

Fog Magic Study Guide

Fog Magic by Julia L. Sauer

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Fog Magic Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapter 1: The Spell of the Fog.....	4
Chapter 2: The House at the Fork.....	5
Chapter 3: The Village Over the Mountain.....	6
Chapter 4: The Salvaged Egg Cups.....	8
Chapter 5: Lost Ann.....	9
Chapter 6: To Halifax for Justice.....	10
Chapter 7: Anthony.....	12
Chapter 8: The Vessel from Bombay.....	14
Chapter 9: The Government House Ball.....	16
Chapter 10: Greta's Twelfth Birthday.....	18
Characters.....	20
Objects/Places.....	23
Themes.....	25
Style.....	27
Quotes.....	30
Topics for Discussion.....	32



Plot Summary

The novel FOG MAGIC, by Julia L. Story, tells the story of young Greta and her love for the thick, gray fog that often settles on the little shipping village by the sea in which her family lives. Her mother, Gertrude, can never understand her daughter's love for the fog. Even as a baby, when the fog sets in Greta reacts with smiles and excitement. To keep her little toddler from running off into the fog, Gertrude literally ties Greta to the clothes line.

As Greta matures, her father, Walter, seems to have a deep understanding of Greta's fascination with the fog. Walter convinces his wife that Greta should be allowed to follow her heart and venture into the fog which excites and seems to lure her. Chasing Rosie, the family's runaway cow one evening, Greta spots in the thickening fog what seems to be the outline of a house. But she knows from her father's stories that there have been no houses on that side of the mountain for many years. Greta's curiosity gets the best of her and she returns to that spot, on the old Post Road, the next time there is a heavy fog. Just as before, she sees the house. This time, she also sees an old man working around the house. He waves at her, as though he is inviting her in. She steps into the spruce forest, feeling safe and protected by the very fog that others detest and dread. Every time the fog rolls in, Greta is eager to finish her chores so she can follow the curtain of fog.

As Greta ventures deeper and deeper into the forest, she encounters a woman dressed in a plum silk dress who is driving a horse and carriage. The woman tells her to come aboard. She drives her the rest of the way to the village of Blue Cove, a fishing community that had been abandoned years before. She had often spent time in the area, playing in the "cellar holes" which is all that is left of the homes. But as she advances toward the village now, she sees a barn and then a house and then other houses and stores emerging from the fog. A beautiful gray cat rubs up against her leg and runs ahead of her, leading her to the Morrill home. There Greta meets the Morrill family: Retha, a girl about her age and her parents, Laura and Eldred. In the months that follow, Greta grows very close to the people of Blue Cove, especially the Morrill family. She knows that the people, while loving and kind, belong to a different world than she does and that she is just a visitor.

Greta enjoys the time she spends in Blue Cove but she knows that the magic will not last forever. When Greta turns twelve, Laura Morrill gives her a kitten for a birthday present. When Laura bids her "safe passage" for the years ahead, she knows her time in Blue Cove has ended. Greta is happy with her life and the memories of Blue Cove but is satisfied to be heading toward her teens and leaving childhood fantasies behind her while vowing to never forget them.



Chapter 1: The Spell of the Fog

Chapter 1: The Spell of the Fog Summary

From a baby on, Greta Addington loves the fog. Her mother can barely keep her inside when a thick blanket of fog settles in. Most people in the little fishing village of Little Valley don't like the fog. Most of the men are fishermen and aren't able to work during a thick fog or, if they are already out to sea, the fog places them in great danger.

North Mountain runs down the length of the peninsula where Little Valley is located. Many years ago, there were villages on the other side of the mountain but most have been abandoned. One road, Post Road, which is an old road worn down to stones, leads across the mountain. It had been built by the first settlers. The only evidence of the earlier homes across the mountain are their cellars. One day the family cow, Rosie, takes off down old Post Road. Greta finds her and begins to lead her home just as the fog is picking up volume. As she glances south, she thinks she sees the distinct outline of a house!

Greta asks her father if there could be a house off Post Road through the spruce forest. He says that there is only the cellar hole of an abandoned house there. There is a glimmer in her father's eye and although she can't hear her parents talk that evening, she feels certain that her father is encouraging her mother to allow Greta to go exploring in the fog and not be so frightened that harm could come to her.

That Saturday, seeing the fog and knowing her daughter would want to go exploring, Gertrude makes her a sandwich to eat along the way. Greta takes a pail and promises to pick berries. Gertrude tells her daughter not to be late.

Chapter 1: The Spell of the Fog Analysis

Greta loves the fog; she thinks of it as a magical adventure. Somehow, her father understands her need for adventure and love of the fog more than her mother does. Foreshadowing is used to add an element of mystery about the house Greta sees in the spruce forest when the thick fog rolls in. Since the houses have long ago been abandoned, what does Greta really see? What does her father know about the spruce forest and the fog? Why does he encourage his daughter to seek adventure in the fog without any fear that she will be in danger?



Chapter 2: The House at the Fork

Chapter 2: The House at the Fork Summary

The first thing Greta does is look for the house she had seen in the woods. She stops to get her breath at the sailors' grave, a spot where her father often stops to pay respect to shipwrecked sailors washed ashore years before. In honor of the lost sailors, he is careful never to cut that part of the field. When she comes to the fork in the path leading to Little Cove, Greta spots the house in the spruce forest! In the months that follow, the house becomes a beacon for her. If she sees the house she ventures on; if not, she turns back.

In the berry patch, she suddenly sees the blurry figure of an old man. He waves at her and goes on toward the house. She waves back. For some reason, the name "Old Man Himion" comes to mind. Her grandfather had told her that Old Man Himion is the one who found the shipwrecked sailors years and years before. Greta walks on and stops when she hears what sounds like a horse-driven carriage on the stone path. Around the bend, she sees the horse-drawn carriage which is being driven by a woman dressed in a beautiful plum colored dress. The woman stops and tells her to come aboard. She is heading to Blue Cove and it is unusual to see someone going there on foot. Greta tells the woman she likes to walk in the fog. The woman responds that the fog is dangerous for the sailors. Greta says it is safer now with the Tolelrton foghorn but the woman has never heard of it. As they drive on, Greta is excited. She doesn't expect to see abandoned villages; she had been certain she'd see a prosperous fishing village.

