**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PART 4- Pages 245-End**

**English 11R – The Glass Castle**



**IV. New York City**

**It was dusk when I got my first glimpse of it off in the distance… (pp. 245-251).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“You West Virginia girls are one tough breed,” he said.*

*“You got that right,” I told him.”* (p. 246)

1. Why does Jeannette find her job at *The Phoenix* rewarding? How is the newspaper’s title symbolic (ie.

what is a phoenix?)

1. Why is Jeannette fearful about Brian moving to NYC?
2. Why does Jeannette finally decide to go to college? Who helps her make that decision?
3. What obstacles does Jeannette overcome in going to college? How does she do it?

**One morning three years after I’d moved to New York… (p. 252-254).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *I had a room now, and I had a life, too, and there was no room in either one for Mom and Dad.* (p. 252).

1. Why doesn’t Mary Walls even think about the effect holding up traffic might have on others?
2. What can you infer from Mary Walls’ statements that the murals at Rockefeller Center aren’t as good as

her own paintings?

1. How do you think the children feel about their parents coming to NYC to bring the family together again?
2. Brian and Lori take their parents in, but Jeannette does not. Why do they react differently?
3. What does Mary say when her daughter, Lori, finally kicks her out? What does this reveal about Mary?

**Mom and Dad called regularly from pay phones to check up on us… (pp. 255-257).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“Being homeless is an adventure.”* (p. 255).

1. How do Rex and Mary spend their days in NYC? Do you believe they are typical homeless people?
2. Why does Jeannette feel guilty about her parents’ homelessness?
3. When Jeannette and Professor Fuchs talk about homelessness, why do they disagree? Do you think

Jeannette lacks sympathy for homeless people?

1. Does Jeannette’s treatment of her parents reveal a lack of compassion? Why does she feel that she

must separate from them?

**That January it got so cold… (pp. 258-259)**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“I’ve spent my life taking care of other people” Mom said. “Now it’s time to take care of me.”* (p. 258).

1. Why does Jeannette consider dropping out of college?
2. What might have happened to her if she’d left college?
3. What is Mary’s reaction when Jeannette suggests ways she could make or raise money? How is her

answer ironic?

**Mom and Dad survived the winter… (pp. 260-261).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“Have you ever known your old man to get himself in a situation he couldn’t handle?”* (p. 260).

1. Why is Rex proud of Jeannette? How has she lived up to his expectations?
2. Why is Rex now questioning his lifelong atheism? Is it really only because of the physics he’s reading?
3. What does Jeannette make her father promise?

**Dad stayed in the hospital for six weeks. (pp. 262-265).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“This crazy-ass mother of yours, can’t live with her, can’t live without her. Damned if she doesn’t feel the same about me.”* (p. 262)

1. Why does Rex manage to stay sober when he is living upstate? Why doesn’t he stay there and remain

sober?

1. How does Mary get Rex to come back to NYC? Why doesn’t she want him to continue a life where he

has been able to be sober?

1. Why do the two stay together?
2. How does Rex react to Jeannette’s Christmas gifts? Why?
3. What do the different reactions of the parents to the gifts reveal about each of them?

**By the following summer, Mom and Dad were heading into their third year on the streets. (pp. 264-**

**265).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“If it was really unbearable, we’d do something different.”* (p. 264).

1. How does Mary manage to blame NYC for her homelessness?
2. Is the Walls’ homelessness really a matter of choice?
3. How does Rex manage to share in Jeannette’s college education?
4. Why does Rex give Jeannette the money he raised? How does it make him feel?

**A month later, I got a call from Mom. (pp. 266-268).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *…I’d always been terrified I’d fall for a hard-drinking, hell-raising, charismatic scoundrel like you, Dad,…*(p. 268).

1. Why does Mary compare squatters to pioneers? What do you think of the comparison? How are they

alike and how are they different? What does Mary fail to see in her analogy?

