

The Penderwicks Study Guide

The Penderwicks by Jeanne Birdsall

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Contents

The Penderwicks Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	4
Chapter One: A Boy at the Window.....	6
Chapter Two: A Tunnel Through the Hedge.....	9
Chapter Three: The Moops.....	12
Chapter Four: The Apology.....	15
Chapter Five: A New Hero.....	18
Chapter Six: Rabbits and a Long Ladder.....	21
Chapter Seven: Borrowed Finery.....	24
Chapter Eight: The Birthday Dinner.....	27
Chapter Nine: Shocking News.....	30
Chapter Ten: A Bold Escape.....	33
Chapter Eleven: Another Rescue.....	36
Chapter Twelve: Sir Barnaby Patterne.....	39
Chapter Thirteen: The Piano Lesson.....	42
Chapter Fourteen: A Midnight Adventure.....	45
Chapter Fifteen: The Shredded Book.....	48
Chapter Sixteen: The Runaway.....	51
Chapter Seventeen: The Next-to-Last Day.....	54
Chapter Eighteen: Good-bye for Now.....	56
Characters.....	59
Symbols and Symbolism.....	64
Settings.....	67
Themes and Motifs.....	70



Styles..... 76
Quotes..... 78



Plot Summary

The Penderwicks is a story about four young girls and their father who vacation for the first time in a cottage on an estate called Arundel Hall which is located in the Berkshire Mountains. Though this wasn't their usual vacation destination, it would be the center of conversations for years to come. The children range in age from Batty who is just four years old to Rosalind who is twelve. Jane and Skye are ten and eleven respectively, and they are joined by Hound Penderwick - something that was not revealed to the owner of the estate, Mrs. Tifton.

Mrs. Tifton is a social climber of sorts whose biggest concern throughout this story is whether or not she will win the Garden Club competition. Sadly for her, an unfortunate event with the Penderwicks and her son will cause her to lose first place to a rival. Mrs. Tifton has one son, Jeffrey, who dreams of going to a conservatory to study music. That seems impossible however as his life has been planned to the final detail. Mrs. Tifton is determined to have Jeffrey attend a military school and follow in his grandfather's footsteps to West Point afterward. The thought makes Jeffrey cringe. Mrs. Tifton isn't thrilled with the impact that the Penderwick sisters are having on her son. Though usually quiet and respectful of his mother's wishes, Jeffrey has stepped up to defend the girls against her and even openly defied her wishes in favor of helping the sisters.

Cagney is the gardener for Arundel Estate and is tasked with creating something so remarkable that Mrs. Tifton will win the Garden Club Competition. Housekeeper Mrs. Church is a woman of many talents. When Jeffrey befriends the Penderwick sisters, she encourages him to invite them to his birthday party. Since the affair is formal, Jeffrey thinks they will decline, but Churchie has an answer for that problem too. She takes the girls up to the attic and allows them to select a dress of their choice from the myriad of dresses outgrown by Mrs. Tifton as she grew up. Churchie reveals yet another talent when she offers to alter the dresses to fit each of the girls, including young Batty. Though the birthday dinner is a disaster, and referred to as the worst birthday ever by Jeffrey and the girls, the Penderwick girls have a definite influence on Jeffrey, encouraging him to talk to his mother and explain how he really feels.

As the Garden Club competition nears, Mrs. Tifton is increasingly anxious, and determined that this will be the year she wins. Rosalind lectures her sisters repeatedly to stay away from Arundel and its grounds on the day of the competition, but that sets the stage for misadventure. Deeply invested in a game of soccer, Skye, Jane and Jeffrey are giving everything they have when the ball winds up in the garden. The children follow in hot pursuit, mindless of where they are until they realize they are not alone. The Garden Club judge is amused and understanding but Mrs. Tifton is barely controlled as the girls head back to the cottage.

The sisters are worried about Jeffrey's fate, and just when they decide to go and check on him, he shows up on their doorstep and tells them he is running away from home. He plans to go to Boston to finish school there and possibly attend the school of music there as well. The girls talk him into spending the night, and in the morning Mrs. Tifton



shows up early looking for him. Jeffrey finally stands up to his mother and tells her what he really wants and she finally relents. By encouraging him, the Penderwick girls have helped to alter the course of Jeffrey's life for the better. By the time their vacation is over, Mrs. Tifton is relieved to see that the ordeal is finally over, but the girls will miss their new friends, and promises to visit are made.



Chapter One: A Boy at the Window

Summary

When the Penderwicks find themselves without a place to spend the summer vacation, the Penderwick girls are afraid they will be forced to spend their entire vacation at home. However, when Mr. Penderwick hears about a cottage available in the Berkshire Mountains that even has enough room for Hound, he rents it without hesitation.

On the way to their new vacation site, the Penderwicks become lost after Hound eats the map used to wrap Jane's sandwich. Rosalind is concerned about the length of time they've already been on the road, travelling for three hours already when it should only have taken half that. Her father remembers that they are supposed to pass a town named Framley and then after a few more turns; find number eleven on Stafford Street.

They back track and Jane composes an episode of Sabrina Starr aloud, the heroine of her ongoing stories rescuing them of course. Rosalind sees a truck at the side of the road, and asks her father to pull over. An old man in worn blue jeans stands at a table piled high with tomatoes. Rosalind asks for directions and he provides them along with half a dozen tomatoes. Rosalind navigates to Arundel and the whole family is stunned by the grandeur of the property, the house still out of sight. They continue to arrive in front of a mansion thinking that surely they have the wrong address.

A young man pushing a wheelbarrow comes into view but then Hound begins the prelude to throwing up and the girls quickly drag him out onto the lawn. Rosalind cleans up after Hound while Mr. Penderwick discusses gardening and local plant life with Cagney, the gardener at Arundel Hall. Mr. Penderwick introduces his children and Cagney gives them directions to the cottage behind the estate. They load Hound and have to prod Jane who is convinced that she'd seen a boy standing in the window of the mansion and his appearance gives her an idea.

Analysis

The Penderwicks opens with the introduction of the Penderwick family – Mr. Penderwick and his three daughters: Jane, Skye and Rosalind in order of youngest to oldest.

The family theme is strong as the Penderwicks joke and banter with one another in the car as they head to Arundel Hall where they will vacation for the first time this year. It is obvious that this is a family that spends many vacations together as the idea of not having a place to go for the summer vacation is beyond comprehension for the Penderwick family. They play word games together, indicating a history of similar prior vacations involving road trips. The presence of Hound in the vehicle and their reaction to his spontaneous vomiting also reveals a history of trips in which Hound played a part as a family member. It is also clear that there is no mother currently in the picture as she is only ever mentioned in association with heaven as her location.



The next theme evident is a military theme in which Mr. Penderwick refers to his girls as his troops and his daughters insist on doing things right if they are going to be done at all (as was said in reference to Batty using the word 'cangaroo' to incorrectly fill the slot of 'C' in 'I Went to the Zoo and I Saw').

Optimism is a strong theme in this segment as well. Rosalind takes on the role of navigator when it becomes clear that they are going in circles, convincing the rest that finding someone who can give them directions will solve the dilemma caused when Hound ate the map and Jane immediately begins composing another episode of Sabrina Starr in her mind, calm under pressure as always.

Harry is introduced when Rosalind asks directions, generous in both information and with his gift of tomatoes to the family. He warns Rosalind to keep Skye under control and clear of Mrs. Tifton's gardens, foreshadowing possible conflict between Rosalind's siblings and their summer landlady.

Jane's character is further developed as intelligent and creative, already composing one of many books in her mind, characters taking shape from events as they occur around her, suggesting she is bright and enjoys language skills while Rosalind is shown as the eldest – a capable and competent young lady who is clearly assuming the role of mother to her siblings in absence of the real thing.

A brief theme introduced in this opening segment is botany as Mr. Penderwick reveals his knowledge of plants and their Latin names. While brief, the depth of his knowledge foreshadows an ongoing connection between Mr. Penderwick and the landscape around them, and reveals a future connection to Cagney who tends the grounds at Arundel Hall.

Discussion Question 1

What happened to the map and directions that were supposed to get the family to Arundel Hall, and why does Rosalind think they need to stop for directions?

Discussion Question 2

Who helps to control the restless children in the car and what does that tell the reader about this character?

Discussion Question 3

Which character is revealed as a writer, and what is the general subject matter written about?



Vocabulary

concentrate, symphony, botany, imitating, embroidered, apologetically, tumbledown, reluctantly



Chapter Two: A Tunnel Through the Hedge

Summary

The Penderwicks settle into Arundel Cottage, everyone pleased with their accommodations. Skye loves her room so much that she stows her bag in the closet so that the clean perfection of her room remains unchanged. Rosalind has a smaller room, chosen to be near Batty who bursts in, thrilled to find the closet passageway between their two rooms. Skye invites Rosalind to join her in exploring, but she declines. Skye goes up to the attic where Jane is composing her next Sabrina Starr story, but she also refuses the invitation to go with Skye. Skye leaves Jane and heads down to where her father is settling Hound into his pen. Hound isn't impressed with the daycare situation, but Mr. Penderwick is sure the latch is Hound proof. He tells Skye to be back for dinner, and rattles off a phrase in Latin that Skye deciphers loosely as 'behave and be careful'. She tells him not to worry and leaves to explore Mrs. Tifton's gardens.

Finding a way through the hedge is hard, but then Skye discovers a small tunnel. Without considering its origins, she crawls through and emerges to see Cagney working nearby. She calls out to him, but before they can talk, someone else calls him. He hides her in a decorative urn as Mrs. Tifton comes over to talk to him about the upcoming Garden Club competition three weeks away. She asks him to do something with the empty urns and he tells her that he intends to put Jasmine in them. She also insists that he cut out the Fimbriata white rose bush that had scratched Mrs. Robinette's car and Cagney is mortified as his father had planted that same bush thirty years before, lovingly covering it year after year during the winter to keep it safe. Skye suggests he transplant it near the cottage where it wouldn't be a problem. The idea cheers him up, and he suggests Skye leave before Mrs. Tifton returns.

Just then, Mrs. Tifton returns, so Skye dives into the tunnel and runs head first into someone else. After ascertaining that the boy is okay, she offers to help him get home. Mrs. Tifton is calling out to someone named Jeffrey and Skye warns the boy to be quiet so that the 'snooty' Mrs. Tifton wouldn't find them. It only takes a moment, along with the look on Jeffrey's face for Skye to realize the mistake she'd made. He tells her his mother is calling and Skye was impeding his ability to get to her.

