

Legends of the Fall Study Guide

Legends of the Fall by Jim Harrison

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Plot Summary

Legends of the Fall by Jim Harrison is a collection of three short novels, including *Revenge*, *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, and *Legends of the Fall*. In *Revenge*, two lovers face the consequences for their illicit affair. *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* is a short portrait of a man who grows unsatisfied with his flat life as a rich oil businessman and seeks to redefine himself. *Legends of the Fall* follows a family's tragedies.

Revenge begins after a rich husband, Tibey, finds out about his wife's affair. Tibey attempts to warn and bribe his tennis associate Cochran, but Cochran is so full of love for Miryea that he fails to recognize or respond to the warnings. Tibey beats Cochran badly, and leaves him on the road for dead. Tibey also takes revenge on his cheating wife. He keeps Miryea on heroin at a whorehouse until she becomes coherent enough to stab a man. Then Tibey moves Miryea to an asylum run by nuns, where Miryea wastes away. A local man rescues Cochran, who recovers at a mission. Cochran sets out to find Miryea and convince Tibey to let them be together. It takes him time to find her, and by the time he does, she is almost dead. Tibey forgives Cochran, but Miryea dies.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name follows Nordstrom from college, through his marriage to Laura and their divorce many years later, to a summer he spends with his daughter, Sonia. During the vacation, he thinks about quitting his job and giving away all of his money. When Nordstrom's father dies, he decides to go through with the plan after his daughter's graduation from college. A tall black man and his Italian friend disturb the graduation dinner. Nordstrom kills the man who comes to threaten him. Nordstrom looks around until he finds a small seafood restaurant in Florida where he becomes the cook with a very different life than he had once had.

In *Legends of the Fall*, three brothers join the Great War together. When the youngest brother, Samuel, dies in the war, the middle brother, Tristan, damns God. Tristan marries his fiancée, Susannah, before Samuel's funeral, but leaves her a few months later. He spends seven years at sea trying to console himself over Samuel's death. The oldest brother, Alfred later marries Susannah and becomes a senator. Tristan finally returns to his family's Montana ranch, and marries Isabel Two, the half-breed daughter of the ranch foreman. Tristan and Isabel Two have two children. Tristan gets involved with smuggling liquor during Prohibition, leading to Isabel Two's death and causing problems with a crime ring out of Seattle. Tristan kills two of the Irish brothers, and when the third comes to the ranch for revenge, Ludlow kills him. Susannah kills herself over losing Tristan.



Revenge, Chapter 1

Revenge, Chapter 1 Summary

Revenge is the story of a man's recovery from a terrible beating from the husband of his lover. Cochran and Miryea are the lovers. As Cochran heals, he wants to kill Miryea's husband, Tibey, and reunite with Miryea, but it takes months to find her. Cochran and Tibey reconcile instead of continuing their separate quests for revenge, but Miryea is almost dead when Cochran finds her.

While Cochran lies dying from heat and dehydration, his injuries draw vultures. A worker at a nearby mission, Mauro, sees the vultures and finds Cochran. Diller, the mission doctor and priest, brings Cochran back to his mission clinic to treat the dehydration, sunburn, and injuries. Diller makes a report to the Federales, but he wants to help the patient avoid any legal red tape. When Cochran comes down with pneumonia, Diller wants to avoid sending his patient to a better facility, mostly out of curiosity about his condition. Cochran plays dead to find out if he is still in any danger.

Cochran remembers getting ready for the trip with his lover. He ignores the warnings, his better judgment, and a feeling of unspecified doom, thinking his affair with Tibey's wife is still secret. While Cochran recuperates from his injuries, he seeks clues from his three-week affair that might have given them away to Tibey or the servants. One night Cochran offers to take Miryea away to Seville, where no one will find them, but she rejects the idea. On another night, Cochran confesses his affair to his friend, who is a pilot for Aeromexico. The friend warns Cochran about Tibey's reputation for vengeance, and offers to give him money and a fake passport. Cochran mentions his friend's reaction to Miryea, and she laughs about it.

Cochran plays the tennis tournament badly until Miryea arrives to watch. In the locker room, Tibey's chauffeur gives Cochran a one-way ticket and several thousand dollars with a note about the match. Not wanting to ruin the weekend, Cochran decides not to mention it to Miryea. He decides to skip the hotel in Douglas to avoid any chance of being seen. One of Tibey's men sees Cochran and Miryea at the airport and makes his report to Tibey. Cochran and Miryea begin their trip and stop for love by the side of the road. Tibey's man, The Crazy One, watches through binoculars, thinking Tibey would shoot them both right then. Cochran notices the pickup following, but stops worrying about it when the truck turns off. Cochran and Miryea stop for dinner, supplies, and shopping, talking about Tibey's nearby ranch. They arrive at the cabin that night and settle, enjoying their freedom and solitude.

As Cochran and Miryea sleep in front of the fire, three men come into the cabin, including Tibey and Tibey's henchmen. Tibey slashes Miryea's lip to scar her. The Elephant and Tibey beat Cochran. The Crazy One gives Miryea an injection. The men load the lovers into the trunk of the limo. The men back Cochran's car up to the cabin



and set it on fire, watching the car explode before they leave. The limo drives away and stops after thirty miles while the men throw Cochran out of the car.

Revenge, Chapter 1 Analysis

Chapter one of *Revenge* sets the scene in the mission in Mexico, as well as beginning to characterize many of the novel's characters. The author introduces the unconscious main character slowly, and with irony. He writes that the reader does not need to know much about Cochran, the protagonist. The author later repeats this message, clarifying it by saying that Cochran is a different person when the story begins. Cochran is a victim, but he has lived through a radical change, similar to a religious conversion. This sets up the theme of taking control of one's life.

Cochran has flashbacks that fill in the plot. Cochran knows better than to fall for Miryea, the wife of a super-rich Mexican man, but he finds himself not in control for the first time since the age of eighteen. The Dom Perignon and the white rose are a warning from Tibey, as well as the one-way ticket and money. Tibey likes Cochran, and provides an escape before he has to seek revenge. Cochran rejects these warnings in favor of his love. He is both out of control in the relationship and trying to take control of his life, regardless of the consequences. Being with Miryea ends his suffering, but the irony is that his affair with Miryea only begins a suffering more terrible than he can imagine.



Revenge, Chapter 2

Revenge, Chapter 2 Summary

At the clinic, Cochran is polite, distant and helpful, but he has bad dreams about Miryea. Cochran sees his friend the Aeromexico pilot, who asks Cochran to return to Tucson, but Cochran wants to find out what has happened to Miryea. The friend tells Cochran about his brother, who is high in the Mexico City government. The friend also offers money and a small gun, and suggests that Cochran leave the mission soon, where it is too easy for Tibey to find him. As Cochran plans to leave, Mauro gives Cochran a pearl-handled knife. Cochran tells Mauro to leave a phone message with the Mexico City politician if anyone comes looking for him. The mission has a feast in honor of Cochran's recovery and departure, where there is singing and joking, but Cochran becomes upset while singing Miryea's Guadalajara folk song.

After giving warnings to Cochran and forgiving the first few meetings with Miryea, Tibey breaks down hearing Miryea tell her sister about the great love of her life. After the cabin, Tibey drinks in the limo to get over his regret. He stops halfway to Durango, and he slaps and rants at Miryea. He doses her with amphetamines and locks her in a bare room full of rattlesnakes until she cannot stay on the high stool anymore. Then Tibey gets Miryea presentable and takes her to a whorehouse in Durango, keeping her submissive with heroin. The madam reduces Miryea's heroin dose out of greed until Miryea becomes coherent enough of her surroundings to stab a man with his own knife. Tibey moves Miryea to an asylum and bribes the nuns with a huge donation to keep her there.

Mauro drives Cochran to Hermasillo. Outside Hermasillo, Mauro and Cochran stop for a meal and help a sick Texan with a horse. The Texan offers to buy Cochran and Mauro lunch and drinks. When Mauro leaves, he gives Cochran the coyote teeth necklace. Cochran tells the Texan he is on the run from the IRS and that he is headed toward Durango. The Texan offers him a ride, but he really wants Cochran to drive for him. While Cochran and the Texan eat, The Elephant (Tibey's henchman) comes into the cantina. Cochran follows the man to the restroom and kills him with Mauro's knife. Cochran and the Texan leave quickly.

Cochran drives while the sick Texan rests. They stop at a hotel and the Texan loans Cochran some clothes, but Cochran does not want to go out with the Texan. The next morning, the Texan looks worse, but Cochran continues driving until they arrive at their destination. The wealthy rancher pays the Texan with a cigar box of money. Cochran and the Texan spend the night in the rancher's guest house, where the Texan dies in the night. Cochran sits him in the truck and leaves in the morning, stopping to bury the Texan under rocks. Cochran drives straight to Mexico City and abandons the Texan's truck at the airport. He dresses in the Texan's best clothes and takes the cigar box with him.



Miryea spends her first month at the nunnery detoxifying from her forced heroin addiction. Then the nuns allow her to wander in the courtyard, where Miryea decides to help three autistic girls who respond to no one. Miryea orders books on the subject and works with the girls for days, giving attention to them that no one else offers. Miryea thinks of her childhood summers in Cozumel. She knows if her father were still alive, he would rescue her. Miryea wants to find out what happened to Cochran, but she does not allow herself to expect him to come.

Cochran checks into a suite at Camino Real and contacts the Aeromexico pilot's brother, the Mexico City politician. The politician arrives the next day and offers Cochran a Durango contact and an identity posing as a Barcelona businessman interested in movie making. The politician gives letters of introduction, but Cochran refuses his offers of a file on Tibey, a gun, and money. The politician has not found out about Miryea yet, but has people working on it. The politician has a message from Mauro that Tibey's henchmen came to the mission. Cochran tells the politician that he killed the henchman known as The Elephant. Cochran spends the afternoon preparing for his role. He charts a flight to Durango. Amador, the politician's Durango contact, meets Cochran at the airport.

