

# **Midnight Magic Study Guide**

**Midnight Magic by Avi (author)**

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# Plot Summary

Midnight Magic by Avi is a fantasy novel set in the imaginary kingdom of Pergamontio in 1491. Mangus the Magician has recently been placed on trial for using magic and has sworn in return for his life that he will never do magic again. However, when a ghost begins appearing to the king's daughter, Mangus is brought to the castle in hopes that he will be able to solve the mystery of the princess's nightly hauntings before news of these visitations become public knowledge. Mangus finds himself caught between the fact and reason as he attempts to learn the truth of the princess's stories. Midnight Magic is a mystery set in a fairy tale world that will leave readers glued to the page until the final sentence.

Fabrizio is studying tarot cards when a castle guard knocks on the door with a letter from Count Scarazoni, the same aristocrat who had Fabrizio's master, Mangus the Magician, tried for using magic not long ago. Fabrizio fears for his master's life when he learns that Mangus has been summoned to the king. Fabrizio begs Mangus to allow him to go to the castle with him.

When Mangus and Fabrizio arrive at the castle, they learn that the princess has been seeing a ghost in the corridor outside her bedchambers for nearly month. Mangus is charged with finding out if the ghost is real or an illusion. Mangus announces to the court that he does not believe in ghosts, but that he will investigate the princess's story. Mangus and Fabrizio are then taken to a bedchamber for the night. Mangus sends Fabrizio out to get water. Fabrizio quickly gets lost and runs into the princess. It is then that Fabrizio sees the ghost for the first time. However, the princess makes him promise not to tell Mangus what he has seen.

The following day, Fabrizio is sent to the kitchen to get food for his master. While there, Fabrizio meets Rinaldo, a kitchen servant. Rinaldo takes Fabrizio into the king's chapel to hide from the count. While they are there, the count comes into the chapel. Fabrizio hides behind the altar when Rinaldo disappears behind a secret door. Fabrizio hears the count discussing with the princess's tutor a plot to kill the prince and marry the princess.

Fabrizio returns to his bedchamber and tells Mangus what he has heard. Mangus and Fabrizio are then escorted to the princess's rooms to interrogate her. It is during this questioning that Mangus learns that the princess believes her brother, who is supposedly in Rome, has been murdered. A short time later, Mangus goes to investigate the corridor where the ghost has been seen. Mangus finds a piece of wood that he believes came from a statue that once stood in that niche. Mangus sends Fabrizio to find the statue, one that he quickly finds in the quarters of Rinaldo, the kitchen servant.

Fabrizio tricks Mangus into going to view the apparition that night at midnight. When the ghost appears, it speaks to Mangus, asking that Fabrizio avenge his murder. Later that night, Fabrizio meets with the princess. Afterward, Fabrizio is arrested for trying to steal state secrets from the princess. Fabrizio learns the next morning that the princess has made these accusations against Fabrizio so that he might have the freedom to move



around the castle through secret passageways while the count believes he is locked in the dungeon.

Mangus, Fabrizio learns, has figured out how the apparition keeps appearing. Mangus takes Fabrizio and the princess to the family chapel where he shows them a candle, mirror, and silver plate that creates the green light that appears to be a ghost. The queen joins them and Fabrizio and Mangus learn that the count sent the prince to Rome and then had someone kill him. With no evidence to convince the king, the queen and princess have come up with the ghost to attempt to stop an upcoming wedding between the princess and the count. Together with Mangus and Fabrizio, the queen and princess agree to a plot to convince the king of the count's guilt.

The following day, Mangus sets up a magic show that is intended to showcase the ghost with Fabrizio creating the illusion. Fabrizio is to accuse the count of murder to convince the king of his guilt. However, when Fabrizio arrives at the chapel to create the illusion, he finds Rinaldo there. Rinaldo is really the prince in disguise and he has destroyed the candles in order to appear himself as the ghost to force a confession. However, the prince has injured his leg. Fabrizio stands in his place, forcing a confession that leads to the counts arrest.



# Chapters 1-4

## Chapters 1-4 Summary

The novel is set in 1491 in the fictional Kingdom of Pergamontio, which appears to be somewhere in Italy based on the speech of the characters.

Chapter 1. Fabrizio, servant to Mangus the Magician, is reading tarot cards, hoping to learn Mangus' future, when there is a knock at the door. Fabrizio is frightened to find a soldier from the castle there. The man has a letter from Count Scarazoni, the same count who had Mangus tried for using magic months before.

Chapter 2. Fabrizio takes Count Scarazoni's letter to Mangus. When Fabrizio learns that Mangus is to go to the castle, he becomes concerned that Mangus is finally to be put to death for his crime. Fabrizio begs Mangus to allow him to go along. After gaining Mangus' permission, Fabrizio rushes upstairs to inform Mangus's wife, Sophia, of what is happening. Sophia gives Fabrizio several gold coins.

Chapter 3. Fabrizio and Mangus ride to the castle in an unmarked, sealed carriage with Count Scarazoni. Mangus is informed that his head must remain covered at all times to keep the people from knowing he has been summoned to the castle. They are lead into the castle over a drawbridge. When they enter an outer chamber, Mangus removes his hood and is immediately recognized by the soldiers there. Fabrizio makes a coin disappear to distract the guards.

