

The Revenant Study Guide

The Revenant by Michael Punke

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Plot Summary

The Revenant: A Novel of Revenge is a historical fiction novel written by Michael Punke. The story takes place along the Missouri River in 1823. The trappers of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company are traveling upwards, on their initial path to Fort Union. One man in this party, Hugh Glass, is ferociously attacked by a mother bear, leaving his body slaughtered and on the brink of death. Everyone in the group, including Glass, believes that it's only a matter of time before the inevitable happens. When Captain Henry orders two men to stay behind and keep watch on Glass until his death, Fitzgerald and Bridger volunteer.

The men are meant to stay behind and bury Glass after he has died, and in return, they will receive \$70. On the third day, Fitzgerald, fed up with being so far behind the rest of the group, abandons Glass, and takes his precious rifle and knife, leaving him with nothing to protect himself. Bridger initially protests his actions, but eventually runs away from Glass to catch up with Fitzgerald.

The Revenant is filled with fascinating and true historical details. The definition of a "revenant," from the title of the book, is a person who returns, supposedly from the dead. The basic premise the readers follow is Glass's will to not only survive, but get revenge on those who wronged him. Somewhere within him, He proves himself indestructible when he finds the strength to crawl 200 miles in pursuit of finding those who abandoned him and stole his belongings. This is a story of obsessive retribution and heroism.



Chapters 1-5

Summary

Chapter One begins with Monsieur William H. Ashley writing a letter to James D. Pickens about the state of events that has unfolded with their troops. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company had been attacked by the Arikara, killing 16 of their men, wounding several others and stealing their horses. This was a major setback, as it caused Ashley to retreat while requesting the support of many others, including the U.S. Army. They retaliated against the Arikara with 700 men, and he vaguely describes how they were able to discipline the Arikara for their betrayal. However, more than 900 of the Arikara warriors escaped, who are now on the loose and a definite threat to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company as they continue their journey.

In Chapter Two, the story dives into the 11 trappers sitting around their camp, speaking quietly amongst each other while they wind down the day. William Anderson asks Hugh Glass if he thinks his brother suffered before his death, and Glass kindly answers that he doesn't believe he did. Fitzgerald butts into the conversation and lays down insults on the deceased man, which causes a physical fight with himself and Anderson. Jim Bridger is assigned to get watch during the night, with Fitzgerald and Anderson taking over the second watch. Captain Henry tells Glass he wants him and Black Harris to hunt the following day, so the group can have some meat to eat. He tells Glass a story about George Drouillard, Corps of Discovery, who was killed by Blackfeet. Glass's rifle is detailed as the one extravagance of his life and as having a deep significance to him. Bridget accidentally sets off his rifle in the darkness, claiming that the hammer slipped. Fitzgerald blames Bridger and tells him that all of their enemies are now aware of their location. Glass steps up and inspects the rifle, telling the Captain that if he had a better rifle, this wouldn't have happened.

In Chapter Three, Glass and Black Harris have set off to hunt for the group. While Glass is wandering alone, he notices two bear cubs. It starts to register in his mind what lies ahead of him. He hears the growl of a mother bear, who is nearing closer and closer to him. He struggles to form a reaction, and tries to process the most strategic plan for escaping the situation. As the grizzly bear charges at him, he gets a shot off that lands right in the heart of the bear, but it doesn't stop her in time.

Glass is mauled by the bear, shaking and tearing him apart as he screams in agony. She bites his neck, and claws his upper arm, shoulder and throat, before toppling over dead on top of him. Black Harris hears the gunshot and sees the two bear cubs. He shoots one, that is touching Glass's arm, and the other scampers off. Black Harris pulls the bear off of Glass and is horrified to see the damage that has been done. He has never seen human destruction like this before. The worst thing about Glass is his throat, which is completely sliced open, and scalp is dangling off, while his body is completely shredded from head to foot.



The Captain and the rest of the men catch up to them, and see what has happened to Glass. They try to heal him using different methods, such as pouring water on his wounds and sewing up the deep cuts. The rest of the men cut up the bear in order to have a feast for themselves. Glass stays unconscious the majority of this time due to his injuries. They wait all morning for High Glass to die, even digging a grave, but it never happens.

Chapter Four begins on August 28, 1823, while the men are continuing their journey and carrying Glass along the way. Carrying Glass is slowing them down a significant amount and after three days, they have only traveled 40 miles. On normal time, they'd cover twice that distance. Captain Henry announces that he would like two volunteers to stay behind and watch Glass, and bury him once he dies. In exchange, they will receive \$70, which is more than 1/3 of their yearly pay. Everyone ponders the offer for some time, and eventually Fitzgerald and Bridger take on the job. The Captain is suspicious of Fitzgerald but winds up agreeing to the situation.

In the beginning of Chapter Five, the Captain and the rest of the brigade have left, leaving Fitzgerald, Bridger and Glass behind. Fitzgerald's upbringing is detailed, which explains his violent past of starting fights in school, killing a prostitute he was in a relationship with along with another man, and evading men who were out to kill him after losing money through gambling. These experiences led him to join Captain Henry's brigade.

Analysis

The reader is introduced to many of the central characters during these first five chapters. During Chapter One, the story introduces background information on the owner of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, William H. Ashley, and a letter he has written to James D. Pickens about the state of the company.

Important elements in the Second Chapter include our introduction to the novels' protagonist, Hugh Glass and its antagonist, John Fitzgerald. The reader is given a glimpse into the temperament of Fitzgerald with the vile remarks he makes. This is the first time readers are given a look into his personality. The reader sees him starting fights for no reason other than riling people up, and using violence when completely unprovoked. On the other hand, the novel shows how Hugh Glass reacts to his friend's inquiry with kindness and empathy. In these two incidents of Chapter Two, there is a revelation of personalities, and foreshadowing of how Fitzgerald and Glass will behave for the remainder of the novel.

The reader also learns how the Arikara Indians have caused severe destruction of the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. It's important to note that these types of battles will be consistent throughout the novel, as it was a common occurrence during the time period. It's also notable that readers are seeing all sorts of historical facts, that are indeed talking about real people and incidents in history. While the facts are true



historical fiction, Michael Punke comments that his stories about the characters have been invented or are loosely based on the lives of these people.

A common Symbol, and one of the biggest in the novel, is the significance of the Anstadt owned by Glass. Chapter Two tells readers that the Anstadt is the one extravagance in the life of Glass, giving readers a prelude to the magnitude of its importance. Readers will see this over and over again throughout the novel.

An extreme focal point in the story comes during Chapter Three, when Hugh Glass is attacked by the Grizzly Bear. It's fascinating to see such an intense climax happening so early on in a novel. Glass's body is being shredded to pieces, and we are seeing the very beginning of his suffering. This is a point of very high suspense in the novel.

In Chapter Four, the men are struggling to carry Glass and Fitzgerald is complaining to the Captain that he is killing everyone by continuing to drag Glass along. Fitzgerald's character traits of impatience, arrogance, and a lack of humanity are shining bright every time he opens his mouth. When Captain Henry announces his plan, requesting volunteers to stay behind and care for Glass, we see his strong hesitation as Fitzgerald volunteers. Captain Henry notes to himself that he really doesn't trust Fitzgerald, but he is left with no other option. This gives us a strong hint to what will happen next. Due to Bridger being young and naive, it's predictable that we see him so easily manipulated by Fitzgerald. Bridger continuously fights with his conscience, and his unending feeling of remorse sheds light on his overall good-natured character.

The novel continually changes perspectives going back and forth following Hugh Glass in one direction, and the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade in the other, with new characters joining in as well. The author does this so that the reader can see each character's perspective during the same period of time.

During Chapter Five, while Fitzgerald and Bridger are left alone with Glass, the novel takes readers back in time to the upbringing of Fitzgerald. The reader sees the world through the perspective of Fitzgerald, and the novel explains how he came to the point of joining the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the personal characteristics of Fitzgerald. Were there any foreshadowing elements that might explain his ruthless actions?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the relationship that Hugh Glass had with each of the men on the Rocky Mountain Fur Company before the bear attack. As they weigh their options about staying behind with Glass and accepting the \$70, did they come to any universal conclusion?