Revenge, Chapter 2 Analysis

This chapter, while advancing the plot, takes a deeper look at the main characters and the motives that drive them. Cochran is jumpy with vengeance while he waits for Mauro. Cochran has become simple but lethal, like Mauro, a state not possible to a civilized man. Cochran is so different that his old life is like a fading dream, except for his daughter. Cochran wants to kill Tibey and reunite with Miryea if she is still alive. Miryea's folksong, which recurs throughout the chapter, is a symbol of the bittersweet quality of impossible love.

When Miryea stabs the man at the whorehouse, it foreshadows Cochran stabbing The Elephant. Cochran is not worried about his murder of The Elephant or about the possibility of pursuit, more evidence that he has rejected traditional values to take control of his life instead of being a victim. Cochran knows helping the Texan will delay him, but he does not want to abandon the sick Texan. In addition, the Texan's truck and money provide Cochran with good cover from his enemies and the law. Cochran's sense of vengeance is so passionate that killing The Elephant is a pleasure.

Tibey's vengeance is fueled by the social ostracism he faces. He does not want to take his revenge, but he also does not want to give up his pride. Tibey is really hurt by Miryea's betrayal. Losing Miryea means everything to him, not just the loss of his social clout. He wants to get back his happiness, and goes into mourning because he knows there is no way to get it back. He must be the shark in his dealings with Miryea to maintain his reputation, but he really wants to just run away and forget the whole thing happened. Tibey is suffering and regrets what he has done. Ironically, the author describes Tibey as a victim of his own youthful dreams.



Miryea is also suffering. Although the autistic girls are a lost cause, she needs a project to take control of her life as much as possible under the circumstances. She spends her time in a half dream state, and when she is fully conscious, she weeps from her post-traumatic stress. She needs help to stop being a victim, but her father is dead. She fears that Cochran is also dead.



Revenge, Chapter 3 and Epilogue

Revenge, Chapter 3 and Epilogue Summary

At the airport, Cochran almost blows his cover helping an upset American actress-model. Amador chides Cochran and tells him about Miryeya's imprisonment in and disappearance from the whorehouse, as well as her added danger from the man she stabbed. Amador warns Cochran of his danger and briefs him on a house where he can stay out of sight of Tibey's men. Amador has scheduled meetings under Cochran's cover. The actress model thanks Cochran again in the hotel lobby. Cochran is aware of all the eyes watching him and walks away. The next day Cochran visits the movie set. The Crazy One recognizes Cochran and reports to Tibey.

Tibey threatens the man Miryeya stabbed and makes him leave for Mérida. Miryeya is wasting away after making no progress with the autistic children. Tibey goes to great lengths to help a young peón bitten by his dog. Tibey tells The Crazy One to just watch Cochran for now. Tibey thinks about Cochran and Miryeya and what he should do, but recognizes that revenge is an endless battle.

Cochran and Amador cannot find Miryeya, and the cover story starts to lose its credibility. After a movie cocktail party, Cochran fantasizes about blowing Tibey away, but he knows he needs Tibey to find Miryeya. Cochran and Amador find the whorehouse and Cochran goes on a useless rampage. To make Cochran's extended stay look plausible, Amador suggests inviting the actress-model for dinner. Amador arranges a date with the actress-model for Cochran, including flowers and drugs. Amador recognizes The Crazy One watching, and realizes the man has been watching Cochran for some time. The actress-model comes for dinner. Cochran tells her the truth and threatens her if she blows his cover. She comes to the villa on off days to relax, but wears out Amador and his relatives working at the villa. However, Cochran is still able to soothe her when she is upset, just as he had at the airport.

Miryeya becomes so ill she loses consciousness. When the nun meets The Crazy One at a restaurant to ask for a doctor, he tells her to wait, knowing Tibey is degenerating over the whole affair. Amador's nephew overhears the conversation. When the nephew makes his report, Cochran is anxious to take action. Amador reminds Cochran to be patient so that he and Miryeya can leave the country alive. Amador and Cochran make plans to confront Tibey. Tibey sends for a society doctor and decides to give up revenge, move to the top floor of his Cozumel hotel, and take a Mayan schoolteacher to Paris. He worries that if Miryeya dies, he will go to hell, and he thinks about shooting The Crazy One to end the revenge.

Tibey and Amador ride into Tepehuanes and hear news about Tibey and The Crazy One. Amador and Cochran continue up the mountain as far as they can drive. Then they wait to walk the rest of the way. Cochran chain-smokes and thinks about Miryeya and his daughter all together in Seville for the holidays. Cochran plans to try to make



peace with Tibey, but Amador plans to hide nearby with his gun. Amador and Cochran talk about the business of killing and how they both lost their wives. Amador and Cochran begin their hike and stake out.

Cochran waits a long time until he finally hears Tibey's dogs ahead of Tibey and The Crazy One on horses. The dogs run off to find quail when Cochran signals them. Amador shoots The Crazy One in the head. Tibey dismounts to look at his dead henchman, then walks up to Cochran and pulls a small gun that Amador cannot see. However, Tibey throws the gun away and asks Cochran to apologize. Cochran apologizes and the two of them follow Amador back to the car, where the three men drink warm beer and talk about the mountains.

Tibey, Cochran, and Amador all go to the nunnery together, where Tibey tells the nun that Miryea is Cochran's wife, not his. They go to see Miryea, who is nearing death. The doctor cannot help her. Tibey threatens the doctor, and leaves with Amador. Cochran sits by Miryea's side through the days and nights, during which time she gets a tracheotomy and an oxygen tent. Cochran runs to the courtyard to scream, waking the patients. Tibey, Amador and the doctor come and subdue Cochran until he sleeps. The next day Miryea awakens and Cochran carries her to the courtyard. She sings the folk song before she dies.

Cochran digs Miryea's grave while Amador and Tibey sit on a bench. Tibey is distraught. The mother superior and a priest also watch. The patients are distracted. When Cochran finishes digging, the priest says the funeral service. Tibey and Amador lower Miryea's coffin into the ground. Cochran kisses the flowers on the coffin and throws the first shovel full of dirt on the grave.

Revenge, Chapter 3 and Epilogue Analysis

Cochran feels sick with lack of hope. At first he imagines that he and Miryea could find a way to be together, but now he just feels murderous. The scorpion, snakes, and other symbols of destruction are symbolic of his feelings. Cochran's fantasy of blowing Tibey away indicates that he is giving up hope on finding Miryea. Cochran is desperate, comparing himself to a knight going off to the Thirty Years War or an astronaut on a one-way trip to the moon. However, patient Amador restrains him from making a mistake on his path to regain control of his life. Alternatively, Miryea is a victim who gives up hope and fails at her attempts to regain control of her life.

Tibey regrets his actions. He is worried that Miryea's death will keep him in hell on Earth and send him to Hell after his own death. He wants to forget the whole thing ever happened. To attempt some sort of unconnected restitution, Tibey goes to great lengths to help a man bitten by his dog. Tibey surrounds himself with men to protect him, but they have become a machine that he cannot stop. Tibey wants to kill The Crazy One because the psychopathic man drives the revenge more than he does. The story ends tragically, with no one getting what they want after the revenge.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 1

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 1 Summary

The Man Who Gave Up His Name is a short novel about Nordstrom, who finds his life as a successful businessman unsatisfying. After his divorce, he moves across the country, seeking to redefine himself. He decides to give away all his money and move again to work in a seafood restaurant.

In college, Nordstrom signs up for a dance class where he watches and lusts after Laura. At the end of the semester, he performs his final exam dance blindfolded, and is mortified to discover that Laura has watched. A year later, Nordstrom goes into a tavern to get out of the rain, and Laura is there. She asks why he never called. Nordstrom warms to the sorority and fraternity crowd when he beats the athletes at arm wrestling. Laura asks him out. She drives him to the country, where they make love and drink wine. Nordstrom and Laura marry after graduation and move to California.

Nordstrom works for Standard Oil, eventually becoming vice president. He and Laura have a sexually satisfying relationship and a daughter named Sonia. However, they become unhappy with each other, highlighted by their daughter's comments at age sixteen. Nordstrom tries to connect with his daughter, but he realizes that he does not really know her. He promises her a BMW after college graduation. Nordstrom tries to talk to Laura about changing his life and gets an unfinished blow job instead. He spends the next few years on a series of unsuccessful experiments to find whatever is missing in his life.

Just before his daughter leaves for college, Nordstrom and Laura finally realize their marriage is over. She dances to the same song as her dance exam from long ago, and Nordstrom cries in the restroom about losing the things that have bound them together. Nordstrom and Laura make love with the passion of their first date in the country, but sex cannot fill Nordstrom's emptiness. They have a mostly amicable divorce. Nordstrom's sexual potency disappears and troubles him as he struggles to find a new life outside Boston. He is lonely, but he does not admit it. Nordstrom prepares for his daughter to stay the summer and wonders why he still works when his wife, daughter, and parents do not need his money.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 1 Analysis

Chapter one of this short novel presents the back-story of Nordstrom's relationship with Laura from beginning to end. Nordstrom does not take credit for any part of the relationship. The relationship with Laura is something that just happens to him. He blames it on the fact that it rained a certain Friday evening. The chapter also presents



the back-story of Nordstrom's business success. He does take some credit for his success, but downplays it as unimportant. Nordstrom does not seem to respect himself. He is jealous of the glamour of Laura's business. Nordstrom seems to use his sexual encounters with Laura as a replacement for a satisfying life. Laura and Nordstrom have a satisfying sexual relationship, but after many years, they realize that sex is not enough to ensure the endurance of their relationship. When Nordstrom realizes that Laura has lost interest in him, he cries from the loss, but also because he feels the flatness in his life. He is also grieving for a life he thinks he should have had.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 2

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 2 Summary

Nordstrom is much happier the summer he spends with his daughter, three years after the divorce. In August, Nordstrom and Sonia move to the house he has rented in Marblehead. He likes to watch the sea instead of keeping up with the world. While cooking, Nordstrom has a strange, intense feeling that precipitates his radical change. He waits for Sonia, feeds the cat, and stares off into space, just allowing himself to feel the feeling. Sonia senses a change in her father, but she does not question him about his daily tasks of coffee, helping the maid, shopping, cooking, and watching the sunset.

