Soul Catcher Study Guide

Soul Catcher by Frank Herbert

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Introduction

Soul Catcher is a tragic, eye-opening novel about the mistreatment of Native Americans and one man's vengeful attempt to even the cultural score. First published in New York in 1972 when the American Indian Movement (AIM) was just hitting its stride, the book has received surprisingly little critical or popular attention and, in fact, is currently out of print. This may have more to do with the author's other books, however, than with the quality of *Soul Catcher*. Frank Herbert, known worldwide as the author of the immensely popular novel *Dune* and its sequels, is revered as one of science fiction's greatest authors; *Soul Catcher* was his first and only non-science-fiction book that concerned Native Americans, a fact that might have turned off his readers and critics.

Still, the book warrants reading. In the story, Charles Hobuhet, a Native American university student who becomes possessed by the spirit, Soul Catcher, kidnaps David Marshall, the thirteen-year-old son of a powerful politician. Hobuhet has the intention of killing David in revenge for the wrongs that have been visited on Native Americans. He also faces an internal struggle between his tribal identity and the identity that he has acquired in the white—hoquat—world. At the same time, David learns more about his captor's Native American beliefs and way of life, and the two develop a relationship. The powerful themes, which include Native-American religious beliefs, sacrifice, and the meaning of innocence, collectively help to underscore the centuries-old plight of the Native American.

Author Biography

Frank Herbert was born on October 8, 1920, in Tacoma, Washington. After attending the University of Washington, Seattle, from 1946 to 1947 Herbert continued working as a reporter, photographer, and editor, work that he had started doing in 1939 at the age of nineteen. Herbert pursued his journalism career for thirty years with many West Coast newspapers, including the *Glendale Star* (California), the *Oregon Statesman*, the *Seattle Star*, and the *San Francisco Examiner*. During this time, Herbert also worked a number of odd jobs and began to sell his first science fiction. His first short story was published in 1952, and his first novel, *The Dragon in the Sea*, was published in 1956.

Although these initial efforts introduced Herbert to science fiction audiences, it was his second novel, 1965's *Dune*, that immediately established Herbert as one of the masters of the field and that spawned a series of books, starting with the sequel, *Dune Messiah* (1970). *Dune* was the first book ever to win both the Hugo (1966) and Nebula (1965) awards, science fiction's two highest honors. The book was also one of the first science-fiction novels to address ecological issues, inspiring other writers to do the same. In 1970, Herbert's interest in social issues led to his joining the World Without War Council, and in 1971, he served as a consultant in ecological and social studies for the Lincoln Foundation. The same year, he moved to a six-acre farm on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, where he developed an ecological project that demonstrated how people can maintain a high quality of life while using minimal natural resources.

The next year, in 1972, Herbert published *Soul Catcher*, one of his few non-science-fiction stories. Still, through its study of Native-American religion and way of life, the book addressed the theme of ecology that is present in many of his science fiction novels. Following *Soul Catcher*, Herbert wrote more than ten more novels, including four in "The Dune Chronicles" series, which culminated with 1985's *Chapterhouse: Dune*. Herbert died on February 11, 1986, in Madison, Wisconsin.

Plot Summary

The Kidnapping

Soul Catcher begins after David Marshall, the thirteen-year-old son of newly appointed United States Undersecretary of State Howard Marshall, has already been kidnapped. This fact is revealed through public statements, news stories, and notes from the kidnapper, Charles Hobuhet, a university student who is now referring to himself as Katsuk. Hobuhet-Katsuk says that he has taken David as a sacrifice for all of the Native-American innocents who have been murdered by whites. After this choppy beginning, the story then jumps back to the events preceding the kidnapping, including David's preparation for his trip to the Six Rivers Camp and Hobuhet-Katsuk's possession by Soul Catcher. Interspersed with these descriptions, more news stories and statements comment on the kidnapping, a technique that Herbert uses throughout the novel.

A Midnight Journey into the Forest

When Katsuk kidnaps David, he does it by tricking him into thinking that David is taking part in a ritual to become Katsuk's spirit brother. When they have journeyed far into the forest surrounding Six Rivers Camp, Katsuk ties David up and lets him know that he is going to be killed as a sacrifice. He also forces David to use the name "Hoquat," the name that Katsuk says his ancestors had given to David's ancestors when they first settled in North America. In his first attempt to be rescued, David drops his handkerchief on the ground out side the cave where they shelter the first morning, and a helicopter sees it.

Raven

Katsuk realizes what David has done, but instead of being angry, he admires David's resourcefulness. He tells David that Raven, a powerful bird spirit, has hidden them from the helicopter, a fact that is demonstrated for the reader when Katsuk remembers the incident. Katsuk, satisfied that Raven will keep an eye on David, unties the boy. The two set out walking again, and David prays for a helicopter. Meanwhile, Katsuk begins to notice the change in David as David follows Katsuk's lead and adapts to wilderness life, learning the proper times to eat, drink, and rest. At one point, Katsuk proves that Raven will hide them from searchers, when a helicopter flies by and a flock of ravens hides David and Katsuk from sight.

Encounters

On the second day of walking, Katsuk notices that some hikers have passed through and commands David to go hide behind a log. From his position, David watches as Katsuk encounters a hiker (Debay) and kills him so that he cannot report their location.

David is horrified at the murder and tries to run away, but Katsuk easily catches him, knocking him out in the process. When David wakes up, Katsuk forces him to hide again while Katsuk conceals Debay's body. Two nights later, David has a spirit dream that tells him he will be granted a wish when he is ready. They talk about Katsuk's religion. The next day as they are walking near a meadow, Katsuk feels the presence of his people who hold a sing that night to lure Katsuk into their camp. Although some of his people—his ex-girl-friend, Tskanay, and his great uncle, Ish—are in the camp and try to stop Katsuk, they are no match for Katsuk's power, which Ish realizes.

No Escape

Tskanay, on the other hand, does not believe that Katsuk is anybody other than Charles Hobuhet. When Katsuk puts David in her care, she encourages the boy to run away. David tries to take the trail that Tskanay has pointed out, but in his efforts to avoid the many ravens on the trail, he veers off and gets lost, getting soaked in the process. Eventually, Ish finds him and takes him back to the camp. David meets Katsuk's aunt Cally, who puts him in a tent and has him take off his wet clothes for her to dry. Tskanay comes into the tent to see David and gives him food to eat. In an attempt to take away David's innocence, the quality that Katsuk has told them is necessary for the sacrifice, Tskanay steals David's virginity. However, it does not work, since David's shame at the act proves his innocence even more and binds him tighter to Katsuk.

Katsuk Is Shunned

That day, the entire tribe, around twenty people, has a meeting, at which Katsuk tries to garner their support. However, while they agree that they will not try to stop him, they do not agree with Katsuk's plan. Instead, they say that if Katsuk kills David, Katsuk will be just as bad as whites. Later that day, as they are sheltering in an old mine, Katsuk tells David that he will not kill him unless David asks him to. Katsuk plays a song on a willow flute, during which he starts to feel ill. He thinks that his people have tricked him into offending Cedar, a tree spirit, and that he has been infected with Cedar sickness as a result. David falls asleep while Katsuk prays to Cedar. When he wakes up, he and Katsuk leave the mine and head up into the frigid forest region near the timberline. David is freezing, but Katsuk seems fine in his loincloth and moccasins.

Preparation

While David dozes on a riverbank, Katsuk prays for and receives the spirit wood that he needs to make his bow. He gets ready to start cutting the wood into a bow but gets a sign that using a hoquat knife on the wood will remove its power, so he throws David's knife into the river. A few days later, he makes a knife out of obsidian rock. When David finds out Katsuk threw his knife into the river, he says that he hopes Katsuk's Cedar sickness kills him, and he hits Katsuk with a rock. Katsuk begins using his new obsidian

knife to carve the wood into a bow, and David asks if he can help him. Katsuk sees this as a sign that Soul Catcher is starting to prepare David to ask for his own death.

Hope and Sickness

While Katsuk is busy carving the bow, David escapes. Katsuk follows him, stopping to make an arrow from a cedar tree that he finds. That night, David finds shelter and makes a fire in the way that Katsuk has taught him, and the next day, he begins to have hope that he will get away. That evening, Katsuk, who is noticeably sick, finds him. His sickness gets worse as the night goes on, and he falls into feverish dreams. When he wakes up the next day, David brings him water and food. Katsuk asks why David is not running away, since it was he that gave Katsuk Cedar sickness, but David tells him he is crazy and that he does not want to leave Katsuk while he is sick. Katsuk gets better, and in one of his dreams, Raven tells him to go downstream, where he finds a search party that is looking for them.

The Sacrifice

The next day, Katsuk announces they will be staying in their shelter. Katsuk is silent, contemplating the meaning of the sacrifice he is about to perform, and his extreme quietness prompts David to ask him questions. Katsuk interprets the questions as further proof that David is preparing himself for the sacrifice, but Katsuk waits for David to ask him for his death. David wakes up when he hears the search party coming and is excited that he is about to be rescued. However, he is also anxious for Katsuk to leave and hide before they catch him and kill him or throw him in jail. Katsuk says that he cannot leave until he has delivered his message, and David tells him to do whatever he needs to do to deliver the message but to hurry before the searchers find him. Katsuk takes this as his sign that David is asking for his death and kills him with the bow and arrow he has constructed. Shortly thereafter, the search party finds Katsuk with the dead boy in his arms, chanting a death song for his lost friend.

Section 1

Section 1 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "When the boy's father arrived at Six Rivers Camp..."

The novel opens with Howard Marshall, a politically well-connected man, going to Six Rivers Camp because his son has been kidnapped from the facility. Marshall's family is in the Washington State logging industry and is known for treating their Native American workers fairly. A Native American man, local college student Charles Hobuhet, is suspected of kidnapping David Marshall.

A newspaper report reveals that Hobuhet uses the alias "Katsuk" and left a note threatening to sacrifice David Marshall in a Native American ceremony. The note says the innocent Marshall boy should die for all the innocent Indians killed by white men over the centuries and is signed by Hobuhet.

Flashing back to the day David leaves for camp, the point of view shifts to that of David Marshall. The young boy is excited about his trip to the wooded retreat, and especially about his camping knife that was a birthday present from his father. David's Indian maid, who makes him feel nervous, enters the room and checks that he is ready for camp.

Another point of view shift takes readers to Dr. Tilman Barth, a university anthropologist. Dr. Barth explains that the word *katsuk* means "center" and is understood to be the middle of the universe where man stands important. Dr. Barth is not surprised Hobuhet has chosen this alias. The doctor continues to discuss papers Hobuhet wrote in college, comparing Native American myths to biblical references.

Section 1 Analysis

Soul Catcher is a tale presented in segments. The narrative varies in time and location, utilizing different tools to present the story. In this first section, the author makes use of fictional newspaper clippings, interviews, and third-person narratives to reveal the beginning of the story. Each section is brief, many shorter than one page, and adds to the building suspense surrounding the kidnapping.

Color is an important literary tool in the sections featuring David Marshall. The boy often focuses on bright colors in the room such as his maid's sari or fingernails, when he is imagining or lost in his own thoughts.

Section 2

Section 2 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "It had begun when his name was still Charles Hobuhet..."

From the point of view of Charles, the reader learns the beginning of the assumed name. As a young boy, Charles was climbing in the forest when a bee landed on his hand. The bee caused him to remember animal names he learned in school with white children. Charles began to remember the Native American rituals he learned as well. The stillness of the bee on his hand led Charles to decide he needed to take a new name to preserve his Native American soul and the soul of Charles Hobuhet. He prayed for wisdom and imagined the bee spoke to him. Deciding he was the center of the universe, Charles took the name Katsuk.

Literally translated, the word *katsuk* means both "human" and "bird." Katsuk began to believe he was part animal and part man. Following the rape and subsequent suicide of his sister Janiktaht, Charles begins ancient rituals to cleanse his body, killing small animals and carrying herbs and relics on his trips into nature. Hiking into the mountains and eating only roots for many days, Katsuk speaks to the bee and to his ancestors. He fights off memories of his dead sister and continues his journey in the wilderness until his body is numb. He convinces himself that if the bee should sting him, Katsuk would become capable of doing a terrible and deadly thing. He believes the bee to be a Soul Catcher.

Katsuk decides to return to the university to receive his doctorate in anthropology. He decides to study among the white men and leave the wilderness behind for awhile. As the sun sets, Katsuk hears a voice telling him to kill an innocent. He leaves the forest, swearing to return and believing that the natural world will always remember him.

Section 2 Analysis

In this long glimpse into the life of Charles Hobuhet, the structure of the story is one single disjointed narrative rather than the clips and flashes seen at the beginning of the book. Starved and possibly hallucinating, Charles Hobuhet wanders the forest in shock after his sister dies. The text wanders around in time in an imitation of Charles's mental state as the boy starves himself and follows rituals learned from his grandparents. The final hallucination of the voice telling Charles to kill an innocent foretells the eventual kidnapping of David Marshall.

Section 3

Section 3 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "From a wire story, Seattle dateline."

David's mother arrives at the camp shaking with fear. The action flashes back to the morning he left for camp, when she was irritated with him for carrying the knife around the house and wanting to take it with him. They argued over the knife and David convinced her that his father had shown him to use it properly. The morning David left for Washington State, his father left for Washington, D.C. to take a position at the State Department.

In present time, Agent Hosbig of the FBI describes what he believes to be the mentally deranged state of Charles. He is not certain whether Charles is actually deranged or is only pretending to be.

Upon arrival at camp, Charles watches a cabin of boys asleep. He is worried because the spirits commanded him to take an innocent. He needed to select the perfect victim. He prepared ceremonial clothing for the event - a loincloth and headband made of natural materials, a flute and various accoutrements blessed by shaman. He decides on David Marshall and dedicates his sacrifice to his grandfather.

Charles decides to think of himself as Katsuk and grows angry that the white men have taken this forest and paved it, made cabins and camps within it. He has taken a summer job as a counselor at the camp and, though angry, plays along when the other staff members refer to him as "chief." Katsuk gets excited as he imagines all the white people looking at the photos taken that day at camp once they have learned of the kidnapping. He writes his note and gets to work. He gathers David's clothes and tells him that he has something special to show him, that they are spirit brothers. They leave the cabin.

In the kidnapping note, Katsuk described the arrow and rituals he would use to sacrifice David. He tells the white men to accept what he has done and to be proud.

From David's point of view, readers witness the first moments of the kidnapping. Still groggy with sleep, David is confused why the chief has taken him into the woods and why he is dressed so sparingly in the cold night. He grows frightened as they walk further into the woods. David senses something is not right, but is not entirely afraid because his counselor has not pulled out his knife. David feels confident because of his own knife.

While they walk, Katsuk begins to think of his sister and life before he was Katsuk. David concentrates on the smells and sights around him and tries to walk as his guide walks, without stumbling. They reach the top of the ridge and see a shooting star. Katsuk sees this as an omen and begins to sing to the spirits. David grows afraid.

Later in time, Katsuk announces to his people that he has done the ritual properly. He details the elements used in the ceremony.

Back in the forest, David is very frightened and cold. He is in awe of the chief's ability to walk through the woods. He compares the chief to Deerstalker and thinks of him as the Ultimate Woodsman. Katsuk is irritated that David is unable to use telepathy and read the signs. David persistently asks where they are going and why. They reach Katsuk's planned spot and he begins to chant in his native tongue. David is increasingly frightened.

Katsuk squats to write his name in the earth. David kneels beside him and they talk about what is going on, discussing Katsuk's spiritual name and David's secret name. Katsuk orders David to stand and the boy thinks of cowboy and Indian games. Katsuk names David "Hoquat," a word he uses repeatedly in the book to describe white men. Katsuk grows angry and David realizes he is in danger.

David continues to ask Katsuk what they are doing. He replies that white men are everywhere and he, Katsuk, is the center of the universe. He chants in his native tongue again. Katsuk tells David he will give the boy true understanding of the world. Katsuk restrains the boy and takes David's knife. David knows he is being kidnapped and Katsuk threatens to kill him immediately if he does not follow instructions. Katsuk moves swiftly through the forest towing the bound boy behind him.

Section 3 Analysis

Two longer narratives frame shorter diversions in this section of the novel. The longer sections give the audience a detailed and sensory view of David's experience. Every sound, color, feeling, and smell is described from both David and Katsuk's point of view. The narration switches fluidly between these two characters during the kidnapping scene. The shorter vignettes are presented as news articles again. The overall effect of the constant time, narration, and point of view switches is one not of confusion but of sensing the full picture. The author takes small steps forward in time before filling in back details, so the audience feels confident in what will happen next.

The interludes from outside characters give the impression that Katsuk has lost his sanity. The rapid sentences and obsessive rituals the character performs secure this suspicion, so that Katsuk does not become a sympathetic character.

Section 4

Section 4 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "Statement of Bruce Clark, chief counselor at Six Rivers Camp..."

An interview with David's counselor describes the boy's eagerness and excellent behavior when he first arrived at camp. David wrote a long letter to his parents after watching the television broadcast of his father accepting his new position as Undersecretary of State. Time flashes to the morning after the kidnapping, and David is still being dragged through the woods.

Katsuk has taken many precautions to ward off search parties including trekking through water and using scent killer. David collapses with weariness and fright. Katsuk commands him to climb a dangerous mountain, saying that mistakes will cause him to be buried alive. David is determined to survive and angry at being called Hoquat. Katsuk beats him during the climb until David answers to Hoquat.

