

Half Broke Horses: A True-Life Novel Study Guide

**Half Broke Horses: A True-Life Novel by Jeannette
Walls**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Half Broke Horses: A True-Life Novel Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Part 1.....	5
Part 2.....	7
Part 3.....	9
Part 4.....	11
Part 5.....	13
Part 6.....	16
Part 7.....	18
Part 8.....	20
Part 9; Epilogue.....	21
Characters.....	23
Objects/Places.....	26
Themes.....	29
Style.....	31
Quotes.....	34
Topics for Discussion.....	36



Plot Summary

"Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is a work of fiction touted as being a "true life novel." The main setting of "Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is located in western Texas. The Casey family lived on High Lonesome, a ranch in the heart of a difficult land. Lily describes the property: "When you looked out across the land, most everything you could see - the horizon, the river, the fence lines, the gullies, the scrub cedar - was spread out and flat, and the people, cattle, horses, lizards, and water all moved slowly, conserving themselves." (Part 1, p. 6).

The Caseys own 160 acres in west Texas, land used to raise carriage horses. The land was also known as the Salt Draw, resting alongside the Pecos River. The land was dry and hard. The region had its share of tornados and flash floods. The latter is recounted in Part 1 when Lily talks about the flash flood that nearly claimed the lives of the animals, Buster, Helen, and herself.

Lily Casey Smith was the main character in the story. Born in 1901 on Salt Draw, Lily quickly became her father's right hand when it came to training horses and dealing with the public. Adam Casey had also been kicked in the head by a horse at age three which left him with a speech impediment. People often mocked him for his slurred speech. Therefore, his speech in public was severely limited. It was up to Lily to be her father's voice.

From a young age, Lily was the kind of person who took charge. She took care of her siblings, broke horses, trained horses, and did every farm chore that needed to be done. There was nothing that Lily Casey couldn't do.

Lily would earn a position as a teacher without proper certification, move to Chicago, get married to a bigamist and promptly leave him, learn to drive a car, fly an airplane, and create an interesting and fulfilling life on her own ranch.

Lily's life was filled with turbulence often turned into opportunities. She landed several teaching jobs before she was certified. Lily also had run-ins with many different people - some of whom were trying to assert their manliness while others do not understand or appreciate Lily's outspoken ways. Lily got fired often.

After Lily's younger sister died by her own hand, Lily decided to get married and have a family of her own. She married Big Jim Smith, a mechanic almost 20 years her senior. The Smiths had a good marriage and produce two children, Rosemary and Little Jim. Both kids were a bit wild but Rosemary vexed her mother on a daily basis. Rosemary got thrown out of school, refused to learn or accept punishment or discipline, and was determined to do whatever she pleases despite protestations and consequences.

Throughout it all, the Smith family remained strong, withstanding drought, floods, and blizzards. They went through good times and financial ruin. In the end, Lily and Jim stayed together and lived their lives without compromises.

It was Lily Casey Smith's amazing life that caused her granddaughter, Jeannette Walls to forgo her original plans of writing a novel about her mother and to focus instead upon on her grandmother, a true pioneer.



Part 1

Part 1 Summary

Part 1, "Salt Draw," began with the tale of a flash flood that plagued High Lonesome, the home of the Casey family. The main character, Lily, was ten years old. She was outside with her little brother Buster, who was 9 years old, and their little sister, Helen, who was 7 years old. There was very little warning before the flood hits. Lily manages to set the animals free. Lily stated, "Those old cows knew trouble was coming before we did." (Part 1, p. 3).

Lily, Buster, and Helen make it to a large cottonwood tree just before the flood hits. They children are forced to spend the night in the tree. Lily used every trick that she knew to keep Buster and Helen awake and therefore preventing them from falling out of the tree and drowning. By morning the water recedes enough to allow the children to get down from the tree and make their way home. Lily's parents talked about a guardian angel that must have saved them from danger.

Lily said, "'There weren't no guardian angel Dad,' I said. I started explaining how I got us to the cottonwood tree in time, figuring out how to switch places when our arms got tired and keeping Buster and Helen awake through the long night by quizzing them."

Lily's father said that maybe the guardian angel is really Lily.

Lily had a large number of responsibilities on the ranch including collecting and selling the eggs, helping her mother and Lupe, supervising the children, and helping with the raising and training of the horses. Daisy, Lily's mother, often objected to Lily's work with the horses but her objections were shot down by Lily's father. He needed the help and Lily is good at it.

Flash floods were not the only problems the Casey's faced at the ranch. A tornado struck. While the house was not ruined by the tornado, a windmill was thrown onto the house roof, caving it in. It was time to leave High Lonesome and return to Hondo Valley. Fortunately, family heirlooms, and most of the animals were saved. Everything was packed up into the wagon and the family heads for New Mexico.

Part 1 Analysis

The first part was dedicated to introducing the family, including Lily Casey and Adam Casey, Lily's father.

Lily Casey was the main character in the story. Born in 1901 on Salt Draw, Lily quickly became her father's right hand when it came to training horses and dealing with the public. Adam Casey had also been kicked in the head by a horse at age three which left him with a speech impediment. People often mocked him for his slurred speech.



Therefore, his speech in public was severely limited. It was up to Lily to be her father's voice.

From a young age, Lily was the kind of person who took charge. She took care of her siblings, broke horses, trained horses, and did every farm chore that needed to be done. There was nothing that Lily Casey couldn't do.

Adam Casey was a man with big dreams and as Lily sometimes puts it, harebrained schemes. Casey was a well educated man, one that is devoted to learning as much as possible and passing that desire and knowledge onto his children, particularly Lily. Casey was an eloquent writer, known for penning long, precise soliloquies and letters to politicians and other public figures. Casey is highly political and somewhat intolerant. He was fascinated by things that are grandiose in nature. One of his fascinations included Billy the Kid, who Casey refers to as being a polite feller.

When Casey was a kid, he was a member of one of the first Anglo families in New Mexico. There were constantly fights and feuds between the settlers. Casey's father, Robert, was killed during one of those fights, leaving Casey to run the ranch until he was accused of murdering one of the settlers in a similar argument. Casey fled to Texas after being set free from prison.

Casey had some ailments that impeded his life. He had a gimp leg. Casey had also been kicked in the head by a horse at age three which left him with a speech impediment. People often mocked him for his slurred speech. This impediment fueled Casey's desire to be able to communicate through the written word.