Nordstrom tells Sonia and her boyfriend, Phillip, to invite some friends from Cambridge. Sonia tells Nordstrom to get a girlfriend. Nordstrom later sees two of Sonia's friends take off their bikini tops while sunning. His life seems dreamlike. He cannot read or think. Nordstrom catches a small dead shark on a setline. He buries it, thinking of his crow from years ago. When Sonia's friends find out Nordstrom is not just the cook, Phillip's friend the Sephard helps with dinner one night. Nordstrom and the Sephard talk about a waitress at a restaurant in the Village that has caught Nordstrom's eye.

Nordstrom sits at the head of the table and converses with everyone while Sonia's friends smoke pot. Most of the friends go off to a disco that night. However, while Nordstrom is feeding the cat and cleaning up, one of the bikini girls comes into the kitchen. She rolls a joint and talks about needing a ride to the airport, and Nordstrom offers to take her. She helps with the dishes and makes a move on Nordstrom. They make love in the kitchen, swim naked, and make love again on the deck. Nordstrom cooks for twenty before everyone leaves to go back to school. He and Sonia have another week together in Boston before they have to go back to usual business.

In October, Nordstrom's father dies. Nordstrom charts a Lear jet to Rhineland, where his mother and cousin meet him at the airport. Nordstrom goes to his father's wake and then to the funeral home. He kisses his father and cries. He walks into the woods until his feet get sore. When he climbs a tree to see where he is, a crow flies by. Nordstrom comes out of the woods and goes into a tavern. He thinks that he will quit his job and give away all his money, but immediately disregards the thought. Nordstrom's father's friend Henry is at the tavern. Nordstrom asks Henry to be a pallbearer. Henry refuses, telling of the events leading to Nordstrom's father's death. Henry gives Nordstrom a ride back home.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 2 Analysis

Nordstrom is so distrustful of his happiness the summer with Sonia that he thinks he will die soon. This preoccupation with death is a common feeling when adjusting to loss, and Nordstrom is adjusting to the loss of his life with Laura and in the oil business, even though he found that life unsatisfying. He must grieve for the loss of that life before he can progress. Nordstrom has such an intense feeling while cooking that he does not want to examine the feeling for fear that it will disappear. This feeling is the beginning of his change, and the beginning of him truly living instead of just going through the motions. Nordstrom's encounter with the girl and his business associate's reaction at the airport are indicators that Nordstrom has gotten over the divorce and is ready to move on with his life.

Chapter two presents several back-stories to give Nordstrom's character more depth. The crows have special significance to Nordstrom and foreshadow later events. Nordstrom is trying to find himself. He does not know who or what he knows or loves anymore, if he ever did. Getting lost after visiting his father's corpse at the funeral home is symbolic of Nordstrom's inner lack of direction. His ruined suit and shoes symbolize the lack of interest he now has in government and business. This foreshadows his change coming in the next two chapters.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 3

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 3 Summary

Nordstrom takes Sonia and Philip to see Baryshnikov and to go out for dinner. Phillip talks philosophically about what happens when a person's father dies. Sonia tries to get him to stop, but Nordstrom thinks what Phillip says is probably true. Nordstrom has insomnia that night and dances without music to avoid waking Philip and Sonia. He writes in his journal, thinking again about quitting and giving away all his money.

Nordstrom has a difficult time quitting and giving away his money. The company does not want him to go. Sonia and his mother do not want the money. His financial adviser insists that Nordstrom see a psychiatrist. Nordstrom meets with Sonia and the broker and convinces them of his convictions by giving money to the National Audubon Society, even though he does not care about birds. Each of the people in Nordstrom's life has their own views about Nordstrom's mid-life crisis. However, none of them convince him to change his plans.

Nordstrom walks from Brookline to Cambridge for his appointment with the psychiatrist. He watches a woman by the river rolling a ball to her child. Nordstrom tells the psychiatrist that he wants to be like Robin Hood. Nordstrom talks about the woman at the river. He analyzes what happened with Laura when she fell out of love with him. Nordstrom explains that he has lost interest in his money. The psychiatrist asks what interests him and Nordstrom answers that he wants to look things over like his father did. He discloses his habit of dancing alone.

Nordstrom's replacement at work arrives. The company plans a dinner for Nordstrom's leaving. Nordstrom's secretary, Ms. Dietrich, has to leave after getting too drunk, ending her plans to sleep with him again. Nordstrom spends the night playing poker with men from the shipping department. He walks home the next morning and is upset by seeing an old black man in a puddle of vomit and a diseased tree. At home, he showers, eats, but cannot sleep. He reads his diary. He watches the woman across the courtyard, but his arousal is uncomfortable to him. He listens to the radio and longs to go to the Caribbean, where he could drink and cook seafood. He writes in his diary. He asks Phillip's friend the Sephard to arrange a graduation party for Sonia at the Village restaurant where Nordstrom saw the waitress. The Sephard plans to invite the waitress to the graduation party. Nordstrom writes about giving away money and how he wants to start over. He smokes Sonia's pot occasionally and writes about other feelings. He remembers a time with Laura at a Montana cabin by a creek.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 3 Analysis

Chapter three returns to the present time frame to track Nordstrom's change through the difficulties of quitting his job and giving away his money. The chapter begins with all the things about Nordstrom's character and life that he wants to discard. He talks with Phillip about death. Sonia is embarrassed by Phillip's insensitivity, considering that Nordstrom's father has recently died. However, Nordstrom thinks that Phillip has a point. Nordstrom feels lucky that his father never judged him, but Nordstrom is only now learning how to follow his heart.

Nordstrom's diary presents a close look at his inner feelings, the details of his life, and his plans. His enjoyment of cooking provides a clue about what he wants to do. When Nordstrom writes about having sex with his secretary, he recognizes the reality in the situation, and the feeling is as powerful as the intense feeling he has over the summer. He examines it this time by writing about it. Nordstrom also wants to eliminate all his doubt, self-pity, discriminations, and opinions. He categorizes Ms. Deitrich's self-consciousness and Phillip's incessant talking as symptoms of a fear of vanishing. His preoccupation with sexuality is his own attempt to keep from vanishing, although he does not quite recognize this on the surface. He does recognize his changing sexual feelings. He describes the arousal he feels while watching the woman by the river as being more sentimental than sexual. He also finds his arousal watching his neighbor uncomfortable.



The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 4 and Epilogue

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 4 and Epilogue Summary

Sonia is graduating from college. Nordstrom goes to the ceremony and reception and is somehow surprised to see Laura. After the graduation reception, Nordstrom tries to give Sonia \$15,000 in one hundred dollar bills to buy the car he promised. The whole family rejects this gesture. Everyone progresses to the restaurant for the dinner Nordstrom and Phillip's friend the Sephard have planned. Thanks to Phillip, everyone knows that Nordstrom has given away all his money and is going on a long trip. Nordstrom senses their changed impression of him. Sonia asks Nordstrom to visit her in Italy. Sarah, the former waitress at the restaurant that Nordstrom wanted the Sephard to invite, is at the dinner.

Most of the people at the dinner leave. Nordstrom follows Laura to the restroom, where she and Sarah have been making frequent trips to snort cocaine. Sarah offers him a line of cocaine, but Nordstrom wants to have sex with one of them instead. Sarah and Laura flip a coin, but Phillip comes in before anything happens, and they all go back to the table. A tall black man named Slat and his Italian friend named Berto come in and grab Sarah. Nordstrom hits Slat, who replies with a death threat. Nordstrom eventually gets everyone calm. Nordstrom's plan takes shape as the group leaves the restaurant. He tells Laura, Sonia, and Phillip that he plans to cash in his trip tickets and go to cooking school. He wants to cook in a restaurant by the ocean.

In the hotel room, Laura calls Nordstrom after talking to Sarah and telling her where to find Nordstrom. Sarah calls and sets up a meeting. In the morning, Nordstrom gets ready and adds his straight razor to his boot. Nordstrom arrives at the meeting place early. He spots Berto watching and lets him know. Sarah arrives, wanting to talk in his hotel room in private. They go to the hotel room, where she seduces him. While she is in the bathroom, he takes her gun from her purse and puts it under his mattress. When Sarah returns, she presents Slat's offer to not kill him for \$10,000. Nordstrom makes a counter offer. Sarah leaves confused, hoping that Nordstrom will just pay.

Nordstrom adds the next room to his suite and takes a nap. He gets out all of his weapons and prepares for the Italian to punish him for his insolent response to the extortion. He writes in his diary about Sonia and Laura leaving and his plans. He waits in the dark. He finally hears his spoon and beer can alarm. Berto comes in, and Nordstrom grabs him and throws him out the window. Nordstrom also drops Sarah's gun out the window. The next morning Nordstrom talks to detectives, saying he did not hear anything unusual. Sarah calls, and Nordstrom asks that she and Slat join him for lunch to settle their differences.



At lunch, Nordstrom threatens to shoot Slats under the table. Nordstrom describes his torture of Berto and lies to Slats about the confession in a convincing performance. Slats gives in and asks if Nordstrom needs any drugs. Nordstrom apologizes for hitting Slats. Sarah explains that she and Slats do this extortion performance often to make money. Nordstrom pays for the drugs, plus \$1,000 that Berto owed Slats. Nordstrom goes to the Museum of Modern Art. He has dinner with the Sephard to talk about cooking schools and gives him the drugs. He still is not sure if he wants to go on his trip.

Nordstrom travels light in an old Plymouth, investigating different towns until he stops in Florida. His new life is full of rich experiences. He works at a small seafood restaurant. He lives in a tourist cabin. He goes out in his rowboat and breaks an oarlock. He bails the boat with his hat for an entire day before being rescued by fishermen. He saves his money and buys a Boston Whaler. He explores the sea in the mornings and on Mondays. He has an affair with a waitress. One night, two waitresses invite him to a dance. He goes and dances all night.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name, Chapter 4 and Epilogue Analysis

Nordstrom feels out of control when he is around the family. He wants things to go a certain way, and feels unprepared for life's surprises. Nordstrom comes to believe that the meaning of life is to dance in your brain at all times. He resents Slats for intruding on what he believes is his last family gathering. His attraction to Laura presents an opportunity to regain his old life. He knows she is unhappy with her new marriage and would return to him if he wanted. However, he decides not to choose that path back to his dead life.

