

# **Magyk Study Guide**

**Magyk by Angie Sage**

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## Plot Summary

Jenna is about to celebrate her tenth birthday with her parents, Sarah and Silas Heap, and her six brothers. She lives in a castle where magic was once very important but has since been all but abolished and where most wizards are feared or shunned. Before the birthday celebration can begin, the Extraordinary Wizard, a woman named Marcia Overstrand, arrives at the Heap house. Silas and Sarah know Jenna is not their biological daughter but have never questioned her parentage. Marcia reveals that Jenna is the daughter of the deceased queen, has been recognized by an assassin, and is now in danger. Marcia's story is backed by Alther Mella, the ghost of a former Extraordinary Wizard who often visits both the Heap house and Marcia. Marcia and the Heaps prepare to escape the castle and Jenna goes with Marcia to the Wizard's Tower. There, they find a young guard, the same age as Jenna, collapsed and frozen near the tower entrance. They take him inside and warm him up.

The boy reveals he's a member of the Young Army and has no name. He is merely Boy 412. He knows nothing about his parentage and has been taught that wizards are bad. When the evil necromancer, DomDaniel, arrives at the Tower, Marcia, Jenna, the Boy, Silas, and Jenna's younger brother Nicko, escape through a rubbish chute. They end up at the home of Silas's aunt, Zelda, who is a white witch. Over time, Boy comes to trust the others and it soon becomes evident that he has incredible magical powers. When Silas learns one of his sons, Simon, is missing, he goes to join the search and soon discovers Simon had run away to get married.

Silas is still away when Marcia receives a bogus message saying Silas needs to meet with her. It's a trap and Marcia is taken captive by DomDaniel who takes Marcia's amulet and sets himself as Extraordinary Wizard. DomDaniel is intent on killing Jenna, heir to the throne of the kingdom, and discovers the location of Aunt Zelda's house.

Aunt Zelda sends Jenna, Boy, and Nicko through a secret tunnel to hide from DomDaniel. There, they discover a hidden Dragon Boat they'd all believed to be nothing more than legend. The Dragon Boat, which is part live dragon, immediately recognizes Jenna as the young queen and Boy as the Dragon Master. The Dragon sets out and takes the children onto the marsh which is flooded by DomDaniel's storm. Jenna instructs the Dragon to rescue Marcia, which the dragon does. The Brownies then take over the boat and apparently destroy everything - and everyone - on board.

The following day Jenna discovers DomDaniel's apprentice has survived and she urges Nicko to help get the young boy to the house. Once there, Marcia realizes it's really DomDaniel in disguise and she sends him back to the Dark regions. Boy 412 accepts that he's a magical being and accepts Marcia's invitation to become her apprentice. With that acceptance comes the opportunity to ask a favor of Marcia and he asks for his true family to be revealed to him. When Marcia calls on Sister Moon for that information, it's revealed that Boy 412 is the seventh son of Silas and Sarah. His name is Septimus Heap and he was kidnapped as an infant.



# Chapters 1 through 5

## Chapters 1 through 5 Summary

As the story opens, Silas Heap is headed home through the forest carrying herbs given to him by Galen, the Physik Woman, that he's to take home for his newborn son, Septimus. Silas senses a living being nearby and discovers an infant girl, wrapped in a blanket lying in the snow. He knows he can't leave the child to die and takes her home with him. At the bridge, Silas is stopped by the Gatekeeper, a man named Gringe, and is forced to pay the man a penny. As Silas enters the walls of the city, he encounters Marcia Overstrand, the Extraordinary Wizard, who tells Silas he's to tell no one about finding the child but is to raise her as his own. Silas nods and Marcia disappears. Just as Silas reaches the door of his crowded little house, he meets the midwife. She is carrying a bundle and Silas's wife, Sarah, says the midwife has taken the body of Septimus away. Silas hands her the baby girl.

In Chapter Two, the Heaps call the little girl Jenna after Silas's mother and she becomes an accepted member of the household. Silas and Sarah can't forget Septimus, who was their seventh son, but they love Jenna as if she were their own. Sarah's friend Sally Mullins is a regular visitor at the Heap house and one day six months after Jenna's arrival Sally announces the queen has been killed. Sally says there are some who say the queen was killed on the day she gave birth to a daughter. Sally says the Wizard Extraordinary, Alther Mello, was also killed and that no one knows where the baby princess is, though Sally believes she is probably in a dungeon somewhere. Things begin to change within the castle and Silas and Sarah consider leaving but eventually decide to remain and "muddle through." For the next nine and a half years they do just that, teaching "Magyk" to the children at home when it becomes forbidden at school.

In Chapter Three, everyone in the Heap household remains asleep on the morning of Jenna's tenth birthday but there is a great disturbance on the other side of the castle as the Supreme Custodian is roused from his sleep when an assassin reports she's found the young princess. The assassin is told she must kill the princess that night. Meanwhile, Alther is flying high above the ground, flying being the one thing he likes about being a ghost. Alther has watched as the Supreme Custodian searched for the princess in the ten years since the death of the queen. Until now, Alther - with Marcia's help - has managed to keep the princess safe. The Supreme Custodian reports every year to a former Extraordinary Wizard who has turned Necromancer, DomDaniel. But with the assassin's report to the Supreme Custodian, Alther knows the princess is no longer safe. He goes to Marcia's home and rouses her from bed.

In Chapter Four, Marcia dresses and stops in front of the mirror, demanding the mirror show her a thinner reflection of herself. She is wearing her "winter ExtraOrdinary Wizard uniform" and, as always, the Akhu Amulet, which is the "symbol and source of power of the ExtraOrdinary Wizard." Outside the Wizard's Tower, Marcia sees a young sentry. When she asks, he says he's ten years old and that he is a member of the Young Army.



Marcia hurries to the Heap house, noting people looking at her along the way. Most people are in awe of the ExtraOrdinary Wizard but Marcia is oblivious to the stares and other reactions.

In Chapter Five, Marcia arrives at the Heap house. Silas opens the door to Marcia and she announces, without any warning, that she's come for the princess. Silas and Sarah are not open to the possibility of Jenna leaving the house and Marcia takes a seat to explain. She points out that Silas and Sarah know Jenna isn't really their daughter and reveals that their next-door neighbor, Linda Lane, is a spy and has revealed Jenna's identity to powers that would hurt her. When Jenna asks Sarah if she's really a princess, Sarah confirms it but then asks Marcia to reveal everything that happened the day Jenna was taken from the royal chambers.

Marcia says Alther Mello, the ExtraOrdinary Wizard at the time, had gone with Marcia - who was his apprentice - to see the newborn princess. An Assassin burst into the room and killed the queen. Alther stepped in to save the princess but was fatally shot. Marcia had the princess and the Amulet. Marcia says she knew she couldn't protect the princess so she ran away but then thought of Sarah, who she knew to be a good mother with an infant of her own. She put the princess in a place she felt sure Silas would find the infant. Marcia places a small golden crown on Jenna's head and says she now has to go away in order to be protected. Jenna, who admits she begins to feel slightly different with the crown on top of her head, agrees. Marcia says Silas and Sarah should take the boys into the forest and hide.

