

*Indian Horse* - Chapter 25-31

1. Based on the following passage, what type of town is Manitouwadge?

“Manitouwadge means “Cave of the Great Spirit” in Ojibway. That was funny, because it was mining that gave the town its life. Everyone in Manitouwadge worked in the mines or the sawmills, and Fred Kelly had brought his family there from the Pic River reservation to join the thirty other Ojibway families who lived in a neighbourhood on the outskirts called Indian Town by the locals. Its residents called it the Rez. I’d learn fast enough that an invisible line was drawn across the intersection of Sanderson Road and Township Road Eleven that everyone regarded as part of the local geography. The town proper was populated by tough, narrow-minded men and their loyal women and their callow kids, all rough-and-tumble and rude. It was a place of Saturday night fights in the parking lot outside Merle’s Old Time Saloon, wild country dances at the Legion Hall, bass boats, snowmobiles, motorcycles and random games of Broom-a-Buck, the redneck game of leaning out the window of a car or truck to swat Indians on the sidewalk or the road. Fifty points for a head shot. Twenty for any other part of the body. I’d learn all of this later. That first day, in the late winter of 1966, all I saw was a town drenched in the seeping grey of spring breakup” (99).

2. Who is Virgil? What role does he play for Saul in this section of the novel? Provide some quotes with page numbers to support your claims.

3. In this section, Saul joins “The Moose,” the Manitouwadge Moose Junior Hockey team, and he tells us of his journey with the team. In general, how does he progress with the team?
4. After you answer the second question, consider what the team comes to represent or symbolize for him? What does the team mean to him? How do you know this?
5. In Chapter 30, the Moose beat the Kapukasing Chiefs, an all white, non-indigenous team. What is ironic about the “Chiefs” name, especially given what happens at the end of Chapter 31? Why might the author decide to call this team the “Chiefs”?