Chapter 4. Mangus and Fabrizio are escorted into an inner chamber where the king, the queen, the princess, and another man are waiting along with the count. Mangus acknowledges the king and thanks him for sparing his life during his previous trial. Mangus then promises to do whatever he can to help the king. It is then that the king reveals that he needs Mangus to free his daughter of a ghost.

## Chapters 1-4 Analysis

In these chapters, the reader meets Fabrizio, the main character. Fabrizio is servant to Mangus the Magician, a philosopher who once practices slight of hand to help supplement his income. Mangus was tried for practicing the dark arts and confessed, but was allowed to live. Now the king has come to Mangus to ask his help. Ironically, Mangus was tried for using magic, but those who tried him now want his help.

Fabrizio is only twelve and somewhat naive. However, Fabrizio is smart enough to know the danger the count and the king represent for his master. Despite this, Fabrizio has a deep fascination with magic and he practices it even though his master has been forbidden to do so. This act could place Fabrizio in danger as he visits the castle with his master.



# Chapters 5-7

## Chapters 5-7 Summary

Chapter 5. The king instructs his daughter, Princess Teresina, to tell Mangus of her experiences. Teresina reports that she has been seeing a ghost in the corridor outside her bedchambers off and on for nearly a month. Teresina says that it happens about the same time each night and that one of her ladies in waiting has seen it. Teresina has also reported it to her tutor and her mother, as well as her father. Teresina claims the ghost wants her to go into the afterlife with it. The king wants Mangus to find out if this story is true and to rid the castle of this haunting within a few days. Mangus insists he does not believe in ghosts, but the king seems to believe this will not interfere with Mangus' investigation.

Chapter 6. Mangus and Fabrizio are escorted to a sleeping chamber where they are left under guard. Mangus and Fabrizio argue briefly, causing Fabrizio to knock over the water jug. Mangus asks Fabrizio to go find more water, but he becomes lost on the way to the kitchen. Suddenly, Fabrizio finds himself in a corridor, where a green light slowly becomes a human figure.

Chapter 7. The princess is in the corridor in her nightgown, frightened by the apparition. The princess collapses and Fabrizio goes to her side, reassuring her that the apparition has gone. Fabrizio and the princess talk for a few minutes. Princess Teresina reveals that her brother, Prince Lorenzo, has disappeared. Teresina believes the ghost is Lorenzo seeking revenge for his murder. Teresina asks Fabrizio to make sure Mangus sees the apparition the following night, but that Fabrizio not tell Mangus that he has spoken with the princess.

## Chapters 5-7 Analysis

The princess is seeing a ghost in the corridor outside her door. The king seems a little reluctant to tell Mangus much more than this, but again he urges Mangus to use his powers of magic to save his daughter from the haunting, going completely against his laws forbidden the use of magic. The king is in a hurry for the matter to be cleared up, however, urging Mangus to find the cause of the apparition in a few days time, but does not wish to let Mangus know why time is of the utmost importance. This is a curious thing. The king is also reluctant to discuss the whereabouts of his son. Teresina seems to shed light on this later that night when she reveals to Fabrizio that her brother has gone mission while traveling to Rome.

The question of whether Teresina is seeing anything in the corridor outside her bedchamber seems to be answered immediately when Fabrizio sees the green ghost for himself. It seems there is no question that a ghost is visiting the princess, the only question is why. Another problem also seems to focus on the fact that Mangus does not

believe in ghosts. Mangus is a man of reason, as he often points out; therefore, he will not be searching for ghosts, but logical explanations for what Teresina has been seeing. This leaves the reader curious if it is a ghost or someone playing tricks on Teresina.



# Chapters 8-10

## Chapters 8-10 Summary

Chapter 8. Mangus chastises Fabrizio for using magic before sending him off in search of food. Fabrizio once again becomes lost in the many corridors of the castle, but no one will offer him directions. When Fabrizio arrives in the kitchen, everyone refuses to speak to him. Finally, Fabrizio does a magic trick that causes the kitchen staff to recognize him as the magician's servant and to offer him lots of food.

Chapter 9. Fabrizio follows the kitchen servant, Rinaldo, through the corridors of the castle. Rinaldo tells him that the servants are not permitted to speak to strangers for fear of spies. As they walk, Rinaldo suddenly becomes frightened and directs Fabrizio into a hidden passageway that leads to the royal family's private chapel. Rinaldo explains that he did not want to be seen by Count Scarazoni. As they talk, Count Scarazoni comes into the chapel. Rinaldo hides in the cabinet that hides the secret entrance, but Fabrizio is forced to hide behind the altar.

Chapter 10. Fabrizio listens as Count Scarazoni has a conversation with Signore Addetto, the tutor. Signore Addetto claims that it was his idea for Count Scarazoni kill the prince and marry the princess to ensure his rise to the crown. However, Signore Addetto is concerned that the prince is not truly dead and that he might be caught in this conspiracy. Count Scarazoni assures Signore Addetto that the prince is dead and that everything will go off without a hitch, including his marriage to Teresina. When Count Scarazoni and Signore Addetto leave, Fabrizio finds Rinaldo and goes into the corridor. Count Scarazoni is there and he pulls Fabrizio aside to ask him to let Mangus know he can interview the princess after his breakfast.