Analysis

Arundel cottage is introduced in this section represented as everything a cottage should be – small, cozy and with a front porch that has pink climbing roses around it. The inside is every bit as charming and the Penderwick children are eager to see their rooms.



Choice of rooms is decided by Hound Draw for Order – a tradition that has become a ritual with the girls. Jane chooses first, and to Skye's surprise Rosalind chooses the smaller room, claiming she wants to be near Batty, leaving her with a room she considers perfect. Skye is a perfectionist, who enjoys cleanliness over all else, even refusing to unpack which in her mind would ruin how perfect her room was.

The family theme is touched on briefly as Rosalind unpacks a photograph of herself as a baby, being hugged by a laughing mother. The photograph was taken before Skye, Jane and Batty were born, and is one that Rosalind values above all others, clearly missing her mother deeply. The family theme continues as Skye has been told many times that she would be the one to grow up to look exactly like her mother, although Skye still struggles to see any resemblance beyond their similar blue eyes and blond hair.

Exploration is also a theme as Skye is ready to take a closer look around. She tries to get Rosalind and even Jane to go with her, but they are both busy and decline so she explores the area alone.

Freedom is also a theme as both Skye and Hound crave open spaces without restriction. Hound is confined to his pen, and Mr. Penderwick assures Skye that he will not get free, foreshadowing the likelihood that he will eventually do exactly that. Skye explores Mrs. Tifton's gardens, despite being told by Harry the Tomato Man that Mrs. Tifton didn't like people in her gardens. Instead, she prefers to believe that Mrs. Tifton might enjoy having someone there to appreciate the gardens.

Friendship also plays a part as a theme when Skye goes looking for Mrs. Tifton's gardens and finds Cagney instead. He immediately reveals himself as a friend when he hides her from Mrs. Tifton who shows up at the same time as Skye does.

Skye's character is revealed to be one of above average intelligence when she recalls an incident during which her second grade teacher was convinced she was lying to her when she competently completed long division. Her adventurous spirit almost gets her into trouble with Mrs. Tifton when she crawls through the hedge to investigate the garden, but Cagney hides her, saving her from being caught. She would have gotten away clean, but when she dove into the hedge tunnel, she ran straight into a boy coming the other way.

Jeffrey is introduced as Mrs. Tifton's son, and the obvious creator of the hedge tunnel Skye found and used.

Discussion Question 1

What kind of room does Skye hope for and what surprise is waiting for her when she finally goes upstairs to see where she'd be sleeping?



Discussion Question 2

What type of feeling is Jane convinced that Skye should be able to absorb just by standing in her room and why?

Discussion Question 3

What is different about Skye compared to her siblings; what part of that difference does she struggle to believe and why?

Vocabulary

reluctantly, hypnotize, rummaged, camouflage, anticipated, impatient, dignity



Chapter Three: The Moops

Summary

Batty is ready for bed, and she sits waiting for Rosalind to tell her a bedtime story. Tonight, Batty wants to hear a story about her mother. There aren't many of them, since Mrs. Penderwick died when she was just a baby, but she loves any story that reminds her of her mother. She bounces on the bed, deciding it will be comfortable, and wishes Hound could sleep with her. Even though their rooms are connected by a closet, Batty knows it will be a while before Rosalind comes to bed because a MOOPS (Meeting Of Older Penderwick Sisters) has been called for eight o'clock.

The door opens and Hound bursts in, tail wagging. Though Batty knows he isn't allowed in her room, she decides to let him stay and pushes him into the closet before Rosalind comes and catches him there. She shuts the door and gets back on the bed, only to have Hound come back in the door again. He'd simply gone through the closet to Rosalind's room and come back. Batty closes the second door and is trying to convince Hound to go back in when Rosalind arrives.

Rosalind tells her that Hound has been given permission to stay with her so that she won't worry about being in a new room alone, but reminds her that Hound isn't allowed on the bed, pushing him off. Batty tells her sister that she wants to hear about the night she was named, and Rosalind tries to hide her reluctance as this is a story that is close to the end of her mother's life. She sits on the bed and begins the story that by now Batty knows by heart, explaining how she had gone with their father to see Batty when she was born and how her mother had wanted to name her Elizabeth, but her father had insisted there was only one Elizabeth in his life. They'd settled on calling her Batty for short, and Batty had smiled at them as though in approval. Two weeks later, cancer takes their mother. Rosalind finishes the story with a 'happily ever after' and tells Batty that their father will be up shortly. Closing the door as she leaves, Rosalind hears the thump that tells her Hound has gotten back onto the bed, but she leaves him there.

Rosalind finally sits down with her sisters and the meeting comes to order. They swear themselves to secrecy, and then Skye finally reveals the reason she called the MOOPS, telling them about Jeffrey, and how Cagney had hidden her from Mrs. Tifton in an urn. She continues, telling them about how she mistakenly spoke ill of Mrs. Tifton, only to discover afterward that Jeffrey was her son and now is too embarrassed to return and apologize. She asks Rosalind to do it for her, but Rosalind decides that it is time to stop coming to Skye's rescue so often and instead enlists Jane's help. Jane promises she won't go off on any imaginative flights of fancy, and Rosalind adds that their father will have to be told first. Skye begs Rosalind to leave out the parts she said about Mrs. Tifton, and Rosalind agrees, providing that Skye talks to her father before Jane goes over to talk to Jeffrey. Skye agrees gratefully, and they discuss what Jane should say.



Analysis

Batty's character is further revealed in this section as the youngest of the sisters. Batty doesn't want to admit that being in a new room in a new place is frightening, and would in fact deny it if asked, but Rosalind and her father both know the truth and to keep her from being fearful, they allow Hound to sleep in her room with her – an unprecedented treat.

The Penderwick family lost Mrs. Penderwick to cancer just two weeks after Batty was born, and Batty doesn't remember her, but loves to hear the stories that Rosalind tells her about the brief time she spent with her mother. The family theme is strong in this segment as well, Rosalind again revealing herself as the surrogate mother to her younger siblings by telling bedtime stories, and tucking Batty in at night.

The Penderwick girls also band together when necessary, making decisions and resolving issues without involving their father. By holding meetings, the girls decide on courses of action and discuss events that require further attention, as is the case where Skye's meeting with Jeffrey that afternoon was concerned.

Manners are also an important theme as the Penderwick girls reveal that, despite being raised without a mother, they are polite and considerate of the feelings of others. This is revealed when Skye accidentally speaks out of turn, badmouthing Mrs. Tifton to her son Jeffrey. Not only is Skye embarrassed by her behavior, but she also recognizes the need to apologize.

Rosalind, as the eldest, also acts as mediator when required and overriding decisions made in haste or without thought. Rosalind is also aware that she can't be overprotective with her siblings, realizing that she can't keep bailing Skye out and as such she votes that Jane be the one to represent Skye in her apology to Jeffrey. She also reminds her siblings that bribery is immoral when Skye tries to offer up her allowance in return for their silence where telling their father what she said about Mrs. Tifton is concerned.

Discussion Question 1

What is a MOOPS and why does Skye call for one?

Discussion Question 2

What does Skye want Rosalind to do, and why does Rosalind decide against that course of action?



Discussion Question 3

Why doesn't Skye want Jane to act on her behalf, and what promise does she elicit when she realizes there is no other choice?

Vocabulary

despair, satisfaction, irrational, concussion, immoral, exchange



Chapter Four: The Apology

Summary

Rosalind and Skye create the batter for chocolate chip cookies while Jane heads to Arundel Hall, rehearsing what she is going to say on the way. Rosalind shows Skye how to mix the batter, but Skye complains that it is all a waste of time, sure that Jane is going to make things worse instead of better and Jeffrey will hate them all when she is through.

Cagney pulls up with a rose bush from Mrs. Tifton's garden and Rosalind heads outside to help. She promises to be right back, instructing Skye to spoon the batter onto cookie sheets and put them in the oven. Outside, Cagney tries to engage Batty in conversation, but Batty seldom talks to new people until she finds common ground with them. That proves easy when Cagney reveals he has rabbits and invites Rosalind to bring Batty to his apartment to see them sometime. Suddenly nervous, Rosalind asks him where he'll put the rose. She hops into the truck to grab the bush, driving a dozen or more thorns into her arms and hands in her haste. Cagney helps and suggests they plant it together.

Meanwhile, Jane practices the two speeches she has ready, depending on who she sees first. She finds the most ordinary door she can and gathering her nerve, knocks on the door. It opens revealing a plump, graying woman who introduces herself as Mrs. Churchill - Churchie for short. Jane introduces herself, and Churchie invites her in but Jane reminds herself she has a task to complete, and asks if Jeffrey is around.

Churchie disappears and Jane closes her eyes, imagining a character in her new Sabrina Starr book. When Jeffrey says hello, she can tell with one look that he isn't the type to tattle to his mother, and asks him how his head is. He shows her the bruise, and Jane announces she has a speech for Jeffrey inviting Churchie to listen in. She launches into the apology they'd crafted, expressing Skye's regret and hoping he would forgive her behavior. He does immediately, and Jane is somewhat disappointed that she didn't have to try harder to convince him. She launches into the extra excuses she'd rehearsed to herself, and Churchie and Jeffrey both tell her that her speech was great. Jeffrey even agrees to come back with her for cookies. Walking to the cottage, Jeffrey tells her about the tunnel that Cagney made for him, and the iguana named Darwin that he'd given him.

Skye struggles with the cookies on her own, getting them on a tray and then into the oven which she has set to broil. Bored, she goes upstairs and immerses herself in math problems. No one notices the smoke pouring out of the oven and Skye is oblivious even to the sound of Hound's alarm bark. Then she hears doors and running, finally smelling something that isn't right. Rosalind pulls two trays of blackened cookies from the oven and chastises Skye for not thinking. Skye doesn't admit she doesn't know the difference between broil and bake but when Rosalind calls her a moron, Skye loses her temper.



She tells Rosalind that it is her fault for not returning like she promised, and insists that it wasn't even her idea. She would never bake for a boy, especially not one who is rich, stuck up, and has a snooty mother. The kitchen is silent all of a sudden and Skye turns to see Jane and Jeffrey standing in the doorway. Jeffrey's face is pale and Skye suddenly wishes the cottage had burnt to the ground with her under it. Mr. Penderwick walks in at that moment, and introduces himself after acknowledging Cagney's quick work with the hose.

