

# **Many Waters Study Guide**

**Many Waters by Madeleine L'Engle**

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# Plot Summary

"Many Waters" by Madeleine L'Engle tells the story of teenage twin brothers, Dennys and Sandy. The boys don't realize there is an experiment in progress in the lab. They are transported to a new place and era and they must figure out how to get back to their home and time.

Dennys and Sandy are ready for some warmth as a break from the cold March storm. In their mother's lab, they dream of warmth and type their wish to go somewhere warm and sparsely populated onto the computer. When they leave the room, they find themselves in a desert where they are found by a four-foot man named Japheth and a small mastadon.

The boys are overheated and Japheth takes them to his grandfather for healing. To do this, they ride on the backs of unicorns, but Dennys finds himself in a different destination. Sandy comes to consciousness in Japheth's grandfather's tent. The others promise to help him find his brother. As he waits he learns about cherubim, nephilim and giants. He also meets Grandfather Lamech's granddaughter Yalith. After a series of events, Dennys returns. He is now in Noah's tents, and the women in Yalith's family determine to protect him and help him heal since he was mistreated while he was gone. Sandy is still across the desert getting cared for in Lamech's tent. Lamech and Noah won't talk to each other even though they are father and son.

Both boys get stronger and find a place in this strange world. Dennys learns that he can understand the stars, and Sandy helps Lamech in the garden. With encouragement on all sides, Noah and Lamech let go of old hostilities and reconcile. Meanwhile, the nephilim reject the seraphim and make a plan to tempt the twins with Tiglah's beauty.

The twins begin to realize that they are part of the biblical story of the flood. This is the Noah who built the ark. Both Lamech and Noah know that changes are coming. A being named El tells Lamech that Noah and his family will be saved from the waters. Lamech doesn't know what that means. Sandy and Dennys wonder how they are going to get home, and they are also concerned about Yalith since they didn't remember her name from the Bible story. Sandy is questioning the events that he described previously when he is kidnapped.

As Noah's family mourns Lamech, they realize that Sandy is missing. They bury the old man then set out to find Sandy, but the nephilim have hidden him well. Sandy realizes he can escape if he can summon a unicorn, but first he has to truly believe in it. When the unicorn comes to him, Japheth and the mammoth find him. The family is reunited.

The boys stay to help Noah and the family build the ark. When it is nearly complete, the rain begins to fall and the seraphim help the twins get back to their home using unicorns and a quantum leap.



# Chapters 1-3

## Chapters 1-3 Summary

"Many Waters" by Madeleine L'Engle tells the story of teenage twin brothers, Dennys and Sandy. The boys don't realize there is an experiment in progress in the lab. They are transported to a new place and era, and they must figure out how to get back to their home and time.

Sandy Murry and his identical twin brother Dennys are playing ice hockey when the snow gets so heavy they can't see the puck. As they prepare to walk home, the brothers discuss warm climates they would like to live in. Even though Dennys likes winter, he says he is getting tired of it by mid-March. They run back to their farmhouse a mile away and arrive inside to find a note from their mother. She is in town with Meg and Charles Wallace.

The twins prepare sandwiches for themselves and sit down at a table strewn with Meg's college papers. They discuss the scientific conversations the family members engage in at the dinner table. Dennys listens and understands what's going on, but Sandy has no idea what they are talking about. He wants to be a lawyer.

Deciding they want some Dutch cocoa, the boys decide their mother has some in the lab. She and her husband enjoy the cocoa at night, but their father is away until the next day. In their mother's lab, the boys see a contraption that is part of their father's research. The lab is freezing, and Dennys types "Take me someplace warm. Someplace warm and sparsely populated. Low Humidity" on the computer. As they leave the lab, they notice a sign on the door that tells people to stay out because there is an experiment in progress. They hadn't seen it because they were too busy eating as they walked in.

The twins cross the hall to get back to the kitchen when they feel a blast of heat. The house is gone, and they find themselves in a very hot place with no-one around. Knowing their father works with time and space travel, they realize they can be anywhere. Seeing a palm tree, they head over to it for shelter. A small man in a loincloth appears behind a rock cliff. At first they are all startled, but as they talk, they all realize that no-one is trying to harm anyone. The man is named Japheth. He thinks the boys are giants since he is only around four feet tall. Japheth explains that he isn't sure whether they are giants, nephilim or serpahim. They insist they are humans.

Japheth is out looking for water. His small animal is helping him. It's a tiny mammoth. Japheth tells the boys that he thought he was dreaming when they appeared. He thought he had been hit on the head by a rock from the earthquake. They have earthquakes frequently.



Wanting to help them, Japheth asks where they are from. He notices they are too hot and decides to take them to his grandfather who lives nearby. As they talk, they find it interesting that they can understand each other. A unicorn appears and helps the twins. It is summoned by the mammoth, and the boys realize it's made of virtual particles. It only really appears solid when they believe in it. Dennys and Sandy are both getting very ill from the heat and struggle to stay conscious as they ride the unicorns. This makes the unicorns start to fade, but they reach the oasis in time, and the boys land on grass as the unicorns disappear.

Sandy comes back to consciousness, but he doesn't recognize the sounds and smells around him. He is in a tent, and a man is asking if he is awake. He remembers Japheth. The man introduces Sandy to his grandfather then explains that Den fainted while on the unicorn and disappeared. He reassures Sand that they will get his brother back. He says that unicorns are very responsible.

