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Sommario/riassunto	The 1970s represented an unusually productive and innovative period for the horror film, & John Carpenter's <i>Halloween</i> (1978) is the film that capped that golden age - & some say ruined it, by ushering in the era of the slasher film. Considered a paradigm of low-budget ingenuity, its story of a seemingly unremarkable middle-American town becoming the site of violence on October 31 struck a chord within audiences. The film became a surprise hit that gave rise to a lucrative franchise. Much of its success stems from the simple but strong constructions of its three central characters: brainy, introverted teenager Laurie Strode, Dr Loomis, the driven, obsessive psychiatrist, & Michael Myers, the inexplicable, ghostlike masked killer. This text offers a bold & provocative study of Carpenter's film, which hopes to expose qualities that are sometime effaced by its sequels & remakes.