

Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment Study Guide

**Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment by James
Patterson**

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Plot Summary

The Prologue to James Patterson's *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* opens with the following line: "Congratulations. The fact that you're reading this means you've taken one giant step closer to surviving till your next birthday." Prologue, p. 1

There is an immediate urgency in the tone of the narrator, begging the reader not to put the book down because to do so could result in dire consequences.

The Prologue gives instantaneous insight into the mind of a scared teenager who is literally fighting for her life. The majority of the story is told by Max, a fourteen year old girl who was created at a school designed to create hybrid human beings. Max, along with her adopted family of other genetically altered beings, is 98% human, 2% bird.

"The six of us—me, Fang, Iggy, Nudge, the Gasman, and Angel—were made on purpose, by the sickest, most horrible 'scientists' you could possibly imagine." Prologue, p. 1

According to Max, the 2% bird DNA has made a huge difference in each kid. Each kid knows how to fly and has many characteristics of a bird including a rapid heart rate, thin bones, and a voracious appetite. The children also have superhuman strength and vision in addition to a variety of supernatural gifts that are discovered throughout the story.

The six children, whose ages range from fourteen to six years old, have escaped from the school. In addition to their creation, the scientists have also created another group of hybrids known as the Erasers - part human, part wolf. The Erasers work as security guards for the school and can morph into wolves in the blink of an eye. It is Max's goal to tell the children's story.

Four years ago, a scientist at the School helped the six kids to escape. This scientist, Jeb, had taught the kids how to live "normal" lives. The kids learned to read, fight, and live in the real world as much as possible. Two years previous, Jeb had disappeared leaving the kids alone.

The action begins with the kidnapping of six year old Angel. The Erasers take Angel back to the school for testing. Angel sees Jeb and is confused about why he would want to hurt her if he was truly her friend.

The other kids hatch a plan to get Angel back from the School. Erasers are everywhere and it is an uphill battle. Max gets hurt saving a girl from bullies. The caper is finally pulled off and Angel is rescued.

The kids go to New York to get information on their histories and families, if they do exist. The battle against the Erasers gets much more difficult. In addition, Jeb and his

son, Ari, are on their trail. The kids eventually get the information they want and fly off to find their families.

The beginning and end of the book both contain passages from Max, warning the reader about the plight of the Flock and how the story may seem fantastic and unbelievable but that it is entirely true. The structure is also designed to create a compelling cliffhanger for the reader coaxing the reader to move on to the next book in the series.



Prologue

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Prologue Analysis

Patterson is a master at grabbing a reader's attention. Max's voice is both pleading and demanding with an edge of desperation. While the story may seem fantastic, Max makes it believable. Despite any preconceived notions the reader may have, Max's words encourage the reader to continue to learn more about the school and, more importantly, the predicament of the children and how it might affect the reader.



Part 1: Chapters 1-11

Part 1: Chapters 1-11 Summary

Part 1: Flock Fright

Chapter 1 opens with Max narrating: "The funny thing about facing imminent death is that it really snaps everything else into perspective." Chap. 1, p. 5

Max is being chased as she flees from the School that had held her captive. Erasers, genetically altered young men that work as the School's security guards, are chasing her. Max describes the men that pursue her as "Mutants: half-men, half-wolves, usually armed, always bloodthirsty. Right now they were after me." Chap. 1, p. 5

Max and her friends have managed to escape from the School. However, the Erasers are not far behind. Max and the others believe they can get away. Max knows they can outrun the Erasers, even little Angel who is only six years old. Soon Max hears the sound of the dogs. None of them can outrun the dogs. Max finds herself running full out through the forest, hoping for a clearing so that she can fly. She comes to the edge of a cliff. Max leaps, spreads her wings and flies for the first time. Max takes comfort in knowing that she will not die today.

Chapter 2: Max wakes from the recurring dream covered in sweat. She reminds herself that she and the others are safe. Max gets dressed and enjoys the view from the group's mountain hideaway. Max loves the house, ranking it as an easy fifteen on a scale of one to ten. Max thinks about their former benefactor, Jeb Batchelder, and how he disappeared two years previous. The kids had known Jeb was dead but never spoke of it. Now they are on their own. The kids learn from the internet and are careful to let no one know about their existence on the mountain.

Chapter 3: Gazzy enters the kitchen. Gazzy is eight years old. Gazzy asks about breakfast. Soon Iggy and Fang appear. Iggy is six months younger than Max; Fang is four months younger. Iggy says he will make breakfast while Max goes to wake the girls. The two younger girls, Nudge and Angel, share a room. Nudge is eleven years old and is known for talking non-stop. Angel is six years old and is Max's favorite. Angel's gift is that she can read minds.

Chapter 4: The group goes to pick strawberries and to enjoy the day. There is joking and playing around until Angel screams. Erasers drop from the sky.

Chapter 5: The attack is swift and brutal. No matter what the kids do, the Erasers are bigger and they are outnumbered. Angel is stuffed into a sack while the others are repeatedly attacked. An Eraser approaches Max and speaks to her. It is Ari, Jeb's seven year old son. He has been turned into an Eraser.



Chapter 6: Fang and Gazzy stand over Max who has just regained consciousness. She is in pain, as are the others. Fang says that the Erasers have taken Angel. Iggy hears the sound of an engine on an old unused logging road. The Erasers are making their escape in a Humvee.

""My heart pounded. I knew, just knew, that my little one, my Angel, was inside. And she was on her way to a place where death came as a blessing." Chap. 6, p. 19

Max asks the others if they are up for a fight.

Chapter 7: The group takes off and flies after the Humvee. Fang smashes the windshield. Up ahead is a helicopter. The group is held off by guns and grenades. Ari throws Angel into the chopper. Max refuses to give up. Ari points a gun at her. Ari tells Max that she has it all wrong - they are the good guys. Max has no choice but to let go or die.

Chapter 8: Gazzy is in hysterics. Everyone looks to Max to formulate a plan. Max takes off and sits high up in a fir tree to think. After she sobs and punches the tree until her hands are bloody, Max decides that she has to return to the others and figure out what to do.

Chapter 9: The five kids return to the house. Iggy and Fang argue after Iggy gets hit in the head. Max reminds them that the Erasers are the enemy. Each is crying and in shock. Gazzy looks at Max like she allowed the event to happen. Max also blames herself.

"True, I'm the leader, I'm Max the Invincible—but I'm also just a fourteen-year-old kid. And every once in a while, like when I realize all over again that Jeb is gone forever, that we're on our own, that the others depend on me and I can't let them down, well, that's when it all gets to me." Chap. 9, p. 27

Max and Fang tell the others that there must have been a reason for Angel to be taken alive and that the Erasers are surely taking her back to the School.

Chapter 10: Gasman is shocked that Angel would have been taken back to the School. Nudge says she had hoped they'd forgotten about them. Fang says that it is clear the School wants them back. Fang retrieves Jeb's papers from a closet and they find a map. It is a map of a secret facility at the School.

Chapter 11: It is decided that Max, Fang and Nudge will fly to the School to save Angel. Iggy is mad that he is being forced to stay behind because of his blindness. Gazzy also wants to go but Max makes the argument that the Erasers might want him, too.

Part 1: Chapters 1-11 Analysis

Max is introduced in a thrilling way - trying to escape the bloodthirsty Erasers who want nothing more than to catch and possibly execute her and the others. The Erasers have



an edge because they have guns, dogs, and their predatorial instincts and abilities. But they cannot fly. Max is shocked to know that she can fly since she has never done it before. It is clear that Max is extremely naïve in some ways, yet brave and desperate for freedom.

The children live in a house that is owned by Jeb Batchelder, a man that had taken them in and protected them. Jeb had disappeared and the children had had to learn to fend for themselves. Max, as the oldest, is in charge of the others although they seem to be able to work together to create a fairly happy existence.

