

Inkdeath Study Guide

Inkdeath by Cornelia Funke

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Plot Summary

Inkdeath is a fantasy novel written by award-winning German author Cornelia Funke, and the third in its series. It is a novel set inside another novel, which has been written so well as to come to life. Numerous characters, good and evil alike, struggle to influence the outcome of the story by the use of words alone.

Inkdeath begins with Mortimer, the Bluejay, in the forest near Ombra, attacking the forces of the Adderhead wherever he can find them. This draws the attention of Orpheus, a man who has learned how to change the land and its inhabitants by writing words and reading them aloud. Orpheus has sworn to bring back his favorite hero, Dustfinger, and Mortimer agrees to summon the White Women in order to allow him to do so, for they can release people from death itself. However, Mortimer is betrayed by Orpheus, who attempts to exchange Dustfinger's life for that of the Bluejay. When the white women appear, they take Mortimer with them and disappear, leaving no trace of him. His wife, Resa, suffers from guilt, since she was the one who begged him to make the deal. His daughter, Meggie, blames her mother for her father's death and the two find themselves at odds with one another upon his disappearance.

However, the White Women soon release Mortimer, alongside Dustfinger, because they wish the immortal Adderhead to come to an end. Their leader is angry with Mortimer for making the Adderhead immortal in the first place, and they threaten to take his daughter unless he kills the Adderhead. In order to do this, Mortimer must write three words in a book he once bound for the Adderhead in order to make him live forever. Furious at the reappearance of Mortimer, the Adderhead demands the children of Ombra be taken hostage until the Bluejay gives himself up. Mortimer gives himself up both to save the children and ensure that he may be put closer to the Adderhead and the White Book. Meanwhile, Dustfinger condemns Orpheus for attempting to trade Mortimer's life for his own, and Orpheus becomes spiteful with jealousy, resolving to aid the Adderhead in order to show Dustfinger what a terrible mistake he made.

Mortimer is aided in his attempt to defeat the Adderhead by the evil ruler's own daughter, Violante. Violante hates her father because of his cruelty, and she saves Mortimer's life by pretending to take him captive. She moves him from Ombra to the Castle in the Lake in order to keep him safe from servants of the Adderhead who hate Mortimer even more than the Adderhead does. Meanwhile, Mortimer's family and friends must struggle to keep the children safe, as they are hunted by the Adderhead's forces. In the end Mortimer is saved by his own wife and manages to write in the book. The great evil brought to the land by his rulership is brought to an end, and Mortimer and his family stay in Ombra. It has become more real to them than the world they once left.



chapters 1-5

chapters 1-5 Summary

The novel *Inkdeath* follows Mortimer, a bookbinder and master story teller, as he battles the forces of the Adderhead alongside his family and friends. The world Mortimer lives in was created by a writer, and as such many of the characters in the novel come from a different world. In chapter one, Elinor sits in her library, trying to discover how to rescue several friends out of the book *Inkheart*, which they entered several months ago. Darius enters her library and attempts to comfort her, but she is very rude to him.

In chapter two, Mortimer travels with the Black Prince and his band of robbers. The group caught in a village by the Adderhead's soldiers. Mortimer and the Black Prince defeat the soldiers and travel back to a farmhouse where Meggie and Resa wait for them. Mortimer goes to show his daughter and wife his new bookbinding outfit, and Resa reveals to him that she is pregnant.

In chapter three, Farid digs for Orpheus under the Gallows, because Orpheus has written buried treasure under the ground there. Orpheus has forced Farid to become his servant since the death of Dustfinger, and even though he swears to bring Dustfinger back with his words, he has made little effort to do so since Farid began working for him.

In chapter four, Resa asks Meggie to come with her to see Roxane, who will have herbs for her morning sickness. Mortimer tells her that he also plans to go to the castle, but he is going to see Balbulus the illuminator, which is a very dangerous undertaking, because the forces of the Adderhead are looking for him. Meggie travels with him for fear of what will happen to her father should he be caught.

In chapter five, Fenoglio, the author of this world, sends Rosenquartz to spy on Orpheus in order to determine how he is changing the world. The glass-man reveals that he's written another treasure for himself under the gallows. Suddenly, Orpheus comes to visit him and in his drunkenness, Fenoglio accidentally admits that Mortimer is on his way into Ombra. Orpheus tells Fenoglio that he wants to discuss the White Women with Mortimer.

chapters 1-5 Analysis

The novel is structured with the opening chapter taking place in the "real" world. The reader quickly learns that several of Elinor's friends have been trapped inside the book, "*Inkheart*," which is a fantasy world of considerable detail. This serves to bring the reader's attention to the fact that the book takes place within a book.

Inside "*Inkheart*," the major characters are introduced, and backstories are introduced between them. The most notable character is Mortimer, who is also known as Bluejay,



Bookbinder, and Silvertongue. Mortimer has been working with the Black Prince against their enemy the Adderhead. The classic division seen in fantasy novels is present and set in motion, but a few characters don't yet fit into either side. Farid's primary desire at this point is to bring back Dustfinger, for which he serves Orpheus. Though the reader does not find him trustworthy at first, it is clear through his unwillingness to betray Mortimer's presence to the forces of the Adderhead, and through his genuine desire to bring Dustfinger back, that he may serve either good or evil, but whatever the case, is clearly self-absorbed.



chapters 6-10

chapters 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, Meggie and Mortimer are stopped and searched by castle guards, and Meggie thinks they are about to be captured. However, they are allowed into the castle, where Fenoglio finds Mortimer and asks him why he has risked such a dangerous visit to the castle. Mortimer simply responds that he is after some books. Farid also approaches and asks Mortimer to tell Orpheus about the White Women, but Mortimer says there is nothing to tell and leaves to meet with Balbulus, the Illuminator. Farid apologizes for his long absence from Meggie, and asks her to come with him to see Roxane with Resa, but she refuses out of fear for her father.

In chapter seven, Mortimer arrives to see Balbulus with Fenoglio. Balbulus reveals that he knows Mortimer is actually the Bluejay. Fenoglio tries to protect Mortimer by lying for him, but Mortimer's hands are tied behind his back by soldiers and he is taken away.

In chapter eight, Resa travels to see Roxane, and when they meet, Meggie, Farid, and Fenoglio are there. They tell her that Mortimer has been taken captive.

In chapter nine, Mortimer is taken to see Violante, the princess of Ombra. She has been searching for him for some time, and wants his help as the Bluejay to kill her father, the Adderhead. Sootbird suddenly arrives at the door, and Mortimer must hide inside a sarcophagus as his old enemy enters and demands to know where Mortimer has gone. Violante pretends to be shocked at the presence of the Bluejay, and quickly leads Sootbird away to organize a search. Mortimer escapes the castle, led away by one of Violante's soldiers, who gives him a few books.

In chapter ten, the robbers move their camp for fear that Mortimer will give its secret away under torture, but Mortimer finds it, and the robbers are stunned at his return. He shows them the books Violante gave him, and Resa begs him to ask Fenoglio to write words that will put them back in their world, away from danger.

chapters 6-10 Analysis

The relationships between the characters in this novel are fairly complicated, and go a long way towards driving its plot. Fenoglio and Farid are both associates of Orpheus and live in the castle. Orpheus works occasionally for the governor of Ombra, known as the Milksop, but has his own intentions, and so doesn't interfere with Mortimer or the Black Prince. Many of the characters in the novel seek Mortimer for various reasons, including Violante, who has a similarly complicated relationship with her father. Despite the world's interest in him, and the fame and popularity he has gathered amongst the people, his family wishes only for his safety. The Bluejay is not the man his daughter and wife once knew, but instead was written into the story to save the tired Black Prince the burden of remaining the only hero. Mortimer, however, has different priorities, as the

world around him has become more real than it once was. It is not clear why he risks his life to enter the castle, as the promise of new books does not seem like enough to nearly get him killed, but it is clear that the conflict in this world interests him greatly, and will guide his actions in the future.



chapters 11-15

chapters 11-15 Summary

In chapter eleven, Elinor still misses her friend stuck in the book greatly, despite Darius' attempts to comfort her. He finally picks up the sheet of paper that transported the others into Inkheart, and this gives Elinor the courage to look at it once more.