## Chapters 8-10 Analysis

Fabrizio continuously gets lost in the corridors of the castle, showing the reader how large and confusing the place is. To make it more difficult, there are multiple hidden passages, as well. Teresina claims only she and her brother know these passages, but Rinaldo, the kitchen boy, also appears to know them. In fact, Rinaldo seems to know a great deal about the castle despite the fact he has only been there a short time. Rinaldo is an odd character that the reader will continuously recall as the plot develops.

Fabrizio goes off to get breakfast for the magician and learns from the behavior of those in the castle the reputation the magician has. People fear the magician. Many attempt to avoid Fabrizio because of his connection to Mangus, while others go out of their way to serve Fabrizio in the hope that Mangus will be kind to them. Perhaps this explains a little the odd behavior of the royal family toward Mangus.

Fabrizio overhears a conversation that reveals two important facts. First, Count Scarazoni has had Prince Lorenzo killed. Second, Count Scarazoni plans to marry





Princess Teresina in an attempt to place himself next in line to the crown. The reader suspects that after the marriage, Count Scarazoni plans to make sure the king meets with an unfortunate accident. This information places an interesting turn to the ghost scenario and seems to lend credence to Teresina's claims that the ghost is her brother.



# Chapters 11-14

## Chapters 11-14 Summary

Chapter 11. Fabrizio tells Mangus what he has overheard in the chapel. Mangus throws out a few theories, such as the possibility that Teresina is insane. A soldier comes to lead them to the princess's quarters. On the way, Signore Addetto asks to speak to Mangus, and Mangus instructs him to wait.

Chapter 12. Teresina seems like a different person as Mangus interviews her. Teresina claims the ghost asked her to go with him to the otherworld with non-verbal communication. Teresina then insists that the ghost is her brother, although Count Scarazoni claims that her brother is safe and sound in Rome. Finally, Teresina admits that she is to marry Count Scarazoni in two days because her father has consulted the stars and that is the best date in the immediate future. After talking with Teresina, Mangus goes to inspect the area where the ghost has been seen. The area is a niche high on the wall where Mangus suspects a statue once stood.

Chapter 13. Mangus tells Fabrizio that he needs to know what happened to the statue that was in that niche and he does not trust that Count Scarazoni will find out the information for him. Mangus sends Fabrizio to wander through the castle with the hope that he might learn something helpful. Fabrizio goes first to the corridor where the princess's rooms are, hoping to speak to her, but there are too many guards around. Instead, Fabrizio wanders the castle as Mangus asked. Fabrizio finds himself in the servant's quarters and is surprised to find the statue he is looking for in Rinaldo's quarters.

Chapter 14. Rinaldo claims the queen removed the statue and gave it to him herself. On his way back to Mangus, Fabrizio runs into the queen. The queen pulls Fabrizio into the chapel and asks him if he spoke to the princess the night before. Fabrizio admits it and tells all that happened. Fabrizio then tells the queen about Mangus' interview of the princess. The queen seems surprised the princess has spoken of her engagement to Count Scarazoni. As the queen turns to leave, she opens the cabinet where the hidden door is. Inside the queen finds the body of Signore Addetto.

## Chapters 11-14 Analysis

Signore Addetto asks to speak to Mangus. Mangus tells Count Scarazoni about Signore Addetto's request. Signore Addetto turns up dead in a secret passage. It hardly seems like a coincidence that Signore Addetto, who is a part of Count Scarazoni's conspiracy to take over the crown, has been found dead. The only question is whether or not Count Scarazoni will get away with it.

Mangus now knows that the prince is thought to be dead by some members of the royal family even though Count Scarazoni claims he is safe in Rome. Mangus also knows

that Count Scarazoni is to marry Princess Teresina. The reader can see that Count Scarazoni is a powerful man who has made himself invaluable to the king and that he must have ambitions of power himself. Therefore, it is not a big stretch to believe he is using the children of the king to get what he wants. The only question is whether or not Mangus can see the connection between this and the haunting he is supposed to stop.

Mangus believes there was a statue in the niche where the ghost appears and whoever removed it is responsible for the haunting. Fabrizio is able to establish that the queen removed the statue, but her reasons seem perfectly innocent. The reader should note, however, that the queen gave the statue to Rinaldo, the kitchen servant. It seems Rinaldo pops up at interesting times.



# Chapters 15-17

## Chapters 15-17 Summary

Chapter 15. Fabrizio runs into Count Scarazoni as he is rushing to the scene of the murder. Fabrizio manages to stop Count Scarazoni and the king for a moment to ask if Mangus might watch for the ghost with Princess Teresina that night. Count Scarazoni quickly agrees. Fabrizio then takes advantage of the confusion over the discovery of the body to speak with Teresina. They discuss the viewing of the ghost that night. When a lady in waiting comes to the door, Teresina pushes Fabrizio out of her chambers through a secret door. Fabrizio realizes someone has been listening and he rushes to see who, but the person escapes. However, Fabrizio finds a glove that he recognizes as Count Scarazoni's.

Chapter 16. Fabrizio returns to his chambers and tells Mangus what he has learned. Fabrizio then asks what will happen if they do not solve the mystery in time. Mangus tells him they will both most likely be put to death. Late that night, Count Scarazoni comes himself to lead Mangus and Fabrizio to the niche where the ghost appears. The king is there with the princess. Mangus asks if he proves the ghost to be true if the marriage will be delayed. The king does not directly answer the question. Count Scarazoni and the king leave then. The ghost appears a few minutes later. This time it speaks, telling them that Fabrizio will be the one to save them all when he reveals the ghost's killer.

