurious restaurants that she desires. Although Carrie is young, her experience with Drouet and Hurstwood has led her to become jaded when it comes to romance. Carrie finds more pleasure as an independent woman than she does as someone's lover.

One day, Carrie's picture appears in the newspaper. Carrie is thrilled and thinks of "going down and buying a few copies of the paper, but [remembers] that there [is] no one she [knows] well enough to send them to." Carrie notes that "only Lola, apparently, in all the world [is] interested." She finds the metropolis "a cold place socially" and that a little money brings her no happiness: "the world of wealth and distinction [is] quite as far away as ever."

Carrie is still lonely—she lacks a family. Lola is the only friend that she has. Carrie realizes that though the city is full of luxury and opportunity to gain recognition, it is also a place without warmth and love. Furthermore, now that she is financially comfortable, Carrie begins to desire the next best thing: to be genuinely rich and celebrated.

Carrie learns that her opera plans to go on the road and decides to audition for a summer play at the casino. The manager at the casino has "never heard of Carrie," but upon learning of her notices in the papers, offers her a silent part at $30 a week. Carrie's looks earn her another photo in the newspaper announcement regarding the play.

Now that Carrie has work experience, her job search is vastly different. It is now relatively easy for her to obtain a position, as she has not only experience but also some connections. She is now being paid roughly seven times the amount that she was paid as a factory laborer in Chicago.

Unbeknownst to Carrie, the author of the play "had fancied a great deal could be made of such a part, given to the right actress, but now, since it had been doled out to Carrie, he would as leave have had it cut out." Carrie's feels that she was "effectually shelved" and is disconsolate at rehearsal. However, the **stage** manager finds this pleasing and tells her to frown more, as it looks "quaint and droll."

Carrie is still not recognized enough to be known by the general public. As a result, she suffers from the author's neglect—he, no doubt, wants the part to played by a celebrated actress. However, her talent once again earns her notice from the manager. Carrie's facial expressions are theatrical and pleasing.

On opening night, the audience notices Carrie by the second act and begins to laugh. The chief comedian is annoyed that Carrie has taken attention away from him; however, the manager likes Carrie's performance and decides that she should continue frowning. Carrie becomes a "hit" and the newspapers praise her endlessly. The author of the play writes a part for Carrie to sing. The manager then raises her salary to $150 a week and extends her contract for twelve months. For Carrie this development opens the door to "a world of possibilities."

Carrie's talent is enough to take attention away from the chief comedian, demonstrating that she is naturally star material. The fact that Carrie becomes an instant sensation shows the importance media in the cosmopolitan world—it is the way that people communicate, and the masses learn things. Carrie earns the recognition that she was looking for. Furthermore, her salary also increases by a sizeable amount. Everything is going according to Carrie's dream.

Hurstwood reads about Carrie's success from "a third-rate Bleecker Street hotel," "without at first realising who was meant." After realizing that the newspaper is covering Carrie, Hurstwood reads the item "over again" and broods. Carrie seems to Hurstwood "a creature afar off—like every other celebrity he had known." Hurstwood resolves not to contact Carrie, out of "a bent, bedraggled, but unbroken pride."

Hurstwood and Carrie now live in separate worlds. She is a famous star while he is practically a vagrant. Carrie now has everything—stability, wealth, and recognition—while Hurstwood has nothing, save for his pride. However, both individuals seem equally lonely, for although Carrie has Lola, she, like Hurstwood, lacks a family.

CHAPTER 44 (AND THIS IS NOT ELF-LAND: WHAT GOLD WILL NOT BUY)

After achieving fame, Carrie finds her circumstances to be vastly different: she has a better dressing room and "she [is] no longer ordered, but requested, and that politely." Carrie enjoys the audience's applause but feels "mildly guilty of something—perhaps unworthiness." The narrator relates that "it never once crossed her mind to be reserved or haughty."

Carrie's sense of unworthiness is ironic given the fact that she knew she had talent. In this way, this sense of guilt can only arise because Carrie became a sensation not necessarily through hard work, but through incident. Carrie already displayed an aversion to dishonest living during her time as a mistress. Thus, she wanted to attain recognition though hard work in her career.

Carrie begins to get letters and cards. A certain Mr. Withers offers Carrie an apartment at a hotel, costing usually three to fifty dollars a day, at any rate that she "could afford to pay." Carrie is now a "patron," one whose "name is worth something." Carrie asks about bringing Lola and Mr. Withers agrees. The two visit the apartment, "a suite on the parlour floor" with "accommodations [that] would ordinarily cost a hundred dollars a week," and decide to move in. The apartment is "such a place as [Carrie] had often dreamed of occupying."