The family seems to get along well. It is clear that each has a distinct personality. Max is in charge; Iggy, although blind, is self supporting and not hampered by his handicap; Fang is a bit of a dark mysterious force; Gazzy is a sweet kid despite his gastrointestinal issues; Nudge talks non-stop; Angel is a sweet little girl who is Max's surrogate daughter. Each has a unique gift which will certainly come into play as the story moves along.

The appearance of the Erasers is shocking. The abduction of Angel happens so fast that no one has a chance to react.

Max and the others jump into action without thinking. No matter how strong or skilled they are, the Erasers have the advantage. Almost as shocking as the attack is that Ari has been turned into an Eraser, which is further confirmation that Jeb is dead.

There is a tremendous amount of fear in all of the children as they wonder what the Erasers will do with Angel and why she is the one chosen. All efforts are fruitless and Angel is taken away. Max feels betrayed by Ari and cannot believe that there is anything good in Angel's future.

Max is in a difficult place. Although she is only fourteen and still a child herself, it will be Max who will have to formulate a plan to save Angel. Max is not emotionally equipped to do so but is the best person for the job.

Max has the weight of the world on her shoulders. She desperately wishes for a leader or a parent - someone to tell her what to do. The reader can perceive that once the shock wears off, the group - or Max, more specifically - will develop a plan to save Angel.

Max tries hard to be "leader-ly" while Fang retrieves Jeb's papers. Only Max and Fang seem to know what needs to be done and that they will have to be the ones to sneak into the facility. There is clearly a great deal of danger that lies ahead.

Max must make difficult decisions. Iggy and Gazzy are not happy to be left behind. Nudge seems to see the trip as somewhat of an adventure. No one has any idea how difficult the mission will be.



Part 2: Chapters 12-30

Part 2: Chapters 12-30 Summary

Chapter 12: Max, Fang and Nudge begin the journey to the school. They fly at 90 miles per hour with the hope of adding another 20 mph if they get a good tail wind. Nudge asks what to do if they should get separated. It is decided that the group will reconvene at the northmost point of Lake Mead.

Max thinks about the location of the School: "Could the School be located in a more perfect place? Death Valley. Above the Badwater Basin. Like, when we got there, we'd see a road paved with good intentions and have to cross the river Styx to get in." Chap. 12, p. 40

Max and Fang talk about how cool it is to fly. Max tries to keep everyone in good spirits but it is hard considering the situation. Max worries about Gazzy and Iggy but knows that she needs to focus on the rescue and the issues at hand.

"The Gasman and Iggy had been none-too-happy campers when we'd left, but I thought I'd made the right decision. That was the problem with this leader stuff. It didn't come with an instruction manual. Given what Angel was facing, their being unhappy was the least of my concerns." Chap. 12, p. 40

Max begins to think about replenishing fuel after two hours in the air. Nudge asks about Jeb's papers. Nudge had seen her real name - Monique - on the papers and wonders if she has parents. Max tells her to focus.

Chapter 13: Angel wakes up in a crate. She hears noises from nearby. Angel reads the minds of two young boys who are scared and confused. Two whitecoats enter the area. The men talk as if Angel is not present. One is amazed at Angel's form and refers to her as Subject 11. One scientist is eager to section Angel's brain.

Chapter 14: Max, Fang and Nudge decide to stop to refuel. They break into a vacation home that has been abandoned for the season. Inside, the group finds various canned items. They eat and then decide to rest for ten minutes.

Chapter 15: Gazzy and Iggy are upset, angry and feeling helpless. Gazzy says that just because they are stuck at the house does not mean that they have to be helpless. The Erasers might return. The boys make a plan to build bombs to blow up the Erasers.

Chapter 16: Angel runs from the scientists but eventually collapses from exhaustion. The men are amazed at Angel's endurance. Eventually, Angel is too exhausted to carry on. The men return Angel to her crate. Angel thinks about how she might escape.



Chapter 17: Max wakes up from her nap and is shocked at how much time has been wasted. She wakes Nudge and Fang. Fang loads up a backpack with food despite Max's protests that cans are too heavy to carry. The group leaves the cabin.

Chapter 18: Max is upset with herself that they had slept for ten hours. In flight, Nudge asks about the plan to save Angel. It seems there is no clear cut plan. Max has a secret plan C to save Angel but it involves sacrificing herself.

Chapter 19: Max spots a group of kids tormenting a smaller child. Against Fang's wishes, Max decides that she needs to fly down and save the girl. Fang and Nudge fly on without Max.

Chapter 20: "The thing about Iggy was, well, sometimes he could figure stuff out like a real scientist. He was that supersmart, scary smart." Chap. 20, p. 64

Iggy and Gazzy work on making a bomb. The last element is a timing device. They choose to use Max's Mickey Mouse alarm clock.

Chapter 21: Max enters the group of kids on the ground. They are tormenting a young girl named Ella. Max gets into a physical altercation and helps Ella to get away.

Chapter 22: Max runs into the woods. She does not want the boys to see her wings. The boys chase Max and fire guns at her, hitting her in the shoulder.

Chapter 23: Nudge and Fang stop for food at the edge of Lake Mead where they will meet up with Max. The pair eats. Nudge sees something outside and calls to Fang.

Chapter 24: Nudge is very quiet as she points out a nest of very large birds.

"'Ferruginous hawks,' Fang said softly. 'Largest raptor in the States. Sit down, very slowly. No sudden movements or we're both bird feed.'" Chap. 24, p. 75

The pair sits very quietly for a long time. Fang lets the hawks smell him. After a while they go back to feeding, leaving Fang and Nudge alone.

Chapter 25: Fang and Nudge wait for Max. Fang watches the hawks and learns a new technique on banking in a tight circle. Fang and Nudge practice. They settle in for the night wondering what has happened to Max.

Chapter 26: Max follows Ella home. She does not want to go to the house but has little choice. It is raining and she is hurt.

Chapter 27: Angel is scared. She had been hit by Reilly after she bit him in the lab. A whitecoat comes and takes the shunt out of her hand. Angel wonders if the whitecoat is a good man, like Jeb.

Chapter 28: Gazzy and Iggy continue with their plans. They think that Max will be proud of them for their ingenuity.



Chapter 29: Iggy and Gazzy pack up their gear and go out to look for the Erasers. The house has been rigged and Iggy carries a time controlled device in case they find the camp.

Chapter 30: Iggy and Gazzy continue with their experiment. They plant bombs and wait.

Part 2: Chapters 12-30 Analysis

This section allows Patterson to begin to show the individual characteristics of each of the kids. Max is a defacto leader although at times she wishes she had someone else to take the reins. The incident with Ella shows that Max is an empathic soul and will always fight for the underdog despite any peril that might occur in the meantime. This can also be seen in Max's "Secret Plan C" wherein she plans to save Angel even if it means sacrificing herself.

Fang takes on more of a leadership role in Max's absence. Fang knows it is his job to take care of Nudge and to carry out the mission as far as he can without Max by his side. Fang, like Nudge and the others, is extremely intelligent. Fang shows his maturity when he distracts himself and Nudge by emulating the hawks' flight patterns.

Nudge is a girl stuck between two worlds. On one hand she is a little girl who longs for a normal life and a real family. On the other hand, she is much more mature and intelligent than a typical eleven year old girl and uses her knowledge and skill to the best of her ability.

Iggy and Gazzy are upset at being left behind but do what they can to make up for the slight. Iggy is feeling sorry for himself and his blindness, which is unusual. The boys show some ingenuity as well as a bit of mischief when they concoct the plan to derail the Erasers.

Angel shows a great deal of maturity for a six year old girl. She knows what will happen if she does not escape the school. Patterson uses a foreshadowing technique in regards to Reilly's treatment of Angel and one can assume that Reilly will be the downfall to the other scientists' plans to study Angel.