Chapter 2: The House at the Fork Analysis

Greta feels safe when she sees the house and Old Man Himion. At this point, she knows that the fog is taking her into a world that has long since passed. Her grandfather had told her the story of Old Man Himion who found the shipwrecked sailors many years before. The fog is magical for Greta. Even though she is probably seeing a spirit and communicating with him (they wave at each other), she is unafraid. Greta feels safe in the fog. The woman driving the carriage on the old road has never heard of the foghorn that was created to help warn the sailors about the onset of the fog. The woman has never heard of the foghorn because she is a spirit who lived before the advent of the foghorn. Greta has a positive, almost intuitive feeling about what she will find in Blue Cove.



Chapter 3: The Village Over the Mountain

Chapter 3: The Village Over the Mountain Summary

The woman assures Greta that they will arrive safely in Blue Cove. Greta asks if she will be able to enter the village. The woman tells her that she has the look of a person who would always be welcome there. The woman lets her off on the edge of a curtain of fog, telling her to go to the second house where she would find Retha Morrill, a girl near her age. Greta has played in the area before, climbing in and out of the cellar holes. But now, as she walks toward the fog, she sees the outline of a barn and then that of a small, neat house. A large, beautiful gray cat brushes against her leg. She tries to pick him up, but he runs ahead almost leading the way.

Retha Morrill runs out to greet Greta, telling her she is glad she has come. Retha leads Greta inside to meet her mother, Laura Morrill. She has the bluest eyes that Greta has ever seen. Laura knows she is from the other side of the mountain. Laura guesses that Greta is an Addington and that her first name might be Greta. Laura says she has the Addington look and that there is always an Addington child who loves the fog. Laura gives Greta a piece of strawberry pie and a glass of milk.

Retha gives Greta a tour of her village, pointing out her church and school. They go down Post Road and see the fish houses, wharf and stores. They see a man sitting against a fence. He is tending to some children playing. He turns and looks at the girls—Greta thinks he looks like a savage. Retha tells Greta that the man, Anthony, is nice but that he never speaks. No one is sure if he can't speak or doesn't want to. The man doesn't have any legs from just above the knees. He always seems to be looking for someone. Retha says she will ask her mother whether she can tell Greta more about the man.

It is time for Greta to go home. Before she leaves, she returns to Retha's house to get her berry pail. Laura has put a piece of strawberry pie in her pail for later. She tells Greta to come as often as she can. When Greta gets home, the strawberry pie has disappeared from her pail. Her father smiles at her and asks if there is a thick fog at Blue Cove. When she replies that the fog is thick, he tells her he thought it probably had been.

Chapter 3: The Village Over the Mountain Analysis

The woman driving the carriage drops Greta off where a young girl her age lives. The woman encourages Greta to go into the fog, knowing that no harm will come to her. Retha greets Greta saying she's glad she has come. Laura knows Greta's name without asking her. It seems as if the people in Blue Cove had almost been expecting her; no



one is surprised with her visit. Even the cat leads the way to Retha's house. When Laura makes the comment that children of the Addington family are often curious about their side of the mountain, Greta's father's attitude about Greta venturing into the fog comes to mind. Perhaps when he had been a child, he had been compelled to enter into the magical world of the fog.

A mysterious figure emerges in the story—the legless man who never speaks. Retha is unsure if she can tell Greta about him. Perhaps she fears that his story would scare Greta away. Laura tells Greta to come as often as she can. Laura's immediate attachment to Greta is somewhat curious. The strawberry pie disappears from Greta's berry pail which leads one to believe that things Greta sees in Blue Cove only exist when she sees them in the thick fog.



Chapter 4: The Salvaged Egg Cups

Chapter 4: The Salvaged Egg Cups Summary

While the weather is clear, the kids in Greta's class voted to go to Blue Cove for their school picnic. Greta votes against it. She is afraid she'd have to share the magic of Blue Cove with the other kids. But the day of the picnic is clear and the unknown life of Blue Cove remains her secret. One morning in July, the fog returns and Greta is off to the other side of the mountain. She sees the house at the fork and knows it is safe to continue. Retha is glad Greta has been able to come back so soon. But Greta responds that it is weeks since she has been there.

A ship had recently gone aground. The people from the village are salvaging what they can from the wreck. Fortunately, the crew and passengers have been saved. Laura feels sad about salvaging the cargo from the ship but it would have just gone to the bottom of sea. At least it will be put to good use by the villagers. The girls run down to the wharf to try to find Retha's father. Finally, Retha spots his boat coming ashore. They return home with him and he shows Laura and the girls the items he has salvaged. He brings Laura and Retha two silver egg cups, two silver egg spoons and two small salt spoons. Laura gives her egg cups and spoons to Greta. Greta thinks about how the strawberry pie had disappeared. Laura gives her a knowing look and tells her that she can keep them there and play with them when she visits.

Eldred Morrill tells Laura and the girls how the large ship sank in the fog and how the crew had no warning. Since the fog is beginning to lift, Greta says she should probably head back home. Laura agrees that it would be best.

Chapter 4: The Salvaged Egg Cups Analysis

When Retha says she is glad that Greta has come back so soon, Greta says it has been weeks. Apparently, life in the magical world of Blue Cove is timeless. When Laura gives her egg cup and spoon salvaged from the ship to Greta, she and Greta exchange a knowing look. They both know that if Greta brings the items home, they will disappear. They are both happy with Laura's solution that Greta keep the items there so she can play with them when she visits. Since Laura enjoys having Greta visit, keeping the egg dish there is a way to make Greta want to come back.



Chapter 5: Lost Ann

Chapter 5: Lost Ann Summary

Greta and her friends are going to go berry picking but the fog has rolled in and the other girls don't want to go into the forest because it will be damp and wet. Greta walks over to Blue Cove and meets Retha who has a berry-picking pail for each of them. Retha's mother gives them some home-made bread to bring with them. They go to the spruce forest and start to fill their pails. They take a break to eat their bread. Greta stretches out on a long rock, turns and looks right into the face of another girl, a little older than she and Retha. When Retha sees her, she jumps up and yells at the girl, "Ann, Ann!" The girl runs off and Retha says they must follow her. But Ann outruns the two girls who are finally too exhausted to keep up the chase.