Nordstrom is excited by the danger of the death threat. He is not afraid because he has already released most of his ties to life. He does not ask for help because he wants to do things for himself in his new life. Nordstrom's defeat of Berto, and therefore Slats, represents his final rejection of traditional values. It opens the way for him to live his life exactly the way he wants.



Legends of the Fall, Chapter 1

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 1 Summary

Three brothersn Alfred, Tristan, and Samuel ride off to Canada to join the Great War. Their father's Cheyenne friend One Stab guides them through the Montana wilderness. They stop for the night at a homesteader's home, where Samuel takes an interest in the man's daughter. Samuel gives her his gold pocket watch for safekeeping and tells her he will write. The brothers and One Stab stop at a tavern, where Tristan beats the owner for his prejudice against One Stab. The major who enlists the brothers knows their father. Alfred becomes an officer, and Samuel becomes an aide-de-camp because of his German and map skills. Tristan takes care of the horses.

The brothers' father, Ludlow, regrets letting Samuel go to war instead of sending him back to Harvard to please his wife, Isabel, who spends her winters in Boston. He stays in his room for a week after his sons leave. When he finally goes downstairs to dinner, the sight of the empty dining room depresses him. He decides to close it until his sons return, telling the servants that he will eat in the kitchen with them to conserve fuel. Ludlow insists on tutoring his ranch foreman's daughter, Isabel Two, starting the next day. Ludlow wakes after dreaming his sons died at war. He visits his sons' bedrooms and finds the book he wrote with Tristan's notes written in it. Ludlow sleeps late and wakes to hunt with Decker, his ranch foreman. One Stab returns while they are roasting their grouse. Ludlow begins to get angry letters from his wife about the war. After Ludlow sends Decker to Helena for supplies, a US Marshall comes to ask about Decker. Ludlow lies and sends One Stab to Helena to warn Decker. Isabel thinks about her damaged relationship with her son Tristan, who as a twelve-year-old cursed God for not bringing her back from Boston by Christmas.

Alfred injures his knee and back. The major writes Ludlow about Alfred, Tristan, and Samuel as soldiers. Tristan visits Alfred in the hospital, where they learn of Samuel's death. Tristan rushes to find Samuel, and cuts out his heart. He encases the heart in paraffin and sends the canister home with Alfred. Tristan goes wild with grief, but after being restrained, he becomes a scout. He scalps enemy soldiers until his companion is wounded. He sings a medicine song he learned from One Stab. When Alfred cannot reason with him, the army sends Tristan to a mental hospital in Paris.

The grief of Samuel's death ages Ludlow overnight. Isabel writes daily letters, and Ludlow does not respond. Tristan plans his escape from the asylum with the doctor's help. Tristan buys a horse and rides across the countryside, making his way to his grandfather's home in Cornwall. Tristan learns about sailing for a month before returning home to see Susannah. When Alfred arrives, he, Tristan, Isabel, and Susannah attend a memorial service with Samuel's college friends. Tristan and Susannah marry before the funeral against his mother's wishes. They all travel by train to Montana for the funeral, though Tristan and Susannah barely leave their compartment. Once at the ranch, they bury Samuel's heart in the canyon near a spring.

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter provides information about all of the main characters of this short novel, as well as the setting of the ranch. Samuel's death is the key plot point that drives the rest of the novel. Ludlow regrets sending Samuel to war, since his wife opposes it, and the grief and guilt over Samuel's death overwhelm him. Isabel senses the disappearance of her family, though it began when she started spending the winters in Boston. Tristan only goes to war to please his father and to protect Samuel. Tristan feels he has failed to protect Samuel, and his response to his grief shocks the other soldiers and commanders. He marries Susannah only because he hopes to bear a son to replace Samuel. His time with his grandfather learning how to sail foreshadows later events in the novel.



Legends of the Fall, Chapter 2

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 2 Summary

In the summer, Tristan makes imaginary plans with Susannah, but only wants her to have a child to replace Samuel. Susannah's father, Arthur, comes to Montana for a sporting expedition and buys the neighboring ranch as a wedding present. Isabel returns and she and Ludlow share their grief over Samuel's death. The honyocker's daughter arrives with Samuel's watch and his letters to her before he died. Isabel reads the letters until she cannot any longer. The honyocker's daughter leaves with a photo of Samuel. Tristan directs his grief into the effort of breaking a difficult young stallion. Tristan finally tells Susannah of his plans to meet his grandfather in Havana. She knows that he must go and tells him she will wait forever. However, she becomes depressed. She goes for long walks along, although Ludlow sends One Stab to follow her.

One Stab accompanies Tristan to the train station and gives Tristan his skinning knife, which Tristan keeps until his death at age eighty-four. Tristan makes his way to Havana and meets his grandfather, Captain Ludlow. Captain Ludlow makes Tristan cooperate with the British war mission so they can keep the ship. They take on a new one, with Tristan listed as the captain, and Captain Ludlow listed as a passenger for the trip to Falmouth. Tristan focuses on learning everything his grandfather knows. When the ship arrives in Falmouth, Captain Ludlow goes to bed permanently. Tristan meets with the British officer. A spy follows Tristan, and Tristan's letters to his father and Susannah are censored. Tristan embarks on his mission, and is happy to find a case of guns that the crew uses for daily rifle practice. The ship escapes a German destroyer in the Mediterranean. Tristan completes the mission without too much difficulty. The British officer releases the ship as a reward for the delivery. Tristan takes a leave in Nairobi, where he makes a deal for an ivory delivery to Singapore. He sends a picture of himself with a dead rhinoceros to One Stab.

Isabel and Susannah leave Montana to return to Boston for the winter. Isabel invites the poet Amy Lowell for dinner. Susannah finally gets news of Tristan from Ludlow, who received congratulations on his noble son for completing a perilous mission. Susannah's father provides Alfred with an office in Helena to become a politician so that Alfred can support his economic interests. Alfred secretly loves Susannah, but when he comes to visit, Susannah hardly notices him. However, she does give him a copy of the Amy Lowell poetry when he leaves.

Tristan comes down with dysentery in dangerous seas and barely escapes with both his life and the ship. His fevers make him delirious. He stands on the bowsprit and hallucinates that he sees both Samuel and Susannah. After making the ivory delivery, he agrees to transport opium to San Francisco. He splits the profits evenly with his crew and his grandfather who owns the ship. The ship stops at Manila for supplies, although it is dangerous with his illegal cargo. Tristan tells Susannah in a letter to marry another. When Tristan returns to the ship, four thugs meet him. His first mate, the Mexican,



disarms and beheads a man while Tristan strangles another. The thugs finally leave but wound Tristan's leg first.

Tristan spends the next six years at sea. During that time, he buys a ranch at Isla de Pinos, and he goes on another British mission for the war. He finally returns to Havana. He gets the news that his grandfather has been dead for five years and finds out about his father's stroke. Tristan entrusts his ship to the Mexican and goes home to his welcoming family. Decker gives him the news that Susanna and Alfred are now married. Tristan goes to visit Samuel's grave. Isabel Two shows Tristan her new puppy. Tristan tells the adventure stories he knows his father wants to hear. He gives everyone presents, including the ring he meant for his mother to Isabel Two. Isabel Two comes to him in the night. Tristan proposes the next day.

Tristan has a calm seven years next, thanks to the people who love him. Tristan builds a lodge in the canyon overlooking the spring. He and Isabel Two marry in October when Isabel can be there, although Susannah and Alfred do not come. Tristan and Isabel Two have two children, Samuel Decker and Isabel Three. Alfred becomes a senator and the ranch prepares for the coming Depression. Tristan does not see Susanna for four years. She is devastated with grief over losing him and jealous of his children.

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 2 Analysis

The focus of this chapter is to further characterize Tristan. The other characters play a very minor role in this chapter, serving only to advance the plot. The string of events in this chapter provide evidence of Tristan's restlessness. When he is upset by the arrival of the honyocker's daughter, he retreats to the horses. Susannah does not become pregnant during the summer, but the reader does not believe that would matter to Tristan anyway. He retreats to the sea, as if he could ride the waves in a ship like riding an unruly horse. Tristan has never cared about money, but in his grief and restlessness, it has less hold on him than ever. He disregards standard practices of separating captain from crew. He trusts his crew, even with liquor, and they respect him. Like his father, he is disgusted by the government and feels no pride at the congratulations he receives when he finishes his mission. After seven years, he is still not consoled about Samuel's death. However, Isabel Two and the children she has with Tristan calm him somewhat for a few years.



Legends of the Fall, Chapter 3 and Epilogue

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 3 and Epilogue Summary

Just after the stock market crash, Tristan, Isabel Two, Decker, and two ranch hands make a trip to deliver cattle. At a celebratory dinner, they all watch another party who is rich from smuggling liquor. Tristan buys whiskey to take home and sell to neighbors. On the way home, the procession of car and horses must stop for a roadblock. The officers shoot their rifles into the air aimlessly, and one bullet ricochets and kills Isabel Two. Tristan beats the officers nearly to death. He picks up Isabel Two and carries her for miles.

Officers come to arrest Tristan for the beatings. Pet, Isabel Two's mother, interrupts to tell Tristan that Isabel Three is missing and Tristan goes to find her, singing the death song with One Stab. Tristan spends thirty days in jail, refusing to see Alfred. Tristan also will not talk to anyone but his children, including responding to Susannah's letter. Ludlow refuses to see Alfred as well. Alfred returns home to Washington DC, where Susannah is suffering from a deep depression. When Alfred returns to the ranch, Ludlow leaves to walk in the pasture. Alfred tries to apologize to Tristan. He begs Tristan to write Susannah to help her feel better. Tristan asks Ludlow to remember that Alfred is his son. Ludlow and Alfred finally reconcile and embrace.