## Chapters 1 through 5 Analysis

There is a great deal of magic from the opening chapters of the book, seen very clearly with Marcia's entrance into the story. The personification of things is an important aspect of this magic. Marcia lives in the Wizard's Tower and when she is about to go downstairs, the stove begins to frantically try to light itself to be ready for her. This reveals two important aspects of the story - that the stove is animated and thinks for itself and that Marcia is demanding so that the things in her house fear her. An amusing scene occurs when Marcia stops to look at herself in the mirror. She demands the mirror make her thinner and gives a ridiculous percentage. The mirror notes that it hates doing math so early in the morning and wishes she would simply ask for ten percent thinner because it can calculate that with no problems. The magical stairs take Marcia up and down automatically and there are other magical features in the house. Another aspect of the magic theme is seen when Marcia arrives at the Heap house. Marcia expects to demand entrance and for the door to give in to her command. It's noted that the door stands firm against her command though the door at the Wizard's tower rushes to open for her.

Something has happened that magic is no longer taught in this world though it obviously remains an important part of everyday life. It's noted that Silas has literally hundreds of magic books and that many of them were rescued from the school when magic was no longer taught. There is a guard at the Wizard's Tower, though it's only a ten-year-old



boy. Marcia notes his outfit which is ridiculously colored with silly accessories and says that it's obviously aimed at making fun of the wizards. This all indicates the lack of official respect for magic and magical people. However, Silas has continued to teach magic to his children and it doesn't seem to be a secret. When Marcia is rushing for the Heap house, she encounters many people and they all recognize her as an ExtraOrdinary Wizard. Some of them even use their "small" spells on themselves as she passes. The situation is confusing but not at all necessary to the overall understanding of the story.



# Chapters 6 through 10

## Chapters 6 through 10 Summary

In Chapter Six, Jenna is hidden under Marcia's cloak and the two leave the house without taking time for any real good-byes. When Marcia and Jenna arrive at the Wizard's Tower they find the boy who was standing guard as Marcia left is now in a heap on the ground, covered with snow and so cold he's almost dead. Marcia revives the boy and she and Jenna take him inside.

In Chapter Seven, Marcia uses magic to remove the wet clothes from the young sentry and then gives Jenna some heavy, warm, purple socks as well. Just about that time, there's a knock and Marcia uses a "Translucent Spell" to discover Jenna's brother, Nicko, Silas and the Heap family's wolfhound named Maximilliam at the door. Silas says Sarah and the other boys have already headed into the forest to stay with a friend named Galen, but that he wanted to bring Jenna her birthday gift which she hadn't had time to open before Marcia took her away. Just then the young sentry regains consciousness and tells them his name is Boy 412. Jenna opens the gift and discovers it's a rock. She tries not to sound disappointed but then her father reveals that it's really a pet rock. She follows his instructions to "tickle" the rock and watches as it stretches and walks around on the palm of her hand. She decides to name it Petroc Trewlaney.

Boy 412 is frantic, imagining the commander of the Young Army arriving to take him away and punish him for allowing himself to be kidnapped by wizards. Jenna tries to comfort him. Then Alther arrives and says the Assassin is already inside the Tower. Marcia uses magic to knock the Assassin away from Jenna then blinds him from seeing them while they escape. Marcia pushes Silas into the rubbish chute, saying it's the only way out. Jenna pushes Boy 412 in as well and then jumps in herself. Nicko, Marcia, and Maxie follow.

In Chapter Eight, Jenna becomes terrified as she plummets quickly downward. It's very dark and she can't see anything but she can hear Maxie catching up with her. Maxie is thrilled when he finally gets himself settled into a "streamlined streak of fur." He's worried when he streaks past Silas because Silas is "To Dog" in Maxie's world, but he can't slow down and has no choice in the situation. Boy comes to believe he's being tested by the Young Army. The chute levels off then they come to a complete standstill. When Marcia finally gets the gate at the end of the chute open, they find themselves in the Riverside Amenity Rubbish Dump.

In Chapter Nine, Sally Mullins is in her café serving five Northern Traders when she sees Marcia and Silas. Sally immediately jumps to the conclusion that Silas and Marcia are running away together and rushes to stand up for her friend Sarah. Sally remembers that Sarah has talked about Silas's obsessions with Marcia but she notes that Sarah isn't completely blameless if the couple is having marital problems. Sally says it's impossible to look at Jenna and not realize Silas isn't her father. Sally confronts



Silas, pleading with him to go home to Sarah but Silas tells her what's really going on in order to convince her he isn't cheating on his wife and to solicit her help.

Sally takes the group to a small cabin behind the business that's sometimes used by travelers who need to sleep. She packs some food for them and they all gather at the quay where Sally has a sail boat named Muriel. Silas says they'll go stay with his Aunt Zelda. Aunt Zelda is the Keeper in Marram Marshes and Marcia agrees. Sally returns to her café knowing the Hunter will be soon arriving in search of Jenna and the others.

In Chapter Ten, eight minutes and twenty seconds later, the Hunter arrives. When he's certain the group isn't in the rubbish chute, he begins to search. Sally sees the Hunter is followed by DomDaniel's apprentice, a young boy who is observing the Hunter's progress. Just then the Hunter sees Sally at the window and recognizes fear in her eyes.

## Chapters 6 through 10 Analysis

Jenna is already struggling with her new identity by the time she reaches Marcia's apartments in the Wizard's Tower. She admits to feeling different from the moment she's wearing the crown and knows most people could never imagine the inside of the Wizard's Tower, let alone visit it. When Silas and Nicko arrive at the Tower, Jenna points out to Nicko that he isn't really her brother but Nicko disagrees. He says, "Nothing can change that. Silly Princess." Silas interrupts, saying that Jenna simply has two mothers - one was the queen and the other is Sarah. Jenna will come to accept her new role and her new identity but it will take some time.

Sally remembers Sarah talking about Silas's obsession with Marcia and uses that to support her theory that Silas is running away with Marcia. In fact, Silas's issue with Marcia has a great deal to do with his own evaluation of past decisions. Silas was originally apprenticed to Alther but dropped out of the apprenticeship because it was taking too much time from his family. Marcia points out that Silas had decided he would rather spend time reading bedtime stories to his sons than studying magic books. This is an important aspect of Silas's personality. He apparently has the magical powers to become a mighty wizard but has devoted himself to his family instead.





# Chapters 11 through 15

## Chapters 11 through 15 Summary

In Chapter Eleven, Sally sees the Hunter and his party coming toward the café and rushes to the counter, planning to appear welcoming when he walks in. The Hunter immediately tells her he knows she has information he needs about "a small and dangerous group of terrorists." When Sally's expression flickers, the Hunter asks if Sally is surprised to hear that her friends are terrorists. Sally says she isn't but realizes she's just admitted to knowing what the Hunter is talking about. The Hunter threatens to burn down Sally's café but she refuses to tell him where they've gone. However, the Northern Traders reveal Silas's group left in a boat. The Hunter lets the Traders leave then gives his men instructions to nail Sally's door shut and burn the café with her inside. The Hunter calls for a bullet boat to follow the group and notes the flames from Sally's café as his boat is pulling away.

In Chapter Twelve, Jenna and the others are traveling along the river. Boy has fallen into an exhausted sleep. Nicko is a good sailor and his father tells him so. In Chapter Thirteen, the Hunter catches up with them. Silas asks Marcia why she can't do something to help them escape. Marcia says she can't make anyone but herself invisible and that she doesn't have time for a complicated "Element Control" spell. She decides she can create a fog in only fifty-three seconds and does so. They can hear the bullet boat nearby but can't see it. The Hunter calls out for them to give themselves up. The Boy is awake but Jenna covers his mouth with her hand, keeping him from calling out. He thumps the boat and the Hunter knows which way to go. Marcia then creates a Projection, a mirror image of the Muriel.

