

# **The Good Fairies of New York Study Guide**

**The Good Fairies of New York by Martin Millar**

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# Plot Summary

The Good Fairies of New York is an award winning novel by science fiction writer Martin Millar. This novel is about a group of fairies who, after a night of drinking, find themselves in New York City with no clue how they got there or how to get home. Two of the fairies befriend humans, but their attempts to help their new friends causes tension among the various groups of fairies living in New York, culminating in a street brawl. At the same time, among the other fairies transporter to New York are the young children of the Cornwall king who are the only hope of a group of rebels who disagree with the king's decision to allow Magris, his magician, to turn their peaceful country into an industrial nation. This battle comes to New York, bringing to Central Park a battle between a Cornwall army and the disorganized, disgruntled fairies of New York City. The Good Fairies of New York is a humorous novel that surprises the reader, causing them to root for a group of unlikely heroes and their human counterparts.

Heather and Morag, two thistle fairies originally from Scotland, stumble through the window of Dinnie MacKintosh's room and vomit on the floor. These fairies had a long night of drinking and have somehow found themselves in a strange land. Heather and Morag make themselves visible to unsuspecting Dinnie, hoping to find a safe place to sleep off their hangover in his home. Dinnie is shocked, but when he overcomes this shock he demands the fairies leave. One does, but after fighting with Heather, Morag decides to find some other place to hide out until she can figure out how to return home. This leaves Heather with Dinnie, an unpleasant bike messenger who insists on playing the violin badly. Heather attempts to teach Dinnie how to play better, but Dinnie becomes so frustrated that he refuses to learn anything.

While Heather attempts to help Dinnie, Morag goes across the street and befriends Kerry. Kerry is an artist who suffers from Crohn's Disease. As a result of her disease, Kerry has a temporary colostomy bag that caused her last boyfriend to break up with her. Kerry is so angry with this boyfriend that she has decided to enter a community art contest so that she can win against his presentation of A Midsummer's Night Dream. The only problem is that Kerry has decided to create a Celtic Alphabet, but the centerpiece flower keeps disappearing.

While Heather and Morag settle in with their human companions, their drinking pals are stuck in Central Park. Among these friends are Petal and Tulip, the children of King Tala, the king of Cornwall. King Tala is dealing with a rebellion that rose up against his decision to turn his kingdom into an industrialized nation. The rebels want Petal and Tulip to ascend to the crown, so King Tala has decided they must die. When King Tala learns Petal and Tulip are in New York City, he sends an army to kill them.

Heather learns that Dinnie has money trouble, so she begins stealing from Italian banks in order to help him pay his rent. This causes the Italian fairies to become angry with Heather. Morag goes to Chinatown with Kerry where Kerry steals a mirror that belongs to the Chinese fairies. This causes the Chinese fairies to become upset with Morag. The group in Central Park begin stealing whiskey from bars in Harlem. This act causes the



Black fairies to become angry with the strangers. In a short time, all three gangs begins chasing the strange fairies through the city in an attempt to stop these thefts.

One afternoon Heather takes a close look at the violin Dinnie bought at a thrift store. The violin turns out to be an ancient heirloom belonging to the Scottish fairies called the MacPherson Fiddle. Since Heather and Morag were kicked out of Scotland for damaging a precious heirloom, the McLeod Banner, Heather thinks she will be welcomed back to Scotland if she can return the MacPherson Fiddle. Heather makes a pact with Dinnie where he agrees to give her the violin if she can help him win Kerry's love. Heather does as promised, but when it comes time to take possession of the violin, Morag insists that she also had a pact with Dinnie and that the violin should be hers. As a consequence, Morag and Heather have a fight, dropping the fiddle in the street and leaving it to be damaged.

When the army from Cornwall begins to descend on Central Park, Maeve, an Irish fairy, calls her friends to help. At the same time, the McLeod's have sent a group to find Heather and Morag to retrieve the pieces of the McLeod Banner. Finally, the rebels also come to New York in order to find Petal and Tulip, as well as a rare Welsh poppy their leader needs to appease the woman he loves. When all these people arrive in Central Park, they are not enough to battle the large Cornwall army. The New York fairies agree to help, allowing the group to win against the Cornwall army. At the same time, Kerry's illness has worsened, causing her to be hospitalized again. Dinnie remains by her side, unconcerned with her colostomy bag. During this time, Kerry wins the art contest against Cal, thanks in part to a woman Dinnie befriended who happens to be one of the judges. Finally, the visiting fairies help Morag to heal Kerry's illness.



# Chapters 1-5

## Chapters 1-5 Summary

Heather and Morag were thrown out of Scotland, leaving them to wander Europe in search of a place where they can form the punk rock band they have always dreamed of. One night, while drinking with friends, Heather and Morag pass out in some sort of shipping container and are flown to New York City. When they wake, they are terribly hung over and they fly into the room of an unpleasant New Yorker who is less than thrilled to see them.

In chapter 1, a drunk Heather and Morag, thistle fairies, fly into Dinnie MacKintosh's window as he plays a violin badly. Dinnie runs out of the room and tells people on the street that he has seen fairies and they laugh at him. At the same time, five more fairies find themselves in Central Park, unsure how they got there or how to get home. In chapter 2, Kerry, a beautiful artist who lives across the street from Dinnie, contemplates her Celtic Alphabet while choosing a flower to wear in her hair. Across the street, Dinnie attempts to get rid of Heather and Morag, but they ignore him after insulting his violin playing. In chapter 3, a homeless woman named Magenta roams the streets while her delusions allow her to believe she is Xenophon watching out for Antaxerxes' army while her friend, Joshua searches for her to regain the recipe for his homemade alcoholic drink. In Cornwall, King Tala orders Magris, his magician, to find his children, Tulip and Petal. In New York, Heather and Morag argue over whose fault it is that they got so drunk they ended up in this strange land with no recollection of how they got there. Morag learns that Dinnie's name is MacKintosh, the same as Heather, and claims that is why he cannot play his violin well. Heather calls Morag a lie and a cheat, causing Morag to leave Heather alone with Dinnie.

In chapter 4, Morag befriends Kerry and learns that Kerry is making the Celtic Alphabet, inspired by a rare Welsh poppy she found in an abandoned building that was used as a crack house, to win a community art contest in an effort to get back at an ex-boyfriend. Cal, Kerry's ex-boyfriend, promised to teach her the guitar solos for the New York Dolls' songs, but broke up with her before he did. Petal and Tulip, King Tala's children, are two of the five other fairies who landed in New York with Heather and Morag and are now stranded in Central Park. Petal and Tulip fear their father wants to kill them and will find them, even in New York. Morag tells Kerry how she and Heather met when they both participated in a music contest. Heather played the same song Morag planned to play. Both girls played the song so well that the judges declared a tie. However, both Morag and Heather believe the judges were bribed. In chapter 5, Heather remains with Dinnie even though he does not want her to stay. Dinnie goes to work as a bike courier, but he is so picky about the jobs he will take that he does not work that day. Instead, to earn money, Dinnie decides to play his violin on a street corner. Dinnie's playing is so bad, people cross the street to keep from hearing it. When Dinnie decides to leave, Heather talks him into remaining. Heather plays her violin and the music is so beautiful that Dinnie makes lots of money since people cannot see Heather and believe the music is



Dinnie. However, Dinnie's bike is stolen while he is playing by Magenta who is trying to escape from Joshua. Morag and Kerry go out. Morag notices how the men appear to find Kerry attractive, but Kerry ignores their advances. When Morag asks Kerry about this, she learns Kerry has Crohn's Disease and as a result of frequent attacks she has had to have a temporary colostomy bag. Men do not find this attractive, and it is the reason Cal broke up with her.