Chapter 17. Teresina collapses, so Mangus calls for the king. The king demands to know if they saw a ghost and Mangus reluctantly admits they saw something. However, both Mangus and the princess fail to tell the king what the ghost said. As Mangus speaks with the king and Count Scarazoni, Fabrizio recalls the glove in his pocket and he throws it against the wall, afraid what will happen if he is found with it. Count Scarazoni finds the glove and claims he has been searching for it for some time. Mangus and Fabrizio are taken back to their rooms. Mangus claims that there is some kind of conspiracy at work and that he believes Fabrizio is a part of it.

## Chapters 15-17 Analysis

Fabrizio arranges for Mangus to go see the apparition even though Mangus has refused up to this point. When the ghost arrives, it speaks. The ghost says that it wants Fabrizio to avenge its murder. This causes some fear for Fabrizio and brief confusion for Mangus. Mangus' confusion is compounded when the princess fails to tell her father and Count Scarazoni what the ghost said. Mangus thinks there is a conspiracy and the reader suspects that Princess Teresina has something to do with it. Perhaps it has more to do with marriage than murder.



Fabrizio has been working hard to help Mangus, but he has also been keeping secrets at the request of the princess. This causes some trouble for Fabrizio when the ghost speaks. Mangus makes it clear that he is aware that Fabrizio has been lying to him, showing the reader how observant and aware Mangus is despite being old and having spent his entire time in the castle confined to his rooms. Mangus is a smart man; if anyone can learn the truth it will most likely be him.



# Chapters 18-21

## Chapters 18-21 Summary

Chapter 18. Fabrizio sees Count Scarazoni at the niche, seeming intent in studying it. Fabrizio then goes to the princess's chambers as he promised earlier. Teresina tells Fabrizio that the fate of their kingdom lies with him convincing Mangus that the ghost is real.

Chapter 19. Fabrizio returns to his chambers only to find Mangus gone. Fabrizio goes in search of his master and runs into the queen. The queen tells Fabrizio that she believes that the ghost is her son and that Count Scarazoni killed him. The queen then expresses a wish that she could see the ghost. Seconds later, the ghost appears, but only momentarily. The queen then leads Fabrizio upstairs the chapel, where they find Mangus on the floor.

Chapter 20. Mangus is only sleeping, claiming all the excitement of the day suddenly caught up with him. Mangus assures the queen that he will be able to free her daughter of this haunting. Then, on the way to their rooms, Mangus claims that he knows how the ghost has been made. Before he can tell Fabrizio, however, the count appears out of nowhere and has Fabrizio arrested. The princess has claimed that Fabrizio came to her rooms seeking state secrets. In his dark cell, Fabrizio falls asleep, only to be awakened by the soft touch of a girl.

Chapter 21. The princess explains to Fabrizio that she had him arrested because there is a secret entrance to the cell where he is being kept so that he can be free to explore the castle while Count Scarazoni believes he is imprisoned. The princess takes Fabrizio through the secret passageways to the bedchamber he shared with Mangus. The princess and Fabrizio explain all to Mangus. Mangus then asks them to go to the chapel with him where he will explain all he has deduced.

Chapter 18. Fabrizio sees Count Scarazoni at the niche, seeming intent in studying it. Fabrizio then goes to the princess's chambers as he promised earlier. Teresina tells Fabrizio that the fate of their kingdom lies with him convincing Mangus that the ghost is real.

## Chapters 18-21 Analysis

Fabrizio speaks with the princess and the queen both. Each woman seems to feel it is important that Fabrizio convince Mangus to tell the king that the ghost is real, but Mangus continues to refuse to admit that ghosts exist. In fact, Mangus claims to Fabrizio that he knows the truth about the ghost. This is interesting, causing the reader to remember that Mangus specializes in illusion. Perhaps the ghost is also an illusion. However, the reader is unsure who would want to haunt the princess and for what reason, unless it has something to do with stopping the wedding.



Fabrizio is arrested and for a time it appears that the princess is insane. However, the princess proves once again that she is quite the con artist. The princess has had Fabrizio arrested so that he is free to move around the castle and manipulate things while Count Scarazoni believes he is locked up. This is an interesting situation that leaves the reader curious what the princess has in mind.



# Chapters 22-24

## Chapters 22-24 Summary

Chapter 22. Mangus has the princess lock them in the chapel, learning for the first time about the hidden door in the cabinet. When Fabrizio admits that he learned of the hidden door from Rinaldo, Mangus seems happy with this idea. Mangus then proceeds to show Fabrizio and the princess how the chapel is directly above the niche where the ghost has appeared and that there are windows on that wall that are designed to allow light from the lower corridor to enter the chapel. Mangus then shows how a candle with a mirror and silver plate can be directed into the niche to create the ghost. Mangus also shows how a person standing near the candle can create the illusion of a human figure in the light. As Mangus finishes his explanation and begins to ask the princess about her accomplice in creating the ghost, a voice calls out from the cabinet door. It is the queen.