In Chapter Fourteen, Marcia is struggling to keep both spells going at the same time and Silas has a "grudging respect" for her, knowing it takes a great deal of talent to do so. DomDaniel's apprentice is the first to realize the boat they are chasing is actually a mirror image. Jenna's group has managed to escape by this time and Marcia says she shouldn't be vindictive but can't help herself. She causes the Hunter to pose on the side of the boat, hold his hands "elegantly above his head" and dive out of his boat into the freezing cold water. Just then Alther arrives and tells Marcia he might have been tempted to do something mean to the Hunter himself.

In Chapter Fifteen, Alther explains that he can only go places as a ghost he'd gone when he was alive. Alther also reveals that DomDaniel has returned to the castle. He says DomDaniel had arrived as soon as Jenna was around the first bend of the river. He says DomDaniel has also taken over the Wizard's Tower. Marcia says she'd always thought everything would be alright if they could simply hold out until Jenna was old enough to rule. Alther says he's only recently realized that Jenna was stopping DomDaniel's return simply by remaining in the castle. Alther also reveals that DomDaniel, whom many had thought dead, was actually waiting in the Abyss for an opportunity to return. Marcia's first instinct is to return to the Tower but Alther says there



are no wizards remaining there to help her and that she's vulnerable because she gave her KeepSafe charm to Sally. Silas uses Magyk to change the Muriel into canoes. It takes several tries before he manages to have two reasonable canoes for the five of them to travel in. Maxie sits behind Muriel and drools in her hair. They enter the Marram Marshes with Jenna in the lead. She soon encounters a fork and doesn't know which way to go. Just as she's asking and Silas is looking confused, "a slimy mud-brown hand with webbed fingers and broad black claws" reaches out of the water and takes hold of Jenna's canoe.

## Chapters 11 through 15 Analysis

DomDaniel's apprentice believes he is a vital part of DomDaniel's return to power in the castle. It will much later be revealed the boy believes he is Septimus Heap, the seventh son of Silas and Sarah who was taken away as an infant. Sarah has been lead to believe her son died. In fact, he was drugged to make it appear he died and taken away by the midwife who was under orders from DomDaniel. What really happened was much different. The midwife's own son was in the nursery where the midwife was when DomDaniel's messenger arrived to pick up Septimus Heap and the messenger picked up the midwife's son by mistake. DomDaniel believes he has Septimus Heap - the seventh son of a seventh son - who will have great magical abilities. In fact, his apprentice is the non-magical son of a midwife.

While they are traveling down the river, Jenna says she hopes Sally is alright and Marcia says Sally will be fine. Silas is angry at her response, saying it's typical of Marcia not to worry about anyone. In fact, Marcia has given Sally a charm to keep her safe though it means Marcia is now traveling without that charm. The reader knows only that Sally's café was burned down, apparently with Sally inside, until much later in the book. It's never revealed how she escaped.

Boy sees the Magyk swirling around Marcia and is amazed by what he sees. The Boy is actually very magical himself but he doesn't realize it or accept it for a long time.



# Chapters 16 through 21

## Chapters 16 through 21 Summary

In Chapter Sixteen, Jenna is about to slap the creature with her paddle when it says, "No need for that," stopping her before she hits it. It is the Boggart, a creature who loves mud and who was sent by Aunt Zelda to show them the way to her cottage. There are adventures along the way, including Maxie's decision to jump out of a canoe so that he's all wet when he gets in the canoe with Jenna, Nicko, and Boy. Boggart warns about the magical aspects of Draggen Island and Silas is almost bewitched.

In Chapter Seventeen, Alther is flying back toward the castle and passes the bullet boat and the Hunter. Alther arrives at the castle and does many little things to make life less comfortable for DomDaniel. The apprentice returns and is horrified at having to tell DomDaniel Jenna escaped the Hunter, but he does.

In Chapter Eighteen, Jenna wakes the next morning at Aunt Zelda's home, the Keeper's Cottage, on Draggen Island. She isn't certain how much of the previous day's events were true but realizes they were all true when she touches the small crown still on her head. Aunt Zelda's house is small and Jenna, Nicko, and Boy are asleep in the downstairs room while the others are upstairs. Jenna goes outside in the early morning and Nicko joins her there. They share a quilt for a short time before going back inside.

In Chapter Nineteen, Aunt Zelda provides hot milk and buttered toast for breakfast. Boy can't imagine being wakened with such a treat instead of the usual means of being roused - with a bucket of icy water. Jenna hears a cat and Aunt Zelda realizes she'd "completely forgot about Bert." Jenna opens a cat door for Bert and an angry duck waddles into the room. The duck meows and everyone is confused until Aunt Zelda says Bert shape shifted into a duck because cats hate the water and there is a great deal of it in the marsh. Jenna, Nicko, and Boy go for a walk but Boy is soon separated from the others.

In Chapter Twenty, Boy falls in a hole and is separated from Jenna and Nicko. Once there, he is afraid of the total darkness but is not hurt. He sits down and runs his fingers through the sandy floor of the cave he's in. He finds a ring and puts it on his finger. The ring is loose at first but soon fits perfectly and begins to glow so that he can see where he's going. The ring guides him through the cave and up some stairs so that he emerges into Aunt Zelda's potions cabinet.

In Chapter Twenty-one, Jenna and Nicko arrive and want to know where Boy was and how he got back to Aunt Jenna's so quickly, but he continues to be silent as he has since their arrival on Draggen Island. Then Stanley, the Messenger Rat, arrives. Marcia hides away with Jenna as soon as Stanley arrives, saying they have to be certain Stanley is a Confidential Rat rather than a spy. The message from Stanley is from Sarah and says one of their sons, Simon, is missing. Nicko says Simon is probably alright but



Silas is clearly worried. Marcia decides that Silas will return with Stanley to get the KeepSafe charm from Sally.

## Chapters 16 through 21 Analysis

It should be noted that both Boy 412 and DomDaniel's apprentice are mistaken about their own identities. Boy 412 is really Septimus Heap, and DomDaniel's apprentice, who believes he is Septimus Heap, is really the non-magical son of a midwife. For the sake of clarity in this study guide, they are referred to as Boy 412 and DomDaniel's apprentice, just as they are in the book.

When Jenna awakes on the morning after her arrival at Aunt Zelda's, she continues to try to come to terms with her new identity. She wonders about Sarah and is obviously missing her because Sarah is the only mother Jenna has ever known. Jenna wonders if Sarah will still want to be her mother. Jenna doesn't yet realize this is a ridiculous question and that family is more than blood kinship.

The rules regarding the Message Rat are interesting. The rat can't speak until the recipient says the magic words and the recipient can also silence the rat. Stanley is flattered to have been asked to carry a message to a wizard but his wife had urged him to turn down the assignment. Stanley is dedicated to his job and when Marcia decides Silas should return with the rat Stanley wants to refuse but gives in and confirms the order. Later, Stanley will be asked to return with another message to Aunt Zelda and he'll be told he is no longer a confidential messenger. The goal is for him to reveal where Aunt Zelda's cottage is but Stanley refuses to give that information despite the fact that he's jailed and held prisoner for a long time.



# Chapters 22 through 25

## Chapters 22 through 25 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-two, those remaining at Aunt Zelda's house settle into a routine of sorts. Marcia teaches Jenna a disappearing spell then tells Boy it's his turn to learn it. Boy, who hasn't spoken aloud in front of anyone yet, thinks the words of the spell and turns invisible. Boy believes he's done something wrong because Marcia seems shocked but Marcia is actually thinking she's never seen someone get the hang of a spell so quickly.