Tristan smuggles whiskey through the wilderness and makes a large profit. He makes another run against Pet's wishes, who takes the children away while Tristan is gone. Tristan retrieves them and wires to the Mexican to bring the ship to San Francisco. Alfred buys a house in Helena, hoping Susannah will do better helping Tristan with his children. Isabel comes to help set up the house. Susannah is better, but only because Tristan's letter gives her false hope. Tristan goes to deliver some whiskey for a party at Alfred's house, hoping to avoid Susannah. Instead, she is there and she gets him to make love to her. After he leaves, Susannah cuts off her hair and stays in her room for the party.

The next day, Alfred takes Susannah, Isabel, Pet and Tristan's children back to the ranch. Susannah tells Tristan that she plans to kill herself. Tristan tries to calm her and ends up giving her false hope again. She improves again, waiting for spring when they can be together. Tristan makes his smuggling trip from Vancouver Island to San Francisco. After a meeting about the next run, four men beat Tristan and his crew. Tristan remembers the Irish brothers responsible. When the ship returns after its second run, Tristan is prepared. He unloads the cargo early and shoots the men who come to attack them. Tristan quits the smuggling business, hiring a fisherman and his wife to care for the boat before he returns to Montana to visit his children.



When Tristan arrives at the ranch, Decker tells of the Irishmen looking for him, who think Tristan is already on his way to Saratoga. Tristan quickly goes to Saratoga and disguises himself as a groom at the races. He spots Alfred and Susannah and finds one of the Irishmen. Tristan catches the Irishman alone and kills him in the stalls with the tines of a manure fork. Tristan changes clothes, and follows the other Irishman until he gets a chance to break the man's neck and throw him into a garbage can. Tristan goes back to the races to talk to Susannah. She convinces him to go to her father's racing season house, not knowing Alfred has assigned an aide to watch her at all times. At the house, Tristan tries to put Susannah off, but Alfred catches them in an embrace. Alfred threatens to shoot Tristan, then himself, before Tristan knocks the gun to the floor. Susannah intervenes, saying it is all a misunderstanding.

Tristan goes home to his children and to go hunting with One Stab. Alfred sends a telegram, making Tristan believe he is meeting Susannah at the train. Tristan is surprised to see Susannah's coffin. After the funeral, troopers visit the ranch, but Tristan recognizes the remaining Irishman. Tristan is prepared for his death, but Ludlow shoots the troopers. Decker and the hands bury the bodies and dump the car. Tristan takes the children to Cuba for many years. Isabel Three owns a ranch in Alberta, and Alfred's son by his second marriage owns the ranch.

Legends of the Fall, Chapter 3 and Epilogue Analysis

Isabel Two's death destroys Tristan, who turns into an outlaw, which suits his restless nature. The disgust for the government nurtured by his father turns into a hateful rage with Isabel Two's death. This contributes to the conflict with Alfred, who represents the government as a Senator. Susannah, who has never recovered from Tristan leaving her, further complicates Tristan's relationship with Alfred. Susannah and Tristan at different times both make destructive choices, hoping for opposition. Tristan chooses smuggling during Prohibition in an area where he can easily be caught. Susannah wants to be free of Alfred and return to Tristan. She hopes if she is caught, she will get what she wants. Susannah's sanity is fragile, and Tristan does not know how to handle her. He accidentally makes things worse with his letter and the things he says to keep her from committing suicide.



Characters

Cochran

Cochran is the protagonist from the novel *Revenge* who Mauro finds near the road, naked and wounded. As a farm boy in Indiana, Cochran takes apart a Ford V8 to see how it works. He joins the Navy to work on jet engines and works a twenty-year career with them. His tour in Guantánamo gives him the opportunity to become fluent in Spanish. His tour in Laos ends his marriage. He loses his wife to his brother, who works with their father on a tuna boat in San Diego, where the family had moved when Cochran was a teenager.

Cochran is a leader with an insatiable quest for knowledge and the desire to be best at everything. He has been out of the Navy for two years, trying to adjust to civilian life. His wife cites womanizing as a reason for the divorce, but Cochran has had six relationships he calls infatuations, including his wife. He is used to being in control of the relationship until he falls for Miryrea. He lives in a condo in Tucson. He is in good shape, but has a barbiturate habit as he struggles to adjust to civilian life. He has a bird dog named Doll. Cochran is lonely and bored. He misses his daughter and has made a poster of her fifth grade class picture.

Cochran feels bad about the affair with Miryrea, just as he is becoming friends with Tibey. However, he feels that loving Miryrea is the best thing he has ever done. Through losing control of that relationship, he also becomes more alive than ever in his life. The beating changes him to the extent that he becomes murderous. He wants to be reunited with Miryrea, but thoughts of revenge eat away at him, making it impossible to find the life he wants.

Tibey/Tiburón/(Senior) Baldassaro Mendez

Tibey is the antagonist in *Revenge*. Tibey is an extremely wealthy Mexican who owns both a Lear Jet and a twin Piper Comanche and frequently spends thousands of dollars on banquets. He has an extra house in Tucson, where he uses Cochran as a ringer for his home tennis matches. Tiburón means shark, and Tibey is a shark in many financial dealings, including the border heroin traffic.

Tibey is born in poverty in Culiacán with an Apache heritage. Tibey's father was involved in the Revolution and dies when Tibey is ten. No one ever gives Tibey the same respect as his father. Tibey becomes an arrogant pimp in Mazatlán by age fourteen and later gets into the drug traffic. Tibey's business grows to include international real estate. He divorces his first two wives as he moves up socially. He marries Miryrea to provide access to Mexican social life.

Tibey seeks revenge on Cochran and Miryrea because of what other people will think, not his own motives. He is truly sad over losing Miryrea, but recognizes that losing a



woman is not the end of all things. He goes through with his spiteful revenge anyway, partly driven by his crazy henchman, who everyone calls The Crazy One. However, even in the midst of his horrendous actions, he regrets them. He wants to run away in his regret and sorrow. He makes a decision at the end to not kill Cochran, which allows the lovers to be reunited, however briefly.

Miryea

Miryea is the tragic heroine of *Revenge*. After being born in Mexico City, Miryea lives in Guatemala and Barcelona. She goes to school in Lausanne and Paris. She has the refined tastes of a rich woman, but is cold and neutral in her personality. Under the mask, however, she is passionate and knowledgeable. She is graceful and beautiful. Miryea is a victim both of falling for Cochran and the revenge that Tibey seeks. Though she tries through helping the autistic children, she does not escape from her victimization.

Mauro

Mauro is the Mexican peasant in *Revenge* who finds Cochran. He is the custodian and ambulance driver for the mission. He is an attentive hunter and was once a bandit. He knows some first aid through helping Diller. He has one daughter who helps in the kitchen.

Diller

Diller is the Mennonite priest and doctor at the mission in *Revenge*. He is deeply religious and does not succumb to vices except gluttony, although he once drank a great quantity of mescal when his wife left him. He loves the scenery of this rural Mexican setting and the primitive people he serves. The people allow his message because of Diller's medical skill. His most interesting cases are drug smugglers. He also drugs aged cancer patients to ease their misery.

Diller gives up his annual leave to return to North Dakota because he finds sitting around praying for the world's heathens boring. He would rather be with the heathen in their country with all of their faults and sufferings. Diller at times takes Dexamyd when he must stay awake all night. This little secret, along with his obesity, gives him the opportunity to flirt with death.

Antonio

Antonio is the effeminate male nurse at the mission in *Revenge*. He makes frequent trips to Nogales or Hermasillo. Diller appreciates his cooking and singing.



Hector

Hector is the captain of the Federales in Revenge. He enjoys Diller's food, company, and medical advice. He is sensitive to Diller's religiosity.

Aeromexico Pilot

Cochran's friend in Revenge is his doubles partner and a pilot for Aeromexico. He gives Cochran advice about Tibey, as well as money and a gun. He provides Cochran with the useful contact of his politically connected brother.

Aeromexico Pilot's Brother

In Revenge, the Aeromexico pilot's brother is an official in the Mexico City government. He plays the part of a politician well, including his pinstriped suit and demeanor. However, he does not want to get too involved in Cochran's revenge because he has a family that he must protect. He helps Cochran because he loves his brother and his brother cares for Cochran.

Texan

The Texan in Revenge is a first rate horseman who was once a rancher himself. However, he squanders most his fortune when his wife leaves. The Texan is delivering a stud horse, dressed in fine rancher clothes and speaking fluent Spanish. The Texan has lived a hard life that has finally caught up to him. He is coughing and weak from illness. He only accepts payment for his work in cash. He dies after the delivery, providing Cochran with a large sum of money for his revenge and search for Miryea.

The Elephant

The large man in Revenge who beats Cochran and Cochran later kills at the cantina is called The Elephant in Tibey's circle. However, the reader does not learn the man's name until near the end of the novel.

Amador

In Revenge, Amador is a man built like a linebacker who knows Tibey but works as a security guard for the other ranches and mines in the area. He is a patient man who knows the rules of revenge. He helps Cochran with all of the details of his plans for revenge and to get Miryea back.



Actress-model

The actress-model in *Revenge* is a stereotypical superficial woman who is impressed that Cochran is straight but not interested in her. She tends to be hysterical about her cat. She provides Cochran with a reason to stay longer at his leased villa, though they have nothing more than an amicable acquaintance.

The Crazy One

Tibey's henchman in *Revenge* is known as The Crazy One, although the reader does not learn this until the end of the novel. Tibey refers to him as a psychopathic threat. The Crazy One seems to drive Tibey's revenge more than Tibey's own feelings about the affair.

Nordstrom

Nordstrom is the main character of *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. In Wisconsin, Nordstrom helps his father build cottages over the summer, leading to an athletic physique. He loves swimming and track, but he loses these passions in college as an economics major working in the statistics library. He meets Laura at the University of Wisconsin, where he graduates magna cum laude. Nordstrom and Laura marry after graduation and move to California. Nordstrom becomes a vice president for Standard Oil of California by the age of thirty-five. His friends and relatives fantasize about Nordstrom's success, but he does not value business success.