Chapter 23. The queen admits that she and the princess came up with the ghost scam not only to stop the marriage between Count Scarazoni and the princess, but to convince the king that Count Scarazoni killed Prince Lorenzo. The queen tells Mangus how she was told her son was killed by thieves and how she was sent his bloody, torn clothing. The queen believes that this is just a cover Count Scarazoni came up with in his scheme to be king. Mangus threatens to go to the king with the truth, but the queen does not want this because it will not stop the wedding or convince the king of Count Scarazoni's guilt. Instead, Fabrizio suggests they use the ghost to tell the king about Scarazoni. Reluctantly, Mangus agrees.

Chapter 24. Mangus goes to the king the next day and asks that he be allowed to call the ghost forward to cleanse the princess of it. The king agrees to allow Mangus to use his magic to help his daughter. Count Scarazoni agrees to allow Fabrizio out of his cell long enough to go to Mangus' home to get the supplies he will need.

## Chapters 22-24 Analysis

Mangus reveals how the ghost is created and accuses the princess of doing it. It turns out that the princess has done this with the help of her mother to force her father to see the truth about Count Scarazoni. Mangus, however, is surprised to learn that the queen is the princess's co-conspirator. It is clear Mangus thought someone else was involved. The reader might also have their own suspicions.

There is some discussion about what should be done with the truth. Mangus is a man of reason and he wants to tell the king the truth. However, Fabrizio, the princess, and the queen convince Mangus to go along with the trick to prove Count Scarazoni's guilt for the good of the kingdom. Mangus agrees, though reluctantly, showing the reader that he is a patriotic man and he will lie when it is necessary for the greater good.





# Chapters 25-28

## Chapters 25-28 Summary

Chapter 25. Fabrizio is escorted to Mangus' house, where he not only collects the items necessary for the night's activities, but he is able to reassure Mangus's wife of their safety. Later, Fabrizio is returned to his cell where Teresina visits him, giving him a candle that counts down time and showing him how to navigate the dark corridors to the chapel. Unfortunately, Fabrizio falls asleep and knocks over the candle, leaving him with no way to tell time or to navigate the dark corridors.

Chapter 26. Fabrizio wakes in a panic and immediately begins to attempt to navigate the dark corridors. Fabrizio first finds his way to Mangus' bedchamber, where he is distressed to discover Mangus has already left for the scheduled sighting. Fabrizio then rushes to the chapel, nearly getting lost again when someone spots him. In the chapel, Fabrizio discovers all the candles have been broken. Behind the altar, Fabrizio finds Rinaldo, the kitchen servant, with the broken candles. Rinaldo has injured his leg. Rinaldo tells Fabrizio that he is not a kitchen servant, but Prince Lorenzo. Rinaldo has been hiding as a kitchen servant ever since returning from Count Scarazoni's failed attempt to have him killed. Lorenzo then admits that he conspired with his mother and sister to find a way to convince the king of Count Scarazoni's guilt. Lorenzo was supposed to appear as his own ghost that night, but he has injured his leg and cannot walk. Fabrizio decides to take his place.

Chapter 27. Fabrizio quickly dons Lorenzo's cut and bloody clothing before sneaking downstairs and waiting for the ceremony to begin. When Mangus has created thick smoke of different colors, supposedly to call forward the ghost, Fabrizio slips into the corridor and onto a platform set there. When Mangus calls the ghost forward, Fabrizio moves forward where the king can see him. Fabrizio then accuses Count Scarazoni of murder. The count denies it at first, but becomes so frightened he finally admits it. The king has Count Scarazoni arrested.

Chapter 28. Mangus and Fabrizio are hailed heroes. Mangus is given a pension while Fabrizio is paid a large sum and offered the job of servant to the princess. Fabrizio turns it down to remain at Mangus's side. Mangus and Fabrizio go home in a carriage. That night Fabrizio again deals the tarot cards.

## Chapters 25-28 Analysis

Fabrizio and Mangus sets up a show for the king, using the equipment Mangus once used to use illusion to make money for his household. Mangus has sworn not to use this stuff again, but he uses it to help prove Count Scarazoni guilty for the good of the kingdom. Fabrizio helps and in the process discovers the prince is still alive and in on



the conspiracy. It seems the co-conspirator Mangus first suspected is the right conspirator, there was just one more than he suspected.

The attempt to scare Count Scarazoni into confessing works and the kingdom is saved. Mangus and Fabrizio are rewarded. Fabrizio continues to use magic, despite all he has seen and learned, suggesting Fabrizio has learned more than the king in this particular situation.



# Characters

## Fabrizio

Fabrizio is the twelve-year-old servant of Mangus the Magician. A short time ago, Mangus was placed on trial in the castle for using magic. Although Mangus's life was spared, his reputation has been ruined. This has caused all of Mangus's other servants to leave the household. Fabrizio, however, is loyal to Mangus and has remained, despite the change in circumstances. In fact, Fabrizio is a strong believer in the illusions that Mangus once performed and continues to practice some of the skills Mangus taught him.

When word comes from the castle that Mangus is needed, Fabrizio feels responsible because he used tarot cards and insists on going. From the beginning of the investigation into who or what might be haunted Princess Teresina, Fabrizio finds himself targeted by the princess in a scheme to convince Mangus the ghost is real. In fact, Fabrizio plays a large part in not only discovery who and what the ghost is, but in using the ghost to prove the guilt of a murderer.