They reach the top of the climb and are surprised by a flock of ravens. Katsuk takes this as an omen and gives David some water before hiding him in a cave to avoid potential helicopter searches. Katsuk decides they should rest in the cave and tells David not to scream or he will be killed. He is upset that he has beaten the boy. Katsuk decides it is his burden to love his victim, as that will make it harder to sacrifice him. He prays for guidance to become worthy of the title Soul Catcher. When Katsuk prays, he prays for his lost people whose stories have been killed along with their tribes.

David, though starved and frightened, is disgusted by the smelly cave. He again asks Katsuk why he has been kidnapped. Katsuk admits to being a little crazy and grows angry over Native American stereotypes. He commands David to sleep, saying that David has been treated the same as any ordinary "Indian." David starts sobbing and calling Katsuk a liar. Katsuk shivers and feels ashamed for a moment until he remembers the task at hand. He leaves David to sleep, promising not to kill him while he rests, and goes to the stream to think and wash his body. Before drifting to sleep, he decides to replace David's knife blade with one dignified enough for a bow and arrow.

The story shifts to the contents of the letter David wrote his parents upon arriving at camp. He wrote of the mundane details of a young boy on a summer adventure, describing the location and plane ride and Chief, his counselor. David is interested in his counselor because he is "Indian" in a different way from his housekeeper.

As the action flashes back to David and Katsuk, David wakes up in the cave parched and hungry. He hears a helicopter hovering outside the cave and gets excited because he had dropped a monogrammed handkerchief on the rocks during their climb. He wonders where Katsuk has gone. The helicopter continues to circle and David's

thoughts alternate between thirst, hunger, fear, Katsuk, and the potential rescue. The helicopter eventually flies away and Katsuk returns to the cave.

Katsuk immediately feels David's hip pocket and congratulates the boy for his cleverness in dropping the kerchief. Katsuk begins to speak of a giant raven. David is confused by Katsuk's metaphors about the birds and the helicopters and grows even more certain the man is insane. Katsuk says Raven has told him to travel by day and untie David. They drink from the stream and Katsuk threatens to kill David if he attempts to escape.

The story then travels to an old research paper written by Charles Hobuhet, in which he compares Native American tales to the biblical tale of Genesis. The paper emphasizes the importance of a name to a living creature.

The author then flashes back to the moment the helicopter begins circling. Katsuk snaps awake upon hearing it and wonders why they keep circling. He knows they cannot land near him and that they would be unable to hear the boy shout. Katsuk looks at the hill and sees David's handkerchief. He is shocked. Katsuk banks on the searchers' assuming the shale hill was too dangerous for men to climb. Even as the helicopter circles, the rocks begin to slide down the slope.

The men fly away and Katsuk is confident they are out of danger of discovery. Instead of being angry, Katsuk admires David for thinking of the handkerchief. Katsuk compares himself to the Bee of his people, and believes that he cannot be stopped by white men. As if seeing it through separate eyes, Katsuk sees the death of Janiktaht and thinks to himself that Charles Hobuhet has discovered this tragedy. Katsuk has fully become this new character in his mind and is able to feel sad for Charles and his sister Jan without feeling the grief Charles felt at the incident. The section ends with the raven flock returning to the mountain.

Section 4 Analysis

The manipulation of time in this chapter makes the action exciting for the audience. The suspense builds throughout the narrative and readers are left to wonder how Katsuk reacted to the helicopter. At the moment of greatest suspense, the action flashes back to that moment and relieves the tension by filling in the back story.

The split personality of Charles Hobuhet and his alter ego, Katsuk, is now essentially complete. Charles no longer thinks of himself as Charles and is even able to witness the great tragedy in his life through the eyes of his new personality, Katsuk. Even though the point of view rests on Katsuk during these thoughts, there is never doubt that the actions stem from the traumatic experience of Charles finding his victimized sister.

The ravens appear repeatedly as omens for the crazed Katsuk. He views them as protection and messages from his dead ancestors. As for David, he continues to observe his surroundings with all five senses, offering a sensual reading of the situation.

Section 5

Section 5 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "Fragment of a note left at the Sam's River shelter..."

A closer reading of the kidnapping note further indicates that David has been kidnapped to punish the white men for threatening the Native Americans. Meanwhile, David and Katsuk are on the move again. David feels hopeful the search team will return as they trudge through the clear afternoon.

As Katsuk continues his crazed thoughts, David marvels at the natural beauty. His mind dwells on thoughts of food and he grows angry that Katsuk lied about eating. As David drinks from a stream, Katsuk first thinks how wonderful it is that David is feeling more at home in nature. Then Katsuk begins to see flashes of David's father in him and worries that traces of a man who is not innocent are coming with them on their journey. Katsuk requests help from his ancestors but gets no response and is frightened.

Katsuk sees a bird and wonders if the boy is hungry. Though it has been nearly two days since he has eaten, Katsuk assures himself his body would alert him if he needed to eat. Katsuk is pleased David is becoming more in tune with nature. He also tunes in to the fact that David moves more slowly when they are in the open. Katsuk tells David he is aware of this tactic and that it will not work. Katsuk assures David that Raven will protect them.

David attempts to talk to Katsuk about college, asks whether the man really believes all he is saying about spirits and Raven. They discuss what will happen if Katsuk is caught. Katsuk begins eating grass and scolds David for not also eating grass, grubs, or berries. David begins to slowly eat the grass, too.

They hear the helicopter approaching again and David tests Katsuk by saying that he is showing doubt in Raven's powers by dragging David into the woods. Katsuk agrees to prove Raven's abilities and remains perfectly still on the rock. A flock of ravens flies overhead as the helicopter flies off. Katsuk asks David why he did not attract attention, saying he would not have killed him. David begins to cry, thinking his captivity is his own fault now. They walk on through the threat of rain.

Back in the woods, David has gathered pebbles to mark the passing days. They survive on ants and grubs and roots while traveling an ancient Native American trail through the woods. David struggles to keep up until they stop because Katsuk spots hiking boot prints. David hides behind a log, wet and cold and miserable, while Katsuk investigates.

David sees a group of hikers in the distance and longs to run to them or scream, but fears Katsuk too much. A hiker passes directly in front of David, but he does not cry out. Down the path, Katsuk hears the laughing hikers and thinks it is humanity laughing at

him. The lone hiker, Vince, sees Katsuk and recognizes him from college. Vince strikes up conversation with Katsuk, asking why he is dressed that way, but does not indicate that he knows of the kidnapping. Months ago, Charles Hobuhet had written an angry letter to the editor of the university paper. He was angry that the whites asked for equal treatment and thought they were hypocritical.

Vince continues to chat, saying he fell behind the group because he was smoking marijuana. He offers some to Katsuk who has decided to kill him. They chat awhile longer before Vince again questions Katsuk's presence in the forest and says he really has to catch the others. Vince hikes away and Katsuk sneaks up behind him and slits his throat. Katsuk feels relief as he holds Vince's body. He prays to Raven and returns to where David is hiding.

Section 5 Analysis

The tension increases as Katsuk actually shows that he is capable of killing. Suddenly, his madness is terrifying and one grows fearful for David's safety. Though the pair is in the woods under tense and horrifying conditions, their interactions have been somewhat pastoral to this point, with David learning to survive in the wilderness.

David learns how to look after himself in ways that will not spark Katsuk's anger. He is still powerless over his fear even when chances of rescue present themselves. He cannot jump when the helicopters hover or scream to the passing hikers even though Katsuk is not nearby or immediately threatening.

At this point in the story, the great detail of the scenery and action serves to build suspense. Readers begin to wonder if Katsuk really has connected with his ancestors as the flock of ravens continues to follow them and fulfill his crazed prophecies.

Section 6

Section 6 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "Special Agent Norman Hosbig, Seattle Office, FBI."

The FBI places 500 people in the wilderness and surrounding cities to search for David. Modern aircraft scan the skies while Katsuk retreats farther into primitive ways. David stands in the forest watching as Katsuk murders Vince, feeling terrified. He moves to chase after the other hikers, now desperate to escape.

Barely aware of his own actions, Katsuk chases after David. He tackles David, scolding the boy for disobeying him. Katsuk knocks David out, bashing his head against a log. While David is unconscious, Katsuk thinks back again to the rape of his sister. He ponders the interconnectedness of the murders, thinking that just as his sister will not have children, Vince will also remain childless. Katsuk grows angry that the white men do not think of such things as they destroy the environment. He throws David over his shoulder and climbs back up the hill. David wakes up and they continue marching.

As they march through the forest, Katsuk writes in trail registry books condemning white men for their thoughtless actions. His words are threatening and speak of apocalypse and death.

David wakes up to Katsuk shaking him. Katsuk has stolen Vince's clothes, finally succumbing to the cold in the forest. David is aware that Vince's murder is a prelude to more murders for Katsuk. He is also upset that his knife was used in the murder. He redoubles his efforts against becoming Hoquat, no matter how Katsuk tortures him for refusing the name.

After the murder of Vince, Katsuk left David with the body while he went off and caught fish to eat. They spent some time on the man-made hiking trail that followed the river. After waking David, Katsuk disappeared again and David hopes he has gone for more food. David worries and has flashbacks of Vince's murder. He sees it again and again when he closes his eyes.

Katsuk returns with a white liquid that nearly makes David vomit. They begin to climb again through the foggy, chilly morning. David now knows that Katsuk would not hesitate to kill him if he disobeyed. As Katsuk continues to chant, David thinks how crazy he is. Meanwhile, the authorities explain how large the wilderness preserve is. The space is so large that six airplanes are missing within it despite extensive searching.

David has been counting the passing days by gathering pebbles. He now has four small rocks in his pocket. Katsuk questions the pebbles and yells at David to count by nights rather than days. Katsuk is angry that David can't see why it matters. That evening they

finally eat a decent meal as Katsuk snares a grouse. Still envisioning the murder, David manages to fall asleep before the fire as he takes inventory of the scenery in the forest.

While David sleeps, he has a nightmare and wakes up screaming. He describes the dream to Katsuk, who is interested that David has had a spirit dream. Katsuk thinks David could be granted a wish and teaches David to pray to the Native American gods. As David ponders Katsuk's sanity, Katsuk promises David he will live. Katsuk feels a bond between David and him and wonders if they are like brothers.

While at university, Charles Hobuhet studied philosophy. He wrote papers discrediting the thought processes of white men and spoke of the superiority of Native American ways.

The pair in the forest begins hiking at dawn. As the weather remains gloomy, David takes note of morose things in the forest. He pays special attention to mangled animals left by predators and broken, rotting logs. As they cross a difficult stream, Katsuk finds a raven feather and decides there is something wrong about their current path.

The problem, Katsuk decides, is the area is too alive. The animals are too lively and they make Katsuk nervous. David senses nothing but the damp cold. Katsuk decides his problem is that he is wearing white men's clothing and rushes to discard it. They come across a dead elk killed by a wild cat. Katsuk is very troubled by whatever had frightened the cat away from such a meal. Just as Katsuk drags David behind a log, a rifle shot echoes through the forest.

Katsuk decides the shot must have come from a poacher, illegally hunting in the preserve. He begins to think how David cannot live now that he has seen Vince's death, but scolds himself for such thoughts. Instead, he decides Vince was part of a grand scheme that will end with David's sacrifice.

Section 6 Analysis

As the action grows more gruesome, the physical descriptions and language grow more vivid. Sunsets are described as "molten," every detail of the ground is described, from lichen and moss to pebbles and sticks strewn about. Readers are granted the opportunity to experience the forests of the American Northwest through this tale and almost forget the horrible situation that David is in.

At this point in the story, the flashbacks and narrative interruptions offer less insight into the characters. Katsuk is already well established as outspoken for Native American rights and the audience is well aware of his mental state. It seems less important to read his rants in trail entries and descriptions of his coursework from college.

The mood of the writing grew decidedly darker after the murder of Vince. David's thoughts wander less and are mainly focuses on the hopeless situation while Katsuk retreats even further into his own mind. The author has created serious doubts as to whether David will survive this ordeal.

Section 7

Section 7 Summary

This section begins with the phrase "Sheriff Mike Pallatt..."

The local police force understands that Charles Hobuhet recently lost his sister. They explain the brutal circumstances surrounding her death and understand how this would drive Charles to insanity.

In the forest, David jerks awake. He forgets where he is, only remembers the nightmare he has been having of being chased through the blackness. As he wakes up more fully, he begins to remember a trek through a dank cave, an old Native American hiding spot. David hears several voices and knows the poachers are in the cave with him. He clears his throat and Katsuk frightens David with the madness in his voice.

David realizes there were no voices, only Katsuk chanting. Katsuk orders David to return to sleep so the spirits will guide his dreams. In the morning, David thinks about how mentally ill Katsuk is. He recognizes how powerful the man is and worries that he is indestructible in the wilderness. David mourns the loss of his childhood as he has adult thoughts now. He worries that he hears the spirit voices Katsuk always speaks of.

The story flashes to Katsuk's aunt relaying a speech Katsuk gave to his people. The speech speaks of the spiritual journey that took Katsuk to be with Raven and his ancestors.

The plot abruptly shifts back to the forest as Katsuk stands outside the cave at dawn. Katsuk thinks of the campfires he had seen below the night before and speaks to himself of climbing down to greet the people by their Native American names. He remembers the people from college who were unkind to him and decides he must deal with them. He prays for the spirits to keep his hatred pure.

David gets to eat the trail food from Vince's pack. He gorges on chocolate and peanuts and is then forced to hide Vince's belongings in the cave. Katsuk says they will now go to his people. They rush through the mountains. David is out of breath and they come to a gathering of huts in the forest.

A woman comes outside and recognizes Katsuk. She calls him by his white name, Charles. Katsuk's people had prayed he would come to them. The woman, Mary, wants to use her white name but Katsuk insists on calling her Tskanay. She tells Katsuk that the other Native Americans are searching the forest to bring Katsuk to the authorities. David tells her his name is David and Katsuk beats him.

Katsuk discovers that his Aunt Cally, old Ish, and several young boys are the only relatives remaining in the camp. Ish scolds Katsuk for acting like a shaman. The others beg Katsuk to stop talking nonsense. Katsuk is enraged that the people have been

poaching in the preserve. They have used their search for Katsuk as an excuse to kill animals in the forest.

David realizes the people are terrified of Katsuk. They begin to argue over dead ancestors and the power of the singing ceremony. As Katsuk screams for Raven, a single raven lands on one of the huts. The family returns to arguing about religion. Ish threatens to shoot Katsuk, but the raven squawks and Katsuk insists Ish understands Katsuk's power. Katsuk leaves David with Ish and Tskanay and walks into the forest.

Alone in the hut, the people discuss Katsuk's madness and agree he is lost to the world. Ish informs Tskanay that Soul Catcher has taken hold of Charles's spirit. They agree to keep watch over David until Katsuk returns.

Section 7 Analysis

Through the eyes of the mad Katsuk, the author hints that the man has murdered the other hikers in the nighttime. While Katsuk ponders the Native American names for the people who were unkind to him at college, readers suspect he is either hallucinating or has indeed gone down to the valley and killed the hikers. When readers discover Katsuk's people really do live in the forest, there is a long moment of surprise in which the author eases readers into the circumstances of a Native American worship service.

This section includes challenging plot details until the flashbacks come together to reveal that the Native American community has gone into the forest to help search for Katsuk. They are searching for him only half-heartedly, instead using the time to hunt elk and wild cats to sell. With this new plot information, the interludes into other points of view and moments in time regain their importance in heightening reader suspense.

Section 8

Section 8 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "Special Agent Norman Hosbig, FBI: Look, I told you media guys how much we appreciate your cooperation."

Back in Seattle, the FBI is working with the media to describe the details of the case. They consider Charles's cryptic note to be a ransom note, which automatically involves the FBI. The FBI suspects Hobuhet is a Native American militant and is going to demand the surrender of Fort Lawton or Alcatraz. They fear he might demand an independent reservation.

In the forest dwelling, David is confused. He cannot understand why he sticks up for Katsuk, describing the powers the man has over ravens to the Native American people who may save him. David understands he has two problems: to escape from captivity and to try to understand the spiritual connection growing between Katsuk and himself. He reminds himself again that he is not Hoquat; he is David.

Tskanay worries about Katsuk. David is afraid to talk to her about it. David is becoming delirious and cannot remember whether he is hungry. Tskanay takes him to eat and wash. Tskanay tells David she was betrothed to Katsuk. They talk for awhile and then David pleads for his life. Tskanay asks why he doesn't run away and David doesn't know the answer. She gives him directions through the forest to return to the road, twenty miles away. David becomes frightened that Katsuk will kill the others if he escapes. She convinces him to run away.

David makes his way into the forest outside the hut clearing, but quickly gets tangled in the underbrush. He cannot follow Tskanay's directions without disturbing a flock of ravens and can't decide what to do. He becomes hopelessly lost in the forest. He is cold, hungry, and frightened in the forest. Suddenly, he hears ravens calling and runs into Ish, who has heard him walking, close to camp, the entire time.

Ish tells David that Katsuk cast a spell on Tskanay and made her fall down. David insists that Katsuk must have hit her for helping David escape. They walk back to camp together to meet Katsuk.

The plot jumps to a letter Katsuk wrote to the United Indian Council in which he urges them into action.

