

# **THE PACT**

## Study Guide

### **Introduction**

Questions:

1. How does the narrator's present compare with his past?
2. Who/What has the most influence on impressionable young adults?
3. How are friendships good? How are they bad?
4. How is this success story different than the success stories that you commonly hear?

### **Chapter 1**

"Dreaming Big"

~George

Vocabulary:

1. boisterous
2. acknowledgment
3. leniency
4. lanky

Questions:

1. How does a trip to the dentist change George's life?
2. Describe Ella Jenkins Mack. What kind of influence could her work ethic have had on George's life?

3. Describe George's step and biological fathers. How were they alike? How were they different.
4. How did George feel about Shahid Jackson?
5. Even though George made a conscious decision to become studious, how did he treat others in the neighborhood that made less than honorable career choices?
6. What kind of teacher was Miss Johnson?
7. Much of what George talked about seemed like random occurrences. But could these 'occurrences' have meant more to George than their face values? Explain...

## **Chapter 2**

"Home"

~Sam

### Vocabulary:

1. obligation
2. occupants
3. despair
4. ranted
5. raved
6. compulsive
7. paranoid
8. sassy
9. reckless

10. saddled
11. courtesy
12. literally
13. retrospect
14. brunt
15. mimic
16. manicured
17. subtle
18. sweltering
19. lament
20. diversion
21. unison
22. prestigious

Questions:

1. What was Sam's 'Moms's' secret?
2. Why did Ruthener Davis drop out of school?
3. How would you describe Kenneth Davis?
4. Describe the neighborhood lived Sam while in grade school.
5. What is the significance of keeping Sam's hair in the Bible?

6. How would you describe Ruthener Davis?
7. How was Sam's home life?
8. How did Sam's home life change after his parent's divorce?
9. How did Sam get along with his siblings?
10. How did Sam's surroundings influence him?

### **Chapter 3**

"Ma"

*~Rameck*

#### Vocabulary:

1. hypothesis
2. aspired
3. stint
4. stunning
5. defying
6. unbeknownst

#### Questions:

1. How was Rameck's mother's and grandmother's relationship?
2. When and why did Arlene have Rameck?

3. How would you describe Rameck's parents?
4. Describe life at Ma's house.
5. What kind of parties was Rameck exposed to while living with his mother?
6. How did Mrs. Hatt treat Rameck?
7. How did Rameck feel about Winnie Jones?
8. How did Rameck's parent's life influence him?
9. How was Rameck's relationship with his parents?
10. How did Ma give help?

**Chapter 4**                      "Common Ground"                      ~George

Vocabulary:

1. menial
2. preparatory
3. predominantly
4. clique
5. exasperated

6. underwritten

7. activist

8. ousted

9. self-reliance

10. summoned

11. futilely

12. incorrigible

13. skeptical

14. reluctant

Questions:

1. Describe University High School.

2. How did George and Sam act in school?

3. How was the neighborhood around the school?

4. Which well-known pop singer attended University High with George?

5. What were the two cliques that hung out within three blocks of George's apartment complex? Which friends did George choose?

6. Which friends did Sam choose?

7. Describe the rigor of University High.
8. What was George's first impression of Rameck?
9. What did Rameck want to become throughout most of High school?
10. What act united the students from rival high schools?
11. Describe the incident that almost got Rameck kicked out of school?
12. How was it serendipitous that George, Sam, and Rameck were in the library to meet the recruiter from Seton Hall?
13. How did the presentation in the Library change the three boys' lives?

## **Chapter 5**

"Caged"

*~Rameck*

### Vocabulary:

1. ringside
2. precinct
3. mannerisms
4. barbaric

### Questions:

1. How did Rameck's Plainfield friends influence him?

2. How did the 'code of the streets' hinder Rameck?
3. What changed Rameck and his friends' dreams?
4. What drew Rameck to his friends?
5. Describe the incident at the hangout.
6. How did Rameck feel after he was arrested?
7. Describe Rameck's experience in jail.
8. How did Rameck's Plainfield friends surprise him?
9. What happened at Rameck's trial?
10. What did Rameck decide after his arrest?