In Chapter Twenty-three, a storm arrives. Marcia is trying to sleep but Maxie's snores are keeping her awake. Aunt Zelda is watching out the window, as she always does during a storm, in case her older brother Benjamin Heap - who had shape shifted into a "storm petrel" - returns to the island. Boy believes he was able to do the invisibility spell so easily because of the ring. Boy lists all the facts he can about his life right now, a habit taught to him by the Young Army. He has no morning roll call in this new life he's living, plenty of food, attention from Aunt Zelda who is very nice, time with Jenna, and has found the ring. He lists all these things on his "good" list. The only negative is that Marcia seemed to be cross after he'd done the invisibility spell so easily. For the first time in his life, Boy has a good life and he fears he's going to lose it.

The next morning, Marcia asks Boy to go for a walk with her. He's immediately worried that she knows he found the cave and the ring, and that she'll accuse him of stealing. During their walk, Marcia tells Boy she sees he has a natural ability for magic and asks him to become her apprentice. She proves to him he can do more magic but he continues to believe it's because he's in possession of the ring and continues to hide the ring from Marcia. Boy shakes his head, refusing the offer, but doesn't say a word. Marcia is shocked that he'd refuse. She asks him to think about it. Marcia then urges Boy to join her in catching bugs for the "Preserve Pots."

In Chapter Twenty-four, Jenna and Nicko return to the cottage to discover the others are in the process of making Shield Bugs. They help. In Chapter Twenty-five, Silas is in the forest waiting for Morwenna Mould, a young witch he'd met years earlier. Morwenna had been trying to escape a pack of hungry hyenas when she'd accidentally put a freeze spell on herself instead of the animals. Silas had saved her. He now asks her to help find Simon.

## Chapters 22 through 25 Analysis

There is a great deal of information about how Magyk books, charms, and spells work. The wizard who creates a spell writes it down and creates a group of charms that go with the spell. The charms can be anything and include the words of the spell. In some



cases, the charms might be as simple as pieces of toast and in other cases might be elaborate and pretty.

Part of the process of making the Shield Bugs is that each member of the household "Imprint" the bug so that bug recognizes them and is willing to protect them. They have an assembly line going to accomplish this but it's momentarily interrupted and only Jenna imprints one of the bugs. This will be important later when that bug is accidentally released.

There's a funny scene in which the reader sees the process from the perspective of a millipede that was among the bugs caught for the spell. The millipede has been protective of its legs because of the need to keep all its legs "in perfect working order." The millipede notes that with "one dodgy leg," he could be destined to walk in circles for the rest of his life. The millipede is horrified to see his legs disappear as he's changing shapes into a Shield Bug until he has only four thick appendages sticking out of his body - appendages that could never truly be considered legs. The expression of the millipede turns to one of surprise as he waits for the moment he'll be released to do his duty. This changing of perspective remains an important part of the story as does a humorous look at the magic being performed.

Chapter Twenty-four ends with an important piece of foreshadowing. Silas is leaving in search of Simon, and Sarah asks that he be careful. Simon tells her not to worry and promises to be back with Simon soon. The final sentence of the chapter indicates that Sarah does worry and that Silas doesn't return soon with Simon. This is a clue to the reader that Simon is not going to be quickly found and hints that something evil has befallen him.



# Chapters 26 through 29

## Chapters 26 through 29 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-six, Sarah allows herself to be persuaded by her friend Galen to attend the Mid-Winter Feast. They are invited by the Wendron Witches and Galen is flattered to be invited. While there, Sarah is consoled by Morwenna who says the witches are all helping search for Simon and that "all will be well" with Sarah's "other three children" who are separated from Sarah at the moment. Sarah counters, saying there are only two others - apparently referring to Jenna and Nicko. While Morwenna doesn't identify the other three, she does say there are three.

Simon, meanwhile, returns to the Heap house in search of Simon. Gringe, the Gatekeeper, quickly informs the Supreme Custodian of Silas's return but Silas has Marcia's KeepSafe charm and remains safe. At home, Silas finds Simon is not there but discovers a removal man is there planning to take all the Heap's possessions to the dump. Silas is forced into helping him clear out the debris and the man heads to the dump with the first load, telling Silas he'll return for all the Magyk books soon. Silas is sad that his books will be burned but Alther arrives and suggests Silas hide the books in the small attic Silas and Sarah had used as a bedroom.

Alther takes Silas to the Hole in the Wall Tavern. It's located in the castle walls and the living have forgotten its existence though the dead spend a great deal of time there. Silas learns from a ghost woman there that Simon had purposely slipped away from Sarah and the others to return to the castle because he planned to marry his girlfriend, Lucy Gringe, daughter of the Gatekeeper. Silas is mortified that he's going to be related by marriage to Gringe but the woman says Gringe found out about the wedding and stopped it. Simon was then arrested by the Supreme Custodian and no one had been able to find him since.

In Chapter Twenty-seven, Stanley is summoned again to the Rat Office to deliver another message. He's given a message to deliver to Marcia and Stanley says he knows how to find her. He's then told he's no longer a Confidential Rat. Stanley's voyage this time is filled with problems and he's soon stranded, cold, wet, and hungry. A man named Mad Jack tells Stanley he lives near the Marram Marshes and offers Stanley a ride. Mad Jack guesses Stanley is a Message Rat, seems awed by the fact, and Stanley, breaking an important rule of his job because he believes Mad Jack is a harmless old man, confirms it. Mad Jack takes Stanley prisoner and leaves him in a cage.

In Chapter Twenty-eight, the Big Freeze occurs. Silas is stuck at the Hole in the Wall. Simon remains imprisoned in the Ladies Washroom of the castle and soon finds himself talking to the Supreme Custodian though he'd originally been afraid. The Supreme Custodian tells Simon there will soon be a new apprentice to the ExtraOrdinary Wizard and that Simon could be offered that position. Simon becomes even more talkative.





He's soon not imprisoned at all. Meanwhile, the Hunter reports to DomDaniel that Simon's conversations have offered enough information for the Hunter to find Aunt Zelda's house while Sarah's other sons have settled into a routine in the forest that includes frequent visits by the Weldon Witches.

In Chapter Twenty-nine, Nicko, Jenna, and Boy have to dig their way out of Aunt Zelda's house. They skate on a pond that has an ice covering over a huge python. They are initially scared of the huge snake but the children get over their fear because the snake can do nothing but swim in circles. Boy 412 is very interested in Aunt Zelda's potion cupboard and sneaks a peek once. One day Jenna and Nicko find Stanley in the cage at Mad Jack's house and rescue him. He's very ill and doesn't speak for days though Marcia says the magic words that would allow him to talk.

## Chapters 26 through 29 Analysis

Simon and Sarah live in chaos in their home in the castle. The house is filled with clutter and there is usually nowhere to even sit. The house is very small for the large family but they seem happy in the clutter. However, when Silas goes back to the house and finds the rubbish man there to collect all their possessions, he sees the house as a stranger would have seen it and he's suddenly ashamed of how they'd lived.

Simon's captivity will prove an important part of the story since it hints of serious problems in an upcoming adventure. Simon is initially a prisoner and is bound but later becomes friendly with the Supreme Custodian. Simon's whereabouts remain hidden from Alther who has searched all over the castle because ghosts can only go where they went in real life. Simon is being held in the women's washroom - a place Alther never went in real life. The living people can't figure out exactly why the washroom is a safe place to discuss things. They originally had a meeting in the room, which was converted to a conference room, because the room was warmer than most in the castle. However, the officials soon discovered their conversations in that room remained secret while people figured out things that were discussed in other rooms.