Discussion Question 3

Regarding his situation, there are many reasons why Hugh Glass shifts into a state of rage. What do you think is the main component that drives Hugh Glass into this fury?

Vocabulary

parfleche, scabbard, suture, syndicate, calamity, artifice, plews, protrusions, mercenary, imperceptible, flintlock, smoothbore, frisson, crescendoed, futility, lithe, jugular, debaugh, rebuttal, sentry



Chapters 6-10

Summary

During Chapter Six, Bridger takes small and helpful measures to take care of Glass. He puts water up to his mouth, and Glass begins to drink. He puts pine gum on Glass's wounds in an effort to heal them and he applies poultice to his throat. Bridger's childhood and upbringing is described. As a child, Bridger traveled with his family on a great adventure and lived near St. Louis. When he was 13, his mother, father and older brother all died of fever within a month of each other. His little sister survived, but Bridger was left to deal with the financial repercussions. Bridger always dreamt of venturing to the frontier. Back on the campsite, Fitzgerald takes Glass's Anstadt and hands Glass's knife to Bridger. Bridger is horrified to discover what Fitzgerald's plans are: to steal Glass's only means of protection and abandon him alive. Bridger briefly tries to protest, but walks away, following Fitzgerald with Glass's knife in his hand. This is the end of Chapter 6, where Glass is conscious at the time and although he can't speak, his eyes are focused intently on Bridger walking away with his knife.

In Chapter Seven, Glass awakens alone and sees a rattlesnake in his presence. He has a hallucination of the snake biting him twice, but he realizes it was an illusion. This chapter discusses his upbringing, and his passion for geography. Glass' father, worried he might run off to sea, asked a known captain of a ship for Hugh to be taken aboard and cared for. The Captain, Jozias van Aartzen, showed Glass the ways of the sea until his death a decade later. Glass met Elizabeth van Aartzen, whom he fell in love with and planned to marry. A week later, Glass left for Cuba and after a month of living in Havana, his father passed away. His mother asked that he come back immediately to handle the family estate. Unfortunately, he was unable to ever go back to Philadelphia, as he never sailed in that direction.

Back at the Grand, Glass is overwhelmed with the idea of having to travel 350 miles, but he knows he has to continue no matter how long it will take him.

Continuing with his flashback, Glass had escaped the sea with Greenstock and ended up at San Fernando de Bexar. There were arrested by the Spanish and brought before Major Juan Palacio del Valle Lersundi, the local magistrate. He had considered hanging them, but agreed to let them go under the condition that they travel north instead of south. Greenstock was killed by local indians and Glass was captured. Glass covered his face with paint, an act that spooked the superstitious indians when they found him. They concluded he was demonic and cast a spell on them, so Chief Kicking Bull put a necklace around Glass's neck to change the course of action. Glass spent the next year with the Loup Pawnee Indians, and Kicking Bull had adopted him like he was his own son. He received news from his brother that his mother had died, and Elizabeth had passed away from an illness as well. Soon after, feeling like he had nothing left to lose, Glass embarked on his journey with Captain Henry and the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.



Chapter Eight begins with Glass killing and eating the rattlesnake next to him. Despite his pain, he crawls for more than three hours that day. Three more days pass as he crawls his way down the Grand River. On the way, he eats the roots, berries, onions, and anything else he knows to be edible. He knows that in order to regain his strength, he will have to find some meat for nourishment.

In Chapter Nine, Glass stumbles across a buffalo carcass which has been dead for at least four to five days. Against his better judgement and because of his ravishing hunger, he eats every bit of it's contents. Following this, he becomes very ill from the rancid buffalo and spends the next few days recovering. He knows he needs to find some more meat soon or he won't survive. While trying to catch a rabbit, he catches a skunk in a trap, which douses it's spray right in Glass' eyes. He creates a trapping technique using a bow, spindle, tinder, and a fire which help him catch many small rodents.

In Chapter Ten, Glass comes across thousands of buffalo laying beyond the rim of the water. He notices another species on the Texas plains, a pack of eight wolves. He watches as the wolves kill a calf, and then he devises a plan that will give him the chance to be fed. Glass is extremely desperate to eat something of substance, so he considers his options carefully. He decides he will carry sage branches with a fire lit on top to use as a scare tactic for the wolves. After they have taken notice of him, lightning and thunder erupt in the sky, and he knows he will have to act fast before the rain comes. Initially, the wolves don't know what to think, but Glass puts the flame up to their faces, which singes their whiskers and startles the wolves. One wolf bites his shoulder, but as the flames continue to contact the wolves on their belly and groin, they slowly start backing away. Glass manages to scare off all of the wolves and he is able to gorge himself on all that is left of the calve.

Analysis

In this section, the story takes on many major changes, as it covers the period of time where Glass has been abandoned and is forced to pull himself out of the grave and drag himself across several miles. He makes the decision that he will survive, based on the idea of getting revenge on these two men who left him and stole the only things that could've saved him. This becomes the major repetitive theme throughout the novel: revenge. It's important to note that Glass is in such a state that anyone who sees him assumes he is definitely going to die. They are all convinced. Even Fitzgerald seemed to truly believe that Glass is about to die. This is why even the idea of him dragging himself an inch, let alone hundreds of miles, is hard to believe. This is the very aspect of the story that makes it the most triumphant tale.

In Chapter Six, the novel shows how Bridger is taking the best care of Glass that he can. He's nurturing him like a nurse would to a patient, and applying all different types of treatments to make Glass heal and feel better. Bridger's care may be the reason Glass has continued to live longer than expected, because Bridger is keeping Glass hydrated and cleaning out his wounds. After witnessing all the compassion Bridger has shown



him, Glass is extremely surprised when Bridger walks away from him, holding his knife - a huge act of betrayal. Glass completely expects this behavior from Fitzgerald, but the feeling of astonishment he endures when seeing this can be interpreted as the turning point where Glass "see's red." It's easy to recognize the many emotions Glass experiences in this moment. He is filled with anger, but also a great deal of panic, shock, and rage.

In this section, readers are given a glimpse into the childhood and adolescence of Jim Bridger. Readers learn that after traveling around often as a kid, Bridger's mother, father and brother all died of a disease within a month of each other. This may explain why he is in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company at such a young age, and why he demonstrates early leadership qualities. It also likely plays a part of him being an integral figure in real life history.

Chapter Seven teaches the reader about Glass's upbringing and how he became interested in geography. While he is left alone, he has a dream about the rattlesnake, which is a symbol for all of the trouble that lies ahead.

Glass dealt with the death of both of his parents within a month, just as Bridger did. This similarity in their backgrounds leads the reader to view them both sympathetically, as they have both suffered through huge losses in life. Glass is depicted as being on a pirate ship and living a through a wide range of different experiences before joining the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

During Chapter Eight, Glass slides himself across the plains searching for any kind of food. The reader is given the impression that he is near starvation, and if he doesn't receive any nourishment he will die.

Chapter Nine discusses Glass' rage over what Fitzgerald and Bridger's betrayal. Glass' eating of the buffalo, which he knows is likely spoiled, shows the reader his intense desperation for food.

In Chapter Ten, out of desperation, Glass launches into a pack of wolves with a fire torch to scare them off and take their food. Even though he realizes the danger and unpredictability of the situation, he goes through with his plan without hesitation. The reader is able to see at the heart of Glass, just how courageous and daring he can be in desperate situations. The wolves symbolize the many seemingly impossible obstacles that Glass will survive. After Glass survives scaring off the wolves, he eats the buffalo, which is a symbol of him building up strength. This is seen as a precursor to Glass's physical power and energy in the future.

Discussion Question 1

Chapter Seven details the death of both of Glass's parents as well as his beloved fiancée. How has Glass's past helped him cope with his current struggles?