Japheth leaves to find Dennys, and Sandy talks with Lamech. A creature comes in and wants to eat. It sees Dennys and backs off, afraid of the giant. Denny is protecting Higgai.

Yalith comes in to visit her grandfather, and the man introduces her to Sandy. Sandy is attracted to her. He mentions that they are looking for his identical twin. That night, Sandy has a hard time. He is used to having Dennys around, and it feels as if part of him is missing.

A seraphim appears to help Sandy. Higgai tries to get its attention, and the seraph tells him to call the pelican. As the seraph heals Sandy, he asks questions about his situation. Adnarel tells him not to worry. His brother will be returned.

Yalith leaves her grandfather and sees a creature. She calls out to Aariel then realized it isn't a lion. It's Elbis, a nephilim. He offers to give her gifts and help, telling her that changes are coming. The two are interrupted by Aariel. He asks Elbis to leave Yalith alone. Talith tells Aariel about the man she saw when she was visiting her grandfather. She offers many details showing that she observed him closely. Aariel tells her to go home and lets her know that he will make certain that she is safe.

On her way back, she encounters her sister Mahlah and a nephil. They tell her that Mahlah is going to spend the night with the nephil and ask Yalith to tell the parents that they are betrothed.

Dennys comes back to consciousness. There is a strange mammoth near him, and he is in a rancid room with unkempt people. They are mean and smelly. Dennys feels sick. He doesn't know where he is or where Sandy and Japheth are. Trying to escape the horrible people and smells, he runs outside and scrubs himself with cool sand, not realizing he is scraping off his skin. He calls a unicorn and climbs onto its back.

Mahlah is sitting on a rock when she sees a seraph. It's Alarid, and he asks if it's true she is leaving them by betrothing herself to Ugiel. She tells him to be happy for her and agrees to continue being his friend.



Yalith goes back to her home and tells her family that Mahlah is betrothed to a nephilim. Her mother isn't happy. Yalith looks around at her brothers and their wives. One stands out taller and more beautiful and talented than the others. Her mother points out that if Oholibamah has been sired by a nephil then good has been brought into their lives by them. She loves the girl.

Oholibamah was Yalith's first real friend. As they talk, she mentions that a nephilim stopped her that morning and said she was one of them. Yalith wonders what it would be like to discover the father she loves so much isn't really her father.

A flash of light appears in the tent, and Dennys appears with a unicorn. Yalith explains who he is just as Japheth appears. They talk with the boy and realize that he is very ill. He is also very afraid. Someone has mistreated him. The women decide to let him live with them until he heals.

## Chapters 1-3 Analysis

Chapter One introduces the twins and shows what their home life is like. The two are obviously close to each other, choosing to spend leisure time together. Their parents are scientists, and the brothers have an older sister and a younger brother. They are very tall teens who are still growing. The boys aren't rebellious or disrespectful. This is demonstrated by the way they responded to their mother's note, the way they were willing to go pick up their father the next day, and by their regrets over entering the lab when they discovered they shouldn't have. They were concerned they messed up an experiment. When they found themselves in the desert, they were concerned, but they didn't panic. They knew their family would come after them. They used the science they knew to help them adjust to the new situation, even when it came to riding unicorns.

Sandy finds out that his brother is missing. It alarms him since the two are so close. Still, he knows he has to trust that Lamech and Japheth will find Dennys. The old man and his grandson have a close relationship, but Japheth's father is estranged from the old man. Japheth goes out to find Dennys, and Sandy knows he is too weak himself.

When a beast comes into the tent, Sandy protects his new acquaintances. He isn't used to anyone or anything being afraid of him, and Lamech calls him a gentle giant. Yalith comes in, and Sandy is attracted to her. Still, his mind is set on finding his brother. He explains about Dennys to the others since they are unfamiliar with the concept of twins.

Sandy and Dennys have a tight bond, even though their parents tried to treat them as separate individuals. They are still a unit, and Sandy has a hard time without Dennys. A seraph comes to him and not only helps him physically, but mentally as well when he tells Sandy that his brother is found and will return.

Chapter Three is written in third person subjective from Yalith's point-of-view. The girl knows how to protect herself and carries arrows that she shoots out of a blowpipe. She isn't as worried about the manticores as she is about the men in town. This shows that she is attractive.



She calls to a friend, but it ends out being a nephilim. He tells her that she will need help since changes are coming. This foreshadows trouble ahead. Ariel appears and asks the nephil to back off. Elbis asks why he would care about the girl since the cherubim can't have relations with humans like nephils do. This shows that Ariel's caring and protection is genuine. He warns Yalith to be careful around Elbis. Later as they talk he realizes her attraction to the new boy who appeared.

On her way home, Yalith meets her sister. One again there is a foreshadowing of trouble brewing. This time, Mahlah talks about how the old ways are changing.

The point of view shifts to Dennys. He is in a new place, and it isn't pleasant. The people are dirty and crass. They don't take care of the mastadon in their midst. He isn't as scientific as his brother and the rest of his family, but he is determined to take all he knows and use it to help himself survive. Using this knowledge, he summons a unicorn and escapes.

