

Outsider-Author Stephen King

In *The Outsider*, Stephen King delivers one of his most unsettling and compulsively readable stories.

An eleven-year-old boy's violated corpse is found in a town park. Eyewitnesses and fingerprints point unmistakably to one of Flint City's most popular citizens. He is Terry Maitland, Little League coach, English teacher, husband, and father of two girls. Detective Ralph Anderson, whose son Maitland once coached, orders a quick and very public arrest. The case seems ironclad, especially when Anderson and the district attorney are able to add DNA evidence to go with the fingerprints and witnesses. But Maitland has an alibi, and it turns out his story has incontrovertible evidence of its own.

How can two opposing stories be true? What happens to a family when an accusation of this magnitude is delivered? When must reason or rationality be abandoned in order to explain the inexplicable? As the investigation expands and horrifying answers begin to emerge, King's propulsive story kicks into high gear, generating strong tension and almost unbearable suspense. Terry Maitland seems like a nice guy, but is he wearing another face? When the answer comes, it will shock as only Stephen King can.

Book Club Questions

1. The beginning of the story starts off with interviews and what is happening at the present time. Did you like being introduced to the plot and several of the main characters this way?

2. Frank Peterson is the reason for the public arrest. Why doesn't King go into more detail about him?

3. Do you think Terry was guilty? If so, why? If not, why?

4. Should June Gibson have interfered with Fred Peterson's suicide?

5. What is your impression of Holly Gibney?

6. Okay, let's talk about Jack Hoskins. Why did the Outsider pick him?

7. Do you think Claude Bolton was chosen on purpose or do you think if the Outsider knew he was going to be in Texas, he would've picked someone else?

8. What do you think really happened to the boys that got lost in the Marysville Hole?

9. Guillermo Del Toro wrote the book, The Strain. The vampires in that book were full of little worms. Do you think King was paying homage to Del Toro by making the Outsider full of worms?

10. The Outsider seemed very interested to know if Holly had seen others like him. Why do you think?

11. At the end of this nightmare adventure, Holly and Ralph form a close bond. Do you think it will last?