Life on the Casey Ranch was hard. Lily was expected to do far more than her fair share and it is clear that her parents relied on her intelligence and strength. This was particularly true of Adam. While he wanted Lily to succeed, he wanted her to do it at the ranch under his watchful eye.



Part 2

Part 2 Summary

Part 2, "The Miraculous Staircase," began with the Casey family arriving in Hondo Valley, New Mexico. They saw a mirage in the distance. In the sky is an inverted image of the town of Tinnie, six miles away. Lupe made a sign of the cross. Adam explained the mirage.

The life of the Caseys was about to change. The KC Ranch was much larger than the one at High Lonesome. There was more land to contend with and care for which meant more land for the horses but it also meant more work.

Due to Adam's speech impediment, it became Lily's job to hire and oversee migrant workers and farm hands. Lily was only 11 years old.

Although Adam had a great deal of work and responsibility on his hands, there is always time for his flights of fancy. Among these was writing a biography of Billy the Kid. Lily took her father's dreams with a grain of salt. She said, "I sat there, ignoring Dad's prattle about harebrained schemes." (Part 2, p. 44).

Buster was sent off to school at age ten. Lily had been promised an education for years. Finally, she was going to be sent to The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Adam and Lily set off for Santa Fe, a 200 mile ride from the ranch. Lily fell in love with Santa Fe.

One of the first things that Lily and Adam saw in Santa Fe was the Miraculous Staircase. The staircase had 33 steps with no visible support. The staircase had been built by a mysterious, nameless carpenter after the nuns realized they had no staircase and prayed for intervention.

Lily liked Mother Albertina, the Mother Superior of The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light. The woman was stern but fair and always on the move. She had a calming presence. The thing that Lily liked the most about Mother Albertina was that she treated everyone the same despite ethnicity or socio-economic status.

Lily did well at the convent school. Mother Albertina told Lily that she should become a teacher. Mother Albertina explained to Lily that she could do anything that she wanted to do, whether or not that included a husband. Lily talked about becoming a nun. Mother Albertina said that unless Lily has the calling, becoming a nun would be a mistake. Even when it became clear that becoming a novitiate is the only way Lily can stay at the convent, she knew that it was not the right thing for her. Lily must return to KC Ranch.

Adam did not go to Santa Fe to get Lily. Instead Lily must take the stagecoach. When Lily met her father, she learned that her tuition had been spent on purchasing Great



Danes, which the family will breed. Lily learned that Buster was still in school because a boy must have a diploma.

The Caseys take on tenant farmers. The Clemenses were extremely poor. Lily liked their daughter Dorothy, who was capable and a hard worker.

There was the beginning of a feud when Old Man Puckett kills the Caseys Great Danes. Puckett claimed that the dogs were on his property and he feared that they would kill his horses. Lily and her father go to court to demand restitution. The family received restitution in the form of several half-broke horses. One of the horses was a mare Lily names Patches. The two would become nearly inseparable.

Mother Albertina sent a letter to Lily. Due to the war, there was a shortage of teachers. If Lily could pass the certification test, she could teach despite her lack of education. After much discussion, it was determined that Lily would take the test.

Part 2 Analysis

Lily is growing up. It is clear that her father wants to keep her on the ranch. Denying Lily an education went against what the girl had been taught but Adam did not want to let Lily leave. It was only through Lily's perseverance that she manages to get to the convent. This is clearly a male-dominant society where women need to know very little. It was only important that women know the most basic things in life, including how to keep a house and raise a family. Daisy, Lily's mother, feared that her daughter will not marry.

Lily did well in school. She worked hard and the education that she had to date paid off. When Lily learned that she must return to the ranch, she was devastated. The only way to stay without having to pay tuition was to become a novitiate. Mother Albertina showed wisdom in advising against such a drastic move. Becoming a nun was not in the cards for Lily.

Spending Lily's tuition on the Great Danes seemed logical to Adam but was hurtful and insulting to Lily. She knew that it was merely an excuse to keep her on the ranch. Later, when Lily had the opportunity to take the teacher's exam, her father had little room to argue. Lily knew that the ranch would never belong to her. She needed to make a life of her own.

Part 3

Part 3 Summary

In Part 3, "Promises," Lily got her teacher's certificate. The test was easier than Lily had expected and her education paid off once again. While Adam was not happy that Lily would be away from the ranch, he had no valid argument to keep her there.

For the next four years, Lily traveled from town to town, teaching children of all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds, and abilities. Lily loved her job. The superintendent was rarely at the school, leaving Lily to teach how she wanted. Lily learned that every child could be taught, it simply took a while to learn the trick of teaching those that do not learn in a conventional manner. Lily was a strict teacher but the students and parents liked her.

When the war ended, Lily's job ended. The women whose husbands went off to war were being laid off from the factories and wanted their jobs back. These women had more experience and education than Lily, so they were preferred stock. Lily returned to KC Ranch once more.

It had been a long time since Lily had been home. She was pleased to see that the ranch is in good repair. The fences were mended, the buildings had been whitewashed and everything was neat and tidy. Lupe greeted Lily with a whoop, alerting the rest of the family. Lily was glad to be home. The ranch was in good shape, thanks in part to Dorothy. Dorothy and Buster had married the previous year. It seemed that Dorothy had taken over the household, much as Lily might have if she had stayed on the ranch.

Lily went back to her routine for a while. Lily finally decided that she needs to break out on her own. Lily felt that she was not needed on the ranch. She decided to go to Chicago where an unmarried woman could find satisfying work.

Lily made her way to Chicago. She had a difficult time finding work at first. Eventually, Lily took on work as a maid. It was not her ideal job and she had a difficult time being subservient. Lily met Minnie, a girl who would become her first genuine friend. Minnie died in a factory accident.

Lily met Ted Conover, an Electrolux sweeper salesman. Ted swept Lily off her feet and the two marry. Lily and Ted lived in a boarding house for couples. They planned for a bright future and scrimped and saved to ensure that their dreams would come true. Ted works out of town which was fine with Lily, who was busy getting an education and working.

Lily was hit by a car on the street. The man who hit Lily insisted that she go to the hospital and call Ted. Lily objected but finally gave in. When Lily called Ted's office, she learned that not only did Ted work in the city, he was also married to a woman named Margaret. Lily was stunned. She confirmed this story. Lily confronted Ted in his office.