Yalith talks with her mother, and the reader begins to understand signs of racial tension among the nephilim, seraphim, and humans. There are good and bad in the nephill and it makes the mother wary. Dennys appears and it causes concern. The women are determined to protect him.



# Chapters 4-6

## Chapters 4-6 Summary

When Dennys wakes up, he is terrified. He thinks he is back in the awful tent and he can't find the unicorn. An older woman soothes him, and he also sees a younger woman. He recognizes Japheth but is too weak to answer questions. Japheth tells him not to be afraid. The small man carries him to a cooler place. He asks for water, but they don't have any. The family members are kind and give him other things to drink. The girl offers to give him some water from Grandfather Lamech's well, and Dennys overhears her ask woman why her father won't reconcile with Grandfather Lamech. The older girl explains that their father was hurt when the grandfather insisted on staying in his own tent.

Dennys is extremely ill and he slips back into unconsciousness. Meanwhile, Sandy is back in Grandfather Lamech's tent feeling miserable. He wishes Yalith would come back, but she doesn't. Slowly, he begins to heal. As he gets better, Lamech suggests that they go out of the tent to sit under the stars. His skin isn't ready for the sun, but it is ready for air. Sandy tries to find out what planet and what galaxy he is on, but his questions confuse Lamech. They talk about gardening, and Sandy asks if his brother is really getting better. As they talk, Lamech tells Sandy about a curse. He also explains why he won't go to live in his son's tent. Sandy points out that they are both so stubborn they will never see each other. Lamech realizes that his days are numbered, and he says that he talks to El. Sandy wonders how he is ever going to get home.

Noah comes in to visit Dennys and brings a mammoth with him to keep the boy company. He asks how Sandy is doing, and Noah tells him that his brother is almost healed from what he has heard. Dennys wants to know when he will see him, and Noah tells him it won't be long. He begins asking questions, and Noah is pleased, saying that he is doing better. He asks what the seraphim are.

Noah tells Denny that the seraphim are the sons of El. As they talk, Dennys begins to remember a story from the Bible about Noah and the flood. He recognizes some of the names of the sons, but doesn't remember any women in the Bible story. He asks about the nephilim, and Noah tells him that they are tall and have wings, though the humans seldom see them fly. Some say they are like falling stars that were flung out of heaven. The seraphim never seem to age.

Dennys wonders how much El has told Noah, and Noah tells him that he knows that these are the end times for them all. There is a lot of wickedness on the earth. They talk a bit about Noah's relationship with Lamech and why he won't go see his father. A pelican comes to the door, bringing water. Dennys discovers that the pelican is really a seraph when it changes shape. The seraph's name is Alarid, and as they talk, he mentions that he sees time in pleats. They talk about the history of earth and how unique it is that Dennys and Sandy speak and understand the Old Language. Dennys





mentions that all he wants to do is go home to his own time. He wonders if the seraphim knows about the flood.

Sandy can't sleep and talks with Grandfather Lamech, who tells him that great troubles are going to come after he dies. Dennys begins to go outside at night and notices how different the atmosphere is from his time. Yalith suggests that he listen to the stars, and he can hear them talking.

Yalith and Matred talk about Mahlah and her upcoming marriage. The mother doesn't understand why her daughter wants to marry a nephil and break traditions. Yalith says she will try to talk with her sister. When they do talk, Mahlah laughs and says that customs change, and they must move with the times. She reminds her sister that Eblis likes her and wants to take care of her. Yalith doesn't know how she feels about it. She would rather be with Dan and Sand, but she doesn't know which one.

In the sounds of the night, creatures stir. Twelve oddly assorted creatures position themselves in a circle. They are the nephilim.

Dennys continues to get better under Yalith's care. The family talks about where he and his brother might have come from and discusses their age. Noah and Matred discuss their own children, and Matred points out that Mahlah is grown up. Yalith wonders if she notices the swelling of Mahlah's belly.

Yalith sees a strange grouping of animals in a circle, surrounding her sister. They transform into the nephilim, and they have gathered for the marriage. Each says its name as they transform. The seraphim comes as well, declaring the nephilim are still their brothers, although the nephil deny the connection.

Eblis finds Yalith and offers her protection, warning of fearful things to come. She isn't ready to make a choice, and he agrees to wait. Japheth visits Dennys and notes how much better he is. Dennys tells his friend that the stars want him to make peace.

Sandy is well enough to go into the sunlight for short periods. He asks Grandfather Lamech if he can do some work and offers to work in the gardens. Lamech is grateful for help. One morning Sandy is talking with Adnarel while he is gardening. They talk about time and space.

Noah talks with Dennys and says that Dennys is about ready to be moved. He is going to join his brother. Dennys encourages Noah to let go of his stubbornness and reconcile with his father.

Tiglah is admiring her own beauty when Rofocale, the nephil, comes to talk with her. He wants her to seduce the brothers. In the evening, Noah comes to Lamech's tents and introduces himself to Sandy. The father and son reconcile. They are both filled with joy. When they come out of the tent, Sandy learns that his brother is doing very well.

Both Noah and Lamech talk about what they have heard from El. They know they are part of the end days, but don't understand what else is going on. Sandy feels awkward



because he knows what is going to happen. Still, he can't remember the details of the flood story. For instance, he doesn't remember if Grandfather Lamech was mentioned in the story.