In chapter twelve, Farid enters Ombra again. Orpheus has been asking after him constantly since Mortimer's escape. Orpheus wants to know if Mortimer agreed to talk to him about the White Women, but Farid can only tell him that there is nothing to know about them.

In chapter thirteen, Farid goes downstairs to get tea for a stomach ache that Orpheus is having. Brianna, Dustfinger's daughter, is there, and she fixes it for him. She blames Farid completely for her father's death.

In chapter fourteen, Meggie and Resa have permanently moved from the farm to the new robber's camp, and Mortimer still joins the Black Prince frequently on his raids. One day, Doria and Luc return to the camp with news that the Piper burned and looted the wester road to Ombra because governor Milksop hasn't collected enough taxes. Snapper explains that Piper is going to start taking children to use in silver mines. The Black Prince tells Mortimer to explain what happened at the castle, which he does. He wants to trust Violante, and offer the Adderhead his services as a bookbinder in order to get close enough to his White Book and write three words in it. The Black Prince rejects his plan, as he believes it is too dangerous.

In chapter fifteen, Meggie listens to her mother and father arguing at night. Resa thinks the White Women changed Mortimer into the Bluejay during his temporary death, and she begs him again to make Fenoglio to write words that will bring them back to their own world.

chapters 11-15 Analysis

The remaining events to unfold throughout the novel are set in motion. Mortimer has been given the opportunity to take control of the story, despite his wife's insistence that they return to their world. She is correct that he is no longer the person he used to be, and that is because he understands that no one else but himself can save the people of Ombra and defeat the Adderhead. He is also no longer a peaceful man, and this fact bothers both his wife and daughter more than the constant danger he places himself in. However, Meggie does not desire to leave, because she is in love with Farid, and will not leave if he doesn't. Even though the Black Prince has forbidden Mortimer to make a deal with Violante, he is very likely to take the offer seriously, as it gives him the greatest chance of defeating the Adderhead, who he feels responsible for making immortal.



chapters 16-20

chapters 16-20 Summary

In chapter sixteen, Fenoglio watches as the Milksop comes out to talk to the women of Ombra, who want to know why their children are being counted by the Piper. Fenoglio tried to write the day before, but failed. The Piper appears in front of the group and tells them that he counts the children of Ombra because the Adderhead always wishes to know what he rules over. He also tells the people that he is actually looking for the Bluejay, and threatens to take their children if they do not help him. Resa finds Fenoglio after the Piper has finished. She begs him to write her family back into the other world. Fenoglio refuses. He likes Mortimer as the Bluejay, and believes that he belongs in Ombra.

In chapter seventeen, Mortimer returns with the Black Prince to the hideout, after searching for a place to hide the children. Meggie tells him what the Piper has done. He asks her where Resa is. Resa has told her daughter that she went to see Roxane, but Roxane is in the camp with the Robbers. Mortimer realizes that his wife has gone to speak with Fenoglio in Ombra and travels there despite the risks should he be found there.

In chapter eighteen, Resa arrives at Orpheus' home. Farid takes her to see him, and Orpheus agrees to help her in exchange for getting her husband to summon the White Women. She refuses the deal, but Orpheus sends Farid to tell Mortimer about the offer anyway.

In chapter nineteen, Resa is attacked outside Orpheus' home by two soldiers and rescued by Mortimer, along with Meggie and the Black Prince. They escape the castle together.

In chapter twenty, Resa apologizes to Mortimer for trying to make Fenoglio and Orpheus write the words, but she does not tell him about the deal Orpheus offered her. They spend the night in a well-protected camp nearby. Mortimer asks Meggie if she wants to leave, and she doesn't know the answer. She does miss Elinor, however, but like her father, worries greatly about those they would leave behind in Ombra. Mortimer tells her that the people in Ombra are the reason he wants to stay and face the Adderhead. They are interrupted by the Strong Man, who tells them that Farid has arrived and wants to speak to Mortimer.

chapters 16-20 Analysis

The subplot of Dustfinger's return from the dead is woven into the main plot with the arrival of the Piper and counting of the children. Previously, the Adderhead and his servants had attempted to find the Bluejay by offering a reward for his capture, but the evil lord's latest attempt to threaten the children of Ombra has seriously compromised



Mortimer's safety, and makes Violante's offer more appealing since now Mortimer knows he must act to save the lives of the children. Orpheus wants to use this fact to his advantage, and goes so far as to offer Resa a deal as long as Mortimer will summon the White Women, but it is clear he only wishes to exchange the life of the Bluejay's for that of Dustfinger, as he is obsessed with the character and believes him to be the true hero of the story.



chapters 21-25

chapters 21-25 Summary

In chapter twenty-one, Elinor picks a fight with Darius, even though she feels very bad about doing so. Darius does not respond to her, but instead begins packing his things. He is about to leave, but she stops him and pleads with him not to go. Instead of leaving, he asks her to get out the sheet of paper that put their friends in the book Inkheart. Elinor rejoices, because Darius is going to read them into Ombra in order to be with them.

In chapter twenty-two, Oss delivers a message to Orpheus. It is from Mortimer, and it agrees to the terms that Orpheus asked of his wife. At first he is thrilled, but then reads the rest of the letter to discover Mortimer only wants words that will put Resa and Meggie back in the other world. Though curious about Mortimer's intentions, Orpheus decides that it doesn't matter since he plans to trade Mortimer's life for Dustfinger's anyway.

In chapter twenty-three, Meggie travels to a graveyard with Doria to visit his sister's grave, and he needs her because he can't read. Mortimer is there with Orpheus, and she sees Orpheus give her father the words to summon the White Women. Mortimer begins to read the words, and the White Women begin to appear. Resa and Meggie rush forward to find Mortimer, but when the mist clears, they find he has completely disappeared, and there is no sign of either him or Dustfinger.

In chapter twenty-four, Mortimer has totally vanished, and people attempt at lengths to determine what happened to him, as he was merely supposed to die in exchange for Dustfinger's return. Resa and Farid both suspect that Orpheus only wanted the White Women to take Mortimer, but he insists that he desires Dustfinger's return more than anyone, and that the White Women disappeared before he could even ask them about Dustfinger. Meggie rides back with the robbers to their secret camp, but she is furious with her mother and Farid for their roles in her father's disappearance.

In chapter twenty-five, Mortimer finds himself in a strange place with the White Women, and finds Dustfinger sleeping peacefully. A bird appears, calls herself death, and tells Mortimer that he must bring him the Adderhead. She is very angry with him for making the evil man immortal, and threatens to kill Meggie if he does not undo the White Book he made for the Adderhead. He agrees, so long as Dustfinger can come with him, but death tells him that Dustfinger will die too if he does not make true to his word and defeat the Adderhead.

chapters 21-25 Analysis

The story of Elinor and Darius is almost ready to join that of Mortimer's and his family, at the very same time Orpheus finally makes use of his talent for something significant and



world-changing. Orpheus is an interesting character, for despite being incredibly treacherous, he does seem bound to his promise to bring Dustfinger back to life, despite protests from Farid and Resa that he never had any intention of doing so. Meggie's romantic interest in Farid has been shattered by his role in helping bring Orpheus and Mortimer together. She holds him and her mother responsible for the disappearance of her father. However, Mortimer has just put her life in danger as the White Women demand the Adderhead or Meggie in the evil lord's place.



chapters 26-30

chapters 26-30 Summary

In chapter twenty-six, Dustfinger returns from death and Mortimer pulls him back to the world of the living in Ombra.

In chapter twenty-seven, Dustfinger goes to his wife Roxane, who cannot believe he has returned.

In chapter twenty-eight, Doria announces that the Bluejay has returned to the Black Prince, who hurries to the area where he was last seen in order to find him before the Piper does. He spots many armed soldiers getting ready to hang the woman who first spotted Mortimer, but Mortimer himself appears and announces that he has returned from death. The soldiers flee in terror of him. Mortimer asks the Black Prince if his wife and daughter have already departed, because he expected his daughter to read the words, but the Black Prince does not know what was written on the pages, and does not understand the question. Meggie and Resa are still in Ombra.