## Chapters 1-5 Analysis

These chapters introduce the main characters, including the seven thistle fairies who inspired the novel's title. Heather and Morag are female fairies who drank too much and somehow find themselves in New York City, thousands of miles from their home in Scotland. These fairies, however, seem more concerned with their petty differences than their current circumstances. In fact, the reader learns that Heather and Morag have competed against each other since the day they met at a youth music contest in which they both played a difficult song on their violins and tied for first place. This competition and constant fighting between these two defines their relationship and foreshadows difficulties for them as the plot develops, especially when they fight rather than team up together to help themselves fix their situation.

Also introduced are five fairies in Central Park who were apparently drinking with Heather and Morag and were also transported to New York in some mysterious conveyance. These five include two young people who happen to be the children of the king of Cornwall. These two feel their lives are in danger by their father and that he will be able to find them, even in New York. This is supported by a passage in the third chapter when King Tala orders his magician to find them. The reader might suspect that a battle will come to New York in order to find Petal and Tulip, but it is unclear at this point how bad this battle will be and who it might include.

Finally, several humans are introduced in these chapters. The first is Dinnie, an unpleasant young man who is the unhappy host to both Morag and Heather when they first arrive in the city. After a fight between the two fairies, however, Dinnie is left alone with Heather. Dinnie is annoyed by this situation, but Heather proves useful when she helps Dinnie make money for his rent by playing her violin and making it appear that it is Dinnie's violin making the beautiful music. Kerry, a beautiful woman who lives across the street from Dinnie, becomes friends with Morag. Kerry appears to have everything a young woman might want, beauty, freedom, and a creative career. However, Kerry has Crohn's disease, which has left her with a colostomy bag. Kerry finds it difficult to date with such a medical condition and fears that her disease will progress so far that she will be stuck with the bag for life. This leaves Kerry certain she will never find love, leaving the reader hoping that love will find her unconditionally, touching on a theme of the novel. Finally, Magenta and Joshua are introduced. Magenta is a homeless woman who believes she is Xenophon, a Greek warrior on the run from her enemies, specifically Joshua, another homeless person who wants back a recipe Magenta stole from him. How Magenta and Joshua will fit into the plot is not clear at this point, but will become clear as the plot continues to develop.



## Chapters 6-9

### Chapters 6-9 Summary

In chapter 6, Heather attempts to teach Dinnie how to play the violin in order to save her pride by proving to Morag that any MacKintosh can play the violin well. Dinnie is resistant at first, but eventually relents. Dinnie is not a quick learner and Heather becomes frustrated. Heather leaves and runs into Magenta. Magenta can see Heather, but believes her to be part of her enemy's army. In Cornwall, Aelric, the leader of the rebels who are fighting to have Petal and Tulip placed on the throne, is in a human library studying books about military strategy. In chapter 7, Morag and Kerry go to Chinatown in search of a flower for Kerry's Celtic Alphabet. While there, Kerry shoplifts a mirror that the store owner refused to sell to her. Morag sees some lobsters in a tank and is saddened by the sight. That night, Morag returns to the restaurant and frees the lobsters. A group of Chinese fairies see this and chase Morag out of Chinatown. Across the street, Heather sits on Dinnie's shoulder as he walks through town and tells him a story about how she and Morag were traveling and it began to rain. They found a castle and sought refuge in a coffin there. The coffin held a cloth that Heather cut two blankets out of for herself and Morag. Later they learned the cloth was the famous MacLeod Banner. Heather and Morag were thrown out of Scotland for desecrating this artifact and refusing to return the cut pieces. Heather sees a dead homeless person on the street later that night. Heather places Kerry's rare Welsh poppy beside the body, but Magenta steals the flower. In Cornwall, Magris learns that the king's heirs are in New York City through an albatross he sent after them.

In chapter 8, Kerry is upset about the loss of her poppy because it is so rare and it is the centerpiece of the alphabet. To cheer her up, Morag tells her how the MacKintoshes and MacPhersons have been enemies for generations, explaining why she and Heather fight so often. At the same time, the Chinese fairies become aware of the theft of their Bhat Gwa mirror and they begin tracking Morag, convinced she has something to do with it. In chapter 9, Dinnie learns he is to be evicted for not paying his rent. Heather promises to take care of the problem. In heaven, Johnny Thunders, lead guitarist of the New York Dolls, laments the loss of his 1958 Gibson Tiger Top guitar. In Cornwall, Aelric begins studying Chairman Mao in order to learn new strategies to use against King Tala. Heather talks Dinnie into taking her to a club where musicians play Scottish music. Dinnie is embarrassed when Heather talks him into playing and he does not do well. At the same time, the Italian fairies become upset when they realize strange fairies are stealing money from their banks.

### Chapters 6-9 Analysis

Heather and Morag, unaware of the existence of other fairies in America, anger both the Chinese and the Italian fairies without being aware of it. The Chinese fairies are upset that Morag freed the lobsters in one of their human's restaurants as well as the theft of



their Bhat Gwa mirror, a mirror that will help with their Feng Shui during the Festival of Hungry Ghosts, which is coming up very soon. This leads the fairies to chase after Morag in hopes of retrieving the mirror that Kerry actually stole. At the same time, Heather has stolen money from an Italian bank in order to help Dinnie to pay his rent. This causes the Italians to become angry that their humans are being robbed by strange fairies. The anger of these two groups of fairies causes the reader to suspect that trouble looms in the not so distant future for Heather and Morag.

Two objects of importance in these chapters are Kerry's Welsh poppy and the Bhat Gwa mirror. Kerry found the poppy in a crack house right after the police raided it. Due to the fact that this flower is so rare, Kerry felt inspired by it and it remains the centerpiece of her Celtic Alphabet. The disappearance of this flower is significant and it will cause Kerry a great deal of stress, which is not good for her illness. The reader knows that Magenta picked up the flower after Heather stole it from Cal who stole it from Kerry. However, the reader does not have confidence that Kerry will be able to get it back, something that is deeply important to Kerry. The Bhat Gwa mirror, as the reader knows, belongs to the Chinese fairies and Kerry stole it when the shop owner refused to sell it to her. Kerry is a shoplifter who steals things in part to help with her finances and in part for the excitement. This shows the reader how depressed Kerry must be because of her illness and that shoplifting is a form of acting out in defiance of her illness. This time Kerry has not been caught by humans, but by fairies who could pose a problem for her new friend, Morag.





# Chapters 10-12

## Chapters 10-12 Summary

In chapter 10, Kerry and Morag have no luck in their search for the poppy while Heather and Dinnie fight over Dinnie's unwillingness to practice on his fiddle. Kerry has become convinced that Cal stole her flower to sabotage her Celtic Alphabet. To cheer her up, Morag tells Kerry about the MacPherson Fiddle, a violin created by a fairy for a human that could magically become large or small. This fiddle belonged to James MacPherson the robber. When the robber was caught and hung, it is believed he destroyed the fiddle so that it would never fall into the wrong hands. Heather, reminded of this famous fiddle while listening outside Kerry's window, realizes that Dinnie's violin is this famous fiddle, explaining why the violin sounds beautiful even with Dinnie's terrible playing. Heather convinces Dinnie to give her the violin in exchange for Heather helping him win Kerry's affections. Heather immediately researches what women want and tells Dinnie he must be nicer and he should go on a diet. Women want skinny men with ponytails, Heather insists. At the same time, Magris begins raising a group of mercenaries to go after Petal and Tulip while Cal struggles with the play he wants to present for the community art contest.

