

The Killer Angels

Michael Shaara



Study Guide, and Military Terms Glossary

Name _____

Foreword

The Foreword introduces the reader to the general nature of the two armies that will face each other at Gettysburg in July of 1863. It also provides brief biographical sketches of the men who will be the major characters in this book. The story deals with conflict, not only between the armies, but also between officers and sometimes within individuals as well. You may find it helpful to refer to the Foreword from time to time as new major characters are introduced.

Use complete sentences to answer the following questions.

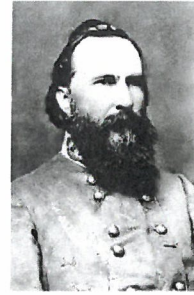
1. What is the purpose of describing each of the men?
2. How are the two armies similar?
3. How are they different from one another?
4. What is ironic about the line, "It is an army of remarkable unity, fighting for disunion" (xv)?
5. Of the men who are described in the Foreword we come to know best Lee and Longstreet for the South and Chamberlain and Buford for the North. Why does Shaara single out these individuals?

6. Provide three key details about each of the following characters. Briefly note how each detail may matter as the story unfolds.

Confederate Army



General Lee



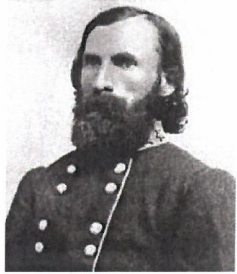
Lieutenant General Longstreet



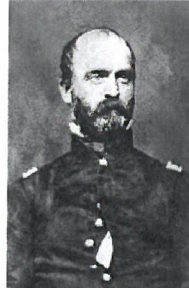
George Pickett



Richard Ewell



Ambrose Powell Hill



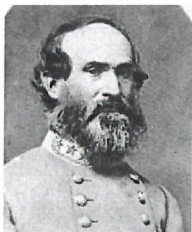
Lewis Armistead



Richard Brooke Garnett



J. E. B. Stuart



Jubal Early

Union Army



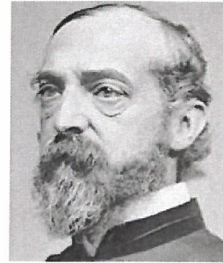
Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain



John Buford



John Reynolds



George Gordon Meade



Winfield Scott Hancock

7. Who is in command of the Union Army at Gettysburg? How did he find himself in this position? How might that influence his leadership?

Monday, June 29, 1863

Chapter 1.1: The Spy

1. What effect is created by starting the novel with a chapter that focuses on the spy? Consider the fact that all of the other chapters in this book focus on the characters described in the foreword.

9. Explain the three conflicts between Lee and Longstreet that are introduced on page 10. How might this be foreshadowing?

Chapter 1.2: Chamberlain

1. Why are the mutineers (people who refuses to obey the orders given by an authority) sent to Colonel Chamberlain?
2. What inner conflict does Chamberlain face in regards to the mutineers?
3. List some of the strategies Chamberlain uses to get the mutineers on his side.
4. What does "the soft answer turneth away wrath" (23) mean? Explain how the idea is connected to Chamberlain's situation.
5. What is the effect of the use of inner dialogue on pages 25-27?
6. According to Chamberlain, what was wrong with the social class system in Europe? In what way is the South making the same mistake (27)?

7. How does Chamberlain apply the concept of “the soft answer turneth away wrath” during his speech?

8. Describe Kilrain. Why is he included in the story?

9. Describe Chamberlain’s younger brother, Tom. Why is he included in the story?

Chapter 1.3: Buford

1. Use this space to record your answers to the following questions that refer to information that can be found on pages 33-36.
 - a. Which army wore gray and which wore blue?
 - b. Which road does the Confederate army come in on? How about the Union army?
 - c. What does Shaara mean when he writes, “But now the cat had turned” (36)?
 - d. Where does the Confederate army go and for how long?

2. When the Union cavalry commander, John Buford, arrives at the cemetery on the hill near Gettysburg, what does he see?

3. How is the angel in the cemetery symbolic of Buford? Pay close attention to the imagery used to describe the angel.

Chapter 1.4: Longstreet

1. Why is Fremantle included in the story?
2. What does Longstreet think about as he watches the poker game? What is the significance of the things he thinks about?
3. How does Longstreet's response to Fremantle's poker question further develop Longstreet's character?
You're going to need to learn a little about poker to answer this question! Wikipedia is a good source for this.
4. Shaara uses juxtaposition to introduce George Pickett and Dick Garnett. Cite textual evidence about each to show the contrast between the two.
5. Which sentence best supports the idea that Longstreet does not think that Dick Garnett is a coward? (page 55)
6. Why is Pickett unhappy about the position of his division?
7. What is a symptom of "Old Soldier's Disease" (55)? Provide textual evidence to support your answer.