## **Chapter 6**

### **"A Big Break"**

*~Sam*

#### Vocabulary:

1. vicinity
2. careening



Questions:

1. What happened to Sam and Frank on Dayton Street? How did it turn out?
2. What proposition did Sam find irresistible to turn down?
3. How did Sam feel about the deal?
4. How did Sam resist peer pressure?
5. What was the new moneymaking scheme Sam had presented to him?
6. How did he handle the peer pressure?
7. How did this scheme turn out?
8. Describe Sam's experience in jail.
9. How did Sam's court date turn out?
10. How did the pact he made with George and Rameck seem to him now?
11. How did Sam's Dayton Street friends react to his college plans?

12. What did Sam decide to do?

## **Chapter 7**

“Hope”

~George

Vocabulary:

1. solidify
2. hindsight

Questions:

1. What helped each of the students meet the deadline for applications at Seton Hall?
2. What is one of the main goals of the Pre-Medical/Pre/Dental Plus Program?
3. How was Sam’s interview different?
4. How was Rameck’s decision to go to Seton Hall ‘helped’ along?
5. After prom, what did George decide to do with his girlfriend?
6. How did going off to college seem different?

*“George on Peer Pressure”*

Questions:

1. To what did George attribute to having a huge influence on his life?

2. Who, does George believe, have the most influence on one another's lives?
3. How did George avoid socializing with negative people?
4. Why did George admire Rameck and Sam?
5. How important is community involvement during the teenage years?

## **Chapter 8**

### **"Summer Odyssey"**

*~Rameck*

#### Vocabulary:

1. remediation
2. detractors
3. prominent
4. temperament
5. depict
6. garb
7. rhetorically

#### Questions:

1. Why did Sam, George, and Rameck have to go to school six weeks earlier than the rest of their classmates?
2. How does Rameck feel about his community?

3. What did Rameck realize about school?
4. Describe an average day of an EOP student.
5. How did the three students perform during the summer sessions?
6. What prank were the students going to play on Carla near the end of the summer program?
7. How did the summer program help the students?

## **Chapter 9**

“Earth Angel”

~*Sam*

### Vocabulary:

1. admonished
2. obsolete

### Questions:

1. What author changed Carla Dickson’s life?
2. How did Carla view the bond between the three friends?
3. How was Carla’s relationship with the young men?
4. How did Carla convince Rameck to stay in school?

5. What was Carla's job?

6. What was the significance of keeping the pictures in her Bible?

## **Chapter 10**

### **"A Different World"**

*~Rameck*

#### **Vocabulary:**

1. mercilessly

2. feigning

3. demeanor

4. lax

5. grandiose

6. envisioned

7. gig

8. liability

9. naively

10. compelled

#### **Questions:**

1. Why did Rameck invite Michael to visit him at college?

2. How did the visit turn out?

3. How did Rameck feel after the incident?

4. What was his mother's advice while growing up?
5. What happened when the police came?
6. How did this incident challenge Rameck's views about white people?
7. What other incident happened before the end of freshman year almost had Rameck kicked out of school?
8. How did this change Rameck?
9. What book did Rameck find that inspired him?
10. What did Rameck, George, and Sam decide to do?

*"Rameck on Giving Back"*

Questions:

1. What do you need to enrich another person's life?
2. Describe the analogy Rameck uses for giving.
3. Who was the one person Rameck felt he was lacking while growing up?
4. Why should selfish people give?

## **Chapter 11**

## **"Rap"**

*~George*

### Vocabulary:

1. era
2. mogul
3. stately
4. perplexed
5. introspective
6. escalated
7. abrupt

### Questions:

1. How did George, Sam, and Rameck feel about rap?
2. What was the name they chose for their group?
3. How far did they pursue their rap careers?
4. How successful was the group?
5. Why did George stop rapping?

**Chapter 12**

“Lovesick”

~Rameck

Vocabulary:

1. inflict
2. crystallized
3. residency

Questions:

1. What kind of family life did Rameck envision in his future?
2. Describe Rameck’s relationship with Kay.
3. How did Rameck’s part time job almost turn into a career?
4. Why did Rameck stick with Medical school?