Carrie is now a celebrity and has everything that she once dreamed of, namely, fine clothes, a luxurious home, wealth, and recognition. Fame appears to be the most effective means to success in the city. Furthermore, fame appears to make one more attractive: where Carrie was once considered only a mildly attractive young women, she is now experiencing the passionate advances of numerous admirers.

One day, after a matinee, Mrs. Vance visits Carrie. Carrie warms up to her "in spite of her first troubled feelings." Mrs. Vance "tactfully [avoids] the subject of Hurstwood […] No doubt Carrie had left him." The two make plans to visit each other. Carrie realizes that "she [is] as good as this woman now—perhaps better," and "something in the other's solicitude and interest [makes] her feel as if she [is] the one to condescend."

Mrs. Vance is a fair-weather friend—she did not visit Carrie when she was the obscure wife of an unkempt man, but does so now that Carrie is a famous actress. Carrie demonstrates her good nature through her immediate acceptance as Mrs. Vance and her lack of condescension. Carrie realizes that she is now, by the standards of New York, a fine woman.

Many gentlemen send letters to Carrie, hoping for "an engagement." One man with "a million in [his] own right" begs her for "one half-hour […] to plead [his] cause." Carrie "[smiles] to think that men should suddenly find her so much more attractive." It only "[incites] her to coolness and indifference." Carrie refuses to meet any of these men. She spends her time enjoying all "the luxuries which money could buy."

Carrie is not deceived by the attentions of these men—she realizes that they only find her attractive because of her fame. Carrie has learned from her experience with Drouet and Hurstwood to be distrustful of men. Instead, she chooses to find pleasure in things she can do alone and buy with her own money.

Carrie receives her first $150 paycheck. The cashier treats Carrie with much more friendliness than before. She perceives the world to be "so rosy and bright." However, Carrie soon realizes the "impotence of money": "If she wanted to do anything better or move higher she must have more—a great deal more."

The world treats Carrie differently because of her newfound fame, yet Carrie is observant enough not to be deceived. Carrie begins to realize that money is not all that she thought it was—money will not bring her happiness.

Carrie begins to see that "life's perfect enjoyment [is] not open." A critic claims that Carrie is "merely pretty, good-natured, and lucky." This "[cuts]" Carrie "like a knife" An author brings Carrie a play to produce, but "alas, she could not judge." Carrie blames these things on the slowness of summer. She tells Lola about her loneliness, but Lola, "thinking of her own lightsome tourneys with the gay youths," does not understand. Carrie doesn't yet realize it, but "her idle hands were beginning to weary."

Carrie learns that she is a popular actress, but not necessarily a skilled or critically-acclaimed artist. At this point, she does not crave simply recognition—she craves respect. Carrie also learns that she is not well-educated when it comes to art. In other words, though her appearance and manners are fine, her mind is still common. For the first time in the novel, Carrie begins to grow disillusioned with glamour.

CHAPTER 45 (CURIOUS SHIFTS OF THE POOR)

Hurstwood's life is deteriorating. He moves from cheap rooms to even cheaper rooms, living on the seventy dollars he got from selling furniture. He reads about Carrie in the papers and feels that in his shabbiness, "he [presents] a marked contrast to all that she now [seems] to be." Soon, Hurstwood has only twenty dollars and moves to a "fifteen-cent lodging-house." He spends his days daydreaming about life back in Chicago.

Carrie position rises in the world while Hurstwood has fallen to the bottom. The two essentially live in different worlds. The only contact that Hurstwood has with Carrie is through reading about her in the newspaper, showing that she is now quite removed from his reach. Hurstwood no longer has any hope about improving his situation—he spends his time escaping from reality by reading the newspaper and daydreaming.

One day, Hurstwood sees in the papers that there is a new play at the Casino and that "Carrie had gone!" He feels nervous, checks his money, and counts "but ten dollars in all." Hurstwood knows that many of his fellow lodgers beg but is horrified at the idea. Coming to his last fifty cents, Hurstwood goes out to look for work. He tries to get a position at a hotel and is given "scrub work" to do. However, his constitution is poor. One day, Hurstwood finds that he cannot lift the culinary boxes. The hotel physician discovers that Hurstwood is sick with pneumonia and sends him to Bellevue.

Even though he no longer has contact with Carrie, Hurstwood still views her as a sort of lifeline, a person he can turn to so he can keep off the streets. This shows that Hurstwood believes Carrie has a good enough nature to help him. His pride forbids him from begging, so he does menial work. However, Hurstwood is aging and his health is declining with his money. Consequently, he cannot stand the strain of physical work, especially as he has never done it before.

After being discharged in May, Hurstwood weighs "but one hundred and thirty-five pounds" and is told "to apply to the charities." Hurstwood goes back to the fifteen-cent lodging house and resorts to begging. One day, Hurstwood sees an announcement regarding Carrie's return to New York with the Casino Company. On a "severe run of ill-luck," he resolves to ask Carrie for "a few dollars." Hurstwood visits the Casino in hopes of meeting Carrie. However, he misses her in the merry theater-going crowd, especially as when Carrie arrives, she seems "so elegant and far away."