In chapter twenty-nine, Orpheus is extremely frustrated that Mortimer has returned from the dead, but very happy that Dustfinger has returned along with him. Farid, however, is thrilled by the news completely. Out of sheer frustration, Orpheus orders his bodyguard to throw Farid into the cellar and to kill him when it grows dark outside. He remains captive for hours until Dustfinger arrives to rescue him. They are stopped briefly by Orpheus, who is very glad to see Dustfinger alive, despite his anger at still having to deal with the Bluejay. Dustfinger despises Orpheus however, and thinks him a small man for trying to trade Mortimer's life for his own. Dustfinger condemns Orpheus' actions, and demands the copy of Inkheart that Orpheus has been using in order to write himself treasures. Orpheus refuses to give it to him, and Dustfinger sends Farid to retrieve it.

In chapter thirty, Fenoglio is taken to the marketplace to watch Sootbird's fireshow, though he does not like the man because he serves the Adderhead and governor Milksop. Still, he is in good spirits because he knows that Mortimer and Dustfinger have returned from the dead. As he watches the disturbing fireworks created by Sootbird, an older boy approaches the crowd of people surrounding Fenoglio. He tells everyone to run away, but he is too late. Suddenly, the Piper and his soldiers swarm the marketplace. They separate the children from their mothers and drive them towards the castle, killing several of them in the process. Fenoglio returns to his room and again tries to write in order to help save the children he has just seen taken captive, but finds that he is still completely unable to do so.



chapters 26-30 Analysis

The novel has undergone several important changes with the return of Dustfinger. First, as Dustfinger rescues Farid from Orpheus, he deeply insults the man as a result. Orpheus once worshipped Dustfinger as a hero, but now will clearly seek revenge. Second, the reappearance of the Bluejay has caused the Piper to make good on his threat of taking the children to the silver mines. Lastly, Dustfinger, having returned from the dead, is now even more skilled with fire than ever. He and the Bluejay represent a serious threat to Milksop, the Piper, and the Adderhead, who have proven themselves evil enough to be willing to sacrifice the children in order to capture the Bluejay.



chapters 31-35

chapters 31-35 Summary

In chapter thirty-one, Resa writes a declaration for Mortimer. The Bluejay intends to give himself up in exchange for the children. She hates the idea, but no one can come up with a better idea in order to save them. She also continues to feel very guilty for putting her husband in danger in the first place, and shares his concern for the children of Ombra, despite the risks it presents to her husband. Meggie asks her father to take her along with him when he is taken prisoner, but he refuses, as it is too dangerous, and there is no reason the Adderhead would keep her alive.

In chapter thirty-two, Darius tries to read a passage he's written to put him and Elinor in the book Inkheart. Suddenly, they find themselves in the middle of the city, and are quickly attacked by two guards, who want the dog Cerebrus, who has come with them because they have no one else to look after it in the other world. They try to take Cerebrus, but the dog bites one of the soldiers on the hand and Darius manages to escape alongside Elinor.

In chapter thirty-three, Violante returns to her chambers after tending to the children who have been taken prisoner. One of her soldiers enters to tell her that a former maidservant, Brianna, is here to see her. Brianna is Dustfinger's daughter, and was also a favorite of her now deceased husband, Cosimo, and claims to bring herbs to help the sick children. When Violante admits her, Brianna hands over the letter that Resa wrote on behalf of Mortimer, surrendering himself to her in order to free the children.

In chapter thirty-four, Meggie is with the robbers, who are preparing to deliver Mortimer to the castle. She is extremely worried for her father, and decides she is going to get the words that Orpheus wrote in order to bring her family out of the book. She goes to Resa, and Resa tells her that the words have been burned, and that they only contained the power to send Meggie and Resa back. Meggie now knows that Mortimer never intended to return to the other world with them. She finds Battista and asks him to sing one of Fenoglio's songs about the Bluejay. She writes the song out and reads it out loud until morning, to protect her father from the dangers he will face.

In chapter thirty-five, villagers gather quietly in front of the castle. The Piper appears, and Dustfinger warns him not to mistreat the Bluejay, or he will attack the castle. Violante reminds the Piper and everyone else that Mortimer is in fact her prisoner. The children are released and returned to their mothers, but they first surround Bluejay in an attempt to rescue him themselves. Piper demands them to let him through, and forces them to make way for Mortimer.



chapters 31-35 Analysis

The relationship's inside Mortimer's family have been greatly strained, and Resa and Meggie have both suffered a lot of turmoil. Meggie is frustrated that she is not allowed to go with her father, as she is a capable young woman and might be able to do her father some good inside the castle. Now that Mortimer has been taken captive, the sudden appearance of Elinor, Darius, and Cerebrus will likely take on greater significance, and their presence in the book of Inkheart may prove highly useful. Violante's motives in agreeing to take the Bluejay are unclear. It does seem as though she hates her father deeply, but many characters have noted that she bears fearful similarities to him, and may still be treacherous. Whatever the case, it is up to Dustfinger and the Black Prince to protect Mortimer's family and the rest of the robbers now, and Dustfinger seems like a very dangerous opponent to face in such a situation.



chapters 36-40

chapters 36-40 Summary

In chapter thirty-six, Elinor comes across Fenoglio. The two know each other from the other world. She asks him why the Adderhead has taken over Ombra, and where Resa and Meggie are to be found. He reveals to her and Darius that the story has taken on a life of its own and is now writing itself. He reluctantly tells them what has become of Ombra, and the role Mortimer and his family now play in the story against the Adderhead.

In chapter thirty-seven, Orpheus has sent his servant to spy on Fenoglio to determine if the old man has begun writing again. He comes across Cerebrus, who he recognizes from the other world. He discovers from his spy, Ironstone, that Fenoglio is in fact, not writing anything at all. Ironstone also searched the man's quarters for the book "Inkheart," which Orpheus assumed Dustfinger had given him, but Fenoglio does not have it. A Magpie appears, and turns into Mortola, Fenoglio's former master. Mortola blames Mortimer for her imprisonment and torture at the hands of the Adderhead, and wants her revenge against him. She has acquired a number of seeds that allow her to change into the form of a bird, and has been using them to spy on many people in order to determine what's happened in Ombra. She also reveals to Orpheus that Violante is working with Mortimer, and plans to kill the Adderhead with him.

In chapter thirty-eight, Dustfinger has Farid catch him a fairy in order to help them prevent the Piper from torturing Mortimer. Dustfinger also calls Sootbird in order to show him a new fire trick. He creates live spiders out of fire, and a fiery bluejay, which set the castle on fire in order to distract the Piper. The soldiers attempt in vain to stop the fiery creatures from causing disorder, but Dustfinger has grown far more powerful since his death, and nobody is able to stop him.

In chapter thirty-nine, the children of Ombra have been disappearing again since the Bluejay allowed himself to become captured, and the Black Prince suspects that the Piper and governor Milksop are behind their disappearances. Meggie finds Elinor waiting for her in the camp, and Fenoglio has also joined them to help in whatever way he can against the Adderhead.

In chapter forty, Mortimer waits for the arrival of the Adderhead in the dungeon. He is taken to the Piper, who beats and tortures him, but Violante suddenly appears with her soldiers, and orders the Piper and his men to be bound up. She leads Mortimer out of the dungeon and unties him in front of Farid and Dustfinger. Violante tells them that she is taking him to the Castle in the Lake to keep him safe from the Piper and Milksop.



chapters 36-40 Analysis

The novel's structure has continued to be reorganized, in subtle but very important ways. The most notable incident is the sudden appearance of Mortola, who, knowingly or not, has given Orpheus a valuable piece of information to use against Mortimer in the future by telling him of the alliance between Mortimer and Violante. Orpheus' hatred of the heroes in the story has steadily been turning him into a villain. At the beginning of the novel, he was not interested in the Bluejay, except as a bargaining chip to use in order to bring Dustfinger back from the dead. However, once Dustfinger rejects Orpheus and takes Inkheart from him, Orpheus stands to become a major villain.