Max is upset with herself for delaying Angel's rescue and one wonders if it will be too late when Max, Fang and Nudge reach the School.



Part 2: Chapters 31-48

Part 2: Chapters 31-48 Summary

Chapter 31: Max enters Ella's house. Ella introduces Max to her mother. Max learns that Ella's mother is a veterinarian. Ella's mother looks at Max's wounds and discovers Max's wing. Ella's mother acts as if nothing is out of the ordinary and tends to the wound.

Chapter 32: Gazzy and Iggy see the results of their plan when the Hummer travels along the logging road.

"It was like watching a movie. One second, the boxy black vehicle was tearing along the road, and the next second, it swerved violently to the left with an audible squealing of brakes. It began a slow, graceless series of jerky spins down the road, then gave an unexpected jump toward the trees on one side. It hit the trees at an angle and went airborne, sailing upside down about fifteen feet before landing with a heavy crunching sound." Chap. 32, pg. 98

The Erasers emerge, angry but seemingly unharmed.

Chapter 33: Iggy and Gazzy go to an old cabin to wait and think about what to do next. As the boys are talking they hear a noise from outside. The Erasers have found them.

Chapter 34: Nudge wakes to find that Fang is gone. Nudge panics and then sees Fang flying with the hawks. Nudge joins in and realizes that she needs to practice.

Chapter 35: Max wakes in the Martinez house. She is disoriented and it takes a minute to remember what has happened. Max wonders if this is what it is like to have a real home.

Chapter 36: Gazzy and Iggy quickly devise a plan to escape from the Erasers. They spread their wings and fly up through the rotten roof. Once above the cabin, Iggy sets off the "big Boy" bomb. Two Erasers die. Iggy and Gazzy escape.

Chapter 37: Angel is put through an endless series of tests, including a maze. This time, the whitecoats plan to put an Eraser in the maze with her. Angel reads a whitecoat's mind and learns the layout of the maze. Angel hears a familiar voice and looks up to see Jeb.

Chapter 38: Nudge and Fang try to decide what to do about Max. Nudge sees a sign for Tipisco, Arizona. Nudge recalls seeing paperwork with her name on it and the name of the town. Nudge insists on going to Arizona to find her parents. Fang argues but in the end, Nudge wins.



Chapter 39: Gazzy and Iggy hide in a crevice on the side of a cliff. Neither had thought about what to do beyond the bombing of the Erasers. Gazzy says he has a plan - one that Max would not approve of if she knew.

Chapter 40: Max is enjoying her time at the Martinez house although Angel is always on her mind. Max wonders if this is what "normal" feels like. Dr. Martinez asks Max if there is anything she would like to talk about. Max has to fight to keep quiet because she is still afraid of anyone outside the Flock.

Chapter 41: Dr. Martinez takes Max to her clinic for x-rays. Max is afraid, particularly when she sees a white lab coat. Max begs to leave. Dr. Martinez says the x-ray will just take a minute. Max has no broken bones but does have torn muscle tissue. However, Max regenerates quickly. The doctor also finds a microchip in Max. The doctor says it looks like a locator chip.

Chapter 42: Dr. Martinez tries to reassure Max that the chip only looks like a locator chip; it might be something else. Max tells her to take it out. The doctor explains that she cannot remove it because it was put into Max's arm when she was small. To try to extract it would mean causing muscle, nerve and/or tissue damage.

Supposed law enforcement officials come to the clinic looking for anything "unusual." Dr. Martinez protects Max and sends the men away. Max is ready to leave but the doctor makes her promise to stay one more night to heal.

Chapter 43: Fang continues to try to talk Nudge out of going to find her parents. They land in a trailer park and watch as a woman exits. The voice of an Eraser comes from behind them.

Chapter 44: The Erasers taunt Fang and Nudge. The Erasers say that they have burned down the house. The Erasers begin to morph into wolves. Fang and Nudge execute a plan and manage to get away. Nudge says she wants to go home to the hawks.

Chapter 45: Angel and Jeb talk. Angel is confused and does not know what to do. Angel is unable to read Jeb's mind which makes it worse. Jeb keeps trying to reassure Angel that everything will be okay.

"Without saying a word, Angel sat up, crossing her arms over her chest and staring at him the way Max stared at Fang when they were having an argument and she was going to win. Angel made herself not look at the food, not even smell the food. She was so freaked at seeing Jeb here that her stomach was all in knots anyway. The fact that she couldn't pick up any of his thoughts made him seem weird and dead to her." Chap. 45, p. 145

Chapter 46: Max, Ella and Dr. Martinez bake chocolate chip cookies. Max thinks she is in heaven.

Chapter 47: Nudge and Fang talk about what the Erasers had said about everyone else being dead. Nudge can't bear the thought. After hiding from a helicopter for twenty



minutes, Fang sets out for food. He returns with kabobs he has stolen from campers. Fang and Nudge spot two large awkward birds in the sky and wonder if the Erasers had learned to fly. It turns out to be Iggy and Gazzy. They tell Fang and Nudge that Erasers are all over the mountain and they decided it would be best to find the rest of the Flock.

Chapter 48: Max prepares to leave Ella and Dr. Martinez. Ella wants Max to stay. The doctor gives Max an old backpack and phone numbers to call in case she ever needs them. Max flies away.

Part 2: Chapters 31-48 Analysis

In this section each of the children faces his or her own demons, deficiencies and skills. Iggy and Gazzy are proud of what they have been able to accomplish and take some pride in telling the others about it. At first the others believe that Iggy and Gazzy may have started a war with the Erasers until it is learned that the Erasers already knew about the house and cabin. It would have been a matter of time before everything was destroyed.

Nudge has been feeling abandoned and Fang is confused. The incident in Arizona had only made things worse. Nudge continues to berate herself for forcing Nudge to go and the fact that the trip put them in danger.

Max is sad to leave the Martinez house since it is the only time she has truly felt a sense of normalcy and family. Although her muscles are sore, Max manages to fly. Max must leave behind her emotions and focus on the task at hand - saving Angel.

Angel is in the most trying position at this time. She is at first relieved to see Jeb but then realizes that he is now on the side of the whitecoats. Jeb's lack of explanation is supposed to serve as his explanation and it is clear that he underestimates Angel.



Part 3: Chapters 49-66

Part 3: Chapters 49-66 Summary

Part 3: School - What Could be Scarier Than That?

Chapter 49: Max gets closer to the meeting point. At first she thinks she spots a helicopter and then realizes that it is a flock of hawks. Max draws closer.

"My heart swelled—there were four way-too-big hawks, all right. Except hawks usually weren't quite as awkward as these four. And hawks didn't usually wear sneakers." Chap. 49, pg. 160

Max is filled with relief when she realizes that the others have waited for her.

Chapter 50: Max and the others reunite. Stories are exchanged about the events over the past couple of days. The group takes off to go and rescue Angel.

Chapter 51: As the kids fly they talk about saving Angel. Max apologizes for delaying the mission.

Chapter 52: The Flock flies until it needs food. They stop in a small town about ten miles from the school. They watch as a man withdraws cash from an ATM. Ari and other Erasers drive up fast and hit the man's car.

Chapter 53: The skirmish between the man and the Erasers causes the man to take off while leaving his card behind. The Flock manages to get a few hundred dollars which will help them to buy food and any other necessary supplies.

Chapter 54: The Flock watches as a guy pulls up in a red van. The man goes into the convenience store and punches in to go to work. The Flock decides to "borrow" the guy's van while he is at work. Max says that she has seen people drive on TV, so how hard could it be?

Chapter 55: The Flock drives in circles and takes many wrong turns before giving up to find a road map. Apparently, the Flock's flawless sense of direction does not mean that there is a road attached to where they need to be going.

