



Quicklet on Jeannette Walls' *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls (Book Summary)

Kathryn Prout

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Quicklet on Jeannette Walls' *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls (Book Summary) Kathryn Prout ABOUT THE BOOK

When *The Glass Castle* made the bestseller list and book groups everywhere were featuring it as their headliner, I shied away from the book. As a writer, and an instructor of literature, I tend to be skeptical of the bestseller list. Undoubtedly these are entertaining books, but I usually can't come up with a solid rationale for teaching them to a writing or literature class. So I didn't read *The Glass Castle* when it was at its most popular.

However, when I started teaching memoir writing classes, *The Glass Castle* came to mind. I decided to give it a try. Reading it, I was surprised at how intense the book was, but also how deeply it resonated with its reader, and how engaging the prose was. I started teaching it to show students how to be courageous in their writing and write with honesty but in a way that pulls in their readers. What I most admired about Jeannette Walls was her ability to be forgiving and compassionate in her telling of the story.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Born in Port Huron, Michigan, Kathryn Prout has worked as a small town dance teacher, small city nonprofit coordinator, and after school poetry workshop leader for teens. While she's currently busy farming in Ireland, Kathryn always makes sure she has time to read, write, and of course, run.

EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

The Glass Castle is a poignant memoir about a dysfunctional but lively family, told from the perspective of the second daughter of four children. Jeannette Walls is three years old when the story begins and well into her adult life when it ends. Her parents, Rex and Rose Mary Walls, are troubled people who struggle with their own issues while trying to raise four children. Neither parent can hold down a job for any length of time. They move around with their children until they finally settle in Welch, West Virginia.

In Welch, near Rex's family, they live in squalid conditions. From the time Jeannette and her siblings are young, though, their father has grand plans to build the Glass Castle, taking out his blueprints and showing his ornate design of their home. As the kids get older, they lose faith in their father ever building the Glass Castle, but he does teach them to have dreams. Each child escapes to New York City to realize his or her dreams the way their father didn't.

BOOK OUTLINE

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- +Chapter-By-Chapter Commentary & Summary
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