Laura and Nordstrom have a sexually satisfying relationship. However, sex and their daughter are the only things that bring them together. Nordstrom has a secret imagination and sense of humor that Laura does not understand. He is also jealous of her glamorous career. When Sonia is in high school, they lose interest in each other. Nordstrom begins a series of unsuccessful experiments to find meaning in his life. Life remains empty and flat. Nordstrom and Laura divorce when Sonia goes to college.

After the divorce, Nordstrom moves to Boston. He begins dancing by himself for exercise and to ease his loneliness. His lack of sexual activity brings a feeling of deadness and emptiness, but Nordstrom begins to realize that there is more to life than sex. He does not know how to get what he wants in life, but starts to understand that he is in control. Once he takes control of his own destiny, things start to change for him. He rents a summerhouse in Marblehead, where he cooks and entertains Sonia's college friends. He has a short affair with one of Sonia's friends and finally accepts the divorce. Nordstrom's father dies, and Nordstrom wanders around in the woods.

By Sonia's college graduation, Nordstrom decides what he wants to do. He quits his job, gives away his money, and plans a long trip. He begins living in the moment. When Slats disrupts the family graduation dinner, Nordstrom hits the man, leading to a death threat. Nordstrom decides not to get security help from a friend, wanting to do things for



himself. He throws Berto out the hotel window as if he is throwing his old, dead self away. Nordstrom confronts Slats and they resolve their conflict without fighting. Nordstrom decides to cash in his trip tickets and ends up finding a life he likes in Florida, cooking for a small seafood restaurant and going out on the ocean in his boat.

Laura

Laura is the graceful, beautiful, independent woman married to Nordstrom in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. In dance class, she knows that Nordstrom watches her. She expects him to call. A year later, she asks him out, taking control of the relationship herself. Laura has a successful and glamorous career in film production in California. She has affairs with other men because she does not think she should have to be confined to one lover. Laura spends countless hours with a psychiatrist and uses drugs socially.

Sonia

Sonia is Nordstrom's daughter in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. As a child, Sonia plays tennis with father until she breaks her ankle. She and Nordstrom smoke pot together, and Nordstrom realizes that he does not really know her. He promises her a car after college graduation. Sonia goes to Sarah Lawrence and meets Phillip. She has a number of friends who come to the Marblehead house. She graduates eighth in her class. After graduation, she plans to accompany Phillip to Florence for his fellowship. Sonia does not want Nordstrom's money or the car he has promised her because she wants to find her own way in life.

Father

Nordstrom's father in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* is a builder in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. When he visits Nordstrom in California, he goes fishing, rents boats, eats too much, and talks about the Depression. In the 1930s he spent four years as a hobo, looking things over across the country. Because of this experience, he feels that anything over subsistence is extra, so he is not greedy. He is a competent builder, but he feels satisfied with the consistent profits from building three cottages a year and does not expand his business. He dies after his friend Henry takes him to the hospital for heart problems.

Mother

Nordstrom's mother in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* writes him letters.



Phillip

Phillip is Sonia's Jewish boyfriend in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. He attends Harvard and is interested in art history and contemporary music. He talks in complicated sentences and makes tangents about art and history, leading Nordstrom to believe Phillip is too smart. Phillip feels a freedom at age fourteen when his father dies. Feeling he has no one left to judge him, he stays up late and smokes cigarettes. Phillip wins a fellowship to study in Florence.

Henry

Henry is Nordstrom's father's friend in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. He is an Ojibway Indian who works as a carpenter. He drinks too much. Henry gets angry at Nordstrom as a child for shooting a crow because he is superstitious. Later, when Nordstrom saves and cares for a crow, Henry is delighted when Nordstrom shows up with the crow on his shoulder. Henry gives Nordstrom a ride after Nordstrom has been lost in the woods.

Sonia's Friend

The author never names the girl with pear-shaped breasts in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. After getting sunburned at the Marblehead house, she and Nordstrom share a joint and make love in the kitchen and later on the deck. Nordstrom takes her to the airport where a business associate believes correctly that she is not just one of Sonia's school friends.

Ms. Dietrich

Ms. Dietrich is Nordstrom's secretary in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. She is in her thirties, has a husband but no children, and works hard enough to run the whole company. Her unsatisfying sex life with her husband leads her to make a move on Nordstrom after working late one night. At Nordstrom's farewell dinner, she has plans to bed him again, but she gets too drunk and has to go home.

Laura's Psychiatrist

Laura spends hours with a psychiatrist in California in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. He is arrested for masturbating in public on Rodeo Drive. However, after he goes to Colorado for treatment, he returns to usual business and same clients.



Nordstrom's Psychiatrist

Nordstrom consults a psychiatrist in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* when everyone thinks he is crazy for giving away his money. The psychiatrist thinks Nordstrom is harmless but passionate, and recognizes Nordstrom's desire to get away from his unsatisfactory life.

Sarah

Sarah is the waitress-dancer in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* that Nordstrom has noticed at a restaurant in the Village. Phillip's friend knows about her and invites her to Sonia's graduation dinner. She likes Laura and Sonia and makes frequent trips to bathroom with Laura for cocaine. Sarah and Slats regularly put on the act that he is the mean husband to extort money from sympathetic men. She is not a great actress, and Nordstrom sees through the act.

The Sephard

The Sephard is Phillip's friend in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*. He comes to the Marblehead house and helps Nordstrom cook one night. Nordstrom has the Sephard plan Sonia's graduation dinner and invite Sarah. Nordstrom respects his knowledge and plans to discuss cooking schools with him.

Slats

Slats is the man in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* who grabs Sarah at the Sonia's graduation dinner. When Nordstrom hits him, Slats threatens him. He pretends to be Sarah's husband to try to extort money from sympathetic rich men. Slats backs off from the extortion plan after Nordstrom apologizes and buys drugs from him.

Berto

In *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Berto is the Italian thug helping Slats. He pulls a gun on Nordstrom at the graduation dinner and breaks into Nordstrom's hotel room to scare him. However, Nordstrom is ready for Berto and throws him out the window.

Tristan

Tristan is Ludlow and Isabel's impulsive middle child in *Legends of the Fall*. He curses God for not bringing his mother home when he is twelve and gradually becomes a non-believer. He never completely forgives her for leaving, even though she returns each spring. He learns many things from One Stab, including hunting and scalping. Tristan is intolerant of intolerance. He is generous and restless.



Tristan damns God over Samuel's death, making destructive choices in his life after that. He marries Susannah in spite of his grief, hoping that she will bear a son to replace Samuel. However, he leaves her just a few months later to roam the seas. He does not return home for seven years, eventually writing Susannah to marry someone else. When he finally returns to the ranch, Isabel Two and their children calm him for a time. However, when Isabel Two dies, he becomes restless and wild again. Tristan courts death when he begins smuggling liquor, and finds trouble with the Irish gang over the Seattle smuggling business.

Tristan shares his father's disgust of the government. He only enters the army to watch out for Samuel. When Samuel dies, Tristan blames the government. Tristan only completes the British mission because his grandfather told him it was the only way to keep the schooner. He has no respect for the accolades he receives. When Alfred becomes a senator, Tristan becomes conflicted, although their relationship is already strained by Alfred marrying Susannah.

Alfred

Alfred is the oldest son in Legends of the Fall. He is prayerful and stodgy. He never learns to ride a horse well and falls while in the war. He comes home because of his injuries, bringing Samuel's heart to bury. Alfred is secretly jealous of Tristan about Susannah. Alfred becomes a politician, straining his relationship with his father and Tristan. When Tristan writes Susannah to marry another, Alfred takes the opportunity, although Susannah does not love him.

Samuel

Samuel is the youngest son in Legends of the Fall. He has spent a year at Harvard, for which his family is very proud. He likes the homesteader's daughter and gives her his watch for safekeeping, promising to write her. He dies in the war.

Isabel

Isabel is an independent woman and Ludlow's wife in Legends of the Fall. Isabel is a steady force in Ludlow's life, although she leaves the ranch each winter to enjoy more civilized companionship and milder winters in Boston. She takes lovers each winter. She plans for Susannah to marry Alfred and tries to keep Samuel out of the war. She disapproves of Susannah marrying Tristan, perhaps knowing of Tristan's restless spirit. She plans Isabel Two's wedding to Tristan and helps Susannah with her new house in Helena.



Ludlow

William Ludlow is the retired Army Colonel in Legends of the Fall. Ludlow loses respect for the government when no one responds to his recommendations for the treatment of Indians in Montana. Ludlow secretly favors Tristan over his other sons for his misbehavior, just as he privately approves of One Stab's Caucasian scalps. He takes Decker on as ranch foreman, even though he suspects he has committed a crime. Ludlow becomes more and more reclusive. He has a stroke, taking his capacity for speech. When Tristan returns from his seven years at sea, Ludlow writes his questions on a slate he wears around his neck. He also writes long letters, which Tristan answers at dinner.

Susannah

Susannah is betrothed and married to Tristan in Legends of the Fall. She marries Tristan before Samuel's funeral, against Isabel's wishes, as well as her father's wishes. She seems to understand Tristan's need to leave, but she never gets over her grief when he does not return. Her mental health deteriorates under the pressures of being a senator's wife when she marries Alfred. She remains childless, further compounding her mental problems. She manipulates Tristan to try to win him back and finally commits suicide when she fails.

One Stab

One Stab is an old Cheyenne in Legends of the Fall who is friends with Ludlow and like a father to Tristan. He teaches Tristan the ways of a hunter. He watches over all the characters living at the ranch.

Roscoe Decker

Roscoe Decker is the ranch foreman in Legends of the Fall. He comes to the ranch on the run from a crime, and Ludlow protects him. He marries a Cree woman named Pet, and is father to Isabel Two.

Pet

Pet is the Cree woman in Legends of the Fall who marries Decker and is mother to Isabel Two. Under Isabel's training, she becomes cook for the ranch.



Isabel Two

Isabel Two is the half-breed child of Decker and Pet, named after Ludlow's wife. Decker calls her Two to avoid confusion. Ludlow tutors her in her youth. She marries Tristan when he returns from sea, and bears two children.

Grandfather/Captain Ludlow

Ludlow's father in Legends of the Fall is a sea captain who sails almost his whole life. He hates that Ludlow bought him a boat, and sends money to repay him little by little. Captain Ludlow teaches Tristan everything he knows about sailing and gives Tristan the schooner.

