Carrie went into the house and closed the door behind her. Bright daylight disappeared and was replaced by brown shadows, coolness, and the oppressive smell of talcum powder. The only sound was the ticking of the Black Forest cuckoo clock in the living room. Momma had gotten the cuckoo clock with Green Stamps. Once, in the sixth grade, Carrie had set out to ask Momma if Green Stamps weren't sinful, but her nerve had failed her. She walked up the hall and put her coat in the closet. A luminous picture above the coathooks limned a ghostly Jesus hovering grimly over a family seated at the kitchen table. Beneath was the caption (also luminous): The Unseen Guest. She went into the living room and stood in the middle of the faded, starting-to-be-threadbare rug. She closed her eyes and
watched the little dots flash by in the darkness.

Her headache thumped queasily behind her temples. Alone. Momma worked on the speed ironer and folder down at the Blue Ribbon Laundry in Chamberlain Center. She had worked there since Carrie was five, when the compensation and insurance that had resulted from her father's accident had begun to run out. Her hours were from seven-thirty in the morning until four in the afternoon. The laundry was Godless. Momma had told her so many times. The foreman, Mr. Elton Mott, was especially Godless. Momma said that Satan had reserved a special blue corner of Hell for Elt, as he was called at the Blue Ribbon. Alone. She opened her eyes. The living room contained two chairs with straight backs. There was a sewing table with a light where Carrie sometimes made dresses in the evening while Momma tatted doilies and talked about The Coming. The Black Forest cuckoo clock was on the far wall. There were many religious pictures, but the one Carrie liked best was on the wall above her chair. It was Jesus leading lambs on a hill that was as green and smooth as the Riverside
golf course. The others were not as tranquil: Jesus turning the moneychangers from the temple, Moses throwing the Tablets down upon the worshipers of the golden calf, Thomas the doubter putting his hand in Christ's wounded side (oh, the horrified fascination of that one and the nightmares it had given her as a girl!), Noah's ark floating above the agonized, drowning sinners, Lot and his family fleeing the great burning of Sodom and Gomorrah. On a small deal table there were a lamp and a stack of tracts. The top pamphlet showed a sinner (his spiritual status was obvious from the agonized expression on his face) trying to crawl beneath a large boulder. The title blared: Neither shall the rock hide him ON THAT DAY!

But the room was actually dominated by a huge plaster crucifix on the far wall, fully four feet high. Momma had mail-ordered it special from St. Louis. The Jesus impaled upon it was frozen in a grotesque, muscle-straining rictus of pain, mouth drawn down in a groaning curve. His crown of thorns bled scarlet streams down temples and forehead. The eyes were turned up in a medieval expression of slanted agony. Both hands were also drenched with blood and the feet were nailed to a small plaster platform. This corpus had also given
Carrie endless nightmares in which the mutilated Christ chased her through dream corridors, holding a mallet and nails, begging her to take up her cross and follow Him. Just lately these dreams had evolved into something less understandable but more sinister. The object did not seem to be murder but something even more awful. Alone.

King, Stephen (2008-06-24). Carrie (p. 48). Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.