Lamech tells the story of Enoch, his grandfather. He says the man was, then was not. He went to be with El when he was only 365 years old. Sandy tries to remember the flood story and whether or not Yalith was mentioned. He wonders what will happen to his brother and to himself when the flood occurs.

## Chapters 4-6 Analysis

Dennys is on his road to recovery thanks to Japheth, Nalith, and their family. He witnesses the true love demonstrated between Japheth and his wife, a girl who is a bit older than Yalith. As he listens to them, he understands that Noah doesn't get along with his father.

Sandy shows signs of recovery. Lamech and Sandy talk about change, and Sandy learns that Lamech talks with a being called El. This being is what Sandy considers God. Lamech knows his days are numbered, but that doesn't seem to bother him. All his concern goes to the state of the world, which is immersed in evil. As the chapter closes, Sandy still has no idea where he is in space or what time period he is in.

Dennys is slower to heal than Sandy because he is in much worse shape. It's hard for him to feel safe. The others are kind, and he begins to feel more comfortable. As he gets stronger, Noah talks with him, and Dennys begins to understand that he is still on Earth, but he has gone back in time to the flood. He knows he can't upset the balance of history. In this chapter, Dennys witnesses the transformation of an animal to a seraph.

Dennys always felt that he and Sandy were members of the family who weren't noteworthy. The seraph helps him understand that they are special, too. Somehow they understand the old language, and there is a chance they were sent to this time for a reason. He also learns that he can hear messages in the stars.

While the family remains tight-knit, Mahlah seems to be breaking away. She is determined to marry the nephil, even though he won't follow any of her family traditions.

In a strange ceremony Yalith observes, her sister is married. During the ceremony she sees how the nephilim reject the seraphim even when the seraphim reach out to them.

Sandy is doing so much better, he asks to help out. Lamech begins to change, accepting help. This shows he might be open to admitting that he can't do everything himself should his son come around.

Rofocale talks with Tiglah and they come up with a plan to bring down the twins. When Noah and Lamech reunite, it's a blessing for both men. They both hear from El and compare notes on times to come. By now, Sandy is understanding what Bible story he is part of, but he struggles to remember all the details.



# Chapters 7-9

## Chapters 7-9 Summary

As Sandy sleeps, he wonders if Adnarel knows about the upcoming flood. He wraps his arms around Higgsion, and it reminds him of when he was little, sleeping with a stuffed triceratops. Sandy feels the scarab beetle on the mammoth's ear. He is soothed into sleep.

The next day he talks with Adnarel about the flood and proposes a plan for getting home using unicorns. Adnarel agrees that his plan is possible. He asks the seraph about Yalith and finds out that she is taking care of Dennys. He is slightly jealous.

Later in the day an extremely beautiful girl comes to talk with him. She says it's nice to see him again, and Sandy realizes that she must have met Dennys. It's Tiglah, Anah's sister. She begins seducing him, and he is slightly drawn to her, yet slightly repelled at the same time. A griffin interrupts them, telling Tiglah to leave.

The griffin nudges Sandy into the tent where Grandfather Lamech is waiting for him. When he goes in, he tells the old man he was talking to a girl. When he mentions her name, Grandfather Lamech warns him to be careful. The two discuss gardening, and Sandy notes that the man is getting more frail.

Dennys makes the trip across the desert on a camel, which is really the seraph, Admael. Noah can't go with him since he hurt his foot. The family waves him off. As they cross the desert, they are chased by a manticore. Dennys asks for help even though he knows seraphim don't like to intervene in course of things. Admael tells the manticore to leave them. They set off to walk the rest of the way. Meanwhile, the nephilim discuss the boys and try to determine their greatest weakness. They settle on lust.

Sandy and Dennys are reunited. They compare their experiences and discuss their situation. They also talk about Yalith and her role in the flood. The brothers wonder when the rains are supposed to start. Both agree to let the story take its course, and they won't interfere. The seraphim talk to each other and discuss how the boys already made changes such as in Noah's relationship with his father. Even though they can leave the earth, they decide to stay as long as the boys are there.

The boys are working in the garden when Mahlah and Tiglah come to visit. Sandy realizes that he prefers Yalith's quiet beauty more than Mahlah's obvious beauty. Sandy and Tiglah talk of their first meeting, and Dennys is suspicious. He doesn't trust her after his experience with her family. Tiglah invites them on a walk, but Dennys won't go. Sandy decides to stay with his brother. The griffin comes in, startling Dennys, but Sandy tells him it's a friend.

Tiglah continues flirting with Sandy, but he decides to stay with Dennys in the garden once again. Oholibamah and Yalith come over, distracting the twins. After Tiglah leaves,



Dennys tells Sandy about his experiences in her tent. As the days go by, Noah's family regularly comes to bring food for the old man. They frequently stay and talk.

Matred talks with Noah about the fact that Mahlah is with child. She tells him that their daughter is married to a nephil. He is angry that they didn't follow formalities. Noah isn't happy about the connection to the nephil, but he is thankful for Oholibamah, and since she is sired by the nephil, they already have a connection.

The twins work in the garden and compare their home to life in the desert. They note the changes in their own appearance. They realize that the change is in more than appearance. They aren't children any longer. The boys also realize that they have enemies—the nephil.