She attempted to pawn her engagement ring, which she learned was a fake. Lily arranged for an annulment and left Chicago.

Part 3 Analysis

Lily took a few hard blows in this section. After four years of being a teacher throughout the western U.S. Lily was told that there is no longer a place for her in the system. The women and soldiers were returning and although Lily had performed well, the women had more experience and education. Lily was wounded and upset. In Lily's mind, the superintendent had discounted her and her work. Lily had no choice but to return home.

Upon returning to KC ranch, Lily sees that she is no longer needed. This is another blow to her ego. Dorothy had all but taken over the ranch, just as Lily might have done. Lily saw this as a good thing, however, because Dorothy was good at her job. Besides, the ranch would be inherited by Buster and Dorothy when Adam and Daisy died. Lily needed to make a life of her own.

Lily was used by Ted. That was the most devastating blow thus far. Still, Lily's pride and determination were stronger than Ted's betrayal. Lily told Ted that he did not have the power to destroy her.



Part 4

Part 4 Summary

Part 4, "Red Silk Shirt," began with Lily's return to KC Ranch. It had been several years since Lily had been home. Buster and Dorothy had two children in Lily's absence. Lily was excited to see Patches, who was now 17 years old. The two bonded quickly. Lily easily fell into her old routine of farm chores. Lily's main concern at this point was Helen.

Once again, Lily realizes that she had changed and living on the ranch no longer held the same appeal as it once did. The family expected Lily to leave again. Lily left for Flagstaff earlier than planned.

Lily fell in love with college. Being older, she was not distracted by drinking and boys. Lily took every class she can handle, read every book, and got the most from the entire experience. Part way through her tenure, Lily began to have concerns about money. Lily was approached by the superintendent who offered her a teaching job even though she did not have her degree. Lily accepted.

Lily returned to KC Ranch to get Patches. The trek was a familiar one but Patches was old and it took a while to get her into shape again.

Lily was happy to be back in Red Lake. She was assigned 36 students of all ages, sizes, and abilities. Lily was a good teacher; a strict teacher. People respected her. At the end of the week, when Lily went to collect her paycheck, she was challenged by two men. The men told her that she needed to pass a test before collecting her check. Lily had to ride a "gentle" little mustang in the corral. Lily said that she was not dressed for riding but would give it a try. The men laughed at Lily. The men stopped laughing when Lily easily broke the wild mustang.

It wasn't long before Lily befriended the men, especially Orville Stubbs, aka Rooster. Rooster eventually became Lily's "secret student" and learned how to read and write.

Lily became a regular at one of the local bars. She played poker. Lily also began to race horses, notably the little mustang she broke to gain her paycheck. Lily became famous for her red silk shirt.

Lily was introduced to Big Jim Smith. Jim was the owner of a local garage. Lily told Jim about her fascination with cars. Jim taught Lily to drive. It was not long before Jim began to court Lily despite a significant age difference.

Lily received letters from Helen in Hollywood. Helen had not been successful in the movie business, however, each week she met a new Mr. Wonderful. Lily expressed concerns about Helen's virtue. Lily received a letter from Helen stating that she was pregnant. Mr. Wonderful wanted Helen to have a back alley abortion but Helen was scared. Lily told Helen not to do it. Helen arrived in Red Lake to stay with Lily.



Helen's demeanor improved. She slept a lot and Lily tried to ensure that Helen got sunshine and exercise. Lily was disappointed when Helen showed no interest in Rooster.

Helen and Lily began to go to a local Catholic Church. The Father told Helen that her mortal soul was in danger.

The townspeople learned about Helen's situation. People began to treat Helen and Lily differently. The superintendent told Lily that if she wanted to keep her job, Helen will have to leave. Helen heard the conversation and is distraught. Helen commits suicide.

Helen was not permitted to be buried in the Catholic cemetery. Jim and Lily buried Helen on top of a hill. Helen wore Lily's red silk shirt.

Part 4 Analysis

In this section, Lily took control of her situation once more. While she loved college, being able to teach classes and make money while doing it made more sense to Lily. Lily was a pragmatic woman. Showing up the men at the corral was a bonus for Lily. She does not gloat, which is another thing that wins the men over.

Lily appreciated that in Red Lake a woman can have her moniker and still be a respected woman. Lily befriended Rooster but made it clear that she had no intention of marrying again. This decision held even though it became clear that Jim Smith was courting Lily. Lily liked Jim and the easy company. He was exactly the opposite of Ted.

Lily tried to step in to save Helen once more. Small towns were known for gossip and it did not take long for word of Helen's condition to travel. Despite Lily's reassurances that they would find a solution to Helen's problem, Helen's life-long battle with melancholy and unrealistic dreams won over.



Part 5

Part 5 Summary

Part 5, "Lambs," began with Lily's thoughts on suicide: "When people kill themselves, they think they're ending the pain, but all they're doing is passing it on to those they leave behind." (Part 5, p. 113).

Lily was consumed by grief over Helen's death. Everything annoys her, even the children she teaches. If it wasn't for the children Lily says she would stay home but she has a duty to fulfill. The thought of Helen's baby also consumes Lily. For the first time, Lily decides that she wants to have a child. Lily proposes to Jim Smith. Lily tells Jim that her only criteria include being partners in the marriage and that Jim, as a Mormon, will not take another wife. Jim says he believes Lily is all he could ever handle. The couple marries in the schoolhouse. Lily is 29 years old.

The couple moved to Ash Fork, a nearby town. Jim opens a new garage and the couple builds a home. The house has indoor plumbing, which seems almost miraculous to Lily. Lily got pregnant.

Over the next couple of years, Jim and Lily had two children - Rosemary and Little Jim. Rosemary was a great deal like Lily and had a bit of a wild streak.

The Great Depression continued and finally hit Arizona hard. Lily began to worry about the family's financial status as more money was going out than coming in. Lily was approached by Mr. Lee, a Chinaman bootlegger who was also a friend of Jim's. Mr. Lee and Lily struck up a deal that Lily would begin to sell bootleg whiskey out of the house: "It was because I was a mother with two kids, I said, as well as a respected former schoolteacher, that the revenuers would never suspect me." (Part 5, p. 121).

The business was very successful and eased the family's burden. One night a man came to the house and Lily refused to sell whiskey to him. The man threatened to call the police. The police showed up at the house but Lily was able to persuade them that the report is completely false. Although the operation was safe, Jim said that he would rather be broke than have his wife behind bars. Lily closed up shop.