Back in the forest, Ish and David return to camp. Aunt Cally is talking to Katsuk, who is not angry. He feels powerful knowing the ravens prevented David from escaping him. David is miserable and wants the others to help him. David realizes Cally is proud of Katsuk's return to his spirit, though still afraid of him.

Cally tries to reach out to Charles deep within Katsuk. She says returning David would be the biggest gift he could give. They all begin screaming at one another. Everyone is afraid of everyone else; they fear Katsuk most of all. They argue over the power of the spirits that Katsuk has summoned.

Cally takes David's clothes to dry and wraps him in blankets from inside the hut, which repulses David as much as the cave did earlier. He begins to cry over his situation. He feels powerless against this man who seems to control the birds and the trees. Tskanay, with a bruised face, comes into the hut and shares fish with David. She denies that Katsuk hit her, insisting she fell down. David tries to reason with her, tries to get Tskanay to help him. She is angry, more at the loss of her betrothed husband than the current situation.

Tskanay tries to have sex with David so he will no longer be an "innocent." David is confused and likes, yet does not like, what is going on. They go through with the encounter and, while David is still very confused, he is excited at the potential of Katsuk releasing him because of what he's done. Katsuk bursts in and Tskanay tells him what has happened.

Katsuk is at first enraged and wants to kill David. Then he thinks that Tskanay would like that to happen and decides against it. Katsuk decides sex does not make one innocent, that some other quality about David makes him the chosen one. He tries to kill Tskanay instead. When David protests, Katsuk insists this is what makes the boy innocent. David feels "defiled" and tied even more closely to the maniac captor after pleading for Tskanay's life. Katsuk tells David he feels they are brothers now and references Cain and Abel.

Section 8 Analysis

This section of the novel grows more emotionally powerful, as issues of rape, incest, power, and domination come to the surface of the story. The mental power Katsuk holds over all around him, including his relatives, is very frightening. The explicit detail in which the surroundings and action are described contribute to a mounting sense of doom in the novel.

Even the Native American relatives who have taken to the forest to retrieve Katsuk are unable to do so because they have become dishonorable. In Katsuk's crazy diatribes, he questions notions of innocence and loyalty. His behavior is decidedly wrong, yet his motives seem to be on the right track and this gives his character complexity. Who can argue that white men do not appreciate the earth and do not pay attention to nature and the interconnectivity of all living things? With this in mind, readers have a more difficult time choosing the fate they hope for Katsuk.

The powerful bond growing between the captive boy and the crazed kidnapper is also unsettling. In another situation, these young men would be learning from one another and acting in a very positive mentor/protygy relationship. As it stands, David is being

held against his will, starved, and beaten into an understanding of nature. The troubling thing is that David seems to enjoy and appreciate the lessons he is learning while in the woods. This section of the novel leaves readers in a very complicated space emotionally. The narration and straightforward prose of the book allow the tale to come across smoothly while the emotional questions asked by the content resound.

Section 9

Section 9 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "Harlow B. Watts, teacher at Pacific Day School, Carmel, California...."

David's teacher describes David as an excellent and sensitive student. He discusses a paper David wrote where he questions Bob Kennedy as a hero because the man made no mistakes. Harlow thinks this is an odd thing for a young boy to notice.

Back in the forest, David counts six pebbles in his pocket. He is embarrassed at what he has done with Tskanay. Two children have replaced her as David's guard and they refuse to speak to him. David cannot imagine Katsuk and Tskanay making love. He thinks how different they must be from Mary and Charlie, their white personas. David sees an airplane fly overhead and grows depressed when it passes.

That night, Katsuk gathers everyone together. He tells them he is powerful and deserves to wear the garments of a chief. He shouts at them to be angry at the lost rights of the Native Americans. He is angry that he must speak to them in English because they do not speak their language any longer. Ish and Katsuk discuss the difference between the modern rituals and the old ways. Katsuk insists the old spiritual ways are still powerful.

Katsuk is angry that his people are not more angry and demanding of the white men controlling their resources. He is enraged that his people have difficulty finding even menial labor jobs and thinks the slow moving peace talks are pathetic. David begins to feel guilt over what white men have done. Cally tells Katsuk that killing David will make Katsuk just like the white men. Katsuk responds that his words are the only link to their past and drags David away from the camp.

The story jumps to Sheriff Pallatt, who is certain Cally has seen Katsuk. Cally has gone to warn the authorities to call him Katsuk and search in the wilderness. She tells them calling the man Charles could force him over the edge.

In the forest, it starts to rain as Katsuk and David trudge onward. Katsuk rages to himself over what happened with his family. He is angry that they don't fully believe and support him. He fears his people will turn him in to the authorities for reward money. David clings to Katsuk in fear during a lightning storm. Katsuk insists the thunder and lightning are gods speaking to them.

David apologizes to Katsuk for what his people have done. Katsuk replies that David is now truly innocent. Katsuk becomes worried that he is too connected to David and might not know who to sacrifice to Soul Catcher. They return to the mine shaft where they camped before joining Katsuk's family. Over the fire, Katsuk plays the flute and

sees a vision of his sister. He becomes frightened and thinks his headband is crushing his skull. He begins to rave to David, who is confused and scared.

Katsuk decides he is afraid of cedar because he was born in a cedar canoe, his sister committed suicide in one, and he was once very ill from an infected cedar splinter in his knee. Katsuk begins praying to the cedar trees and David decides the man is even more insane with every day that passes.

The point of view shifts to a note left by Katsuk at a camping shelter. David has offered ransom money to Katsuk, who is insulted by this suggestion. Katsuk wants his land returned to his people. He understands the ways of the earth.

In the morning, David awakes to steady rainfall. Ravens squawk outside the cave and David decides against an escape attempt. Katsuk climbs back into view. He has been with his relatives. The lightning knocked down a tree right near where they were arguing over whether to turn him in to the police. They look on this as a sign and send fish with Katsuk as a peace offering.

David and Katsuk begin climbing in a place where there are no man-made trails. David admits he will escape if he sees an opportunity. Katsuk is glad of this innocent honesty. They climb through deer paths, almost to the tree line, where snow is on the ground. Katsuk sees human footprints, but recognizes they are old and headed downhill while the pair is climbing uphill.

They cross the peak of the mountain and start descending. David starts to run, but Katsuk warns him it is unsafe to run downhill. David is freezing in his hiking gear and Katsuk still wears just a loincloth. David wonders how the man's body stands it. They reach a frozen river and Katsuk begins to pray to river spirits before crossing the stream.

Section 9 Analysis

The flashbacks and interludes in this section reinforce what readers suspect - that Katsuk's family will never turn him in to the police and that Katsuk will not stop until he regains some land for his people. The predictions of the authorities in earlier interludes are coming true.

The sections in which the Native Americans do not believe Katsuk entirely are very poignant. They want very badly to believe the old, mystical ways of their people but are very much absorbed in the modern, white world in which they live. Until Katsuk began questioning their behavior, they were living what they thought to be a balanced existence between the two spheres. They start to view coincidences in nature as proof that Katsuk really has harnessed the power of the spirit world.

While Katsuk grows ever madder and David grows more mature and thoughtful, the two continue to share powerful and emotional experiences. They both continue to learn from one another and build a complicated and challenging relationship. David has almost

stopped being afraid and now seems to pity his captor for his madness. David still very much respects Katsuk's abilities to maneuver in nature and looks up to him for his communion with the wilderness.

Section 10

Section 10 Summary

This section begins with the sentence, "Sheriff Pallatt: Hell, I know the FBI thinks he's gone underground in some city."

The local police are certain Katsuk still roams inside the wilderness preserve. He has seen tracks on some of the trails and thinks Katsuk is crazy enough to wander in there forever.

David is practicing the meditative technique of not thinking. Katsuk has been discussing non-verbal communication with the boy and leaves him to practice while Katsuk contemplates their next move. They have been using a store of poachers' supplies Katsuk unearthed along the way. After David eats, he gives up not thinking and starts chanting that he is David, not Hoquat. David begins to question his identity and asks whether he has become someone else, part-David, part-Hoquat.

Katsuk is contemplating how to make the bow and arrow to kill David. He is sad that he must kill the boy because he is becoming attached to him. David notices how volatile Katsuk is, how quickly he transforms from helpful and informative to enraged and violent. For the first time, David begins to think of home. He notices things in the sunset that remind him of his house. As he eats grubs and worms, he thinks of his mother and appetizers on silver platters. He decides not to worry, remembering Katsuk's promise not to kill him unless David asks him to.

Katsuk longs for a sign from the spirits. He is unsettled that David had a spirit dream where the spirits promised him a wish. A piece of driftwood washes up at Katsuk's feet and he takes this as a sign. He decides to build the bow from this wood. He throws away David's knife, refusing to use a white man's tool one more instant and keeping the knife away from the sacred driftwood.

Back in civilization, the authorities are convinced the kidnapping is a revenge cry against the white men. They are certain that Katsuk is acting deliberately and is following a grand scheme to kill David and send a message to white people.

The story returns to the forest with Katsuk crouching by the river. David now has eight pebbles in his pocket. Katsuk is fishing with just his hands. He holds his arm very still under the water, grabs a giant fish, and hurls it at David, who falls in the river. Katsuk breaks the fish's neck. As Katsuk cleans the fish and David washes himself off, the two share a tender moment joking about the fish. Katsuk teaches David to clean it and how to thank the river for the meal.

The text moves to another note left in a shelter by Katsuk. The note talks about the spiritual ways of thinking that Native Americans use to guide them. Katsuk doesn't

understand why white men make noise when they are confused. He thinks it is better to be still and wait for guidance.

By the river, Katsuk lies awake, thinking. He is disturbed the spirituality he senses around David. Katsuk is startled that David is becoming more thoughtful, more like the Native Americans. Katsuk begins to talk to the spirit he senses hovering around David. The spirit questions Katsuk and his mission and Katsuk is afraid.

In a college paper, Charles Hobuhet wrote about a lack of feeling in Western literature. He criticized a separation of life and death, the way the philosophers ignored the spiritual connections. Charles accused white men of not really living their lives and being focused on all the wrong things.

Section 10 Analysis

David and Katsuk are linked even more closely together in this section. There is almost no tension between them any longer and they even share a long laugh over a silly situation when fishing. The close contact and intimacy is unnerving for Katsuk. The discomfort manifests itself in the form of conversation with spirits. Katsuk begins to doubt his own motives and the questioning spirits confirm this. Perhaps Katsuk acted too hastily in assuming the white men could never appreciate his message. David seems to be very open to and appreciative of the lessons Katsuk has to offer.

Once again, the author's vivid sensory details are the driving force of the text. Readers feel invested in the story because they can so perfectly imagine the scenes. When Katsuk dips his arm in the freezing water to fish, it is so well described that the reader can imagine him or herself in that situation with Katsuk. This closeness to the characters continues to complicate the emotional attachment readers feel. As the man and boy grow ever closer, one wonders what to hope for in an ending for this tale.

Section 11

Section 11 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "About thirty thousand years go..."

Katsuk begins to explain the natural history of the land to David. David starts to discuss his life with Katsuk, talking about tennis lessons and the mundane features of a privileged life. During this discussion, Katsuk continues to sharpen a piece of obsidian he found to use as a knife. David has ten pebbles in his pocket and is concerned that Katsuk seems more troubled each day.

Katsuk has spent a great deal of time in these woods as a tour guide for white adventurers. He is now angry over having shared this part of the Native American lifestyle with them. He continues to teach David as he hunts and traps and lives off the land. Noting Katsuk's struggle with the rocks, David asks where his knife has gone. Katsuk admits to having thrown it in the river and David is furious. The knife was a precious gift from his father and he is outraged at Katsuk's behavior.

David curses Katsuk, hoping the cedar god will kill him. Katsuk is shocked that David can call the spirits and warns him to watch what he says. David asks about the pouch of duck down Katsuk has been carrying around. Katsuk says only that it is for spirit medicine, but thinks happily of how he will scatter the feathers on David's body after killing him. Katsuk is glad the spirits are guiding David to ask the right questions.

David begins angrily throwing rocks into the stream and Katsuk says David should just throw the rock at him if he wishes. David hurls the rock, hitting Katsuk's face. Katsuk is not in pain, though his face is bleeding. David is terrified over what he has done. Katsuk assumes Bee has blocked the pain and gets back to work. Katsuk tells David that he now knows a little of the hate Katsuk feels toward the white men.

David is furious that the wound does not hurt Katsuk. He stares at the bleeding as Katsuk continues to work on the knife. Katsuk reiterates that he would never kill David without being asked, tells a story of how whales used to ask for the harpoons before Native Americans would kill them. When David asks whether Vince asked for death, Katsuk evades the question and starts talking about Raven again.

David asks if there is anything good about the white world. He asks about doctors and Katsuk responds that white doctors do not care about balance. He insists they are only tied to disease. Native healers are concerned with the balance of the earth. He counters David's every point by discussing white disregard for the environment. Later, Katsuk leaves a note that says his body is a pure expression of himself.

Katsuk finishes making the obsidian knife. He begins to carve the bow. David asks to help. Katsuk wonders if this is a request to be slain, decides not, and teaches David to carve a bow. Katsuk tells David where to carve and they form the bow together.

Later, David is angry about the knife again. He throws more rocks into the river and dwells on the fact that Katsuk killed Vince and threw away David's knife. David goes exploring, but decides not to try to escape just yet. He walks along the trail in the forest. After he walks for a long while he decides he is now trying to escape.

Outside the forest, the authorities are arguing over jurisdiction in this case. The local police just want to save David and feel the FBI are meddling. The police decide to take local people into the forest and find them.

Back at the campsite, Katsuk finishes the bow and realizes it is nearly dark. He looks up to find David missing. Katsuk decides he has become Raven and needs to find an arrow and go kill David. Katsuk can see David's tracks through the forest and knows he can quickly catch him. He takes off after David, noticing that the moccasins his sister made him are growing thin. He talks to himself as he searches to complete his spiritual message.

Katsuk feels that Tskanay is interfering with his ability to find David. Katsuk prays for guidance. He decides cedar has forgiven him and carves an arrow out of cedar wood. As he begins to carve, the flock of ravens returns to guide him.

Charles's aunt Cally relates a dream Charles told her of long ago. As a boy, he dreamt of ravens as spirits. He dreamt of a hidden cave and always talked of finding it.

Back on the chase, Katsuk prays as he finishes the arrow. He is consumed by sorrow at the loss of David. He can no longer ascertain where David has gone. Katsuk senses that David has made a fire in the night, decides he is having spirit vision, and lets the spirits guide him to where David is hiding. He then decides he will wait and find David by daylight.

Section 11 Analysis

This section brings the two main characters closer than ever. They continue to bond as they learn from one another in the forest. During this moment of tender guidance, David realizes that Katsuk has discarded his most valuable possession. Only now can David become truly angry over his situation. The disregard for his precious gift from his father is the final straw.

Even though David does not, initially, set out to escape, as he wanders the forest he knows he is finally able to do so. David can make use of the skills he has learned during his ten days of captivity to make his way to safety. He knows which way the water travels and can tell which way leads to civilization. He even knows which natural symbols Katsuk reads as spiritual signs and waits for the right time to leave. The bond between them has allowed David to escape from his captor.

The flash to the police officers helps to build suspense in this section. Readers feel certain these local men will be able to navigate the forest. This combined with David's

departure makes quite a cliffhanger as readers wait to see what happens when morning arrives.

Section 12

Section 12 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "From an interview with Harriet Gladding Morgenstern in the San Francisco Examiner."

David's grandmother tells the press that David has always been brave and adventurous. He has always been a respectful boy and she feels this quality will allow him to survive the ordeal.

Using the skills Katsuk taught him, David finds shelter during the night. He knows how to build a fire, but wonders if this will give away his position to Katsuk. He decides to risk it and is proud of his ability to do so. Over the past days, Katsuk had mocked David for his impatience in building fires and David is now skilled at creating fire from natural elements. He wishes Katsuk could see him doing it.

The thought of his connection to Katsuk frightens David. He is upset that he feels tied to this man. He now knows how to fish and find food, but is even more upset that he knows these skills from hanging around Katsuk. He opts not to find food, certain that the next day he will find rescuers to feed him. David dozes through the night, restocking his fire to keep warm. He dreams that he is being chased, led by a string through the forest. His chaser is asking him for help. In the morning, he wonders if Katsuk is really in trouble. He continues to follow the stream.

The local people are aware that the Native Americans have strange rituals. They also respect how well the Native Americans can survive in the wilderness and recognize that white men lack this familiarity with the land.

The story flashes back to David on the run. David now feels an ache around his head, as if the band he dreamed he wore were real. He wonders whether Katsuk has a spiritual tie to him. David continues to follow the stream, worrying all the time of Katsuk catching him. He walks through the cold, now able to tell things about the trail based on his experiences with Katsuk. He knows which animals have passed through and how long ago. He knows he is close to finding man-made trails and perhaps food.

As nightfall nears, David is miserable. He feels his escape was too easy and he is nervous. He finally comes to a sign that says he is two miles from a shelter. As he rushes toward the shelter, the air fills with ravens. Katsuk emerges from the trees and stands before David. Katsuk had known David would follow the river and, guided by Raven, he took a shortcut and met the boy. He stands with his arrow drawn in the boy, the obsidian knife hanging from his waist.

Katsuk has grown ill. He believes David has cursed him and tells the boy they must find shelter and food. Katsuk refuses to head toward the people and the shelter. Instead, he

makes David double back to a collapsed shelter David had overlooked earlier. They crawl in and build a fire.