Chapter 56: The Flock goes into a fast food restaurant and orders a feast. Part way through the meal Max gets a bad feeling. Suddenly she and Fang notice that there are tables of burly men with angelic voices surrounding them. They are surrounded by Erasers.

Chapter 57: The Flock flees from the restaurant and makes it to the van just as the Erasers emerge. There is a car chase. Just as Max is prepared to ditch the van she hits a car head on at 60 mph.



Chapter 58: Iggy and Gazzy manage to get away. Max, Fang and Nudge are captured by the Erasers.

Chapter 59: Max is in a large cage. She is relieved to see Angel. Angel is bruised and dirty but alive. Angel tells Max not to worry or blame herself. Fang is withdrawn; Nudge tries to hold it together but fails. Angel tries to tell Max something but is interrupted by the arrival of Jeb.

Chapter 60: Jeb talks to Max. Max remembers how much she had loved Jeb as a father. Max recalls learning to fly, fight, read and many other things Jeb taught her and the others. Now everything has changed.

"Like a door slamming shut, everything in me that had loved and trusted Jeb closed down. In its place rose new feelings that were so powerful and full of hate that they scared me." Chap. 60, p. 193

Jeb takes Max out of her crate, saying that he needs to talk to her. Max gives the others the signal to wait.

Chapter 61: Jeb takes Max into a room and makes cups of hot chocolate. Jeb says there are many things that Max does not understand, things that he wanted to prepare her for. While many things remain unexplained, Jeb tells Max that she was created for a purpose.

"Max, that reason, that purpose is: You are supposed to save the world." Chap. 61, p. 197

Chapter 62: Jeb tells Max that her life is worth the lives of thousands. Other people will talk to her about this but Jeb wanted to be the first. Jeb returns Max to her crate and tells her to trust her gut.

Chapter 63: Max knows that they are under surveillance and cannot talk. Angel reads Max's thoughts. The Flock remains quiet. Later Ari, more Erasers and a whitecoat take the cages out into the yard.

Chapter 64: Ari continues to taunt Max. Max bites Ari's finger until she tastes blood. Max's cage gets knocked over. She unlatches her cage and then Angel's, urging the girl to run. Ari begins to chase after Angel. Storm clouds fill the sky. Max smiles realizing that the storm clouds are hawks, led by Iggy and Gazzy.

Chapter 65: Max throws Angel into the sky and tells her to go. The hawks attack. The Erasers and whitecoats are quickly defeated. The hawks know that the battle is over. Angel is barely hanging on so Gazzy and Iggy help her stay in the air. Just as the Flock is ready to fly, Jeb calls out to Max. Max turns away.

Chapter 66: The Flock returns to the cave. Max expresses how much everyone means to her. The others chime in. The Flock cannot return home since the house has been destroyed. It is decided that they will fly east.



Part 3: Chapters 49-66 Analysis

Max feels a great sense of relief when she finds the other kids. She still has remorse over being gone for so long but knows that nothing can be done about it now.

The reunion between Max and the others is short and sweet. They catch up quickly and take off to find Angel. Each silently fears that it might be too late.

Max is both saddened and rejuvenated by being reinstated in her role as the leader of the Flock. No one blames Max for leaving. Gazzy and Iggy let everyone know about the mountain house and each mourns the loss.

The attempted rescue falls flat. Iggy and Gazzy manage to get away but Max, Fang and Nudge have no chance at escape. It is somewhat surprising that the Erasers, particularly Ari, did not take it upon themselves to kill Max, Fang, and Nudge.

Max's first bad reaction comes upon seeing Angel. Although Max is hurt, seeing Angel in her weakened and tortured state supersedes everything else. Max is shocked and deeply wounded when she sees Jeb. Jeb had been a father to all of them and now he is a whitecoat. Jeb tries to be gentle with Max but Max protects herself by drawing inward. Even when Jeb tries to explain, Max refuses to believe what is happening. It is clear that Jeb cares about Max but his lack of explanation makes matters worse.

The arrival of the hawks is a "hooray" moment for the Flock. The Erasers are no match for the hawks and the Flock's getaway renews their spirit. Angel will heal, as will Max. Deciding where to go next seems to be easy for the group although reasoning behind the decision, if there is any, seems unclear.



Part 4, Chapters 67-85

Part 4, Chapters 67-85 Summary

Part 4: New Yawk, New Yawk

Chapter 67: The Flock is flying through the sky when Max get a violent pain in her head. Max is stunned and confused. She cannot speak or move and begins to fall.

Chapter 68: Fang scoops her up when he sees she is in trouble. Max, finally able to speak, asks Fang to find a place to land.

Chapter 69: The pain passes. The group sets up camp and makes dinner. After everyone goes to bed, Angel wakes Max and tells her that she has a secret.

Chapter 70: Angel begins to tell Max that she overheard things people thought while at the School. Some of the things Angel heard she did not understand. She tells the others that an Institute in New York has information about them. Angel also says that they were all born from human mothers.

Chapter 71: Angel tells each person about their mothers, except for Max. Angel did not overhear any information about Max. Angel says that the parents wanted to help the School so they allowed the whitecoats to inject bird DNA into the wombs of the mothers during pregnancy. The mothers sold the children to the School.

Chapter 72: The Flock reels from the information. Max is upset that she still doesn't know anything about her heritage. Fang says sometimes not knowing is better. The group goes to bed. Max is too exhausted to think about the brain attack.

Chapter 73: Max wakes first and begins to make breakfast. The group prepares to fly to New York. As soon as Max begins to fly, the brain attack returns.

"Behind my eyes, bursts of red and orange flooded my brain, as if fireworks were exploding inside me. Then it was as though someone had jacked a movie screen directly into my retinas: Lightning-fast images shot through me so fast it made me feel sick. I could hardly make any of them out: blurred buildings, fuzzy landscapes, unrecognizable people's faces, food, headlines from papers, old stuff in black-and-white, psychedelic stuff, swirly patterns. . ." Chap. 73, p. 233

Max hits the ground with a thud. Fang suggests going to see a doctor. Max says no and that she is already feeling better, which is a lie.

Chapter 74: The Flock begins to fly. Max feels sick but the pain is gone. Nudge talks about her parents. Max thinks about Ella, her mother, and the chocolate chip cookies.



Chapter 75: The Flock arrives in New York and is assaulted by sights and sounds. Nudge wants to do everything at once. Gazzy loves all the sounds while Iggy hates them because it is too confusing to be "smothered" in sound. The Flock attends a concert in Central Park and for a short time everyone is happy.

Chapter 76: The Flock goes to explore the city streets. As some of the group goes to see a clown with balloons, Max's alarm goes off. She spots a man coming toward them. Max sends out an alarm to Fang and the others and they begin to run. Soon the number of men chasing them increases.

Chapter 77: Iggy tells everyone to go left. They merge into a group of school kids going into the Central Park Zoo. The Erasers are turned away because it's a school-only day. The kids rejoice as they go inside the zoo. Nudge is excited to see the animals. They move farther into the zoo to put more distance between themselves and the Erasers.

Chapter 78: Gazzy is thrilled by the bears. None has seen animals in real life and are intrigued. It makes Max think of the School and she wants to free the animals. Fang tells her that they are safer where they are and that they would not survive in the city. Suddenly Max feels sick and they leave the group of kids.

Chapter 79: The Flock returns to the street. Nudge raves about all of the food places. Max smells cookies and goes into a Mrs. Fields store to buy some. They aren't as good as those she helped to make with Ella and her mom.

Chapter 80: Max must come up with a plan. She has no idea how to find the Institute until she spots the New York Public Library.

Chapter 81: Max and Fang search for the Institute but do not find it. The computer they are working on crashes. A guard begins to approach and the Flock flees. No one follows.