Retha tells her mother about seeing Ann who, she tells her, looked scared and hungry. Laura asks Retha if she had told Ann that the money had been found and that she can come back. Greta explains that since they couldn't catch up with the girl, they had been unable to talk to her. Eldred says he'd get a group of men together and go search for her. Laura and Retha explain that the girl had been accused by her boss of stealing money from him. After Ann had run away, her boss found the missing money. Greta looks frightened; people on her side of the mountain had always told the kids to watch out for a girl named Ann, a ghost who haunts the woods. Greta's father has told her that they had found her skeleton in the bottom of the lake. Eldred says not to worry, that they'd find her. It is time for Greta to return home. She tells Laura that she isn't afraid to go alone. On her way home, she calls out to Ann in the woods, telling her that everyone knows she is innocent. But there is no answer.

Chapter 5: Lost Ann Analysis

Greta is probably glad that her friends don't want to pick berries in the fog. She prefers spending time with her friends in Blue Cove. Greta meets up with the girl who, her parents have warned her, haunts the woods. When Greta tells Eldred that Ann's skeleton had been found, he ignores her and insists on looking for Ann. He knows that in their world of the spirits Ann is still "alive."

Tragically, Ann never learns that the people in the village know of her innocence—that her boss had found the missing money. Retha tells her mother that Ann looks hungry, indicating that Ann probably had died of starvation. Greta calls to Ann as she was walking home through the forest. Even though Greta knows that Ann's skeleton has been found, part of her thinks of the world in Blue Cove Ann as still alive. Greta is living between the reality of her own world and the fantasy of the world on the other side of the mountain. It is through the fog that Greta is able to experience this other existence.



Chapter 6: To Halifax for Justice

Chapter 6: To Halifax for Justice Summary

Blue Cove grows more and more real to Greta as time passes. She tries to bring up the subject of the differences between herself and Retha. Retha's mother has always told her that everyone must learn to be content and at peace with who and where they are. One day Greta goes to Blue Cove and the Morrills are getting ready for church; it isn't Sunday in Little Valley. Greta learns that in Blue Cove it might be a different day of the week than that in her village. Greta goes to church with them. Sitting in the front row is the woman who had first given her a ride in her carriage. A tall woman sits next to her. Greta learns that the tall woman is Mrs. Stanton and the woman who had given her the ride is Mrs. Trask. They are both coming for dinner.

Mrs. Trask recognizes Greta and is happy to see her. After dinner, Mrs. Trask asks Ardis Stanton what brings her back to Blue Cove. They have hardly seen her since she married Aubry. Mrs. Stanton tells those gathered about what has happened to her after Aubry was lost at sea. She has had a difficult time after her husband's death raising her five children. To make matters worse, a man had appeared one day, claiming he is the true owner of her entire property. For the past five years, she has been fighting this man and trying to get some justice. She has spent all her time and money—even sold her jewelry—to hire agents to speak for her but to no avail. She announces that she is going to walk to Halifax to personally ask the Duke of Kent to help her. Greta comments that the Duke of Kent has just married Princess Marina. The women laugh. Mrs. Trask says that the Duke of Kent is not a marrying man.

An older woman in the group, Mrs. Morehouse, asks what Mrs. Stanton is carrying in the package she has with her. Mrs. Stanton replies that it is her wedding dress and her great-grandmother's earrings—the only things of value she has left. Everyone feels sorry for Mrs. Stanton and remembers back to the day when she had been a beautiful bride. They all had attended her wedding. Mrs. Trask is heading toward Halifax the next day and offers to give her a lift part of the way. The weather is clearing so Greta leaves to go home.

The next day, Greta watches the road most of the day. She never sees Mrs. Trask's carriage drive by.

Chapter 6: To Halifax for Justice Analysis

Greta and Retha are struggling a bit with their identities. Greta feels comforted when she hears Mrs. Morrill's words that one should be happy with his own existence. Greta sees the woman again who had given her a lift, Mrs. Trask, who is happy to see her. Part of the reason Greta is not afraid to visit Blue Cove is because everyone, like Mrs.



Trask, is so nice to her and always happy to see her. Perhaps the spirit world of Blue Cove feels more alive with the presence of a living person.

A new character, Mrs. Stanton, tells the story of her struggle in raising her children after her husband is lost at sea. She plans to walk to Halifax to appeal directly to the Duke of Kent. Greta comments that the Duke just got married which everyone thinks is funny. Probably the Duke of Kent to whom Mrs. Stanton is referring is a distant ancestor of the Duke of Kent about whom Greta knows. The comment that the Duke of Kent the people of Blue Cove know is not the marrying type could infer that the Duke of Kent of old had been a confirmed bachelor.

The women feel sympathy for Mrs. Stanton. They remember back to her wedding when she had been young, beautiful and alive. They are not only feeling sadness recalling Mrs. Stanton's youth, but they are mourning for their own former lives as well.

Although Greta knows in her heart and mind that her friends in Blue Cove are spirits, a part of her longs for them to be real.



Chapter 7: Anthony

Chapter 7: Anthony Summary

As school approaches, Greta is very busy in Little Valley, but she never forgets about her friends in Blue Cove. Most people live in two worlds—the real one and the one of our imaginations that comes from books and stories. Greta realizes that Blue Cove goes on without her. She is just a visitor there. Greta loves to watch Laura Morrill weave the carpets that she is making for the house. Greta secretly wishes that her family had woven rugs; it is much homier than the Congoleum tiles that cover the floors in her house.

One afternoon, Mrs. Morrill tells the story about how the whole village had been nearly wiped out when everyone had crossed the Bay on Captain Landers' vessel to attend a cherry festival. A vicious squall hit the boat and capsized it. Everyone clung to the sides of the boat and were rescued. A commotion outside interrupts Mrs. Morrill's story.

The girls run out to see Father Amiraux from the French shore walking with a sailor down the street. The sailor is being brought to Anthony to see if they perhaps speak the same language. The townspeople had always hoped that a sailor would come ashore someday who spoke the same language as Anthony so he could have someone with whom to talk. Greta reminds Retha that she is going to see if she can tell her about Anthony. Mrs. Morrill takes over telling the story. She tells Greta that Anthony is at least 65 years old and had lived in Blue Cove for 40 years.