Section 12 Analysis

For the first time in the novel, David is on his own. He has learned a great deal from his captor and does very well surviving in the forest. Even though he does not build traps to catch fish, he knows how to do it. All of the details used to describe the journey earlier in the novel come to use now as David draws on these memories to guide him through the woods.

The connection between the two characters manifests itself in a dream while David flees. He dreams of a physical string tying him to Katsuk and feels the pull of this string even in the morning. Improbable as it seems, the ravens actually do lead Katsuk to the boy. The section ends with Katsuk ill in the shelter. Because he is weakened by sickness, readers are left to wonder why David does not attempt escape. Based on the bond developed between the two characters, the story suggests David will stay behind to care for his sick mentor/captor.

Section 13

Section 13 Summary

This section begins with the phrase, "Chief Park Ranger William Redek..."

The park rangers reveal that the forest is colder than usual for the time of year. It's been snowier and rainier than usual and the ranger doubts whether Charles Hobuhet has the Indian survival skills to keep healthy. He tells the authorities to search the shelters for fire.

The ranger's predictions prove true as the two huddle in the shelter for warmth. Katsuk has a fever. He speaks deliriously and has visions of the dead and David. As Katsuk had done on many mornings previous, David has gone off to gather wood and food for the pair. The two have switched roles as David cares for the sick man.

A plane circles near their shelter, but the trees are too thick for anyone to see them. Katsuk begins chanting, praying for David to ask for the arrow to kill him. Katsuk asks David why he does not use this opportunity to escape. David simply responds that Katsuk is sick. Katsuk notices his knife is missing, but David has not stolen it. David has piled Katsuk's weapons in a safe place in the shelter so the man could sleep comfortably.

Katsuk begins to mutter that David gave him the sickness first through curses, then through sickness blankets like the white men have done in the past. As Katsuk dreams of his own death and mutters madly, David heats stones and food and feeds Katsuk.

In the night, Katsuk wakes up and is well. He tells David that even though the boy nursed him to health, this does not change the fact that Katsuk must send his spiritual message. As David drifts to sleep, Katsuk thinks that he must still create a nightmare for the world.

Sheriff Pallatt complains that he has only 35 men and one helicopter to search the entire wilderness. The man's feet are swollen with exhaustion, but he continues to search the forest for the boy. He swears he will find them.

In the middle of the night, David awakes to a full moon blaring bright. Once again, he is alone and calls for Katsuk. David asks where the man has been and Katsuk is troubled by this question. He has been off speaking to the spirits, who have been giving him guidance. Katsuk knows that the rescuers are nearing them, and has discovered their camp. Katsuk had crawled silently near them and listened to their plans.

Katsuk tells the boy only that he was walking. David tries to talk calmly to him, convinces him to rest after his illness. Katsuk is very agitated and knows that time is running out. He visualizes the sacrifice, dwells on it constantly while they both putter around the campsite building the fire and gathering food.

David realizes he is afraid both of and for Katsuk. He does not want to die and he also does not want Katsuk to be harmed. Katsuk begins to worry that the white men might not recognize his ritual. Katsuk begins to pray, to urge David to ask for the arrow. They hear sounds approaching in the woods and Katsuk tells David his rescuers approach.

David panics. He tells Katsuk that they must run and try to escape. Katsuk is confused and does not understand why the boy would say this. David worries the rescue squad will kill Katsuk and begs him to escape. Katsuk asks David how he can do this when he still has a spiritual message to deliver.

Thinking of anything to urge the man to safety, David tells Katsuk to just deliver his message and escape. David insists he will not tell the police about Vince's murder. He promises to keep everything a secret, say he came of his own free will. He begs Katsuk again to just deliver the message and escape. Katsuk takes this urging as David asking for the arrow. The man walks into the trees and prepares his bow and arrow.

Katsuk prays, says goodbye to David, and shoots him with the arrow. The cedar arrow pierces David's heart and he slumps and dies almost immediately. David has time only to think, "He did it!" while Katsuk prays to Soul Catcher about the finished task. Katsuk hears the police approaching and begins to sob. He cradles the dead boy in his arms and rocks, sobbing in the forest. When the police arrive, they find him cradling David's body, with thousands of duck feathers floating around in the air.

Section 13 Analysis

By the end of the novel, David cares very deeply for Katsuk. He is so torn by his mixed emotions that he stays and endangers himself so that he can nurse the man back to health. His last thoughts as his rescuers approach are to save the man who has kidnapped him. In the last pages of the novel, Katsuk's thoughts and prayers reach a maddening pace, but he is mainly focused on the connection between himself and David. Katsuk imagines David has completely understood all of his lessons. When David tells the man to go ahead and deliver his spiritual message, Katsuk accepts this as a request to kill him.

Even though Katsuk is well aware of what he is doing and totally deliberate in all of his actions, he grieves the loss of the young boy who has become so close to him. The ending begs the question of whether Katsuk's sacrifice was necessary. By spending nearly two weeks together, Katsuk has taught David the ways and awareness he would like all white men to share. Readers are left to forever wonder if David might have become a spokesman for Native American rights, if he would have served as a link between the two groups of people. He has certainly come to appreciate the land and the power of interconnectivity by the time of his death.

Characters

Dr. Tilman Barth

Dr. Tilman Barth is one of Hobuhet's professors in the University of Washington anthropology department, who comments on Hobuhet and his beliefs.

Aunt Cally

Cally is Hobuhet's aunt, and she wants him to save his life by releasing David, even though she is proud of her nephew for the kidnapping.

Vince Debay

Vince Debay is the hippie hiker whom Katsuk kills in the forest with David's knife, an act that encourages David to make his first escape attempt. Although Debay recognizes Hobuhet from an anthropology class that they have shared, he thinks it odd that Hobuhet is dressed in traditional Native-American garb, a fact that makes him nervous.

Charles Hobuhet is a graduate student who becomes possessed by a spirit, kidnaps David Marshall, and ritually sacrifices him as a way to pay back white society for all of the Native Americans they have killed and mistreated. It is the rape of his sister by white loggers and her subsequent suicide that sends him into madness. The madness causes him to go into the forest, where he is possessed by Soul Catcher, a powerful spirit who instructs him to kill an innocent, and where he gets the spirit name of Katsuk. One night, he uses his status as a camp counselor at Six Rivers Camp to lure David away from his bunk, claiming that he is going to make David his spirit brother. Katsuk takes David deep into the forest, then ties him up, and reveals his plan to sacrifice him. Meanwhile, Katsuk has left a number of notes that illustrate the knowledge he has gained in his anthropology degree, his hate for the hoquat—white—world, and his desire to regain lost land and customs. These notes are very angry and often draw on legends from his people.

Katsuk himself draws on the power of legendary spirits such as Soul Catcher, the powerful spirit that possesses him, and Raven, who helps him to hide both him and David from helicopters and search parties. Throughout the story, he prays to many of these spirits, as well as to Alkuntam, the supreme god of his people. After David has his own spirit dream, Katsuk suggests that he pray to Alkuntam. The spirits are both a source of strength and anguish for Katsuk, who faces the internal struggle that results from his beliefs. Katsuk sees a spirit inside David and believes they are engaged in a battle. When Katsuk becomes sick, he thinks that David has infected him with Cedar sickness by encouraging Katsuk to make an arrow from a cedar tree. He also relies on the strength of his spirits to kill a hiker, who could expose their location. Katsuk and his captive eventually form a relationship, which Katsuk sees as a spiritual link. When

Katsuk is sick, David takes care of him, and when he gets better, Katsuk thinks that Soul Catcher is helping David's spirit guide the boy to his destiny. When David speaks to him, he starts to hear a hidden meaning, which eventually leads to his belief that David is asking for death, a necessary prerequisite to this traditional sacrifice. Because of this, Katsuk kills David in a ritual sacrifice, with a special bow and arrow that he has made. When David dies, his connection to the spirit world is closed, and Katsuk is just a man again. He is proud of David for his sacrifice and chants a friend's death song for him.

Hobuhet-Katsuk

See Charles Hobuhet

Hoquat

See David Morgenstern Marshall

Agent Norman Hosbig

Special Agent Norman Hosbig of the FBI's Seattle office is the agent assigned to lead the search for Hobuhet and David. He mistakenly believes that Hobuhet has taken David underground in the city and as a result does not concentrate all of his men in the forest. He thinks that Hobuhet is insane and ignores the sacrifice references in Hobuhet's notes, treating David's capture as a standard kidnapping.

Janiktaht

Janiktaht is Hobuhet's sister, whose rape by white loggers and subsequent suicide spark Hobuhet's madness, which in turn leads to his possession by Soul Catcher. Hobuhet has raised Janiktaht in the absence of their deceased parents and loves her very much.

Katsuk

See Charles Hobuhet

Mary Kletnik

Mary Kletnik, also known by her tribal name of Tskanay, is a young Native American who tries to spoil Hobuhet's plans for sacrifice. Tskanay is Hobuhet's ex-girlfriend, and she had hoped to marry him. She is upset when she sees that Hobuhet is too far gone to get married and tries to help David escape. She becomes even angrier when her

attempt to steal David's innocence by stealing his virginity—which she thinks will make David an impure sacrifice—does not work. Although she is very Americanized and does not believe in the spirit world anymore, she starts to believe when Hobuhet demonstrates his power.

David Morgenstern Marshall

David Morgenstern Marshall is the thirteen-year-old kidnap victim, who gets ritually murdered by Charles Hobuhet-Katsuk. In the beginning, David is excited about going to the exclusive Six Rivers Camp, where he hopes to see real Indians and learn survival skills. He gets more than he bargains for, when his status as the son of a powerful politician makes him the target of Charles Hobuhet, one of the camp counselors. Hobuhet lures David out of his bunk one night and takes him into the woods, where he makes David call him Katsuk and where he gives David the name Hoquat—the same word that Hobuhet's ancestors used to describe David's ancestors. David tries many times to attract the attention of rescuers or to escape, but it is no use. He is constantly thwarted by the ravens that are summoned by Katsuk's power.

Katsuk chose David for his innocence, something that he demonstrates both in the simplicity in his letters home to his parents and in his conversations with Katsuk. Katsuk tells him in the beginning that he is going to kill David as a sacrifice to even the score between whites and Native Americans, but as they develop a relationship, David thinks that maybe he will survive. At one point, Katsuk tells David that he will not kill him unless David asks him to, and David feels even safer. David feels guilty over the way that his ancestors have treated Katsuk's ancestors, a feeling that is magnified after Tskanay talks him into having sex with her, in an attempt to destroy his innocence. However, this act only binds David to Katsuk more tightly. It is this connection that makes it easier for Katsuk to find David when he escapes. It also prevents David from leaving when he has the chance—instead staying to nurse Katsuk through his sickness. When David hears the search party coming for him, he is worried for Katsuk's safety. In his attempt to help Katsuk escape, he unwittingly gives Katsuk permission to kill him. His last thoughts before he dies are of shock and betrayal.

Mr. Howard Marshall

Mr. Howard Marshall is the newly appointed United States Undersecretary of State, a status that leads to Hobuhet's kidnapping and sacrifice of his son, David.

Mrs. Marshall

Mrs. Marshall is David's mother, who is worried about him bringing a knife to Six Rivers Camp; this is the same knife that Hobuhet uses to kill Vince Debay.

Old Ish

Old Ish is Hobuhet's great uncle on his father's side, and he is one of few who try to stop Hobuhet. After Ish and his people sing in the forest to lead Hobuhet to them, he tries to raise his rifle at Hobuhet but is too scared by the spirit he senses in Hobuhet, which he correctly identifies as Soul Catcher.

Sheriff Mike Pallatt

Sheriff Mike Pallatt is the head of the local law enforcement and leads the search party that finds Hobuhet and David. Pallatt knows about Janiktaht's rape and realizes that this is what caused Hobuhet to go mad. Unlike Agent Hosbig, Pallatt must make do with a very small search party, which he concentrates on the uncharted wilderness area. Pallatt is angry that the news media has pitted him against Hosbig by saying there is a battle to see who will get credit for the case. Pallatt says that his first concern is saving David, and Hobuhet, if he can. In order to do this, he and his deputy camp without a fire so that Hobuhet will not know they are coming. However, it is not until David makes a fire while Hobuhet is sick that Pallat finds their location. Shortly thereafter, Pallatt and a large search party find Hobuhet with a dead David in his arms.

Mrs. Parma

Mrs. Parma is the Marshalls' servant, a woman from India who makes David very uneasy. Before he leaves for camp, David wonders if his "Indian" counselors will look like Mrs. Parma.

Ranger William Redek

Chief Park Ranger William Redek provides the news media with information about the difficulty of the search and the potential dangerous effects from being in the cold weather.

Tskanay

See Mary Kletnik

Themes

Mistreatment of Native Americans

In *Soul Catcher*, Katsuk and others make some very overt references to the struggle between Native Americans and white people in the past. This is his stated reason for sacrificing David: "I want your world to understand something. That an innocent from your people can die just as other innocents have died." Through his captivity, David, an American boy who knows nothing about Native Americans before he goes to camp, learns more than he wishes about the treatment his ancestors have given Native Americans: "His people had stolen this land. He knew Katsuk was speaking the truth.... He had even sinned as his ancestors had, with a woman of these people." Katsuk also notes other ways in which early Americans mistreated his

people, such as giving them blankets infested with smallpox: "You hoquat have used sickness blankets on us before." The knowledge of these offenses against Native Americans weighs him down: "David felt himself hostage for all the sins of his kind." Even Sheriff Pallatt, who heads one of the search parties, acknowledges the bad treatment that Native Americans have received at the hands of whites: "This is what comes of sending an Indian to college. He studies how we've been giving his people the s—ty end of the stick. Something happens . . . he reverts to savage."

Native-American Religion

Native-American religion is another key concept in the book. As Katsuk demonstrates, Native-American religion is rooted in respect for nature, which provides the way of life for his people. Throughout the book, Katsuk prays to various spirits, many of which represent natural forces. For example, Raven, named for the birds he commands, serves as a guardian to Katsuk, protecting Katsuk and David from sight when helicopters fly by, as Katsuk proves to David: "The helicopter was high but in plain sight.... An occupant would only have to glance this way to see two figures on the high rock escarpment." However, the helicopter does not see them. Shortly after the helicopter flies away, David sees why, when "a single raven flew over the rock where David lay, then another, another."

Katsuk also acknowledges his reliance on other aspects of nature, such as when he prays to Fish, the spirit who controls fish, for forgiveness, when he kills a fish for him and David to eat. The spirits also plague Katsuk, as when he gets sick and attributes it to Cedar sickness, which he believes he has gotten from not praying enough to Cedar. Not all spirits are based in nature. Soul Catcher, the powerful spirit that possesses Katsuk, does not have any specific correspondent in nature. However, when Soul Catcher possesses Katsuk, he does it through the stinger of a bee, another symbol of nature. Even those Native Americans in the story who do not actively practice their religion often remain respectful. When Katsuk walks into the camp of his great uncle,

Ish, and his ex-girlfriend, Tskanay, Ish realizes that Katsuk has been possessed and backs down from trying to stop Katsuk: "Don't catch me going up against a real spirit. Soul Catcher's got that one."

Katsuk lets the outside world know in one of his notes that "I take an innocent of your people to sacrifice for all of the innocents you have murdered.... Thus will sky and earth balance." In the beginning, Katsuk reinforces, both to himself and the outside world, that this sacrifice is symbolic in nature. However, occasionally, his thoughts slip to the rape of his sister and her subsequent suicide, at which points the sacrifice becomes a revenge killing. And eventually, the two become one and the same, as he equates his sister's death with all of his ancestors' deaths. Katsuk blames the need for the sacrifice directly on the loggers who raped his sister: "They had killed Janiktaht.... They had killed Vince, growing cold up there on the trail.... All killed by those drunken hoquat." Katsuk further notes that although Vince's death is not a large enough sacrifice to send a message and even the score, he will still serve as "a preliminary sacrifice, one to mark the way."

Survival

As David becomes a captive of Katsuk in the forest, he starts to learn the Native-American methods of survival. Katsuk notices the change early on: "When it was time to drink, he drank. Hunger came upon him in its proper order. The spirit of the wilderness had seeped into him." After a week with Katsuk, David knows that grubs are "juicy and sweet" and is not above looking inside a stump and "searching for grubs in the rotten wood" when he is hungry. In modern society, eating grubs is not necessary or in many places acceptable. It is David's ability to cast off these modern ways that help him to survive. Likewise, when David escapes from Katsuk and spends a night on his own, he uses the techniques that Katsuk has shown him to make a fire for his shelter:

With a slab of cedar notched by pounding with a stone, with a shoestring bow to drive the tinder stick, with pitch and cedar splinters, ready at hand, he persisted until he had a coal, then gently blew the coal into flame which he fed with pitch and cedar.

Innocence

Katsuk makes it known to everybody—his people, David, and the outside world—that David must be an innocent to make a proper sacrifice. There are several points in the story when the boy's innocence is threatened. When Katsuk kills the hiker, he sees David's terror over realizing that he will be next: "Hoquat must not let this awareness rise into his consciousness. He must know it while denying it. Too much terror could destroy innocence." Later, as David starts to adapt to his circumstances and gain appreciation for Hobuhet's way of life, he realizes that Katsuk has eaten a spirit and is surprised by this Native American way of thinking: "David sat up, wondered at such thoughts coming all unbidden into his mind. Those were not the thoughts of childhood." However, though he is beginning to have more adult thoughts, they are not enough to

spoil his innocence. Even when Tskanay seduces him, the act of sex is not enough to spoil his innocence, because he feels shame, a quality of innocence. Also, as Katsuk notes to Tskanay when David tries to protect her from being hurt, "You tried to use him against me . . . and he still doesn't want you hurt. Is that not innocence?"