Chapter 82: The Flock decides to spend the night in Central Park. Nudge asks if they can take the subway. They go down into the subway and head into one of the tunnels.

Chapter 83: The group finds a place to sleep. It is warm and dry so it would do. Fang agrees to take the first watch.

Chapter 84: Max wakes with a sharp pain in her head. The flashing images have returned along with a strange voice speaking gibberish. From the darkness an angry voice calls out about someone messing with his Mac.

Chapter 85: The kid continues to blame Max for messing with his computer. He finally shows her the screen where she sees the images that have been flashing in her head.



Part 4, Chapters 67-85 Analysis

Things begin to get much stranger for the Flock. Max's attacks are unexplainable and excruciatingly painful. She tries to keep up a good front by telling the others that she is fine. This is clearly not true although everyone but Fang seems to believe it. Max wonders if she has a brain tumor and thinks that perhaps it is her time to self-destruct or die. The Erasers have a short life span so that fact may also apply to her.

New York is an entirely different place than any of them have ever been. Max works hard to keep Nudge focused. The interaction with the new Erasers presents a whole new set of problems. The new Erasers are harder to spot because they look more human. Additionally, there are now female Erasers.

The strangest incident occurs in the tunnels. It is unclear what is happening to Max but that some greater thing is at work, whether it is electronic or supernatural.



Part 5, Chapters 86-109

Part 5, Chapters 86-109 Summary

Part 5: The Voice - Make That My Voice

Chapter 86: The kid continues to threaten Max. Max does not understand. The computer screen reads "Hello Max." Fang is also confused. The kid continues to argue with Max. Four words flash on the screen: Institute for Higher Living.

Chapter 87: The kid rants about his computer and how he can hack into anything. He says he had been kicked out of MIT for not taking his medication for schizophrenia. The kid wants to know how Max is messing with his computer. The kid runs away. Max and Fang explain the situation to Iggy.

Chapter 88: The Flock gets up and heads out onto the street. After they eat Max insists that they find the institute. They stop in front of an electronics store. Messages addressed to Max flash across the screens.

Chapter 89: Max decides to listen to the Voice's advice and the Flock boards the Madison Avenue bus. The boss stops at the AFO Schmidt toy store.

Chapter 90: The kids are enthralled by the toy store. Max thinks they could easily sleep there among the toys. Angel wants to buy a teddy bear dressed as an angel. Max says they don't have enough money left. Max spots a Ouija board. It spells out "Save the world, Max."

Chapter 91: Max tells the others about the Ouija board and says that they need to leave the store. Gazzy thinks Max is famous. Max searches for Angel and panics when she can't find her. Angel convinces a woman to buy the teddy bear for her. Max is shocked. Angel says she used her mind to convince the woman.

Chapter 92: Max is upset because Angel should know right from wrong. Fang gives a warning glance to Max about lecturing Angel. The voice begins to chatter in Max's head.

Chapter 93: The voice continues to talk to Max. Two Erasers step out in front of the kids. The Flock races across the street. A bicycle messenger runs over one of them. The other grabs Max.

Chapter 94: The Eraser begins to run with Max. Nothing she does can slow the creature's pace. All of a sudden it collapses and dies for no apparent purpose. The kids run away. Max finds an ATM card on the ground with her name on it. The voice tells her that if she can figure out the password, she can use it.

Chapter 95: The Flock goes to Central Park to spend the night where they will be safe.



Chapter 96: A cop tells the kids that climbing trees in Central Park is forbidden. She orders them to come down. Max tells them to run. She thinks she sees Jeb. Max knows that they will never be safe again.

Chapter 97: The Flock runs and ends up in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Nudge has never seen a church and wants to go inside. Fang says they can find sanctuary. The church is filled with tourists and Max thinks it is a good place to get lost.

Chapter 98: The church is the one place where the Flock feels safe. They kneel and pray. No one wants to leave.

Chapter 99: Max says they have to find the Institute. She sees a greenish building in her head and the words 31st Street. The Flock decides to walk up and down 31st Street until they see the building. Max wonders if they are walking into danger.

Chapter 100: Max tries to guess the password on the ATM card. Angel tells her to try "mother." The password works.

Chapter 101: The Flock arrives at the building on 31st Street. It is the building Max had seen in her head. The receptionist at the front desk says there is no Institute for Higher Living in the building. The voice suggests to Max that it might be in the basement. The receptionist alerts the security guard. The kids run.

Chapter 102: Gazzy has a meltdown on the street. Max thinks that she would promise him anything at this point if it would make him feel better. Gazzy chooses a fancy restaurant for dinner. Max knows the place is very expensive, but she promised.

Chapter 103: The Flock orders a huge amount of food. Everyone at the restaurant is highly suspicious of these kids. The waiter doubts that they can eat, let alone pay, for the food.

Chapter 104: The restaurant manager comes over to the table and questions the kids. The manager is rude and suggests that the kids leave and find a more appropriate restaurant. Max knows the scene is about to turn ugly. Someone calls the cops. Are they real cops?

Chapter 105: Cops come through Max's kitchen escape route. The cops want to take the kids to the police station and call their parents. The only way out of the situation seems to be to fly out. Max knows it is a huge mistake but there seems to be no other choice.

Chapter 106: The Flock flies up into the trees. Within moments, Ari appears at the base of the tree, taunting the kids. Ari holds Angel's bear Celeste. Max tells Ari that he keeps showing up like a bad penny. The Flock does not understand Ari's betrayal. After all, he is Jeb's son.



"'Yeah, Jeb's son,' he snarled. 'Like he even knows I'm alive. What did you think happened to me while you were off playing house with my father? Did you think I just disappeared?'" Chap. 106, p. 333

Angel demands that Ari return Celeste. Ari taunts Angel. Suddenly, Angel becomes commanding and demands that her bear is returned. Against his will, Ari drops the bear and Angel swoops down to retrieve it. The Director calls the Erasers back to headquarters.

Chapter 107: The Flock finds an unfinished building and makes camp. Max and Nudge go shopping for food. Soon, a comfortable little nest is set up and everyone but Max falls asleep. Max thinks about the chip in her arm and wonders if it is a locator chip. She is also concerned about Angel's powers which seem to be increasing exponentially. The voice returns and says:

"'Worry is unproductive. You can't control what happens to Angel. You can save the world, but the only thing you can control is you.'" Chap. 107, p. 339

Chapter 108: Max wakes to find that the others have retrieved breakfast and newspapers. Pictures of the Flock in flight are plastered on the front of every major daily newspaper. The kids will have to lay low.

Chapter 109: The group walks along carrying food and drink when a young man jumps out in front of them. He offers them free makeovers as long as it's the stylist's choice. Max agrees thinking that looking completely different would be a good thing.

Part 5, Chapters 86-109 Analysis

The voice inside Max's head seems to be ever present. The brain attacks have stopped but Max is still getting headaches. She is annoyed that the voice will not give out information when she asks but seems to talk almost as much as Nudge at other times. Max is irritated. Still, the voice seems to be giving some information, albeit cryptic.

The Erasers seem to be everywhere and it is clear that they have some way of tracking the Flock. Max believes it is the chip implant. Max also wonders about the arrival of Angel's newest ability of controlling people's minds.

The Institute continues to be a mystery to the Flock.

Without the internal alarms of each of the Flock members, particularly Max and Fang, the kids would certainly be captured.

The reader is left to wonder where the Flock might go to be safe while they are looking for answers. Leaving the city seems to be the best option as the Erasers seem to be able to find them no matter where they go. The pictures on the front of the newspapers only make matters worse.



The biggest change in character at this stage involves the changes seen in Angel. Angel is growing stronger every day and her attitude seems to be changing into something more demanding and in control. It is reasonable that Max is worried about her.

The voice continues to be a mystery and offers little in the way of any real solutions.