Analysis

Skye's character grows in this segment as she learns to regret behavior that embarrasses her and makes it necessary for her to apologize. While some her age might have let it slide, she talks to her sisters instead and together they agree that Skye's behavior would reflect badly on the family's honor – something the sisters had recently begun to reflect on.

Rosalind again reveals herself as the matron of the family, taking charge of the method and manner of the apology that will be made to Jeffrey. She also convinces Skye to bake a batch of cookies as an addition to the apology, a gesture that Skye doesn't agree with.

Rosalind's interest in Cagney grows as she makes an effort to be around him, and to involve herself in his activities. At the same time, Jane's friendship with Jeffrey blossoms as they share common interests on the way back to the cottage.

Mrs. Churchill, or Churchie as most call her is introduced as the Tifton's housekeeper. She is a strong but welcoming woman who immediately invites Jane inside. She reveals that Hound's presence is being kept a secret from Mrs. Tifton, endearing her to Jane immediately and foreshadowing the likelihood that this is a secret that may not be kept for long.

Jane's intelligence is revealed as she works on word problems to entertain herself, enjoying the brief challenge each one presents. Her skills as a writer are also obvious as she recites the methods by which she'd been prepared to persuade Jeffrey to forgive Skye if necessary. She also uses the time she spends walking to the main house rehearsing her newest Sabrina Starr episode in which she has already constructed a character she names Arthur.

Rosalind reveals that anyone can speak out of turn, doing the same thing herself when she discovers that Skye has almost accidentally burned down the cottage. Calling her a moron, she knows immediately that she should apologize, much as Skye had come to a similar conclusion after her encounter with Jeffrey, but before she has a chance to do so, Skye retaliates reminding Rosalind that she shouldn't have left her alone, and should have come back like she said she was going to. Then, still angry she adds that she never wanted to bake them anyway, and again refers to Jeffrey as a stuck up boy



with a snooty mother. As soon as the words are out, Skye can feel Jeffrey and Jane behind her.

Discussion Question 1

Whose idea is it to bake cookies and why are they being baked?

Discussion Question 2

What lesson is Skye supposed to absorb by the apology that is taken to Jeffrey?

Discussion Question 3

Who bears responsibility for the fire, and in what way?

Vocabulary

adversaries, subsequent, persuading, influence, imprisonment, smoldering



Chapter Five: A New Hero

Summary

Mr. Penderwick sends Skye on a walk with Jeffrey, Jane, and Batty while he and Rosalind tackle the kitchen. Skye apologized to Jeffrey for the things she'd said in the kitchen in anger, but they still can hardly meet each other's eyes and Skye drags behind them as they walk.

Jeffrey leads them along a high stone wall until they reach a wooden gate and tells Jane to look through the knothole for the bull kept in the enclosure, but he isn't there. He tells Jane about a man who was gored when he trespassed into the field and they go further down the wall to see if they can get a better look from a ladder there.

Rosalind had instructed Batty to stay with her sisters, but when they stopped at the gate, she hid behind a bush wishing Hound was there to keep her company. When her sisters leave with Jeffrey, she creeps up to look through the knothole. Seeing a field of clover, she assumes it is the perfect place for a horse. She squeezes under the gate to pick daisies, thinking Rosalind will help her make a chain later.

Jane turns halfway up the ladder and asks where Batty is, and Skye realizes that as the oldest, the responsibility for watching Batty fell to her. Jeffrey had seen her hiding behind a bush and Skye hopes she just went back to see Hound. Jeffrey offers to look for her, but Jane wants to look at the bull first, who had just come out from the barn. As Jeffrey and Skye debate who will go up the ladder next Jane begins to scream.

Batty has heard Jane scream before, and isn't worried. She looks up and is surprised to see a bull is only fifteen feet away. Batty calls him a nice horsie, knowing full well he isn't. Luckily, the story Jeffrey told them had been wildly exaggerated and the bull had never gored a trespasser, but just stepped on the man's camera. Batty lies still, hoping someone will come to help her, and comforted by the sight of Jane running along the top of the wall, yelling at the bull to leave her alone. A minute later, Jeffrey and Skye slide under the gate. Jeffrey heads for the bull while Skye goes to Batty. Jeffrey yells getting the bull's attention while Skye packs Batty as far as the gate and shoves her underneath, following her out. Jeffrey is still yelling at the bull and Jane screams at him to run.

Jeffrey ducks and weaves to avoid the bull and is under the gate in a flash. They grab Batty and run for the cottage as the bull smashes against the gate in frustration. Jane tells Jeffrey he is a true hero, and as the oldest sister, Skye thanks him and then really apologizes for her earlier behavior. They shake hands and agree their father probably shouldn't know what happened. Batty wants to seal the deal with Penderwick Family Honor. Skye argues their rituals are strictly for family, but Jane suggests they make Jeffrey an honorary Penderwick for his heroism. They swear secrecy, and another crashing noise from nearby has them running for the cottage again.



In their hurry, none of the children notice Hound who managed to free himself from his pen when he sensed that Batty was in danger. Now, scenting the air, he no longer senses the danger around her, and locating her scent, he trots after them.

Analysis

Friendship is an opening theme in this segment as Jane and Jeffrey chat amiably while they walk, Skye following reluctantly behind. Skye has apologized for her behavior, but the air between her and Jeffrey is still strained. While Skye is convinced that she isn't jealous of their friendship, it still irks her to follow and listen as Jeffrey and Jane babble on as though they'd been friends forever. Skye is increasingly impatient when the bull isn't to be found in the field like Jeffrey promised, and she convinces herself that Jeffrey probably lied about that to impress Jane. She even snorts out loud when Jeffrey tells Jane the wildly exaggerated story about a man who had trespassed into the bull's field.

Exaggeration is a theme as well as a character flaw when Jeffrey continues to inflate the story he was told by Cagney about the bull. The story was initially exaggerated by the first person who added a scratch on the man's leg which the second person changed to a gouge when he told it, and slowly the story grew until the tourist had been gored. Jeffrey had told the story almost exactly as Cagney had told it to him, changing only one element and telling Jane and Skye that three doctors had been necessary instead just one. The story had become its own monster making the bull much more fearful than was necessary.

Skye once again learns not to leap to judgement when the bull comes out of the barn and heads straight for Batty who is happily picking daisies in the field. Instead of panicking, Jeffrey climbs under the gate and begins yelling and throwing rocks at the bull, revealing more heroism than Skye could have imagined earlier in him. Once they manage to get Batty out of the field safely, Skye has to admit that she's been wrong about Jeffrey and that Jane is right when she refers to him as heroic. She can't come up with a good argument to keep him from being instated as an honorary member of the Penderwick family.

Loyalty is a big theme in this segment also as Hound senses the distress that Batty is in and immediately springs his latch to go to her rescue as foreshadowed earlier. His love for Batty is stronger than the latch that secures him. Another example of loyalty is shown when Jeffrey springs to the rescue, going into the bull's pen to distract him so that the girls can get Batty out safely. Jane and Batty manage to convince Skye to reward his loyalty when they make him an Honorary Penderwick.

Secrecy is also an ongoing theme as the secrets of the sisters begin to pile up. So far, Mr. Penderwick hadn't been told the entire truth about how Skye and Jeffrey met; and now the girls want to withhold another incident from him, foreshadowing an upcoming revelation as the truth will always come out in the end.



Discussion Question 1

What happens as a result of the tale Jeffrey tells Jane and Skye about the bull, and how different is the story Jeffrey tells from the truth of what happened?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Batty remain behind and hide while her sisters continue?

Discussion Question 3

Why do the sisters decide to make Jeffrey an honorary Penderwick and what does he have to do in order to become one?

Vocabulary

petition, intelligent, sauntered, heralded, exasperating, eliminate, toreador



Chapter Six: Rabbits and a Long Ladder

Summary

In the morning, Batty shares the story of the bull with Hound again. Hound tries to undo his latch like he did the day before, but Mr. Penderwick has fixed it. Jeffrey arrives and reminds Batty she isn't supposed to tell anyone, but Hound doesn't count, she informs him.

Rosalind has already repaired Batty's wings, and when Jeffrey observes the good job she's done, Batty tells him that she does everything her mother would have done since her mother's death. Asked if she misses her, Batty has to be honest. She tells him that she doesn't really remember her mother, but admits that Rosalind still cries in her sleep sometimes, and then asks him not to tell anyone. Jeffrey admits that he was afraid of the bull, and he doesn't want anyone to know that either.

Rosalind announces that Cagney invited them to come to see his rabbits when he'd come that morning to water the rosebush, and she hustles Batty along so they won't be late. Rosalind and Batty arrive on time and Batty hides for a minute, changing her mind about going in, but Rosalind convinces her that the rabbits know she is coming and will be disappointed if she doesn't show up. Knowing how that feels, she goes in with Rosalind. Cagney comes from the kitchen with a handful of parsley, explaining that Yaz and Carla are hiding under the couch but Carla likely won't come out as she is shy – a sentiment Batty can relate to. On their knees, they peer under the couch and watch as the bunnies make short work of the parsley. To Cagney's surprise, Carla goes straight to Batty, likely recognizing a kindred spirit.

While they are busy, Jeffrey finds Jane and Skye with a soccer ball Hound has flattened. He offers them the use of his. Mrs. Tifton is at a Garden Club meeting so Skye and Jane go with him back to Arundel Hall. Jeffrey takes them up to his room, Skye already warning Jane not to touch anything. Once there, they discover Jeffrey has an upright piano in his room and Jane asks if he can play. Jeffrey is reluctant at first, but then sits down and plays a passage from Tchaikovsky and Jane is enchanted, wanting to hear more. Jeffrey glows with the praise and tells them music is everything to him and one day he'd like to go to Juilliard and perhaps conduct someday.

At that moment, his mother calls him down to entertain Mrs. Robinette's son, Teddy. Teddy is a bully, and Jeffrey asks the girls to hide upstairs while he deals with him. Skye has a better idea. She points out the window to a big tree and together they remove the screen and toss out the ball. Jane leaves a note for Jeffrey and they climb as far down the tree as they can. The branches end fifteen feet from the ground, but luckily Cagney is working nearby. She calls out to him, and he quickly gets a ladder to help them down. Skye asks him to let Jeffrey know they've escaped and he promises to take care of it.