Discussion Question 2

Bridger is shown taking care of Glass in a careful and delicate manner. At this point in the story, why do you think he ends up keeping Glass' knife and abandoning him?

Discussion Question 3

Glass has taken several risks throughout his life, which easily could have ended it had they gone in the other direction. Discuss some of the ways Glass has barely escaped death, and how this has helped make him who he is.

Vocabulary

awl, poultice, inexorably, stilted, pemmican, confluence, venison, traversed, implored, baratarians, mulatto, visceral, trepidation, rudimentary, vigilante, disillusioned, traipse, unmalleable, emanated, redundant



Chapters 11-15

Summary

During Chapter Eleven, Fitzgerald and Bridger are walking alone along the river, discussing directions. Fitzgerald tells Bridger that they did everything they could for Glass, and threatens that he will cut Bridger up if he rats them out to anybody.

In Chapter Twelve, Bridger has a dream that he is being attacked and stabbed with a knife. In the beginning, he can't make out the face, but before he wakes he realizes that the burning eyes staring at him are that of Glass.

In Chapter Thirteen, Glass comes across a lodge in a village where he finds an old woman and her dog. The woman is completely blind and wailing in a language Glass cannot understand. Glass cooks her dinner of corn, broth, and the meat of a stray dog he finds by the creek. The woman is fearful and chanting what Glass assumes is a kind of death chant. By the morning, she has passed away. Glass reflects on the deaths of his lover and his mother, wondering what had been spoken at their funerals.

Before he knows it, four Sioux Indians are inside on their horses. The eldest one is named Yellow Horse. They examine Glass and his wounds from the bear attack. One of the Indians grabs a white worm in his fingers that had been inside the gashes of Glass's back. His back was crawling with these maggots, which horrifies Glass as soon as he sees. The Sioux Indians bring Glass to a medicine man, who pours several vessels containing different ingredients, primarily buffalo urine, onto Glass's back. Although it is the worst pain Glass had ever felt in his life, it kills all of the maggots and overall helps to heal Glass's body. The Pawnee consider Sioux their mortal enemies, but this experience gives Glass a new perception of the Sioux.

In Chapter Fourteen, Fitzgerald and Bridger catch up to the rest of the men in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. They are treated with respect for the operation they are thought to have accomplished. Fitzgerald makes a speech about how deep they had buried Glass as soon as he died, and makes up an additional story about Bridger insisting on making a cross for the grave. Bridger is appalled by this lie, and desperately wants to come clean to the crew, no matter the consequences. Before he can speak, however, he is commended by Captain Henry and lets the story live on.

In Chapter Fifteen, Glass is reintroduced to Kiowa Brazeau, the fort's namesake, who he previously met with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Glass still has trouble speaking, but he quietly tells Kiowa what has happened to him. Kiowa feeds him a nice meal and Glass tells him he is heading to Fort Union, much to Kiowa's dismay. As a way of expressing his gratitude to Yellow Horse, Glass takes the bear claw from around his neck and places it around the Indian's neck.



Glass finally sees his reflection in a mirror, and finds it strange to see his wounds after all this time. A dozen men enter the room at this point. Glass is introduced to Antoine Langevin, who was asked by Kiowa to lead a group up the Missouri in an effort to reestablish ties with the Arikara. There is room for six men and supplies on the boat, and they ask that Glass go along with them. In the group is Toussaint Charbonneau, the husband of Sacagawea as well as a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The other members are Andrew MacDonald (Professuer), Dominique Cattoire, and his brother Louis Cattoire. Glass considers his options, and decides to go along on the journey, leaving the following morning.

Glass is able to pick out some new weapons, a wool cap, mittens, and other tools and food, leaving him feeling like a king. Glass composes a letter to William Ashley, informing him of the situation he is in with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He promises to repay his debt to him, as he had advanced the goods to his account. The voyagers he will be traveling with mostly speak in French, unless they are speaking with Glass directly. Kiowa tries to convince Glass to stay around the lodge for the winter, but Hugh retorts that he has other affairs to attend to. Glass witnesses the Cattiore brothers in a spat which turns into a physical fight, which is quickly forgotten by the two participants. As they take off up the river, the men start singing a tune together. On this day of October 11, 1823, Hugh Glass resolves to never retreat again.

Analysis

In Chapters Eleven through Fifteen, the reader is shown the manipulation that's occurring between Fitzgerald and Bridger. During Chapter Eleven, Fitzgerald tells Bridger that if he tells anyone the truth, he will hurt him. Fitzgerald is clearly holding the power in his relationships with others based on fear tactics.

In Chapter Twelve, Bridger's dream about Glass tells us just how guilty and unsettled he feels about the whole situation. Readers know by now that if Bridger had been watching Glass alone, he would've stayed with him no matter what else was happening around him. He is shown to have deep remorse about leaving Glass behind. This vision is foreshadowing the fact that Glass is still alive and will eventually catch up to Bridger. Several characters in *The Revenant* have dreams, which symbolize something coming to come in the future. This is one example of where Bridger's dream ends up being very close to reality in the future.

In Chapter Thirteen, Glass comes across the old Arikara woman in the village. Although he has no obligation to help her, he resolves to feed her and keep her warm. This again shows Glass's good morals, since the Arikara are otherwise their mortal enemies. It's compelling to imagine what any of the other men would have done in this situation. It wouldn't be surprising if they would have just killed the woman, in retribution for those who have been killed by the Arikara. The old Arikara woman is the lone survivor of a burnt down village. In this way, she symbolizes survival. Glass's show of compassion and humanity is what makes him a virtuous character. The next morning, Glass meets Yellow Horse, who brings him to the medicine man to heal him. When the medicine man



pours the potions onto Glass's back, readers see another display of his fearlessness. Although he describes this as the worst pain he has ever experienced, he doesn't object to the same procedure happening again and again. The medicine man is a symbol of ultimate healing. His name alone gives the reader the impression that he is a healer and will alleviate the pain that Glass is in.

When Fitzgerald and Bridger find their way back to Captain Henry's group in Chapter Fourteen, Fitzgerald's lie about what happened fills Bridger with shame. Not only does he say that they gave Glass a proper burial, but he details a story of Bridger insisting on making a cross for Glass's grave, both of which didn't even come close to happening. Readers are left with the impression that Bridger really wants to come clean, but being praised by the Captain stops him from saying anything.

In Chapter Fifteen, Glass gives the bear-claw necklace to Yellow Horse as a token of his appreciation. He does this because it holds a great deal of value to him and he sees it as a good luck charm. He is very appreciative of all that Yellow Horse has done for him, so he feels this is the perfect gift to give him before he leaves. The reader is introduced to the merry group of voyagers at Fort Brazeau. Glass is still unable to speak very well from the bear attack, but he mumbles his story to the cheerful group of men. Readers are given the impression that the Cattiore brothers often get into physical and verbal fights, but also have a deep love for one another. Readers realize this group is of a jolly bunch, who constantly joke around and poke fun at each other. It is strange to see them serious for any length of time, with the exception of Charbonneau. Their high-spirits and optimism are a red herring in the story, because they are all killed (except Charbonneau) before the reader has the chance to get to know them very well. Although the theme of death is frequent in this novel, it is an unexpected twist to see these strong personalities dying so suddenly. Glass gives these men the impression that he is very quiet and doesn't do much speaking during their voyage.

Discussion Question 1

What differences do you notice among the Voyager men in comparison to those in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company?

Discussion Question 2

Bridger is shown as displaying deep emotional guilt as a result of his actions. At this point in the story, do you think that he will confess to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company about leaving Hugh Glass while he was still alive?

Discussion Question 3

Compare and contrast what is shown about the Sioux to the Pawnee Indians in this novel.