Part 6, Chapters 110-120

Part 6, Chapters 110-120 Summary

Part 6: Who's Your Daddy, Who's Your Mama?

Chapter 110: The makeovers are complete. Each member of the Flock is completely transformed.

Chapter 111: The Flock flies about an hour and a half outside the city. As they sit down to eat in a relatively deserted area, the voice tells Max that it is time to learn.

Chapter 112: Everyone loves the beach. Nudge wants to grow up to study the ocean. Gazzy is thrilled when he finds a crab. Fang wonders what it would be like if they forgot about the Institute and everything else and just lived in that spot.

Chapter 113: Max watches as the younger kids go swimming. She thinks about the entire thing being a game and wonders if perhaps Fang could be a double agent. Gazzy calls out that Angel has gone under and hasn't surfaced.

Chapter 114: Minutes pass. Everyone is frantic because Angel has not reappeared. Just at the point of hopelessness, Angel surfaces and announces that she can breathe underwater.

Chapter 115: Everyone is amazed at this announcement and Angel demonstrates. Everyone else tries but no one has the same skill. The voice speaks to Max, saying that each person is a work of art and that she needs to learn to enjoy it.

"Works of art or freaks? Glass half empty, glass half full. Like I wouldn't give up my wings in a second to have a regular life with regular parents and regular friends." Chap. 115, p. 364

The voice tells Max that a regular family would bore her to tears.

Chapter 116: Max and the others wake to find themselves surrounded by hundreds of Erasers. Fang and Max are caught. Ari attacks Fang and is intent on killing him. Max cannot get away. Jeb appears.

Chapter 117: Jeb talks to Max about the game and how she must learn to save the world. Max despises Jeb. Jeb orders the Erasers to let go of Fang, Iggy, and Max. Jeb and the Erasers walk away. Max has no doubt that Jeb is now one of them.

Chapter 118: Max tends to Fang who seems to be extremely hurt. Iggy suggests that he and Max could carry Fang to a hospital. Fang comes around and although he says he feels terrible, he will be okay. Max kisses Fang. Fang vows to kill Ari.



Chapter 119: The Flock flies back to Manhattan. They go back to the subway tunnel to sleep. The schizophrenic from before confronts Max about messing with his Mac. The kid asks if someone has something electronic. Max talks about the memory chip. The kid runs away.

Chapter 120: Max has another vision and has figured out how to find the Institute. She tells Fang to wake everyone up.

Part 6, Chapters 110-120 Analysis

There seems to be no other explanation to the Erasers' arrival than the memory chip. Foreshadowing makes it clear that Jeb is not finished with Max and is determined to get her to agree to save the world, even if she does not want to do it. The reader may surmise that there will be a showdown with Ari and that there may come a time when Ari can no longer be controlled.

Returning to New York does not seem as dangerous now that the Flock realizes that they are in danger everywhere they go. Max begins to understand more of her visions.



Chapters 121-134

Chapters 121-134 Summary

Chapter 121: Max begins to lead the others down a tunnel. The map in her head seems to be spread out across her retinas, guiding her toward the Institute. While walking, Max thinks about her future and what is happening to her.

"One other thing I guess I should mention—I was really, really afraid now, more afraid than I'd ever been before, and I didn't even know why. Maybe I didn't want to know the truth. Also, my head was throbbing, and that had me a little crazy too. Was I approaching my expiration date? Was I going to die?" Chap. 121, p. 382

Chapter 122: Max is confused about which way to go. The voice tells her to trust herself. Max finds a door that is almost hidden.

Chapter 123: Iggy picks the lock on the door and the Flock begins to descend a staircase. The voice tells Max that she is on her own.

Chapter 124: The group comes to another door and then enters a lab. They have found the Institute.

Chapter 125: Max hacks into the computer after Nudge gives her the password.

Chapter 126: Max finds a large group of documents containing information about them. Max prints them out and tells the others to get ready to leave.

Chapter 127: Gazzy finds an adjoining lab. Behind a glass wall are cages filled with child-size life forms - more mutants.

Chapter 128: The Flock releases the various mutants from their cages.

Chapter 129: Max explains to a bird girl that they are free. Ari comes from behind and tells Max that they need to talk for old times' sake.

Chapter 130: Ari and Max go into hand to hand combat. Max thinks she has killed Ari.

Chapter 131: As the Flock flees, Jeb arrives and finds Ari. Jeb is filled with grief. He calls after Max, asking her how she could do such a thing. She has killed her own brother.

Chapter 132: It is discovered that Angel has rescued a dog named Total from the lab. Angel will not be dissuaded from keeping the dog.

Chapter 133: Max and the others camp for the night. They begin to read the pages from the Institute.



Chapter 134: Each of the members of the Flock finds out information about their families except for Max. Max decides that they will go to Washington, DC and start tracking down families.

Chapters 121-134 Analysis

There is still much to be figured out regarding the game and Jeb's part in it all. Jeb swears that he loves Max and that he is her friend yet his actions do not mirror the sentiment.

Max has begun to trust the voice enough to lead her to the Institute. Nudge gets temporarily distracted by the discovery of her new gift. Gazzy's discovery of the mutants in the cages behind the glass wall is shocking and is a factor in the group almost getting caught.

The battle between Ari and Max is ugly. Max remembers that Jeb told her to fight dirty if she wanted to win. Ari seems to have many things to say to Max that he never has the opportunity to say. Jeb's grief over Ari's death is apparent. Max is stunned when Jeb says that Ari was her brother.

Max tries to be happy for the others when they learn the information about their families. The voice is no help when it comes to giving Max a reason for her exclusion. Clearly, Max still has a great deal to learn about herself and the horrible game.



Epilogue

Epilogue Summary

The Flock takes off and begins to fly. Max still has many questions that remain unanswered. The voice refuses to cooperate.

Epilogue Analysis

Patterson clearly intends to create a cliffhanger and leads the reader to the next book in the series.



Characters

Max

The main character in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson is Maximum Ride, also known as Max. Max is a fourteen year old girl who has escaped from a secret scientific facility known as the School. Although Max is only fourteen, she is more or less the leader of the group of refugees and the authority figure over her adopted family, which includes Fang, Iggy, Gazzy, Nudge, and Angel. Only Gazzy and Angel are related by blood but Max considers them all to be her family.

Max was a test tube baby, or so it is assumed. Max is 98% human and 2% raptor. Max, like the others, has large wings and can fly. She also has the vision of a raptor, bones of a bird, and tremendous speed and strength.

Max tries to be fair with the others but refers to the leadership of the house as a "Maxocracy." Max's protective instincts and empathic nature often cause her to throw caution to the wind. Max tends to fight for the underdog although it usually ends up causing trouble. Fang refers to it as Max's "supergirl" routine. A good example of this behavior can be seen in Max's attempts to rescue Ella from a group of bullies. In the end Max saves the girl but ends up getting shot.

Overall, Max is highly intelligent, sensitive, savvy and generally levelheaded.

Fang

One of the main characters in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson is Fang. Fang is a fourteen year old boy who has escaped from a secret scientific facility known as the School. Fang is considered to be the second in command of the Flock because he is only four months younger than Max, the leader. Unlike the other kids, Fang knows that he has a mother, although she allegedly died as a teenager, leaving Fang to be altered by the scientists at the School.

Like the others, Fang is 98% human and 2% raptor. Fang has large black wings with a span of approximately 14 feet which allows him to fly. Since Fang had never flown until his escape, he is still learning the best way to control his gift. Like Max, Fang also has the vision of a raptor, bones of a bird, and tremendous speed and strength.

All of the kids have alternate gifts in addition to being able to fly. Fang's gift is the gift of stealth. Fang is able to sneak up on people silently as if he has appeared out of nowhere. Fang also has the ability to seemingly disappear and blend into the background. This helps with surveillance and escape since no one seems to be able to see Fang in the darkness. This plays into Fang's dark personality, which is exceptionally mysterious due to the fact that he rarely speaks.