**Chapter 13**

“Access Med”

~Sam

Vocabulary:

1. daunting
2. feisty
3. condominium
4. anesthesiologist
5. meticulous
6. commute



7. scribe

8. torrential

Questions:

1. What program accepted Sam and Rameck?
2. Where did Sam and Rameck transfer?
3. What happened to the trio of students?
4. How was the Livingston campus a welcome change to Sam and Rameck?
5. How was Sam adjusting to medical school?
6. Outside of class, what took up the three student's time?
7. How did Sam and Rameck make money?
8. What news from home distracted Sam?
9. How did Sam cope with the pressure?

**Chapter 14****“Old Ties”***~George***Vocabulary:**

1. logistical
2. invigorating
3. surreal
4. straddling
5. ethic
6. inflection

**Questions:**

1. Where was George accepted to dental school and where did he stay while attending?
2. What happened with the “free ride” the three students was promised?
3. How far was George falling behind on his tuition?
4. How much was it to take the state licensing exam?
5. How was living in the old neighborhood different than living at Seton Hall?
6. How was George different?
7. How did George’s friends treat his apartment?

8. How did the separation from Rameck and Sam affect George?
9. What did Sam realize about the people around him at home or at school.

## **Chapter 15**

“D.W.B.”

~*Rameck*

### Vocabulary:

1. secluded
2. catapult
3. profiling
4. presumed
5. plea
6. clinical

### Questions:

1. Why was Rameck arrested?
2. After talking to his lawyer, what did Rameck do?
3. Why did this arrest scare him?
4. How did his actions hurt him in court?
5. What was his lawyer's response?

6. How did the trial turn out?

## **Chapter 16**

### **“Becoming Doctors”**

*~Sam*

#### Vocabulary:

1. physiology
2. insurmountable
3. elation
4. vague
5. affiliated
6. dweller
7. gastrointestinal
8. lacerations
9. dean
10. reputable
11. intent
12. perseverance
13. humble

#### Questions:

1. How did Sam do on his first state board exam?
2. How was this a different concept for the three students?

3. Who was Sam able to connect with?
4. How did Sam cope with his failure?
5. How did Sam feel when he visited his old neighborhood?
6. How did Sam do on his second state board exam?
7. Where did Sam choose to do a rotation dealing with emergency medicine?
8. What happened to change Sam's feelings of not belonging in medicine?
9. What happens on Match Day? How did Sam do?
10. Where did Rameck place for residency? Where did Sam?
11. How did Sam feel after he didn't place in an emergency residency?
12. What did Sam find while trying to remedy the situation? How did it turn out?

*"Sam on Perseverance"*

Questions:

1. What are Sam's three D's?

2. What does Sam say about perseverance?

## **Chapter 17**

## **“Graduation”**

*~George*

### Vocabulary:

1. rigor
2. grueling
3. doggedly
4. entangled
5. amphitheater
6. prophetic

### Questions:

1. Why did George want to do a residency when one wasn't needed?
2. What did Dr. Noble do right before their graduation?
3. How did George feel about this?
4. How did George and Rameck help each other while they were still in school?
5. What was the first thing the three planned for after graduation?
6. What was the headline on the newspaper?

7. How did the story contrast to what George was used to seeing on the front page?

## **Chapter 18**

“Goodbye”

~*Rameck*

Vocabulary:

1. cirrhosis
2. gastroenterology

Questions:

1. Why did Rameck choose to specialize in gastroenterology?
2. How did Ma help Rameck with his patients?

## **Chapter 19**

“Home Again”

~*Sam*

Vocabulary:

1. colleagues
2. leery
3. gratitude
4. obstructions
5. triumphant
6. magnitude

Questions:

1. How did the three doctors' lives change after graduation?

2. What foundation did Sam, George, and Rameck help establish?
3. What was a major downfall by practicing so close to home?
4. What did Sam realize after an old friend was brought into emergency?
5. What were the only things that separated Sam from his patients from the inner-city of Newark, New Jersey?
6. How did Sam turn out as a doctor?
7. How was Will different from other friends back home?
8. How did the doctors' journey affect other people?
9. To Sam, what is being a doctor all about?