Vocabulary

demarcated, flaxen, famished, chasm, apparition, haphazardly, pommel, confluence, crude, pallet, cordage, sioux, scaffolding, intricacy, retching, palsied, gourds, cathartic, venison, ensign



Chapters 16-22

Summary

Chapter Sixteen marks the beginning of Part Two of *The Revenant*. It is now November 29, 1823, and the voyagers are paddling through the water. Glass's job on the canoe is to be constantly shoveling water out of the boat, since a leak causes a pool of water at the bottom of the canoe. Then men fall into a routine with each other rather quickly. They wake up and have breakfast before dawn, and are back on the water as soon as it is light enough to see. At noon, they stopped to eat jerky and dried apples, and eat again at dinner time. Glass is in charge of killing an animal in the evening for the men to eat. The men smoke tobacco in their pipes several times a day. Each of the men, besides Charbonneau, are the most optimistic bunch of people Glass has ever known. They spend every moment possible laughing and joking around. Glass thinks this is a pleasant way to live life.

La Vierge realizes that no one has heard very much about Glass, so he asks him a few questions. He tells Glass a story about a beautiful maiden named Isabelle. Isabelle noticed a black stallion in a river, who would bring her a new gift each day. Nobody in her family believed her story. One day, Isabelle climbed on the stallion's back and he went into the river. She was never seen again. La Vierge tells Glass that they have been voyagers ever since that day.

In Chapter Seventeen, the Arikara attacked their site the following morning, and Professuer is killed. Shots continue to pour in as the rest of the men scramble for cover. La Vierge is shot while standing in the water. Dominique struggles to hold him above water. Langevin is talking to Glass when a musket ball hits him from the back of the head, killing him instantly. Dominique refuses to leave his brothers side, even as the Arikara are nearing on him. Glass shouts at him several times that they have to leave, but Dominique continues to ignore him. Dominique enters the water with his brother in his arms, knowing that they are both to die.

In Chapter Eighteen, Glass becomes surrounded by three Arikara Indians. They are likely about to attack, before a fourth indian appears in front of him. To his surprise, this indian starts shooting at the other three. Glass realizes he is a Mandan Indian, and he has saved his life. This Mandeh-Pahchu sees this opportunity to rescue Glass and receives praise from his chief, Mato-Topé. The chief has a beautiful daughter who the Mandan is aspiring to be with.

Soon after, Glass and the Manden are being fired at by white men who are suspicious of the two of them together. They are now in Fort Talbot. Glass requests that he have a blanket and some mittens from the men. They angrily tell him they don't have much to spare and that it doesn't look like he has any way to pay them. He tells them he will sign a generous draft of behalf of William Ashley in order to pay them back. They agree to the trade and Glass requests a skinning knife as well. After leaving, he gives the



skinning knife to the Mandan as a "thank you" before walking away up the Missouri River.

In Chapter Nineteen, Fitzgerald, with his \$70 in hand for tending to Glass, decides that he is going back to a life of gambling. He steals a boat in the middle of the night and leaves the Rocky Mountain Fur Company behind him. Captain Henry mulls over the fact that he and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company have been a failure. He decides to abandon the mission to Fort Union.

In Chapter Twenty, Fitzgerald and Glass cross paths without knowing it. Fitzgerald paddles by in his boat, while Glass is sitting around a campfire on the ground. They both take notice of each other without realizing who the other is, and Fitzgerald continues on down the river. Later, Fitzgerald is speaking to a man in town who tells him he has seen Glass. Fitzgerald is astonished that Glass is still alive.

In Chapter Twenty-one, it is New Years Eve and Henry brews beer for his men. They end up getting very intoxicated and are laughing and celebrating in jovial spirits. The men shoot at a tin cup sitting on Pig's head, fire off the cannon and destroy it entirely, and are acting endlessly wild. Just then, Glass comes in the door. He looks around, trying to find the two men he's been searching for all along. Bridger stares horrified at what stands in front of him. Glass is disappointed to find out that Fitzgerald is missing from the group, but he walks right up to Bridger and asks him for the whereabouts of his knife. Before Bridger can answer, Hugh starts punching him over and over. Pig tries to intervene, but Captain Henry says it was up to Glass to decide if he wants to kill Bridger or not. Bridger refuses to fight back and just lets Glass hit him. Glass suddenly realizes how scared Bridger is, and walks away to warm up by the fire.

In Chapter Twenty-two, Fitzgerald gets into trouble with gambling again. He loses his hand of poker, and pulls out a knife to stab a man to the table. He bashes the man's head with a bottle of whiskey and he is grabbed by two soldiers. He is found guilty of assault and must choose between five years in prison or three years in the U.S. Army. Having been in prison before, he chooses the Army.

Bridger has avoided Glass ever since his beating, but now he walks right up to him. Bridger apologizes for leaving him, and Glass simply tells him, "Follow your own lead, Bridger."

Analysis

In part two of *The Revenant*, readers get to know the French voyagers better. It begins with Chapter Sixteen, when the reader sees these new people as an entirely different bunch from any other that seen in the story. They are often rambunctious, funny and optimistic, while the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company are described as more serious, somber and practically humorless. The only man the story describes without a sense of humor is Charbonneau.



During Chapter Seventeen, the cheerfulness of these men may be seen as ironic that all of them, with the exception of Charbonneau, are killed on this journey. There is a strong sense of brotherhood among them, especially the two biological brothers. When Dominique is killed by an Arikara, La Vierge would rather die than leave his side. This bond may be stronger than any other described in the novel.

In Chapter Eighteen, after being rescued by a Mandan Indian, Glass receives some supplies from Fort Talbot. He requests a blanket and mittens and a skinning knife to give to the Mandan, as a token of his gratitude. Glass is shown again to be a gracious and grateful person.

Just as Glass is getting close in Chapter Nineteen, Fitzgerald decides to steal a boat and run away from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. It takes this action to convince Captain Henry to abort the mission to Fort Union.

In Chapter Twenty, there is a great deal of irony in the novel. Fitzgerald is floating by on the river, right under the nose of Glass, and they both take notice of each other. This is the moment that Glass has been waiting for for months, yet he has no idea. Fitzgerald continues down the river without either man realizing what has just happened.

During the New Years celebration in Chapter Twenty-one, Glass walks in and looks around at all the faces for the ones he's been looking for. This moment is the biggest climax in the story. Everyone is in total shock at seeing him alive, and the range of emotions in the room change rapidly. From shock and disbelief, to anger and confusion. Everyone in the room realizes what has happened once Glass starts beating Bridger. It's interesting to note that Captain Henry lets Glass do whatever he wants with Bridger. Even though Bridger is one of his men, the Captain gives the authority to Glass in this situation.

Chapter Twenty-two, the final chapter of this section, discusses how Fitzgerald has run off to his new life of gambling, and as the past had shown him, this isn't an easy way to live. After losing all of his money in a hand of poker, Fitzgerald stabs his opponent and is arrested. In today's era, it would be absurd to give a person who just attempted murder the option of choosing prison or the U.S. Army, especially for a shorter sentence, but these are the options that he is given. The historical facts given in the novel shed a great deal of light into the history of the U.S. Unsurprisingly, Fitzgerald chooses the U.S. Army. Fitzgerald's personality doesn't appear to change throughout the entirety of the novel. He is continuously prone to violence and deceit.

Discussion Question 1

What are the major reasons that lead Captain Henry's decision to abandon Fort Union?



Discussion Question 2

Do you think Glass handles the situation with Bridger effectively? What do you think changes his mind about killing Bridger?

Discussion Question 3

What is the main point of the story La Vierge tells of the beautiful maiden named Isabelle?

Vocabulary

thwart, folly, wattope, docile, gunwale, bramble, tributaries, preening, forelock, dismounted, gruff, abutted, plunder, jute, inadequate, surmounted, jovial, cogent, howitzer, trunnions



Chapters 23-28

Summary

In Chapter Twenty-three, Glass heads off on a messenger mission to St. Louis along with Chapman, Pig and his friend Red. They are in charge of carrying a message from the captain to William H. Ashley. On the first night, they camp at a ravine where Pig is in charge of keeping the late night watch. Two Shoshone boys, Little Bear and Rabbit (12 years of age), come into their campsite and untie their horses. They are about to ride off with them, when Pig wakes up and tells them to stop. Little Bear buries his knife into Pig's chest, killing him.