Anthony is a young handsome sailor who washed ashore from a man o' war fighting ship. When he came to shore, he was already missing his legs. They were cut off neatly just above the knees and the wounds were just about healed. The townsmen rescued him and nursed him back to health. He said something that sounded like "Anthony," so that's what they called him. He never said another word after that. Greta can't believe that the story ends like that. But Mrs. Morrill says that stories might have endings but in real life, there aren't always answers. No one can figure out why his legs were cut off although the doctors think his legs were surgically removed. Anthony is smart and always seems to be looking for "someone," either for revenge or for someone from his homeland.

Chapter 7: Anthony Analysis

The people of Blue Cove are always on Greta's mind. Greta is no different than most people because most people live in two worlds—the real world and one of their imaginations. It raises the question as to whether Greta is interacting with the spirits of the Morrills and the other people of Blue Cove or if she just has an active imagination. After all, she has heard stories about Blue Cove throughout her life. She has been warned about Ann, a ghost who haunts the woods and whose skeleton has been found.



She also has been told that there were once thriving fishing villages across the mountain. Greta wishes that her family had rugs instead of Congoleum. The Congoleum tiles symbolize modern times while the rugs represent times gone by.

Mrs. Morrill tells Greta about the time the entire village had been almost wiped out when they all traveled to the cherry festival. She claims they clung to the sinking boat but perhaps she is telling Greta how they all perished. She is interrupted while telling the story and she does not complete it, leaving it a mystery.

Greta is upset that the story of Anthony is an incomplete one. She insists that all stories have an ending but Mrs. Morrill replies that real life doesn't always have endings—that some things remain mysteries. Although Mrs. Morrill is ostensibly speaking about Anthony, she is speaking about all the people of Blue Cove as well.



Chapter 8: The Vessel from Bombay

Chapter 8: The Vessel from Bombay Summary

September and October are clear. Greta, hoping for fog, asks her father if he thinks the fog will come soon. He replies that it probably will not. He adds that there is disappointment across the mountain. She doesn't respond but knows there is an understanding about Blue Cove between them. Blue Cove almost seems like a book she has read but that she hasn't been allowed to finish. Some time after that, she wakes up on a Saturday morning to a thick fog. She runs most of the way to Blue Cove and right into the Morrill's home, throwing herself into Mrs. Morrill's arms. Laura is surprised at Greta's display of affection. Greta always forgets that time is meaningless there. They probably think she'd been there the day before rather than that it has been weeks that have passed since her last visit.

Mrs. Morrill asks Greta when she will be twelve. Greta notices that she doesn't ask her how old she is but rather when she would be twelve. Greta tells Laura that she compares her birthdays to going up a flight of stairs. But when she turns twelve, the stairs would take a turn and she won't be able to see what is ahead for her. Mrs. Morrill comforts Greta telling her that she when she becomes twelve she won't be afraid and that with courage and time she will be able to look ahead with her heart. Mrs. Morrill tells her she will give her a kitten for her birthday. Greta asks if she'd be able to take it home. Mrs. Morrill says she'd think about it.

Greta runs down to find Retha at the beach. A large vessel is anchored off shore. The ship is too large to land at the wharf. They learn that the ship is the Emmeretta, Captain Cornwall's ship. They also learn that Leah Cornwall, the Captain's wife, is in command of the ship. The ship has been in the Far East and the Captain had died on board. The Cornwalls had only been married a few months and Mrs. Cornwall has taken his death very hard and, some of the crew think, has gone mad. She had taken up arms and confiscated the ship, insisting that it return to their homeland where her husband could have a Christian burial. The women want Mrs. Cornwall to feel comfortable and a group of them head over to open her house up and air it out.

Greta remembers that the names of Captain Ansel Cornwall and Leah Cornwall appear on headstones in her village's cemetery. The women discuss the situation agreeing that Mrs. Cornwall is very young and would surely marry again and have a happy life. Only Greta knows that Mrs. Cornwall dies just a year after her husband. Greta returns for the funeral procession. She comments to Retha that so many sad things happen in Blue Cove. Retha asks if sad things happen in her Village. Greta has to agree that they do. Retha's mother has always taught her that living and dying are both natural things. The only sad deaths are those caused by war and there would never be any cause for another war. Greta keeps silent about the war in which the entire world is engulfed. She says that sometimes people fight because other people make them fight. Retha disagrees saying there is never a reason to go to war.



That evening, back in Little Valley, Greta sneaked over to the cemetery. There were no fresh mounds of dirt at the Cornwalls' grave sites.

Chapter 8: The Vessel from Bombay Analysis

Greta's father signals his understanding when she asks about Blue Cove. He is apparently speaking from experience when he tells her that only disappointment lies across the mountain. Is it the disappointment of the things that happen there or the disappointment of one day losing contact with the people. Perhaps it could even be both. Even though Greta hasn't been in Blue Cove for months, Mrs. Morrill is surprised that Greta is so glad to see her. Time is not an element in Blue Cove.

Mrs. Morrill seems to know how old Greta is without asking her. Mrs. Morrill has probably been through relationships with living children numerous times. When Greta shows some apprehension about what her future might hold, Mrs. Morrill comforts her. Her strength would see her through. Greta is concerned about the kitten that Mrs. Morrill plans to give her. Would she have to leave it there? If she tries to bring it home, would it disappear?

Greta remembers that she has seen the gravestones of the Cornwalls, another confirmation that she is in the midst of a spirit world. Retha tells Greta that living and dying are both natural things. The only deaths that are tragic are those caused by wars and that there would never be a reason for another war. Greta remains silent about the current war that envelops the earth. Since the book is written in 1943, Greta is referring to World War II; the author's anti-war stance thus emerges.



Chapter 9: The Government House Ball

Chapter 9: The Government House Ball Summary

Greta has many questions about Blue Cove. Sometimes she has the feeling she can provide better answers than can the Morrills. Perhaps her father has some answers as well. In her heart, she feels he had the same experience as she does when he had been a young boy. One matter of particular interest to her is what had destroyed the entire village. Even if some people moved away, others would have stayed behind. One day her father asks if she'd ever seen eyes as "blue as gentian." (page 81) Without pausing, she says only those of Mrs. Morrill. After she blurts that out, she is worried that he'd be embarrassed, but he isn't.