1. What values do the Walls share with other squatters?
2. Why is the squatters’ building truly a home for Rex and Mary?
3. Why doesn’t Jeannette invite her father to her college graduation?
4. What kind of man is Eric? Why is Jeannette attracted to him? How is Eric the opposite of her father?

**I Invited Mom and Dad up to the apartment. (pp. 269-271).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *I wanted the world to know that no one had a perfect life, that even the people who seemed to have it all had their secrets.* (p. 270).

1. How do Jeannette’s parents react to her new home? Why do the parents react so differently to Jeannette

and Eric’s Park Avenue apartment?

1. What is Mary worried her daughter will become?
2. What does Mary think Jeannette should be writing about?
3. What is the focus of Jeannette’s journalism?
4. How does she justify to herself a career spent writing about the wealthiest people?
5. What does Jeannette fear?
6. Why does Jeannette lie about her past?

**My life with Eric was calm and predictable. (pp. 272-273).**

***REACT/RESPOND:***Had all those years…been a caprice inflicted on us by Mom? (p. 273)

1. What does Mary ask Jeannette to do for her?
2. What does Jeannette discover about her mother’s family property and what questions about her life are

raised?

1. Why does Mary refuse to sell her property? Is this a logical decision? How does it connect with the

diamond ring incident from Jeannette’s childhood?

1. Why does Jeannette refuse to buy the family land for her mother?
2. How does her mother react to this decision?

**Lori was working as a freelance artist… (p. 274-276).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *The longer she stayed with Mom and Dad, the more lost she became…* (p. 274).

1. What does Rex think of Brian’s career as a police officer? What childhood behaviors exhibited by Brian

indicated that he might go into law enforcement?

1. What kind of life is Maureen living? Where do you think she learned this behavior?
2. Why do you think Maureen looks for men who will take care of her? How does this connect with the way

Maureen lived in West Virginia?

1. Why does Rex say such harsh things to Maureen?
2. Why does Jeannette think that Maureen is mentally ill?
3. Why does Mary deny that Maureen tried to kill her?
4. Explain how each family member reacts to Maureen’s arraignment. What do these reactions reveal about

each?

1. Why does Jeannette believe that Maureen is the most fragile family member?
2. Why does Jeannette feel responsible for Maureen’s breakdown?
3. Where does Maureen go? Why is this probably a good decision?

**After that, I hardly ever saw Mom or Dad. (pp. 277-281).**

***REACT/RESPOND:***“*Your father is who he is,” Mom said. “It’s a little late in the game to try and reform him. Humor the man.”* (p. 277).

1. Why does the family get together after Maureen’s arraignment?
2. Why does Rex make up a story about his illness?
3. What is the one way Jeannette can answer Rex’s question?
4. How do Rex and Jeannette feel about each other?
5. Why does Mary stay out of the conversation?

**Two weeks later, Dad had a heart attack. (pp. 280-281).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *I had this crazy urge to scoop him up in my arms and charge through the doors—to checkout Rex Walls style one more time.* (p. 280).

1. How would Rex Walls have preferred to die?
2. Why does Jeannette react by wanting “to checkout Rex-Walls-style”?
3. How does Jeannette react to her father’s death?
4. Why does Jeannette divorce Eric? Do you think that this is connected to her father’s death? Why?

**V. Thanksgiving**

**I was standing on the platform with my second husband, John. (pp. 285-288).**

***REACT/RESPOND:*** *“Life with your father was never boring.”* (p. 288).

1. Why does Jeannette close her memoir with a Thanksgiving reunion? What does the holiday suggest

about life and family?

1. What do you think of John’s reaction to Jeannette’s scar (that it proved she was stronger than what tried

to hurt her)? What does this suggest about his ability to understand her?

1. Why do you think that Jeannette and Eric, as well as Brian, enjoy restoring old homes?
2. Why does Brian react with anger to the abundance of the dinner table?
3. What do you think of their toast to their father?
4. What does the fluttering of the candle flames suggest? Why does she end with this thought?