## Mangus the Magician

Mangus the Magician is a philosopher who used illusion to make money for his family. Unfortunately, the king is against the use of dark arts and placed Mangus on trial for using magic. As a result, Mangus has sworn off all magic and focuses on philosophy, despite his lost reputation and his inability to provide for his family.

Mangus is called to the castle to find out if Princess Teresina's claims of a haunting are true and to rid her of this haunting. From the beginning, Mangus insists he does not believe in ghosts and that he will more than likely find a reasonable explanation for this ghost. This causes the conspirators behind the ghost to focus on Fabrizio, Mangus' loyal servant, to continue to promote their scheme.

Mangus eventually learns the truth about the so-called ghost. However, the reasons behind this ghost are so compelling that Mangus agrees to go against his own moral insistence on honesty to help reveal a murderer. In the end, Mangus is well compensated for what he has done, but is forced to continue to refrain from magic.

## Princess Teresina

Princess Teresina is the ten-year-old daughter of the king. Teresina claims that she has been seeing a ghost outside her bedchamber for nearly a month. The king, who is very superstitious, becomes concerned about these claims and allows Count Scarazoni to call in Mangus the Magician to stop these hauntings.



Teresina uses Fabrizio to convince Mangus the haunting is true. Teresina needs Mangus to tell her father the haunting is real so that he will cancel the planned wedding between Teresina and Count Scarazoni. In fact, Mangus learns that Teresina is creating this haunting with clever lighting in order to show her father that Count Scarazoni is a murderer. In the end, Mangus and Fabrizio agree to help Teresina for the good of the kingdom.

## Prince Lorenzo

Prince Lorenzo is the teenage son of the king. Prince Lorenzo was sent almost a month ago to Rome with a message from Count Scarazoni. On the road, it is reported that Prince Lorenzo encountered thieves and was killed. The clothing the prince was wearing was sent back to his mother. It turns out later, however, that the prince survived the attack on his life and has been hiding in the castle while his sister and mother attempt to convince the king that Count Scarazoni is a murderer.

## Count Scarazoni

Count Scarazoni is an aristocrat who lives in the castle of the Kingdom of Pergamontio. Count Scarazoni is very close to the king and is in fact the power behind the crown. However, Count Scarazoni is no longer happy with his role as advisor and has decided he wants to be king. To make this happen, Count Scarazoni has arranged the murder of the prince and marriage to the princess. Unfortunately, Count Scarazoni's betrayal of the king has not gone unnoticed. The queen and the princess are both aware of Count Scarazoni's plot and are working together to prove his guilt.

## The King

The king is a weak man who has many fears. As a result of this personality, the king has allowed Count Scarazoni to become very powerful. Count Scarazoni practically runs the country. In fact, the king often sits back and allows Count Scarazoni to order the servants and people of the kingdom. For this reason, the king's own family is convinced he will never see any wrongdoing in the count. The king's family plot behind his back in order to convince him that Count Scarazoni is a murderer.

## The Queen

The queen is from a foreign land; therefore, the people of Pergamontio do not trust her. For this reason, the queen's power is somewhat limited. The queen, however, is a strong patriot and she loves her family. The queen works hard to scheme with her children to convince the king that Count Scarazoni is a murderer and he plans to take over the crown.



## Rinaldo

Rinaldo is a kitchen servant. However, from the beginning, the reader notices odd things about Rinaldo's behavior. For one, Rinaldo knows some of the secret passageways that supposedly only the prince and princess know. For another, Rinaldo has a statue that once sat in the niche where the ghost appears. In the end, the reader is not surprised to learn that Rinaldo is the prince in disguise.

## Signore Addetto

Signore Addetto is the princess's royal tutor. Signore Addetto is the first person the princess tells about the ghost's appearance. Signore Addetto is loyal to Count Scarazoni and tells him immediately about the ghost. It later turns out that Signore Addetto is the one who came up with the scheme of killing the prince and for the count to marry the princess. When Signore Addetto appears to have a change of heart about this scheme, he is killed and his body is found in the family chapel. Count Scarazoni later confesses to his murder.

## Sophia

Sophia is Mangus the Magician's wife. Sophia is a kind woman who gives Fabrizio the coins he uses to impress and distract the people of the castle. When Fabrizio is sent home to gather equipment for the final appearance of the ghost, he is given instructions to reassure Sophia of Mangus' love and loyalty.



# Objects/Places

## Letter from Coun Scarazoni

A guard gives Fabrizio a letter for Mangus that was written by Count Scarazoni in the beginning of the novel. This letter tells Mangus he has been asked to meet with the king.

## Tarot Cards

Fabrizio is consulting the tarot cards when he is interrupted by a soldier from the castle. Fabrizio is afraid it is this act that has caused the visit from Count Scarazoni and it forces him to request to go to the castle with Mangus.

## Bloody Clothing

The clothing the prince was supposedly wearing on the day of his death was sent to the castle. Fabrizio wears these to convince the king that he is the ghost of Prince Lorenzo.

## Candle

There is a candle in the chapel that is set on a special candelabra that uses a shiny plate to project the light. It is this candle that is used to create the ghost.