Jim and Lily watched as many of their neighbors and friends began to lose their ranches.

Lily and Jim were barely holding on to their land and home. A few months later, the bank foreclosed on the property. Lily and Jim decided to sell everything off at an auction and head to California where there were still jobs to be had.

There was an incident with lambs at the Carmel Brothers' ranch. The lambs get separated from their mothers and complete chaos ensues. No matter what the brothers and their ranch hands try to do, the lambs and mothers cannot find each other. Lily told



them to get Jim because he would know what to do. Jim solved the problem and gained the eternal thanks of the Carmel Brothers.

One of the brothers told Jim that they were selling the ranch to some British investors. Jim was recommended to run the ranch. Lily and Jim called off the auction and settle in at the Arizona Incorporated Cattle Ranch, aka AIC. While Jim and Lily's future was secure for now, others were not so lucky.

"With the Depression still going strong, owners like that - as well as plenty of owners who did know a thing or two about ranching - were going out of business." (Part 5, p. 140).

Lily struggled with Rosemary who is 100% tomboy. The girl was always getting hurt and putting herself into dangerous situations. Jim claimed that it was just her personality. Lily was determined to teach Rosemary and calm her wild nature.

Lily decided that she cannot do everything at the ranch without additional help. Jim was busy taking care of the massive property and had little help as well. Lily decides that she would forgo laundry and housework until it could be put off no longer.

The rains came but were soon followed by a terrible drought. Jim proposed building a dam for when the next rains come. The idea was brilliant and works well. There was a struggle to save the dam from a flash flood but it was saved.

Part 5 Analysis

Lily's moxie became apparent in this chapter. Although she struggled with Helen's death a great deal, Lily managed to pull through. Lily is angry with Helen but more distraught because she was not able to help her baby sister. The reactions of the townspeople only made it worse since they seemed to be unwilling to show any compassion to the woman that they had adored not so long ago. The worst part of the scenario came later when the irate man told Lily that she was nothing more than the sister of a dead whore.

The thought of having a baby seemed to save Lily from her grief. Jim Smith was thrilled but surprised when Lily proposed.

Building a future seemed to be Lily's forte. She showed great ability to think ahead and to dig in to do the work. With Jim by her side, Lily seemed to be the perfect person to operate a business, make money, and run a ranch.

Jim was a good fit for Lily despite his age. Jim was calm and even tempered. Lily cannot help but compare Jim to her "crumb bum" husband Ted and know that she made the right choice.

It was humorous and ironic that Rosemary was a lot like Lily. This might count for some of Lily's impatience and intolerance of her daughter's actions.

Jim and Lily refused to be destroyed by the Depression. The incident with the lambs proved to be fortuitous and saved the couple from orange picking in California.



Part 6

Part 6 Summary

Part 6, "Teacher Lady" begins with the purchase of Hackberry, a nearby ranch. The AIC is now comprised of 180,000 acres. It takes a week to ride the property. Jim is often gone for days at a time with Rosemary in tow.

Jim and Lily move into the house at Hackberry. For the first time Lily decorates the house with bright colors. Lily falls in love with the house and wants to buy it. However, neither Lily nor Jim is willing to get a loan and go into debt. Lily devises a plan to save as much money as possible and to purchase the house outright within ten years.

Lily gets a bit extreme with her frugal ways.

One day, Lily sees a sign for flying lessons. She asks Jim to stop. The pilot, Goggles, balks at giving a flying lesson to a woman.

"'Don't you 'little lady' me,' I said. 'I break horses. I brand steers. I run a ranch with a couple dozen crazy cowboys on it, and I can beat them all in poker. I'll be damned if some nincompoop is going to stand there and tell me that I don't have what it takes to fly that dinky heap of tin.'" Part 6, p. 161

Goggles was impressed by Lily. Rosemary asked about the expensive lessons because she knew that the family must save money. Lily explained that she wanted to get her pilot's license. A bush pilot can make a lot of money. It was not frivolous, she told Rosemary. It was an investment.

Lily decided to go back to teaching. She took Rosemary and Little Jim with her to Arizona Strip. Lily enrolled the children in school. Lily made it clear that there would be no favoritism.

Lily had a run in with Uncle Eli, a powerful figure in the Mormon's polygamist community. Lily believed in teaching the children about the outside world, not just straight academic studies like math. This enraged Uncle Eli. Uncle Eli begins to spy on the "Teacher Lady." Lily covered the schoolroom windows. Uncle Eli was persistent. When Lily caught Uncle Eli skulking around the school, she fired at him with a shotgun. Lily's contract was not renewed at the end of the school year.

Lily decided to take a summer job. The job paid well. There were actually three jobs available - teacher, janitor, and school bus driver. Lily took all three jobs. She purchased a hearse and used it as a school bus. Her days were long and strenuous but Lily was determined. Lily also decided that it made no sense to let the hearse sit unused on the weekends, so she also started a taxi service. There was a humorous incident with three ladies from Brooklyn and a car accident with the hearse.



The ladies in Brooklyn convinced Lily that Rosemary and Jim need to learn about Santa Claus. The children would have none of it.

The next person that caused trouble for Lily is Deputy Johnson. The deputy and his wife have four sons, each wilder than the next. Because the boys are the son of a deputy, they feel they can get away with anything and do. They torment people, vandalize, steal, and do everything possible to get into trouble. When Lily tried to discipline one of the boys, Deputy Johnson confronted her. Lily was fired once again.

At the end of the school year, Lily learned that "Gone with the Wind" was premiering in town. The tickets were extremely expensive but "Gone with the Wind" is Lily's favorite book. She made a gown from red velvet curtains, a la Scarlett O'Hara. As she stepped from the car, a photographer took her photo with Deputy Johnson looking on in the crowd. Lily had the last laugh.

Part 6 Analysis

At times Lily's temper and her ideals got the better of her. Although she acted rashly at times, Lily always felt justified and said that she would do the same things over again. In the case of Uncle Eli, Lily explained that she was protecting herself and the children. In the case of Deputy Johnson, it was clear that the boys needed to be reined in but it was also clear that Lily would not be the one to do it. Certainly the boys would grow up to be even bigger bullies and corrupt citizens, protected by their father, which made him equally as guilty.

