

Beat Sheet: The Tradition

- **Opening Image (Pages 1-2):** Flashback – Timothy witnesses John Porter's horrifying, inexplicable death in the warehouse. Establishes Timothy's core trauma and the story's unsettling tone.
- **Theme Stated (Page 5):** At John's funeral, Gloria says, "Life... snatched away. Cruelly. Meaningless. Cherish what you have. Keep your family safe." (Themes: Handling trauma, protecting family, randomness vs. fate).
- **Set-Up (Pages 1-6):** Timothy's visible trauma at the funeral; Rebecca's character introduced; the creepy leaflet ("YOU CAN'T ESCAPE") appears (Page 5); Timothy expresses the need for a fresh start (Page 5); montage shows packing and anxious departure from Salford (Page 6).
- **Catalyst (Pages 7-8):** The family takes the Fudgewick junction and arrives in the seemingly idyllic but deserted village. They have entered the story's main arena.
- **Debate (Pages 8-15):** Initial exploration and growing unease. Is this place charming or sinister? Encounters include the empty playground (Page 8), twitching curtains (Page 9), the bizarre neighbour interaction ("naked... tradition," Page 10), the single "welcome" letter (Page 11), the empty shop/honesty jar (Pages 12-13), the free pub (Pages 13-14). Timothy expresses direct suspicion ("Like... a trap," Page 15).
- **Break into Two (Act II Begins - Pages 18-20):** After deciding to leave (even temporarily), their first escape attempt fails. They drive out, the road loops, and they repeatedly encounter the Fudgewick sign (Page 19). Timothy confronts the reality: "Becks... I think we're trapped" (Page 20). They are now confirmed prisoners of Fudgewick.
- **B Story (Develops from Page 21 onwards):** The family dynamic under pressure – their relationship, their sanity, and their desperate attempts to protect Lizzie as the village's influence mounts.
- **Fun and Games (Promise of the Premise - Approx. Pages 21-26):** Experiencing the core horror of Fudgewick:
 - The village feels predatory on return (Page 21).
 - Living in fear, barricading doors (Page 21).
 - Explicit village phenomena: Pulsing balloon, violently moving swings (Page 22).
 - The house attacks: Spinning clock, rattling cups (Page 22), thudding upstairs (Page 24), warehouse sounds/John's death sounds manifesting *inside* (Page 24).
 - Trauma weaponized: The identical toothbrush appears inside the house (Page 24).

- Targeting Lizzie: Whispers via baby monitor, rotating toy, intense cold spot (Page 25).
- Rebecca's defiance emerges (Page 26).
- **Midpoint (Pages 26-27):** The intense psychic assault in the living room. The house is in full revolt (strobe lights, shaking furniture, time distortions). Timothy is trapped in vivid hallucinations of John's death; Rebecca is attacked with maternal terror (visions of Lizzie taken). This culminates in their dual, defiant turning point: Timothy rejects the guilt, Rebecca finds protective rage, momentarily disrupting the assault (Page 27). Stakes are at their highest, and they've shown they *can* resist, however briefly.
- **Bad Guys Close In (Approx. Pages 27-44):** The village's pressure becomes more insidious and encompassing:
 - Weary Resignation: Time passes, they stop trying to leave, settle into routines (Page 28-32).
 - Lizzie's Disturbing Adaptation (Age 4): She talks to "Mr. Mannequin," hums the village tune, recites the "tradition," has blank spells (Pages 33-34).
 - New Victims/Cycle Confirmed: Mark and Chloe arrive, mirroring the Crawfords (Pages 34-35).
 - Control Solidified: The Crawfords are physically/psychologically prevented by the village (via Lizzie and invisible forces) from warning the newcomers (Pages 35-36, 37-38).
 - Mark & Chloe Succumb: Montage shows the village targeting and breaking them down (Page 39).
 - Investigation & Revelation: Crawfords try to warn Mark & Chloe again, meet resistance/denial (Pages 40-41); Lizzie drawn to bandstand (Page 42); Timothy's map and Rebecca's locket discovery pinpoint the bandstand as the nexus (Pages 43-44). The "bad guys" (the entity) are making their move on Lizzie as the protagonists finally understand the source.
- **All Is Lost (Page 45):** The lowest point. Lizzie is lured from her bed at night by whispers, heading towards the bandstand. Rebecca finds her gone. The entity has taken direct action to claim their daughter.
- **Dark Night of the Soul (Pages 45-46):** The frantic race to the bandstand. Seeing Lizzie near the centre. Being confronted and physically blocked by the controlled Mark and Chloe chanting the "tradition." Facing the entity's power directly while Lizzie is seemingly under its control.
- **Break into Three (Act III Begins - Pages 46-47):** In the midst of the final confrontation: Timothy consciously overcomes the guilt vision ("It wasn't my fault," Page 47). Rebecca actively fights back against the fear visions with

protective rage ("GET AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER!", Page 47). They understand how to resist internally and decide to act physically.

- **Finale (Pages 47-49):**
 - They break past Mark/Chloe onto the bandstand (Page 47).
 - Lizzie disrupts the entity's control with her confused humming (Page 47-48).
 - Timothy, guided by the map, strikes the bandstand's central pillar (Page 48).
 - The entity's hold breaks (screech, balloon explodes, Mark/Chloe collapse, atmosphere clears, Page 48).
 - They see the real road out (Page 48).
 - Frantic escape in the car, successfully passing the Fudgewick sign (Pages 48-49).
- **Final Image (Page 49):** The car driving away into the darkness. They are physically free, but the final shots of the waiting village and the implication of their trauma signify the lasting impact.