Hurstwood's appearance is now so different from before that he is unrecognizable. His appearance matches his station in life. The fact that Hurstwood decides to ask for money from Carrie shows that he has swallowed all his pride when it comes to her—he is willing to beg. Hurstwood has fallen so low in life that he is now unable to even get a glimpse of the woman he once called his lover..

At this time, "an ex-soldier turned religionist" takes to the streets, lining up homeless men and asking the wealthier pedestrians to give money for lodging. A weary Hurstwood joins this line, as "it was a simple way out of one difficulty." Hurstwood gets a place in a lodging house and exclaims to himself, "I've got to eat, or I'll die."

Hurstwood now only has the most basic needs: food and shelter. By lining up with the homeless men, Hurstwood demonstrates that he has abandoned all of his pride—he is now willing to resort to begging. He now relies on the charity of the world to get by.

CHAPTER 46 (STIRRING TROUBLED WATERS)

One day, while Carrie is playing in New York, Drouet comes to visit her backstage. He still exhibits an "exuberant good-nature" and the two chat pleasantly. Carrie sees that Drouet "[expects] to restore their old friendship at once and without modification." She turns down his invitation for dinner that day and "as sort of penance for error" invites him to dinner for the following day at the hotel.

Drouet no longer holds any resentment toward Carrie. Indeed, he seems to like her all the more because she is famous. Indeed, he is similar to the men who write Carrie passionate love letters—Carrie is all the more attractive to him because of her vocation. Carrie does not want to renew her acquaintance with Drouet; she invites him to dinner out of a sense of guilt, as she was the one who wronged him years ago.

The two enjoy a pleasant dinner the next day. After Drouet asks, Carrie relates to him that she no longer knows where Hurstwood is. Drouet tells a shocked Carrie regarding Hurstwood's thievery back in Chicago. Drouet begins to imagine that he is "winning Carrie to her old-time good-natured regard for him." Carrie, noticing this, becomes cold and excuses herself from the dinner, much to Drouet's dismay.

Carrie realizes the full extent of Hurstwood's nature through Drouet's revelation: Hurstwood never trusted her, not even when he claimed to love her. Drouet's delusion with regards to Carrie shows that he is optimistic yet foolish and inconsiderate as ever. He does not realize that he has no qualities that would make him appeal to Carrie as a partner.

The following night, Carrie encounters Hurstwood while walking to the theater, "[frightening] her" with his "shabby, baggy figure." He asks for money which Carrie readily gives. Hurstwood assures Carrie that he will return the money. Carrie makes "kindly inquiries," which Hurstwood "[resents]." Hurstwood then "[shuffles] off." For days, Hurstwood's appearance is a "drag on [Carrie's] soul."

Hurstwood frightens Carrie, indicating that his appearance has drastically changed since they last saw each other. The fact that Hurstwood resents Carrie's kind inquiries shows that he does not enjoy being condescended upon by the woman who was once his mistress, whom he financially and emotionally supported. Hurstwood's appearance is unsettling to Carrie because she still feels guilty about abandoning him—she did, after all, once believe herself to be in love with him.

Drouet calls on Carrie again, "but now he was not even seen by her." The show then transfers to London and Drouet realizes that "the old days [are] gone for good." Hurstwood spends his summer and fall working as a janitor, begging, and applying to charities. Carrie comes back in the winter but neither men go to see her.

Carrie has no wish to even be acquaintances with Drouet—she feels sorry for him but does not care for him in the least. Neither Hurstwood nor Drouet go to see Carrie because both have realized that she is beyond their reach.

Ames returns to New York, having "made a little success in the West." He meets with Carrie but "there was nothing responsive between them." Ames still thinks of Carrie as "united to Hurstwood." He sees Carrie's new play with Mrs. Vance and "[expresses] himself accordingly," saying that Carrie can "do better" than comedy.

Ames remains just as honorable as the first time that Carrie met him—believing her to be a married woman, he treats her with only platonic friendliness. Furthermore, unlike Drouet and Carrie's other suitors, he does not fawn over her simply because she is an actress. Indeed, he even has suggestions for Carrie regarding ways that she can improve her career.

Carrie and Ames meet one afternoon at the Vances'. Carrie feels that she is "now blessed with much of which he would approve." However, Ames's questions about Carrie's initial interest in "comedy-drama" leads her to realize that she "had failed" in his eyes. Later, the two meet again and share a moment listening to a "pathetic strain." Ames advises Carrie to go into "comedy-drama" and relates to her that because she has potential, she "must do something with it." That night, Carrie relates to Lola a desire to take a part in "a serious play."