In chapter 11, Morag gives Kerry another flower she found for the Celtic Alphabet. However, Morag had some bad luck when she appeared to a child and the shock caused the child to step in front of a car. Morag is afraid she will have bad karma now and this seems to come true when Morag and Kerry have several close calls while walking the streets in search of the poppy. Morag and Kerry have learned Magenta have their poppy and chase her to a gallery where a friend of Kerry's is reading a poem. The crowd is ignoring the poet because of the heat, so Morag plays her fiddle to help the people to relax and enjoy the poem. However, in the frenzy of applause, Morag drops her fiddle and it is destroyed. In chapter 12, King Tala continues to insist on Magris finding or killing his children despite Magris' hesitation. A group of mercenaries are prepared for the trip. Podraig, one of the five fairies in Central Park, talks the others into venturing out in search of whiskey. Kerry, who has just recovered her poppy from Magenta, discovers the Chinese fairies have stolen it for ransom for their mirror.

## Chapters 10-12 Analysis

Heather and Morag were thrown out of their home because of their destruction of the MacLeod Banner, so now Heather has found the MacPherson Fiddle and believes by returning it she can secure her return to her home country. The fiddle was made for a human by a fairy and has the magical powers to become large or small and has a beautiful sound. Heather has discovered that Dinnie's thrift store fiddle is the MacPherson fiddle, so she agrees to help him make Kerry fall in love with him in return for the fiddle. This task seems nearly impossible as the reader takes into account the fact that Dinnie is rude, unattractive, sad person who is unkind to everyone. Heather



sets out to find what all women want and decides to force Dinnie to be nice and to lose weight. This seems a little unrealistic and simplistic to the reader, but it is amusing to watch Dinnie struggle to do as Heather asks.

Kerry and Morag manage to find the poppy and retrieve it from Magenta, but Morag breaks her fiddle in the process. Morag is now as depressed as Kerry was. However, Kerry's happiness does not last long because the poppy is stolen once more by the Chinese fairies. At the same time, the five fairies in Central Park begin going to local bars to steal whiskey. When Heather and Morag do this, they anger local fairies so the reader is curious if this action will not upset yet another group of fairies. At the same time, King Tala orders a group of men to be sent to New York to find his children despite the hesitation of Magris, his magician. This foreshadows trouble for the five fairies in Central Park as well as Heather and Morag.



# Chapters 13-18

## Chapters 13-18 Summary

In chapter 13, Heather goes in search of fresh ingredients for Dinnie's new diet. While out, Heather runs into Morag who is in the middle of trading the Bhat Gwa mirror for Kerry's poppy. Heather interferes and causes the poppy and the mirror both to fall into Magenta's bag. In chapter 14, Kerry and Morag are both depressed because of the loss of the poppy and Morag's broken fiddle. In Cornwall, Aelric prepares his supporters for another attack on King Tala. In New York, Heather tries to console Morag only to have Dinnie let it slip that his fiddle is the famous MacPherson Fiddle. In chapter 15, Brannoc is depressed because Petal, his love, is more interested in her brother than him and he cannot get anymore whiskey because of the Black fairies who attacked them on their last foray. In Scotland, the MacLeod's decide to send four of their best warriors after Heather and Morag to retrieve their lost sections of the MacLeod Banner. In chapter 16, Kerry and Morag go to a festival in Tompkins Square where they throw a bottle at Cal and a riot breaks out, leaving Morag convinced her bad karma is still following her around. Morag finally finds Magenta again, but when she catches up to her, she no longer has the poppy. At the same time, Johnny Thunders descends from heaven with the Chinese ghosts celebrating the Festival of the Hungry Ghosts in order to search for his guitar.

In chapter 17, Heather attempts to convince Dinnie to like some of the music Kerry likes, but he cannot force himself to like it. Aelric, after a battle with some of King Tala's men, has fallen in love with King Tala's stepdaughter, Marion. At the same time, Morag decides to make a deal with Dinnie in order to get the MacPherson Fiddle from him. In chapter 18, Morag convinces Kerry to pretend to like Dinnie in order to fulfill her deal with him so she can get the fiddle. Kerry agrees. In the meantime, Heather has found the poppy and she gives it to Dinnie to give to Kerry. Dinnie chickens out, however, when faced with having to speak to Kerry. Aelric learns that Marion is close to King Tala and unlikely to turn to the other side for love. Heather is chased by a group of Italian fairies. At the same time, Morag is being chased by Chinese fairies. The chase leads them to Harlem where the Black fairies join in the chase. In Cornwall, the group of mercenaries begins the long walk to New York over a moonbeam while closely behind the MacLeod sisters follow in search for Heather and Morag. The MacLeod sisters arrive just in time to spot Heather and Morag on a car in Manhattan.

## Chapters 13-18 Analysis

Heather and Morag, touching on the theme of friends, fight again when Heather attempts to help Morag out of what looks like a bad situation but turns out to be an attempt at an exchange. Morag again loses Kerry's poppy. This fight appears to be the end for these two friends, but they again find their way back to each other somehow. In fact, the end of this group of chapters finds them running away from three gangs of



fairies just in time to run into the MacLeod sisters who have come to retrieve the sections of the MacLeod Banner Heather and Morag used as blankets. This friendship is strong and the reader is confident it will last, at least the length of the plot.

King Tala sends a band of mercenaries to New York at the same time his biggest enemy, Aelric, falls in love with his stepdaughter. Aelric's timing could not be worse because his campaign against Tala's factories is finding some success. However, love is sure to sidetrack Aelric as he begins to spend more time trying to win Marion's love than to find ways to ruin her stepfather. In the meantime, Brannoc, one of Petal and Tulip's companions, is unhappy and it seems he might give up on his four friends, leaving them alone to face King Tala's mercenaries with one less warrior to help. A big battle is once again foreshadowed as the reader wonders what will happen to peaceful Petal and Tulip.



# Chapters 19-25

## Chapters 19-25 Summary

In chapter 19, Kerry learns that Magenta got the poppy again when she rescued Heather and Morag from the MacLeod sisters and Heather showed the flower to her. Magenta took the flower claiming Heather could not care for it properly. Later, when Kerry runs into Dinnie at the deli, she punches him for stealing her flower. In chapter 20, Kerry and Morag continue collecting flowers for the alphabet, but Kerry is worried about how she will complete it without the poppy. Morag later runs into the ghost of Johnny Thunders and sympathizes with his attempts to find his guitar. Dinnie becomes annoyed when Heather insists he grow a ponytail. Dinnie leaves to play his violin for money. Dinnie plays for Cal and is hurt when Cal makes fun of him. Dinnie runs into Kerry, knocking her to the ground and storming away without helping her. Morag becomes concerned because Kerry appears ill. In Cornwall, Aelric makes a mistake because he is distracted by Marion. In chapter 21, the fairies in Central Park see the moonbow and know trouble is coming. Maeve manages to kill several dogs that came down the moonbow first. At the same time, the Black fairies decide to seek out the mystery fairies stealing their whiskey and make peace. As the mercenaries begin to land in Central Park they find themselves surrounded by the Black fairies and are taken prisoner.