In Chapter Twenty-four, the men build Pig a grave. They struggle to carry him and drop him twice trying to take him to the burial. Glass finds a trinket on Pig and he wonders what the significance of the item is. Glass speaks The Lord's Prayer during Pig's funeral. The men spend a week building six bullboats to use on their mission. Glass thinks about how easy it will be to spot Fitzgerald, noting that he won't rest until he does.

In Chapter Twenty-five, it is the morning of the fifth day on the boats. Red thinks he has spotted one of the Arikara, which Glass doesn't quite believe. They continue up the river, and Red is shot and killed. Chapman falls into the water, submerging underneath, knowing the Arikara are after him. As soon as he comes up for air, he is killed by a swinging ax. Glass is the only one to escape through many arrows and bullets. He is hit by an arrow in the leg, but manages to pull it out and crawl deep into the willows. Glass climbs up a tree in an effort to hide from the Indians. There is one indian right below him, that he considers jumping on and slitting his throat to give Glass access to the Arikara's weapons, but more of the indians start emerging in the clearing. Glass doesn't move from the tree for more than two hours. When things settle down, he returns to the Platte and continues on to Fort Atkinson.

In Chapter Twenty-six, Glass is spotted by Major Robert Constable. Glass tells him he is a messenger for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and asks if he has seen Fitzgerald. Constable tells him that he is enlisted with them. Glass tells that he is a thief who stole his rifle and knife. A formal courtroom case is conducted and Fitzgerald is brought out. Fitzgerald creates a story about how Glass was so disillusioned from the bear attack that he doesn't remember what really happened. Glass is livid in his seat and cannot believe that his story is working with Major Constable. Every question asked infuriates Glass more and more, and eventually he can't take it anymore. He pulls out his gun and fires at Fitzgerald, hitting him in the shoulder.

In Chapter Twenty-seven, Glass awakens inside of a jail cell. He stays there for two weeks, until Kiowa Brazeau shows up to bail him out. Kiowa is on good terms with Major Constable, and convinces him that Glass is a protege of Monsieur Ashley. Glass is angry that Fitzgerald only receives a punishment of forfeiting two months pay, and he



wants to cause him more suffering. Kiowa convinces him to walk away from the Fitzgerald situation and to go drink some whiskey with him.

In the final chapter on the book, Chapter Twenty-eight, Bridger is approaching the Captain, as no one has seen him off of his quarters for more than a week. The men are all saying that Captain Henry has gone crazy. Captain Henry tells Bridger that he did all the numbers wrong, and it doesn't look like he will be able to keep them on their feet. Bridger tells the Captain that he wants to be sent with some of the men over the mountains to look for Jed Smith. The captain tells him that he knows what Bridger is looking for, and he isn't going to find it. However, he says that if Bridger really wants to go, he will send him.

Analysis

Chapter Twenty-three opens with Glass, Chapman, Pig and Red going off on the messenger mission, while Pig is left to keep watch overnight. When the Shoshone Indian boys come to steal the horses, Pig doesn't know what to say. He tells them to stop, but it frightens them. Little Bear, who appears unaware of the magnitude of his actions, stabs Pig straight in the chest. The scene is played out as if the shoshone boys thought the whole thing was just a game.

In Chapter Twenty-four, After Pig is killed, the rest of the men struggle to carry him to his grave as a result of his heavy weight. Glass has a somber moment when he finds a trinket inside Pig's clothing. This part of the story alludes to the necessity of cherishing life, because as Pig's life is cut short, Glass realizes there are many things he never knew about him and now, he never would.

Chapter Twenty-Five, the Arikara have attacked again, bringing back the recurrent theme of death to Chapman and Red. Glass is forced to climb a tree and stay atop of it for hours, showing his strength and perseverance.

When Glass see's Major Robert Constable in Chapter Twenty-six, he is hoping to find answers of Fitzgerald's whereabouts. When Constable tells him that Fitzgerald is a part of his crew, Glass is elated. They begin the court hearing to testify against Fitzgerald. It's interesting to note the similarities and differences between a modern day court case. Fitzgerald does what is expected of him at this point in the story: He lies. While creating a story that sounds innocent enough, Glass is seething in his chair. It's not the fact that Fitzgerald is lying that bothers him. It's that the Major is believing his every word. Glass has waited so long to get revenge on Fitzgerald, and he starts to realize that might not happen. Without hesitation, he fires his gun and shoots Fitzgerald in the shoulder, leading to Glass' arrest.

At the start of Chapter Twenty-seven, Glass has been sitting in his jail cell for two weeks and is still seething with anger wanting to get his proper revenge. When Kiowa bails Glass out of jail, he talks him out of seeking further revenge, as it would keep him in jail for good.



The final Chapter of the book, Twenty-eight, suggests that Captain Henry has possibly lost his mind. The Captain seems to have irrational thoughts, possibly as a result of failing with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Bridger wishes to be sent on a mission, and although the Captain doesn't believe he will succeed, he tells him he can go if he really wants to. The reader knows from history that Bridger goes on to be one of the most famous frontiersmen of all time.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the actions of Little Bear. Do you think he intends to kill Pig?

Discussion Question 2

Contrast what Glass imagined would happen once he finally saw Fitzgerald, compared to what really happened.

Discussion Question 3

In the last chapter of the book, Captain Henry is described as behaving strangely. What do you think has happened to him?

Vocabulary

segue, ebbed, torrential, extricated, plaintive, vale, carrion, tallow, exertion, precariously, forlornly, ruse, pettifogger, calibrated, epaulettes, truants, muttonchops, pinpricks, palisade, gumption



Characters

Hugh Glass

Hugh Glass is a trapper at the Rocky Mountain Fur Company who becomes victim of a grizzly bear attack. Throughout *The Revenant*, Glass' personality changes quite a bit due to all the trauma that he endures. In the beginning, he is known as noble, admiral and respectable man, who always does and says the right thing. In one instance, he comforts a man who is mourning the loss of his brother. In another, he is spoken about in high regards among the Captain and other members of the crew. He loses parts of this personality after he is attacked by the bear and left for dead. Glass becomes enraged and furious over the abandonment, which leads his character to become more bitter, vengeful and angry. The reader witnesses the hatred consume him on his journey. Every time he is faced with physical pain from his injuries, or he is in imminent danger, it reminds him of how he was betrayed and abandoned by Fitzgerald and Bridger. Glass ultimately settles down slightly as time goes by and the hatred loses its strength.

Glass grew up in Philadelphia, the son of Victoria and William Glass. His father was an English bricklayer who was able to make enough money to be comfortable raising five children. Glass was incredibly successful academically, so his father wanted him to go into law school. Glass was not interested in this; instead, he was interested in geography. His father knew the owner of a Rawsthorne & Sons, a shipping company, and asked that Glass be taken aboard and cared for by the captain, Jozias van Aartzen. The captain treated Glass like his own son. Once van Aartzen died a decade later, Glass became the first mate on the ship.

Glass fell in love with the ship captain's daughter, Elizabeth van Aartzen. He asked her to marry him with a pearl on a golden chain. They planned for the wedding the following summer, which never occurred because Glass never returned to Philadelphia.

Glass's ship was taken over by a mulatto. Instead of being killed, he told the mulatto that he was a "marin," or sailor. As a result, Glass would become a pirate. During this time, Glass found himself stuck. He wasn't a prisoner, but he was unable to escape the criminal enterprise of Jean Lafitte. He managed to avoid killing anyone himself, and justified his other actions in that they were absolutely necessary. Ultimately, the United States President James Madison sent a fleet of American warships to their location. Lieutenant Kearny told Lafitte he could either leave now or be blown away. Lafitte left, along with Glass and the rest of the pirates.

Next, Glass was looking for a new direction in life. He met Alexander Greenstock, who had served with him on the Gulf. He told Glass he was heading to the mainland for a skiff on the South Shore. They took off together, and ended up making a wrong turn along the way. They were arrested in San Fernando de Bexar and brought before Major Juan Palacio del Valle Lersundi. Normally, he would have hanged them, but decided against it this time. He told them they were free to leave as long as they traveled north.