2. Where is General Hill going? For what purpose? Why doesn't he know he is about to be attacked by the Union army?

3. We, as readers, know that Hill's men have already been fired upon. This is an example of which type of irony (dramatic, situational, verbal)? Explain!

4. What is Lee's response to Taylor's assertion that, "...those orders would be easier to follow had the Yankees shown charity when they were back in Virginia" (78)? What does this reveal about Lee's character?

5. Reread the section on pages 78-79 in which Venable explains to Lee the situation between Pender and his wife. Lee thinks to himself, "God protect us from our loving friends" (79). What does he mean?

6. Provide and explain an examples of textual evidence that shows that Lee values Longstreet's leadership capabilities.

7. Lee and Longstreet have different opinions about how to punish Stuart AND on how to approach the upcoming battle. What is each man's opinion about each of the two situations AND how do these opinions continue to develop each character?

8. What do Lee and Longstreet discover at the end of Chapter 1?

Chapter 2.2: Buford

1. The **imagery** in the following passage helps to create a mood of _____.
Explain your answer.

Buford “pulled Devin out of line in the north and brought him in alongside Gamble: two thousand men facing west. All that while whenever he came near the line he could see enemy troops moving in the fields across the way, ***spreading out as they came down the road, like a gray river spreading where it reaches the sea***” (90).

2. Why does Buford pull a squad out of Devin’s line? Where does he send it? Whom does he put in charge?
3. In the following sentence, *breakthrough* is a **euphemism** (look this word up if you don’t know what it means). What does it really mean when the narrator says, “There was a breakthrough on the right but some junior officers patched it” (91)?
4. Why is Buford so extremely happy to see Reynolds?

5. Explain the irony of Reynolds' death (especially from Buford's point-of-view). What kind of irony (dramatic, situational, verbal) is this?

6. Give some examples of the imagery Shaara uses to develop the chaotic mood of the chapter.

7. Based on the last three paragraphs of the chapter, we can infer that Buford is feeling _____ . Explain.

8. Where does Buford go at the very end of the chapter? Why?

Chapter 2.3: Lee

1. Notice that Hill won't look Lee in the eye (99). Does he really have Old Soldiers' Disease or is there some other reason? Provide textual evidence to support your response.

2. Why does Lee begin to work on a plan for withdrawal? Provide textual evidence to support your response.

3. What does General Heth say in his report to Lee? How does he explain the situation he is in? What does he say about Reynolds?

4. How does it happen that Lee decides to commit all his forces to the battle (104)?

5. Lee gets reports that the Union Army is falling back. What does this mean?

6. How does Lee know the fight is not over? Provide textual evidence to support your response.

7. Lee is delighted to see Longstreet. Summarize each character's position on what should happen next.

8. Provide textual evidence that shows that Lee has decided not to take Longstreet's advice.

9. How do you know Ewell does not take the hill?

Chapter 2.4: Chamberlain

1. What is the Mason-Dixon Line and why is it significant to this chapter?



2. What is the difference between the way Chamberlain's men are treated below and above the Mason-Dixon line? Give specific examples and explain the significance of each.
3. Notice the juxtaposition of the paragraph that starts with, "...awake all night in front of Fredericksburg" (118) and the one that comes before it. What is the effect?
4. Chamberlain remembers growing up with his father in Maine. What did his father say about angels? How does this reflect a theme of the book?
5. At the end of the day, Chamberlain's men have marched for twenty miles and are ready for some sleep. What happens instead?
6. Why do some of Chamberlain's men grumble when they see "many healthy-looking young men lining the road"?

Chapter 2.5: Longstreet

1. The imagery in the first paragraph helps to create a mood of _____. Cite 2 examples of the imagery you notice and explain how each supports your answer.

2. Longstreet and Fremantle discuss a variety of topics as they ride back to headquarters. What is the significance of each of the topics listed below?