Again, Lily was not to be dissuaded. She wanted to buy Hackberry more than anything and needed money. Jim ran the ranch while Lily was away with help of a cook. Times were hard but Lily and Jim made the most of it. Meanwhile, the children learned about perseverance and fortitude.



Part 7

Part 7 Summary

Part 7, "The Garden of Eden," began with Lily going back to teaching once more. She told the children not to make friends with other school kids because she wanted to discourage any type of favoritism. Making friends at home was a different story.

The kids love to hike, ride horses, and race trains. They were the rough and tumble kind. One day Lily and Rosemary were out in the car and got stuck in the mud. Rosemary is impressed when Lily caught a wild half broke mare. They rode home. Rosemary wanted to keep the mare but Lily says it has to be set free.

Lily and Jim decided to send the kids to boarding school. Both kids hated it. Little Jim ran away as often as he could manage and was given the name "Little Houdini." Rosemary was crass and undisciplined. The Mother Superior wanted her to leave after the first year but Lily managed to convince the school to keep her. The second year was worse and Rosemary was not allowed to return.

Lily finally got her degree and a new job. World War II wreaked havoc on everyone's lives, often making difficult situations worse for the Smith family.

Adam contacted Lily and said that he was dying. Lily and Rosemary begged and borrowed to get enough gas to travel to Tucson to rescue him from an old age home. Adam died the night after Lily and Rosemary arrive. They took Adam back to KC Ranch to be buried. Lily learned that Salt Draw had been left to her. After weighing the options, Lily decided to keep Salt Draw.

Rosemary's compassionate heart continued to get the best of her. She wanted to stop the killing of the Japanese and wanted to set free all animals despite the outcome. Rosemary got into trouble for letting cows go free.

Rosemary developed a crush on Fidel Hanna, a member of the Havasupai tribe. Lily kept a close eye on her wild daughter. Rosemary said that she wanted to learn to slaughter a cow to prove that she could run a ranch. It was clear that Rosemary is not a rancher.

The Arizona Department of Education contacted Lily. The women representing the department wanted to investigate the conditions of the Havasupai tribe to make sure the children were being educated and the conditions were sanitary. The Havasupai wanted no part of it. Lily became angry when Fidel arrived wearing war paint. The trip was a total disaster. Rosemary was caught swimming in her underwear with a group of boys that had gone skinny dipping. Rosemary got a beating from Lily. It was decided that Fidel would not return to the ranch.

The children were sent to boarding school once more. The school year was no more successful than the last. Lily was frustrated.

Jim was contacted by the people at AIC. They were going to sell the ranch to investors. Jim and Lily met Boots and Gaiters. Gaiters had worked with John Wayne and wanted the ranch to be a sort of Hollywood getaway as well as a working ranch. They fired Jim and Old Jake, referring to them as "Old geezers." Lily and Jim gave up everything and move to Phoenix.

Part 7 Analysis

Lily became more and more frustrated. Although she and Jim managed to keep themselves out of financial binds, they had lost Hackberry. The biggest concern, however, was the children. Both hated school, unlike their mother. Rosemary was the worst. She was becoming wilder by the day. Lily began to believe that she had finally met the one child she could not teach.



Part 8

Part 8 Summary

Part 8, "Gumshoes," began with Lily and Jim getting dentures. Lily was so pleased with her dentures that she showed them off at every opportunity. Lily began to splurge on things that others might view as necessities. Lily and Jim bought a house, a dining room table, and a car to replace the hearse. Little Jim and Rosemary hated Phoenix. Both wanted to be back on the ranch.

Lily continued to work toward her pilot's license. Jim got a new job in a warehouse. Rosemary was fully focused on her art. For the first time, Lily suggested that Rosemary try modeling or beauty pageants. Rosemary had the looks for it but not the demeanor.

Lily got in trouble for having a gun at school. Lily began to hate Phoenix.

Jim was called out to help during a major blizzard. When he arrived back home two weeks later, he was pale, gaunt, and exhausted. He was also happy.

Showtime Ranch, formerly the AIC, was in need of a new manager. Jim was offered the job. Both Jim and Lily knew that it would mean working for Gaiters. Jim refused the offer.

Lily discovered that there was a floozy that works in Jim's office. She began to wonder if Jim was faithful. Everyone knew Lily, so Lily persuaded Rosemary to spy on Jim. Jim was innocent of any wrong doing. He and Lily realized that it was time to leave Phoenix.

Part 8 Analysis

The shiny newness of Phoenix did not last long. Lily loved the modern conveniences but not the bureaucracy of the school. The new house was a palace in Lily's eyes and the cafeterias in town are a real pleasure. The discord between Lily, Jim and their jobs proved that neither was cut out for city life.

The offer from Gaiters was unexpected even though Jim gained a great deal of respect after the blizzard. Neither Jim nor Lily were willing to be anyone's servant ever again.



Part 9; Epilogue

Part 9; Epilogue Summary

Part 9, "The Flyboy," described the tale of Rex Walls and Rosemary.

Lily and Jim moved to Horse Mesa, a beautiful ranch. Jim was hired to haul gravel and Lily returned to teaching. There was a one-room school house so Lily could teach the way she was always meant to teach without the bureaucrats hanging over her shoulder.

Lily began to become involved in politics. She became the Democratic precinct captain on Horse Mesa and registered all 13 families in Horse Mesa to vote. Lily and Jim also took up hunting for uranium.

Little Jim and Rosemary were enrolled in Arizona State University. Rosemary insisted on studying art. Lily said that Rosemary can study art but insisted that she major in education and got a teaching degree. After the first year in college, Little Jim met Diane. Little Jim dropped out of school, got married, and became a police officer.

Lily worried constantly about Rosemary. Men proposed to Rosemary on a regular basis. Lily thought about Helen and tried to isolate Rosemary as much as possible. Lily had even more cause to worry when Rosemary met Rex Walls.

Rex Walls was a wild card. However, he was determined to marry Rosemary. Nothing Lily could say would deter Rosemary from marrying Rex. Rex was a loud mouth who drank too much, was clearly not a good candidate for a husband, and had no solid plans for a future. Rex did what he could to impress Jim and Lily but failed. Rosemary, however, was smitten.