Greenstock was killed when he foolishly shot a horse of one of the Pawnee Indians. Glass woke up in the presence of Chief Kicking Bull and other Pawnee Indians came to carry him into the Pyre (grave), but Glass was face down. They saw this as a sign of fear. Glass had covered his face in red paint, which terrified the Indians as he looked like some kind of demon. Glass rehearsed the Lord's Prayer which further confused the superstitious Indians. Glass spent more than a year living with the Loup Pawnee Indians.

Glass received a letter from his brother informing him that his mother, father and future bride Elizabeth had passed away. The following morning, he left his old life behind and began a new one with Captain Henry and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

Captain Andrew Henry

Captain Henry is the co-owner of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trading Company. He is a kind man, with a genuine personality and tries his best to treat his men well. He initially refuses to abandon Hugh Glass, but this proves impossible when transporting Glass up the terrain isn't attainable. He places two men, John Fitzgerald and Jim Bridger, in charge of watching over him until his death and giving him a proper burial.

John Fitzgerald

John Fitzgerald is a fugitive mercenary that is a member of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He is put in charge of watching over Glass after the grizzly bear attack. Throughout the plot of the book, John Fitzgerald is known to be an overly aggressive and difficult person. From the very beginning of the story, he is unnecessarily rude and starts physical fights with others completely unprovoked. The first time the reader is introduced to his character, he starts a fight with Anderson and continues to say things that will knowingly anger him. Fitzgerald's reputation as a liar and manipulator continues to grow after reuniting with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company men and giving them an elaborate tale about burying Glass while Bridger created a grave. As time goes on, the reader sees him ditching the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, stealing a boat, getting back into gambling, stabbing a man after losing money, and eventually, telling an elaborate and blatant lie while in court. John Fitzgerald is the story's leading antagonist.

Fitzgerald grew up in New Orleans, and was the son of a Scottish Sailor and a Cajun merchant's daughter. After Fitzgerald's father died with his ship sinking into the Caribbean, his mother remarried an elderly man who was the owner of a sundry shop, in order to keep her family's finances afloat. While most of Fitzgerald's siblings flourished into adulthood, he came out somewhere in between.

In early adulthood, he developed a trait for violence and aggression. Early on, he fell in love with a prostitute named Dominique Perreau. Upon walking in on her with another man, he murdered them both and headed North up the Mississippi.



Fitzgerald held fantastic mathematical skills, and was an excellent gambler. After hitting a jackpot worth \$1,000, he quit his job as a bartender and planned to use gambling as a way to make a living. This idea got him into trouble after owing \$2,000 to a loan shark named Geoffrey Robinson. He found another lender to help him pay off this balance, but instead of paying, he decided to use the money to flee Memphis and start over somewhere new. It wasn't long before they were onto him, but he saw an ad in the newspaper that caught his attention. Captain Henry was looking for enterprising young men to join the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

Jim Bridger

Jim Bridger is described as an overall nice and polite young man, and the youngest man among the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He could be described as a little naive due to his young age, but he makes up for it with his intelligence and leadership qualities.

After joining the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, Bridger volunteers for the task of watching over Glass after Glass is attacked by a grizzly bear and is near death. Bridger and Fitzgerald abandon Glass while he is still alive, leaving him without any weapons for survival. It's surprising act when he walks away from a near-death Glass while taking his knife, but the novel describes Bridger facing an almost immediate sense of remorse. He deals with the guilt for the remainder of the time, until he is found by Glass. Afterwards, Glass gives him some words of encouragement, essentially wishing him well. Overall, Bridger is a character with good morals, who made a one major poor decision.

Bridger was born in 1804, at the same time as the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Growing up, his family lived in St. Louis on a small farm. When he was eight years old, his family went traveling on a epic voyage west. The family was made up of his mother, father, older brother and younger sister. When he was 13 years old, all but he and his sister died of fever within the span of a month. Financial problems forced him to take a job with a ferry owner.

After seeing the future of the river on his many experiences, Bridger was captivated by the Missouri River. A conversation that Bridger had with a preacher gave him the idea to travel west. Bridger met Captain Henry while working with a blacksmith. The blacksmith, who knew Captain Henry, told Bridger about an ad in the paper from the captain. This was his chance to join the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade.

Kiowa Brazeau

Kiowa Brazeau is a frenchman whom Fort Brazeau is named after. He is a very intelligent man who helps Hugh Glass in many ways. He has a Sioux wife and comes off as worldly and kind-hearted to those around him. In the end of the novel, he bails Glass out of jail and talks him out of killing Fitzgerald, essentially saving Glass once more in the long run.



William H. Ashley

William H. Ashley is the businessman who owns the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He is the head of command for the troops, and he gives orders to Captain Andrew Henry. After losing several men during an attack by the Arikara, he created a new arrangement to distribute the troops. In the story, it is said that he invented the system that would define an era.

Yellow Horse

Yellow Horse is a Sioux Indian that saves the life of Hugh Glass by taking him to a medicine man. When they initially meet, Hugh Glass's injuries are still catastrophic, and there are bugs living inside his wounds. By bringing him to the medicine man, Glass is cured.

Medicine Man

Medicine Man heals Glass by pouring a powerful astringent made up of buffalo urine. He continues this application multiple times. Glass describes this pain as, by far, the worst feeling he has ever endured in his life. In the end, it needs to be done and ends up saving his life.

Pig

Born Phineous Gilmore, Pig is one of the men in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He was born in Kentucky, and grew up on a very poor farm. He is given the nickname Pig based on his size and the way that he smells. He is massive in size and his odor is overwhelming to those around him. He is killed by a Shoshone boy while keeping late night watch over the campsite of Glass, Red and Chapman.

Antoine Langevin

Antoine Langevin is the leader of the group of voyageurs who go on a journey with Glass.

Toussaint Charbonneau

Toussaint is the husband of Sacagawea. Charbonneau is the only one other than Glass to escape the Arikara attack alive.



Andrew MacDonald "Professeur"

Professeur is a simple-minded man, referred to as a one-eyed Scot. He doesn't seem to understand much when someone is talking to him, and the other men often crack jokes at his expense.

Dominique Cattoire

Cattoire is the brother of La Vierge Cattoire, with whom he often gets into verbal and physical fights with. He is killed by an Arikara, and his brother refuses to leave his side.

Louis 'La Vierge' Cattoire

La Vierge is the brother of Dominique, who fights relentlessly with him but is also very funny and playful. He is killed when he refuses to leave his brother's side after an Arikara attacks the men.



Symbols and Symbolism

Snake

The snake is a symbol of the trouble lying ahead for Glass. Glass has a hallucination of a snake with black eyes biting him and tearing into his wounds. Although the snake is really there, it doesn't attack him.

Anstadt

The Anstadt is the rifle of Hugh Glass, which symbolizes his biggest desire for revenge.

Buffalo

Glass eating the buffalo is a symbol of him building up strength, as buffalos are revered by Native American tribes for their strength and stability. This is seen as a precursor to Glass's physical power and energy in the future.

Pawnee Indians/Superstition

The Pawnee Indians hold firm beliefs in superstitions. Glass begins to act as if he is possessed, which terrifies the superstitious Indians. Instead of killing Glass or keeping him as prisoner, they save his life, not wanting to have any part in harming a "possessed demon."

Wolves

The wolves symbolize obstacles. Glass has to find a way to distract them in order to have food, no matter how impossible the task. He runs up to them flailing his arms and acting insane, knowing that they could kill him at any time.

Bear Claw

The bear claw around Glass' neck symbolizes the good luck it appears Glass experienced in order to survive his bear attack, but it could also be seen as symbolizing Glass' struggle and perseverance to get him where he ends up in life. Glass wears the bear claw of a bear which almost mauled him to death around his neck. In this way, the creature that almost killed him can now potentially save his life. It becomes a good luck charm for Glass.