Analysis

Confinement is the first theme as Mr. Penderwick fixes the latch in such a way that Hound will no longer be able to escape, foreshadowing his continuing efforts to do so and the likelihood that his confinement will pose ongoing issues.

The family theme is ongoing as Jeffrey observes the neat manner in which Batty's wings had been fixed, and Batty tells him that Rosalind has always been the mother to her since her mother died when she was just a baby.

Secrets are exchanged by Batty and Jeffrey as they become more comfortable with each other and Batty begins to get past her shy demeanor. This is a handicap both children share and as such are stronger together. Jeffrey proves himself to be trustworthy with secrets when he maintains the cover story created to explain Batty's torn wings.

Rosalind's interest in Cagney continues as she makes a point of finding things to do near him when he comes to water the rose bush. He returns her interest, inviting Rosalind to bring Batty by to see his rabbits, breaking the ice with Batty and earning points with Rosalind for his intuitive invitation. This also reveals that Rosalind and Cagney are similar in their emotional makeup, both concerned with the younger children around them or in their care, providing nurturing environments while becoming friends.

Rosalind's growing interest in Cagney continues to be at the forefront as he invites Rosalind to bring Batty to his apartment to see his rabbits. Rosalind is nervous about being in the apartment of a boy – something she'd never done before, and her preconceived notions of what to expect are examined, and discarded as she discovers that not all boys are the same and this one is not a slob like Anna suggested all boys were as part of their genetic makeup.

Rosalind continues not only to provide a safe environment for Batty, but also to bring her out of her shell by comparing her reluctance to follow through with meeting the rabbits to a time when she had been disappointed by someone who hadn't shown up, teaching Batty that her feelings are not the only feelings involved.

Jane's character is revealed to have physical talent when Skye tells Jeffrey about her soccer attributes. Hound had flattened the ball, making practice impossible, but Jeffrey offers the loan of his, and the girls invite themselves to join him as he goes back to Arundel Hall to retrieve it. While Jane is eager to go, Skye is reluctant to run into Mrs. Tifton, and Jeffrey's assurances them his mother is away from the house clearly foreshadow and early return and a possible confrontation.

Wealth and opulence are also a theme as Jeffrey takes the girls through Arundel Hall and they see how different the interior is from the way they live. Skye immediately reminds Jane not to touch anything and is reminded of a museum as they go to Jeffrey's room. Skye mentally compares Jeffrey's room to the rest of the house, observing that in



his room, the furnishings were normal, and a visitor wouldn't be afraid to sit down or walk across the rugs.

Jeffrey's musical talents are revealed, and while a little self-conscious, he plays a bit of Tchaikovsky for them so adeptly that both girls want to hear more. He reveals his dream to be a conductor one day.

Bullying is a theme briefly touched on as Mrs. Tifton returns with Mrs. Robinette and Teddy, her son. Jeffrey admits that he'd rather drown Teddy in the pond than spend time with him and suggests the girls avoid both Teddy and his mother. When the girls manage to climb down the tree outside Jeffrey's window, Cagney helps them to reach the ground and they explain, asking him to help with Teddy. Cagney offers to take care of it.

Discussion Question 1

What surprises Skye and Jane when Jeffrey takes them into his room in Arundel Hall, and what insights into Jeffrey's desires for the future are given?

Discussion Question 2

What preconceived notions about teenaged boys does Rosalind have and how does Cagney change them?

Discussion Question 3

Why do Jane and Skye climb out the window and use the tree to escape Arundel Hall, and what almost ruins their exit?

Vocabulary

brouhaha, genetic, solemnly, grandeur, magnificent, intricately, exquisite



Chapter Seven: Borrowed Finery

Summary

Jane worries when Jeffrey doesn't return later, wondering if he's actually followed through with his plan to drown Teddy like he threatened. Skye worries that their visit was discovered and they would be forbidden to do so again. Both are relieved when he returns the next morning, telling them Teddy had injured himself and Jeffrey had been forced to stay and keep him company. Jeffrey had fixed it so that Teddy wouldn't return however, and Cagney had promised he would hang a rope ladder from the tree where they'd been stuck so they can come and go unnoticed.

Rosalind and her sisters do the dishes as Jeffrey adds that Churchie has invited them all over for gingerbread and adds that his mother is out again, if it matters to anyone. Mr. Penderwick comes in to inspect the work Batty is doing, telling her the silverware has been put away perfectly. Jeffrey extends the invitation to him as well, but he has plans to see Cagney's efforts at hybridizing peonies.

Churchie greets them enthusiastically, meeting Rosalind, Skye and Batty for the first time. Harry arrives with tomatoes, showing up just in time for gingerbread, and Churchie teases him good naturedly. They enjoy the fruits of her labor and complement her efforts. Churchie tells them that she will be baking a birthday cake and is surprised when the girls don't know who for. She tells them it is for Jeffrey's eleventh birthday and asks Jeffrey why he didn't invite them. Embarrassed, he insists they won't want to come, especially since Dexter will be there. He also adds that it is a formal affair and Rosalind admits that they have no finery to wear. Jeffrey is relieved, but Churchie has an idea.

Churchie takes the children up to the attic – a treasure trove of wonderful things. She starts with Rosalind, telling Jeffrey to entertain the others. Together, they examine the hundreds of articles of clothing that were once worn by Mrs. Tifton, and by her mother, Mrs. Framley. Once the life of the party, the family had entertained extensively and Rosalind is stunned by the finery surrounding her. Churchie tells Rosalind a bit about the history of the family, including the fact that Jeffrey doesn't know his own father – not even his name. Churchie holds up a striped dress that she promises to take in for Rosalind so that it will fit right. Rosalind objects, but Churchie assures her that Mrs. Tifton will never recognize anything they decide to wear. Churchie tells them some of the family history as she looks for outfits that Skye and Jane could wear.

The children are amazed by the variety of treasures in the attic, each aisle leading to more. Soon it is all settled and the girls will all be wearing Mrs. Tifton's clothes to Jeffrey's birthday. Later that night, Rosalind calls a MOPS and tells the others the sad tale regarding Jeffrey's father. They decide while nothing can be done to fix the situation, they can help by not asking him about his father, and by helping to make his



birthday great. That night, each of the girls realizes that not knowing who your parent is must be much worse than losing a parent.

Analysis

Fear is an opening theme in this chapter as Jane is half afraid that Jeffrey had actually drowned Teddy as he'd threatened, and the myriad of consequences that could come from such an action go around and around in her head when Jeffrey doesn't show up that afternoon. Skye is also fearful, but her fear is that Mrs. Tifton has discovered their visit to his bedroom and Skye worried that she would forbid her son from ever seeing them again.

When Jeffrey shows up the next day, he assures them their fears were groundless, and tells them that Cagney intended to put a rope ladder in the tree outside his room as a means of quick escape if it became necessary. Jane adds that Jeffrey would also be able to escape, and while he doesn't understand why that might be the case, the comment foreshadows the likelihood that it will be in the near future.

Churchie's skills are expanded on in this section, baking gingerbread that is well received by all, and then later altering dresses to fit the Penderwick girls so that they can attend Jeffrey's birthday. She also plans to bake Jeffrey's birthday cake.

Harry is introduced again, this time as a friend of Churchie's and touted by her as being the man with Massachusetts' most sensitive nose as he manages to arrive on gingerbread day without fail. Harry comments that the Penderwick girls live the place up, and Churchie adds that it is about time, revealing that the Tifton household has been too quiet for her tastes.

Jeffrey's birthday is a surprise to the Penderwick girls. He purposely hadn't told them, hoping to avoid the discomfort of such an event, but Rosalind speaks for her sisters as well when she tells him they'd come if he wanted them to. He reluctantly agrees once all obstacles are removed, but the degree of reluctance on his part foreshadows a disastrous evening.

Waste and wealth are a theme that goes hand in hand in this segment as the Penderwick girls are taken up to the attic for the first time. There they discover lifetime's worth of stuff, discarded or replaced, or simply grown out of or bored with. There is more in the attic than the Penderwick family has ever seen, and each aisle is a new adventure into the Tifton family history.

Tifton family history is examined as they wander through the attic, Churchie revealing snippets of Brenda Tifton's luxurious past, and the events that led to their current and more reclusive lifestyle. As an only child, Brenda lived the life of a pampered princess, contributing to her inflated self-worth.

The Penderwick girls learn that Jeffrey has never known his father, and this information changes how they feel about their own situation. While they'd lost their mother years



previously, they'd had advantages over Jeffrey. He had never known his father, and has no idea who he was. The girls realize that being without their mother isn't nearly as bad as never knowing her to begin with.

Happiness is a growing theme as Churchie tells Rosalind that Jeffrey is as happy now as she's seen him in a very long time. Rosalind calls a meeting of the sisters later and tells them the story Churchie told her about Jeffrey's father, and they discuss ways to help foreshadowing once again the likelihood that the birthday celebration will be anything but.

Discussion Question 1

How does the issue of Teddy's visits get settled and by whom?

Discussion Question 2

Why doesn't Jeffrey want the girls to know about his birthday and what does Churchie do to ensure that the girls get to go?

Discussion Question 3

What happened to Jeffrey's father and why has he not been mentioned by Jeffrey so far?

Vocabulary

mortification, scrumptious, quiver, compliments, dismayed, resolutions



Chapter Eight: The Birthday Dinner

Summary

The next seven days are perfect. Somehow they manage to avoid Mrs. Tifton while Jeffrey shows them all of his favorite places. They explore the old springhouse; the bubbling stream; the Greek pavilion; the lily pond and old trash site. One day, when the weather is hot, they turn on the garden fountains and cool down in the water until Cagney comes and laughing, turns it off, warning them not to do it again. Hound continues to sleep with Batty each night, to her great comfort and she and Rosalind saw the bunnies almost daily. Jane practices soccer moves with Jeffrey and Skye every day, and continues to write her newest Sabrina Starr episode and Skye enjoys spending time with Jeffrey during the day time and sleeping in her perfect room each night. Rosalind spends as much time with Cagney as she can, learning about him by asking questions, and then writing it all down later to share with Anna. Then the day of the party arrives.