Captor/Captive Relationships

When David is kidnapped, Katsuk lures David outside by telling him that they are going to do "a ceremony of spirit brotherhood." When David realizes that he has been kidnapped by Katsuk, he is terrified: "All the horror stories he'd heard about murdered kidnap victims flooded into his mind, set his body jerking with terror." However, as they make their way through the forest, captor and captive start to develop a relationship, and David begins to lose his fear of being killed. In fact, Katsuk feels "a bond being created between himself and this boy," and wonders if it is possible that they "were really brothers" in the spirit world. Although Katsuk feels it is a spiritual bond, relationships between captor and captive have been known to blossom into something resembling friendship. This bond is strengthened to the point where, when David has a chance to escape, he chooses instead to help nurse Katsuk back to health: "I couldn't just leave you. You were sick." When the search party is almost there, David tries desperately to get Katsuk to run and says that if they catch him, "I'll tell 'em I came of my own free will," even though he has not.

Style

Setting

The state of Washington setting is crucial to the story, as it provides a realistic venue for David's kidnapping. Six Rivers Camp is poised on the edge of a huge, uncharted wilderness. Even Chief Park Ranger William Redek notes the difficulty of finding somebody in this area: "we know there are at least six small aircraft crashed somewhere in there. We've never found them. . . . And those aircraft aren't actively trying to hide from us." Besides being big and secluded, the forest is also the place where Katsuk's powers are their strongest, which he notes when he says that he is not afraid of the search helicopters: "All that lived wild around him helped and guarded him. The new voice of the wilderness spoke to him through every creature, every leaf and rock." For David, the setting is a challenge and provides an appropriate background for his change. In the beginning, he feels that the forest is a place that is "so utterly foreign to the sounds, sights and smells of his usual life that he tried to recall things from other times which would fit here." However, it is only when he begins to work with the forest, not against it, that David learns how to survive, and he matures, gaining a new respect for the Native-American way of life.

Exposition

In the beginning of the novel, Herbert uses several mini chapters that include news stories, statements, and notes from Katsuk. This is a very overt style of exposition—the process by which readers gain information they need to understand the story. This blatant exposition prepares readers for the story they are about to hear. However, when the actual plot progresses and the reader is drawn into the events in the forest with David and Katsuk, the exposition is more subtle. Herbert still uses mini chapters, but now they serve to pull readers out of the story, letting them know: what is going on with the search for David, Katsuk's philosophies, and the views of Katsuk by other people. These outside perspectives do not prepare readers for the story, but they do enhance their reading of it.

Suspense

In the beginning of the story, Herbert gives several different accounts of the kidnapping and then goes back to the events leading up to it. At this point, Herbert is invoking a sense of dread in his readers, who know what is coming. After this point, however, Herbert changes dread for suspense, as he leads readers along, making them guess whether David will live or die. When Katsuk is successful in hiding them from the helicopters by calling on Raven, David starts to realize that Katsuk's powers are for real: "He had the eerie sensation that the birds had spoken to Katsuk in some private way." As a result, David starts to lose hope. However, shortly after this, David makes his first

escape attempt, giving both him and the reader some hope that he may survive: "He was running all out now. There was nothing left to do but run." David's escape attempt is cut short when Katsuk comes out of nowhere, catching "the running boy in full stride." The boy's hopes, like the reader's are dashed, at least for now.

Throughout the rest of the story, Herbert employs many more events like this to raise readers' hopes up and send them crashing down. This uncertainty becomes very suspenseful, as Herbert makes it unclear what the outcome is going to be. Katsuk's people try to stand up to him but fail. Tskanay tries to render David an impure sacrifice by sleeping with him—"You're a man now, not a little innocent Katsuk can push around"—but the act only binds him tighter to Katsuk. The ultimate moment of suspense comes at the end of the story, when David can hear the search party coming and thinks he is going home. He tries to encourage Katsuk to leave before the search party catches him, and Katsuk takes the boy's language to mean that he is asking to be sacrificed. For readers, it becomes a race to see if David will be killed by Katsuk or saved by the search party, whose flashlights can be seen "coming through the trees across the river." The slowness of Katsuk's actions increases the suspense of the moment: "Katsuk faded back in the shadows . . . set the bowstring . . . nocked the arrow . . . drew the bow taught . . . released the arrow." These actions take place at an excruciatingly slow pace over a few paragraphs, and it is only when the arrow flies "into the boy's chest," killing him, that the suspense Herbert has built up throughout the novel is finally broken.

Historical Context

American Indian Movement (AIM)

In the late 1960s, Native Americans in both Canada and the United States, reacting to centuries of oppression and mistreatment by whites, began to organize and protest in many isolated regional events, and in 1968 four men established the American Indian Movement (AIM). However, as Vine Deloria, Jr. noted in his book *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*, these smaller events "inspired Indians across the continent to defend their rights, but what was needed was some national symbol, a rallying point, that could launch a national movement." In 1969, Native Americans got their wish. After a convention in San Francisco to discuss Native-American issues, the Indian center where tribal representatives were meeting caught fire and burned to the ground. Realizing that there were no government funds to build a new Indian center, a group of Native Americans, supported by AIM and calling themselves the Indians of All Tribes, seized Alcatraz, the infamous island-based prison, which had lain empty since 1964, and demanded that the government give them leave to turn the defunct prison into a cultural-educational center.

The majority of the group was university students, like Charles Hobuhet in the novel. In fact, in *Soul Catcher*, Special Agent Hosbig of the FBI mentions that Hobuhet is "a university student" and then ties this into the Alcatraz event: "we've reason to believe he was an Indian militant. He's going to demand that we cede . . . Alcatraz or set up an independent Indian Territory somewhere else." In a statement issued from the Indians of All Tribes in February 1970, they said that they had learned that "violence breeds only more violence" and that because of this, they had "carried on our occupation of Alcatraz in a peaceful manner, hoping that the government will act accordingly." With nationally recognized protests like Alcatraz, the American Indian Movement (AIM) picked up speed.

Native Americans in Higher Education

In the book, Herbert indicates that it was the wish of Hobuhet's people that he get an education. When Katsuk meets his people in the forest, he informs the old man, Ish, that he is there to "show them that my spirit is all powerful." This is not what Ish had hoped for, however: "The old man sighed, said: 'That sure . . . isn't why we sent you to the university.' "

One of the ways in which Native Americans tried to adapt to life in the United States in the twentieth century was by attending American universities. They were aided in this attempt by government programs such as the Higher Education Grant Program, established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1948 to provide educational grants to Native Americans. By 1972, nearly 12,500 Native-American students were receiving $15 million in educational funds. However, like Hobuhet, not all Native Americans

wanted to learn in American universities, for fear of losing their heritage. As the Indians of All Tribes noted in their statement, "One of the reasons we took Alcatraz was because the students were having problems in the universities and colleges they were attending .... We wanted our own Indian university, so that they would stop whitewashing Indians."

Native-American Women's Groups

Several groups provided support during the American Indian Movement. Two of the most effective groups were the North American Indian Women's Association (NAIWA), founded in 1970, and the Women of All Red Nations (WARN), founded in 1974. The NAIWA was sponsored by the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and its main goal is exposure for Native-American women across the country, as well as improving communication at both the personal and tribal levels.

WARN, on the other hand, has a slightly different history. Because Native-American women were largely ignored by outsiders—who mainly punished men during the American Indian Movement—the women took the opportunity to band together for their own causes. WARN was founded to address issues among Native-American women, including ending violence against women and increasing educational opportunities. WARN also works with other women's organizations to help improve life for all minority women and provides support on general Native-American issues such as protecting Native-American land and government.

Hippies and Rebellion

In the novel, Katsuk runs into Vince Debay, a hippie, while Debay is hiking through the forest. Debay's hippie status is identified by his "long hair" and by the marijuana that he offers to Katsuk. In his essay, "Youth Protest and the Counter-culture," Timothy Miller notes some of the different types of hippies in the 1960s and early 1970s: "Some hippies were escapists who simply favored withdrawal from the prevailing culture; others proposed much more active opposition." Given Debay's easygoing, laid-back attitude, he seems to belong to the former group. In either case, Katsuk is not impressed by Debay's form of protest, as he notes after he has killed the hiker: "Vince had judged his own people harshly, had shared the petty rebellions of his time." Katsuk calls these rebellions, "petty," because they pale in comparison to the type of protest that Katsuk is performing.

Environmentalism

Native-American way of life, certain aspects which David Marshall becomes used to, and even begins to enjoy, during his captivity. At the time the novel was written, environmental preservation was a hot topic. In 1970, two years before the book was published, President Nixon founded the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in large part due to the failure of existing environmental protection laws. Although their

duties would eventually encompass a wide range of environmental issues, the EPA's first task was to administer the 1970 Clean Air Act, which sought to reduce air pollution from motor vehicles. As a result of the EPA's efforts, automobile manufacturers began to install catalytic converters in their vehicles, which significantly reduced air-pollution emissions in the next two decades.

Critical Overview

Herbert is a hugely popular author, mainly due to the success of his second novel, *Dune*. *Soul Catcher*, on the other hand, is almost a non-event as far as critical and popular readers are concerned. Published in 1972, the book has since fallen out of print. However, even when it was in print, the book received very little critical attention. In 1974, G. Robert Carlsen notes in the *English Journal*, that the "book builds with spellbinding intensity" and that it is a "moving story." However, while Carlsen also briefly discusses some of the plot elements, in general, one searches in vain for anything more than a line or two about the book. Even in these cases, the book is sometimes talked about for what it is *not*, rather than for what it is. Take, for example, the comment by David M. Miller, in his 1980 book, *Frank Herbert*: "*Soul Catcher* is neither science fiction nor fantasy."

In his entry on Herbert in *Science Fiction Writers*, Willis E. McNelly notes that the book's non-science-fiction status "both puzzled and irritated many" early reviewers. McNelly further notes that, while the book "contains many of Herbert's customary technical devices and is really quite similar to his science fiction," early critics still had difficulty "addressing" the novel, and as a result, "initial reviews of the novel were mixed." Herbert is famous for his science fiction novels with fantastic elements, like *Dune*, so novels that fall into other categories, like *Soul Catcher*, were not widely acknowledged because they deviated from Herbert's style.

The lack of critical attention and support could also be due to the fact that it is "a novel about the American Indian," which is all Don D'Ammassa had to say about the book in his 1986 Herbert overview article in *Science Fiction Chronicle*. Of course, the Native-American theme alone would not necessarily prevent the book from being reviewed. In fact, for the past few decades, works about Native-American culture have become increasingly popular. As historian Wilcomb E. Washburn noted in his chapter in *The Cambridge History of the American Peoples, Volume 1: North America, Part 2*, this literary renaissance in Native-American writing began around the same time as the American Indian Movement: "For purposes of emphasis the year 1969 can mark the formal recognition of this phenomenon in the United States." As Washburn says, this was the year that Scott Momaday, "an Indian and professor of English at Stanford University, received the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*."

However, Momaday, and the other popular authors of Native-American literature who followed in his footsteps, has something that Herbert did not—a Native-American heritage. Although Herbert's book champions the Native-American cause, Herbert does not share the background of these other authors. This fact, when coupled with Herbert's overwhelming success in a different genre, may have caused many critics to pass over *Soul Catcher*. McNelly notes, however, that this fact may change in the future and that maybe the book "has yet to achieve the preeminence that a few readers have claimed for it. It is perhaps still seeking its audience.

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3
- Critical Essay #4

Critical Essay #1

Poquette has a bachelor's degree in English and specializes in writing about literature. In the following essay, Poquette examines the reasons why Herbert uses a disjointed narrative in his novel.

Soul Catcher is a shocking story, which grabs the reader on page one and does not let go until its tragic conclusion. Through the characters of Charles Hobuhet-Katsuk and David Marshall, the reader is drawn into a captor-captive tale, in which the captor is hard to hate and the captive is easy to love. In fact, throughout the story, the two develop a relationship that makes the ending even harder to bear. The book has many contradictions, from the modern helicopters that search in the primitive wilderness to the conflicting attitudes toward the characters. The biggest contradiction, however, is Herbert's use of a disjointed narrative, which he uses to complement the action and add to the characterization.

From the very beginning of the novel, readers realize that there is something different about this book from most other books. The first chapter is only a few paragraphs long—a mini chapter—and is followed by three more chapters that are about the same length. With the exception of the first mini chapter, which narrates Howard Marshall's reaction when he finds out his son, David, has been kidnapped, the other three chapters consist entirely of public statements, news stories, and notes about David's kidnapping, which has already happened at this point. Starting with the fifth chapter, which begins with the sentence, "On the day he was to leave for camp, David Marshall had awakened early," Herbert jumps to the past, before David has been kidnapped, and begins to tell the actual story, in chapters that are usually much longer. Herbert jumps between the mini chapters and normal chapters throughout the rest of the book, in most places alternating one mini chapter with one normal chapter. It is a very obvious technique that Herbert is using, so the reader knows that the author must have good reasons for using it. In fact, this is a common narrative style for Herbert. In this story, he uses it to comment on the action and add to the novel's characterization.

In their entry on Herbert for *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Robert A. Foster and Thomas L. Wyner note the fact that "Herbert usually employs a fragmented narrative structure, in which relatively brief episodes are introduced by quotations from invented works." On a similar note, in his entry on Herbert for *Science Fiction Writers*, Willis E. McNelly says that the novel "contains many of Herbert's customary technical devices."

As in other Herbert novels, the mini chapter is often used to comment directly on the episode that follows it, as in an example near the beginning of the novel, when a news story reports that the grief-stricken "mother of the kidnap victim arrived at Six Rivers Camp . . . yesterday." This contrasts with the episode that directly follows this mini chapter, which describes the conversation between David and his mother on the morning that he is to leave for Six Rivers Camp. His mother is worried about the knife that David's father has gotten him, even though David tells her he needs it "to cut things, carve wood, stuff like that." His mother is unconvinced, but eventually she

relents and lets him take the knife. However, she transfers her dislike for the knife to the camp itself, calling the camp "awful." For the reader, this is a powerful contrast, seeing the mother arrive at the camp where David has been kidnapped and then flashing back to her discussion with David, in which the reader sees her hesitation in letting David go to this "awful" camp.

However, in other cases, the mini chapters also serve to complement the action by "setting up" information that does not ultimately "pay off" until later in the novel. The best example of this also takes place near the beginning of the novel, in the mini chapter where Katsuk announces to his people that he has "done all the things correctly." He goes into detail about the items he has used on the "sacrificial victim," including the "consecrated down of a sea duck." He says that "It was all done in the proper way." In a normal novel, these confessions would serve as a clear foreshadowing of David's death and would tip the reader off to this fact. However, because Herbert is using such a disjointed narrative style and jumps around in his use of time, as he did in the beginning of the book, only the most perceptive readers will recognize that the author is using the past tense, "done," implying that the sacrificial act has already taken place at the time that Katsuk makes this announcement.

In the next chapter, when Katsuk and David stand upon a trail, Katsuk opens his pouch and removes "a pinch of the consecrated white duck down." He thinks to himself that "It must be done correctly" and uses the down to write his name upon the earth, a necessary prerequisite to David's sacrifice. In this way, as in the previous example with David's mother, the mini chapter comments on the episode that follows it. However, unlike the reference to David's mother, which does not appear again in the book, the duck down is referenced again in a few more places. But it is only at the very end of the book that the mini chapter pays off in the reader's mind. In the final scene, the suspense of the book reaches its height as the reader wonders if Sheriff Pallat and his search party can save David from being sacrificed. After David is killed and the suspense is broken, Herbert offers one final detail in the last line of the book. At this point, Katsuk is sitting with "Hoquat's body in his arms," while "The white down of sea ducks floated in the damp air all around them." This line links back to the mini chapter at the beginning of the novel, in which Katsuk lets his people know that everything "was done in the proper way."

Herbert also uses the mini-chapter commentaries in one other way. Foster and Wyner note that Herbert generally uses a fractured narrative because he is "Less concerned with plot and characterization than with setting and ideas." However, in *Soul Catcher*, Herbert deviates from this practice somewhat, because he puts as much emphasis on characterization as the other aspects. The characterization, however, is developed in two ways. First, readers learn aspects of Hobuhet-Katsuk's and David's characters as they follow the two characters on their journey, through the longer episode chapters. This is the normal way that readers learn about their characters, through the actual story itself.

However, in *Soul Catcher*, Herbert uses the mini chapters to introduce many characters that are not found in the actual narrative. In a normal disjointed narrative of this size,

these extra characters would decrease readers' understanding of the characters, since they would steal attention away from the two main characters and force the reader to think about other characters, other subplots. But in this book, there is very little information given about these additional characters, which are generally used for the sole purpose of offering outside perspectives of either David or Hobuhet-Katsuk. As a result, the outside world remains very distant, and the reader is forced to focus on David and his captor, who become the two most prominent characters.