# Chapters 30 through 36

## Chapters 30 through 36 Summary

In Chapter Thirty, Stanley reveals his message to "ex-ExtraOrdinary Wizard Marcia Overstrand." The message indicates Marcia is to come to the castle at a specific time of night, is "by proxy" and is signed, Silas Heap. The message indicates Silas will be waiting for her each night until she shows up. Marcia wants to go immediately but waits until the middle of the night. She disappears from the cottage and appears at the castle gates, believing she'll be safe because of a spell. But she's miscalculated the time and is caught upon arrival.

In Chapter Thirty-one, Aunt Zelda is upset that Marcia left. Stanley decides he's strong enough to make the return trip. Jenna wants to send a message to Silas but Aunt Zelda refuses, sensing something is wrong with the entire process. He's in serious trouble because he's been away about two months and is then taken to the Supreme Custodian.

In Chapter Thirty-two, the Big Thaw arrives and the python breaks free but has trouble straightening out after swimming in a circle so long. Marcia is being held in deplorable conditions and would already have died if not for Alther's continual support. One day Aunt Zelda feels someone coming toward the cottage and sends Boggart to find out who and to show them the way in. All the Shield Bugs at the cottage are "activated" in case of trouble and Jenna accidentally releases the one that had been a millipede. This was the bug that wasn't imprinted by the entire household and it immediately attacks everyone, believing it's supposed to protect Jenna from everyone else. Jenna tries to get it back in its jar but can't. They hear a scratching on the door and discover Boggart on the steps, bleeding. Aunt Zelda manages to dig a bullet out of Boggart though he is seriously ill.

In Chapter Thirty-three, Aunt Zelda says Boggart will be okay but it will take time to heal. Knowing there is someone coming toward the cottage who intends harm, Boy, Nicko, and Jenna keep watch. They see a canoe coming with a couple of inhabitants and a "Thing." They release all the Shield Bugs as soon as they see the Hunter and DomDaniel's apprentice but Jenna keeps her personal Shield Bug with her. The Shield Bugs rush the Hunter who stops very still. The apprentice runs and the bugs all chase him into the marsh where they are drowned by the weight of their armor. The Hunter zeroes in on Jenna, Nicko, and Boy. Nicko faces him while Boy and Jenna run. The Hunter is about to catch them when Boy and Jenna drop into the hole that Boy had found earlier. Jenna is more surprised by the fact that Boy yells her name than their fall.

In Chapter Thirty-five, Boy uses the ring to light their way and Jenna assures him it's not the ring that magical, but Boy. In Chapter Thirty-six, Boy and Jenna arrive in the cabin through the potions cupboard to find the Hunter has been frozen by Aunt Zelda. The



apprentice sees an opportunity and tries to take Jenna hostage. They learn the apprentice is the one who shot Boggart and that he believes he is Septimus Heap.

## Chapters 30 through 36 Analysis

"By proxy" means someone else actually sent the message Stanley delivers to Marcia. In truth, the message is at DomDaniel's demand with Silas's name attached in an effort to capture Marcia. It's interesting that no one asked who the "proxy" was or that Marcia didn't suspect a trap.

The "Thing" Jenna and the others see in the canoe is a Magog. This is a long, snail-like creature that is huge and leaves a slimy trail wherever he goes. The Magog is basically a minion of DomDaniel, recovered during his time underground.



# Chapters 37 through 41

## Chapters 37 through 41 Summary

In Chapter Thirty-seven, Jenna recites the seven sons born to Silas and Sarah, including the seventh, Septimus, who died soon after birth. She says that, until recently, she'd believed Septimus was her twin brother. Aunt Zelda calls on a spell to see the truth of Septimus Heap's life. They see the midwife disguising Septimus's death with a few drops of a potion that made the baby go instantly limp and appear dead. The midwife returns to a nursery where her own baby is waiting. She's there when a "tall woman in black" arrives, obviously coming to collect Septimus Heap. The apprentice manages to break free and runs away.

In Chapter Thirty-eight, Aunt Zelda and the others decide they'll erase the Hunter's memory before he completely defrosts. They create a set of new memories of his life, including that he's on his way to find a traveling circus where he's going to be a clown. Later, the Hunter knocks at the cottage door asking for directions.

In Chapter Thirty-nine, the apprentice, who had been caught again, escapes again and they know he'll reveal everything to DomDaniel as soon as he can. In Chapter Forty, Boy, Nicko, and Jenna set out to catch the apprentice. They discover DomDaniel's ship, the Vengeance, anchored in the sea near the ditch that runs to Draggan Island. They find Alther on the shore nearby and he reveals that Marcia is being held on the ship. Alther says plans are underway to get Jenna and the entire Heap family out of the region. Alther then leaves with the three children pretending to head back to Aunt Zelda's house but turning back toward the Vengeance the moment Alther is out of sight.

In Chapter Forty, Jenna and Boy make themselves invisible but Nicko doesn't know the same invisibility spell, therefore would be invisible to Jenna and Boy. Jenna and Boy, having used the same spell, can see each other. It's decided that Nicko will remain with the canoe while Jenna and Boy go aboard the ship in search of Marcia. The apprentice tells DomDaniel he captured Jenna but before he can add that she escaped, DomDaniel sends for Marcia. The apprentice reveals the rest of the story, that Jenna got away, and DomDaniel furiously demands that Marcia be returned to her prison cell below deck. Boy manages to reach her before she goes and gives her the ring he believes to be the source of his magic.

## Chapters 37 through 41 Analysis

Jenna is naturally a kind-hearted girl and this is seen again as she is faced with the Hunter being frozen. It's decided they will create a new set of memories about his life which will prompt the Hunter to a new set of actions now. When this begins, Jenna chastises Nicko for being mean to the Hunter with tales of a horrible and embarrassing childhood. Jenna finds the desire to be kind despite the fact the Hunter tried to kill her.



# Chapters 42 through 46

## Chapters 42 through 46 Summary

In Chapter Forty-two, the three children rush to get away from DomDaniel who has sensed their presence and is chasing them. DomDaniel calls up a storm and the ditches are soon flowing heavily with water. They reach Aunt Zelda's house and she's upset to learn they'd been aboard the Vengeance. Then they see the ship coming toward Aunt Zelda's cottage. In Chapter Forty-three, Aunt Zelda sends Boy, Jenna, and Nicko through the potions cupboard into the cave. She says DomDaniel isn't really after her and fears leaving or moving Boggart. The three children take Maxie with them and head into the tunnel. Jenna spots a particular hieroglyph and touches it. Immediately the ground begins to shake and they are suddenly faced with a huge boat that is shaped like a dragon. On closer inspection, they discover it is a live dragon that has been transformed into a boat.

The three children get into the boat and Nicko begins to tell Boy how the various aspects of the boat operate. He points out the tiller and when Boy takes hold, the Dragon Boat unfolds her wings and rushes toward a spot in the cavern wall that has split with the water flooding the marsh. Soon they are outside and the Dragon Boat is thrilled to again be released.

In Chapter Forty-four, the Dragon Boat instinctively obeys Jenna's desires and agrees to attack DomDaniel's boat in order to rescue Marcia. Marcia is on the verge of being able to escape on her own, thanks to the magical boost she's received from Boy's ring. DomDaniel initially believes the Dragon Boat is nothing more than a magical projection but the Dragon Boat dips her head toward the ship and Marcia grabs her amulet from DomDaniel and climbs on with Jenna. In Chapter Forty-five, the Dragon Boat is sad to be returned to Aunt Zelda's and yearns to remain outdoors. Jenna has her land in the marsh and remain there. When they return to Aunt Zelda's house they discover the place is crawling with Brownies but the Boggart is feeling better. The Brownies soon rush off and tear into the stranded Vengeance.