## Statue

There was once a statue of the Virgin Mary in the niche where the ghost appears. This statue has been given to the servant Rinaldo.

## Magic Trunks

Since his trial for the use of magic, Mangus has locked his magical supplies in trunks in his study. Fabrizio retrieves several of these items when he and Mangus use the ghost to force Count Scarazoni to confess.

## Secret Passageways

The castle is filled with secret passageways that only the royal family is aware of. Teresina uses these passageways to help Fabrizio make his way through the castle.



## **Niche**

There is a niche high on the wall in the corridor that runs outside the royal chambers. It is in this niche that the ghost appears.

## **Chapel**

There is a private chapel above the niche where the ghost appears. The ghost is created by shining candle light through windows in the chapel that look down on the corridor below.

## **Teresina's Bedchamber**

Teresina sees the ghost in the corridor directly outside her bedchamber. It is also in her bedchamber that Fabrizio meets with her on several occasions.

## **Kitchen**

Fabrizio meets Rinaldo in the kitchen when he goes in search of breakfast. Rinaldo proves to be an important character in the novel.

## **Dungeon Cell**

Fabrizio is arrested for being a spy and locked in a dungeon cell where there is a secret passageway that was once used to execute prisoners in secret.

## **Kingdom of Pergamontio**

The novel is set in the Kingdom of Pergamontio in the year 1491.



# Themes

## Magic versus Reason

Mangus the Magician once used magic to support his family, although in his heart he is a philosopher. Mangus did not use dark magic; he simply used illusion to fool and entertain people. This led to a trial in the castle that could have ended in death. Mangus has been freed, but his reputation is ruined and he lives in seclusion and fear.

Mangus is called to the castle in order to prove or disprove the princess's claims of being haunted by a ghost. Mangus makes it clear from the beginning that he does not believe in ghosts. Mangus is a philosopher first; therefore, everything he does is based on reason. Mangus assures the king there is a reasonable explanation for the ghost his daughter is seeing.

Fabrizio believes in the ghost. From the first time he sees the ghost, Fabrizio is convinced that the princess is seeing the ghost of her dead brother. Fabrizio tries hard to convince Mangus of this fact, but Mangus holds tight to the idea that there is a reasonable explanation, even after seeing the ghost himself. In the end, Mangus is right. The conspirators have used tricks of illusion, not unlike tricks Mangus himself once used, to convince everyone there is a ghost. In the end, reason wins out over magic.

## Conspiracies

The reader will discover at the end of this novel that there were two different conspiracies going on throughout the novel. The first was a conspiracy between Count Scarazoni and Signore Addetto. Count Scarazoni wants to be king. To make this happen, Signore Addetto has concocted a scheme in which Count Scarazoni will kill the prince and then marry the princess, so that when the king should die, Count Scarazoni will be the king. This conspiracy appears to be going well, but the haunting of the princess causes a possible impediment to the marriage, causing Count Scarazoni some concern.

When Teresina and her mother learn of the impending marriage between Teresina and Count Scarazoni, they know they must act to stop this marriage. Both the princess and the queen know that Count Scarazoni has his eye on the crown, therefore they know that the marriage to the princess will place the king's life in danger. Together, mother and daughter come up with a scheme to create a ghost. This will play on the king's superstitions and hopefully cancel the wedding plans.

Everything becomes complicated when the prince is supposedly killed on the way to Rome. However, the queen and princess learn that the prince is still alive. They hide him in the castle and use his death to further their ploy with the ghost. In the end, the ghost convinces Count Scarazoni to confess and saves the kingdom.





## Loyalty

Fabrizio is Mangus the Magician's servant. Fabrizio is fiercely loyal to Mangus, and for this reason he has insisted on going to the castle with him. If not for Fabrizio, Mangus might not have learned most of the truths he learns about the princess and Count Scarazoni. However, Fabrizio is forced to lie to Mangus on several occasions to protect his new friendship with the princess. This causes Mangus to doubt Fabrizio's loyalty to him.

In the end, when Mangus learns the ghost is a hoax, he is determined to tell the king the truth. However, the queen and the princess convince him that the good of the kingdom depends on them using the hoax to convince the king that Count Scarazoni is a killer. Mangus chooses his loyalty to his country over his own moral beliefs to rid the kingdom of Count Scarazoni.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the third person point of view. The main character, Fabrizio, is the focus of this narration. Fabrizio tells the story of the investigation into the haunting of Princess Teresina and his own role in that investigation. As the novel progresses, the reader sees through Fabrizio's eyes everything that happens, a story that is enhanced by Fabrizio's own opinions and emotions.

The point of view of this novel is appropriate to the plot because it shows the story exclusively through the eyes of Fabrizio. For this reason, the reader comes to appreciate that Fabrizio is the true hero of the story because it is his investigation and his clever actions that brings the plot to a happy conclusion. The point of view is also appropriate because it lacks some of the complications of a multi-character view point that appears in other novels of this type. For this reason, the point of view of this novel is appropriate both for the plot and the intended audience of the novel.

## Setting

The novel is set in the Kingdom of Pergamontio in 1491. This kingdom is in Italy and is ruled by a king. However, in this novel, the kingdom is ruled by one of the king's advisors, Count Scarazoni. This situation causes a situation in which the main character of the novel finds himself investigating the haunting of the young queen and coming to a conclusion that ends in the arrest of Count Scarazoni.