Iggy

Iggy, although blind, is self supporting and not hampered by his handicap. Iggy is also fourteen years old, six months younger than Max. Iggy is extremely smart and enjoys building bombs and cooking.

Gazzy

The Gasman, aka Gazzy, is a sweet kid despite his gastrointestinal issues. Gazzy is eight years old and the older brother to Angel. Gazzy's gift is the gift of mimicry.

Nudge

Monique, also known as Nudge, is a girl who is known to talk non-stop. Nudge is a girl stuck between two worlds. On one hand she is a little girl who longs for a normal life and a real family. On the other hand, she is much more mature and intelligent than a typical eleven year old girl and uses her knowledge and skill to the best of her ability.

Angel

Angel is a sweet little girl who is Max's surrogate daughter. Angel, age six, escaped from the School when she was two years old. In addition to being able to fly, Angel can read and control other people's minds.

Jeb Batchelder

Jeb Batchelder is a former employee and whitecoat at the School. Jeb had helped the kids to escape and cared for them until his disappearance. Although the kids have no proof, they all believe that Jeb is dead. Later Jeb reappears and seems to have returned to the School to work with the whitecoats.

Ari Batchelder

Ari Batchelder is a seven year old boy and the son of Jeb, the whitecoat who saved the kids from the School. Ari becomes brainwashed and genetically altered to become an Eraser and therefore the enemy of Max and the others. It is Ari who abducts Angel.

Reilly

Reilly is the whitecoat who administers tests to Angel at the School. Reilly is overzealous and dangerous.



Ella Martinez

Ella Martinez is the girl Max saves from bullies. After her rescue, Ella takes Max into her home so that her mother, a vet, can attend to Max's wounds.

Erasers

Erasers are genetically altered young men who work as the School's security guards. Max describes the men that pursue her as "Mutants: half-men, half-wolves, usually armed, always bloodthirsty." Chap. 1, p. 5

Whitecoats

Whitecoats are the scientists who work at the School. They are responsible for creating the Flock and other hybrids. Jeb is one of the whitecoats.



Objects/Places

School

The School is a secret facility located in Death Valley, CA. It is so secret that it does not appear on any map.

The School's purpose is to do scientific research on various humans and animals, mutating the species to create new life forms. The members of the Flock were created through these procedures by combining human and bird DNA.

The group of scientists who operate at the School are referred to as "whitecoats." This group is responsible for creating and implementing the tests used on the captive mutants. All test subjects are kept in cages, are not permitted to communicate, or have any free will.

In addition to the Flock there are many other mutants at the school, most of which are unidentifiable. Many of these mutants do not survive and it appears that the whitecoats spend a great deal of time and effort in trial and error methods and procedures.

Another important mutant group is known as the Erasers. The Erasers are half-wolf, half-human. They work as security for the School and also serve as executioners for escapees.

The School is linked to the Institute of Higher Learning in New York although it is unclear which activities take place at each and how they are connected beyond sharing experiments and information.

Genetic Mutation

Genetic mutation is a common thread throughout the whole of the story. The reader learns that the main purpose at the School is to do scientific research on various humans and animals, mutating the species to create new life forms. The members of the Flock were created through these procedures by combining human and bird DNA. Originally, it is not known how the Flock was created. It is known that some of the Erasers, the School's half-wolf, half-human executioners, were created by altering human children. This is apparent when Ari, Jeb's son, is turned into an Eraser after he is returned to the School at age three.

It is often assumed that at least some of the Flock and other mutants were genetically altered as they were being created in test tubes. Later, it is learned that at least five of the six kids were born to human parents. The scientists performed genetic mutation by injecting bird DNA into the womb during the mother's pregnancy. The mothers sold their children to the School upon their births.



In addition to the Flock there are many other mutants at the school, most of which are unidentifiable. Many of these mutants do not survive and it appears that the whitecoats spend a great deal of time and effort in trial and error methods and procedures.

There are many objections to genetic mutation. The life span, gifts and abilities of each is unknown.

Death Valley

Death Valley is the location of the School. Max thinks that the location is appropriate considering the work done at the private facility.

Lake Mead

Lake Mead is the location where Fang and Nudge wait to meet up with Max after she takes off to save Ella.

Martinez House

The home of Ella and Dr. Valencia Martinez is where Max goes after being shot by the bullies. Max stays at the home for five days while recuperating from her wounds.

Flock House

The Flock's house is located on a mountain top in a remote area of the southwest. The house is supposedly a safe place for the Flock to live in peace and avoid the Erasers and members of the School.

Manhattan

Manhattan is the spot chosen in New York to search for the Institute of Higher Living. The Flock loves New York and is enthralled by all of its sights and sounds.

Central Park

Central Park is the preference of choice for places to sleep for the Flock. Although they have been chased out on several occasions, it is one place where the Flock feels safe.

Institute of Higher Learning

Institute of Higher Learning is the name of the lab in New York that maintains records on the Flock and other test subjects. It is somewhat of a holy grail for the Flock.

The Voice

The Voice is a mysterious entity that seems to live inside Max's head. The voice often raises more questions than it answers.



Themes

Family

Family is one of the main themes in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson. Max explains how the family came together in the beginning of the book.

"The six of us—me, Fang, Iggy, Nudge, the Gasman, and Angel—were made on purpose, by the sickest, most horrible 'scientists' you could possibly imagine." Prologue, p. 1

Jeb, a whitecoat at the facility, helped the six kids to escape. Since that time, the children have morphed into a family unit, watching out for one another. Although Max, Fang, Iggy, Gazzy, Nudge and Angel are not related by blood (except for Gazzy and Angel who are brother and sister), they are a family nonetheless. Due to their circumstances, the group of six may have a stronger bond than most families of biological origins. Each was created at the School as part of an elaborate and not entirely ethical experiment. Although the children were never supposed to have contact with one another, a bond was formed. This bond led to the creation of family and to the eventual escape from the School.

At age fourteen, Max is the eldest and therefore the family's leader. Max declares that their family is not a democracy but rather a "Maxocracy." Overall, the relationships in the family are strong and at their best when the children are united against a common foe such as the Erasers.

Loyalty

Loyalty is one of the main themes in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson. Although Max, Fang, Iggy, Gazzy, Nudge and Angel are not related by blood (except for Gazzy and Angel who are brother and sister), they are a family nonetheless and therefore have unspoken loyalties to each other. The loyalty increases exponentially after Angel is abducted and again when the others are threatened by evil forces such as the Erasers.

The past experiences at the School have also increased the children's loyalties to each other. To be disloyal would surely cause one or more of the family members to be harmed or perhaps killed. Because the children have no one but each other, they must protect each other in order to survive. The children felt the same about Jeb, the whitecoat that saved them from the School by helping them to escape. In many ways, Jeb was the father of the group.

There are however, many disloyal characters in the story. One example is Ari, Jeb's seven year old son. Ari is the Eraser who abducts Angel and pulls a gun on Max. As Jeb's son one might assume that Ari would be loyal to the six runaways. Although Max



is shocked at Ari's betrayal, she attributes it in part to the evil doings at the School and the fact that Ari has been altered and turned into an Eraser, a natural predator.

Good Versus Evil

Good versus evil is one of the main themes in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson. This classic theme is seen throughout literature since the beginning of time and is one of the most popular themes found in fiction. Patterson uses good versus evil in regards to the Flock versus the School. The Flock is a group of innocent kids that have been taken advantage of and altered against their will. The children simply want to be left alone to live their lives in peace and serenity. However, the School has entirely different ideas.