Ugiel comes to Matred telling her that it's almost Mahlah's time. He wants Matred to be there to help her daughter. Oholibamah asks Yalith about the twins, and she loves them both. Elisheba tells Matred that she is going to have a baby. Eblis once again reminds Yalith that he will take care of her. She runs away from him.

It's the hottest day that the twins have ever experienced. They hear thunder rumbling in the background. The boys go into Lamech's tent and are startled by how cold his hands are. He asks about their world and the people in the world. They tell him that they love him and he says that he loves them. Even though the thunder continues, rain does not fall.

That evening the boys talk to each other about Lamech. They think El has told the old man about the flood. While they say the flood didn't work, they also realize that if everyone had been wiped out, Jesus would never have been born.

Tiglah comes by and tells them that Mahlah is going to have her baby that night. She invites Sandy on a walk, and this time he decides to go. She kisses him, but when he is tempted, he pulls back.

Rofocale questions Tiglah regarding what Sandy told her, but she doesn't have answers for him. He tells her to work fast. They need to have the boy in their power. Meanwhile Mahlah is in the throes of childbirth. The birth is difficult and labor lasts for days. Mahlah has a boy and both she and the child are fine.

Dennys talks with Grandfather Lamech. The old man tells him El has spoken. He told Dennys that El told him that his family will be spared from the many waters. He doesn't understand what the waters mean, but he is happy about his sons.

The old man is dying and Sandy goes to get Noah. Adnarel tells him he doesn't need to rush. He will remain alive until dawn. Noah makes the trip, but Sandy is concerned that he is holding Noah back so he tells the man to go off on the camel without him. He will follow. As he walks, he is filled with questions. Someone throws something over his head, and two people carry him. He can't scream since the skin over his head is pressed against his mouth. As he tries to escape, he feels a prick.



## Chapters 7-9 Analysis

Sandy is beginning to feel a bit homesick. He wonders if he and his brother will ever get back. Since he knows some science from listening to his parents, he comes up with a theory for getting home. After talking with a seraph, he discovers that there is hope that his idea will work.

In this chapter, Sandy is also missing his brother. When he learns that Yalith is taking care of his brother, he feels jealousy for the first time. He has never cared about a girl that way before so this shows he is growing up. Right as this happens, temptation comes across his path as the beautiful Tiglah enters his life. He is protected by a griffin that seems determined from keeping distance between him and the girl.

When the brothers see each other once again, they try to figure out what's going on. The seraphs are doing the same thing. They wonder what purpose the boys have in this era.

In Chapter Eight, Tiglah continues to try to get closer to Sandy. Dennys tells him his story, and Sandy remains true to his brother even though Dennys says the choice to be with Tiglah is up to his brother. He won't interfere.

This chapter highlights character growth. The boys are growing in maturity, and Noah grows in acceptance of his daughter Mahlah and her situation. He isn't happy about being connected to the Nephil, and he is worried about his daughter, but he sees how sometimes good comes of it all such as the presence of Oholibamah in their lives. Eblis continues to try to get Yalith to come to him. Before, she was uncertain. Now, she flees from him.

The weather is very ominous since it is brutally hot and thundering without any sign of rain. It's a time of death and a time of life as Lamech begins the final dying process and Mahlah goes into labor. El gives Lamech a message that offers peace before he dies. Tension is building in the story, and Sandy is kidnapped.



# Chapters 10-12

## Chapters 10-12 Summary

Yalith runs out to the desert where the lion comforts her regarding Lamech's death. The stars dim and sing, bringing her peace.

Noah tries to bring his dying father comfort while Dennys sits outside the tent. The men talk about thing El has said, and Noah promises to listen to El and do what he says. The man gasps, looks joyful and dies while Noah begins mourning. The sky is silent, and the stars stop singing. A seraphim stands before Dennys.

Oholibamah and Japheth sit together in the desert, mourning the death of Lamech. Japheth tells Oholibamah that the old man wasn't strong enough for the trip. He tells her that El told Noah to build an ark. This makes no sense to them, but El's instructions on how to build it are very clear. They wonder what is going to happen with the twins.

The ones around Lamech's tent realize that Sandy is missing and are greatly concerned. They have to bury the old man quickly because of the heat in the area. Dennys knows something is wrong, otherwise his brother would have found a way to send a message.

Lamech is buried at sunset. Oholibamah tells Dennys that Mahlah will ask Ugiel about Sandy when she gets back. She thinks the nephilim have something to do with his disappearance.

Sandy wakes up in a smelly area and realizes he is tied up. He is hungry and exhausted. Tiglah comes to him, and he is repulsed. She gives him some food. Talking with her he realizes that they are holding him for ransom, hoping to get Noah's vineyards. She tries to tempt him to escape and run away with her, but he won't.

After Lamech is buried, they get some food and set out to find Sandy. Dennys wonders if the mammoth can catch his brother's scent. Matred and Noah talk, and Noah is concerned that they can't find Sandy. He talks about starting to build the ark and tells his wife that only she, their sons, and their wives will be saved. Tiglah's father and brother come into the tent.

Yalith goes to the desert, hoping to find Aariel. She tells him about Sandy's disappearance and how Noah is going to build an ark. Aariel tells her it is wise. She is aware of the fact that she is not one of the ones who is going to be saved. Aariel reassures her, and he tells her not to be afraid.