Rex decided that he needed to win over Lily so he took her flying. It was illegal to take a civilian up in an Air Force craft but it is done often. Lily was happy about the flying since it had been years since she has flown. Lily was still not sold on Rex and continues to try to talk Rosemary out of marriage. Rosemary, however, has a comeback for every one of her mother's objections. Rosemary insisted that she and Rex did not need a plan, or a future or a home. It seemed that Granny's predictions were right - Rosemary was a wanderer.

Lily finally gave in. She said that she would pay for the wedding if Rosemary and Rex got married in the local Catholic Church. There was a big reception held afterward at a newly constructed hotel in town.

Little Jim and Diane lived in the house on North Third Street in Phoenix. Lily and Jim remained on Horse Mesa where they would retire.

Epilogue:



Rex and Rosemary had three daughters, the second of whom died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome before she turned a year old. The third daughter was Jeannette, the author. Lily was grateful that Jeannette was not a stunning beauty like her mother or Helen. She was an interesting character. Lily assured the reader that the grandchildren would know her. Rosemary and Rex continued to be somewhat wild. Lily said that it was all right, though, because she had every intention of being around to watch over everything.

Part 9; Epilogue Analysis

Lily gave up trying to teach Rosemary and make her submit to her will. It seems that Rosemary is a lot like Lily, save for her love of education. Although it seemed that Rosemary was determined to run her life the way she saw fit and Jim was accepting of it, Lily was equally determined to be watching over her daughter's shoulder.



Characters

Lily Casey Smith

Lily Casey Smith was the main character in the story. Born in 1901 on Salt Draw, Lily quickly became her father's right hand when it came to training horses and dealing with the public. Adam Casey had also been kicked in the head by a horse at age three which left him with a speech impediment. People often mocked him for his slurred speech. Therefore, his speech in public was severely limited. It was up to Lily to be her father's voice.

From a young age, Lily was the kind of person who took charge. She took care of her siblings, broke horses, trained horses, and did every farm chore that needed to be done. There was nothing that Lily Casey couldn't do. The first major accomplishment - although not a big deal in Lily's eyes - was to travel 500 miles across the desert at age 15 to attend school at The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The family worried about Lily but knew she was capable. That step was the first of many that would lead to a remarkable life.

Lily would earn a position as a teacher without proper certification, move to Chicago, get married to a bigamist and promptly leave him, learn to drive a car, fly an airplane, and create an interesting and fulfilling life on her own ranch. It was Lily Casey Smith's amazing life that caused her granddaughter, Jeannette Walls to forgo her original plans of writing a novel about her mother and to focus on her grandmother, a true pioneer.

Adam Casey

Mr. Adam Casey was Lily's father. He was also father to Buster and Helen. Mr. Casey's first name was rarely used. He was a man with big dreams and as Lily sometimes puts it, harebrained schemes. Casey was a well educated man, one that was devoted to learning as much as possible and passing that desire and knowledge onto his children, particularly Lily. Casey was an eloquent writer, known for penning long, precise soliloquies and letters to politicians and other public figures. Casey was highly political and somewhat intolerant. He was fascinated by things that are grandiose in nature. One of his fascinations included Billy the Kid, who Casey refers to as being a polite feller.

When Casey was a kid, he was a member of one of the first Anglo families in New Mexico. There were constantly fights and feuds between the settlers. Casey's father, Robert, was killed during one of those fights, leaving Casey to run the ranch until he was accused of murdering one of the settlers in a similar argument. Casey fled to Texas after being set free from prison.

Casey had some ailments that impeded his life. He had a gimp leg. Casey had also been kicked in the head by a horse at the age of three, which left him with a speech



impediment. People often mocked him for his slurred speech. This impediment fueled Casey's desire to be able to communicate through the written word.

Mother Albertina

Mother Albertina was the Mother Superior of the Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Mother Albertina also served as Lily's mentor.

Ted Conover

Ted Conover was the man that Lily married in Chicago. Ted, an Electrolux sweeper salesman, turned out to be a bigamist, liar, and cheat. Lily left him and returned to the ranch.

Helen Casey

Helen Casey was the youngest of the Casey children. She was somewhat delicate and not a hard worker like Lily. Helen went to Hollywood to get discovered. She ended up getting pregnant and committing suicide.

Buster Casey

Buster Casey was the middle child and only son in the Casey family. Buster's only real ambition was to take over the ranch some day. He had an eighth grade education. Buster was married to Dorothy Clemens.

Dorothy Clemens Casey

Dorothy Clemens Casey was the daughter of the tenant farmers on the Casey farm. She was a lot like Lily in that she was highly capable and not afraid of hard work. Dorothy was married to Buster Casey.

Daisy Casey

Daisy Casey was mother to Lily, Buster, and Helen. She was married to Adam Casey.

Lupe

Lupe was a woman that lives on the KC Ranch. She helped the family with running the ranch.

Apache

Apache was an old man that lives on the KC Ranch. Apache had been on the ranch for many years and helped the Caseys with the work.

Jim Smith

Jim Smith was Lily's husband and the co-owner of the family ranch.



Objects/Places

Salt Draw

The main setting of "Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is located in western Texas. The Casey family lived on High Lonesome, a ranch in the heart of a difficult land. Lily describes the property: "When you looked out across the land, most everything you could see - the horizon, the river, the fence lines, the gullies, the scrub cedar - was spread out and flat, and the people, cattle, horses, lizards, and water all moved slowly, conserving themselves." (Part 1, p. 6).

The Caseys own 160 acres in west Texas; land used to raise carriage horses. The land was also known as the Salt Draw, resting alongside the Pecos River. The land was dry and hard. The region had its share of tornadoes and flash floods. The latter is recounted in Part 1 when Lily talks about the flash flood that nearly claimed the lives of the animals as well as herself, Buster and Helen.

Part 1, "Salt Draw," begins with the tale of a flash flood that plagued High Lonesome, the home of the Casey family. The main character, Lily, is ten years old. She is outside with her little brother Buster, who is 9 years old, and their little sister, Helen, who is 7 years old. There is very little warning before the flood hits. Lily manages to set the animals free. Lily states, "Those old cows knew trouble was coming before we did." (Part 1, p. 3).

Lily, Buster, and Helen make it to a large cottonwood tree just before the flood hits. Lily saves the lives of her siblings through intelligence and ingenuity.