Mr. Penderwick takes several photos of the girls in an effort to get one good shot, and they go over the rules for their visit one more time. Mr. Penderwick assures Batty he'll take Hound out, and spoil him with hotdogs for supper later. The girls walk to Arundel and hide Jeffrey's gifts under the pavilion, having agreed to give them to him alone later, and head to the kitchen door to show Churchie the results of her labor.

Cagney opens the door and he, Harry and Churchie agree the girls look gorgeous. Jeffrey is in the dining room with Mrs. Tifton and her boyfriend Mr. Dupree. Nervously, the girls go through the door from the kitchen, and begin to advance across the long room. They walk forward more than thirty steps before Jeffrey notices and announces their arrival. Mrs. Tifton turns, giving them a look that none of the girls can adequately describe later. They stop and Mrs. Tifton inspects them as Jeffrey introduces them. When Mrs. Tifton compliments Rosalind's dress, Skye announces she'd purchased it at Salvation Army. Her sisters are introduced and Mrs. Tifton introduces Mr. Dupree. Jeffrey is instructed to show them his birthday present – a set of golf clubs and lessons at Mr. Dupree's private country club - a detail that Dexter makes of point of telling them. Jeffrey seats them as instructed next, putting Rosalind next to Dexter and Batty, still holding onto Rosalind's hand, next to her.

Jane is looking up and following her gaze Rosalind takes in the frescoes of men and women on the ceiling. Dexter points out that it cost a fortune. The walls are covered in stern looking portraits, and one is Mrs. Tifton's father, General Framley. Mrs. Tifton points him out fondly, assuring the girls that Jeffrey looks just like him. Dinner is served, and then Mrs. Tifton asks the girls about themselves mixing Skye up with Jane. Jane tells her she is a writer. Rosalind, Dexter guesses wants to be a model, and Skye's self-control vanishes. She insists none of them would have so little self-worth that they would indulge in fashion modeling and announces her intention to be a mathematician or an astrophysicist and Rosalind, she continues, remains undecided about her future,



but has strong diplomatic skills. Mrs. Tifton quips that Batty must surely be headed for Presidency, but Jane corrects her, insisting Batty will be a veterinarian.

Finally, Mrs. Tifton announces that she is glad they know what Jeffrey will do with his life and the girls almost blurt out musician, knowing his heart is there, but she tells them that they have it all planned. Jeffrey will attend military academy, then West Point, and finally be a soldier like her father. She toasts the General's photo.

Analysis

Perfection is a theme that opens this segment as described by the Penderwick girls themselves. Each has a reason for looking back on this particular week as the epitome of perfection. Of course perfection is subjective, so each person has a different reason for thinking the week was perfection, but all of the girls would agree that it was.

Batty's ongoing interest in Yaz and Carla and the care with which the rules are followed lead the reader to suspect that Batty may be less than careful at some point in the future.

Jeffrey's captivity by an evil person as written by Jane foreshadows the events of Jeffrey's birthday celebration during which they learn that Jeffrey's life is mostly planned to the end already, and none of it is really what he wants and he would love to escape it all.

Relationships and friendships are developed as each of the Penderwick girls creates friendships or relationships that enhance their lives. Rosalind becomes friends with Cagney, learning much about him by listening; Skye and Jeffrey have become friends as have Jane and Jeffrey; and Batty simply loves the idea that Hound has been able to keep her company each night – her friendship and connection with Hound growing as a result.

Dreams are also a theme as the hopes and dreams of some characters are explored. Cagney reveals his desire to be a History teacher and a basketball coach, and to one day settle down and raise a team of his own, while Jeffrey's desire is to have a career in music.

Promises are an early theme in this chapter as Dexter promises Jane that he'll have a look at her book when she is finished writing it. It is an idle promise made halfheartedly, but Jane believes it and is excited about the prospect while Rosalind knows the truth, hating the idea that Dexter likely wouldn't keep that promise and would hurt Jane as a result. It is clear that this is a promise Jane will want him to live up to in the near future. Jane continues to write a version of the life she lives in her mind blended in with the life she experiences each day.

Assumptions are also a theme as Mrs. Tifton meets the Penderwick girls for the first time, and assumes that they are of lower class and, therefore, lesser intelligence than



she, Jeffrey and Dexter Dupree are. This is a misconception that Skye tries to correct, but Mrs. Tifton's mind is made up.

Celebrations are a theme as Jeffrey's birthday is observed by a party to mark the occasion. Gifts were given to mark the day, some more thoughtful than others.

The botanical theme continues as Mr. Penderwick goes in search of 'Rudbeckia laciniata' during the time that the girls are at Jeffrey's party.

Manners and propriety are a theme as the girls meet Mrs. Tifton for the first time and find that she sees them as lacking on all fronts. In fact, she believes the sooner their influence over Jeffrey comes to an end, the better.

Opulence is also a theme as the Penderwick girls make their first introductions to Mrs. Tifton. After a journey of more than forty paces, they finally come face-to-face with Mrs. Tifton and her date, Dexter Dupree. Dexter brags to the girls about the cost of the extravagant frescoes on the ceiling as though he personally was responsible, and his intimate knowledge of Mrs. Tifton's finances foreshadows an increasing interest in the widow.

Discussion Question 1

How do the Penderwick girls look back on the week before Jeffrey's birthday; what feelings do they share and what experiences are responsible?

Discussion Question 2

How does Rosalind learn more about Cagney and what are the things that she learns?

Discussion Question 3

In which ways does either Mrs. Tifton or Mr. Dupree offend or insult the Penderwick girls and regarding which subjects?

Vocabulary

cherished, scaffolding, vigorously, destruction, compliments, characteristics



Chapter Nine: Shocking News

Summary

Jeffrey is morose once they escape the dinner party, calling it the worst party ever. Skye agrees and Rosalind blames part of it on the fact that they had upset his mother. Jane retrieves the gifts they bought him and for a moment, he forgets about the future. Hound had eaten the card, they explain. Rosalind and Jane give him a book of famous conductors and their orchestras; Skye gives him a camouflage hat like hers and Batty gives Jeffrey her favorite framed photograph of Hound.

They hear music and creep quietly along the veranda until they see Mrs. Tifton and Mr. Dupree, dancing a waltz above. Jeffrey tries to show Skye how, revealing he'd taken lessons, but it works better when he tries with Rosalind. They almost get caught when Jane and Batty tumble over a flower pot, but they manage to hide in time. Mrs. Tifton and Dexter discuss the Penderwick girls. She calls them vulgar and lacking in class, and worries about their influence on Jeffrey, while Dexter assures her that they will be gone in a short time and forgotten soon after. They continue to dance while below the girls fume and Jeffrey is embarrassed beyond recovery.

Dexter continues to soothe Mrs. Tifton, talking about Paris, and telling her about the vacation they could take together. He insists he wants to marry her and take her on a fabulous honeymoon. While she agrees that she wants to marry him, she is reluctant because of Jeffrey who listening below, gasps. Dexter assures her that boys eleven years of age are being accepted to the academy, suggesting he start his career as early as this year. Still, Brenda is reluctant. The girls hear noises that sound like kissing and when they finally go back in, Jeffrey excuses himself, unable to face them.

Later, Jane writes another section of Sabrina Starr's latest adventures, and then unable to sleep, she goes in search of someone to talk to. Skye tells her to leave, but Rosalind is still awake and they sit down on the bed together. Jane suggests their father adopt Jeffrey, but they both know that is impossible. Then Jane asks her if she thinks Dexter was serious about his offer to critique her writing wondering if it will be her only chance to have a professional look at her work. Rosalind assures her she will have many opportunities, but back in her room Jane wonders if perhaps Dexter is like Jekyll and Hyde. Perhaps he had a wise and kind side. She falls asleep and dreams about being a famous author.

Analysis

Gifts are an obvious birthday theme, along with the care and consideration used to select them. Jeffrey is given a set of golf clubs and the lessons that accompany them by his mother and Dexter, but neither adult takes Jeffrey into consideration when selecting this gift for him, or they would have realized that he has no interest in golf. The gifts



given to Jeffrey by the girls are much more considerate. He is given a book about music and conductors; a camouflage hat; and a framed photo of Hound – each gift carefully selected to reflect the things they had already learned about their friend.

Lessons learned and punishments are early themes as Rosalind is reminded that hearing rotten things about yourself is one of the ways that eavesdropping is punished when they inadvertently hear Mrs. Tifton reveal how she feels about them and their contact with Jeffrey.

The future and how it will unfold is an ongoing theme in this section as Dexter and Brenda discuss their future and the way that it will affect Jeffrey. Dexter is pushing for marriage while Brenda is still resistant, worried about the effect it might have on Jeffrey. Dexter is quick to suggest he leave for military school a year early to facilitate their wedding sooner. The future is also a subject of conversation between Jane and Rosalind later as Jane reveals how troubled she is about Jeffrey, suggesting even that they adopt him. Jane also questions Rosalind about Dexter's offer to critique her writing. While Rosalind knows the offer was made halfheartedly and without actual commitment, Jane tries to convince herself that Dexter is the first step on the ladder to her becoming a writer.

Travel is the subject of discussion as Dexter works to convince Brenda that life will be wonderful as soon as Jeffrey is gone and they are married. He promises her a honeymoon that would take them from Paris to Copenhagen; London to Rome and on to Vienna even, eager to set a date.

Loyalty is also a theme as Jane asks Rosalind if she thought that allowing Dexter to help her with her book would be disloyal to Jeffrey. Rosalind assures her that Dexter likely didn't mean what he offered her – mostly because he isn't a nice person, and she advises Jane to worry less about the future and get some sleep.

Discussion Question 1

What punishment comes from eavesdropping as far as Rosalind is concerned, and what do the girls learn about Mrs. Tifton and how she feels about them?

Discussion Question 2

What do the children hear about Jeffrey that stifles all thoughts of laughter and joking around, and how does Jeffrey respond?

Discussion Question 3

What does Dexter do particularly that upsets Rosalind, and how does Jane interpret his comments?

Vocabulary

astrophysics, humiliating, ferocious, camouflage, ridiculous, disloyal, dastardly



Chapter Ten: A Bold Escape

Summary

Jeffrey arrives for soccer practice as usual the next morning, and they are all acutely aware that everything has changed. The Penderwick's time at Arundel Hall is already more than half over and soon they'll be heading back to Cameron.