In chapter 22, Heather and Morag worry about the MacLeods. Later Morag and Kerry visit some of Kerry's friends, all of whom have minor ailments that Morag heals. Afterward, Kerry becomes ill and has to go to the hospital to have another operation. In chapter 23, Kerry recovers from her surgery at home with Morag while the Italians prepare to march against their enemies and the MacLeod sisters continue to look for Morag and Heather. In Cornwall, Aelric spends time he should be spending on planning their next offensive on picking flowers for Marian. In chapter 24, Dinnie's ponytail has grown out now thanks to Heather's help, and Heather has died it blue, which Dinnie does not like until it begins attracting female attention. In Cornwall, King Tala demands that Magris send an army to New York after Tulip and Petal. Dinnie apologizes to Kerry for knocking her down, opening a dialogue between them. Across town, the MacLeod sisters begin traveling with Joshua in the hopes that he will lead them to Magenta and Magenta will lead them to Heather and Morag. In chapter 25, Morag runs into Johnnie Thunders who tells her she can get her violin fixed by a shop owner in Chinatown. Johnnie goes with Morag, helping her to make peace with the Chinese fairies. Inspired, and a little jealous, Heather decides to make amends with the Italians. The MacLeod sisters catch up with Magenta, but get bored when she does not lead them to Heather and Morag. They steal the poppy from her, however.

## Chapters 19-25 Analysis

Kerry's poppy has gone missing again. Somehow, no matter what happens, it seems Magenta always ends up with the flower. Kerry is becoming desperate to get the flower



back and the stress of all this causes her disease to flare up. Many more episodes and Kerry will have to have the colostomy bag for the rest of her life, a prospect that only adds to her stress. At the same time, Dinnie wants to make Kerry his girlfriend, but they seem to be bringing out the worst in each other. Kerry hits Dinnie because she believes he stole her poppy, then Dinnie knocks her down some stairs. This seems to be disastrous for both Heather and Morag's plans to get Dinnie's fiddle, but when they apologize to each other, hope is breathed back into the plot.

Heather and Morag, when not fighting with one another, seem to spend all their time running from rival gangs of fairies. On top of this, the MacLeod sisters are also in town looking for the pieces of the MacLeod Banner the girls stole. Finally it occurs to make amends with the Chinese, inspiring Heather to do the same with the Italians. This too offers hope to the plot, suggesting to the astute reader that a resolution might be possible in all the conflicts that fill this novel.



# Chapters 26-31

## Chapters 26-31 Summary

In chapter 26, Maeve teaches Petal and Tulip how to use a sword. While they are distracted, Brannoc leaves and makes friends with the Black fairies. In chapter 27, Dinnie and Kerry go out on their first date to a club where some of Kerry's musician friends play. The date goes well despite Heather's fears that Dinnie might do something wrong. In Cornwall, Aelric goes to see Marion where he is turned down flat. However, Aelric learns that Marion is building a Celtic Alphabet and she needs a Welsh poppy. Aelric believes if he can find her one, she might fall in love with him. In chapter 28, the Chinese fairies find Magenta, who has the Bhat Gwa mirror and a broken guitar in her possession. Morag is hopeful that the guitar might be the one Johnnie Thunders is looking for. At the theater, Cal is having trouble with the actress playing Tatiana, while Heather believes the entire play is a farce. In chapter 29, Dinnie goes shopping with Kerry while Morag and Heather have dates with the Chinese and the Italians. Kerry tells Dinnie that she thinks Heather and Morag have held onto the pieces of the MacLeod Banner for sentimental reasons. When Kerry explains that she believes Heather and Morag became lovers the night they took the pieces of the banner, Dinnie makes her angry by denouncing her theory.

In chapter 30, Aelric and his band of rebels become trapped in a castle by King Tala's men. Aelric should have scouted out an escape before the fight, but did not so he is now scouring the castle for a way out. The five fairies in Central Park discuss the coming fight with the Ghanaian fairies and they decide to invite all the other fairy groups in New York to join the fight. Heather is convinced Kerry will never want to go out with Dinnie again, but Kerry has promised Morag that she will help get the fiddle back. In chapter 31, Kerry and Dinnie go out again causing both Morag and Heather to believe they will soon have the fiddle. Unfortunately, when each goes to retrieve the fiddle, they learn the other's deal with Dinnie and begin to fight. The Italians jump in to help Heather and the Chinese jump in to help Morag, causing a street brawl. Soon all the fairies in New York are fighting, including the MacLeods. One of them drops the poppy and Johnnie Thunders picks it up. The MacPherson fiddle is forgotten in the gutter where it is run over by a car.

## Chapters 26-31 Analysis

Dinnie and Kerry start going out and seem to do well together. However, the reader is unclear if this is a love match, or if Kerry is making it appear as one in order to help Morag get her fiddle back. At the same time, Aelric is spending more time attempting to woo Marion than running his rebellion against her stepfather. This causes Aelric and his gang to find themselves in some trouble while battling against King Tala's men. Love seems to be getting everyone in trouble, touching on the theme of unconditional love.



Heather and Morag are at it again. Heather and Morag think they are both entitled to the MacPherson Fiddle because Kerry and Dinnie kissed. However, instead of compromising and both taking it back to Scotland, they cause a street brawl between all the fairies in New York. This results in the destruction of the fiddle. Once again, tempers rule the day and friendship goes flying out the window, leaving the question of whether Heather and Morag will be able to get past this one into the open again.





# Chapters 32-44

## Chapters 32-44 Summary

In chapter 32, Morag tells Kerry the real reason she and Heather did not return the pieces of the banner is because they used them to blow their noses on, a worse deed than cutting the banner in the first place. Kerry washes the pieces in her washing machine, making it possible for Morag to return them. The same day, Morag runs into Johnnie Thunders who tells her he traded the poppy to Magenta for the broken guitar she had, but it turned out to not be his. Later, Magenta gave the MacPherson fiddle to the repairman in Chinatown in exchange for money to buy the ingredients for her alcoholic drink. In chapter 33, the poppy continues to change hands while Maeve contacts her friends in Ireland for help against King Tala's army. The MacLeods call their kin as well. In chapter 34, Aelric finally finds a way out of the castle for his group of rebels. In New York, Kerry walks in on Dinnie having sex with another woman. Later, Tulip and Petal approach Heather and Morag to help reconcile the feuding fairy groups in order to get their help in fighting Tala's army when it arrived. In chapter 35, Kerry is beginning to feel ill again as Heather and Morag prepare for the arrival of the army from Scotland. The news that Tulip and Petal gave the poppy to a homeless woman does not help Kerry much.

In chapter 36, Dinnie is sad about hurting Kerry, so he gets drunk while playing his violin on a street corner for money. When it is time to play the violin to direct the Scottish army coming to help against King Tala's army, Heather and Morag begin to fight, once again breaking Morag's fiddle. Instead of coming to where Heather and Morag are, the army is directed to Dinnie who is playing the same song, though not well. In chapter 37, Tala's army arrives. The army is so large that the fairies in New York begin to despair. Aelric and his group follow the army to New York because Aelric hopes to find a Welsh poppy there. At the theater, Magenta disrupts Cal's rehearsals of his play, causing some of the actors to run away. Heather and Magenta manage to get the poppy for Kerry and Cal's guitar, which might be Johnnie's, but is not. In chapter 38, the Scottish fairies go off to the battle in Central Park. Dinnie runs into Kerry at the deli and urges her to enter her alphabet in the competition even if it is not complete. In chapter 39, the battle is about to begin in Central Park, but the New York fairies are sadly outnumbered. Hope comes when Magenta brings the repaired MacPherson Fiddle. However, that hope quickly disappears as the girl whom they have entrusted the fiddle falls and breaks it after Heather and Morag tied her shoe laces together. At the same time, Kerry is rushed to the hospital in an ambulance after Dinnie found her passed out outside her building.