Violante's removal of Mortimer from Ombra comes as a surprise, but also serves to reinforce the idea that she is a very powerful and resourceful character. Elinor and Darius have not yet made a significant impact on the world of Ombra, but Elinor does seem determined to make Fenoglio write once more, and their reconnection with Resa and Meggie does appear to signify that they will assume greater significance soon, especially since Elinor's overbearing personality has already been put to use against some of the less noble robbers in the camp.



chapters 41-45

chapters 41-45 Summary

In chapter forty-one the Black Prince takes the robbers and children to a remote cave. Fenoglio discusses the book "Inkheart" with Elinor, trying to guess who must have it since Dustfinger took it from Orpheus. Resa has the book, but Meggie keeps that a secret, and Farid comes to her and shows her a new magic trick that Dustfinger taught him. The trick shows the location of her father, Mortimer, in fire, and proves that he is still alive and safe for the time being.

In chapter forty-two, the Adderhead arrives in Ombra. Orpheus sends his bodyguard Oss to tell the lord that he has news about Bluejay and his daughter Violante. He is summoned to the Adderhead, but must first convince Milksop to allow him to speak. He finally meets the Adderhead, who is so unimpressed with Orpheus' news that he threatens to cut out his tongue for wasting so much time. Orpheus summons his strongest voice and swears to the Adderhead that Mortimer and Violante are plotting against him, and the Adderhead finally believes him. He decides to take Orpheus along with him to the Castle in the Lake.

In chapter forty-three, Mortola, disguised again as a magpie, is slowly being driven insane as the bird she's become takes on a life on its own. She drops five poison berries into the Black Prince's food to try and kill him, but a marten rushes towards her and chases her off before she could drop all of them in. She decides four berries should be enough to kill the Black Prince, and also overhears Snapper, who she determines to be self-interested enough to use in order to retrieve the White Book from the Adderhead.

In chapter forty-four, Resa shoos Mortola away as she is disguised as a magpie, suspecting something is wrong with the bird. Roxane tells her and Meggie that the Black Prince is having stomach cramps. They go to him and find him in great pain. Resa realizes that the magpie is actually Mortola. She recognizes the poison that has been used, but the cure is extremely rare. Elinor asks Fenoglio to write the cure for the Black Prince. Frantic to save the Black Prince's life, Fenoglio manages to put a few words together and gives them to Meggie in order to read.

In chapter forty-five, Roxane finds the flowers that Fenoglio wrote into the world as the cure for the Black Prince. She returns to the camp, where the White Women have already gathered, waiting for the prince to die. The cure works very slowly. Battista appears and says that Snapper and his friend Gecko have abandoned the other robbers and gone after Mortimer, because they believe he's going to betray all of them to Violante. They are going to try and steal the White Book from the Adderhead, because they have been told by Mortola that it will make them very rich as well as immortal.



chapters 41-45 Analysis

The roles of the Black Prince and Bluejay have drifted very far apart, where once they fought together against the Adderhead. Many of the other characters, especially those close to Mortimer, question Fenoglio's creation of the Bluejay, but they blame Fenoglio for too much that has transpired. After all, the story has clearly begun determining much of its own outcome, and Fenoglio has been unable to write it at all for some time, until the life of his favorite character is threatened.

Snapper and his friend Gecko have become dangerous to the heroes in the book, whereas before they were simply an annoyance. Though they work with the Black Prince and Bluejay, they have selfish motives and do not share in a desire for justice. They have argued constantly up until Mortola's appearance, and she is clearly the one who turned them against the other robbers. The heroes almost seem as divided amongst themselves now as the villains did at the beginning of the novel.

However, on the other side of the conflict, Orpheus has joined forces with the Adderhead. However much Mortola hates Mortimer, she is presently working in favor of the Adderhead, so that the villains appear to be coming together and growing stronger.



chapters 46-50

chapters 46-50 Summary

In chapter forty-six, Violante and Mortimer meet up with a great amount of soldiers outside of Ombra. Two White Women have been following Dustfinger and Bluejay. They reach the Castle in the Lake, and Violante takes them inside.

In chapter forty-seven, Resa leaves the book Inkheart with Fenoglio, having determined Dustfinger was wrong to dismiss him as someone who interfered with the lives of others by meddling with words. She also leaves Fenoglio a letter, then departs towards the Castle in the Lake. The Strong Man comes with her. She asks him about the magpie who was seen as the Black Prince and his bear were poisoned, and the Strong Man also knows it wasn't a bird, because he is very familiar with birdsongs, and Mortola's sounded like an old woman instead of a Magpie.

In chapter forty-eight, Violante leads Mortimer inside the Castle in the Lake to show him a room filled with books that have been ruined by mold. They used to belong to her mother, but the moisture surrounding the castle has destroyed all of them, despite Violante's attempts to save them all when she was just a little girl. She also tells him that the Adderhead has had the pages of the White Book dipped in fairy blood to try to preserve them from mold. Dustfinger finds them to say that Balbulus has arrived. He fled the castle when the Adderhead cut off his arm as punishment for illuminating pictures of the Bluejay.

In chapter forty-nine, Orpheus travels with the Adderhead slowly towards the Castle in the Lake. He's been looking for any book he can find with Fenoglio's words in them, and finally manages to find one, but it belongs to Jacopo, Violante's son, who has traveled with them. Orpheus pays Jacopo to borrow the book. Mortola arrives, upset with Orpheus for working with the Adderhead. She tells him that Snapper, Gecko, and several other robbers are lying in ambush up the road. As soon as she is gone, Orpheus goes to tell the Adderhead everything he has learned from Mortola.

In chapter fifty, Elinor wakes Fenoglio up and tries to make him write. He complains that he has tried, but the words are still not coming to him. He may have begun the story, he argues, but it has outgrown him. Elinor suggests that he writes a wheel off of the Adderhead's coach in order to buy them all more time, and Fenoglio agrees to try. Battista comes and tells him that governor Milksop and his soldiers will arrive in the evening, and that they must flee their hiding place at once.

chapters 46-50 Analysis

Both the villains and the heroes of the story continue to underestimate each other's resources. Mortola is completely mistaken with respect to her former servant's loyalty, and Orpheus continues to gain reputation with the Adderhead as a result of her



foolishness. Fenoglio's limited success in writing will no doubt continue to prove useful in the future, but he has made it clear that he no longer controls the story. Instead, he must work within its own guidelines, as it will not accept the obvious outcome presented to the reader already. This is a cleverly placed technique in the novel, promising the reader a surprising ending of some sort without presently disturbing the passage of events, which have sped up considerable since the resurrection of Dustfinger and especially with the arrival of the Adderhead. The reader has learned that the Adderhead is more foolish than most think, but since Mortola is the one to reveal that fact and is insane herself, cannot be to certain of this claim.



chapters 51-55

chapters 51-55 Summary

In chapter fifty-one, Mortola, who has been wounded by Oss, is back with the Snapper as they get ready to attack the Adderhead. She watches as a Night-Mare, an evil creature out of a fairy tale Orpheus discovered in Jacopo's book, attacks Snapper, Gecko, and his men. Orpheus sees her in the trees, points to her, and she is struck and killed by an arrow.

In chapter fifty-two, Resa and the Strong Man come across Snapper's tracks, and realize that they veer away from the direction of the Castle in the Lake. They discover the robber's corpses, left in such a way that they knew the men were killed by a Night-Mare. She also finds Mortola dead, and takes the seeds that Mortola had been using in order to transform.

In chapter fifty-three, Meggie and the robbers escape the cave before Milksop arrives. Fenoglio leads them to human nests up in trees, high enough so that giants cannot reach the people inside of them. He also tells Meggie he's almost certain he wrote Doria into existence many years ago, but as a fully grown man who married a woman from a faraway land.

In chapter fifty-four, Dustfinger asks Mortimer, who he still thinks of as Silvertongue, to tell him about Roxane and Brianna, his wife and daughter. They suddenly stop, and Dustfinger realizes the Adderhead is approaching.