Mrs. Tifton seems to be everywhere at once as she prepares for the upcoming Garden Club competition, obsessed with winning and pushing Cagney to the brink of his patience. She seems to show up wherever the children are; complaining that whatever they are doing is a problem. For Batty it is the worst. The other girls hate Mrs. Tifton, but Batty is also afraid of her, telling Hound at night that when Mrs. Tifton walks by, flowers die. Usually, she is able to hide in time, but one day Mrs. Tifton catches Batty alone and the event is awful.

Batty tries convincing Rosalind to take her to see the rabbits, but Rosalind is busy and promises to take her later if neither Jane nor Skye will go with her. Batty goes outside and asks them, already knowing the answer is no and they don't surprise her. Even Mr. Penderwick is busy. Batty decides that she can go herself, and hurries to the carriage house, pleased that no one notices her leaving the yard. She knocks and there is no answer but that doesn't deter Batty. She knows what to do. The most important part is latching the gate because Yaz will run away if she doesn't.

They are sleeping on the rug and she calls out to them softly, unlatching the screen door and shoving two carrots inside. She sticks her nose in and to her horror, hears Mrs. Tifton come up the path behind her. She turns to see Dexter there as well, completely forgetting to latch the gate. Mrs. Tifton tells her to go back to the cottage, but Batty is frozen unable to move. Dexter wonders aloud if she is touched, tapping his temple significantly, or perhaps deaf. Mrs. Tifton raises her voice and just then the screen door hits Batty's back. Yelling 'Yaz No', she slams the door but Yaz is already out. Neither adult notices, but both comment how glad they'll be when the Penderwick family goes home. They leave, still seeking Cagney while Batty sits there in shock, realizing just how wrong she'd been to come. The only hope she has is to find Yaz and bring him home.

In the meantime, Rosalind has finished baking brownies and wraps a few to take to Cagney. She considers looking for Batty to take her along, but preferring time alone with Cagney, she sets off; following the same path Batty took in an effort to avoid Mrs. Tifton. This time, it doesn't work and she walks right into her. Mrs. Tifton is not amused, having run into the second Penderwick girl on her property, and says so. When Rosalind realizes that Batty had come ahead alone, she slips by them and hurries to the carriage house. Once there, she finds the carrots inside the screen door and Carla looking sad under the couch alone.



At the same time, Jane, Skye and Jeffrey are practicing with arrows when Hound, barking anxiously, clears the fence and runs for Arundel Hall in a panic. Afraid Mrs. Tifton will see him, the children hurry to search for Hound and run right into Rosalind who tells them Yaz is missing and tells them they have to find him before Cagney comes back. Skye tells her about Hound and Jeffrey quickly organizes a search.

Rosalind sees Yaz first, but before she can grab him, Hound comes around the corner barking and Yaz is gone in a blink with Hound on his trail. To make matters worse, Mrs. Tifton's voice comes from behind them as she sees Hound for the first time. Too far away to help Yaz, she can only watch as Hound avoids Jeffrey and catching Yaz, brings him back to them happily.

Mrs. Tifton, having broken a shoe and limping, is furious. They stand in front of the lump of fur that Hound dropped to hide it from her as Mrs. Tifton berates Rosalind, assuring her that their father will be hearing about this. She tells Jeffrey to come back to the house with her, but Jeffrey flatly refuses, saying he needs to help secure Hound first. Mrs. Tifton stomps off even angrier than before. When they try to get Hound home, he barks frantically again, and no one can understand what he wants until Rosalind realizes that Batty isn't with them.

Analysis

Time and the speed by which it often passes is the opening consensus among the characters, each thinking about how fast time is going by; the Penderwick girls are hardly able to consider Jeffrey's fate. Time is also an issue for Batty who wants to go and see the rabbits again, but no one seems to have the time to take her. As such, she makes a decision that will come back on her.

Fear and loathing are comparable themes as Batty combats her growing fear and the rest of the Penderwick girls suffer loathing where Mrs. Tifton is concerned. Batty is so fearful that she talks to Hound about it at night. The others do their best to avoid her, but lately that seems all but impossible. Batty's fear is confirmed when Mrs. Tifton catches her at Cagney's carriage house with the rabbits.

Rules are an important theme on several fronts in this segment beginning with Batty remembering the rules where the rabbits were concerned but breaking the rules and leaving the yard to go to the carriage house to see the rabbits alone. When she breaks this rule, she sets the wheels in motion for fate to even things out, and it does. Mrs. Tifton catches Batty alone, and Batty is so afraid of her that she forgets Cagney's number one rule - not to leave the screen door unlatched because Yaz knows how to push her way out. When Hound senses her distress, he breaks the rules by hopping out of his enclosure, but because Batty is in trouble, the trouble he will be in doesn't matter. Rosalind goes on Arundel Hall property to go to the carriage house as well, and like Batty, she is caught by Mrs. Tifton who tells her to get out immediately and take her younger sister with her if she saw her.



Mr. Dupree and Mrs. Tifton continue to talk down to and at the Penderwick sisters, beginning with - but not exclusively to - Batty. Rosalind is older and, therefore, knows how to take the acid that some adults sprinkle in their observations, but not Batty who even at four years old knows when someone is saying she's stupid, as Mr. Dupree had insinuated. This classless behavior foreshadows an eye opening experience on the horizon for Mrs. Tifton and likely Dupree as well.

Consequences are also an important theme as Batty believes that Yaz is dead because of her and Rosalind is carrying some remorse for not having kept a better eye on Batty. Another example of consequence is Rosalind's realization that Batty is not with them, and combined with Hound's obvious distress is enough to make Rosalind frantic.

Rescue is also an overall theme in this segment as Hound rescues Yaz, returning him to where Rosalind stands horrified, thinking that Hound had killed Yaz.

Discussion Question 1

How does Batty justify breaking the rules and what are the consequences of her actions both directly and indirectly?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Hound escape his kennel and what does he do once he is free?

Discussion Question 3

What are Skye, Jane and Jeffrey doing while Batty leaves the yard, and how are they alerted that something is amiss?

Vocabulary

consequences, triumphant, mortified, complacently, proficient, jubilant, renegade, witheringly



Chapter Eleven: Another Rescue

Summary

Batty looks everywhere for Yaz and when she decides that Yaz is gone for good, she does the only thing she can think of – she heads for their home in Cameron. She knows she has to go down because Cameron has no mountains, but beyond that she had no idea. She plods along unhappily, finding a small stream and even two horses standing by a fence. She picks clover for them, but then remembers Yaz and walks on.

Jeffrey and the girls search the grounds to no avail. Skye even checks the cottage, but there is no sign of Batty. Pale and frightened, Rosalind announces it's time to tell their father and collapses to the grass sobbing. Jeffrey asks if Hound can track and the girls feel a glimmer of hope. Rosalind hurries back to the cottage where Hound is behaving like a crazy dog. They put a stuffy under his nose and tell him to find Batty, which Hound didn't need. He is out the door in a shot and racing for the hedge tunnel.

Batty walks for a long time, and now hungry, tired and thirsty, she comes to a road. It wasn't a busy road; no cars had come by at all, but she knew she was not allowed to cross alone. Cameron seems like a very long way to go, and she wishes she could go back to the cottage. Then she hears barking and turns to see Hound. Soon after, she sees Jeffrey and her sisters waving and yelling, sure that they were telling her what a rotten thing she'd done. She grabs Hound's collar and tries to cross the road, but Hound digs himself in and refuses to move. Just then a car rounds the corner and Jeffrey grabs Batty before something terrible can happen.

Later, they tell their father the story, Batty snuggled safely in his lap. Batty wants to hear the story about Yaz again, but he stops her, needing to have a more serious conversation with his girls. He tells her that Mrs. Tifton had called, complaining about their behavior and his lack of control over them. Mrs. Tifton also berated him for the influence his girls are having over Jeffrey, who had defied her to help them. Skye tries to defend Jeffrey, assuring her father that it was likely Dexter that caused the rebellion.

Mr. Penderwick continues, telling the girls that since Jeffrey had saved Batty's life, he was linked to their family and in some cultures he would own a portion of her soul. Skye wonders aloud what Jeffrey would want with Batty's soul, and sleepily she pipes up that he could marry her. The others laugh until Mr. Penderwick settles them again, reminding them that they are guests. As such, he expected them to be on their best behavior and they promise they will be before heading for bed.

Analysis

Fear drives the opening of this chapter as Batty decides the only recourse she has left is to return to their home in Cameron, despite the fact that she isn't exactly sure how far away it is, or what direction. The idea that Yaz is gone for good and it is all her fault is



enough to keep her walking away from her family and everyone who loves her. Along with the fear is a bravery of sorts as she continues on her own, going farther away from her family than she has ever been alone before. Fear is also a theme where her sisters are concerned, all frantic that something has happened to Batty.

Responsibility is a strong theme as Rosalind realizes that she failed to live up to the promise she made to her mother that she would look after Batty. Her failure is so acute that she momentarily breaks down, unable to fathom the consequences of losing Batty.

Hound is once again revealed to be Batty's best and most loyal friend as he not only becomes frantic when he realizes that she is in distress, but also has no trouble tracking her down no matter where she goes. Hound's loyalties to Batty are so strong that he doesn't need the added help of the scent of a stuffed animal to tell him that he needs to find her, and he is hardly able to wait until the door is open wide enough for him to get out.

Reunions are another theme as Hound has no trouble finding Batty and leading her sisters and Jeffrey to her. Batty is overjoyed to see him, but within seconds is ready to run again when she sees the others coming. Hound isn't going anywhere however, the reunion for him is incomplete until the rest of the family arrives.

Rescue is the next obvious theme as Jeffrey snatches Batty off the road before she is hit by an oncoming car which does not diminish the fact that Hound found Batty first, thereby being the one to have truly rescued her.

Complaints are also a theme as Mrs. Tifton calls Mr. Penderwick to berate him about his daughters' behavior. She not only complains about their excursions in her garden, but also about the effect they are having on her son, turning him into a defiant young man. To make matters worse, she continues on, telling Mr. Penderwick that he has no control over his daughters.

Rebellion is a theme that encompasses Jeffrey's new behavior. He refuses to do as his mother asks, opting instead to help the Penderwick girls take Hound home and then afterward to find Batty. Jeffrey's newly discovered strength of character foreshadows changes in his future and makes it unlikely that he will attend military school, or continue to West Point afterward.

Loneliness is how Mr. Penderwick explains the possible reason that Mrs. Tifton is spending time with Dexter, despite his obvious greed and poor character. Mr. Penderwick recognizes the symptoms and draws attention to them, teaching his daughters that sometimes there is more to a situation than what is initially thought.