In chapter 40, Magenta uses her knowledge of Greek battle tactics to help the fairies fight against Tala's army. In chapter 41, Dinnie continues to sit with Kerry while the battle rages in Central Park. The New York fairies have held the army off, but are tiring. Aelis drops fliers on the army hoping the message in them will encourage the army to stop fighting for the wrong side. In chapter 42, Cal's play proves to be a disaster as he performs it for the judges until a bunch of fairies arrive and disrupt it. Aelric finds Kerry's



poppy and gives it to Marion, causing her to change sides, along with many of the soldiers in the army. In chapter 43, the battle is over. Kerry returns home where she takes her poppy back from Marion and places it in the alphabet in time for the judging. However, the judges appear to have liked Cal's play better, especially Joshua after he learns Kerry is a friend of Magenta's. In chapter 44, Dinnie learns that the third judge and the one hold out is a woman he knows. Dinnie convinces her to vote for Kerry. Back at the hospital, Morag gathers all the fairies with healing powers around Kerry and they heal her disease. Back at Kerry's apartment, Johnnie Thunders finally finds his guitar. However, he decides to leave it for Kerry.

## Chapters 32-44 Analysis

The banner is finally returned to MacLeods, helping Morag and Heather make peace with their enemies. However, the poppy continues to make the rounds of New York, passing through the hands of nearly every character in the book. Finally, however, Kerry gets it back and is able to place it in her complete alphabet. Kerry wins the competition despite some obstacles, though she does not get to enjoy her victory for long because of her illness.

The battle that has been foreshadowed throughout the novel finally takes place. The fairies seem to believe the only way they can win is if they have all three of the magical weapons of their clans, but this is impossible when Heather and Morag assure the destruction of the MacPherson fiddle a second time. However, Magenta shows up and proves to both the fairies and the reader that she is not as crazy as she seems. Magenta shows them some battle tactics and helps them hold off the army until Aelis and Aelric are able to convince them to stop fighting for the wrong side. At the same time, Aelric finally gets the girl with Kerry's poppy, but Marion is forced to return it to Kerry so she can win the art competition.

In the end, everyone finds what they were looking for. Kerry gets her win against Cal and she finds a man who will love her even with a colostomy bag. Dinnie gets the girl of his dreams. The MacLeod's get their banner back. The only ones who have not gotten something is Heather and Morag. However, they get their friendship back to where it started, so perhaps that is exactly what they wanted and needed.



# Characters

## Heather MacKintosh

Heather MacKintosh is a fairy from Scotland. After cutting blankets from a sacred banner, Heather was forced out of Scotland and began wandering the English countryside looking for a place where she might fit in. Along with her good friend, Morag, Heather wants to form a punk rock band. However, since she and Morag cannot decide who the best fiddle player is, among the many other things they fight over, they have never been successful in forming a band. One night, while drinking with friends, Heather and Morag became so drunk that they end up on a plane to New York City. Heather wakes just before crashing into the apartment of Dinnie MacKintosh, a human who is less than happy to have Heather and Morag in his house.

Heather and Morag have a fight, causing Morag to abandon Heather in Dinnie's apartment. Out of a sense of pride, Heather claimed to Morag she could teach Dinnie to play the violin, so now she is stuck with Dinnie until he becomes a great violinist. This may take a very long time. Heather then discovers that the violin Dinnie found in a thrift shop is actually the sacred MacPherson Fiddle, one of three magical weapons with which no fairy army could possibly lose. Heather believes if she can take that violin back to Scotland that all will be forgiven and she will be allowed to return to her home. Heather makes a deal with Dinnie, promising to help him win the heart of the woman he loves in exchange for the violin.

Heather has a great deal of trouble getting Dinnie to follow her instructions on how to become more appealing to the opposite sex. However, Dinnie eventually begins to behave in a more desirable manner, managing to entertain Kerry, his love, in such a way that success looks inevitable. Before Heather can get the violin, however, Morag learns about its true identity and makes a deal with Dinnie as well. When both deals are concluded, both fairies attempt to take the violin. A fight breaks out and the fiddle is damaged. Heather and Morag once again find themselves unable to make amends and return home.

## Morag MacPherson

Morag is a fairy from Scotland. Morag met Heather when they were both young and entered a youth music competition. Heather played the same song Morag intended to play, causing the judges to declare a tie. Morag never accepted that Heather could be as good a violinist as she, so they often fought over who would have won if the judges had not been bribed. Like Heather, Morag wants to have a punk rock band and play her less traditional music, but this is not something their families would like to see happen. Also like Heather, Morag was thrown out of Scotland for desecrating the prize McLeod Banner.



Morag befriends Kerry after she and Heather end up in New York and have a fight. Morag feels sorry for Kerry because Kerry suffers a terrible disease that has left her terribly ill and unable to find a lover willing to accept her condition. Morag decides to help Kerry create the Celtic Alphabet she wants to make in order to beat out an ex-boyfriend in a community art contest. While helping Kerry, Morag runs afoul of a Chinese gang of fairies who are not happy that Kerry stole their antique mirror. Morag also upsets a group of Italian fairies when she steals money from their banks in order to help Kerry pay her bills.

Morag is a fairy who has a great many good intentions, but her good intentions constantly get her into trouble because she is in a city that she does not understand, honing in on territory that belongs to other fairies. Morag wants to help Kerry, but by doing so she creates a turf war that culminates in a street fight between several gangs of fairies. At the same time, Morag continuously fights with her best friend, Heather, causing a rift that could possibly never heal. However, in the end Morag is able to get Kerry together with a man who does not care about her illness and to have a group of fairies help to heal Kerry. Morag turns out to be a fairy with a heart of gold, she simply goes about her good deeds in a lackadaisical way that causes more trouble than it solves.

## **Dinnie MacKintosh**

Dinnie MacKintosh is an unpleasant human who just happens to have the same name as a fairy who accidentally falls into his apartment in a drunken collapse. Dinnie is a bike messenger who is so picky about the jobs he will take he often goes days without work. Dinnie found an old violin in a thrift shop and tried to teach himself to play, but is such a bad player that people are willing to pay him to make him stop playing. When Heather hears his awful playing, she bets her friend Morag that she will be able to teach him to play. Heather thinks that because Dinnie is a MacKintosh like her that he must have some talent, he simply needs a strong teacher. Heather is wrong.

Dinnie is in love with Kerry, a beautiful young woman who lives in an apartment across the street from his rooms. However, Dinnie is so unpleasant and self-conscious of his own shortcomings that he makes fun of Kerry and avoids running into her on the street. Dinnie's poor attitude is a cover for his unhappiness with his own looks and feelings of inadequacy. When Dinnie meets Heather, at first he wants nothing more than for her to go away. However, after time Dinnie comes to rely on Heather for both the money she often brings him and the companionship that has helped him change his dark attitude. Eventually Heather helps Dinnie win Kerry over and to become a nice man who can overlook the disease that has left Kerry with a colostomy bag.