The setting of this novel is appropriate to the plot because it sets up the conflict that will propel the plot. If not for the setting of this novel, the conflict would not make a great deal of sense to the reader. Not only this, but the setting adds a new element to the novel that might impress some young readers. The use of candlelight to create the illusion of a ghost will be fascinating to readers, especially those who are modern enthusiasts of magic.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is simple English. The novel includes some Italian words, such as the proper address of men and women of some stature. These words, however, are easily explained by their usage and most likely will not confuse the readers. The language is also the plainer type of language a child of twelve will most likely use, supporting the age of the main character and fitting for the intended audience of young readers.

The language of this novel is fitting for the plot because it is used to not only support the setting of the novel, but to support the main characters. Most of the main characters are



young children; therefore, the language of the novel is appropriate to their knowledge and age. However, the language of the young servant boys, Fabrizio and Rinaldo is quite well educated, suggesting that either both these characters have had a great deal of education, which was unusual at the time, or are not what they seem. This helps to tip the reader off to some of the secrets of the novel as well.

## Structure

The novel is divided into twenty-eight chapters. The chapters are fairly short, though some can be longer than ten pages. The novel is told in both exposition and dialogue, showing the story quite artfully rather than simply telling it. The novel also includes some internal monologue as young Fabrizio struggles to understand the mystery he and his master are in the castle to solve.

The novel contains one main plot and multiple subplot. The main plot follows Fabrizio and Mangus as they attempt to solve the mystery of who or what is haunting Princess Teresina. Some of the subplots include the conspiracy of Count Scarazoni and his attempt to take over as king. Another subplot follows Mangus as he learns that the ghost is really a conspiracy between the princess and queen to convince the king of Count Scarazoni's betrayals. In the end, all the plots come to a satisfying conclusion.



## Quotes

"In 1491, in the Kingdom of Pergamontio, there lived a twelve-year-old boy by the name of Fabrizio. He was the sole servant of Mangus the Magician."

Chap. 1, p. 1

"Two large chests containing magical apparatus sat against the wall. Since the trial they had been kept tightly closed."

Chap. 2, p. 9

"Though born and raised in the city, Fabrizio had never been to the castello, which sat atop the steep hills and cast a shadow over the municipality."

Chap. 3, p. 19

"'Mangus, in all my kingdom, it's you'—the king's voice turned to pleading—'and only you who can free my daughter from a terrifying ghost!'"

Chap. 4, p. 31

"In his mind, Fabrizio saw the final tarot card."

Chap. 5, p. 40

"Squinting into the gloom, he saw Count Scarazoni entering the chapel. With his long, lean face and pointed beard, he looked like the Devil himself."

Chap. 10, p. 74

"On the floor was the body of Teresina's tutor, Signore Addetto. He was dead."

Chap. 14, p. 113

"Heart fluttering, Fabrizio stared at the apparition, unable to believe what he was hearing and seeing."

Chap. 17, p. 135

"Fabrizio rushed forward. In a glance he saw who lay upon the floor: It was Mangus."

Chap. 19, p. 159

"'Oh, Mother,' Teresina said, squeezing her hands together in excitement, 'I do love conspiracies!'"

Chap. 24, p. 205

"'I...do...I...do,' Scarazoni whimpered. 'I did order the murder of the prince. I did kill Addetto. I admit to it all!'"

Chap. 27, p. 242

"Smiling broadly, Fabrizio turned the next card..."  
Chap. 28, p. 247



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Fabrizio? What is he doing at the beginning of the novel? How does Fabrizio believe this act has caused Mangus to be called to the castle by the king? Why does Fabrizio insist on going to the castle with Mangus? What does he expect the result of this to be?

Who is Mangus? Why was he placed on trial? What was the possible outcome of that trial? In reality, what was the outcome of that trial? Who was responsible for placing Mangus on trial? What has Mangus promised as a result of that trial? Why is Mangus called to the castle? Why is the request of the king ironic in light of Mangus's previous trial?

Who is Princess Teresina? What has she seen in the corridor outside her bedchamber? What does Teresina want Mangus to believe about this vision? Why does Teresina befriend Fabrizio? What does Teresina want from Fabrizio? Why does Teresina later have Fabrizio arrested? What does this say about Teresina's frame of mind?

Who is the queen? Why does she repeatedly seek out Fabrizio? What does the queen say to Fabrizio on these occasions? How does the queen know that Teresina has befriended Fabrizio? What does the queen think of this? What is odd about the queen's behavior early in the novel? How is this behavior explained later in the novel?

Who is Count Scarazoni? What is his role in the kingdom? What does Count Scarazoni want for himself? How does he go about achieving this? Who helps Count Scarazoni? For what reason? What happens to this co-conspirator? What does this say about Count Scarazoni's determination? His character?

What is a conspiracy? Who is involved in a conspiracy in this novel? How is this conspiracy revealed? Is there more than one conspiracy at work in this novel? How are the two conspiracies related to one another? How does Mangus learn the truth about the dealings in the castle? What does he want to do about it? What does he do about it?

Discuss magic versus reality. How is magic different from reality? What type of magic does Mangus perform? How is it done? How does this differ from the reason he is always talking about? Which wins out in the end, magic or reality? Does magic help prove reality? Explain.