

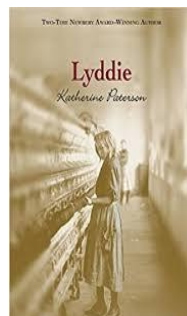
Name _____

Lyddie by Katherine Paterson

Date _____

Chapter 16

Directions: Close read excerpts and a summary of chapter 16 of our new novel, Lyddie by Katherine Paterson.



16

Fever

Although it pains her, Lyddie spends more than two weeks' wages buying new clothes and books for Rachel. Lyddie and Rachel are happy together. Work improves as well after Lyddie gives Brigid money to pay a doctor's bill. Brigid works hard so that she doesn't disappoint Lyddie at work.

Mr. Marsden was very pleased. By Thursday, he smiled across the room continually. Lyddie resolved not to glance his way, but she could see without looking the little rosebud mouth fixed in its prissy bow.

How hot the room seemed. Of course it was always hot and steamy, but somehow . . . Perhaps if she hadn't been burning up she could have kept her head, but she was so hot, so exhausted that Thursday in May, she wasn't prepared, she had

no defenses. He stopped her and made her wait until everyone had gone—just when she felt she must lie down or faint, he stopped her and put both his fat white hands heavily on either sleeve, dragging his weight on her arms. He was saying something as well, but her head was pounding and she couldn't make it out. What did he want with her? She had to go. She had to see Rachel. Her whole body was on fire. She needed a cool cloth for her head. And yet he kept holding on to her. She tried to stare him down, but her eyes were burning in their sockets. Let me go! She wanted to cry. She tried to pull back from him, but he clutched tighter. He was bringing his strange little mouth closer and closer to her fiery face.

She murmured something about not feeling well, but it made his eyes grow soft and his arm go all around her shoulder.

What made her do it? Illness? Desperation? She'd never know. But she raised her booted foot and stomped her heel down with all her might. He gave a cry, and, dropping his arms, doubled over. It was all the time she needed. She stumbled down the stairs and across the yard, nearly falling at last into the door of Number Five. He had not tried to follow.

She did not go to work the next day or for many days thereafter. Her fever raged, and she was out of her mind with it.