As the days wear on, Greta finds herself busy and enjoying the clear days in Little Valley and on the foggy days, enjoying her time in Blue Cove. One day, Retha greets her with the news that Mrs. Stanton has returned from Halifax and is coming over to the Morrills for tea. On their way back to Retha's house, she pauses to tell Anthony about Mrs. Stanton. He seems to be pleased.

Mrs. Stanton tells the group of women gathered that she has indeed seen the Duke. Cynthia Blackthorn, the grandniece of a neighbor of Mrs. Stanton, works at the Duke's residence and had promised to get Mrs. Stanton in to see His Honor. Mrs. Stanton had been fully aware that she could never get past the guards to get an audience with the Duke because of her shabby appearance. She had heard word that Young Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, is drawn to beautiful women. Cynthia had smuggled Mrs. Stanton's wedding dress into the Government House. A few weeks later, when the Duke had been having an event, Cynthia had smuggled in Mrs. Stanton. She had worn her wedding gown and her grandmother's earrings.

As the Duke had passed through, Mrs. Stanton had seen that she had caught his eye. A short while later, an aide had come to her, telling her that the Duke wanted to meet her. She had been honest with the Duke and told him that she was an imposter and had walked 200 miles to see him to get justice. Mrs. Stanton had been whisked away to a private room where she had waited for the Duke for several hours. He finally came into the room and she had been able to tell him her story about the man trying to steal her land. The Duke had told her she needed to stay in Halifax for a few days while he had the necessary papers drawn up. The papers granting her ownership to the property had come to her less than a week later. He had also given her a purse to defray her travel expenses.

The women are all thrilled with Mrs. Stanton's story. They ask her to slip on her wedding dress again for them. While she is changing, the women light twinkling candles all over the room to set the right mood. Mrs. Morrill goes outside and picks a bouquet for Mrs. Stanton to carry. Mrs. Stanton looks beautiful when she enters the room in her gown, but her eyes are brimming with tears thinking of her wedding day so many years before.



Mrs. Morehouse comforts her, telling her that Aubrey would be proud of her. The courage of a fine woman is more important than youth and beauty.

Greta has never felt closer to the people of Blue Cove than she does that day. Mrs. Morrill beckons to Greta, telling her that she is happy to have her at the gathering but that the wind has changed and she should head home. Greta feels she may never see Mrs. Morrill again. Mrs. Morrill tells Greta that she'd never send her away if she had a choice. As the air clears, she looks back at Mrs. Morrill standing in the doorway but her image becomes blurred and begins to disappear.

Chapter 9: The Government House Ball Analysis

That Greta and her father share the same experience with Blue Cove is becoming more apparent. He signals that he had known Mrs. Morrill by referring to her blue eyes. Although father and daughter do not have an open conversation about their experiences, they share them within their hearts. Since Greta's father had known the people of Blue Cove, he knows that his daughter is safe. Perhaps he shares his experiences with his wife which convinces her to allow Greta to visit the village when the fog settles in. As Greta comes closer to her twelfth birthday, she is enjoying her life in Little Valley and in Blue Cove. As Mrs. Morrill says, living and dying are both natural parts of life. Greta is in the unique position of enjoying people in both worlds.

Mrs. Stanton's success thrills the ladies of Blue Cove. She is comforted by the support of the women who admire her courage and strength—values that are more important than fleeting beauty and youth. When Mrs. Morrill tells Greta she must leave, there is a stark difference in this parting than those in the past. Mrs. Morrill tells Greta she would never tell her to leave unless she must. Mrs. Morrill knows that the relationship is coming to an end and that the magic will disappear for Greta when she turns twelve.



Chapter 10: Greta's Twelfth Birthday

Chapter 10: Greta's Twelfth Birthday Summary

Greta senses that she will feel different after turning twelve. Her father tells her that the Church committee has decided it would hold the annual picnic in Blue Cove. The date that they decide on is her birthday. Her father says he could ask the Church committee to change the date. Greta doesn't want them to change the date for her. It is just that two good times would be had on the same day. Her father tells her that they would have a separate celebration for her birthday at home.

The Reverend Mr. Clute decides to have the party on a high point to the left of the beach. It is a beautiful clear day and Greta thinks it is a wonderful way to spend her birthday. It would have been perfect, she thinks, if her friends from Blue Cove could have attended, too. The picnic breaks up when the weather starts to turn. Greta and Mr. Eldred Addington are the last to leave. As they walk back, Greta looks in the clearing but the fog hasn't given it life yet. On an impulse, she drops her sweater. They stop at the top of the mountain for a breather. Looking back over the sea and shore below, she sees a thick curtain of fog is beginning to form. She tells her father she has dropped her sweater and must go back for it. Her father tells her to hurry and that he'd wait for her.

Greta runs to the Morrill home. She runs in and tells Mrs. Morrill that she has been at a picnic in Blue Cove but the weather has turned and the others have all left. She also tells her that it is her twelfth birthday. Mrs. Morrill gives her a knowing look and tells her she wants to wish her "safe passage" and that she has her gift ready for her. Greta responds that only those going on a voyage are wished "safe passage." Mrs. Morrill tells her that now that she is twelve, she is heading on the voyage of the rest of her life. Mrs. Morrill leaves the room and comes back with a gray kitten and places it in Greta's arms. She tells Greta to take the kitten home. She wishes her safe passage again for all the years ahead.

Greta ran and met her father. When he saw the kitten, he took out a small knife from his pocket. Greta asked if he got the knife from Blue Cove. He said he had and on his twelfth birthday, too. Her father told her that now that she was twelve, she would be putting away childish things and looking forward to her life ahead. Greta knew what her father was referring to. He confirmed her thoughts that tomorrow the homes in Blue Cove would once again appear as only be cellar holes to her. Greta felt uplifted by his words. She decided to call her kitten Wisp, because it was gray like the fog. She told her father that she was glad to turn twelve no matter what she had to give up. Greta vowed that she would continue to visit Blue Cove forever.



Chapter 10: Greta's Twelfth Birthday Analysis

Greta's childhood has come to an end. And with the end of her childhood, she must leave behind the fantasies associated with it, including Blue Cove. That Greta is enjoying her life in Little Valley is a sign that she is preparing to let go of her life and associations with the people of Blue Cove. Laura Morrill knows that their relationship is ending when she wishes her "safe passage," but she doesn't want Greta to feel sad. As Laura said before, both living and dying are natural parts of life. Laura acknowledges that Greta is part of the living world and knows that she cannot keep her in the world of Blue Cove and that she doesn't want to keep her from the living world where she belongs.