In Chapter Forty-six, Jenna and Nicko discover a boy in the mud of the marsh, obviously having escaped the Brownie attack on the Vengeance. It seems to be the young apprentice and they take him inside. Marcia soon returns to the cottage from her walk and realizes the boy is not the apprentice but is actually DomDaniel in the apprentice's form. She banishes him with a magical spell.

## Chapters 42 through 46 Analysis

The Dragon Boat is something Boy and the others have read about but they believe it is a myth. The story says that a great wizard named Hotep-Ra built both the Wizard's Tower and the Dragon Boat. Over the centuries, queens and their daughters have



visited the Dragon Boat each year. It's Aunt Zelda's job to maintain the cottage where the queens stay during their visits and to protect the Dragon Boat. The Dragon Boat immediately recognizes Jenna's touch as belonging to a princess.

When Boy takes hold of the tiller of the Dragon Boat, the boat is soon flying. Nicko believes Boy is causing it and wants him to stop, believing they are out of control. What neither Nicko nor the Boy yet realize is that Boy is actually the Dragon Master. This is why he immediately connected with the ring he found in the tunnel.



# Chapters 47 through ending

## Chapters 47 through ending Summary

In Chapter Forty-seven, Marcia takes them out into the marsh where she'd found the body of the apprentice earlier. She notes this is why she was immediately certain the person in the house was not the apprentice. Marcia extends another invitation to Boy 412 to become her apprentice. Marcia returns Boy's ring and he tells her where he found it. She tells him that he didn't find the ring. The ring found Boy, recognizing him as an incredibly magical being who would be known as the Dragon Master. She also points out that the Dragon Boat "recognized" Boy even though he wasn't wearing the ring when he first got aboard. Boy accepts Marcia's offer to be her apprentice.

In Chapter Forty-eight, Marcia says DomDaniel's apprentice would likely die but Aunt Zelda sets out to nurse him back to health. Alther arrives in his boat along with Silas, Sarah, and Simon. Marcia gives everyone a magical cabbage for the supper to celebrate Boy's decision to become her apprentice and each person can make the cabbage into any meal they choose. Marcia tells Boy she will grant him one favor and that he can ask anything he wants of her. She pledges to do everything in her power to grant that request and Boy says he wants to know who he really is.

In Chapter Forty-nine, Marcia and the others gather around a large pool of water and look at their reflections. Marcia asks the moon to show Boy his real family and only Marcia notices that the entire Heap family remains reflected with Marcia's reflection being the only one to disappear. Boy then asks to see his mother and all the reflections except Sarah's disappear. Sarah turns to the Boy and realizes this is her long-lost son, Septimus.

In the final chapter, titled "What Aunt Zelda Saw in the Duck Pond," the truth of what happened to Septimus is revealed. The midwife arrives in the nursery with Septimus. There are four other children there, a set of triplets who will become Boy 409, 410, and 411 in the Young Army and the midwife's own son. The midwife has Septimus in her arms for awhile but her son begins to cry and she puts Septimus onto one of the cots to tend her child. The midwife is holding her son when the woman enters the room and, believing the infant being held by the midwife is Septimus Heap, takes him away without listening to the midwife's explanation.

## Chapters 47 through ending Analysis

There is an interesting reference to Simon Heap just before Septimus's true identity is revealed. Simon has always focused on magic and it seems he wants to be an important wizard. He has hopes of being the apprentice to DomDaniel who has become the ExtraOrdinary Wizard in Marcia's absence. Simon is jealous of all the attention



being paid Septimus, even before Septimus's true identity is revealed. It seems likely Simon will be a problem in future stories.

After the final chapter, there are several pages filled with explanations of where the various characters wound up after the book was completed. This lends a level of reality that might not otherwise have existed. Most are minor characters who were not central to the plot. For example, Lucy Gringe is locked away by her father. Stanley was kept in prison for awhile but Lucy Gringe began feeding him. The midwife who stole Septimus Heap away became a bag lady. Jenna's Shield Bug became part of a traveling circus and kept visitors entertained because he had a particular dislike for a clown, the former Hunter. The final two entries of this section are the two authors, Angie Sage and Mark Zug.



# Characters

## Jenna Heap

She is really the princess of the kingdom and heir to the throne but has grown up as the daughter of Silas and Sarah Heap. Jenna initially rebels at the idea she might be a princess but quickly comes to accept it as the truth, at least partly because she doesn't at all resemble her parents or siblings. Jenna is a determined little girl of ten and is devoted to her family and friends. Jenna is also easily swayed into trusting others and has a natural kindness. This is seen with how quickly she accepts Boy 412 as a member of their close-knit group despite the fact that he'd tried to sabotage their efforts to escape. Jenna is also the first to say they need to help the young apprentice of DomDaniel, despite the fact that he'd held her at knifepoint just a short time earlier. This was almost a fatal mistake since Jenna helped get the young man back to Aunt Zelda's cottage only to discover he was really DomDaniel disguised as the young apprentice. Jenna seems to struggle only slightly with her new identity, a testament of her security and her love for her family. Immediately after discovering she is really a princess, she worries that her life with her family will be changed and that Sarah will no longer be her mother, but she seems to soon put those worries behind. She finds herself referring several times to the Queen as "mother" though she always hesitates over the connection.

## Boy 412

He is really Septimus Heap, kidnapped son of Silas and Sarah Heap. Boy 412 was stolen from his parents when he was an infant and grew up as a member of the Young Army. When Jenna turns ten, Boy 412 is a 10-year-old soldier who is guarding the Wizard's Tower. Marcia seeks a safe place to hide Jenna and takes Jenna to the Wizard's Tower. Jenna and Marcia find the boy, unconscious on the ground in front of the tower and take him inside, saving his life. The boy is uncertain what happened and initially believes he's been kidnapped. He has trouble believing the Heap family and their friends won't harm him and tries to sabotage their efforts to escape the Hunter. He eventually comes to trust Jenna and the others but fights against his training as a member of the Young Army for weeks. He actually has magical powers and Marcia, recognizing his potential, asks him to join her as an apprentice. Boy believes he cannot accept her offer. He later accepts Marcia's words that he was chosen to be the Dragon Master because of his magical powers rather than having magical powers because of the dragon ring. After he realizes the magic comes from within himself, Boy 412 accepts Marcia's offer to become her apprentice. When he is told he can ask anything of Marcia as a favor for becoming her apprentice, Boy asks for his family to be revealed and only then discovers his true identity. For the sake of clarity in this study guide, he is referred to as Boy or Boy 412 until his true identity is revealed.





## **Alther Mella**

The ghost of a former extraordinary wizard, Alther was Marcia's teacher in life. He is a ghost throughout this story but is seen by many of the people he encounters, including the Heap family and Marcia. Alther helps Jenna, Boy 412, and Nicko locate Marcia though he warns them not to try to rescue her.

## **Silas Heap**

Father of Jenna and her seven adopted brothers, he is an ordinary wizard. Silas had the opportunity to become an extraordinary wizard but chose not to because he felt the duties were forcing him to spend too much time away from his family. Silas loves his children and is completely devoted to his family.

## **Aunt Zelda**

Silas's aunt, she is a white witch and lives in a cottage over a secret hiding place for a dragon. Aunt Zelda is much calmer than Marcia and likes to think things through before taking action.

## **Marcia**

The Wizard Extraordinary, Marcia has retained a level of respect though wizards are basically out of power by the time Jenna turns ten and her identity is discovered. Marcia believes herself stronger and more knowledgeable than anyone else and this results in her capture when she receives a message, apparently from Simon, asking to meet her at the castle. Despite warnings to the contrary, Marcia rushes off to meet him and is captured by DomDaniel.