In chapter fifty-five, Fenoglio writes about the Adderhead approaching the castle. The guard's alarm is sounded, however, to notify the people in the nests that Milksop is approaching them. Fenoglio realizes that he must write about giants in order to save himself and the lives of everyone else who has taken to the nests.

chapters 51-55 Analysis

The novel is reaching its climax, and two very important encounters are about to occur. Two major plots are at play. One focuses on the Black Prince, Fenoglio, and Meggie as they try to protect the children from Milksop. The other, and most important plot, is Bluejay's confrontation with the Adderhead. Several smaller changes have taken place within the novel as well. Meggie is no longer romantically interested in Farid, but instead seems attracted to Doria. Resa is also on her own quest to save her husband from the Adderhead. Her journey has become extremely dangerous, as proven by the foolish but very threatening Mortola, who has been found dead as a result of Orpheus' actions. Orpheus himself continues to grow in power and influence over the story.



chapters 56-61

chapters 56-61 Summary

In chapter fifty-six, Violante resolves to keep her father waiting in front of the bridge to the castle for several days. She asks Mortimer to marry her after they've succeeded against the Adderhead and the Piper, but he refuses. A young soldier stumbles towards them, trying to say something about the Piper, but he dies before he can finish. They are suddenly surrounded by enemy soldiers. Orpheus leads them, alongside the Piper. Dustfinger attacks the soldiers with fire, and Orpheus reveals that he's been sent to kill Dustfinger. His shadow turns into a Night-Mare and kills Dustfinger instantly. The Piper takes both Mortimer and Violante prisoner.

In chapter fifty-seven, Resa discovers that the Adderhead has reached the castle before them. She is caught by some of the soldiers, but manages to escape with the Strong Man's help.

In chapter fifty-eight, the robbers struggle to defend the nests they've found from Milksop's soldiers. Fenoglio's giant arrives and Milksop flees. However, the giant manages to pick up the Black Prince. Fenoglio falls and the giant catches him. He walks away from the nests with both men.

In chapter fifty-nine, Mortimer is taken before the Adderhead. Instead of trying to fix the White Book, the Adderhead commands him to make a new one. Mortimer refuses and the White Women suddenly surround him.

In chapter sixty, Violante is imprisoned in her mother's old room. Orpheus enters and asks her for any books still in good condition. She refuses, but her son gets a book from her and gives it to Orpheus.

In chapter sixty-one, Resa has transformed into a bird. She travels to the Castle in the Lake, finds Dustfinger, who suddenly comes back to life. He has been able to separate his soul from his body ever since his return from the White Women, and escaped the Night-Mare at the last possible instant.

chapters 56-61 Analysis

The villains continue to draw resources that the heroes could never have guessed, and even Fenoglio's summoning of the giant goes wrong quickly. With neither Fenoglio or the Black Prince, Meggie must find a way to both protect the robbers and rescue them, though it is far from clear how this will happen. Violante has been stripped of her ability to aid Mortimer, which makes it all the more important that Resa has arrived and found Dustfinger still living. If they manage to conceal their presence in the castle, they can play a major role in rescuing Mortimer and defeating the Adderhead.



chapters 62-67

chapters 62-67 Summary

In chapter sixty-two, Orpheus goes to Mortimer and tortures him with words, in order to try to make him bind a new book for the Adderhead. Resa appears beside him, and Dustfinger lowers a rope to Mortimer so that he can escape.

In chapter sixty-three, the giant buries the Black Prince in a pile of leaves. Fenoglio pretends to be dead in the giant's hands, and the giant eventually sets him down too. Battista finds him after a while and tells him they've located the Black Prince, who is also still alive.

In chapter sixty-four, the escape of Bluejay and reappearance of Dustfinger have caused the Adderhead to panic, and he orders Orpheus to set everything right. Orpheus tells him how to do this, and the Adderhead realizes that Orpheus has grown so powerful that he will have to kill him after he has his new White Book.

In chapter sixty-five, Dustfinger tries to convince Bluejay not to try to confront Orpheus. Resa reads him some of Orpheus' words, then sets out to try to find the White Book on Mortimer's behalf.

In chapter sixty-six, Dustfinger confronts Orpheus, who tells him that Brianna is being tortured in a cage nearby. Orpheus agrees to release Dustfinger's body if he gives up the location of the Bluejay.

In chapter sixty-seven, Mortimer finds Balbulus in the room with all of the moldy books, and Dustfinger appears to tell him about Orpheus' bargain. They both agree that there is no choice, and Dustfinger must show Orpheus where Mortimer is hiding.

chapters 62-67 Analysis

The story continues to gain complexity as the major characters manage to narrowly avoid death or worse in almost every chapter. The Black Prince and Fenoglio, having managed to escape the giant, are in more or less the same situation as they began. In the Castle in the Lake, Dustfinger and Bluejay struggle to come up with a way to claim the White Book, and Resa is the obvious choice to do so, because even Orpheus is unaware of her presence. However, Violante and Jacopo's roles in defeating the Adderhead have not been established and so there may be more surprises on the way.



Chapters 68-74

Chapters 68-74 Summary

In chapter sixty-eight, Milksop's soldiers capture the Black Prince just as he returns to the nests. The giant reappears to listen to Roxane sing. Farid burns the enemies with fire he learned from Dustfinger, and defeats Sootbird.

In chapter sixty-nine, Resa searches the Adderhead's chambers for the White Book. The Piper enters to say that they've caught the Bluejay. Dustfinger finds Resa and they continue to search for the White Book.

In chapter seventy, Doria has been found badly wounded from Milksop's soldiers. Farid uses his fire trick to view Mortimer, and sees him binding a second White Book, which he and the others take to mean that he has been defeated.

In chapter seventy-one, Mortimer starts a fight between the Piper and Orpheus on purpose, to buy him some more time against the Adderhead.

In chapter seventy-two, Jacopo, angry over his mother's imprisonment, kicks one of her guards and flees. He goes to his grandfather's room and steals the White Book from him.

In chapter seventy-three, Dustfinger stays near his daughter's cage, trying to come up with a way to destroy the Night-Mare. He must know its name in order to kill it. After careful thought, he guesses its name, Basta, and manages to destroy it.

In chapter seventy-four, the Black Prince has forbidden Meggie to go help her father, but she plans to sneak away in the night. Before she can do this, a White Woman appears and writes her the song of the Bluejay.

Chapters 68-74 Analysis

The heroes, each of them, have all gained some powerful advantage, most notably the discovery of the Night-Mare's name and Jacopo's theft of the White Book. It still remains to be seen what will become of the Milksop, and how precisely the White Book will get to Mortimer, but his use of flattery to turn the Piper and Orpheus against one another works effortlessly, as the Bluejay has learned by now that the villains in the world of Inkheart work only to further themselves.



chapters 75-81

chapters 75-81 Summary

In chapter seventy-five, Jacopo comes to Mortimer, hiding the White Book. He distracts the Piper long enough for Mortimer to write the three words into the book that will kill the Adderhead.

In chapter seventy-six, the White Women appear in front of the Adderhead and swarm him, taking him away from the land of the living.

In chapter seventy-seven, Mortimer tells the Piper that the Adderhead is dead. The Piper cuts Resa badly with his sword. Mortimer kills the Piper with a knife. Dustfinger comes and frees him from the rest of the soldiers.

In chapter seventy-eight, Orpheus discovers the Adderhead has died. He takes a knife, several books, and heads north towards the mountains, which Fenoglio never wrote about.

In chapter seventy-nine, Dustfinger burns the remains of the Adderhead and the Piper. Mortimer and his group go to find the Black Prince. They find him with the sleeping giant. Mortimer and Resa go to Meggie.

In chapter eighty, everyone returns to Ombra, finding that the Milksop has fled. Violante takes control of the castle. Farid asks Meggie to go away with him, but she refuses, because she wants to stay with Doria.

In chapter eighty-one, Meggie's brother is born five months later, and the family stays in Ombra.

chapters 75-81 Analysis

Interestingly, none of the major or minor heroic characters die by the end of the book. Even the Black Prince, who suffered through several serious incidents, manages to survive and continues on with his life. In fact, nearly all of the major characters have been wounded in some way, and the novel strongly suggests that even though the Piper and the Adderhead have been defeated, Ombra is not out of danger, for the Milksop has fled to the Castle of Night, and even Violante expects war soon. Also, Orpheus has managed to survive, and may well find that his trick for writing will work in the northern mountains.