KC Ranch

After the family ranch is destroyed, the Caseys move to KC Ranch in the Hondo Valley of New Mexico. Lily recalls the ranch as being more of a farm than a ranch, with rows of tomatoes, orchards of old peach and pecan trees, and fields of alfalfa. The ranch house is better than the last, with two rooms, which almost seems spacious and luxurious compared to the old house. There is plenty of room for the horses and Lily's fathers Great Danes which are eventually murdered by an ornery neighbor.

The house is made of adobe and stone. The walls are as thick as Mr. Casey's forearm and he states that there is no need to worry about a tornado knocking over this house. The house was built by a Frenchman and was purchased by Mr. Casey's father who left it to his son when he died. In addition to the house there are stalls in which Apache could sleep and a woodshed outside that would make for a home for Lupe. Eventually the family took on the Clemens family as tenant farmers. The move was a smart one as the Clemenses were a help to the Casey family, particularly their daughter Dorothy. Dorothy would eventually marry Buster and become an integral part of the Casey household.



Santa Fe, New Mexico

Santa Fe, New Mexico is the location of The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light. Lily falls in love with the old city and its unusual architecture and opportunities.

The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light

The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light is located in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is a convent and school where Lily goes to further her education. Later it is also the site of Lily's first teaching job.

Chicago

Lily decides to go to Chicago where an unmarried woman with little education might have a better chance at obtaining a good job with an opportunity for advancement.

Desert

The desert is the main barrier between Santa Fe and the KC Ranch. Lily traverses the desert more than once during her tenure at The Sisters of Loretto of Our Lady of the Light.

Flagstaff

Flagstaff, Arizona is the location of the teacher's college attended by Lily.

Patches

Patches is Lily's horse. She was originally thought to be rather useless as she was unbroken and neglected. Lily broke and trained Patches who became Lily's near-constant companion in her youth.

Education

Education did not play a large part in the families in western Texas. It was only required that one could read, write, and perform basic math to operate a ranch. However, Lily's father instilled in her a great need for education.

Horses

The Caseys raised and trained carriage horses. Lily learned at an early age to break the horses and to train them to her father's high standards.



Themes

KC Ranch

KC Ranch is one of the main themes of the story as it is where most of the family interaction between the Caseys occurs.

After the family ranch in Salt Draw is destroyed, the Caseys move to KC Ranch in the Hondo Valley of New Mexico. Lily recalls the ranch as being more of a farm than a ranch, with rows of tomatoes, orchards of old peach and pecan trees, and fields of alfalfa. The ranch house is better than the last, with two rooms, which almost seems spacious and luxurious compared to the old house. There is plenty of room for the horses and Lily's fathers Great Danes, which are eventually murdered by an ornery neighbor.

The house is made of adobe and stone. The walls are as thick as Mr. Casey's forearm and he states that there is no need to worry about a tornado knocking over this house. The house was built by a Frenchman and was purchased by Mr. Casey's father who left it to his son when he died. In addition to the house there are stalls in which Apache could sleep and a woodshed outside that would make for a home for Lupe. Eventually the family took on the Clemens family as tenant farmers. The move was a smart one as the Clemenses were a help to the Casey family, particularly their daughter Dorothy. Dorothy would eventually marry Buster and become an integral part of the Casey household.

Education

Lily's parents sent her to the convent for educational purposes. Although Lily's time there was cut short, Lily realized that she wanted and deserved to get a diploma and a degree.

Another opportunity came when Mother Albertina informed Lily that there were positions open for teachers due to the war and the fact that many teachers left to work in factories. In Part 3, "Promises," Lily gets her teacher's certificate. The test was easier than Lily had expected and her education paid off once again.

Lily was determined to get an education. Lily went to Chicago on her own. When Ted turned out to be a snake in the grass, Lily pulled herself up by her bootstraps and went to a teacher's college in Arizona.

Meanwhile, Buster decided to forgo a higher education. There was some contention when Buster was permitted to stay in school and Lily was not. Boys apparently needed a better education. After eighth grade, Buster decided that he knew enough and decided to stay on the ranch.



Adam was also a proponent of higher education, particularly when it came to his own learning; perhaps in part to overcome his speech impediment and thirst for knowledge.

Determination

Determination is a major theme in the story. Lily was taught that there was nothing that could stand in her way. From breaking horses at the age of five to supervising KC ranch employees at the age of eleven, Lily was a force to be reckoned with. When Lily appeared in court as Adam's mouthpiece, even the judge was impressed with the young girl's demeanor and eloquence.

Lily's parents sent her to the convent for educational purposes. Although Lily's time there was cut short, Lily realized that she wanted and deserved to get a diploma and a degree. Lily was determined to get both. Lily went to Chicago on her own. When Ted turned out to be a snake in the grass, Lily pulled herself up by her bootstraps and went to a teacher's college in Arizona. It seemed that nothing could stand in Lily's way.

Two quotes that show Lily's determination:

"Word about me breaking that mustang spread around Red Lake, and people began regarding me as a woman to be reckoned with." (Part 4, p. 94).

"Don't you 'little lady' me," I said. "I break horses. I brand steers. I run a ranch with a couple dozen crazy cowboys on it, and I can beat them all in poker. I'll be damned if some nincompoop is going to stand there and tell me that I don't have what it takes to fly that dinky heap of tin." (Part 6, p. 161).



Style

Point of View

"Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is written in the first-person point of view, through the eyes of the main character, Lily Casey Smith. The use of first person in the story works well in that the reader is able to understand the modern world of a woman living in a man's world, particularly as it pertains to ranching and breaking horses, which is Lily's specialty. The use of the first person makes the story seem slightly less unusual as Lily seems to take all things in stride even when those things are quite dramatic and sometimes shocking to the average man or woman at the time. There are no limits to what Lily Casey Smith can do or is willing to do from the time she saved her siblings from a flash flood to the time she decided that she wanted to learn how to fly. As the people on Lily's ranch might say, Lily Casey Smith takes guff from no one.

While the third-person omniscient point of view may have enabled the reader to get a broader view of the life of a woman in the early part of the 20th century, as well as the inner workings of the ranching world, the use of the first person lends an air of authenticity to the story. By using the first person point of view, the author brings a sense of authenticity to the character of Lily Casey Smith.

Setting

The main setting of "Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is located in western Texas. The Casey family lived on High Lonesome, a ranch in the heart of a difficult land. Lily describes the property: "When you looked out across the land, most everything you could see - the horizon, the river, the fence lines, the gullies, the scrub cedar - was spread out and flat, and the people, cattle, horses, lizards, and water all moved slowly, conserving themselves." (Part 1, p. 6).