Sometimes, these additional characters offer contradictory perspectives. This is true for Hobuhet-Katsuk. For example, in one of the first mini chapters, Dr. Tilman Barth, Hobuhet-Katsuk's old professor, is introduced. "I find this whole thing incredible," says Dr. Barth. "Charles Hobuhet cannot be the mad killer you make him out to be. It's impossible." Dr. Barth's other mini chapter statements also involve Hobuhet-Katsuk and, in fact, serve as some of the few positive views of David's captor. Likewise, Sheriff Pallatt notes in a mini chapter that Charlie's sister was a "good kid" and that Hobuhet has "raised her almost by himself" since their parents died. For this reason, Pallatt is sympathetic about the sister's rape and subsequent suicide, saying that "I'm not surprised Charlie went off his nut." Later on, in another mini chapter, Pallatt also expresses his desire to help Hobuhet: "All I want is to save that kid—and the Indian, if I can."

These positive, or at least supportive, views are important to the narrative, especially since most other statements in the mini chapters are negative. David's father says: "Our Indians were well treated.... The man who took David must be insane." Likewise, FBI agent, Norman Hosbig, is cold and stereotypical. Hosbig believes that Hobuhet is either "mentally deranged" or "pretending insanity." He also refuses to believe that the note Hobuhet-Katsuk left was anything but a "ransom note" and sticks doggedly to his idea that Hobuhet is an "Indian militant" who is going to demand "an independent Indian territory" in exchange for David. This is all that Hosbig knows from his experience. The contradictory viewpoints are intended on Herbert's part. If Hobuhet-Katsuk were depicted only as a crazy person or a lawless militant, the author would be leading his readers to choose one of these ideas as their viewpoint. Instead, Herbert does not give any easy outs. Readers must read all of the accounts of Hobuhet-Katsuk, from both himself and others, and make a decision for themselves as to whether he is evil for his actions.

When it comes to David, however, Herbert does lead the reader into a decisive judgment. David is the good innocent, plain and simple. This is shown in the main narrative, with the way David handles himself during the kidnapping. He feels ashamed at his ancestors' actions, he is embarrassed when he has sex with Tskanay, and he chooses to stay and help Hobuhet-Katsuk get better, even when he has a chance to flee. This characterization of David is strengthened through the depictions of David in the mini chapters. In David's letter home from camp, he uses the short, journalistic-style sentences that an innocent child uses to describe something to someone, in this case his parents: "I am having a lot of fun.... A man from camp met me there. We got on a small bus. The bus drove for a long time. It rained." These short sentences are free from any pretensions or ornamentation whatsoever. They are simply the writings of an

innocent who writes about what he sees. Likewise, David's teacher says, "He's a very good student, considerably ahead of most in his form. . . . David is very sensitive . . . the way he studies things." Herbert uses these mini chapters to underscore the pure goodness and innocence of David. With this picture of David in mind, the sacrifice at the end becomes even more painful and tragic.

In the end, Herbert inspires an extreme feeling of uneasiness in the reader, who has just witnessed the horrible death of a true innocent. By contradicting his entire narrative with a second narrative thread, which exists in mini chapters that break up the main narrative, Herbert helps to underscore the fact that the issues surrounding Native Americans are complex, a little chaotic, and not easily solved.

Source: Ryan D. Poquette, Critical Essay on *Soul Catcher*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2003.

Critical Essay #2

Witcover is an editor and writer whose fiction and critical essays appear regularly in magazines and online. In the following essay, Witcover discusses myth and religion in Frank Herbert's novel Soul Catcher*.*

Frank Herbert is justly famed as the author of one of the greatest science fiction epics ever written, the classic *Dune* series. The most popular and successful book in this series was the first, also called *Dune*, but readers who stop there, with the thrilling victory of Paul Atreides, a.k.a. Muad'Dib, over his evil enemies, thus fulfilling the ancient messianic prophecies of the Fremen of his adopted planet, Arrakis, and the secret genetic engineering program of the Bene Gesserit order, miss an extraordinary reversal of fortune for the immensely likeable young hero. In the next two novels, *Dune Messiah* and *Children of Dune*, Herbert boldly and systematically traces Paul's downward path from liberator/messiah to hated tyrant to blinded outcast to mad prophet while simultaneously presenting the journey of his son, Leto, in the opposite direction, with the son not only becoming a more absolute tyrant than his father ever was but finally renouncing his humanity in favor of a monstrous godhood from which Paul had recoiled in horror.

Many readers of *Dune*—who, as Herbert fully intended, had become deeply attached to the charismatic and sympathetic figure of Muad'Dib—recoiled in a kind of horror themselves from the fate to which Herbert subjected him. As critic Timothy O'Reilly notes in his book *Frank Herbert*:

In the *Dune* trilogy, Herbert portrays a hero as convincing, noble, and inspiring as any real or mythic hero of the past. But as the trilogy progresses, he shows the consequences of heroic leadership for Paul, his followers, and the planet. Anyone devoted to the heroic ideal is apt to be devastated by the conclusion of the trilogy.

The extremity of changes that Herbert puts his characters—and readers—through in the course of these books is very much a conscious choice: a recurring theme in all his work is the inevitability of change and the desirability of aligning oneself and one's culture as far as possible with the inevitable forces of change rather than seeking either to hold them back or to rigidly control them; either of these choices, in Herbert's fiction, is likely to unleash destructive forces on both the personal and cultural level. The virtue Herbert holds highest is that of awareness or consciousness (not to be confused with sheer intelligence); characters like Paul demonstrate a level of consciousness far above and beyond that of normal human beings. This hyperconsciousness is almost always marked by the ability to simultaneously perceive multiple realities or interpretations of reality, which, in its highest form, includes the ability to enter empathetically into the experiences and mindsets of others. As a result, either willingly or reluctantly, these hyperconscious characters, who often walk a fine line between transcendent genius and madness and who remain, despite all their advantages, fallible human beings, tend to become powerful leaders, messiah figures to their people. Yet in the process, they unleash forces they cannot control and that seek to control them and that often succeed

in doing so in whole or in part. In an interview with *Vertex* magazine, Herbert spoke of the *Dune* series as "a treatment of the messianic impulse in human society" and compared that society, in a characteristic metaphor, to a living organism. Seen in this way, a messiah figure like Paul Muad'Dib is either a virus or a genetic mutation in the larger organism. Both can be spurs to healing, adaptation, and evolution. Both can also be fatal.

A dynamic of fiercely contending interests is the norm in Herbert's fictional ecologies. His aim as a writer is not to resolve these conflicts or even judge between them but to compel his readers to evaluate for themselves and make up their own minds. Herbert is not an overtly moralistic writer; he generally does not tell his readers what to think or feel. This is not to say that he doesn't have an opinion or preference himself for solutions to the complex moral, psychological, and emotional situations he presents in his books. On the contrary, but, in keeping with his training as a journalist, Herbert presents the complexities as objectively as possible, without stacking the deck, then trusts the reader to make an informed choice. A judgment is expected, but it is the reader's to make. In order to make it, Herbert's readers, like his characters, must raise their consciousness. O'Reilly aptly observes that Herbert's novels are "training manuals for exactly the kinds of consciousness they describe."

Of course, it is impossible to be completely objective, especially in such an inherently subjective medium as the novel, and Herbert, despite himself, often does subtly, or not-so-subtly, stack the deck. Indeed, a schematic didacticism may be his greatest weakness as a writer; it is a weakness always lurking in his work, though generally counterbalanced by depth of characterization, vitality of intellect, complexity of plot, and that page-turning quality that is the mark of the most skillful fiction.

Herbert's faith in the intelligence of his readers is rarely shaken, and he seldom fails to follow his fictional ideas to their logical conclusions, even when those conclusions are likely to be unpopular or unpleasant.

This is nowhere truer than in Herbert's novel *Soul Catcher*, where rigorous extrapolation of the initial idea leads to a conclusion so viscerally unpleasant as to be repugnant. Of the twenty-one novels that Herbert published in his career, twenty are science fiction; only *Soul Catcher*—published in 1972, midway between the publication of *Dune Messiah* and *Children of Dune*—falls outside the genre. As critic David M. Miller notes in his book *Frank Herbert*, "*Soul Catcher* is neither science fiction nor fantasy"; it is, he adds, "an anomaly in Herbert's canon." Yet in some ways it is the most characteristic novel Herbert ever wrote. Again quoting Miller:

Soul Catcher does not add to Herbert's earlier novels in the sense of being something new; rather, it steps away from the buffers and props that assured his success in the world of science fiction.... What remains is essential Herbert, without ploy or pretense.

What is *Soul Catcher* if it is neither science fiction nor fantasy? Is it a realistic novel? It can certainly be read that way. On a purely realistic level, the novel is a thriller/horror story recounting the kidnapping of thirteen-year-old David Morgenstern Marshall, son of

a U.S. Undersecretary of State, by Charles Hobuhet, a graduate student in anthropology, who is also a member of the Quinault tribes of northwestern Washington state. After evading his pursuers for two weeks in the wilderness, Hobuhet—deranged with grief over the recent suicide of his younger sister, following her brutal rape by a gang of white loggers—ritually murders his innocent captive in revenge not only for her death but for the deaths of all Native Americans killed by whites over the centuries. As Hobuhet states in a note left behind after his abduction of David, "I take an innocent of your people to sacrifice for all of the innocents you have murdered."

In this reading, Hobuhet is either a terrorist or a madman (or both), his aim a horrific conflation of personal revenge and grandiose fantasies of a messianic mission to "create a holy obscenity" and "produce for this world a nightmare they will dream while awake." In other words, Hobuhet murders David for the publicity it will bring to the twin causes of justice for his sister and justice for Native Americans, believing—with that naivete peculiar to children, terrorists, and madmen—that the publicity will somehow bring about meaningful change, waking up Native Americans and white Americans alike, albeit in different ways and to different ends.

But such a reading, while defensible on its own terms, is only part of Herbert's design. A purely realistic interpretation of the novel forecloses any judgment of Hobuhet other than terrorist/madman; it would take a sick or perverse individual to view this Hobuhet, whatever the justice of his cause, as a hero of any kind and the cold-blooded murder of a thirteen-year-old boy as justified in any way. What would be the point or challenge to such a novel for a writer of Herbert's distinctive ambitions and interests? No, just as in the *Dune* series, Herbert has larger aims here, and they lie beyond the borders of realistic fiction, in the mist-shrouded realm of the visionary, that space of altered, higher consciousness that is the birthplace of myth and religion. To fully understand *Soul Catcher*, to earn the right to pronounce informed judgment on Hobuhet and his sacrifice of David, rather than simply condemning both with a knee-jerk reaction, readers must, like prophets or shamen, raise their consciousness enough to cross the borders of the realistic and enter the visionary realm. There the possibility—though not the certainty—exists that Hobuhet is in fact a hero, his sacrifice of David an act of supernatural potency that will bear fruit in the worlds of myth and everyday reality. In order to judge, readers must set aside their normal sympathies and moral standards and entertain these fantastic and morally complex possibilities with an open mind. It is not an easy task, but Herbert will use all his considerable skills as a novelist to make it possible.

Before turning to an examination of the visionary realm and a reading of the novel in those terms, it will be useful to give a brief taste of the cultural climate in which Herbert wrote *Soul Catcher*. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the rise of the American Indian Movement, or AIM, a Native-American civil rights organization dedicated to both redressing the historical wrongs done to Native Americans by the United States and its racist white power structure and reclaiming the lost and/or stolen cultural heritage of Native-American nations and tribes. In 1972, the same year that *Soul Catcher* appeared, AIM led a march on Washington, D.C., that culminated in the occupation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In February 1973, local Sioux activists invited AIM to take command of an occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, site of the last major

armed conflict between the United States and Native Americans, a brutal and shameful massacre perpetrated by federal troops in 1890. The 1973 occupation would last seventy-one days and again feature armed conflict between Native Americans and the United States, represented this time by local and federal law enforcement and units of the National Guard, with casualties on both sides. The novel—whose plot of kidnapping and murder must seem all-too-believable to readers in the aftermath of the 2001 World Trade Center attack and the 2002 murder of journalist Daniel Pearl by terrorists in Pakistan—would have seemed more like a cautionary tale to readers in the decade of the 1970s, though by no means an impossible one; in fact, it would have seemed less so with each passing year. The fact that history has given *Soul Catcher* a retrospective verisimilitude very much like the prophetic quality occasionally encountered in (and more frequently ascribed to) science fiction is a striking though deeply lamentable bit of tragic irony.

How does a visionary novel in the sense suggested above differ from a fantasy? If the ritual murder of David is invested with supernatural power, doesn't that mean magic is at work? If so, how does that make Hobuhet any different from a wizard? First of all, there are different types of fantasy novels. Some, like the Harry Potter books of J. K. Rowling, feature an escape from the "real" world into one where the usual physical rules or laws are replaced by magical systems. Others, such as J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, take place in magical worlds that either have no connection to the "real" world whatsoever or a tenuous one only: for example, the fantasy world is set in the distant past (Tolkien) or in the far future (Terry Brooks's Shannara series); more generally, the connection is a metaphorical one. Such fantasies may be pure escapism, religious or political allegories, satires, works of high and serious art, or admixtures of these things. But whatever they are, they are situated at sharp angles to the "real" world; even in the case of allegories or satires, this sharp divergence, which need not take place at every point as long as it occurs at (at least) one significant point, serves to bring differences and similarities into starker relief. Such is not the case with visionary novels. While the magic in a fantasy novel goes against the structure of the "real" world, operating beyond or outside the normal order, visionary novels reach toward a power that invests the "real" world, though often invisibly and secretly. The presence of this power may be known only to a select few or forgotten by all. This power is not magic but the very basis of reality; thus, visionary novels generally are not set at sharp angles to the "real" world but rather lie over or behind it; they permeate the "real" world at every point, just as God is said to do, and they are no more about magic than is the Bible. It is in this sense that *Soul Catcher* may be thought of as a visionary novel, or, more accurately, as a novel employing visionary strategies. It neither seeks nor offers readers (or its characters) an escape from the "real" world; on the contrary, its goal is to awaken readers (and characters) to the real nature of the "real" world.

Throughout the novel, Herbert calls attention to the interpenetrating layers of the visionary and the real. Every character, every event, exists simultaneously in two worlds, on two levels. Hobuhet takes the name of Katsuk, a Quinault word meaning "the center of the universe"; to David, he gives the name Hoquat, a Quinault word meaning "something that floated far out on the water, something unfamiliar and mysterious." Hobuhet/Katsuk sees himself as occupying, and in many ways as being identical with,

the fixed point around which the universe revolves, while David/Hoquat is everything that surrounds him at the limits of his perception. Hoquat is not only the name that Katsuk gives to David, it is the name that the Quinault gave to the first whites who appeared on their shores; thus, the relationship between Hobuhet/ Katsuk and David/Hoquat is, in microcosm, the relationship between all Native Americans and whites.

from the human Hobuhet into the more-than-human shaman/warrior Katsuk, "who will set this world afire." David, too, in the course of his ordeal, comes to recognize the truth of the interpenetration of the worlds of everyday reality and myth:

There were two problems, or one problem with two shapes. One involved his need to escape from the crazy Indian, to get back with people who were sane and could be understood. But there was another part of this thing—a force which tied together two people called Katsuk and Hoquat.

It is important to note that Katsuk and Hoquat, the center and the circumference, together make one thing: the universe. The growing mutual recognition between captor and captive that they are somehow a single thing is an important element of the novel. "Katsuk felt a bond being created between himself and this boy. Was it possible they were really brothers in that other world which moved invisibly and soundlessly beside the world of the senses?" David, too, becomes aware of the bond he shares with Katsuk and comes to trust him. While the Stockholm syndrome is plainly in operation—that is, the psychological process by which a kidnapping victim comes to identify with his or her kidnapper—on the visionary or mythic level, David's recognition is no delusion. Yet this awareness of brotherhood, which both characters come to share, will not move Katsuk to pity; he will not spare his brother Hoquat's life; indeed, the sacrifice becomes all the more potent and sacred because of their brotherhood:

Katsuk thought: *Any man may emulate the bee. A man may sting the entire universe if he does it properly. He must only find the right nerve to receive his barb. It must be an evil thing I do, with the good visible only when they turn it over. The shape of hate must be revealed in it, and betrayal and anguish and the insanities we all share. Only later should they see the love*.

These are eloquent words, and they may well move readers to sympathy for Katsuk. Indeed, Herbert takes considerable pains to make Katsuk an eloquent and sympathetic character. Again and again, despite Katsuk's repeatedly stated intent to murder David, and despite numerous small cruelties of speech and action, readers find themselves liking the man. Even after Katsuk murders an innocent hiker in cold blood, as a kind of warm-up exercise for the execution of David, readers are loath to label him a monster. This is all the more incredible given the fact that Herbert takes equal if not greater pains to render David sympathetic. Of course, a reader's sympathies will almost always be engaged by an underdog, a child, an innocent victim. But Herbert presents David as a truly exceptional boy: he is brave, intelligent, and compassionate. Though he has been infected with the casual and unexamined racism of his culture, he is himself no racist and even comes to recognize the justice of Katsuk's cause: "Guilt filled David. He

thought: *I am Hoquat*. His people had stolen this land. He knew Katsuk was speaking the truth. *We stole his land*."