Characters

Mortimer

Mortimer is known by many names, including Bluejay, Silvertongue, Bookbinder, and Mo. He is the father of Meggie and Resa's husband. Though he was once a simple bookbinder with a powerful reading voice, Fenoglio wrote the character Bluejay and at the beginning of this novel, Mortimer has assumed the role of this character. He assists the Black Prince in his defence of the local villagers against the Adderhead and governor Milksoop. He believes that the world in Inkheart is just as real as the one he came from, and seeks to find a way to destroy the Adderhead, because he once bound a book for the evil lord that made him unable to die, even though Mortimer did soak every tenth page in the book in order to make it rot. Mortimer places himself in danger constantly, and his wife and daughter must rescue him often. Many other powerful characters in the novel respect him deeply, including Fenoglio, Dustfinger, and Violante, and these characters all seek to aid him in whatever ways they can. By the end of the novel, Mortimer is able to defeat the Adderhead by depending on these allies and his own knowledge of the book he once bound for the Adderhead. Yet upon defeating his enemy, Mortimer and his family choose to stay in Ombra and live their lives there.

Meggie

Meggie is Mortimer's and Resa's daughter. She is very independent and possesses some of her father's ability for storytelling, which allows her words to change the outcome of the story. Though she begins the novel deeply in love with Farid, she blames him when the White Women take her father away, and throughout the course of the novel, comes to care deeply for Doria, and stays with him when the Adderhead is defeated. Meggie also blames her mother Resa for her father's disappearance, and this causes a deep rift between the two that lasts well beyond her father's return. Meggie suffers from being unable to help her father throughout much of the novel. Earlier in her life, she had been separated from Resa, which caused her to bond much more strongly to Mortimer. She was once able to help him greatly against the Adderhead, but finds herself constantly unable to do anything for him throughout the present conflict. Nonetheless, she writes down Fenoglio's songs of the Bluejay and reads them as loudly as she can, in order to aid Mortimer as he is a prisoner in the Castle in the Lake. She also makes herself useful to the Black Prince, Fenoglio, and the band of robbers in many ways throughout the book. Unlike her mother, she was not interested in leaving the world of Inkheart until her father was placed in grave danger.

Resa

Resa is Mortimer's wife and Meggie's mother. At the beginning of the novel, she makes it known that she is pregnant with another child. Her fear for Mortimer's safety cause her



to seek words from Fenoglio that will return her entire family back to their original world, but when Fenoglio refuses, she asks the same of Orpheus. This proves to invite disaster, and Resa suffers from incredible guilt as the words she ask for lead to Mortimer's disappearance with the White Women. Though Mortimer quickly returns, the task he must undertake as a result puts him in greater risk, and this time Resa is willing to cooperate with her husband in order to help save his life and the lives of the innocent people in Ombra. Against the Black Prince's wishes, she goes to to the Castle in the Lake in order to help her husband, and takes a number of seeds from Mortola that allow her to take the form of a bird. From there, she enters the castle and does everything within her power alongside Dustfinger and Violante to help Mortimer find the White Book. Though she does not succeed, she throws herself in front of the Piper in order to save her husband and is wounded badly as a result. However, she recovers quickly, and remains with Mortimer and Meggie in the world of Ombra to raise her newborn child.

Orpheus

Orpheus is in many ways the most important villain in the novel, and easily the most resourceful. Once the student of Fenoglio, Orpheus learned how to use Fenoglio's words in order to change the world of Inkheart. At the beginning of the novel, Orpheus uses his ability for Milksoop, creating rainbow colored fairies and unicorns for the governor to hunt. However, Orpheus desperately wishes to bring Dustfinger back from the dead, as he was once his favorite character. He plans to trade Mortimer's life for that of Dustfinger, and Resa presents him with the opportunity to do so. The deal goes wrong, however, and both Mortimer and Dustfinger return. Dustfinger rejects Orpheus, and this enrages him far enough to encourage Orpheus to lend his abilities to the Adderhead when the evil lord arrives in Ombra. He is able to help the Adderhead a great deal, and nearly kills Dustfinger a second time during the struggle at the Castle in the Lake. When the Adderhead is defeated, Orpheus flees into the northern mountains, which Fenoglio never wrote about, in the hopes of being able to gather new strength there and find a way to take his revenge on Dustfinger and Mortimer.

Farid

A young man brought to life from a different novel, Farid wants Dustfinger to return alive just as badly as Orpheus, and joins the robbers at their camp once his former adopted father returns. He aids the robbers with the skills Dustfinger taught him about fire. He asks Meggie to travel with him at the end of the novel, but she rejects him.

Fenoglio

Fenoglio is the author of the world of Inkheart, but at the beginning of the novel, he is a hopeless drunk. When the Black Prince, his favorite character, is in danger, then Fenoglio is finally able to write in order to save the robbers.



Elinor

Elinor is Resa's aunt. She is trapped outside Inkheart, but enters it when Darius reads them inside.

Darius

Darius is a friend of Mortimer's family, who enters Inkheart by reading himself and Elinor inside of it.

The Black Prince

The leader of a band of robbers, very similar to Robinhood, who seeks justice against the Adderhead and his forces. The Black Prince was once the hero of the story, but Fenoglio wrote the Bluejay because he felt the Black Prince had done enough for the land of Ombra already. Nevertheless, he is badly wounded many times in his struggles.

Dustfinger

Dustfinger comes back to life in the middle of the novel, and proves himself of great worth to the Bluejay. The two share a strange connection because they have both encountered the White Women. He is very skilled at fire, especially since his reappearance, and protects Bluejay as best he can with it.

The Adderhead

The Adderhead is the immortal and evil ruler of both the Castle Ombra and the Castle of Night. He despises Mortimer, but wants to use him in order to bind a new book that will keep him immortal, as the old book Mortimer bound for him suffers from mold.

The Piper

The Piper is the Adderhead's servant, and just as evil as his master. He hates Mortimer completely, and tortures him as often as he can after Mortimer was taken prisoner. He dies at the end of the novel, stabbed by Mortimer with a knife after Resa saves her husband from the Piper's sword.

Mortola

Mortola is a woman once taken prisoner by the Adderhead and tortured. She hates both the Adderhead and Mortimer for the death of her son, and attempts to use Orpheus in order to defeat them both. Unfortunately, she is betrayed and killed by her former



servant. Nevertheless, she nearly manages to kill the Black Prince and stop anyone from helping Mortimer during her brief appearance.

Snapper

A robber who disagrees with the Black Prince and abandons the group to find the Adderhead's White Book to keep to himself.

Gecko

Snapper's friend. Gecko leaves with Snapper when he goes to search for the White Book.

Violante

The Adderhead's daughter. Violante is in love with Mortimer and hates her father. She tries to protect him in the Castle in the Lake, but underestimates her father greatly.

Jacopo

Jacopo is Violante's son. He begins the novel with great respect for the Piper and the Adderhead, but their treatment of him leads Jacopo to give Mortimer the White Book.

Milksop

Governor of Ombra. Milksop is incompetent and lazy. He only acts against the Black Prince and Bluejay because he fears the Adderhead's power.

Sootbird

Sootbird is a fire-eater, like Dustfinger, but not nearly as talented. He serves the Adderhead but is defeated by Farid.

The Strong Man

A constant companion and loyal follower of the Black Prince. The Strong Man is dependable and very protective of his friends.



Doria

The Strong Man's brother. Doria is also a very good friend to Mortimer and his family. Meggie falls in love with him by the end of the novel.

Roxane

Roxane is a healer and Brianna's mother. She is also Dustfinger's wife.

Brianna

Brianna is Violante's former maid, and the daughter of Dustfinger and Roxane.



Objects/Places

Ombra

Ombra refers to both the castle and land surrounding the majority of the novel. Many of the characters live here.

The Castle of Night

The Castle of Night is the home of the Adderhead.

The Castle in the Lake

This is the home of Violante's now deceased mother. Violante takes Mortimer here to protect him from the Piper and keep him safe until the Adderhead arrives.

Books

Books are very important to the novel and are mentioned often by almost all of the characters.

Fire

Dustfinger, Farid, and Sootbird all practice tricks with fire. Dustfinger even sets Castle Ombra on fire in order to distract the Piper from torturing Mortimer.

Castles

The castles in the novel are mentioned constantly by the characters.

Martens

These small ferret-like animals aid the robbers frequently.

Birds

Many of the characters in the novel are named after birds. Mortola and Resa both take the form of birds.



Herbs

Roxane is a healer and uses herbs to help the sick.

Crossbows

Crossbows are used by the Adderhead's forces to attack the robbers.

Swords

Swords appear several times in the novel and are used primarily by the Black Prince, Mortimer, and the soldiers.