Samuel Decker

Samuel Decker is the first child of Tristan and Isabel Two in Legends of the Fall, named after both his uncle and his grandfather

Isabel Three

Isabel Three is the second child of Tristan and Isabel Two in Legends of the Fall, named after her grandmother and mother.



Objects/Places

Ambulance

A Dodge Powerwagon serves as the mission ambulance in *Revenge*. It has a canvas cover and a cot in the back. Mauro uses the ambulance to drive Cochran to Hermasillo.

Mission Clinic

The clinic where Diller nurses Cochran back to health in *Revenge* has only one private room. Cochran spends a month in the room.

Necklace of Coyote teeth

In *Revenge*, Mauro's mother's necklace is made of coyote teeth. Mauro hangs it over Cochran's bedpost during the supposed coma. Cochran keeps the necklace on as a talisman to help him destroy his enemies.

Pearl-Handled Knife

In *Revenge*, Mauro gives Cochran a pearl-handled, razor-sharp knife, which he says is lucky, to use for revenge. Cochran uses it to kill the Elephant at a cantina outside Hermasillo.

Cigar Box of Money

In *Revenge*, the Texan only accepts payment for his delivery in cash. The rancher pays him for delivering the stud horse with a cigar box full of money. When he dies, Cochran thinks of counting the money to get it to the Texan's heirs and the horse trader in Arizona, but then he uses the money for his guise in his revenge plans.

Durango Whorehouse

In *Revenge*, Tibey puts Miryea in an awful whorehouse in Durango as part of his revenge on her. The madam keeps Miryea high on heroin to receive her punishment of sex with hundreds of the worst men.

Nunnery/Asylum

In *Revenge*, Tibey moves Miryea to the asylum run by nuns after Miryea kills a man at the whorehouse. He gives the nuns a letter begging them to save Miryea's soul, with a



large sum of money and a promise to repeat the donation annually to keep Miryea there. The asylum is in a run down nobleman's estate.

Miryea's Guadalajara folk song

In *Revenge*, Miryea sings her Guadalajara folk song to Cochran. Later, he sings it at the mission, where it overwhelms him with sadness. When he starts his quest for revenge, he sings or whistles the song for strength. Miryea sings the song again in her raspy voice just before she dies.

Villa

In *Revenge*, the villa is a house that Amador leases for Cochran's stay near Durango to look for Miryea. The house is on the southern outskirts of Durango.

Apartment in Brookline, Massachusetts

In *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Nordstrom moves to the Boston area to work as a vice president for a book wholesaler and to be near his daughter at Sarah Lawrence. He recreates a happy memory with his bedroom décor and takes up dancing alone.

Rhineland

Rhineland is the northern Wisconsin town where Nordstrom's parents live in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*.

Beverly Glen

While Laura and Nordstrom are separately successful in California in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, they buy an impressive home in Beverly Glen.

Marblehead House

Nordstrom leases a house at Marblehead in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* to spend the summer with Sonia.

Islamorada, Florida

In *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Nordstrom finally stops searching when he gets a job at small seafood restaurant in Islamorada, Florida. He lives in a one-room tourist cabin and saves his money in the freezer instead of a bank.



Ranch

Ludlow's ranch in Choteau, Montana is the main setting of *Legends of the Fall*. Ludlow purchases it inexpensively because there are no minerals on the property, but it is lush enough to raise more cattle than he wants to maintain.

Canyon

In *Legends of the Fall*, the canyon with a spring becomes the graveyard for the characters as they die, including Samuel, Isabel Two, and Susannah.

Schooner

Captain Ludlow's boat in *Legends of the Fall* is the setting of Tristan's seven years at sea and the means for smuggling liquor from Canada into California.

Packard

Ludlow buys a Packard automobile in *Legends of the Fall*. Tristan uses the car for his first whiskey delivery, when Isabel Two is accidentally shot.

Paraffin Canister

When Samuel dies, Tristan cuts out his heart. He and his companion encase the heart in a canister in paraffin to send home with Alfred to be buried at the ranch.

Elephant Gun

On the British war mission, Tristan and his crew find a case of guns, which they use for rifle practice. One of the guns is an elephant gun. Tristan later uses the gun against the group that attacks the ship after he starts bootlegging out of San Francisco.

Gold Watch

Samuel gives his gold watch to the girl he meets at the homesteader's house. After she learns of Samuel's death, she returns the watch and letters to the Ludlow family.

One Stab's Skinning Knife

Tristan loses his skinning knife in the war. One Stab gives him his knife when Tristan leaves for his time at sea. Tristan keeps it until his death.



Themes

Being a Victim

The first novel of this collection begins with a victim, as Cochran lies dying from his beating in *Revenge*. He is lucky that Mauro and his daughter travel the same road where Cochran was dumped. Cochran is also lucky that Mauro is observant, noticing the vultures waiting for Cochran to die. Cochran thinks of other instances in his life when things just happen to him, as if he has no control, such as his marriage and divorce, and playing tennis for Tibey. Miryea is also a victim. Although she initiates the relationship with Cochran, once Tibey begins to punish her, she never escapes from her victimization. She attempts to regain control of her life by stabbing the man at the whorehouse and by trying to help the autistic children. However, both attempts end badly, and she gives up. She wishes her father could help her, but she does not dare hope that Cochran can save her. Even Tibey feels like a victim. He is a victim of his father's legacy and the poverty of his youth. He escapes the poverty of his youth, but he cannot truly gain access to the wealthy Mexican social class without Miryea. Once he knows he must do something about Cochran and Miryea's affair, he is once again victim, this time to social expectations. He really does not want revenge, but feels he must go through with his ruthless actions.

In *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Nordstrom also feels like a victim. He feels that his life has just happened to him like a dream. The only reason for his marriage to Laura is the chance of it raining one Friday evening. Nordstrom takes no credit for his business success, or rather feels that it is unimportant, and has happened in spite of what he wants out of life. As he struggles to take control of his life, other things happen randomly, such as sex with the girl at the Marblehead house and Ms. Dietrich. Nordstrom feels that the toilet is the only place in his life where he really has control. Nordstrom finds life too surprising, even expected things like a parent's death or Laura's presence at their daughter's graduation. He feels a loss of control as everyone at the graduation party denounces him for trying to give Sonia money to buy a car.

Tristan responds to the tragic events in his life a little differently in *Legends of the Fall*. He feels responsible for both Samuel's and Susannah's deaths. However, his life is a string of events over which he has little control, although he tries. He retreats to the sea in his grief over Samuel. Tristan knows that if he does not complete the British mission, he will lose the schooner. After that, he bases his life on a series of coincidences and circumstances for six years. He becomes a true victim when Isabel Two dies and he must spend the first month of his mourning for her in prison.



Rejecting Traditional Values to Take Control of One's Life

All three main characters stray from traditional values without guilt as they seek to take control of their lives. Adultery, drugs, and even murder become acceptable as the characters struggle with their experiences of life. This theme ties in closely with the theme of Being a Victim.

In *Revenge*, Cochran goes through a radical life change similar to a conversion. He rejects the rules that he has not taken part in making. However, before his conversion, he is already struggling to take control of his life, which lacks anything interesting except for his daughter. When he retires from the military, Cochran cannot seem to find himself. He is bored and lonely. When Cochran takes control, the normal rules no longer matter. He knows he should not fall in love with Miryea, not only because she is married, but because Tibey has a reputation for vengeance. However, when Miryea makes a move, Cochran ignores all the warnings. Later, he feels no regret for murdering the man who beat him and takes the dead Texan's money to carry out his quest. He is also prepared to kill Tibey to be with Miryea.

The entire story in *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* is about Nordstrom's decision to take control of his life. He feels unsatisfied with the life that just happens to him, and wants to fill his time with things more meaningful to him, even if they are simple things. He rejects his marriage and his career, though many people envy his life. He flirts with drugs and has sex with a girl his daughter's age. However, Nordstrom truly takes control of his life once Slats threatens him. Nordstrom handles the threat on his own, and he feels no regret in his murder of Berto.

Tristan in *Legends of the Fall* does not respect traditional values either. He curses God when his mother goes to Boston for the winter the first time when he is twelve. When Samuel dies, he damns God. As if nothing can save him after that, he acts as if he can do anything he wants. He marries Susannah impulsively and then leaves her without any regard to her feelings. Tristan delivers dangerous cargo, almost hoping for the consequences of delivering ivory and opium. He smuggles liquor and beats the officers who accidentally shoot Isabel Two. Tristan kills the Irish bootleggers. All of Tristan's life is a series of actions to attempt to take control of his life after tragic coincidences take his loved ones from him.

Passion

Passion is a recurring theme in the novel. In *Revenge*, Cochran disregards warnings and conventions to be with Miryea. Tibey responds with a passionate revenge, severely beating Cochran, and treating Miryea so harshly that she eventually dies. Tibey's revenge is fueled by his passionate despair over losing Miryea. After Cochran recovers, his quest to find Miryea energizes his life. His mission to find her is energized with a



passion that causes him to ignore all danger. Cochran murders The Elephant, enraged over the part the man played in Cochran's fate.

Nordstrom, on the other hand, lacks passion. Though he and Laura have a sexually stimulating relationship, his life is unsatisfying. Their lovemaking does not constitute enough passion in his life. Nordstrom's search for passion motivates him to completely change his life, first divorcing Laura and moving across the country, then quitting his job and giving away all his money. The life he finds is simple. However, he loves to cook, and he loves the sea. He allows these passions to constitute his life.

Tristan is an extremely passionate character. His grief over losing Samuel is so intense that seven years at sea barely diminish it. Tristan violently reacts to Isabel Two's death, as well. He beats the officers so badly he nearly kills them. His passion also infects Susannah, who can never forgive him for leaving her. She also never forgets her passionate love for him. These passions destroy her.