- *The inevitable victory of the Confederacy*

- *Lee as a gentleman*

- *Darwin & evolution*

- *Stonewall Jackson*

- *Pickett's men (Garnett, specifically)*

3. How does the use of irony in the following passage reflect a theme of the text?

"[Jackson] was a good soldier. He could move troops. He knew how to hate.' Longstreet thought: a good Christian. He remembered suddenly the day Jackson had come upon some of his troops letting a valiant Yankee color sergeant withdraw after a great fight. The men refused to fire at him, that man had been brave, he deserved to live. Jackson said, "*I don't want them brave, I want them dead*" (131).

4. Later that same night, Lee sends for Ewell to come without Early. What do we learn about Lee's leadership from this meeting?
5. Why does Lee think Ewell did not try to take the hill on the first day of the battle?
6. What is the significance of Lee saying the Lord's prayer at the end of the chapter? (If you are not familiar with this and its typical purpose, do a little research before answering this question.)

Chapter 2.7: Buford

1. The majors are fighting about whether Hancock or Howard should be in charge when Buford rides up to the farmhouse headquarters. What are the arguments for each man?
2. How is the situation mentioned above similar to the situation between Ewell and Early at the Confederate headquarters?
3. Why is Buford told to wait outside for his orders?
4. When Meade shows up, how does he treat Buford? What is the significance of this?
5. What is the effect of describing Buford's dead aides as "the buck toothed boy and the yellow-haired boy" (150)?

6. Buford is unable to find the white angel in the cemetery. What is the significance?

Thursday, July 2, 1863

Chapter 3.1: Fremantle

1. The description of the second day of the battle begins with the focus on Fremantle's point-of-view. What differences do you notice between his perspective and those that were portrayed in the scenes of the evening of the first day of battle?
2. How does Shaara use Fremantle's developing characterization as a device to help the reader understand the situation at Gettysburg?
3. Draw a picture of what Fremantle sees as he looks at the position of the Union troops. What is the significance of this description?

Chapter 3.3: Longstreet

1. How does the use of understatement (a form of verbal irony!) in the following passage reflect Longstreet's point-of-view?

"Longstreet sat alone, a forbidding figure. He was thinking: Lee has made up his mind; there's nothing you can do. Well. Then there will be a scrap. He took a deep breath. Ought to get something to eat" (181).

2. Lee tells Longstreet to attack *en echelon*, to create an opening to take Cemetery Hill from the rear. What is Longstreet's response?
3. Which sentence best supports the idea that Captain Johnston is nervous about leading Longstreet's men into position to fight? Explain!
4. Longstreet is remembering back to the Mexican-American War while he rides toward the Union soldiers. Why do his memories trouble him? How does this further develop his character?
5. At the end of the first long paragraph on page 195, the narrator tells us, "If Stuart had appeared at that moment Longstreet would have arrested him." Why is Longstreet so upset? Specifically, what predicament has Stuart's absence gotten Longstreet and his men into?

5. Chamberlain asks his brother Tom to fill a hole in the line where two Maine soldiers have just been killed. Explain Chamberlain's internal conflict and how it develops his characterization.

6. Why does Chamberlain order his men to "fix bayonets" (226)? What happens as a result? Does his decision alter your perception of him at all? Explain.

7. How does the interaction between Kilrain and Chamberlain on pages 230-231 further clarify Kilrain's purpose in the book?

8. Colonel Rice is curious and impressed by Chamberlain's charge. What do you think Rice would have expected Chamberlain to do? Why? What do you think "Regular Army" would have done? Why?

Chapter 3.5: Longstreet

1. At the beginning of this chapter, Longstreet goes to see Hood in the hospital then meets Sorrel and Goree who tell him that everyone blames him for the day's defeat. What is the effect of opening the chapter this way?

Chapter 3.6: Lee

1. Reread the last page of the Longstreet chapter then read the first paragraph of the Lee chapter. What is the purpose of this juxtaposition?
2. As Lee moves into the night, the author uses the similes of hardening cement and a teetering rock to describe him. What do the similes mean and what is the contrast?
3. When Virginia declared its secession from the Union in April 1861, Lee chose to follow his home state *despite* his personal desire for the country to remain intact and *despite* an offer of a senior Union command. How does this help explain his reaction to Virginia's secession as described on page 263?
4. Why does Stuart unbuckle his sword? Would you describe his action as sincere? Explain.
5. What does Lee decide to do with his army on the next day, the third day of battle? Why?