Nests

The robbers and children hide from Milksoop in nests too high up for giants to reach.

Fairies

Fairies are common in the world of Inkheart. Orpheus created a new breed of them that are rainbow colored.

Glass Men

Glass Men come from the forest, but serve people such as Fenoglio and Orpheus. They are very small, and often useful as spies.

Children

The children of Ombra have nearly all lost their fathers, and Mortimer decides to give himself up once the Piper captures them.

Night-Mares

Night-Mares are terrible creatures too evil for the White Women to take. They remain on earth and hunger to eat people's souls.



Themes

Good against Evil/Heroism

The novel is a classic story of good against evil. Mortimer, the Black Prince, and Dustfinger all deeply sympathize with the suffering in Ombra and seek justice as a result. They are the personification of good, and battle against the Adderhead, the Piper, Milksop, and eventually Orpheus. Each of these evil characters is selfish, driven only by his own desires, and willing to bring disaster to the land of Ombra. The Adderhead serves as the archetypal major villain. He is in command of the other villains and seeks the destruction of Mortimer, who in his role as Bluejay, is now the most important hero of the book. Both characters have powerful allies that help one against the other. Each side is contrasted sharply throughout the novel, as when the villains capture the children and the heroes struggle to take them back. Though a few of the characters, most notably Orpheus at the start of the novel, have their own agendas entirely, the overwhelming majority of them have already taken sides. It is worth noting, however, that in this novel the heroes are considered "robbers" who fight against the soldiers of Milksop and the Adderhead. These are popular heroes amongst the villagers, but they cannot take drastic risks against the forces of evil because they are greatly overwhelmed. However, even though Bluejay's actions at the beginning of the novel are highly secretive, they are no less heroic.

Fantasy

The novel is set in a Fantasy world and makes use of many things typically found there. Fairies are very common throughout Ombra, and Orpheus even writes a unicorn into existence. Evil creatures such as giants and Night-Mares also exist, and White Women appear often when characters are badly wounded or dying. Magic is also extremely common, though never called that directly. Dustfinger's abilities with fire give him a huge advantage against the soldiers in Ombra Castle. Another form of magic lies in Fenoglio's and Orpheus' ability to write words, and several characters are able to read them in such a way as to bring these words to life in the story. Castles and villages are a common way of life in a fantasy setting, and they are found here as well. Also as typically found in a fantasy novel, the world lacks much of the technology that we are familiar with, and much of this is viewed by the inhabitants of Ombra as fantastical in nature. Planes, for example, are met with disbelief by Mortimer and Resa's newborn child. To people native to the world of Inkheart, our world seems difficult to believe in.

Storytelling

Storytelling itself is a very important theme in the novel. Songs are sung about Bluejay's heroic deeds. Balbulus illuminates books with pictures and is made widely famous for doing so. Many of the characters possess a strong love for books and seek to find or



preserve them whenever possible, and much of the livelihood in the city of Ombra seems to revolve around books and literature in general. More importantly, storytelling itself has great influence over the story that the characters all find themselves in. This is why Fenoglio and Orpheus are critical to the narrative. Each character possesses the ability to influence the world around them by what they write, and as a result both the heroes and the villains are able to create circumstances and objects that would not otherwise exist. However, the world of Inkheart has taken on much of a life of its own, and Fenoglio and Orpheus both know that the story will not accept outcomes that don't lie true to the original novel. They both struggle with this fact many times. Fenoglio has a terrible time controlling his own words, as the giant that he creates manages only to cause a great deal of confusion amongst both Milksop's soldiers and the Black Prince's Robbers. Mortimer is also aware that the book is writing itself in many ways by the end of the novel. He uses this fact to save his own life by becoming the Bookbinder when all of Orpheus' writings are focused on the Bluejay.



Style

Point of View

The author uses a third-person perspective in the narrative, switching between many of the major characters and some of the secondary characters. The point of view is often unreliable. Characters are frequently misled about the location of a friend or passage of events and sometimes this confusion leads to actions that complicate the plot further. Mortola, for example, is aware that she is being driven insane by her bird form, but nonetheless continues to make very poor decisions regarding Orpheus, and this leads Orpheus to gain a serious advantage later on in the novel.

The story is told through exposition and the character's thoughts are frequently shared with the reader. Dialogue is also very important, and tends to occur in large sections as the characters discuss whatever they believe must be done next. Very little time tends to pass through most of the chapters, and though the novel covers most of the characters' thoughts and feelings in complete detail, the reader still gains a sense of urgency from the narrative. This novel makes almost equal use of villains and heroes for points of view, though Mortimer and Orpheus are perhaps used the most often. Meggie and Resa are also very commonly used as points of view, though usually only to emphasize the fear that both of them are feeling due to Mortimer's actions.

Setting

The novel is set in the fictional world of Ombra, inside the novel Inkheart. This is a medieval fantasy world, where native characters serve the land as peasants or nobles. There also exist bands of robbers who either steal from people or, like the Black Prince, work in secret to defeat the Adderhead. Ombra has been taken over by the Adderhead and his evil forces from the Castle of Night, and though it is near enough for the characters to reach in a few days, it is never featured itself in this novel. Fairies, glass-men, and other creatures live in Ombra, and the characters encounter them very often.

A small portion of the novel takes place in the "real" world. This is our world, and two of the characters wish to leave it in order to enter the novel Inkheart. Our world is viewed as impossible and fantastic by the inhabitants of Ombra.

When Bluejay allows himself to be captured by Violante, he is taken to the Castle in the Lake. This castle is old and suffering from considerable amounts of decay, and the forests and swamps surrounding it are very different from the gentle woods and farmlands familiar to everyone in Ombra. The Castle in the Lake is where Dustfinger and Bluejay finally confront Adderhead and manage to defeat him, though Orpheus escapes to the north, which is a land that has not been described by Fenoglio in earlier writing.



Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is simple and straightforward, though because of its nature as a fantasy book, words occur often that the average reader may at first be unfamiliar with, especially terminology used to describe castles, villages, or medieval professions. Though it might seem odd at first that the language of the novel is similar to that spoken in the Reader's everyday world, it does give the narrative a significant advantage towards telling the story. In essence, *Inkheart* is a simple novel, and the simplicity of the language allows the reader to engage more closely with the motives and desires of each of the individual characters. This allows the readers to sympathize with characters whenever necessary, and to dislike them when the character's thoughts or motives become cruel or otherwise undesirable.

Many of the peasant characters have a different way of speaking, but for the most part each of the characters remains in the same dialect. Even Farid, who comes from a different world altogether, is easily understandable. The characters are thus not distinguished by dialogue, but instead by internal thoughts. These are all written in a similar fashion even if the thoughts themselves are vastly different. Very little time tends to pass through the chapters themselves, and here the simplicity of the language is again useful, as the reader easily comprehends what is being said and can move forward rather quickly, especially considering the amount of characters and conflicting interests established throughout the novel. Action does tend to occur quickly, however, and the characters are very prone to mistaking the outcome of events, at least at first. This can cause the reader to backtrack somewhat, but does not significantly hinder the novel.

Structure

This novel is comprised of eighty-one chapters, each approximately between two and twenty pages in length. Each chapter has a name that refers to some action or event within the novel that foreshadows what the reader is about to read, and also contains a quote from another story or poem pertaining to the events in the chapter itself. The chapters tend to be short and full of a character's thoughts and emotions until something new is discovered near the end that drives the story forward.

The plot of the novel is simple, but there are several important subplots to make note of. Most of the novel details Mortimer's struggle against the Adderhead and tells of how he is eventually able to overcome the evil that plagues Ombra, but the subplot involving Orpheus' attempts to bring back Dustfinger is equally important in the beginning of the novel. Without this plot, neither Dustfinger nor Orpheus would arrive in the Castle in the Lake, and the story would end very differently. Another important subplot at the beginning of the novel is Resa's attempts to send her family back to the world they came from. Without this, Dustfinger would never have been able to come back in the first place. Meggie is also the focus of another subplot, namely falling out of love with Farid and in love with Doria.

The novel's pace is quick with plenty of dialogue. It should be mentioned however, that many of the action scenes end with the characters who witnessed or experienced them in confusion, which can make it necessary for the reader to skip back a few lines or to the last chapter to see if what he or she read was correct.