## **Kerry**

Kerry is a beautiful artist. Kerry is an orphan who was left at a young age with nothing but a good health insurance policy. As a young woman, Kerry became ill with Crohn's



disease. The disease has progressed to a point where Kerry has been forced to have a colostomy bag. The bag is temporary, however, and doctors hope she will one day recover enough from her illness that she will be able to undergo a reversal operation that will remove the need for the colostomy bag. In the meantime, however, Kerry has lost a boyfriend because he could not imagine being intimate with a woman with a colostomy bag. In revenge, Kerry hopes to create a Celtic Alphabet that will help her beat this ex-boyfriend in a neighborhood art contest.

Kerry befriends Morag after Morag and Heather have a fight upon their arrival in New York City. Kerry becomes a good friend to Morag, teaching her how to dye her hair and washing the bits of cloth taken from the McLeod banner in able to help Morag and Heather soothe over the McLeod's so they might return home someday. As Kerry works on her Celtic Alphabet, the key flower, a Welsh poppy, keeps disappearing. The stress of this situation causes Kerry's illness to flare up again. As a result, it appears that Kerry will have to have an operation that will make the colostomy bag permanent. Kerry is saddened by this. However, Dinnie has come to be with her at the hospital and it appears that she has finally found a man who is willing to overlook the unpleasant side effects of her illness.

## **Magenta**

Magenta is a bag lady who lives on the streets of new York City. Magenta has stolen a recipe for a homemade alcoholic drink from her boyfriend. While visiting the library, Magenta took a book on ancient Greece that causes her to begin believing she is Xenophon, battling to take the throne back for Cyrus. Magenta moves through the streets believing she is leading a great army. In the process, Magenta comes into possession of Kerry's Welsh poppy on several occasions. Magenta believes this poppy is booty obtained in battle and she attempts to protect it from the fairies who continuously attempt to retrieve it. Due to her mental incapacitation, Magenta can see these fairies and she believes they are members of her army or members of the enemy army. At one point, Magenta saves Heather and Morag from an angry group of fairies.

## **King Tala, Tulip, and Petal**

Tala the King is the king of fairies in Cornwall. Tala has created an industry based economy in his kingdom and removed the ownership of the land outside of Cornwall from the people and given it to landowners, forcing the fairies to work in his plants. This design is actually the work of Tala's magician, Magris. Magris created the machine that helps the fairies make cloth and arranged the contracts with other fairies in foreign countries to buy the cloth. Tala has learned that some fairies have decided to rebel against this new system and are willing to back down if Tala allows his son and daughter, Petal and Tulip, to take the crown. As a result, Tala sends a group of mercenaries in search for Petal and Tulip in order to kill them and remove any possibility that they may attempt to take his crown. When it is discovered that Petal and Tulip have managed to find their way to New York City, Tala sends an army to Central Park to kill



them. This results in a big battle between the Cornwall army and an army built from the multi-racial fairies of New York, a group of Irish and Scottish fairies, and the drunken group who found themselves transporter to New York by accident.

## **Padraig and Maeve**

Padraig and Maeve are Irish fairies who find themselves in Central Park after a drunken night with several friends, including Heather and Morag. Padraig and Maeve remain in Central Park, afraid of the unknown of the city where they have found themselves. On their one trip out of the park, Maeve and Padraig, along with several of their friends, go to a bar and steal whiskey. Discovered by a group of Black fairies, they are chased back to the park and become too afraid to leave again. Maeve, who is a strong, brave Irish fairy, wants to return, but she allows herself to be dissuaded by her lover, Padraig, and her other friends. When Maeve learns that an army from Cornwall is on its way, she sends a message to her friends in Ireland. Immediately Maeve's friends arrive to help battle the Cornwall army and protect Petal and Tulip.

## **Brannoc**

Brannoc is the final member of the group of fairies who became drunk and were mysteriously transported to Central Park. Brannoc is in love with Petal, but becomes deeply jealous when Petal and Tulip make love in front of him in Central Park. While it is not taboo for siblings to be lovers and Brannoc believes they are only experimenting, he is very jealous and angry. Brannoc begins spending time alone. Eventually, Brannoc confronts the Black fairies and befriends them, taking one as his lover.

## **Aelric and Aelis**

Aelric is the leader of the rebels who are fighting against King Tala. At first, Aelric is a good, strong leader, spending all his free time researching new tactics in the human library and scouting out potential targets. However, when Aelric falls in love with King Tala's stepdaughter, he begins to lose his efficiency. Aelric's second in command, Aelis, is the daughter of Magris. Aelis attempts to convince Aelric of the stupidity of his love for King Tala's stepdaughter, but has little success. Eventually Aelric's obsession brings him to New York where he believes he can find a rare Welsh poppy to give to his love for her Celtic Alphabet. In doing this, Aelric brings his troops into the middle of a battle between a Cornwall army against the fairies of New York as well as a group from Ireland, and the drunken castaways.

## **Cal**

Cal is Kerry's ex-boyfriend. While they were dating, Cal promised to help Kerry learn how to play all the New York Dolls' guitar solos. However, when Cal learned about Kerry's colostomy bag he broke up with her, afraid he would not be able to be intimate



with a woman with a colostomy bag. Cal never taught Kerry the guitar solos. Seeking revenge, Kerry decides she will battle Cal in a community art contest in which she heard he plans to enter a version of the play *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. Cal's rehearsals for the play take place in Dinnie's building and are frequently interrupted by the fairies searching for Kerry's Welsh poppy or Magenta who has wandered into the theater while running from the imagined armies of her Greek enemy. When Cal performs the play for the judges it is again interrupted by the fairies, but this interruption is so unique that Cal is in the forefront of the running for first place. However, Kerry's Celtic Alphabet wins out in the end, giving her her much desired revenge.



# Objects/Places

## Welsh Poppy

Kerry finds an extremely rare Welsh poppy that inspires her to create a Celtic Alphabet for an art competition in which her only real competition is her ex-boyfriend, Cal. However, this poppy keeps disappearing from her apartment, causing Kerry a great deal of stress as the deadline for the contest approaches.

## Celtic Alphabet

The Celtic Alphabet is an art project Kerry attempts to create with flowers based on an ancient design using specific flowers.

## Colostomy Bag

Due to her illness, Kerry is forced to wear a colostomy bag. This bag makes dating difficult and intimacy impossible and is the reason Cal broke up with Kerry.

## Crohn's Disease

Cronh's disease is a disease of the intestines that cause great discomfort and sections of the intestines to die. Kerry suffers from this disease and it has become so bad that she has to wear a colostomy bag while the doctors wait for the damage caused by the disease to heal. Kerry has been warned that frequent flares will cause them to remove so much intestine that she may always have to wear the colostomy bag.

## MacPherson Fiddle

The MacPherson Fiddle is a famous violin that was created by fairies for a human to play, but could magically be reduced to fairy size. The violin was believed to have been broken when the human was arrested and put to death, but Heather discovers that Dinnie owns the violin. Before Heather can return the violin to Scotland and receive her rewards, Morag finds about it and they fight over it, leaving it to be crushed in the streets.

## MacLeod Banner

The MacLeod Banner is a blanket given by fairies to the child of a MacLeod fairy and her human spouse. This banner has magical powers and is part of the three mighty weapons with which any army cannot fail. However, Heather and Morag spent a night





sleeping under blankets they cut from this banner, causing them to be thrown out of Scotland for desecrating the sacred symbol.