Pyre/Graves

Burial and graves/pyres are symbols in the Revenant that represent the unceasing death that occurs in this time period. Glass is shown to favor the Native American burial custom of pyres, when he builds a pyre for the old Arikara woman.

The old Arikara Woman

The old Arikara woman is a symbol of survival, as she is the last remaining person in her village after it has been destroyed.

The Medicine Man

The Medicine Man represents the ultimate healing. After being treated by the Medicine Man, Hugh Glass knows he is going to survive.

Dreams

Various characters have dreams during the novel that usually represent a foreshadowing of something to come. For example, Bridger dreams of Glass surviving, finding him one day, and stabbing Bridger. Glass does end up surviving, and he does hunt Bridger down. Although he doesn't stab him, Glass does beat Bridger up badly.



Settings

The Grand River

The American Wilderness, otherwise referred to as the uncharted American frontier, is where a large majority of the story takes place covering various locations of the The Grand River. Captain Henry and his men are dispatched up the river by William H. Ashley. Starting at the Grand River, Captain Henry and his men ascended up as far as possible, leaving Glass behind at the river. They stop before reaching their initial destination of Fort Union, and instead detour and end up at the Fort on the Bighorn.

Glass follows a different path. After he is attacked by the Grizzly Bear, he goes down the river to Fort Brazeau, then to Fort Talbot, Fort Union, and finally, Fort on the Bighorn, where he meets up with the rest of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

Arikara Villages

Glass finds his way into the burnt remains of an Arikara village. Here, he sees an old blind woman and makes the two of them something to eat to regain strength. The next day, he meets Yellow Horse, the medicine man, and other Sioux Indians that have their camp nearby.

Fort Brazeau

Seventy miles south of The Grand River, Fort Brazeau consists of a single log cabin, a dock, and a hitching post. The cabin is partly a sundry shop and the other part a saloon. The fort's namesake is Kiowa Brazeau. This is the first major Fort that Glass stops at following the Grizzly attack.

Fort on the Big Horn

Captain Henry decides to keep his men here after abandoning their mission to Fort Union. After staying for a while, Fitzgerald decides to steal a boat and abandon the crew in this location. This is also the location where Glass finally catches up to the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade, only after Fitzgerald has left. He stumbles in during their New Years celebration and startles the entire crew. Glass zeros in on Bridger and starts punching him senseless. After realizing that Bridger is not fighting back, he stops fighting him.



Major Constable's Courtroom

Glass sits at the bench in the Courtroom of Major Constable's, where he testifies against Fitzgerald. This is a notable scene where Glass becomes outraged listening to Fitzgerald's lies and shoots him in the shoulder. It is because of this that Glass ends up in jail.



Themes and Motifs

Revenge

Overall, the novel claims that revenge is the driving force of Glass, the novel's protagonist. He gains the strength to pull himself out of a shallow grave after he has been viciously mauled by a grizzly bear, based solely on the idea of getting revenge. Every decision Glass makes after being abandoned, has something to do with seeking revenge on Fitzgerald and Bridger, who left him for dead, taking Glass' only means of protection, his gun and his knife, with them.

Glass is motivated to survive solely based on the revenge he is seeking on Fitzgerald and Bridger. Throughout his recovery and many years after, he is constantly thinking about his anger towards the men and how he will get his vengeance once he finds them. It's hard to say what might have happened had he not been so desperately angry.

Revenge also symbolizes Glass getting his life back. Although he has physically survived on his own, he feels it is necessary for him to get retribution before even thinking about resuming his normal life. He sets out on this journey, not only to reclaim his belongings or to simply get on with his life, but for the sake of getting revenge on those who have wronged him.

The definition of a 'Revenant' is a person who has returned, especially supposedly from the dead. This fits perfectly with the theme of the book. Glass, someone who supposedly died from has returned from the dead and has come to seek revenge.

Movement/Travel

Overall, traveling symbolizes change and new beginnings in the Revenant. Throughout The Revenant, Glass travels thousands of miles, covering land in vast regions of the country. Movement is a reoccurring theme of transitioning from place to place. There is always somewhere that needs to be traveled to in this story and the movement doesn't cease throughout the entirety of the book.

The American Wilderness, otherwise referred to as the uncharted American frontier, is where a large majority of the story takes places covering various locations of the river. Captain Henry and his men are dispatched up the river by William H. Ashley. Starting at the Grand River, Captain Henry and his men ascended up as far as possible, leaving Glass behind for dead. They stop before reaching their initial destination of Fort Union, and instead detoured and end up at the Fort on the Bighorn. Glass follows a different path. After he was attacked by the Grizzly Bear, he goes down the river to Fort Brazeau, then to Fort Talbot, Fort Union, and finally, Fort on the Bighorn, where he meets up with the rest of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.



Glass, along with nearly every other character in the novel, is constantly traveling and on the move to a new location. Each mission they go on is for a different reason, but they all have to do with exploring the regions of the west that were, at the time, only known to Indians, and traveling to wherever the rivers might take them. They are essentially paving the way for other pioneers to follow in their footsteps.

In the beginning, the men are traveling because they are instructed to go on an exploration by the owner of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, William H. Ashley. Sometimes their travels are in search of a certain destination, such as to Fort Union for its trapping territory, but in others, they are just trying to escape the Indians and find more areas to explore. Glass has rarely stayed in the same place for longer than a year. He has no home base or place to settle down. With the occupations of these men, it is perhaps a normal way of life during this era.

On all of his journeys, Glass temporarily stays in many places, including Fort Brazeau, Fort on the Big Horn, and endless campsites in various locations.

Death

Throughout *The Revenant*, there are many occurrences of both death and the loss of objects/possessions. While this is a grim theme to explore, it appears in *The Revenant* with an alarming frequency. In the very first chapter of the novel, William H. Ashley informs the reader that there has been many deaths among the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company due to an attack by the Arikara Indians. Sixteen men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company had been killed by Arikara warriors. As the story goes on, readers see these attacks continuing repeatedly. The theme of death symbolizes an end of suffering. Death is an important part of life, and it's important to note how much suffering went on during this time period. The frequent deaths throughout the book help establish how death can be seen as a necessary part of life.

Death consumes major pieces of the novel, with the perishing of several central characters and hundreds of others.

All of the voyager men, with the exception of Toussaint Charbonneau, were killed in the novel. Antoine Langevin, Andrew MacDonald (Professeur), Dominique Cattoire, and his brother Louis Cattoire all died as a result of an Arikara attack on the river. This is significant to the story because it changed the course of whichever path Hugh Glass was on at the time.

The death of Pig was a major event in the story, as Glass, Chapman and Red struggled to bury him. Then, the death of Chapman and Red by the Arikara Indians was significant, as once again, only Glass escaped and survived.

Overall, the theme of death is something that appears again and again in *The Revenant*, and many times, it happens unexpectedly.



Love/Loss

Love and Loss as a theme is very significant to *The Revenant*, as it happens in these many forms, from losing loved ones to losing treasured belongings. In this setting and period of history, death occurs very frequently.

As told in a flashback, the protagonist Glass was with a woman he had planned to marry, Elizabeth, who died while he was away. Both of his parents also died around the same time as his girlfriend. This was a devastating and life altering period of time for Glass, who immediately joined the Rocky Mountain Fur Company following these losses. These deaths clearly contributed to this change in his life's direction.

Readers see another case of love and loss between the Cattoire brothers, La Vierge and Dominique. Although they relentlessly teased each other, they were clearly extremely close as brothers. When Dominique was killed, La Vierge refused to leave his brother's side on the river, causing his own death by not letting him go as well. This was a very deep love that surpassed the will to live without the other person.

In the same way, the loss of material objects is very important to the novel. Glass was clearly very attached to his weapons: his rifle, called the Anstadt, and his knife. When he lost these two items, it was beyond devastating to him. He viewed them as necessary to give him any chance of survival. In his opinion, they were maliciously stolen from him, so this became a central focus for him.