The School can be seen as evil in several different ways. First of all, the School creates and then tortures its subjects. In the case of Angel, the School kidnaps a six year old girl and puts her through innumerable tests, many of which are harmful and potentially fatal. One of the scientists even talks about dissecting Angel's brain to uncover any abnormalities and to discover how Angel has obtained her special gifts.

Another sign of evil related to the School is the existence of the murderous Erasers. Not only are the Erasers genetically altered to serve as the School's security, they are also programmed to track and kill members of the Flock.

The School's activities are also seen as being blasphemous as they take it upon themselves to create human beings that have been altered. Scientists have long faced accusations of "playing God" and this is certainly a good example of that.

Patterson has the ability to make the reader wonder if good will conquer evil.

Style

Point of View

A majority of the chapters are presented in first person through the eyes of the main character, Maximum Ride. This is an excellent choice because of Max's role in the story and also because of the sights and sounds Max experiences that cannot be seen or heard by the others.

In the chapters that are not devoted to Max, Patterson uses a third person omniscient point of view. This point of view is particularly accurate when both setting and an overall explanation of the times and events are of great importance to the story. There are times when Max is separated from the group and therefore could not speak on their behalf. Third person allows Patterson to give the reader great insight into the sights and sounds of the time and to develop a sense of personality and vision regarding each character.

There are some cases in which the third person is the only plausible choice. This is particularly true when explaining the backgrounds of the Flock as well as the Erasers and Jeb. The combination of the two points of view gives the reader a solid grasp on the story.

The main point of view in the story comes from fourteen year old Max, who is the main character. As the eldest in the Flock, Max is the leader. As such, she has a great deal of responsibility on her shoulders and is constantly thinking of plans to get information and to save her family from the Erasers and whitecoats, including Jeb.

Setting

The School is a secret facility located in Death Valley, CA. It is so secret that it does not appear on any map.

The School's purpose is to do scientific research on various humans and animals, mutating the species to create new life forms. The members of the Flock were created through these procedures by combining human and bird DNA.

The group of scientists that operate at the School are referred to as "whitecoats." This group is responsible for creating and implementing the tests used on the captive mutants. All test subjects are kept in cages, are not permitted to communicate, or have any free will.

In addition to the Flock there are many other mutants at the school, most of which are unidentifiable. Many of these mutants do not survive and it appears that the whitecoats spend a great deal of time and effort in trial and error methods and procedures.



Another important mutant group is known as the Erasers. The Erasers are half-wolf, half-human. They work as security for the School and also serve as executioners for escapees.

The School is linked to the Institute of Higher Learning in New York although it is unclear which activities take place at each and how they are connected beyond sharing experiments and information.

Other settings in the book include the house on the mountain where the Flock had lived with Jeb and various parts of New York City including Manhattan and Central Park.

Language and Meaning

The language used in *Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment* by James Patterson is a mix of technical jargon and every day common usage. The main characters in the book, Max, Fang, Iggy, Nudge, Gazzy and Angel, range from fourteen to six years old. A great deal of the dialogue used by the kids is common usage peppered with slang one might expect from children in that age range, e.g., dweeb, scuzzes, fang-boy.

The kids' education comes from the internet so it is common for them to spout interesting facts on many different topics. A good example can be seen in Fang's assessment of the hawks he and Nudge encounter.

"'Ferruginous hawks,' Fang said softly. 'Largest raptor in the States. Sit down, very slowly. No sudden movements or we're both bird feed.'" Chap. 24, p. 75

Because of the unusual make up of the kids, they also know and speak a great deal about DNA and genetic mutations.

Overall there is a good balance of language and its meaning is clear without any need for a lengthy explanation.

Structure

Maximum Ride: The Angel Experiment by James Patterson is a work of fiction. The book is 422 pages in length and is comprised of six parts and 134 chapters. The shortest chapter is one page in length; the longest chapter is three pages in length. The average length of a chapter is three pages.

The six parts are: Part 1: Flock Fright; Part 2: Hotel California, Sort of; Part 3: School - What Could be Scariest Than That?; Part 4: New Yawk, New Yawk; Part 5: The Voice - Make That My Voice; and Part 6: Who's Your Daddy, Who's Your Mama?

The story is written mostly in chronological order with some flashbacks and background information on various characters including Max, Fang, Iggy, Nudge, Gazzy, Angel, Jeb, and Ari.



Throughout the majority of the story the point of view is from Max, who is challenged with getting information about their existence, trying to understand the new found voice in her head, and finding ways to fend off the Erasers. Patterson does a good job of marrying science with teenage angst, deception, and curiosity.

The beginning and end of the book both contain passages from Max, warning the reader about the plight of the Flock and how the story may seem fantastic and unbelievable but that it is entirely true. The structure is also designed to create a compelling cliffhanger for the reader coaxing the reader to move on to the next book in the series.



Quotes

"The six of us—me, Fang, Iggy, Nudge, the Gasman, and Angel—were made on purpose, by the sickest, most horrible 'scientists' you could possibly imagine." Prologue, p. 1

"The funny thing about facing imminent death is that it really snaps everything else into perspective." Chap. 1, p. 5

"Mutants: half-men, half-wolves, usually armed, always bloodthirsty. Right now they were after me." Chap. 1, p. 5

"My heart pounded. I knew, just knew, that my little one, my Angel, was inside. And she was on her way to a place where death came as a blessing." Chap. 6, p. 19

"True, I'm the leader, I'm Max the Invincible—but I'm also just a fourteen-year-old kid. And every once in a while, like when I realize all over again that Jeb is gone forever, that we're on our own, that the others depend on me and I can't let them down, well, that's when it all gets to me." Chap. 9, p. 27

"Could the School be located in a more perfect place? Death Valley. Above the Badwater Basin. Like, when we got there, we'd see a road paved with good intentions and have to cross the river Styx to get in." Chap. 12, p. 40

"The Gasman and Iggy had been none-too-happy campers when we'd left, but I thought I'd made the right decision. That was the problem with this leader stuff. It didn't come with an instruction manual. Given what Angel was facing, their being unhappy was the least of my concerns." Chap. 12, p. 40

"The thing about Iggy was, well, sometimes he could figure stuff out like a real scientist. He was that supersmart, scary smart." Chap. 20, p. 64

"'Yes!' said Fang, punching the air. 'Freaks rule.'"

"The Erasers poked their fingers through our bars, trying to scratch us, taunting, literally rattling our cages. I wondered how much strength it would take to grab an Eraser finger and snap it." Chap. 63, p. 203

"Playing is learning, Max, said the Voice inside my head. It was the same one as last night, and I realized I couldn't tell if it was adult or child, male or female, friend or foe." Chap. 88, p. 277

"Max—you have a bigger mission than finding the Flock's parents. Focus on helping the whole world, not just your friends." Epilogue, p. 422



Topics for Discussion

Do you think it's possible for a place like the School to exist? How? What might be its purpose? Could it be kept secret from the public?

Examine Max's relationship with Angel. Why is there a special bond? Do you think that the relationship affected Max's plans to rescue the little girl? Explain.

Discuss the existence of the Erasers. What is the purpose of the Erasers? What is the relationship between the Erasers and the six refugees? Do you think the Erasers enjoy their jobs? Explain.

Examine Max's personality. Do you think that Max is over protective? Is Max the best person to lead the family? What is your opinion of Max's "supergirl" tendencies?

Discuss the relationship between the six kids. Who are the closest? Why? Do their experiences and/or unique gifts help or hinder their relationships?

Discuss Ari's involvement in Angel's abduction. Can Ari be held accountable for his actions? Did Ari betray Max and the others? What might Jeb think of the situation?

Discuss Angel's abduction. Why was she abducted? How did the others try to stop the abduction? What happened to Angel after she was taken? Why do the whitecoats refer to Angel as an "it" or as Subject Eleven instead of a little girl?