Tiglah comes back with Rofocale who questions Sandy about how he came to be there. He asks why Sandy and Dennys don't leave. Dennys responds that they will leave when it's the right time. After the questioning, Tiglah laughingly tells Sandy that Noah is building a boat.



Back in the tent, Noah and Matred continue to talk about the ark with their sons. The others still can't find Sandy. Adnarel points out that the nephilim are masters of illusion. Since it's the middle of the day, they leave Dennys behind as they set off once again to find Sandy. He can't handle the sun.

A new, friendly mammoth comes to Sandy in the tent. As Sandy talks with the mammoth, he realizes he can escape by summoning a unicorn, but first he has to truly believe in it. He sets his mind to it and calls one. The nephilim gather and talk about the upcoming events. They want to destroy the twins.

Higgaion finds the tent Sandy is in when the unicorn is in it. He leads Japheth in. Sandy holds the mammoth and the unicorn as Tiglah's relatives come in. Japheth sends Sandy and the mammoth away on the unicorn. Tiglah's father and brother attack him, and a manticore interrupts them. In the ensuing fight, the tent and the manticore come down on the father and brother. Higgaion and Japheth escape, wounded and scared, but all right. The seraphim help him when they join him and see that he is weakened from blood loss. Once they are all reunited, Sandy and Dennys insist on staying to help build the ark.

Later, in the tent, Sandy tells Dennys how they can get back using a quantum leap. They wonder what will happen with Yalith.

Once again, Yalith is reminded not to be afraid. Everyone is working hard on the ark except for Shem who goes out hunting and Matred who cooks for everyone. Dennys slips away after the meal, and he calls to Alarid to talk with the seraph about Yalith. Alarid says he doesn't have the power to change things and he doesn't meddle with the pattern. After leaving Alarid, Dennys goes off to listen to nature. He feels quiet flowing through him.

Sandy can't help being concerned about Yalith. He asks her what she is going to do when the floods come. She says she listens to the stars, and they tell her not to be afraid. Sandy asks her if she would go back to their time with them. She says she will consider it. Later, Sandy tells Dennys wants to take her with them, but Dennys knows she won't survive in their time since the air is so different, and she isn't used to their diseases.

Noah sends Oholibamah and Japheth out to warn others about the flood, but they are just ridiculed and abused. Oholibamah tells Japheth that they are going to have a baby. The neighbors come to make fun of Noah's family as they work on the ark. Sandy and Dennys, giants to the neighbors, tell them to go home, and they leave.

Oholibamah and Yalith have a talk in the desert. They both feel it's wrong for Yalith to go back with the twins, although they don't know why. In the last days of building the ark, the seraphim and nephilim aren't around. Sandy and Dennys decide to go out into the desert at night, when they won't be missed. Yalith follows them without their knowledge. Higgaion wakes and notices they are missing then wakes the other mammoths and follows them.



In the desert, the twins find themselves surrounded by nephilim. They run, and the circle once again begins to form. Yalith sees what is happening and calls for Aariel who prevents the circle from forming. The nephilim ask what is going to happen, and it begins to rain. They slip away. The seraphim take the twins and Yalith deeper into the desert. El has told them what to do with Yalith. She is to leave the way her great-great-grandfather Enoch did. Aariel takes her away after they all express love for each other. Yalith would not be drowned. The boys tell Noah that the next day, and he and Matred are filled with joy.

The ark would be finished the next day and it is raining as the boys sit in the tent next to the mammoths. The next morning, the boys prepare to go home. Adnarel, Alarid and Admael are there to call the unicorns. They promise to take care of the mammoths. When they find themselves in the lab, the boys hear their mother's voice. Before the seraph leave, they restore the boys to the way they looked before they went back in time. Everything seems normal once again.

## Chapters 10-12 Analysis

In the aftermath of the death, there is confusion and sorrow. They want to mourn for the old man, but there is an urgent need to find Sandy. Lamech was very loved, but the family is happy he is with El. In the end, even the mammoth decides that it is more important to focus on the living than the dead, and they set out to find Sandy.

While the others are out trying to find Sandy, Yalith is trying to come to terms with all she knows about the future. She is happy her family is going to be saved, yet knows she herself isn't. It troubles her, but she doesn't show jealousy.

Meanwhile, the nephilim are powerful and sneaky, but they also show signs of weakness. They can hide Sandy, but they don't know what the future holds, and it's making them nervous. In their ignorance, they set out to destroy the twins. Sandy realizes he has to use the power of belief in order to save himself.

Noah and his family listen to El even when they are ridiculed. As the end draws near, all the pieces fit into place. Yalith is taken off after the twins have a chance to say goodbye. Mahlah will be taken care of by her husband, the mammoths are taken care of, and the boys get home. Back home it seems as if nothing has changed, but the boys know how much they have grown during this experiment gone awry.





# Characters

## Dennys Murry

This is one of the identical twins. He listens to his family as they talk around him and he has a keen understanding of science due to conversations with his parents. He is very close to his twin brother. This character is very practical and knows how to use his mind to work through tough situations such as when he is stuck in a different time in a different climate. He knows he has to take precautionary steps to avoid heat stroke. He and his brother becomes separated, and he meets some nasty men who abuse them. He recovers in Naoh's tent before rejoining his brother. This character is fifteen years old and he is very attracted to Yalith. However, he knows she would never survive in his own time. Due to his knowledge of science, he knows she would be highly susceptible to disease and the pollution in their own atmosphere.