The gift of the kitten is Greta's link to Blue Cove. The kitten does not disappear when she emerges from the fog. Just like her father who had received a knife from Mrs. Morrill when he had turned twelve, Greta will have the kitten who will embody her memories of Blue Cove. She is happy to be twelve and heading on the journey of the rest of her life but she will hold the memories of Blue Cove the rest of her life just as her father has.



Characters

Greta Addington

Greta is the young heroine of FOG MAGIC. Even as a baby, Greta feels a special fascination for the fog. She is about eleven years old when she begins to venture into the fog over to the other side of the mountain. She discovers a whole new world in Blue Cove, a fishing community that had reportedly been abandoned years before. Greta's spirit and curiosity leads her into the thick gray fog which she does not fear or detest like the other kids in Little Valley where she lives with her parents. The fog, to Greta, is a protective shield against danger and harm.

Greta becomes great friends with the people of Blue Cove, particularly the Morrill family. She and Retha Morrill are about the same age and form a natural relationship. Greta becomes particularly close to Retha's mother, Laura Morrill, who seems to know quite a bit about Greta the minute she arrives. During her many visits there, Greta encounters many different people and hears many unusual tales about them.

Through her relationship with the people of Blue Cove, Greta learns about the important things in life and understands the closeness she has always felt with her father. When Greta turns twelve, she senses that her time in Blue Cove is coming to an end. Although Greta is happy to move ahead to other adventures in her teens, she will never forget the loving people of Blue Cove.

Laura Morrill

When Greta ventures into the magical fog and finds the community of Blue Cove, a series of fishing villages on the other side of the mountain from her town of Little Village, a whole new world opens up to her. The first family she meets is the Morrill family. Retha Morrill is close in age to Greta and they form an easy, natural friendship. From the moment Laura Morrill first sees Greta, she seems to know her immediately. Greta feels an immediate affinity to Laura Morrill. Laura is always so kind and thoughtful to Greta, always asking her to please come back soon and often. The first time Greta is there, Laura Morrill gives her a piece of strawberry pie to take home with her in her berry picking pail. By the time Greta gets home, the pie has disappeared.

Laura is always mindful of the weather when Greta visits. When the fog starts to clear, she always reminds Greta that she should head home, knowing that when the fog dissipates, the magic spell would be broken and Greta would no longer be able to see the people of Blue Cove.

Laura knows that Greta would soon be turning twelve and that things would change. On her twelfth birthday, she gives her a kitten as a present. When Laura wishes Greta "safe passage" for the rest of her years, she knows that her time with her friends in Blue Cove is coming to a close. Greta senses that Laura had had a close relationship with her own



father when he had been a young boy. She and her father both had noticed that Laura had the bluest eyes they had ever seen.

Walter Addington

Walter Addington is Greta's father. He convinces his wife to allow Greta to explore in the fog which she finds fascinating. As a young boy, Walter had had an experience similar to that of his daughter with the people of Blue Cove.

Gertrude Addington

Gertrude Addington is Greta's mother. When Greta had been a baby, Gertrude could hardly keep her indoors when the fog settled in. She has always been afraid for Greta to explore in the fog until her husband convinces her to allow Greta to have her adventure.

Old Man Himion

Greta spots Old Man Himion outside of the house that she first sees in the fog. He is friendly and waves at her making her feel welcome to venture further into the fog and the spruce forest.

Mrs. Trask

Mrs. Trask is driving a horse and carriage when she spots Greta along the side of the road. She gives her a lift and lets her off in front of the Morrill house, telling her that a girl lives there who is around her age.

Princess

Princess is the large gray cat that Greta first encounters in Blue Cove. The cat leads Greta to the Morrill house. For her twelfth birthday, Laura gives Greta one of Princess' kittens as a gift.

Retha Morrill

Retha Morrill is the young girl of Blue Cove whom Greta befriends. They are about the same age and Retha is thrilled to have a good friend like Greta.



Mrs. Stanton

Mrs. Stanton walks 200 miles to Halifax to meet with the Duke of Kent. She is a widow with five children. A greedy man is trying to claim her land as his. The Duke prepares the necessary papers granting the land to her.

Leah Cornwall

After Captain Cornwall dies at sea of yellow fever, Leah, his wife, takes over command of the ship. She insists on bringing her husband's body back home so that he can have a Christian burial.



Objects/Places

Little Valley

Little Valley is the fishing village where Greta Addington and her parents live. From the time she is a baby, Greta is always excited when the thick fog settles in on the village.

The Fog

To Greta, the fog is magical. Once she ventures into the thick blanket of gray fog, she feels safe and protected. It spirits her off into a new world that no one else knows exists.

North Mountain

North Mountain runs the length of the peninsula where Little Valley is located. Greta discovers another world on the other side of the mountain when she encounters the village of Blue Cove.

Post Road

Post Road is a seldom used road that had been constructed by the first settlers in the area where Greta lives. It is so old that it is worn down to its original pebbles. It is on this road that Greta encounters the first person from Blue Cove, Mrs. Trask, who is driving her horse and carriage.

The Spruce Forest

When Rosie, the family dairy cow, wanders off Greta runs after her. She finds the cow near the spruce forest where a thick fog has settled. She makes out the faint outline of a house in the forest where one does not exist in clear weather.

Blue Cove

Greta discovers Blue Cove, a fishing village that had been abandoned years before, where Greta meets and builds strong relationships with the spirits who still exist in the village during the fog.



The Morrill Home

Greta spends most of her time in Blue Cove with the Morrill family. The Morrill house is the center of Blue Cove's social life. Many teas and gatherings of the town's women are held there.

Halifax

Mrs. Stanton travels to Halifax, walking most of the 200 miles on foot. She wants to have an audience with the Duke of Kent to have her property declared as rightfully belonging to her.

The Government House Ball

Mrs. Stanton wears her wedding dress and grandmother's earrings for her meeting with the Duke of Kent at a ball he holds at the Government House in Halifax.

Nova Scotia

Little Valley and Blue Cove, the fishing villages where the story of Greta and the magic fog takes place are located on Nova Scotia.