Everything readers take for granted about the way that fiction works, everything that exists in the unwritten contract between reader and author, persuades that Katsuk will, in the end, spare David's life. When he does not, readers more than share David's fleeting sense of betrayal as the arrow enters his breast; they feel betrayed by Herbert. And yet, Herbert has not lied. He has not cheated. He has played fair throughout the book. The shock that strikes us at the end of the novel is the same shock that Katsuk is delivering to the connected yet separate worlds of Native Americans and whites. The question is, does the sacrifice succeed in doing what Katsuk intends? What exactly does Katsuk think his sacrifice of David will accomplish anyway?

Katsuk may be mad, but there is method in it. A graduate student in anthropology, Hobuhet is deeply knowledgeable about myths and rituals, not only those of the Quinault culture, but those of cultures from other places, other times. Hobuhet is filled with rage and hate following the rape and suicide of his sister. He longs to take revenge. Yet he cannot do it. Why? Is it because he is weak? Or afraid? No. The reason Hobuhet does not take revenge on the whites who raped his sister is that he recognizes the futility of it. He could kill those men, but would that make a real difference? Would that change the culture in which whites have the power to rape and murder Native Americans both literally and figuratively? It would not. And yet the hatred, the rage, the desire for revenge remain.

Hobuhet's training as an anthropologist comes to his rescue. A symbolic act can provide an outlet for these emotions and desires. What kind of symbolic act? A ritual, of course. But what kind of ritual? Hobuhet cannot answer that question. But Katsuk can. And so Katsuk is born from the sting of a bee. And it is to Katsuk, not Hobuhet, that Tamanawis speaks:

whites must feel it. They must hear it. An innocent for all of our innocents.

For Hobuhet to kill the rapists of his sister would be a futile and selfish act of personal vengeance; it would not bring his sister back or change the world. Yet for Katsuk to sacrifice an innocent as commanded by Tamanawis, "the greatest of spirits," would be a ritual act of impersonal atonement that could redeem the past and change the future of the world. Hobuhet has created Katsuk to take the vengeance he cannot; yet to disguise the personal nature of that vengeance, he turns it into a ritual of universal, mythic redemption. Such sacrifices bridge the gap between the real and the visionary, breaking through the walls that separate the world of timebound history and the world of timeless myth. But Katsuk cannot simply make up a ritual of his own. There would be no mythic power in such a sacrifice. What makes a sacrifice sacred and potent is the fact that it has always existed, that it enacts—or, rather, reenacts—a timeless action given by divine powers to human beings. The sacrifice of the innocent white must follow the traditional form if it is to have any meaning. Yet the Quinault tribes did not practice human sacrifice; there is no such ritual among the Quinault. Again, Hobuhet the anthropologist comes to the aid of Katsuk the warrior/shaman. The Pawnee tribe,

although culturally and linguistically distinct from the Quinault, did practice human sacrifice. And so Katsuk will adopt the Pawnee rite to his own purposes.

The Pawnee ritual involved the sacrifice of captured maidens to the god they called Morning Star. The victims were held in comfort and treated well until the appointed time for the sacrifice, when they were hung on a timber scaffold and pierced with arrows. In Pawnee mythology, the union of the gods Morning Star and Evening Star had produced the first human being, a girl, whom Morning Star placed on Earth to engender the Pawnee people. Thus it was deemed necessary to return a girl to Morning Star in thanks for the god's sacrifice of his daughter.

Katsuk chooses a boy instead of a girl, but the quality of innocence remains of paramount importance. Yet the Pawnee sacrifice that lies behind Katsuk's sacrifice of David is an indication that David, is, among other things, a standin for Hobuhet's innocent sister; the sacrifice of David is a recapitulation of the rape and murder of the sister, raised to a mythic level. Hobuhet wants the death of his sister to mean something. He seeks not only retribution, not only transcendence, but the forgiveness of the guilt he carries for not having prevented her death and for not having avenged it.

Yet Herbert is playing a complicated game here. For David's middle name, Morgenstern, means "Morning Star." The name ties him explicitly to the Pawnee sacrifice; he is, in a sense, a born victim. But there is another level of mythic allusion at work. The name also alludes to a passage in the New Testament's Book of Revelation: "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." (Rev. 22:16.) These words are spoken by Jesus Christ. By "root and offspring of David," Jesus is identifying himself as a descendent of the Jewish king; by "bright and morning star," Jesus is alluding to his death and resurrection, by which sacrifice (in the mythology of Catholicism) he has taken away the sins of the world and shown human beings the path to salvation and eternal life.

In the Pawnee sacrifice, the victim was no scapegoat. The girl was not killed as the bearer of the sins of the Pawnee, thus cleansing them from sin. Nor was she killed as a retributive act, as the embodiment of the sins of the enemies of the Pawnee, from whom she had been stolen. Her death was a mimetic act, a repetition on Earth of a creative sacrifice made at the beginning of time in heaven. It ensured the fertility of the Earth and the continuance of the Pawnee people in the here and now, not in the afterlife.

The role that David plays in Katsuk's sacrifice is closer to that of Jesus. David is innocent. He is a scapegoat; that is, he is the symbolic embodiment of the sins of the whites. He will also carry Hobuhet's guilt. And, like Jesus, he is of the "root and offspring of David"; that is, he is Jewish, a fact entirely overlooked by Katsuk, who, in his fanatical obsession, doesn't see the irony in holding a Jew responsible for the genocide of Native Americans. Yet there are important differences. Jesus willingly and consciously embraced his sacrifice, but that is not true of David. David is manipulated into an agreement that he remains ignorant of making, an agreement that exists only in his murderer's mind. Hobuhet/Katsuk is trying to force together two mythologies that are

profoundly, radically different. For all his insistence that he is following the traditions of his people, in fact he is not.

But that doesn't mean his new, hybrid ritual must necessarily fail. Perhaps the violent fusion of Native-American and Judeo-Christian mythologies can spark a new mythological order on heaven and on Earth. Perhaps David's death can serve a purpose, can really be the "artistic act" that Hobuhet/ Katsuk envisions: "a refinement of blood revenge, a supreme example to be appreciated by this entire world." Yet if such were the case, Herbert would provide some indication of it in the novel. He does not.

For David, there was only the sharp and crashing instant of awareness: *He did it*! There was no pain greater than the betrayal. Hunting for a name that was not *Hoquat*, the boy sank into blackness.

This is not sacrifice, but murder. There is no redemption, no resurrection, no renewal. When the search party catches up at last, they find Katsuk "cradling the dead boy like a child, swaying and chanting the death song one sang for a friend." This poignant image cannot erase the bloody fact of what has taken place; instead, it underscores the horror, exposing the banality at the heart of Hobuhet's breathtaking madness. What is shown is not the boundless and all-inclusive embrace of the universe, such as might occur in the aftermath of a successful sacrifice, but the tragic and meaningless result of one man's pathetic delusion. Thus does Charles Hobuhet, a particularly chilling example of what Herbert called "the messianic impulse in human society," take his place among the intelligent monsters of fiction.

Source: Paul Witcover, Critical Essay on *Soul Catcher*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2003.

Critical Essay #3

Hart has degrees in English literature and creative writing and focuses her writing on literary themes. In this essay, Hart looks at Herbert's hiker-murder scene to uncover hidden connections between the hiker and the protagonist.

Frank Herbert's *Soul Catcher* was published in 1972, during the heyday of the hippie movement. Although his book is not dated by the inclusion of a hippie-type young man hiking through the woods, the significance of the character of Vince Debay might have carried more weight in the 1970s, when young hippie-types were prevalent on college campuses. Today, Vince's character might represent a young environmentalist or a pot-smoking follower of the Grateful Dead. In the 1970s, however, reader might have seen something more complex in Vince's character and thus something more significant happening between him and the protagonist Charles Hobuhet-Katsuk. They might have understood that this scene represented more than a chance encounter between two young men who, at one time, were college classmates.

Herbert prefaces the scene of Katsuk and Vince's meeting in the forest with an editorial statement that Katsuk had previously sent to the University of Washington's student newspaper. In his statement, Katsuk refers to some of the inspirations of the hippie movement during the 1960s and 1970s, such as the fight for civil rights, but he also accuses the young people of hypocrisy: "You say you would risk anything to achieve equal happiness for all. But your words risk nothing," he wrote. The young people's beliefs, Katsuk held, were "fragmented," because they did not see their own "self-imposed limitations." He continued: "You exist in constant tension between tyranny and victimization."

During those turbulent decades of the 1960s and 1970s, many young college students were caught between tearing down the beliefs of their parents and trying to create new philosophies of their own to replace them. American culture had a relatively short history, so looking backward through time provided the young rebels with very little inspiration. Their American ancestors, for the most part, had come from Europe and Africa, countries that were too far removed from them and therefore did not provide the kind of answers that they were looking for. What developed in this void was a tendency among some youth to look to Native-American culture for answers. There was hope that the Native-American traditional culture might provide a possible alternative to their own lifestyles. Books that explained various aspects of Native-American philosophy and traditional culture such as *Black Elk Speaks* (originally published in 1932), Carlos Castandeda's *Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (1968), and Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1971) were widely read and taken to heart, as many young people adopted personal interpretations of Native-American lives and tried to emulate them. The long hair and the wearing of braids and headbands were a direct reflection of more than just a rebellion against the stereotypical teenager of the previous generation. It was also an expression of camaraderie with the Native-American people, albeit a somewhat romantic version, as most youth had little, or no, contact with contemporary Native Americans. Their visions of Native-American life had little to do

with the problems of alcoholism, unemployment, and a loss of culture and land, as Herbert's character Katsuk and his people were experiencing.

So when Katsuk notices Vince bounding down the wilderness trail, he sees a lot more than just a former classmate. Vince, in many ways, represents the hippie movement. He is described as a young man with long hair "bound at the forehead by a red bandanna," which gave him a "curiously aboriginal look." In other words, Vince is portrayed as a pseudo-Indian, or "wanna-be." He might "curiously" bear the look of a Native American, but even David, the thirteen-year-old captive, can see that there are wide gaps in Vince's disguise. First, Vince walks in a marijuana-induced stupor, glancing "neither right nor left," unaware of his surroundings and of the imposing danger that awaits him, so unlike the way that Katsuk moves through the forest. Vince also walks with "a stiff, heel-first stride that jarred the ground," announcing his presence, disturbing the quiet of the forest. In contrast to Katsuk's stalking movements, Vince stomps through the forest. Hence, he plays out Katsuk's reference to the "tension between tyranny and victimization." Vince walks through the wilderness as if he owns it, unaware, and unequipped to deal with, the vast danger that is about to pounce on him in the form of Katsuk. For his part, even David realizes that Vince is incapable of saving himself. Something inside of David comprehends that Vince, maybe even more than David himself, is not a savior but rather is yet another victim.

Just prior to Vince's appearance, Katsuk had "felt an odd fear that he would find his secret name carved some place." As he looked around at his surroundings, he wondered where this name might appear. What form would it take? "He wondered if there were any *thing* in these mountains with the power to set his universe in perfect order once more." Shortly after this statement, Vince shows up. The connection between these two events makes it obvious that in some way Katsuk relates to Vince. Could it be that the name that Katsuk is looking for is written all over Vince? Wasn't Katsuk, at one time, just like Vince? When Katsuk first sees Vince in the woods, he recognizes him, but "it bothered him that he could not name the face." Vince, on the other hand, remembers Katsuk, or rather he remembers him as "Charlie." "We were in that Anthro Three-hundred class together," Vince reminds Katsuk when they finally face one another. Both had been students at the University of Washington. Both had taken upper level anthropology classes, both had been interested in studying people and culture. Both were searching for new definitions of themselves, rejecting many of the beliefs of their parents.

However, that was the old Katsuk, the "Charlie the Chief," as Vince calls him—the white man's description of him. Katsuk had embraced that definition of himself, had tried through an institutionalized educational program to learn about his culture and the white society around him. But just as he had recently taken off the clothes of the "white man" and donned his own traditional costume, Katsuk had also eliminated that version of himself. Vince, therefore, represents not what Katsuk is but rather what he had been. If his name were truly written on Vince, then that name had slipped into the past, and Katsuk's not being able to put a name to Vince's face was proof of it.

Although Katsuk does not immediately remember Vince, he does see something in Vince that immediately angers him. In Vince are "all the defeats of his people. Their sobs and oaths and lamenting echoed within him, a swarm of unavenged shadows." If Katsuk had once been like Vince, then he too was a cause of his people's sorrow, or his people's defeat. In order to be rid of that self-image, Katsuk therefore had to do more than change his clothes and try to alter himself. He had to get rid of Vince. This is the only explanation for why Herbert had Katsuk murder Vince. Why couldn't Katsuk have hidden, like he had ordered David to do, and allowed the hikers to pass by, including Vince? Why did he purposely expose himself to, and confront, Vince? Part of the answer might be explained by the fact that Katsuk was on a mission; and he was obsessed by it. Sometimes his rational thoughts were obscured by his emotions. At other times, he was like an animal, reacting to events on instinct rather than on intellect. He did not want to classify himself among those whom he referred to, in his editorial essay, as people who say they "would risk anything to achieve equal happiness for all" but would never act on their statements. "Words," Katsuk had written, "risk nothing." The old Katsuk might have been a man of words, but the new Katsuk was a man of action; and his instincts told him that he must kill Vince.

Vince is nervous when Katsuk approaches him. He's not sure why, but he suddenly senses that he is out of his familiar element. He cannot bring Katsuk back to the more recognizable, and lighthearted, "Charlie the Chief." Katsuk is in a place that Vince can only relate to as a game or as a set of an old Western movie in which Katsuk is the "Indian," and Vince is the settler fighting for *his* land. When Vince finally realizes that he has in no way impressed Katsuk and, in fact, might have actually insulted him, he tries to apologize. Even in his asking to be forgiven, Vince has no idea how deeply the offense has actually penetrated Katsuk's psyche. He is not aware of what the true insult is. Surely it has little to do with Vince's inability to recognize that Katsuk is definitely not playing a game. However, maybe it has everything to do with Vince's comment about "Indian" and "settler." Didn't that relationship sum up the whole grievance that Katsuk holds? The history of white people dealing with the Native population, in Katsuk's mind, is a relationship of tyranny. As Katsuk's sister had been raped, Katsuk believed that all Native people had also been raped by the white settlers.

At this point in the story, Vince makes one final attempt to bridge the widening chasm between himself and Katsuk. "You want a little grass?" Vince asks Katsuk. This statement is an ironic twist on the familiar scene in a typical Hollywood cowboy-and-Indian movie in which a Native man offers a white man a peace pipe. The irony does not impress Katsuk, who wants nothing to do with making peace over a shared smoke. However, Vince's gesture illuminates the difference between the two characters. Vince's offer is sincere but, in Katsuk's mind, it is insignificant. Sharing a smoke with this white man would be like putting a bandage on one's body to remove a cancer. When his offer is rejected, Vince tries to evaluate his position in the encounter. So he asks: "What *are* you doing here?" Katsuk's answer only deepens Vince's fear. Katsuk tells him that he is searching "for a deformity of the spirit." Without completely understanding what Katsuk is referring to, Vince finally senses the danger he is in and tries to slip away, but it is too late.

After murdering Vince, Katsuk does a strange thing. Earlier, upon first catching sight of him, Katsuk had criticized Vince for carrying an overloaded backpack. "You have not yet discovered that having too much is no better than having enough," he scolds. However, after burying Vince's body, Katsuk not only takes Vince's backpack, he also puts on Vince's clothes. "Katsuk wore clothes taken from the dead hiker's pack: jeans that were too tight for him over the loincloth, a plaid shirt. He still wore moccasins and the band of red cedar bark around his head." In this passage, Herbert cements the connection between Katsuk and Vince. The murderer has taken what material symbols remain of his victim. He wears Vince's jeans, covering his own traditional costume. He dons the plaid shirt; and although he does not wear Vince's red bandanna, his own headband is the same color as Vince's. Thus immediately after killing him, Katsuk takes on the appearance of Vince. Almost as if memorializing his victim, for a short period of time, Katsuk pays homage to him in wearing his clothes, in using his sleeping bag, in eating his food. A little later, he discards all physical remnants of Vince, reconvinced that the things of the white man are sapping his strength.

Although the two men shared a similar background and a linked fate, they also were dissimilar in significant ways. Vince had risked his life by entering the forest, but he did so without fully understanding the dangers that were waiting for him. He entered the woods, more as an escape, much as he used smoking pot as way of temporarily leaving things behind. Katsuk, however, went to the woods deliberately, consciously aware of every step. He had a mission by which he believed he could avenge his people, and he was willing to risk his life on it.

Herbert neither condones nor explains Katsuk's behavior, especially in this scene between him and Vince. He simply places the two men in full view of one another and describes the action that unfolds, almost as if he, himself, were merely viewing it. The battle between the two young men that ensues from this encounter could be described as an ancient one—a clash of cultures; a clash of beliefs; a clash of misunderstandings. However, Herbert suggests that this conflict might have been something entirely different than it first appears. He implies that it could be interpreted as an interior struggle, fought not between two men but rather between two disparate definitions of self.

Critical Essay #4

DeFrees is a published writer and an editor with a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Virginia and a law degree from the University of Texas. In the following essay, DeFrees examines the universality of a story rooted in the genre of science fiction.