Man vs. Nature

Hugh Glass's injuries are so severe that no one expects him to survive. In this way, it is man against a grizzly bear (nature), where he fights for his death. He is forced to overcome all that the natural world throws at him after the bears destruction of his body. The reader sees this play out over and over again throughout the novel.

It is a constant theme through out the novel that every man is at war against the forces of nature. Whether they are faced with the cold temperatures or other weather, wild animals, or anything that has caused further injury to themselves, the characters in *The Revenant* are forced to put up with many different forces of nature.

In one example, Glass had maggots living inside of his wounds (which were caused by a grizzly bear). After living outdoors and in areas where they have no protection from the forces of nature, it's understandable that this would happen.

In this period of time in the brutal American West, they either have to overcome their weaknesses or they will die. In Glass' case, he overcame a severe wild animal attack, a daring interaction with wolves, and the unending killing of animals for food. The medication used to heal his injuries came directly from buffalo urine, and weapons are made from items found in nature. Just about every thing they used or owned traced back to it's ties with nature.



Styles

Point of View

The narrative is told in third person point of view and it follows different characters nearly every chapter. In the prologue, the story follows the perspective of William H. Ashley. Later, it goes on to follow Captain Henry and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, and then Hugh Glass by himself. This continues throughout the novel. It uses the present tense whether it is talking about an event that happened in the past or not. By using present tense throughout the entire book, it allows the story to have a tone of immediacy. It allows the reader to witness and understand the changes as they are taking place.

Language and Meaning

The genre of *The Revenant* is historical fiction, so the reader encounters many terms and language styles that were relevant during the time of the American West. Although many of the people and places in the novel truly existed, the storyline created is fiction. There are some accents used throughout the story. There are many Indian tribes depicted in the story that have their own unique language. Glass cannot understand them but they do what they can to communicate with each other. For example, "When they finished, Glass pointed to his back, raised his eyebrows questioningly to ask, 'Does it look okay?' Yellow Horse pursed his lips and nodded his head" (125). This is the type of verbal communication used between Glass and the Indians who cannot speak his language.

The voyagers were all Frenchmen so there are several points in which the French language is used. When meeting Dominique Cattoire, he remarks to Glass, "Enchanté." Another example is from the narrator, who is speaking about a boat in both the English and French language. "Though smaller than the big canoes de maître, the bâtard was sizable, almost thirty feet in length" (145). The author includes this because it makes the story as realistic as possible. Michael Punke has researched this historical aspect of this novel vigorously, and he wants to make it appear like this could have been a situation that really took place. It gives the reader the idea that Glass would really come across people of different cultures who speak all types of different languages on his journeys.

Structure

The structure of the novel is split into two parts. During Part one, the reader has seen everything happen up until Glass leaves on the mission with the voyagers. In the beginning of Part two, he leaves with the voyagers and it ends when he gets out of jail. The narrative switches to a different character at nearly every chapter, and also refers to

the past at several points. There are certain places in the novel where the narratives merge as the characters cross each other's paths.



Quotes

Glass's rifle was the one extravagance of his life, and when he rubbed grease into the spring mechanism of the hair trigger, he did so with the tender affection that other men might reserve for wife or child."

-- Narrator (chapter 2)

Importance: This sentence is suggesting that Glass has a very strong sentimental attachment to his rifle.

He saw the cubs before he saw the sow. There was a pair, and they tumbled toward him, bawling like playful dogs.

-- Narrator (chapter 3)

Importance: This is the first line that hints at the idea that the bear attack is coming. Since the reader likely knows ahead of time that there is a bear attack in this novel, this line tells us that the attack will happen soon. A few paragraphs after, Glass is attacked by the grizzly bear.

We need to make better time. I need two volunteers to stay with Glass. Stay with him here until he dies, give him a proper burial, then catch up. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company will pay \$70 for the risk of staying back.

-- Captain Henry (chapter 4)

Importance: The Captain puts a deal on the table that gives two men more than a third of their wage for the entire year, but also puts them in potential danger by staying behind.

Sorry, old Glass. You ain't got much more use for any of this."

-- Fitzgerald (chapter 6)

Importance: This line is one of the major aspects that enrages Glass and enables him to continue living. Fitzgerald deliberately volunteers to stay behind and watch Glass until he has died to give him a proper burial. While he volunteers purely for the money he will receive, he decides to abandon Glass in the ditch and leave him with nothing. Taking his rifle understandably infuriates Glass, which becomes the catalyst that motivates him to survive.

Glass had no idea why he had not been discovered the day before, but he knew his luck could not last much longer."

-- Narrator (chapter 7)

Importance: This sentence hints at the upcoming obstacles that are heading Glass's way. As he is crawling on the ground with his wounds open wide, he is just barely getting by. He is able to successfully dodge some life threatening obstacles, such as any Indian finding him, but this kind of luck will inevitably end. The reader learns in the



novel that it does indeed end, as Glass is forced to crawl over 350 miles in hopes of avoiding this confrontation.

Fitzgerald and Bridger had acted deliberately, robbed him of the few possessions he might have used to save himself. And in stealing from him this opportunity, they killed him. Murdered him, as surely as a knife in the heart or a bullet in the brain. Murdered him, except he would not die. Would not die, he vowed, because he would live to kill his killers."

-- Narrator (chapter 9)

Importance: This quote reiterates the theme of the novel and Hugh Glass's overall goal: To kill the men who left him for dead. The quote reinstates the main idea of the book. Hugh Glass was "murdered" by his fellow men, but the only reason he survives is to seek revenge on these men.

He savored the seeping warmth of the fire, a luxury he would not enjoy again in the foreseeable future."

-- Narrator (chapter 10)

Importance: This quote insinuates that this will be the last time for a long time that Glass will be comfortable. In other words, the luxury of having a warm fire doesn't come to him for a long time. This proves true when the next time Glass is comforted is way down the line, after he runs into the Sioux Indians.

He liked the idea that the claw that inflicted his wound now hung, inanimate, around his neck. Lucky charm, he thought, then fell asleep.

-- Narrator (chapter 10)

Importance: Glass put the bear claw, which nearly mauled him to death, around his neck. Instead of destroying or doing away with something that has damaged his life so greatly, he chooses to think of it as a good thing by turning it into something powerful. He thinks of it in a way that it might bring him luck.

Captain Henry's luck, it appeared, would never change.

-- Narrator (chapter 11)

Importance: Captain Henry essentially fails to keep the Rocky Mountain Fur Company together and successful. There was a time when Captain Henry thought his luck might turn around. However, this quote alludes to the fact that it never will. During the very last chapter of the book, the captain appears to have lost his mind due to these fiascos.

In some ways it was a relief to die, he thought, easier than living with his guilt."

-- Bridger (chapter 12)

Importance: Bridger had a dream that he was being stabbed by Glass' knife. At the very end of the dream, he sees Glass' face and his angry, piercing eyes. This is something that is constantly on Bridger's mind because the guilt he feels from



abandoning him is overbearing. This alludes to the idea that Glass is coming for him to get revenge for stealing his knife in the future, which really does happen eventually.

We buried him deep...covered him with enough rock to keep him protected. Truth is, Captain, I wanted to get moving right away--but Bridger said we ought to make a cross for the grave."

-- Fitzgerald (chapter 14)

Importance: Fitzgerald and Bridger have just reconnected with the other men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, when Fitzgerald tells this blatant lie about their experience. By detailing the fact that Bridger insisted on making a cross for Glass, he deeply shocks and aggravates Bridger. Bridger is already feeling an incredible amount of guilt, and when Fitzgerald says that, Bridger comes very close to confessing the entire story. Although he didn't confess, his guilt is elevated tremendously.

Others might feel disquiet at the notion of something so much larger than themselves. But for Glass, there was a sense of sacrament that flowed from the mountains like a font, an immortality that made his quotidian pains seem inconsequential."

-- Narrator (chapter 20)

Importance: Glass thinking about the big picture of things in life. He is realizing that his pains and all the little things that happen to him on a daily basis are very small in regards to the rest of the world, or in this case, the Rocky Mountains.