## **DomDaniel**

The Supreme Wizard and Necromancer, DomDaniel remains hidden away for years and takes over the castle once Jenna has been located and gets Marcia's amulet, putting himself in a position to be Extraordinary Wizard. DomDaniel is desperate to find and kill Jenna but his efforts continue to fail throughout the story. DomDaniel does manage to capture Marcia but is banished back to a Darke region by Marcia.

## **Nicko Heap**

Jenna's older adopted brother, Nicko loves to sail and knows a great deal about boats. Nicko is with Jenna at Aunt Zelda's cottage and the two spend a lot of time together, playing in the marsh. Nicko is already learning some aspects of magic by the time Aunt Zelda teaches Jenna and Boy to make themselves invisible and he refuses to take part



in their learning exercises, then is forced to remain behind when Boy and Jenna go aboard DomDaniel's boat to try to rescue Marcia.

## **Simon Heap**

One of Jenna's adopted brothers, Simon is supposed to be with Sarah but slips away from her and returns to the castle where he plans to marry the daughter of the gatekeeper, a girl named Nancy Gringe. The marriage is stopped and Simon is arrested for a time but is eventually returned to his family. As Boy 412 is being shown his true identity, Simon turns his back, obviously jealous of all the attention Boy is getting from the Heap family.

## **Stanley**

The message rat that delivers messages to and from Aunt Zelda's house, Stanley is dedicated to his job and, when he's kidnapped, takes weeks to deliver a certain message to Marcia. Stanley is told one of his messages is not confidential and is then told to reveal the location of Aunt Zelda's cottage. He refuses to do so even though he's told he can and even though his refusal results in his being imprisoned.



## Objects/Places

### Marram Marshes

Aunt Zelda lives in Marram Marshes.

### The Message Rat

The Message Rat delivers messages and can only speak when addressed with specific words.

### Bert

Bert is a cat who lives in the body of a duck because cats don't like the constant water of the marsh.

### Boggart

A creature from the marshlands, the Boggart loves mud and frequently runs errands for Aunt Zelda. He is shot by DomDaniel's apprentice.

### The Wizard's Tower

The Wizard's Tower is where Marcia and the other wizards live.

### Petroc Trelawney

Jenna names the pet rock she receives for her birthday Petroc Trelawney.

### The Shield Bugs

The Shield Bugs are charmed and sealed in jars until there is a threat, then released. They are dedicated to protecting the person who released them.

### Maxie

The Heap family's wolfhound is named Maxie.



## **Magogs**

Magogs are huge snail-like creatures that leave a horrible trail of slime in their wake.

## **The Dragon Boat**

The Dragon Boat is a live dragon that has been hidden away for centuries in a tunnel below the cottage where Aunt Zelda lives.



# Themes

## The Importance of Family

The importance of family is a driving theme in the story because the two main characters - Jenna and Boy 412 - are shaped by their family affiliations and by the new information each receives about their families. Jenna is raised as the only daughter in a household of six sons. She believes Silas and Sarah are her biological parents though she has wondered why she doesn't resemble her parents or brothers. Jenna learns, rather abruptly, that Silas and Sarah are not her parents and that she's the heir to the throne. As a princess, she's a powerful little girl but is also in grave danger. One of Jenna's first reactions, after she accepts the story as the truth, is to say that Nicko isn't really her brother. He quickly denies that, saying they'll always be brother and sister. This is an important aspect of this theme - that family doesn't necessarily refer to blood kinship. Boy 412, on the other hand, is a different kind of example. He was literally ripped from his mother's arms as an infant and lived ten years of his life with no information about his family. He has no idea what his name is or who his parents were. He was taught the Young Army was his family and when he asks Marcia to reveal his family he fears he might discover the Young Army really is his family. That frightens him to the point that he is on the verge of telling Marcia he doesn't want to know. When he learns his real identity and Sarah realizes the Boy is really her long-lost son, she asks for permission to remove his hat and ruffle his hair. The Boy might have objected but he says that's what mothers do.

## The Quest for Power

The quest for power is the reason Jenna and Septimus are stolen from their mothers and the reason both children and their families are in danger. Jenna is a princess, or "queenling" with the power to rule the entire kingdom. She doesn't know she has this power but her mere presence has apparently been sufficient to keep the Necromancer, DomDaniel, away. DomDaniel kills Jenna's real mother, the queen, but Jenna is saved and hidden away by Marcia. DomDaniel wants to be in control of the kingdom and sees Jenna as his only obstacle. He sets out to eliminate her by creating a network of assassins and hunters who find Jenna and are on the verge of killing her when Marcia intervenes again. This time Jenna is taken away from the castle, leaving the way open for DomDaniel to return but saving Jenna's life. DomDaniel's quest for power has also affected Septimus Heap's life. DomDaniel sought Septimus because he was the seventh son of a seventh son, therefore destined to great magical powers. DomDaniel pays a midwife to steal Septimus away from Sarah and she does so but the midwife's own son is mistakenly taken with the belief the boy is Septimus. The mistake is never corrected and DomDaniel spends years working with a boy who has no magical powers at all. Meanwhile, Septimus is not returned to his real mother but is raised as a member of the Young Army. To a lesser degree, the theme is seen in Jenna's life. Jenna wants



the power that is rightfully hers and when she's about to be sent away, she objects, saying she wants to remain and fight.

## Magic

The role of magic in the story is undeniable almost from the first pages of the book. In the world of Silas Heap and his family, wizards, magical potions, charms, and powers are the norm. The people accept the presence of magic as a normal part of everyday life and are not at all surprised to learn that it's possible to become invisible, to control the elements, or to cause rats to speak. The adventures of Jenna, Nicko, and Boy 412 include a cat that is living in the body of a duck in order to withstand the damp conditions of his home, shield bugs that are magically altered to protect the children, and a boat made of a live dragon that can fly and obey commands. The existence of extraordinary wizards is an accepted fact as is the presence of the ghost of a former extraordinary wizard named Alther. The use of magic is seen as Jenna and the others are trying to get away from the Hunter. Marcia manipulates fog so their boat is hidden and creates a "projection," or mirror image, of their boat to fool the hunter. In another scene, Sally is about to be burned alive but is saved because of a protection charm. In yet another scene, a young witch is being chased by wolverines and accidentally freezes herself instead of the animals attacking her. An interesting aspect of this theme is that magic does have its limits. Marcia is very fond of her purple snakeskin boots but when they are wet she is unable to use magic to put them back to their usual, pristine condition. She notes that having those particular boots is not vital and therefore not an option for magic.

# Style

## Point of View

The story is written in third person from an omniscient point of view. This perspective provides some interesting scenes that would not be possible with a more limited perspective. For example, in Chapter Forty-three, DomDaniel is approaching Aunt Zelda's house in the Darke ship and Aunt Zelda insists that Boy 412, Jenna, and Nicko leave the house. They are to go through the potions cupboard to a secret cave Boy 412 has already explored. Nicko wants to take the family's wolfhound, Maxie, with them but Maxie digs his claws in, trying to hang on to the floor and keep from being shoved into the cupboard. The reader learns that Maxie believes he is being punished for something "very bad." Maxie, however, can't remember anything that was a lot of fun that would have gotten him this kind of punishment. There are other aspects of the story that make the reader aware of the omniscient perspective. For example, in Chapter Thirty-two, Stanley has been imprisoned and is being punished because he wouldn't tell where Aunt Zelda's cottage is. The author points out that the Hunter has already figured it out but that Stanley doesn't know that. The omniscient perspective is seen again at the end of the book when the author lists some of the minor characters and relates their fates. For example, it's pointed out that Stanley is rescued and later becomes friends with Lucy Gringe who is locked away by her father to prevent her from seeing Simon Heap.