Quotes

"Memories. They were all that she had. No more tangible than the pictures conjured up by books" (Chapter 1, p. 12).

"The wood of the chest was rotten, and as with the other treasures he had dug up, Farid wondered whether the silver might not have been lying under the gallows even before Orpheus wrote his words" (Chapter 3, p. 31).

"Fenoglio was lying in bed, as he had done so often in these last few weeks. Or was it months? It didn't matter" (Chapter 5, p. 45).

"He found it difficult to feel afraid of the boy, although he had heard so much that was bad about him" (Chapter 7, p. 71).

"Perhaps he could seize a sword from one of the soldiers in one of the dark corridors, far from the other guards on duty. For guards stood everywhere with the Milksop's emblem on their chests" (Chapter 9, p. 82).

"She stayed in bed for three more days, and when she dragged herself into her library on the fourth day, still in her nightdress and dressing gown, to get something else to read, she found Darius holding the sheet of paper" (Chapter 11, p. 105).

"Brianna's eyes were not like her father's. She had her mother's eyes, and they looked at Farid with the same hostility as Roxane's" (Chapter 13, p. 117).

"She didn't want Mo to say what she herself had never put into words. In love — it sounded like a sickness without any cure, and wasn't that just how it sometimes felt" (Chapter 15, p. 131).

"Hope. Nothing is more intoxicating. And hardly any hope was sweeter than the prospect of giving the Piper an unpleasant surprise and humiliating him in front of his immortal master" (Chapter 17, p. 146).

"Ombra seemed more than ever like a city of the dead as Resa went back to the stable where she had left her horse" (Chapter 19, p. 161).

"He took out Meggie's bookmark and stoked the boldly patterned blue feathers. Blue jay feathers. Meggie had glued them to a strip of pale yellow cardboard" (Chapter 21, p. 175).

"Another White Woman appeared, then a fourth, and a fifth. They surrounded Mo and the Black Prince until Meggie saw the two men only as shadows among those misty figures" (Chapter 23, p. 188).



"The face was indeed much more tranquil than it had been in life, and all of a sudden he wasn't sure whether he was really doing Dustfinger a favor by calling him back" (Chapter 25, p. 199).

"Even when he put his arms around her, carefully, as if he wasn't sure whether he had forgotten how to hold her, she didn't move - because her hands did not believe they would really feel him, her arms did not believe they could hold him again" (Chapter 27, p. 204).

"Farid immediately forgot all about Oss' rough fingers and Orpheus' unpleasant smile. There was nothing in him but joy, like a violent pain, too much for his heart to bear" (Chapter 29, p. 212).

"Resa had finished writing the letter. She looked at Mo as if hoping, just for a moment, that he would throw the parchment on the fire" (Chapter 31, p. 228).

"Several times a day, Violante went down to the dungeons where the Milksop had imprisoned the children" (Chapter 33, p. 242).

"There was not a cheerful sound to be heard, no laughter, no weeping. It was simply quiet. Resa stood with the mothers as if she, too, were waiting for a child to come back, instead of expecting to lose her husband" (Chapter 35, p. 256).

"Naturally, Orpheus had sent Oss with the glass man at first, but his bodyguard had let Fenoglio's landlady catch him. There was no dark corner where that great hulk could lurk unsee, and Ironstone hadn't even reached the stairs leading to Fenoglio's room" (Chapter 37, p. 271).

"The little girl cried when the women left, but Meggie stroked her hair and told her what Battista had said about the snow: Many of the snowflakes, he had told her, were tiny elves who kissed your face with icy lips before melting on your warm skin" (Chapter 39, p. 292).

"The Black Prince led them uphill and downhill, through thickets and stony debris, along such overgrown paths that they usually had to carry the smaller children" (Chapter 41, p. 304).

"Every day it was getting more difficult to keep her wings still when the magpie wanted to spread them, and Mortola had to shake her bird's head harder and harder to make it think human thoughts" (Chapter 43, p. 328).

"The White Women had gone, but his dark face was still as gray as if their hands had bleached his skin" (Chapter 45, p. 343).

"There was no going back home without him. If Mo died in the Inkworld, then so would she...hoping that the White Women would take her to wherever he was" (Chapter 47, p. 356).



"Orpheus hadn't found anything about him in Fenoglio's book, so presumably he was one of those characters who - if Fenoglio himself was to be believed — had been hatched out by the story itself, like midge larvae in a marshy pond" (Chapter 49, p. 371).

"Mortola uttered a pitiful cry, and the robbers looked up at her as if she were announcing their death. They didn't realize that the magpie was the old woman they'd wanted to kill" (Chapter 51, p. 390).

"The sun was already low as the robbers began stretching ropes, weaving nets, and building wooden platforms to be hauled up the tall trunk" (Chapter 53, p. 406).

"And the words came. They came easily. The Adderhead was on his way back to the castle where he had once paid court to Violante's mother, and his immortality was a burden to him" (Chapter 55, p. 417).

"Resa heard the sobbing as soon as she made her way into it. The Strong Man was groaning as he crawled in after her. Something furry crouched there in the darkness" (Chapter 57, p. 433).

"The Hall of a Thousand Windows had no windows anymore. Thumbling had had them draped with black cloth, and only half a dozen torches gave light in the darkness, just enough of it to show the Adderhead the face of his worst enemy" (Chapter 59, p. 442).

When Resa spat out the seeds she had been holding under her tongue, two were missing, and for a terrible moment she was afraid she would be a bird forever, but her body still remembered itself" (Chapter 61, p. 460).

"In the hand of a giant. His own giant! Not bad, eh? No reason to be sad about it" (Chapter 63, p. 470).

"The wolf with its burning coat leaped off the wall and followed Dustfinger out. However, the words that had been written in the air were still there, and Resa read them again" (Chapter 65, p. 482).

"Books. He leaned the bloodstained sword against the wall, stroked their stained spines, and felt the burden of the words lifting from him shoulders" (Chapter 67, p. 490).

"Where was the White Book? Resa looked around her. Chests, clothes thrown over a chair, the bed untidy. The Adderhead slept poorly" (Chapter 69, p. 499).

"Fold. Cut. The paper was good, better than the last time. Mo's fingertips felt the fibers on its pale white surfaces, ran along the edges in search of memories" (Chapter 71, p. 510).

"Resa had flown to him so that Silvertongue would not be alone when he died. Or did she still hope for some miracle to save him" (Chapter 73, p. 520).



"Write, Mo! He pressed the pencil down onto the blood-soaked paper" (Chapter 75, p. 530).

"Desperately, Resa fluttered up on the table, retching in the frantic hope that there might be a seed still under her tongue, but her feathery prison would not let her go, and the Piper pulled at Mo's chains again" (Chapter 77, p. 533).

Silvertongue took the Bluejay away with him, too. It seemed as if the two of them were riding side by side, and not for the first time Dustfinger wondered whether they were only two sides of the same man" (Chapter 79, p. 543).

"Almost five months later a baby will be born at the lonely farm where the Black Prince once hid the Bluejay" (Chapter 81, p. 552).



Topics for Discussion

Discuss the characters of Bluejay and the Black Prince. What is their relationship at the beginning of the novel? How does it change by the end?

Why does Meggie lose feelings for Farid but gain them for Doria? What about Doria attracts him to her?

Is Fenoglio responsible for the situation all of the characters are now in as many blame him? Discuss his strengths and weaknesses.

Compare and contrast the characters of Fenoglio and Orpheus. What about them is similar? What makes them take drastically different sides in the novel? Which appears to be the stronger writer? Why?

Why does Violante hate her father so much that she seeks to kill him? Does part of her father's own personality owe some responsibility for this? Why was Violante's nickname Her Ugliness? How has that shaped her personality with respect to her father?

Jacopo is not well liked by any of the other characters. Discuss how you feel about the young child and explain why he suddenly decided to help Mortimer and his mother against the Piper and Adderhead, who he regarded as heroes.

Why does Dustfinger try so hard to protect Mortimer from danger? What is Orpheus' reaction to Dustfinger's reappearance? How does it affect the rest of the novel as a whole?

Is Meggie a strong character? Is she more like her father or mother? Explain.

Discuss the role of family in the novel. Compare and contrast Mortimer's family with that of the Adderhead's.