Discussion Question 1

What makes Batty run away? Where is she headed and what does she hope to accomplish by doing so?



Discussion Question 2

What obstacle does Batty come across, and what happens that convinces her that she should continue anyway?

Discussion Question 3

What does Mrs. Tifton say to Mr. Penderwick when she calls and what does he decide to do about it?

Vocabulary

affection, disdain, rebellious, sympathetic, influence, gentlemanly



Chapter Twelve: Sir Barnaby Patterne

Summary

Jeffrey is under considerable strain because of the threat of military school, so the girls decide not to tell him that he now owns some of Batty's soul or that she intends to marry him. Batty tells Hound all about it, but he won't talk.

The girls and Jeffrey stay away from Arundel Hall as Mrs. Tifton prepares for the Garden Club competition. Jeffrey manages to sneak out of the house, and shows the girls the pamphlet he found advertising Pencey Military Academy. The courses are listed on the back and aside from the marching band, there is no music offered. Jeffrey doesn't mind the idea of going away to school, especially if his mother plans to marry Dexter, but he'd much rather go to a school that at least has a music program.

Rosalind reminds Jane and Skye to stay on their side of the hedge, having been reminded by Churchie that the Garden Club will be coming soon. She also reminds them that Hound would be staying inside with Daddy, although everyone promises that they remember. Rosalind finally lets Batty take her to find dandelion leaves for the rabbits, leaving the others to play soccer. Jeffrey plays with intensity, punishing the balls they'd named Dexter and Pencey Military School. The play becomes so competitive that when the balls both wind up on the other side of the hedge, not one of them stops to think about the Garden Club or Mrs. Tifton. Both balls hit the urn together, sending dirt and Jasmine everywhere.

Skye is the first to sense danger, looking sideways to see a sea of high heeled shoes and loafers. Just before Jane can make a nasty reference about Dexter, Skye slaps a hand across her mouth and tries to nonchalantly ask Mrs. Tifton how the competition is going. Her face is a fearful combination of anger and humiliation, but she says nothing. Then, to everyone's surprise, Sir Barnaby begins to chuckle. He asks if the 'charming' children are hers, which only makes Mrs. Tifton's discomfort more acute and Skye can't help but admire her as she calmly tells him that Jeffrey is hers. Jeffrey introduces Skye and Jane, and as soon as she can, Skye drags Jane back to their side of the hedge, leaving Jeffrey to cope with the mess.

Later, as Rosalind is freeing the lightning bugs that Batty collected, she has a strange feeling that fate will bring something or someone special. She turns to see Cagney walking toward her. He brings word from Jeffrey that he's fine and Batty runs inside to grab the dandelion greens they'd foraged for. She also gives him a book of Civil War photos as an apology for letting Yaz out.

As Rosalind gets Batty ready for bed, Jane and Skye are using the rope ladder Cagney installed to visit with Jeffrey. He tells them how mad his mother was when Arundel received only second place in the contest while Mrs. Robinette had taken first, and then promises to see them at the cottage in the morning.



Analysis

Secrets are ongoing as a theme – the Penderwick girls keeping Jeffrey from learning that he is now part owner of Batty's soul, or that she intends him to be husband material in her future. While the information is kept from Jeffrey, Batty makes no secret of it where Hound is concerned, telling him all of her wedding plans including how he would be the dog of honor. The problem with secrets extends to Jeffrey as well. Having learned about his mother's intentions to marry Dexter, and Dexter's intentions to send him to military school a year earlier than she'd intended by eavesdropping, he can't very well approach her on the issue or argue his case for another school at least.

Status is a huge part of this segment's theme as Mrs. Tifton does everything she can to win the Garden Club competition. The importance of a win is only accentuated by the fact that the distinguished Sir Barnaby Patterne was announced as the judge. The event is so important to Mrs. Tifton that she is in the garden every day herself, pulling weeds and trying to coordinate and coax perfection out of her garden space.

Responsibility is high in Rosalind's mind as she instructs her siblings one more time as to the rules for the day. This theme is one that she makes sure they understand, and then goes through them yet again, just in case.

Competition is a strong theme as Jane, Skye and Jeffrey play soccer, using the physical activity as a release for the tension and pressure each feels. Using both balls, Jeffrey plays with abandon, his increased energy and fury driving Skye and Jane to up their games just to keep up. The fury with which the three children play soccer in conjunction with the stern and repetitive warnings from Rosalind as to their behavior for that day foreshadow certain disaster where Mrs. Tifton's Garden Club competition is concerned.

Disaster is an obvious theme, as each of the younger Penderwick girls and Jeffrey would agree that their behavior on the day of the Garden Club competition led to nothing but as Mrs. Tifton and a gaggle of high heels and penny loafers rounded the corner to find them in the midst of the garden, having knocked over a vase and spreading dirt and jasmine flowers everywhere.

Humiliation is the theme that pervades when Mrs. Tifton sees the mess made by her tenants and her son. Sir Barnaby Patterne and the rest of the Garden Club surround her as she stands there using all of her self-control to contain the intensity of her feelings.

A sense of humor is an important theme in this segment, balancing the fury and humiliation that Mrs. Tifton is experiencing. Sir Barnaby Patterne begins by chuckling when he sees the dirty mess that Jeffrey and the girls are in the middle of. While the Penderwick girls debate whether his laughter made the situation better or worse, it is clear that despite his laughter, Mrs. Tifton is still furious and barely controlled.

Admiration is a fleeting theme as Skye can't help but admire Mrs. Tifton's self-control, and her ability to continue to be polite as she tells Sir Barnaby that Jeffrey is the only child she personally lays claim to.



Sympathy is also a theme as the girls feel sorry for Jeffrey, knowing that they left him to deal with the full brunt of his mother's fury. The Penderwick girls' capacity for sympathy is revealed in Rosalind's behavior as she insists that the lightning bugs Batty caught be set free.

Music is revealed as the way that Jeffrey expresses himself, heard by Jane and Skye as they climb the rope ladder to ensure that he is okay. Jeffrey knows that Pencey Military School has no music program to speak of and his misery at the thought of having to go there is acute.

Discussion Question 1

What rules are the children reminded repeatedly to observe on the day of the Garden Club competition?

Discussion Question 2

What does the Pencey Military School boast about in their pamphlet, what part of the pamphlet causes Jeffrey the most distress and why?

Discussion Question 3

How does Mrs. Tifton fare in the Garden Club competition, and what likely added to the decision making process?

Vocabulary

distinguished, obsession, maneuver, ferocity, imprisoned, rigorous, synchronization



Chapter Thirteen: The Piano Lesson

Summary

With only three days left in the Penderwick family vacation, Jane sneezes and, feeling her head, Rosalind sends her up to her room to rest. Jeffrey arrives, finally free after his mother and Dexter leave for Vermont. Bored, Jeffrey invites Skye and Rosalind to come back to Arundel Hall with him, but Rosalind begs off to stay with Jane. Batty asks if she can come, and Jeffrey agrees.

In the music room at Arundel Hall, Jeffrey leads Skye to the grand piano sure she'll enjoy it because she enjoys math. He sits on the bench, patting the space beside him. Batty makes a fort as Jeffrey plays a segment of Bach for Skye, and then asks her if she hears the mathematical progressions. She doesn't. He explains that notes are like fractions. Jeffrey tries again and Skye imitates him, crashing and banging on the keys until he begs her to stop, tickling her off the bench when she refuses. Skye tickles him back, knocking over the piano bench and sending the sheet music flying. At that moment the door opens, but no one hears it over the laughter. This time, Sir Barnaby isn't there to lessen Mrs. Tifton's wrath.

Skye takes responsibility for starting the mayhem, and Mrs. Tifton has no doubt as to who is responsible. Skye looks around and sees that Batty has turned the music room into a fort. Jeffrey calls her out, telling her not to be afraid, and she crawls out with a small lion in each hand. Mrs. Tifton is livid and tells Skye that she and her sister can both leave. She adds that they are no longer welcome in her house and insists Jeffrey remain silent until they are gone.

Batty creeps over to Skye who marches out of the room after politely thanking Jeffrey for teaching her how to play the piano. Batty begins to cry as soon as they are out of the music room sure it is all her fault. Skye tries to send her to the kitchen where Churchie is but Batty wants to stay with her. They creep back to the music room door and listen as Jeffrey and his mother argue. Jeffrey confronts his mother about her plans to marry Dexter and she asks how he came by the knowledge, instantly blaming it on the Penderwick girls. She goes on to describe all of the Penderwicks as uncouth, conceited and rude, blaming Mr. Penderwick for not properly educating his children. When she speculates that their mother likely ran away, Skye can no longer remain silent. She storms across the room and insists Mrs. Tifton take back the things she said.

Mrs. Tifton yells for Churchie who comes running. She quietly suggests Skye go back to the cottage, but Skye doesn't hear her. Getting right up close to Mrs. Tifton, she tells her that she isn't good enough to understand anything about her mother because she would never have left if she hadn't died. Churchie again tries to calm things down, suggesting Skye tend to Batty and Mrs. Tifton agrees, asking Churchie to get Skye away from her. Skye goes over to Jeffrey and quietly apologizes. They bump fists, citing friends forever and Penderwick Family Honor together. Walking back in the rain, Batty stops Skye to



ask her if she is odd like Mrs. Tifton said. Skye assures her she is perfect, and taking her hand walks her back to the cottage.

Analysis

Weather is a theme that keeps the children inside with just three days left of their vacation. The rain makes playing outside impossible, and since Jane is already showing signs of flu, she is confined to her room.

Jane warns Jeffrey not to let Skye get him into any more trouble, foreshadowing that no matter what they do together that day, she will.

Music is an ongoing theme as Jeffrey takes Skye and Batty back to Arundel Hall to teach Skye how to play the piano. He assures Skye that Dexter and his mother are gone for the day, foreshadowing their early and unexpected return.

Music is described as a version of mathematics, and as such Jeffrey believes that Skye will catch on quickly, but Skye is less than enthusiastic when he tries to teach her.

Creativity is a strong theme in this section as Batty creates a fort using the items she finds in the music room while Jeffrey tries to explain the relationship between music and math. He plays chord progressions, asking Skye if she can pick out the math, but Skye isn't receptive. Finally, she pretends to understand, and then plays a discordant mess until Jeffrey begs her to stop.