## Sandy Murry

This is one of the identical twins. While others talk about science around him, he really doesn't listen. His goal is to become a lawyer. Still, he's picked up enough scientific knowledge from his family to understand what might be happening to himself and his brother in this strange new land. It is he who figures out how to use a quantum leap in order to get back to their time. This character becomes very ill from the sun, and he recovers in the tent of Lamech. He is very close to his twin brother and misses him when they are separated. This character is fifteen years old and he is very attracted to Yalith. This startles him because he has never felt so strongly attracted to a female before. He asks the girl if she would like to go back to his time with him.

## Japheth

This is the short man who finds the twins and helps rescue them.

## Mother

This woman studies virtual particles. The boys go to her lab to find cocoa.

## Father

This man studies time and space. He has a machine that the boys inadvertently use and find themselves in a desert in a time long before their own time.



## **Meg**

This is the college-aged sister of the twins.

## **Charles Wallace**

This is the twins' younger brother.

## **Lamech**

This is Japheth's grandfather. He is a small, strong old man who is known for his kindness and willingness to help others.

## **Yalith**

This is Lamech's youngest granddaughter. She is attracted to Sandy.

## **Seraphim**

This comes to help Sandy and Lamech. It is wise and has a gift for healing.

## **Elbis**

This is a nephil that is attracted to Yalith.

## **EI**

This is a powerful being whose ways are not man's ways.

## **Aariel**

This character is a seraph. It protects Yalith and warns Elbis to leave her alone.

## **Mahlah**

This is Yalith's sister. She is not concerned with the old ways of doing things. She is betrothed to a nephil.



## **Ugiel**

This is the nephil that is betrothed to Mahlah.

## **Shem**

This is Yalith's brother.

## **Anah**

This is Ham's wife.

## **Ham**

This is one of Yalith's brothers. He is sickly.

## **Matred**

This is Yalith's mother.

## **Elisheba**

This is Shem's wife. She is stocky and sensible-looking.



# Objects/Places

## Lab

This is where the boys go to find cocoa. They didn't realize an experiment is in progress until it is too late.

## Oasis

This is where Japheth's grandfather lives. The unicorns take the twins to him when they are ill from heat.

## Unicorns

These consist of virtual particles. They come when summoned but only appear as solid state when truly believed in.

## Mammoth

This is what appears with Japheth. It has a gift for finding water. It can also summon unicorns.

## Garden

This is what Sandy and Dennys tended to help Lamech. It made them happy and reminded them of home.

## Ark

This is what Noah was told to build, according to El. It made all the neighbors laugh.

## Tiglah's tent

This is where Dennys appeared. It was filthy and Dennys was kicked out .

## Wine

Noah made this. It was some of the best in the area. He brought it to Lamech after they reconciled.



## **Flood**

This was what the boys knew was coming. It would destroy the earth and everyone except Noah's family.

## **Thunder**

This is what the twins hear throughout the story, but it doesn't come with rain.

## **Scarab Beetle**

This is generally found on the mammoth's ear. It's a seraph.

## **Quantum Leap**

This is what the boys use to travel through time. They learned about it from their father who does experiments with it.



# Themes

## The Limitations and Benefits of Shape Shifting

Both the nephilim and the seraphim have the ability to shift and manipulate shapes. The nephilim have a reputation for using the shifting for trickery. This is why Noah and his family can't find Sandy when he is captured. The nephilim have made his tent invisible. Both groups also shift into animal shapes. This is helpful to them because it allows them to blend in with scenery, and it also allows them to keep an eye on what's happening around them. For example, when Yalith goes into the desert, it's easier and less conspicuous to follow her as an animal than as an unusually tall man. Another benefit of shape shifting is practicality. A seraphim turns into a camel to help take Dennys across the Dennys.

On the negative side, shape shifting takes a lot of energy so it can't be done repetitively. Also, it puts limitations on the nephilim and seraphim. When they are in the animal form they don't have the free range of power that they are accustomed to.

Although not a nephilim or seraphim, the unicorns also take shape from particles of matter. The twins use unicorns for transport. The negative part of unicorns is that they only appear when truly believed in. A mind with belief must conjure it up. The unicorns will only allow themselves to be touched by virgins. This works well for the twins, but it means that the older, married Japheth can't use them for transportation.

## Time and Space Travel

Dennys and Sandy live in a household where science is uplifted. Their mother studies particular matter, and their father studies time and space. The boys accidentally become part of an experiment and find themselves in a strange world. Knowing their father's interests, they realize they can be anywhere in the universe. They also realize that they can be anywhere in time. This makes things a bit difficult when they begin to try to figure out how to go home.

After a while they realize that they are part of the biblical story of Noah. The twins are relieved because at least they know what planet they are on. Due to conversations from the dinner table, the boys are somewhat familiar with manipulation of matter, time and space. Because of this, they don't panic in their situation. They just put open their minds to various solutions for getting back to their time. They eventually figure out how work with the seraphim and the unicorns to take a quantum leap through time to get back to their own home and time.