## Setting

The story is set in an imaginary time and place. The descriptions are wildly imaginative and, in some cases, leave a great deal to the imagination. There are several specific settings within the overall setting. One is the castle which is really a large city set within the walls. This is where the Heap family lives until they are forced to flee the city. The walls are so thick there is a tavern within a section of the wall that has been completely forgotten and abandoned. Another setting is the Wizard's Tower which is a highly magical place where Marcia lives until she runs away in an attempt to protect Jenna. The marsh where Aunt Zelda lives is another of the major settings. This marsh is a large region filled with magical creatures. Some are friendly and some are not. Aunt Zelda's house was originally established as a place for the keeper of the Dragon Boat and the house is connected to a tunnel leading to the cavern where the Dragon Boat is hidden. The Dragon Boat itself is described in great detail and could be considered one of the settings within the book. The boat is an actual living dragon that most believe to be only a legend. The dragon has green eyes, as do all the magical members of the Heap family. The dragon itself is covered with blue and green scales that are so bright Jenna has to squint when she looks at it in the morning sunlight. The various settings are described to an adequate degree and are acceptable for the story.



## Language and Meaning

The story is written in an informal tone with action that flows very quickly. The story is filled with words and phrases that are specifically made up for the story. For example, Aunt Zelda helps DomDaniel's apprentice recover by giving him a series of magic potions, including "Urgent Ungent" and "Vigor Volts." The use of these made-up words and phrases should not be a problem for the reader. It is not necessary to know exactly what "ungent" means or what "Vigor Volts" is in order to understand the meaning of the situation. There are many other words that are spelled differently in order to bring attention to their use. "Darke" is one of those. The author adds the "e" to the end of the word in order to make the point that this is not a real word and that it refers to something not of this world. That same method is used on other words, including "magyk" instead of magic. Many other words that carry magical meanings are written in bold letters and are capitalized. For example, when Aunt Zelda is sending Jenna, Boy 412, and Nicko down into the secret tunnel to hide from DomDaniel, she says she will "make the trapdoor Disappear." The word "disappear" is in a bold font and is capitalized. The purpose is to make the reader realize that the word refers to a magical action. This is done with words throughout the book. Marcia creates a "Projection" of their ship to distract the man chasing them and the word projection is capitalized in a bold font. In some cases, the words are used differently. For example, when Jenna, Nicko, and Boy 412 are planning to sneak aboard DomDaniel's ship, they "use an Unseen," which is an invisibility spell. Unseen would not typically be a noun but becomes one in this case.

## Structure

The story is divided into forty-nine chapters of varying lengths. The story is presented roughly in chronological order though there are several flashbacks aimed at providing additional information for the reader. Among the more important of these are the revelations of what happened to Sally Mullin, Sarah Heap, and Simon Heap. The reader sees the action from Sally's perspective after Silas, Jenna, and Nicko sail away in Sally's boat. The Hunter arrives and burns down Sally's restaurant, apparently with Sally inside. The reader learns later that Marcia left a protective charm with Sally but doesn't see that detail when Marcia leaves the charm. The reader also learns about Sarah Heap's arrival in the forest and how the boys began to live on their own. Finally, the reader learns about Simon's decision to slip away from his mother to marry Lucy Gringe long after Simon has run away. With only a few other minor flashbacks, the remainder of the story flows chronologically. Each chapter is titled and numbered. The titles are generic and give little clue as to the contents of that chapter. Each chapter begins with a graphic that includes a full moon, Marcia's shoes, the Boggart, and the Hunter. Titles include "Something in the Snow," "Sarah and Silas," "The Supreme Custodian," "Marcia Overstrand," "At the Heaps," "To the Tower," "Wizard Tower," "The Rubbish Chute," "Sally Mullin's Café," "The Hunter," "The Trail," "Muriel," "The Chase," "Deppen Ditch," "Midnight at the Beach," "The Boggart," "Boy 412," "Shield Bugs," "Pythons and Rats," "The Dragon Boat," "The Apprentice," and "Septimus Heap." There is a map at the beginning of the book and two additional chapters at the end. The two final chapters are





in addition to the first forty-nine chapters. They are titled "What Aunt Zelda Saw in the Duck Pond," and "After." The final chapter, "After," lists several of the characters and explains what happens to them "after" the book is completed. None of these are main characters but include Stanley the Message Rat, two sailors Dom Daniel had thrown from his boat, and Jenna's Shield Bug.



## Quotes

"Silas expected all his boys to be some kind of wizard; it was in the family."  
Chapter 2

"And then she was gone. Down the stairs two at a time, down to the kitchen to terrorize the stove, which had heard her coming and was desperately trying to light itself before she came through the door."  
Chapter 4

"The Heaps' address had previously been: Big Red Door, There and Back Again Row, The Ramblings. Now it appeared to be: Room 16, Corridor 223, East Side."  
Chapter 4

"It seems, Princess, that you have somehow been stopping that awful old Necromancer from coming back to the Castle. Just by being there."  
Chapter 15

"There was a gray tinge to the Necromancer's skin that spoke of years spent underground in the company of Shades and Shadows. An aura of the Other side still clung to him and filled the room with the smell of overripe mold and damp earth."  
Chapter 17

"'But Bert's a duck,' said Jenna. She was thinking that someone had to say it, and they had better say it straight away before they all got into the let's-pretend-the-duck's-a-cat-just-to-humor-Aunt-Zelda thing."  
Chapter 19

"The Message Rat sat unhappily on the bank of the Mott, caught between dog breath behind him and Boggart Breath in front of him."  
Chapter 21

"Added to the powerful aromas of boiled rat and rotten fish was a definite whiff of old cat poo. 'Come in dears. We're just cooking.'"  
Chapter 24

"It took Silas a few moments to realize that, in her panic, the young witch had Frozen herself rather than the wolverines, leaving them the easiest supper the pack had had since the last Young Army Do-or-Die night exercise."  
Chapter 25

"The Shield Bug was happy. It had an enemy. It had a sword. Soon the sword would meet the enemy. Life was simple when you were a Shield Bug."  
Chapter 34

"'Just keeping Boggart damp,' she said. 'A dry Boggart is not a happy Boggart.'"  
Chapter 38



"The Brownies didn't eat all the chairs like last time, and they didn't even poo on the table. So, all in all, it could have been worse."

Chapter 45

"One each for the triplets - Boys 409, 410 and 411 - and one for the newest recruit to the Young Army, twelve-hours-old Septimus Heap, destined to be known for the next ten years as Boy 412."

From the final chapter, "What Aunt Zelda Saw in the Duck Pond"



## Topics for Discussion

Describe Jenna. Describe Boy 412. What do they have in common? How are they different? How are they connected in the story?

Both Jenna and Boy 412 have an identity crisis. What are the circumstances of their births? How does Jenna learn her true identity? How does Boy learn his true identity? How does each deal with it?

Describe at least three scenes in which magic plays an important role. How is magic used in each scene? Who is involved in the magic? How is the magic created?

Who is Marcia? Who is Aunt Zelda? How are each of these characters connected to Jenna? Compare Marcia and Zelda. How are they similar? How are they different? Who plays a more important role in the story? Why?

Describe at least four creatures from the story that do not exist in reality. What is the role of each in the story? Is the creature good, or bad?

What is the most important theme of the story? Give at least three examples of the theme.

Who is Simon Heap? Sarah Heap? Alther Mella? DomDaniel? Nancy Gringe? Linda Lane? The Hunter? What is the role each plays in the story?