Themes

Coming of Age

The story of FOG MAGIC is a coming of age story. All her life, eleven-year-old Greta has been fascinated by the thick fog. Although everyone else in her small village dreads the fog, Greta seems to flourish in it. The fog is the magical carpet ride that takes her to a world of adventure and fantasy. She shares close relationships with the spirits who live in Blue Cove. After being away from Blue Cove for several weeks, Greta wonders if she has been there at all—or has she imagined the place from stories she has heard and books she has read.

Greta loves her friends in Blue Cove although she is bright and observant enough to know that the people in Blue Cove are very different than the people who live in her village of Little Valley. But Greta clings to the magical place she visits, often trying to convince herself that the people are just as real as those in her village. She enjoys her visits and loves the acceptance and love she feels from them but there is always a nagging sense that her time in Blue Cove is fleeting.

Mrs. Morrill tries to prepare Greta for her ultimate departure as she approaches her twelfth birthday. She tells her she would never send her away unless she had to do so. Mrs. Morrill gives her the gift of a kitten, a living reminder of the spirits who have become her friends. Mrs. Morrill wishes Greta "safe passage" for the rest of the years ahead.

When Greta returns home, her father tells her it is time that she leaves her childhood fantasies behind her. Greta is happy to be heading for her teen years and toward maturity and will give up whatever she has to to get there. However, she will never totally abandon her fantasies and they and the people of Blue Cove will always be a part of her.

Strong Women

There are many examples of strong female characters in FOG MAGIC, beginning with the main character, eleven-year-old Greta. Even as a baby, before Greta can understand the significance and magic of Blue Cove, she can hardly be contained when she sees the thick fog settle in. It fascinates and seems to lure her. As she matures, her father convinces her mother to allow Greta to have the freedom to seek the adventure that she seems to savor. Greta is a brave child who is not deterred by the mysterious appearance in the fog of a house in the spruce tree forest where one does not exist on a clear day. The adventure takes on more meaning the further that Greta ventures into the forest. Mrs. Morrill recognizes the strength in Greta, assuring her that her strength would see her through to the future.



Mrs. Stanton walks 200 miles alone for an audience with the Duke of Kent so that she can obtain proof of ownership of her land that a man is trying to steal from her. When she becomes emotional about her deceased husband, Mrs. Morehead tells her that her husband would be proud of her and that God places more importance on a woman with strength and character than on a woman with youth and beauty. Mrs. Trask is an assertive woman who drives her own horse and carriage around the dangerous twists and turns of the mountain road without blinking an eye. Mrs. Cornwall takes up arms to take over the command of her husband's ship when he dies on board of yellow fever. She is determined to bring him home for a Christian burial.

Laura Morrill is emotionally the strongest character of the story. Laura knows that the visits by Greta are temporary and will not last beyond her twelfth birthday. She has an emotional attachment to Greta but does not want to upset Greta about their unavoidable and permanent separation. She has apparently been through many such close relationships with living children and has learned to be selfless, letting them go back to the world to which they belong.

The Unknown

The unknown is a strong theme throughout the story of FOG MAGIC. Even though the protagonist, eleven-year-old Greta, is drawn to the forest and the other side of the mountain by the thick fog, she doesn't know what awaits her. When she detects the dim outline of a house in the forest during a thick blanket of fog, she begins to understand that she is venturing into a world that is unknown to the other people of her village, Little Valley.

Leaving the safety of her village, Greta discovers the extraordinary world of Blue Cove. The only thing she knows for sure about the village is that it doesn't exist in the world of the living! When the strawberry pie that Mrs. Morrill gives her to take with her disappears when she arrives home, Greta is faced with questions and curiosity about the nature of Blue Cove and the people who live there.

The unknown element of the story is an allegory for Greta's future which is illustrated in the scene when Mrs. Morrill bids Greta "safe passage." Mrs. Morrill knows that with Greta's 12th birthday her time in Blue Cove is coming to an end. When Greta expresses fear about her unknown future, Mrs. Morrill tells her that through her strength and through time she will be able to face her future and know in her heart what lies ahead, just as when she had ventured into Blue Cove something had instinctively told her that she would meet no harm. She learns from Laura Morrill of Blue Cove that all lives have elements of the unknown and that some things in life have answers and some remain mysteries forever.



Style

Point of View

FOG MAGIC by Julia L. Sauer is written in the third person limited omniscient point of view. The thoughts of the main character, Greta, are revealed to the reader throughout the tale. The book was written in 1943 during World War II. Sauer is able to work a few anti-war comments into the story without overwhelming it. For example, the character Retha tells Greta that living and dying are both natural parts of life. The only unnatural way to die, Retha tells her, is in war. Greta doesn't mention to the unknowing Retha that the planet is currently engulfed in a world war. She responds to Retha's claim that the only unnatural way to die is in war by insisting that it's okay to fight if one is provoked. Retha is not convinced, stubbornly holding to her claim that there is never a reason to go to war. From these exchanges, it is obvious how the author feels about war. It's rather remarkable that Sauer manages to slip her point of view about war into this child's story about magic fog.

As far as the story itself is concerned, the reader is aware of Greta's growing feelings about the people of Blue Cove. The author is careful to portray Greta as never being afraid of the spirits of Blue Cove who are always kind and loving toward her. Greta struggles with living in two worlds—one of the living and one of the dead. She instinctively knows that she cannot truly be part of Blue Cove and that she is just a temporary visitor. In a sense, FOG MAGIC is a coming of age story. As Greta matures, she learns that she must let go of her childhood fantasies. The reader is able to follow her thought process through the passage of time. The writer portrays Greta as an intelligent, curious young girl who is caring and loving and learns to enjoy her life, look forward to the future and never forget her friends in Blue Cove.

Setting

The settings are a very important element in the story of Greta and the magic fog. Greta lives in a small fishing village on the coast of Nova Scotia. The story was written by author Julia L. Sauer in 1943. Several vague references are made to war; one, in fact, speaks of the whole world engulfed in war. Since the novel was written in 1943, it is obvious that World War II was on Sauer's mind. One of the characters in the story, Mrs. Stanton, travels to Halifax to ask a favor of the Duke of Kent.

The village where Greta and her parents live is called Little Valley. Her father and most of the men in the village are fishermen. When the fog comes in, it places the fishermen either at risk if they are out to sea or it prevents them from working and earning money. No one likes the fog, no one except Greta that is. She loves the fog; it lures her to adventures into unknown areas where it promises to protect her from harm.