## **MacKintosh Sword**

The MacKintosh Sword, along with the MacLeod Banner and MacPherson Fiddle, is the third mighty weapon that is believed to have special powers that makes any army wielding them unstoppable.

## **Bhat Gwa Mirror**

Kerry steals a beautiful, mirrored brooch she sees in a shop in Chinatown. The mirror turns out to be the Bhat Gwa Mirror, a mirror that belongs to the Chinese fairies and helps them watch for trouble during the Festival of Hungry Ghosts. The Chinese fairies steal the Welsh poppy in an attempt to get their mirror back.

## **Italian Banks**

Heather and Morag steal money from banks in order to help out Dinnie and Kerry. The Italian fairies live in the banking district and believe that Heather and Morag are stealing from their people. The Italians become angry and begin chasing Heather and Morag through New York until they are able to speak to them and learn their motives. Soon they all become friends.

## **Whiskey**

Morag and Heather, as well as the other European fairies who came to New York with them, are heavy whiskey drinkers. Some of the fairies steal whiskey and beer from bars in Harlem where they incur the wrath of the Black fairies. Eventually, however, they are able to make friends with the Black fairies.

## **1958 Gibson Tiger Top Guitar**

Johnny Thunders returns to earth from heaven to search for his 1958 Gibson Tiger Top guitar, a guitar he lost shortly before his death and on which he played many of his hit songs when he was a member of the New York Dolls. Johnny eventually discovers that the guitar now belongs to Kerry and he is happy to allow her to keep it.

## **New York Dolls**

The New York Dolls were a popular rock band. Kerry is a fan of the group and has always wanted to learn to play the guitar solos in many of their songs. Cal promised to



teach Kerry the solos, but broke up with her before he could. Morag attempts to teach some of them to Kerry using her violin, but her violin is broken.

## **Tullochgorum**

Tullochgorum is a famous Scottish song that the fairies often play. Heather and Morag both played the song in a music competition, causing the judges to decide to award them both first place in the contest. At the end of the story, as help comes over the moonbows Heather and Morag are supposed to play the song for them to find their way, but their arguing once again leaves them without a working fiddle. Dinnie plays the song, accidentally directing the fairies to the wrong part of town.



# Themes

## Friendship

Heather and Morag have known each other since they competed against each other in a music contest. They both played the same song and played it exceptionally well, causing them both to win the first prize. This contest caused a note of competition to exist between them for the life of their friendship, causing them to constantly fight about anything in which one might be superior to the other. Their friendship is unique, leading them to get kicked out of Scotland, to become so drunk they travel to America unawares, and to become embroiled in turf warfare without even realizing what it is they have done. Heather and Morag have a unique friendship based on competition that propels the majority of the plot in this novel.

As Heather and Morag arrive in New York, they find themselves in the apartment of an unpleasant young man named Dinnie. Heather and Morag fight, causing Morag to leave. Heather remains with Dinnie because she has nowhere else to go. Pride also fuels Heather as she elects to remain with Dinnie to prove to Morag that she can teach even he, a terrible violinist, to play. Later, when Heather becomes aware that the violin Dinnie has is actually a Scottish fairy heirloom, she makes a deal with him in which she promises to get him the girl of his dreams in exchange for the fiddle. Dinnie agrees and Heather tortures him by forcing him to be nice and to follow a healthy diet. Through this torture, however, Dinnie comes to like having Heather around and they develop a sort of grudging friendship in which they depend on each other more than either is willing to admit.

At the same time, Morag has become friends with Kerry, a young woman suffering from a debilitating disease. Kerry has Crohn's Disease and it has left her dependent on a colostomy bag, something that prevents her from being intimate with any men. Kerry becomes the target of Heather's scheme with Dinnie, while at the same time Kerry agrees to be nice to Dinnie in order to help Morag gain possession of the MacPherson Fiddle. Also, Kerry is attempting to create a Celtic Alphabet out of specific flowers. Morag helps Kerry with this creation as well as helping Kerry learn guitar solos to some of her favorite songs. Kerry becomes a good friend to Morag, helping her even when Heather will not. Eventually, Kerry's disease worsens, causing her to be hospitalized, an event that brings Heather and Morag, as well as Kerry and Dinnie, together. It is this that makes friendship a theme to the novel.

## Unconditional Love

Kerry is a sick woman who suffers a disease that has caused her to require a colostomy bag. This colostomy bag is possibly temporary, but every attack of her illness leaves Kerry open to the possibility that she will have to have so much of her intestines removed that the colostomy bag will become a permanent part of her life. Kerry is young



and single and would like one day to be with a man who cares about her. However, the colostomy bag makes this difficult. Kerry's last boyfriend, Cal, broke up with her when he learned about the bag. Kerry is angry about this and hopes to one day find a man who can love her, colostomy bag or not. When Kerry meets Dinnie, he seems like the last person on earth who would accept the colostomy bag. However, in the end Dinnie proves to be the only human who can.

Heather and Morag fight constantly. Heather believes she is a better fiddle player than Morag. Morag believes she is the better player. Heather and Morag fight about everything. However, in the end, they always come back to each other. Heather and Morag care deeply about one another and often come back to each other even after the darkest of fights. There is very little that can keep Heather and Morag apart, even when they are fighting, making unconditional love a theme of this book.

## Industry versus Agriculture

King Tala, the king of the English fairies, has allowed his court magician to bring industry to their kingdom. Rather than allow the fairies to live on their own farms and survive off of their own crops, the king has created a system in which the fairies can either work in his industrial plants or remain in the country where they will starve to death. King Tala is a cruel man who cares more about the money his industry is making him than his own people. When a small band of protesters rise up against King Tala, he becomes concerned about his future on the crown. The protesters want King Tala's son and daughter, Tulip and Petal, to take over his throne. To prevent this from happening, King Tala decides to have his own children killed. The only problem is these young fairies have gotten drunk and accidentally fallen into a crate that was flown to New York City.

Fairies have always lived their lives peacefully without having to work in factories to make a living. When King Tala's magician invents a way to make cloth in mass quantity all this changes. King Tala sees a chance to make a great deal of money selling this cloth to fairies in other countries. King Tala forces the fairies of his country to work in the factories or face starvation. Industry changes the lives of all the fairies of England, not unlike what happened to humans in the late nineteenth century. This change is more unpleasant for the fairies, however, who have always known a freer way of life. It is this change, and the battle it brings to New York City, that makes industry versus agriculture a theme of the novel.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person omniscient. The narrator changes often throughout the novel, even within single chapters. The narrators tend to be Heather and Morag, or Kerry and Dinnie. However, the narrator may also be any character whose actions have bearing on the plot. The point of view character often changes with the action of the novel, frequently changing with a simple switch in scenery.

The point of view of this novel works well because it allows the reader to see the action from multiple points of view. If the action were only seen through the eyes of a single character, the reader would miss some action as well as some witty dialogue. The plot of this novel includes some simple actions that quickly become complicated plot twists. Should the reader not be allowed to see all the actions through all these different points of view, the plot would suffer from a lack of depth. Also, the switches between the narrators are often abrupt, but they are often punctuated by a change in paragraphs, making it fairly easy for the reader to recognize where the narration has shifted and who is now the narrator.