Style

Point of View

The point of view in *Revenge* is third person omniscient with a broad view at first, including a focus on an unconscious man and a coyote. The view focuses on different characters at first, while the main character is unconscious. Once Cochran gains center stage in the narrative, the point of view usually focuses on him. However, on occasion, the focus shifts to Tibey, Miryea, and some of the more minor characters. This technique is necessary in a story with so little dialog. Without access to characters' thoughts, the story would fail to convey important information about the characters, such as Tibey's motives behind his revenge against Cochran and Miryea. This point of view is also important to add to the theme of being a victim, as Tibey, Cochran, and Miryea all respond differently to the victimization they face.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name is also in third person omniscient point of view. However, this story follows Nordstrom exclusively, with little access to other characters' thoughts or emotions, except through the limited dialog. *The Man Who Gave Up His Name* is almost more of a character portrait than a story, since it does not include much dialog or even action. Therefore, the story requires this type of point of view with intimate access to Nordstrom's thoughts, memories, and emotions. The reader identifies with Nordstrom as he thinks about how he has floated through life and decides to finally take control of his life.

Legends of the Fall also uses the third person omniscient point of view. The author returns to focusing on different characters at different points in the story. The point of view often focuses on Tristan, whose life after World War I is the most interesting. However, including a focus on other characters rounds out the story to be about the entire family and their different fates.

Setting

The three short novels in *Legends of the Fall* are set in many different locations. The author provides sparse details for the settings of the story, and this limits the impact the settings have on the novel's meaning. However, it is not difficult to follow the location of each setting. *Revenge* is set in Tucson, Arizona and several mostly rural areas in Mexico. The mission is not far from the cabin of Cochran and Miryea's rendezvous, just south of the border. Cochran's search for Miryea takes him from Hermasillo, to a ranch not far from Durango, to Mexico City and back to the leased house outside Durango. Miryea spends time at the Durango warehouse and the nunnery in the mountains not far from Tibey's place at Tepehuanes.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name presents various locations of Nordstrom's life, including Rhinelander, Wisconsin, where he grows up and later returns for his father's



funeral, and his home with Laura in Beverly Glen, California. While Nordstrom lives in Brookline, Massachusetts, some of the story takes place nearby, such as the summerhouse in Marblehead and the restaurant in the Village. Nordstrom's confrontation with Slats and Berto takes place in his hotel in New York City. Finally, Nordstrom seems to find himself when he settles in Islamorada, Florida, where his life is focused around the restaurant where he cooks and the boat where he spends his free time.

The primary setting for *Legends of the Fall* is the ranch Ludlow owns near Choteau, Montana. The novel follows the three sons to war. Tristan is well traveled, beginning with his escape from the Paris asylum to his grandfather's house in Cornwall, England. Tristan sails across the Atlantic to Boston and goes back to Montana. He meets his grandfather in Havana, Cuba, from which he sets out for seven years at sea, beginning with a British war mission through the Mediterranean. Different cargo runs take Tristan and his ship to various places, including Singapore and San Francisco. Tristan returns to San Francisco later for his liquor smuggling from Vancouver. He goes to Saratoga for Susannah when he fears she will kill herself. Tristan and Susannah meet at her new house in Helena. Although the novel travels to all of these settings, the ranch with its ranch house, hunting shack, Tristan and Isabel Two's house, and especially the spring-fed canyon that becomes a graveyard are the most vivid settings in the story.

Language and Meaning

All three novels in *Legends of the Fall* are shallow depictions of the stories with little dialog or description. Some of the characters are so vague that the reader may have difficulty keeping track of them. Characters often go pages and even most of the story before the author reveals the character's name. The sentences are often extremely long. The paragraphs often only contain a few long sentences, sometimes jumping from one character to another, or across long periods of time. The author includes back stories liberally. The effect of these long sentences with little dialog makes the storytelling seem like a stream of consciousness telling of events. Though the sentences are sometimes verbose, the text is not difficult to read. Sometimes the reader may have to reread an especially long sentence, but the stories as a whole are so short that they are easy to read. The vocabulary is extensive, but appropriate for the particular stories. The meaning in the three stories is like a view through a steamy window. The stories have the feel of a quickly written first draft, and the reader may wish for more dialog and vibrant settings.

Structure

The structure of *Legends of the Fall* is very straightforward. *Revenge* includes only three chapters. The first chapter focuses on Cochran's recovery and the back-stories leading to his beating and separation from Miryea. Chapter Two shifts to Cochran taking control and beginning his search for Miryea. In Chapter Three, Cochran's helper Amador appears. Cochran and Tibey resolve their conflict and end Cochran's tragic

search for his lover. The Epilogue gives a brief look at how all the remaining characters respond to Miryea's death.

The Man Who Gave Up His Name is four chapters. The first chapter presents back information about Nordstrom's life. The second chapter focuses on Nordstrom's summer with Sonia. In the third chapter, Nordstrom struggles with how to change his life. The fourth chapter shows the conflict with Slats and Berto's murder, finalizing Nordstrom's transition to a new life. The brief Epilogue describes Nordstrom's new life.

Three chapters and an Epilogue tell the story in Legends of the Fall. The first chapter presents the events leading to Samuel's death in the war. The second chapter follows Tristan on his travels to recover from Samuel's death and his eventual return to Montana. In Chapter Three, Tristan becomes an outlaw in response to Isabel Two's death. He also fails to save Susannah. The Epilogue rounds out how Tristan spends the rest of his life.



Quotes

"It's not necessary to know too much about the man who was wounded so badly because he was wounded badly enough to alter his course of life radically, somewhat in the manner than conversion, the sacrament of baptism, not the less an upheaval for being commonplace, alters the Christian, satori the Buddhist." *Revenge*, Chap. 1, p. 14

"Life was better if you were no one's victim." *Revenge*, Chap. 2, p. 41

"He reflected on the beauty of threat: the fatal equipment of the mamba owning a beauty shared by the grizzly, rattler, hammerhead shark, perhaps even the black Phantom he flew - an utterly malign black death instrument." *Revenge*, Chap. 3, pp. 72-73

"The die was cast so deeply in blood that none of them would be forgiven by their memories. Meanwhile he would let his former friend eat his heart away in the fruitless search for his beloved." *Revenge*, Chap. 3, p. 77

"Now he felt totally alone and an edge of panic crept into his soul that would stay with him for years. He thought, 'What if what I've been doing all my life has been totally wrong?' He sat in the den the entire night thinking it all over. By dawn he decided he wanted to escape into the world rather than from it: there was nothing particularly undesirable or repellent in his life, only a certain lack of volume and intensity; he feared dreaming himself to death, say as a modest brook in a meadow eases along sleepily to a great river just beyond the border of trees." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 1, p. 114

"I am no longer torn to pieces by the collapse of my life but I have no idea what should come next. Perhaps nothing." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 1, p. 124

"He was rather suddenly not much interested in past or future, or even his breaking heart that perhaps now felt the first itch of healing." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 2, p. 131

"His own life suddenly seemed repellently formal. Whom did he know or what did he know and whom did he love? Sitting on the stump under the burden of his father's death and even the mortality inherent in the dying, wildly colored canopy of leaves, he somehow understood that life was only what one did every day. He seemed to see time shimmering and moving up above him and through the leaves and down around his feet and through his middle. Nothing was like anything else, including himself, and everything was changing all of the time. He knew he couldn't perceive the change because he was changing too, along with everything else. There was no still point." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 2, p. 142



"You only approach total control in the toilet, Nordstrom thought and laughed. Outside the toilet there were bound to be surprises and not all of them pleasant." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 4, p. 164

"There was naturally a toilet in there which meant he was in control again. If one sat on the stool, he thought, that made one the king of a dubious country about six-by-eight feet, but only if you could lock the door and in this case you couldn't." *The Man Who Gave Up His Name*, Chap. 4, p. 168

"Who reasons death anymore than they can weigh the earth or the heart of beauty?" *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 1, p. 197

"Isabel saw all their lives becoming history in units of days and nights so fatally private there was no one left for her to love." *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 1, p. 225

"And God knows what Tristan wanted other than to revive the dead: his brain was the remnant of carnage, a burned city or forest, cold scar tissue." *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 2, p. 245

"No grace is isolate, and it was to a greater part the people he loved, but could scarcely comprehend as people when he left, who led him into light and warmth . . ." *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 2, p. 250

"But he was well past simple notions of vengeance and perhaps grief had coarsened and poisoned him to the point that he knew there was no evening the score with the world, because even if he could that would not recreate the woman who the rain had beat against until her long black hair had sung against his legs." *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 3, pp. 262-63

"No one has figured out how accidental is the marriage of the blasphemy and fate. Only a rather old-fashioned theologian might speculate on Tristan damning God so many years before in France when he and Noel encased Samuel's heart in the paraffin. The contemporary mind views such events properly as utterly wayward, owning all the design of water in the deepest and furthest reaches of the Pacific." *Legends of the Fall*, Chap. 3, pp. 272-73



Topics for Discussion

In *Revenge*, what makes Tibey and Cochran stop their vengeance? Discuss the importance of revenge in all three stories. In what ways do other characters attempt to get even? In what ways do they resign themselves away from revenge?

Discuss the importance of Nordstrom's dancing habit. What does his dancing all night at the end of the novel signify?

Discuss the relationship between Tristan and Susannah. What does Tristan's treatment of her say about his character? Discuss Tristan's other relationships and the effect of each on his life.

Discuss the affect of Tristan's blasphemy on his life. In what ways does his blasphemy affect his circumstances or influence his decisions?

Discuss the limited use of dialog in the novel. How might more dialog change the novel?

Compare and contrast the three main characters, Cochran, Nordstrom, and Tristan. How are they alike? In what ways do they differ? How do their similarities and differences influence the meaning of the novel?

The sea plays a role in the three main character's lives. Discuss the special significance of the sea. What does it symbolize to each character?

Discuss the appearance of drugs in all three novels. Cochran uses barbiturates habitually before his affair with Miryea. Nordstrom toys with marijuana. Tristan enjoys his experience with opium and becomes a drug and alcohol smuggler. Explain how drugs affect each character and the choices they make.

Discuss the similarity in the fates of Miryea and Susannah. Both women are depicted as victims. Is the author making a broader statement about women?

Discuss how the various characters in each story need each other and rely on others for help (or not). What is the importance of loss?