The fog takes Greta to the other side of North Mountain which runs down the center of the peninsula where Greta lives. Once over the hill, Greta passes through a spruce forest and makes her way to Blue Cove which is another fishing village, a community which had been abandoned years before. Greta visits Blue Cove often throughout the weeks and months. She establishes relationships with the spirits of the people who lived there in the past. Once Greta turns twelve, her father tells her that she will have to leave her fantasies behind now that she is nearing her teens. Greta is happy to turn twelve and with her life in Little Valley, but she vows she will never forget the people she loves in Blue Cove.

Language and Meaning

Julia L. Sauer, author of *FOG MAGIC*, sets a whimsical and magical tone in the telling of the story of the young girl, Greta, who is fascinated by and drawn to the fog that often settles over the small fishing village by the sea where she and her family live. While the story tells of spirits and ghosts, it is told in such a way that it would evoke not a bit of fear or fright in the young reader. Rather than an eerie tale, Sauer makes the story one of adventure and mystery. Greta's experiences in Blue Cove, a village abandoned years before, help her to understand what it means to mature and the close ties between herself and her father. Sauer is careful to portray the spirits who live in Blue Cove as kind and loving. Greta has the advantage of living in two worlds and gaining an understanding of both. Just as her friend Mrs. Morrill says, "Living and dying are both such natural things that one shouldn't be any more sorrowful than the other." (page 78)

Sauer interjects a number of charming, almost lyrical flourishes throughout her novel that are both touching and compelling, such as, "Or had it been something so fragile that it would winterkill like other lovely, delicate things?" (page 66); "A dress you've worn and been happy in always gathers in and holds a sort of fragrance of happiness" (page 86); and, "The courage of a fine woman is more in the sight of God and men than the beauty of a lovely girl." (page 93).

The book was originally written in 1943. The writer makes several anti-war references. For example, when Retha tells Greta that there is never a reason to go to war, Greta remains silent about the war in which the entire earth is currently engulfed.

Structure

FOG MAGIC by Julia L. Sauer, is separated into ten titled and numbered chapters. The story of Greta and the magic fog is laid out in basically a chronological order. The story covers a time span of about a year or so. The story ends when Greta turns twelve-years-old, when her father tells her that it is time to put childhood fantasies away.

The first part of the novel tells the reader of Greta's life-long love for the fog. It tells of her mother's struggles to keep Greta inside, even as a baby, when the thick, gray fog set in. Beginning in the second chapter, the reader learns that it is far more than just the fog luring Greta into the forest. The fog, in fact, is what protects her in the woods. The

story is structured and designed to be mysterious and intriguing; however, it is portrayed in a positive light and is not one that will frighten youngsters.

In the subsequent chapters, the strong relationship that Greta builds with the people "over the mountain" in Blue Cove is described. She has great emotional attachments to the people, especially Laura Morrills, who seems to know a lot about Greta the moment she arrives.

Throughout the book, there are hints about the identity of the people of Blue Cove. In the last several chapters of the book, Greta comes to understand her experience and knows that as she matures and leaves her childhood behind, things change. She tells her father that she is glad to be twelve "no matter what I have to give up."



Quotes

"Fog had always seemed to her like the magic spell in the old fairy tales—a spell that caught you up and kept you safe, once you were inside it, as you would have been within a soap bubble." (Chapter 1, page 6)

"'I'd better stop and get my breath at the sailors' graves,' she thought. It was a spot where father often stopped for a moment. Greta had never asked him why." (Chapter 2, page 12)

"She knew somehow with certainty that when the road swung down toward the sea she would not find the familiar empty beach. She would find instead the once prosperous village of Blue Cove." (Chapter 2, page 18)

"Blue Cove with its winding street of houses above the cliff, its busy beach and wharves below, was something Greta believed she saw with her own eyes. Perhaps, if only she could keep it secret enough, she could go on seeing it always." (Chapter 6, page 50)

"The Bible taught that 'faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'" (Chapter 6, page 50)

"'But, Mrs. Morrill, why didn't he speak again? And what had happened to him. The story can't end like that.' ~ 'Maybe a story can't, child,' Mrs. Morrill told her. 'But life can and often does.'" (Chapter 7, page 62)

"I always think of my birthdays as a flight of stairs. Up to twelve it's been fun to look up. But after twelve—the stairs turn—I can't see around the bend." (Chapter 8, page 69)

"My mother says that living and dying are such natural things that one shouldn't be any more sorrowful than the other." (Chapter 8, page 78)

"Sometimes it [going to Blue Cove] was like stepping into a cinema near the end of a picture when she could only guess at all that had gone before." (Chapter 9, page 80)

"A dress you've worn and been happy in always gathers in and holds a sort of fragrance of happiness." (Chapter 9, page 86)



"The courage of a fine woman is more in the sight of God and men than the beauty of a lovely girl." (Chapter 9, page 93)

"On a clear day—with the sea a deep blue, with a crisp wind fanning the excitement of living, with gulls whirling in vast circles and mewing faintly from their great height—on such moments in this place the idea of freedom became so real that you could almost grasp it in your two hands." (Chapter 10, page 98-99)

"It was empty. Not yet had the fog reached it to touch it with life." (Chapter 10, page 100)



Topics for Discussion

Who are the people in Blue Cove that Greta likes to visit? Why is she never afraid to visit them? Greta likes to visit Blue Cove during what kind of weather?

What does the fog represent to Greta? Why is Greta's father sympathetic to her venturing into the foggy woods?

Why does Mrs. Morrill immediately know who Greta is and what her name is? Who else in Greta's family may have been a fog-lover as a child?

What has happened to Mrs. Stanton's husband? How has she been wronged? Who does she plan to visit in Halifax in hopes that she will finally get some justice?

In what ways does Greta show that she understands the difference between her world and that of Blue Cove? In what ways does she try to convince herself that her friends in Blue Cove are real?

What incidents illustrate that the people of Blue Cove lived long ago? What happened to the strawberry pie that Mrs. Morrill gives Greta to bring home? Why does Greta agree to leave her egg cup and spoons at the Morrill's house?

Why is Ann running around in the woods? What happened to Ann in the real world? How does Mr. Morrill react when he hears that Retha and Greta had seen Ann in the woods?