

Book Summary: The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne

by Allen Cheng

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1-Page Summary of The Secret

Overview

Adolf Verloc has been assigned by the Embassy to infiltrate the Red Committee in London. Mr. Vladimir, a high-ranking official at the Embassy, is displeased with his lack of progress and orders him to lead an attack on British society that will allow for repressive legislation.

Mr. Verloc lives with his wife and her brother in a store that sells shady items. He hosts some Red Committee members, who are quick to spout vainglorious statements but don't seem capable of accomplishing the task Mr. Vladimir has asked them to do.

On a later date, Ossipon meets with the Professor, an eccentric man who makes explosives. The article says that Verloc was killed by his own bomb.

After the meeting with Professor, Chief Inspector Heat runs into him on his way out of the building. He talks to Heat about what he's found at the bombing scene and leaves. After that, Heat meets with Assistant Commissioner and reveals his former relationship with Mr. Verloc. The Assistant Commissioner complains to Sir Ethelred about using secret agents like Mr. Verloc because they are dangerous for their organization as well as society in general.

In the past few weeks, Mr. Verloc has been in Europe and back; he's taken long walks with Stevie. Mrs. Verloc is glad to see her husband taking care of Stevie, who is like a son to her. However, on the day of the Bomb Outrage, Mr. Verloc comes home looking ill after trips from Vladimir and Heat about how he gave a bomb to Stevie for Greenwich Observatory but that it was dropped by accident before it could be planted there.

At first, Mrs. Verloc is shocked and doesn't say anything. However, she remembers how her husband has mistreated her over the years and stabs him to death with a knife. Terrified of being hanged for murder, she tries to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge into the water below but ends up running into Ossipon on his way home from work. She begs him to run away with her so they can escape together. When he sees Mr. Verloc's dead body at their house, however, he becomes confused and frightened that something terrible must have happened there and runs away without helping her get out of town before anyone finds out what happened or where she went. She later commits suicide on board a passenger ship as it crosses the English Channel because she knows no one will come looking for her in Europe.

Chapter I

In Summary

At half past ten in the morning, Adolf Verloc leaves his shop. He is a large man who runs a business that sells contraceptives and pornography. His wife, Winnie Verloc, is an attractive woman who shares some of her husband's attitudes towards life. Mrs. Verloc's mother used to run a boarding house until she married Mr. Verloc; she now lives with them and looks after Stevie—a young man who has been unable to hold down a job because he is mentally challenged and acts erratically at times. The narrator gives descriptions of these characters and their relationships together as well as other details about their background so they can be better understood later on in the story when things begin to happen between them all.

In this novel, the narrator quickly switches from Mr. Verloc's walk to his house to a description of both him and his wife. He also talks about Stevie, who is Mrs. Verloc's son. The narrator tells us that Mr. Verloc owns a shop in London where shady characters come by to buy things they can't get anywhere else because of their illegal nature (i.e., stolen goods). In addition, the reader learns that Mr. Verloc thinks about fog while he walks home from work each day; it becomes clear later on in the novel what he means when he thinks about this fog – which is an ominous foreshadowing device used by Conrad throughout the book.

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