Friday, July 3, 1863

Chapter 4.1: Chamberlain

1. Imagery is important throughout the book as we view the battle through the eyes and experiences of the participants. Give examples from the first paragraph of this chapter. What is the effect of this imagery?
2. Based on what Tom says about the bayonet charge, we can infer that he and many of the other men don't like using bayonets because _____. Explain.
3. What new orders does Chamberlain receive? This is an example of which literary device? Explain.

Chapter 4.2: Longstreet

1. Provide textual evidence that shows the morale of the Southern troops before the third day's battle.
2. What does Lee order Longstreet to do? (291-292)
3. Summarize Longstreet's response to Lee's order.

3. Based on the first several pages, we can infer that Chamberlain is feeling _____.
Provide textual evidence to support your claim.

4. Explain the primary purpose of the second complete paragraph on page 303.

5. The memory of using Tom to plug a hole helps Chamberlain realize what about the larger picture?
Explain.

6. When Chamberlain learns from his brother of Kilrain's death, he questions his own religious beliefs.
Why does Shaara present us with these thoughts?

7. What does Chamberlain do during the terrible artillery fire? What is the significance?

8. Give examples of the imagery that is used to describe what Chamberlain sees, hears, and smells. What is the effect?

9. By using the simile, "It was as if you were a baby and your mother was shuddering with cold" (310), Shaara emphasizes _____. Explain.

Chapter 4.4: Armistead

1. Why does Armistead ask Pickett to tell Garnett not to participate in the attack? What do you think Pickett should do? Why?
2. Describe the contrast between Pickett and Longstreet immediately before the attack. How do you account for their different responses?
3. Choose two quotes that make the attack seem real. Explain your choices.
4. Why does Armistead need to tell a nearby officer to "move these people out" (326)?

Chapter 4.5: Longstreet

1. Give examples of some of the most powerful images Shaara creates to convey Longstreet's despair. Explain your choices.
2. When Pickett's aide rides up to ask for help, what is Longstreet's response? What is the significance?
3. Provide textual evidence to describe the difference between Longstreet's view of Lee and the retreating soldiers' view of Lee. What accounts for these differing perspectives?
4. What is Pickett's response when Lee orders him to regroup his men?
5. Considering the characterization of the Confederate army, explain why Longstreet thinks that a Union attack on the retreating Rebel soldiers would be a "mercy."

Chapter 4.6: Chamberlain

1. Chamberlain realizes that he has witnessed a great moment in history. Describe his mental image of the day's battle.

2. Why does Chamberlain believe there is great beauty in tragedy?

3. What effect is created by ending the book with a description of the storm? What literary element(s) is/are at work here?

MILITARY TERMS GLOSSARY

martial - xviii of or appropriate to war; warlike

cavalry - xviii soldiers who fought on horseback

corps - 3 a main subdivision of an armed force in the field, consisting of two or more divisions

mutineers - 17 a soldier who rebels or refuses to obey the orders of a person in authority

regiment - 18 a unit of an army typically commanded by a colonel and divided into several batteries

courier - 24 a messenger who transports goods or documents, in particular

brigade - 34 a subdivision of an army, typically consisting of a small number of infantry battalions and/or other units and often forming part of a division

infantry - 34 soldiers marching or fighting on foot

court-martial -78 a court for trying members of the armed services accused of offenses against military law

Mason-Dixon Line the boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania, taken as the northern limit of the slave-owning states before the abolition of slavery

bivouac - 122 a temporary camp without tents or cover, used by soldiers

breastworks - 159 a low temporary defense or parapet

en echelon - 184 a formation of troops, ships, airplanes, etc., in which groups of soldiers or individual vehicles or craft are arranged in parallel lines, either with each line extending to the right of the one in front (right echelon) or with each line extending to the left of the one in front (left echelon) so that the whole presents the appearance of steps

reconnoiter - 185 to scout ahead to find enemy positions

enfilade fire - 185 firing at the end of an enemy battle line rather than the front

pont au feu - 269 fire(s) of hell: Lee's way of describing the intense artillery pounding he will order on the center of the Union line to pave the way for Longstreet's attack there

rout - 269 a serious defeat where the enemy runs away

detail - 276 any group of soldiers assigned to a specific job like getting water or picking up trash

relieved - 282 in military terminology, when a soldier or a military unit is replaced by another one

feu d'enfer - 292 Literally, in French, a "bridge of fire." In the context of military tactics it means a preliminary bombardment from artillery that suppresses and demoralizes opposing forces before your own troops charge the enemy

brevetted - 354 a type of military commission conferred especially for outstanding service by which an officer was promoted to a higher rank without the corresponding pay