The Caseys own 160 acres in west Texas; land used to raise carriage horses. Later, after the family ranch is destroyed, the Caseys move to KC Ranch in the Hondo Valley of New Mexico. Lily recalls the ranch as being more of a farm than a ranch, with rows of tomatoes, orchards of old peach and pecan trees, and fields of alfalfa. The ranch house is better than the last, with two rooms, which almost seems spacious and luxurious compared to the old house. There is plenty of room for the horses and Lily's fathers Great Danes, which are eventually murdered by an ornery neighbor.

Other settings used in the story include Chicago, Flagstaff, Santa Fe, and Hollywood.

Language and Meaning

The language used in "Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls tends to be relatively informal and relies a great deal on dialogue between the characters. Although Anita is a



professional rancher, the jargon used on the job is not difficult or something that requires much explanation. The tools and methods used by Lily are common and there is little need for explanation of unfamiliar terms.

The language used by Lily is very descriptive and is used in such a way that the person she is speaking to can fully understand the meaning and context of what is being said. Whatever is not being said in the dialogue is covered in a well executed narrative.

There is a used of affected language between some of the less educated characters. This does not apply to Lily, however, since her father was a well educated man who insisted that his children, particularly Lily, follow in his footsteps regarding higher education. The use of regionalisms is kept to a minimum - enough to give the flavor of the area yet not so much as to create a parody.

Examples of language as used in narrative and dialogue:

"Word about me breaking that mustang spread around Red Lake, and people began regarding me as a woman to be reckoned with." (Part 4, p. 94).

"Don't you 'little lady' me,' I said. 'I break horses. I brand steers. I run a ranch with a couple dozen crazy cowboys on it, and I can beat them all in poker. I'll be damned if some nincompoop is going to stand there and tell me that I don't have what it takes to fly that dinky heap of tin.'" (Part 6, p. 161).

Structure

"Half Broke Horses" by Jeannette Walls is a work of fiction touted as being a "true life novel." The book contains 270 pages, divided into 9 parts and an epilogue. Each part contains unnumbered chapters. The book is written in chronological order.

Part 1, "Salt Draw," is comprised of 26 pages divided into 11 chapters.

Part 2, "The Miraculous Staircase," is comprised of 22 pages divided into 9 chapters.

Part 3, "Promises," is comprised of 27 pages divided into 12 chapters.

Part 4, "Red Silk Shirt," is comprised of 21 pages divided into 10 chapters.

Part 5, "Lambs," is comprised of 39 pages divided into 14 chapters.

Part 6, "Teacher Lady," is comprised of 27 pages divided into 10 chapters.

Part 7, "The Garden of Eden," is comprised of 39 pages divided into 9 chapters.

Part 8, "Gumshoes," is comprised of 17 pages divided into 6 chapters.

Part 9, "The Flyboy," is comprised of 21 pages divided into 7 chapters.



The Epilogue is comprised of 2 pages.

The shortest part is comprised of 39 pages; the shortest part is comprised of 2 pages; and the average length of the parts is 27 pages.



Quotes

"Those old cows knew trouble was coming before we did." (Part 1, p. 3).

"Mom worried about things like her daughters catching the right husband. She was concerned with what she called 'priorities.'" (Part 1, p. 10).

"I wondered if Dad thought God had dealt him a bad hand, but I didn't feel it was my place to ask." (Part 1, p. 15).

"Dad relished the notion of being a big landowner but not the headaches that came with it." (Part 2, p. 35).

"I sat there, ignoring Dad's prattle about harebrained schemes." (Part 2, p. 44).

"I was a mite concerned about Helen, seeing as how she was not the most self-reliant creature in the world, but Mom, to my surprise, had encouraged her to go to Los Angeles, insisting that with that pretty face and those delicate hands, she was sure to be discovered, and if not, she could find a rich Hollywood husband." (Part 4, p. 89).

"Word about me breaking that mustang spread around Red Lake, and people began regarding me as a woman to be reckoned with." (Part 4, p. 94).

"When people kill themselves, they think they're ending the pain, but all they're doing is passing it on to those they leave behind." (Part 5, p. 113).

"It was because I was a mother with two kids, I said, as well as a respected former schoolteacher, that the revenuers would never suspect me." (Part 5, p. 121).

"With the Depression still going strong, owners like that - as well as plenty of owners who did know a thing or two about ranching - were going out of business." (Part 5, p. 140).

"'Don't you 'little lady' me,' I said. 'I break horses. I brand steers. I run a ranch with a couple dozen crazy cowboys on it, and I can beat them all in poker. I'll be damned if some nincompoop is going to stand there and tell me that I don't have what it takes to fly that dinky heap of tin.'" (Part 6, p. 161).

"We were pretty isolated on the ranch, there being no other kids within walking distance,

but Rosemary and Little Jim got along fine by themselves. In fact, those two little scamps were each other's best friend." (Part 7, p. 187).



Topics for Discussion

Examine Adam's desire for education and to prove himself to the locals. Do you think part of Adam's demeanor came from his accident? How did the town officials view Adam? What did Adam do to try to gain respect? Did it work?

Examine the life of Rosemary Smith Walls. Was Rosemary a real wild child or simply undisciplined? What might Jim and/or Lily have done to tame Rosemary? Why was Rosemary kicked out of school? How might Rosemary portray her education to her children?

Examine the character of Rex Walls. Who is he? Why is Rosemary so taken with Rex? Why does Lily dislike and distrust Rex so much? What finally forces Lily to give into accepting the relationship and marriage?

Lily believed that she could teach virtually any child until she had Rosemary. Explain why you think Lily was unable to teach Rosemary. What was Jim's role in Rosemary's education? Why do you think Rosemary was so wild and contrary? In what areas did Rosemary excel?

What do you think will become of Rosemary? Do you think she and Rex will stay together? How will Rosemary's wild streak rub off on her daughters? Do you think motherhood will change Rosemary? Explain.

Examine the relationship between Lily and Big Jim. Is it a good marriage? What makes it work? How does the age difference affect the relationship? What causes Lily to become suspicious of Jim's fidelity?

Discuss the interesting and turbulent life of Lily Casey Smith. What were Lily's best traits? What were her weaknesses? Do you admire Lily's abilities? What about Lily do you like or dislike the most? Explain.