## The Importance of Nature

Nature plays a big role in this novel. The story begins with the boys playing a game on a cold, snowy day. Because they are so frozen, they go home to warm up. It's during their search for cocoa that they enter the lab while an experiment is in progress. Thinking of warmer climes, they type that in and find themselves in a scorching desert where the sun is brutal on their fair skin.

The weather is foreboding. It's intensely hot and dry. Water is scarce. This foreshadows troubles to come, especially when the boys know about the flood. The earth isn't used to rain. Thunder resonates throughout the story, but rain doesn't come. When it does, the boys know it will be a deluge that destroys everything.

Some of the characters in the story, such as the twins and Yalith, have a unique connection to nature. They can hear things in the wind and the stars. When Yalith is concerned about her future, knowing she won't be saved on the boat, the stars tell her not to worry and she has enough experience with their messages and enough faith to listen to them. The stars dim and go silent when Lamech dies.

# Style

## Point of View

"Many Waters" by Madeleine L'Engle is written in the third-person point of view. This allows the readers to connect with numerous characters, offering insight into the unique situation and emotions of each. Because of this viewpoint, readers get a clear idea of who intends evil, who is good, and who is a pawn. The twins are the main characters, and the reader gets to know each of them as unique individuals, but also sees how they work together. This is particularly important when it comes to relationships with Yalith. They are both attracted to her and she is attracted to both of them, but due to the third-person point of view, there is no judgment. The reader sees the inward struggle of each of them.

## Setting

The setting is particularly pivotal to the story line. The boys come from the cold and polluted modern world and are transported to a much younger, hotter Earth. It's due to the brutal climate that both boys end up ill, having to be nursed by Noah and Lameth in tents. As they heal, they learn how scarce water is and understand that the Earth is going to become destroyed by water. The Earth is very young, and the boys have to become accustomed to mammoths, nephilim, and seraphim. They also need to learn how to work with mystical beings such as unicorns. They know they have to leave before they, too, are drowned, but they have to figure out how to cross time and space to get back to their home.

## Language and Meaning

Although most of this story takes place in biblical times, the text is devoid of "thees" and "thous" associated with those times. The parents of the twins are scientists, and the language reflects this. Scientific topics such as quantum leaps and virtual particles are discussed regularly. There are also referrals to ancient beings such as the nephilim and seraphim mentioned in the "Holy Bible." Although this text deals with abstract concepts, it is highly readable. The story flows well and difficult concepts are explained in detail.

## Structure

"Many Waters" by Madeleine L'Engle is part of a time quintet. The other books in the quintet are listed right before the title page. The dedication page, which is after the title page, is followed by a table of contents, which shows that there are 12 chapters followed by a question and answer section with the author. The chapters average between 15 and 25 pages in length.





## Quotes

"'Hey.' Sandy pointed. 'We didn't see this.' There was a small note taped to the door: EXPERIMENT IN PROGRESS. PLEASE KEEP OUT" (Chapter 1, p. 9).

"'And I wish our parents did ordinary things,' Sandy complained. 'If Dad were a plumber or an electrician, and if Mother were somebody's secretary, it would be a lot easier for us'" (Chapter 1, p. 16).

"Change is, I suppose, inevitable, and sometimes it brings good things" (Chapter 3, p. 69).

"You are the beginning of change. We are living in end times. It can be very lonely" (Chapter 4, p. 97).

Sandy and I are the squares of the family. Our older sister and our little brother are the special ones. We're just the ordinary—" Alarid interrupted him. 'Because that is how you are, or because that is how you choose to be'" (Chapter 7, p. 113).

"But for the future to touch the past can be dangerous. It could cause a paradox" (Chapter 7, p. 115).

"'Oh, my wife, it is very strange indeed. El has told my father to build a boat, an ark'" (Chapter 10, p. 248).

"'The problem is,' he said to the Mammoth, 'that I always have to see things to believe in them'" (Chapter 11, p. 290).

"In his mind's ear Sandy seemed to hear, 'Some things have to be believed to be seen'" (Chapter 11, p. 290).

"Again Alarid's wings quivered. "Part of doing something is listening" (Chapter 12, p. 317).

"Hey," Sandy said. "I'm not sure anymore what's real and what isn't. I mean, nephilim and seraphim" (Chapter 12, p. 323).

"Yalith remembered the words Aariel had said to her when she had gone out to the desert in the heat of the day. 'Many waters cannot quench love,' she whispered. 'Neither can the floods drown it. Oh, twins, dear twins, I love you'" (Chapter 12, p. 336).

"There have been many times of last days," he said, "and they mark not only endings but beginnings" (Chapter 12, p. 340).

"The pattern is not set,' Adnarel said. 'It is fluid, and constantly changing'" (Chapter 12, p. 346).

"It all depends. But I don't think we touched anything we shouldn't have, do you, Dennys?' 'Under the circumstances, no,' Dennys said" (Chapter 12, p. 351).



## Topics for Discussion

Describe the relationship between Dennys and Sandy.

How did they respond to their time travel and why?

Compare and contrast the world the twins came from and the world they traveled to.

Compare and contrast the nephilim and the seraphim.

What was the significance of the stars and the wind for Yalith?

Why couldn't Yalith return with the boys?

Describe how the boys returned back to their time and how they had changed by the time they returned to the lab.