Soul Catcher is a meditation on anger, on what happens when anger has no outlet. It is, in this way, an unwitting metaphor for the root of all terrorist acts: voiceless rage. Katsuk, the self-given Native-American name Charles Hobuhet adopts after denouncing the evils of modern society, is an emblem of a man driven mad—in both senses of the word—by long-standing injustices, by the ridicule he has endured all of his life for being of Native-American descent, and by the history of violence perpetrated against his people, and more specifically, against Katsuk's sister, by white men. *Soul Catcher* covers a time period of ten days, from the day Katsuk abducts David Morgenstern Marshall, a thirteen-year-old boy, until the day Katsuk kills David. In that short span of time, the reader learns about the reasons for Katsuk's actions, about the young boy's changing attitudes about his captive state, and about the outside world's reactions to the kidnapping. Author Frank Herbert uses an omniscient narrator to present a variety of points of view, moving the narration from character to character to tell the story from different vantage points. Herbert assiduously shies away form judging his characters; instead, he allows the reader to decide who may be right and who may be wrong, and whether, in the end, that line may be less clear than it first appears. *Soul Catcher* follows an unforgiving story line—it is the story of anger spun out of control, leaving a tragic aftermath for mourning and the opportunity to examine what may have led to the tragic turn of events.

From the outset of the story, Herbert clearly establishes the work as one of science fiction—it is popularly labeled as a sci-fi novel, for leaps of the imagination are taken almost immediately, demanding that the reader suspend any disbelief. Interestingly, however, nothing that happens in the novel is so far-fetched that it could not happen in society in the present day. By classifying the novel as science fiction, if seems that Herbert is asking his reader to suspend personal values and personal mores in order to delve into the psyches of other humans.

The story is divided into short sections that alternate between viewpoints, relaying the perspectives of a different person or group. The main voices are Katsuk, David, David's father, Katsuk's relatives, David's teachers and counselors, Katsuk's former teacher, the press and the local sheriff's department. The first voice is that of David's father, Howard Marshall, the newly established Undersecretary of State of the United States. Marshall notes that his father before him often hired Indians to work for the family, and paid the Indians wages equal to those paid to other workers. Furthermore, the Indian employees "were well treated. I really don't see how this kidnapping could be aimed at me or my family. The man who took David must be insane." Marshall's logic is incomplete, but it is the first opinion the reader encounters, and first impressions are lasting. Thus, from the outset, Katsuk is presupposed as a "crazy man," rather than as a sane but angry man

with a virulent message. Another important thing to note about Marshall's statement is his semantics. He says, "I really don't see how . . . ," which is exactly Katsuk's problem with the "white" society: as Katsuk understands it, white people try to reason everything in legal, logical terms. They try to force reason into visual outlines that work within already established arguments. Katsuk, however, *feels* the impotence of his rage in the face of the white man's arguments, feels the years of oppression that hand-outs from someone like Marshall's father can only conveniently salve, but never heal. Change must come from a far deeper place within the establishment, and Marshall, in his newly ordained place of power within the government, is exactly the target at which Katsuk aims. By kidnapping the son of an important member of the United States government, and one currently earning a great deal of press coverage, Katsuk's message of hate and revenge can reach the largest number of people.

The voice of Professor Tilman Barth, one of Katsuk's university professors, serves as a counterweight to Marshall's voice. Barth claims that Hobuhet is a gentle man, not a "mad killer," and that the kidnapping "could be a monstrous joke." Barth has respect for Hobuhet, who, ironically, throughout the novel expresses nothing but contempt for all of his university professors and courses. Furthermore, Barth explains that he found Hobuhet to be a bright and eloquent student who expressed himself in such a manner that led Barth to believe that Hobuhet "is capable of great things, as great as any achievements in our Western mythology." In one paper Hobuhet submitted to Barth for Philosophy 200, Hobuhet argues that people in modern society are full of "Words-words-words, no feelings," and "are always running away from your bodies. . . . You try to explain away a civilization which uses trickery, bad faith, lies, and deceit to make its falsehoods prevail *over* the flesh." Later, Katsuk writes on a scrap of paper while at a hideout known as Sam's River shelter:

When I am confused I listen with as much of my being as I can allow. This was always what my people did. We fell silent in confusion and waited to learn. The whites do a strange thing when they are confused. They run around making much noise. They only add to the confusion and cannot even hear themselves.

Katsuk understands the ways of white men; he lived with them and answered to a name that was given to him while living in "white society." He is not an outside observer who criticizes a world he does not understand. Rather, he has lived the life of white men, and finds it uninhabitable and unnatural. During his educational years, Hobuhet witnessed first hand the methods that white people used to undermine the Native-Americans' right to own land and to live peaceably. He read the derogatory methods the white man used to describe the "Indian," and the ways the white men chose, time and time again, to avoid understanding and honoring the Native-American way of life. *Soul Catcher* is a story for all ages: it outlines the epic story of the taking of the American West by the American government in the nineteenth century, and the attendant usurpation of Native-American land is duplicated in modern United States imperialism with regard to foreign countries. In the novel, after attending the university, Hobuhet worked for a paycheck within the bounds of society, but all the while, his hatred burned, and his heart remained hostile to "the white man." When the chance arose, Hobuhet turned his back on his life within industrialized society, and set out to make the largest statement he could about

his anger at the injustices the whites had perpetrated for so long against Native Americans, and in particular against his sister, who, a few months before the events of the novel, had committed suicide after being raped by a brood of white men. Katsuk's carefully planned revenge is not simply a testament to his ancestors—his rage is intimately personal, and it is festering to a bloody boil.

There is, however, a certain extent to which Katsuk's logic falls short in the novel, a crack, as it were, in the pavement of his narrowly carved walk. After a few days in captivity, the innocent, David Marshall, begins to respond to Katsuk's reclaimed way of living in the forest—living in accordance with the rules of nature instead of, as Katsuk had explained in a philosophy class paper, "against nature." Katsuk was angry at white men, and searched for a way to exact revenge on white men for the agony and humiliation they forced his people to suffer. Thus, when Katsuk is stung by a bee during a ritual he created to discover a Native-American name for himself, he claims that the bee is "Soul Catcher." Katsuk believes that the fact that the bee stung him is a sign that he is meant to be a vessel for evil, prompting him to abduct and kill an innocent white person as a ritual sacrifice to boldly show the white men that what they did to his people remains unforgivable. But once captured, David begins to drop the haughty anger that masks his fear, and he grows curious as to the nature of Katsuk and Katsuk's reasons for choosing a primitive life of exile. Katsuk is torn by this change, by his growing admiration for the boy. He "felt a bond being created between himself and this boy." Katsuk harshly dubbs David "Hoquat," a derogatory reference to white men, but by the end of Katsuk and David's journey together, Katsuk feels a solidarity with David, and at one point, Katsuk even thinks to himself, "My brother, Hoquat." The reader watches David morph into an ambassador to modern society regarding Katsuk's argument for simplicity and against wanton capitalism, and Katsuk must work harder and harder to keep his warming emotions separate from his ultimate task—to murder the boy he has come to respect. He repeatedly promises that he will not kill David unless David specifically asks him to; in this respect, the reader is allowed to hold out hope that David will be spared, despite Katsuk's common statement to himself that he must sacrifice the boy. Katsuk seems, above all, to be a man of his word, and there is a conflict between his promise to his people and his promise to David. In the end, in the face of clashing promises, Katsuk must make a decision; he chooses the past, rather than the future, and tricks David into saying that he wishes to be killed. As the authorities are closing in on Katsuk and David, David urges Katsuk to run away, to save his life. Katsuk asks David what he should do about his spirit message, and David, not understanding that the message is intimately tied with his own murder, tells Katsuk, "What message? . . . I don't care about your message! Send it! Just don't let them catch you!" Katsuk interprets David's response to his own purposes, and falsely pretends that David consents to death. Just before he kills David, Katsuk tells him, "Let all men and all spirits learn of your qualities, Hoquat." He has taught David the vital importance of living in harmony with nature, but he kills David before David can share his new knowledge to "all men," thus in many ways defeating his very purpose. In his anger, he failed to consider that he might also have something to learn.

Soul Catcher is an interesting study of rage, and how rage and lucidity are commingled in such a way that a person truly angry stands on a delicate precipice of sanity and

insanity. Hobuhet becomes Katsuk to live out his rage, but his actions are meditative, willed, and precipitous. The novel ends with the slaughter of an innocent boy, and the answers to the reasons behind Katsuk's terrorist act, and all terrorist acts, and the possible means by which such acts might have been prevented, are left to the reader. Whether what Katsuk did was in any way justified by the history of emotional deprecation and economic depression defies simple logic. Nothing Katsuk does or decides occurs without him first consulting the natural elements. Whether or not this method of consultation—a communion with ravens, bees, the woods—marks a sage man living off the land, both spiritually and physically, or a madman, is left to the individual reader to decide. But what is certain is that Katsuk's actions are deliberate and meticulously thought out, and what is also certain is that he follows through with his plan with exactitude and complete success, despite numerous obstacles standing in his path. His own people rise up against him, but because of the strength of his conviction that he has been chosen by his gods to act out this ritual sacrifice, he is too powerful to be stopped. How this sheds light on the "real world" is effervescently clear: conviction is more potent than might, more powerful than idle words, more dangerous than lies. Science fiction here becomes all too real, in the face of Saddam Hussein, Ayatollah Khomeini, Charles Whitman, Lee Harvey Oswald, suicide bombers, Charles Manson, Cyclops, Hitler—critics may well claim a madness residing in these figures in history, but it is also true that in each case, the act or acts committed were done with dexterous, deliberated planning and extreme precision of thought. There was a sanity, or at least a clear thought process, to the insanity. Katsuk purposely murdered an innocent Caucausian child, a crime far beyond forgiveness in the civilized world. But he did so in strict adherence to his beliefs, and not without painstaking deliberation and sacrifice. With *Soul Catcher*, Herbert does not pronounce judgment on his characters, leaving it to his readers to provide condemnation or approval, leaving a tangled web of history with no square edges, and no straight answers. In this way, Herbert demands that his reader examine the history behind the events in the story. For it is only by unraveling the past that we can begin to examine the present, and only by examining the present that we may begin to understand and act on the possibilities of the future.

Source: Allison DeFrees, Critical Essay on *Soul Catcher*, in *Novels for Students*, The Gale Group, 2003.

Topics for Further Study

Research the American Indian Movement, which began in the late 1960s, and write a short biography about one of the movement's principal leaders, focusing on this person's background, beliefs, and societal goals. Compare these with the background, beliefs, and societal goals of Charles Hobuhet-Katsuk in the novel.

In the novel, David Marshall comes to enjoy the types of food that his Native American captor eats. Research other types of traditional foods that Native Americans ate before the arrival of Europeans and compare these foods to the types of foods that Native Americans eat today. How has the changing physical, cultural, and social environment over the last several hundred years affected the way that Native Americans get and prepare their food?

Research any one of the historical battles between the United States military and a Native-American tribe. Outline the causes of the conflict and the outcome of the battle. Using this information, write one journal entry from the perspective of a Native-American brave and one from the perspective of a United States soldier, the night before the battle begins.

Living on reservations is one of the few ways in which Native Americans can preserve their traditional way of life in the United States today. However, reservations are also plagued by high rates of alcoholism, gambling, and other problems. Research the history of reservations and discuss how and where these problems first began to arise, as well as any current efforts that are underway to address these issues.

Throughout the story, Herbert employs a number of fake news stories that comment on the action. However, there is no news story at the end, after Hobuhet-Katsuk has killed David. Write a fake news story that could have gone at the end of the novel, which comments on this ritual sacrifice of David and the reactions that it produces in the community.

Compare and Contrast

1970s: Aided by events like the seizure of Alcatraz, the American Indian Movement gains national recognition. Many Americans, newly aware of growing Native American activism, initially advocate forced assimilation.

Today: Through the continued efforts of organizations like the Women of All Red Nations (WARN) and a renaissance in Native-American art and literature, the issues of Native Americans are given more exposure and sympathy.

1970s: Some Native Americans, especially those who are older, choose not to join the American Indian Movement, having gotten used to an American way of life, often on a reservation.

Today: While some Native Americans still live on reservations and try to preserve their heritage, others live in modern suburbs and work in a variety of professional and skilled American trades.

1970s: Hippies and other members of the counterculture glorify nature and a natural way of life, which they see as an escape from corporate America and other areas of the establishment.

Today: Overworked Americans in corporate America often get away from their hectic lives by taking vacations to natural areas, in some cases taking part in survival camps or other nature programs that teach them how to live off the land.

What Do I Read Next?

Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Blues* (1996), published by Warner Books, features the story of Coyote Springs, an all-Indian Catholic rock band from the Spokane Reservation in eastern Washington. Mixing Native-American mythology and rock 'n' roll, Alexie depicts the individual struggles of the band members as they embark on a national tour.

Former professional basketball player Larry Colton spent more than a year on the Crow Reservation in Montana, observing Sharon LaForge and other members of the Hardin High School girls' basketball team. Colton's unflinching story, *Counting Coup: A True Story of Basketball and Honor on the Little Big Horn*, reveals that many social conditions such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and low self-esteem continue to plague reservations—and often act as a barrier to success, athletic or otherwise. The book was published by Warner Books in 2000.

In the story, David Marshall is kidnapped by a Native American. Although this was a rare occurrence in the late twentieth century when the story takes place, it was more common in the previous two centuries. *Captured by Indians: 15 Firsthand Accounts, 1750-1870*, edited by Frederick Drimmer and published by Dover Publications in 1985, collects some of the firsthand stories from these early American captives.

Herbert is known worldwide for his epic science fiction novel *Dune*, originally published in 1965, which featured the struggles of young Paul Atreides, a messiah-like duke on the desert planet of Arrakis. After he is overthrown by the previous regime, Atreides is cast into the desert to die and must rely on his inner strength, as well as the knowledge of the native tribe of Fremen, to survive and reclaim his throne. The book was reprinted in a twenty-fifth anniversary edition by Ace Books in 1999.

In many of his novels, such as *Dune* and *Soul Catcher*, Herbert demonstrated his political, ecological, and philosophical beliefs. In *The Maker of Dune: Insights of a Master of Science Fiction*, published by Berkley Publishing Group in 1987, editor Tim O'Reilly collects several essays from Herbert that elaborate on these beliefs.

Although the majority of books featuring Native-American issues are by Native Americans, Herbert is not the only nonnative to write about these issues. Another prominent example is Tony Hillerman, who has gathered a wide readership for his mysteries featuring Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee, two Navajo Tribal Police officers. In *The Ghostway*, originally published in 1984, Chee uses his struggles to decide whether or not to leave the tribal police and the reservation for a position with the FBI. At the same time, he must use both his knowledge of his heritage and police procedures to track down a killer and a missing girl.

Stephen King's *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* (2000), published by Pocket Books, features elements similar to those found in *Soul Catcher*. In the story, a young girl is separated from her family on a nature trip in Maine and becomes lost in the wilderness. While her family, the police, and others form search parties to try to find her, she

survives by learning to live off the nature that surrounds her. Meanwhile, she constantly battles her fear of the supernatural forest monster that hunts her by imagining that her favorite baseball player, Tom Gordon, is there guiding her.

Native-American storytelling has a long history, rooted in oral tradition. In *Coming to Light: Contemporary Translations of the Native Literatures of North America* (1996), published by Vintage Books, editor Brian Swann collects many of these oral stories, songs, prayers, and orations. Each of the pieces in this large anthology is accompanied by an introduction from the translator, which explains the meaning behind each selection, as well as how it was spoken or sung in its time. The literatures represent more than thirty different cultures, including Inuit, Aleut, Iroquois, Lakota, Navajo, and Zuni.

Further Study

Dubin, Lois Sherr, *North American Indian Jewelry and Adornment*, Harry N. Abrams, 1999.

This comprehensive book on the history of Native-American jewelry follows thousands of years of Native-American adornment, by region and tribe. The book also covers the symbolism and purpose of the various artworks and features detailed photos and graphics.

Eichstaedt, Peter H., *If You Poison Us: Uranium and Native Americans*, Red Crane Books, 1994.

This book details the devastating effects of the uranium radiation that resulted from mining on Navajo Indian lands during America's race to construct the atom bomb. In addition to discussing the struggles that Native Americans in this region have faced when seeking compensation for these effects, the book also talks about how this historic tragedy continues to affect Native Americans.

Lewis, G. Malcolm, *Cartographic Encounters: Perspectives on Native American Mapmaking and Map Use*, University of Chicago Press, 1998.

This book examines the long history of Native Americans and their skill in cartography, starting with the first map that a Native American prepared for the Spaniard Hernando de Alarcó in 1540. The book also discusses the connections among maps, space, and history and examines the maps in light of their importance as archaeological evidence.

Mander, Jerry, *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations*, Sierra Club Books, 1992.

Mander examines the effects that increasing technology has had on society and advocates a return to a Native-American way of life. In addition, he discusses how some Native Americans who try to maintain their way of life have clashed with the corporate world.

McNaughton, Patrick R., *The Mande Blacksmiths: Knowledge, Power, and Art in West Africa*, Indiana University Press, 1993.

This book uses an anthropological perspective to examine the roles and social context of the blacksmiths of the Mande people in West Africa. These blacksmiths are acknowledged both for their art and the supernatural power they are believed to possess.

Taylor, Collin F., *Native American Weapons*, University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.

This lushly illustrated book serves as an excellent introduction to the study of Native-American weapons. Divided into five categories of weapons—striking, cutting, piercing,

defensive, and symbolic—the book examines North American weapons and armor from prehistoric times to the late nineteenth century. The accompanying text describes the weapons and their roles in tribal culture, economy, and politics.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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