## Setting

The majority of the novel is set in New York City. Morag travels to Chinatown and it is here that she runs into the Chinese fairies after Kerry mistakenly shoplifts a mirror that is vital to the Chinese fairies. Kerry and Dinnie live near the financial district where the Italian fairies become irate when Heather and Morag steal money from their banks. Heather and Morag's friends become lost in Central Park, near Harlem where they steal from the local bars and incur the wrath of the Black fairies. New York City is a very colorful city full of all different types of people and this is represented by fairies as well.

The setting of the novel adds to the humor of the novel. The novel is based on the accidental travels of several Scottish, Irish, and English fairies to New York City, not unlike the immigrants who came to this country many years ago. These fairies are lost in this strange city, but soon discover other fairies who inhabit this strange land. These other fairies are not happy with these foreign visitors at first because they feel as though their territory is being invaded, almost like the Indians must have felt when the first Europeans set foot in America. However, they eventually make friends. If this novel were set elsewhere, such as London or Paris, it might not have the same cultural and historical references that make this novel as entertaining as it is.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is simple English. The novel and its dialogue are written in simple English that makes it easy to understand for all readers. The novel does,



however, include words in foreign languages including Chinese and Celtic. These foreign words are often explained in text and do not hamper the comprehension of the novel. There are also slang words used in the dialogue that are used to make the speech more authentic and to get certain points across much easier than more formal language might afford.

The language of this novel works well because it is fairly simple and easy for anyone to read. The foreign words are used to make the novel seem more authentic, especially when the reader takes into account that many of the characters are from foreign countries. The dialogue, too, uses slang to add authenticity to the speech patterns of the characters, giving the plot a sense of reality that might be missing with more formal language. All in all, the language of this novel is fairly simple and easy to read, making the plot easy to follow for readers of all ages.

## Structure

The novel is divided into forty-four chapters. Each chapter is fairly short, many not more than five or ten pages long. The chapters are divided into short sections, the beginning of each section indicating a change in narrating character. The novel is told in a linear style, moving through a beginning, middle, and end in a simple and direct manner. The novel is told mostly through dialogue with simple descriptive passages that help the reader understand where the characters are when they begin to speak.

This novel contains two clear plots and several subplots. The main plots are told simultaneous through the eyes of Heather, Morag, Kerry, and Dinnie. These main plots follow Heather and Morag as they befriend Dinnie and Kerry in New York and attempt to match them together as a romantic pairing in an attempt to gain possession of a sacred fairy fiddle. As Heather and Morag scheme unwittingly against one another, a power struggle is taking place in England that is about to come to New York because several of the major players in this struggle were with Heather and Morag when they were accidentally transported to New York City. This power struggle culminates in a battle between English rebels and New York fairies against the armies of the English fairy king, Tala.



## Quotes

"Dinnie, an overweight enemy of humanity, was the worst violinist in New York, but was practicing gamely when two cute little fairies stumbled through his fourth-floor window and vomited on the carpet." Chapter 1, pg. 1

"The homeless clustered everywhere in New York. Every street corner had its own beggar with dull eyes who asked passers-by for change with little hope of a response. Every park was laced and ribboned with makeshift plastic tents and stinking blankets rolled up as sleeping bags. These homeless had the most hopeless of lives. No government scheme would ever give them a fresh start. No charity would ever be rich enough to house them. No employer would ever give them work without their having a place to live, or at least some clean clothes, and clean clothes were never going to appear to anyone who seated all day in a sweltering hot park. All they could do was get by the best they could until they died, and this did not happen nearly quickly enough as far as the decent citizens of New York were concerned." Chapter 3, pg. 7

"If more people had nice pictures by Botticelli there would be much less trouble everywhere." Chapter 4, pg. 15

"Morag sighed. Being human did seem to involve some very unpleasant things." Chapter 5, pg. 30

"Heather still did not fully understand why you had to pay dollars to live in a dirty room—a very strange business it seemed to her—but she was willing to help." Chapter 9, pg. 63

"It took Kerry some time to persuade Morag that they had not actually been responsible for the riot in Tompkins Square and that it was merely a coincidence that it had erupted after they lobbed a bottle onstage at Cal's band." Chapter 16, pg. 120

"Johnny Thunders, in celestial form, floated around Queens, where he was born, before visiting some old East Village haunts, musing on the subject of his lost guitar. He had a definite feeling that if he could not locate it he would never be entirely satisfied, even in Heaven." Chapter 20, pg. 144

"The black fairies lived, unseen by any humans apart from a few wise old women, in a small park on 114th street. The park was in disrepair, uncared for by the city authorities, but it was well known for its air of peace and very rarely did anything unpleasant happen there." Chapter 21, pg. 152

"Magris always made a point of saying that it was not compulsory for the fairies to work in his workhouses. This was true, but as it was forbidden to leave Cornwall, and as all the fairies' land was now in the hands of the landowners, there was no way of growing



or gathering food, and the choice was between working for wages or starving." Chapter 26, pg. 176

"'Kerry did it,' whispered Morag in reply. 'With modern washing technology. She just shoogled the bits round in her machine for a wee while and they came out fine. Apparently washing is more advanced here than in Cruickshank. They have special powders for washing even the most delicate fabric at a low temperature and making it completely clean. And also something called fabric conditioner which makes it soft, pleasant and good as new.'" Chapter 32, pg. 217

"'Why me?' he mumbled. 'I'm just a normal guy. I don't deserve this.'" Chapter 36, pg. 240

"He left Kerry's guitar where it lay, and was not dissatisfied." Chapter 44, pg. 273





## Topics for Discussion

Discuss fairies. What are fairies? Why do only a few humans see fairies? What is the purpose of most fairies? How do Heather, Morag, and their friends end up in New York City? What do they believe their purpose is in New York City? Why do Americans not react to fairies the way European people do? How does this affect the lives of these European fairies lost in New York?

Who is Dinnie? Why does Heather befriend Dinnie? What do Heather and Dinnie have in common? How does this affect Heather's resolve to help Dinnie? Is Dinnie a nice person? Why or why not? Who does Dinnie admire? Why does Dinnie tease and speak badly of this person he supposedly likes? What does this say about Dinnie's personality?

Who is Kerry? Why does Kerry want to build a Celtic Alphabet? What does Kerry hope to win with this alphabet? Why? Is Kerry a mean person? Why does Kerry steal? What motivates Kerry? How does this one thing govern all of Kerry's actions? What does Kerry hope the resolution of this problem will be? Does Kerry like Dinnie? Why or why not?

Who is Heather? Who is Morag? Are these two friends? Why do they fight all the time? Which is better at playing the violin? Why? Why does Heather attempt to help Dinnie? Why does Morag befriend Kerry? What motivates these two characters? Do they eventually get what they want? Why or why not?

What is the MacLeod Banner? What did Heather and Morag do to this banner? Why can they not return the pieces? What did they do to them? How does Kerry help them to return the pieces? How does the returning of these pieces fix their problems? Will Heather and Morag be able to return to Scotland now? Why or why not?

What is the MacPherson Fiddle? Who was the fiddle made for? What happened to this person? What happened to the fiddle? How did Heather find it? How did it get to New York? Who wants to return it to Scotland? Why? What happens to the fiddle? Who is responsible?

What is Crohn's Disease? How does it affect the patient? Who has Crohn's disease in this novel? Why? What has this disease done to this character? How does Crohn's disease affect this character's actions? How might this character be different if not for the Crohn's disease?