Carrie initially thinks that by being an actress, she is worthy of admiration from superior men; however, she realizes that superior men are not interested in her fame and fortune. Ames still feels that she is artistically lacking, as Carrie performs in only popular works rather than meaningful works. Carrie is as attentive to Ames's suggestions as ever, indicating that she still views him as superior to herself. Carrie begins to look to the next best thing: to be a critically-acclaimed actress approved by men like Ames.

CHAPTER 47 (THE WAY OF THE BEATEN: A HARP IN THE WIND)

During the wintertime, Hurstwood spends his days waiting for food at charities. By January, Hurstwood concludes that "the game [is] up with him." In "his wretched clothing and meagre state of body," people were taking him "for a chronic type of bum." Hurstwood continues to beg.

Hurstwood falls to rock bottom in not only socioeconomic status but also in state of mind: he no longer carries any notion of hope for himself. He looks like someone who has been on the streets for all his life—no one would suspect that he was once wealthy and influential.

One day, while walking down Broadway, Hurstwood feels the painful contrast between his state and that of the pedestrians surrounding him. He then sees a large advertisement for the Casino with Carrie's name and face, and impulsively decides to go in the theater to see Carrie. The attendant of the theater pushes Hurstwood out. Infuriated and hopeless, he turns away, thinking, "she owes me something to ear."

The attendant pushes Hurstwood out because he looks like he cannot even afford to go to the theater. In other words, Hurstwood looks like a vagrant. His discomfort with regards to the "painful contrast" between his appearance and those of the pedestrians mirrors Carrie's discomfort while walking next to the fine ladies years ago in Chicago. While Carrie has achieved the American Dream, Hurstwood has fallen to the American nightmare.

At this time, Carrie is reading *Père Goriot*, a book that Ames has recommended to her. She realizes "how silly and worthless" her earlier reading was. Carrie and Lola briefly talk about the cold weather. Lola relates that she wants to "go sleigh riding" but Carrie is full of sympathy for "the people who haven't anything tonight."

Carrie is working toward her goal of becoming a woman that Ames would approve of—she reads canonical literature in order to improve her mind. Carrie's sympathy for the homeless people is ironic, given that her abandonment led Hurstwood to become homeless.

Meanwhile, Drouet is in the lobby of a hotel, planning to go to dinner with "a couple of girls" and "have a dandy time." Passing on a Pullman are Mrs. Hurstwood, Jessica, and Jessica's rich husband. The three are discussing what to do. Jessica is beautiful but "turned supercilious by fortune." She remains conscious of the attentions of "banker's son, also from Chicago," even in her husband's presence, and conjures a "show of indifference" when he passes by on the Pullman.

Drouet has not changed through the course of the novel—he is still a cheerful skirt chaser. Jessica and Mrs. Hurstwood have attained their goal of marrying Jessica off to a wealthy man. Jessica, unlike Carrie, has not fallen into the saving hands of a superior mind—she is now completely superficial and made more so by her wealth. Not all characters in the novel have changed like Carrie and Hurstwood.

Hurstwood is in a crowd near the lodging house, waiting for the building to open. The weather is brutally cold. After getting in and "[laying] down his fifteen cents," Hurstwood goes to his room, "a dingy affair—wooden, dusty, had." The room has a small gas jet. Hurstwood thinks for a while, then turns on the gas jet without lighting a match. He dies thinking, "What's the use?"

Hurstwood commits suicide not in a moment of painful despair, but in a moment of agonizing indifference. He no longer has the capacity to feel great emotions—by the time of his death, he is merely a shell of a man. Hurstwood's life, decline, and death show that in although it is easy to rise in America, it is also easy to fall.

Carrie, despite her success, feels lonely. She had drawn near to things she found beautiful but "time proved the representation false." The narrator relates that at every stage of life, Carrie had thought she would be happy at the next, but she never achieves happiness. She sees no more of Drouet and never learns of Hurstwood's death. Carrie is disillusioned. Indeed, "even had Hurstwood returned in his original beauty and glory, he could not now have allured her. The narrator reflects on the pointlessness of Carrie's pursuit, the "blind strivings" of her heart. She will always "dream [of] such happiness as [she] may never feel."

Carrie has lost all her innocence. She begins to realize that wealth and fame are useless when it comes to bringing her happiness—they can only provide her with the foundation for comfort. Romance is no longer of any import for Carrie—after Drouet and Hurstwood, she is thoroughly indifferent to men, save for, perhaps, Ames. Carrie's narrative has been one of disillusionment, which is ironic, considering that she has achieved the American Dream. Furthermore, the novel ends with Carrie utterly alone—she has no genuine love in her life. Happiness will always be out of Carrie's reach, because she will always remain dissatisfied by looking to the next best thing. The city has caused Carrie's soul to wither.

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