

Name: _____

Chapter 8 Close Read

Directions: Read and annotate the following passage paying close attention to diction, imagery and details, and anything else that seems significant. Then, reread the passage and respond to the questions. Remember that through annotating and responding to these questions, you should be communicating significant analysis of the text, NOT merely summary.

Checklist:

- Reread the passage and **annotate** for DID
- Respond to questions

The receptionist surveyed me up and down, her face a windless puddle of water. She picked up some papers on her desk and shuffled them carefully in order, then removed an ink pen and flat marble penholder and placed them inside her desk drawer. She jiggled out a key from her pocket and locked it. Looking at me, her lips pressed and eyebrows like black lightning bolts, I couldn't tell whether she was embarrassed or angry.

When I got back to the restroom, Magda was on the floor, her muscles slack as water inside a balloon. I thought she was dead. The receptionist, who didn't seem panicky at all, stood straight over her with her arms and legs set in triangles. "She'll be all right," she said. "She's just weak, that's all. Once we get her inside the doctor will fix her right up." She tried to say this cheerfully, but when she saw my mother's face, she put her frown back on.

Mom stuck her hands under Magda's shoulders and lifted. "Let's go, honey, let's go see the doctor." Her hands kept sliding out from under Magda's armpits, she kept drooping back to the floor. "Manny, get over here and help me," she said. "We've got to get her inside the clinic." She turned to the receptionist and said in the politest voice she knew if she could please get a wheelchair.

"Okay, I will, but I'm sorry you won't be able to see the doctor right now."

My mother started to stand up but didn't. If she had, Magda's head would have whacked on the floor.

"It's only that the doctor can't see her right away," the receptionist explained. She had her eyes fixed on the scruff marks on the floor, blinking, her lips firm. "If you just go back to the waiting room, as soon as he's free, I'll call him, okay?"

Before Mom could answer, the receptionist snapped her eyes from the floor and rushed out, saying something I couldn't hear.

I was trying to get a hold under Magda's shoulders when the receptionist came back, slamming a wheelchair against the hydraulic door, making me jump from the sudden bang and hiss.

I guess the receptionist hadn't finished with her lecture about the doctor, because as soon as she came in, she started in on how all the doctors work nonstop ten hours a day, sometimes nights, how the whole staff are so dedicated. She knew, because she herself had typed up the duty rosters. She blew some more smoke about how people like us expect everything to be fed to them on silver spoons. How we never take responsibility. She said that's why we're so confused and screwed up. Only she didn't say "confused" and "screwed up," but said "neurotic" and another medical word I couldn't make out.

Mom's shoulders began twitching, and any minute I thought she was going to jump up and tear the lady's hair out. But she was too busy grabbing Magda under the arms and trying to prop the wheelchair, which kept slipping, against the door handle.

I was going to get up and tell the lady myself to leave, but just then Magda turned to me, and said my name, "Manny," real low and weak.