Laughter is also a theme, the joyful sound overpowering the noise made by Dexter and Mrs. Tifton as they return early because of a flat tire. The laughter is cut short, and replaced by the unrestrained anger Mrs. Tifton unleashes.

Insults and verbal abuse are the means by which Mrs. Tifton offends Skye to such a degree that she feels forced to stand up for herself and her family. Irony is used here as Mrs. Tifton accuses Jeffrey of having no respect while she herself exhibits so little for him.

This chapter reveals a very human failing in that anyone is capable of anything, given the right or wrong conditions. The damage caused by verbal insults is explored here as first Skye is driven to rage when she hears Mrs. Tifton claim that her mother likely ran off when she tired of looking after the girls and later Batty asks Skye if she is odd after hearing Mrs. Tifton say that she was. It is clear from the reaction of the girls that these comments were spiteful and hurtful, not to mention unnecessary. Skye knows that going back into the music room is probably a mistake, but she is too angry to care about the consequences of her actions – a feeling that Mrs. Tifton most likely shares at this moment as she continues to criticize the Penderwick girls and their father's parenting skills.

Friendship continues to be a valuable theme as Skye and Jeffrey reaffirm their friendship for each other and acknowledge the Penderwick Family Honor.



Consolation is the final theme as Skye apologizes to Jeffrey before leaving, hoping to console him somewhat before leaving him to the lecture she knows he will get when she is gone, and also as Skye reassures Batty that she is not odd, and that in fact there is nothing wrong with her.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Jeffrey believe that Skye will have an easy time with learning to play the piano, and what method does he use to try to teach her?

Discussion Question 2

What brings Mrs. Tifton home early, and what does she discover when she returns?

Discussion Question 3

What finally pushes Skye over the edge emotionally, and what does she confront Mrs. Tifton about?

Vocabulary

progressions, fractions, discord, obnoxious, uncouth, conceited, sarcastic, presumptuous



Chapter Fourteen: A Midnight Adventure

Summary

Batty asks for yet another bedtime story and Rosalind agrees if she promises to go to sleep afterward. Rosalind still isn't sure what happened at Arundel Hall. Skye locked herself in her room the moment they returned and Batty looked as though she'd been crying and refused to leave Rosalind's side.

Rosalind tells Batty an abbreviated story, tucking her in after she falls asleep. Then she goes up to check on Jane, whose temperature seems to have gone down. She goes into her room, and is standing at the window, thinking about Cagney when Skye knocks on the door. She comes in and asks Rosalind if she's ever been so mad that she's lost control.

Rosalind can't remember being that angry in a long time, but knows enough to ask Skye if she'd gotten that angry. Skye admits she did, but with good reason and when she finishes explaining what Mrs. Tifton said about them, including the part about Rosalind and Cagney and how some young man will end her innocence one day, Rosalind can't help but agree, although she doesn't actually say so. Instead, embarrassed no end by the comments involving her, Rosalind asks Skye to leave her alone for a while. Rosalind is so upset that she even pretends to be asleep when her father comes in to say goodnight.

Later, Rosalind slips out into the night, wanting to see the gardens one last time by herself before they had to leave. She can hardly believe the beauty of the place, thinking of it as a fairy land and then chiding herself for starting to sound like Jane. She runs until she gets to the pond and collapses on a rock to look at the stars. To her surprise, she hears giggling nearby and a glance reveals a girl she doesn't know with a boy she doesn't want to consider. They kiss, and mortified, she tries to back out of the area, Mrs. Tifton's description of her ringing in her ears. Losing her balance, Rosalind knocks herself out when she falls, coming to in time to hear the girl and Cagney talking about her. Cagney is about to get her father when Rosalind manages to pull herself together, and then to her horror she begins to cry. Cagney introduces Kathleen, assuring her she has no reason to be jealous as Rosalind is just a kid. Then he picks her up and carries her home to the cottage. Kathleen chats happily as they walk but Rosalind is silent, her head on Cagney's shoulder, tears rolling down her cheeks.

Analysis

Batty continues to request stories be told, especially wanting the ones she'd been told a hundred times before about her mother and what she was like. This time, she asks to hear about her mother and her uncle Gordon and Rosalind obliges. Batty knows the story so well that Rosaline gauges when Batty is asleep by when she no longer chimes



in with the storytelling. Then she continues in her parental role when she goes to Jane's room to check on the status of the fever she was running.

Rosalind is pegged as being a lovesick adolescent by Mrs. Tifton, and the description stings, but Rosalind can't help but attribute some truth to the statement. She did find herself thinking about Cagney to distraction and finding ways to connect with him on any level she can, thinking he felt some of what she did as well. To discover Cagney out with another girl is beyond humiliating, especially when she isn't able to reverse herself out of the situation without notice.

Skye looks for validation when she approaches Rosalind and asks her about her control of her temper, insisting her temper was validated by Mrs. Tifton's comments but she would never have guessed that the issue stemmed from comments made about their mother. That was an unforgivable act in Rosalind's mind as well. When Rosalind learns that Mrs. Tifton hadn't confined her insults to their mother, how she feels about the comment is comparable to being "like having a pail of slimy rotten garbage dumped over your head."

Embarrassment related to eavesdropping seems to be an ongoing theme in this story and in this chapter Rosalind is the one who is embarrassed; caught inadvertently listening in on a private moment between Cagney and another girl. This is not dissimilar from the episode in which Jane, Skye and Jeffrey heard Mrs. Tifton and Dexter discussing marriage and military school. The incident in Arundel Hall with Skye however is different as Skye intended to eavesdrop, and therefore suffered the embarrassment of hearing Mrs. Tifton's opinion of their entire family.

Mrs. Tifton's comments foreshadowed the end of Rosalind's innocence and while she was right, the kind of innocence lost is not what she would have expected. Rosalind loses her innocent ideals where Cagney is concerned in the very moment that she sees him kissing Kathleen in the Tifton garden. From there on, her eyes are open. She would no longer be thinking about kissing Cagney, or moonlight walks with him.

Love is of course a building theme as Rosalind has considered the possibility that she was feeling something growing between them, although that isn't really the case at all. This chapter reveals that Cagney thinks of her as little more than a child, and has no interest in her beyond that according to what he tells Kathleen.

Discussion Question 1

What bothers Skye the most about her encounter with Mrs. Tifton, and how does Rosalind respond when she hears about it?

Discussion Question 2

How did Mrs. Tifton describe Rosalind, and how does Rosalind inadvertently put herself in a position to prove her correct?



Discussion Question 3

Which hurts worse when Cagney takes Rosalind home – her pride or her head and why?

Vocabulary

reprimand, deceitful, magnificent, delirious, bedraggled, constellations



Chapter Fifteen: The Shredded Book

Summary

Mr. Penderwick asks Rosalind about the previous night, and she insists she took a walk and fell. Skye comes in asking if Jeffrey has arrived yet and is the next one to ask about Rosalind's bruise. She continues to insist it is nothing which really means she doesn't want to talk about it. Jane comes in waving a notebook, announcing she's finished her book. She asks to type it up, and then notices the bruise and is the next to ask Rosalind about it, but Rosalind is saved from answering by the ringing phone. She picks it up and says hello, and then hands the phone to Skye.

Skye pales when she listens to Churchie's message that Jeffrey's mother and Dexter had taken him to Pennsylvania. Jane knows that means they've gone to Pencey Military Academy and her heart breaks. It takes time to explain it all to Mr. Penderwick. The girls begin with Pencey, and then tell their father about the General, West Point, and finish with the confrontation of the day before. Skye leaves out the part about their mother and what she'd said about Rosalind and Cagney, to Rosalind's deep gratitude. Jeffrey had told Churchie to tell Skye it wasn't her fault, but Skye doesn't believe her.

Skye tries to amuse herself, but the games aren't as much fun to play alone. She decides to check and see if Jeffrey is back, and seeing that Mrs. Tifton's car isn't there, she decides to wait. She is just beginning to get hungry when Jane shows up and offers to stand watch for her so that she can go back to eat. Skye goes back to the cottage and soon after Mrs. Tifton's car pulls in. Jane makes herself small and watches as Dexter, then Mrs. Tifton and finally Jeffrey himself gets out of the car. She waits as they go into the house, making sure the coast is clear before she gets up to leave, but then Dexter unexpectedly comes back out to get the luggage. Jane wrestles with the two versions of Mr. Dupree in her head, and taking a leap of faith she reveals herself in order to show him the finished copy of her book, hot off the printer. A sneeze reveals her before she can announce herself, and Dexter doesn't look at all happy to see her. In fact, he is surprised when she asks his professional opinion. Wanting to be rid of her, he opens her book and in ten seconds announces she's misspelled a word and her work is lousy, adding that she should go away.

Back at the cottage, Jane tears her story into tiny pieces, one page at a time. Skye tries to get her to open the door, wanting to talk to her about Jeffrey, but Jane allows the door to open only a crack to hear Skye's plan before closing it again. Later, when her father comes in and asks, she announces she is talentless and will never write again. Then she tells him about her encounter with Dexter. Her father listens and then tells her that Dexter's publishing career is limited to a car magazine and he likely wouldn't know a thing about books or writing. He manages to convince her that Dexter is the one who is clueless, and then tells her that even writers need their sleep, tucking her in.



Analysis

Secrets are the opening theme in this chapter as Rosalind does her best to avoid the questions her father has for her the following morning. Mr. Penderwick admits that as far as teenage girls go, he's clueless. When he mentions her mother, Rosalind begins to cry and he asks if her mother would be ashamed of anything she'd done, but Rosalind assures him she wouldn't be. She continues to avoid answering questions from her sisters as well.

Embarrassment is an understandable emotion as Rosalind would rather hide in her room than run into Cagney again, realizing that she is just twelve years old and there is no reason that Cagney would see her as anything more than a child. Her behavior the night before is so acutely embarrassing to her that she can't even share this information with her siblings.

Churchie calls and tells them that Jeffrey was taken to Pennsylvania the night before and Rosalind can forget her embarrassment when she sees the look on Skye's face. Nothing in their lives is as critical as the future that Jeffrey is facing, so all of the Penderwick girls experience empathy as a strong theme.

Truth and explanations are necessary next as the girls must fill their father in on the events of the past few days. After hearing about Mrs. Tifton's comments, although abbreviated, Mr. Penderwick assures his daughters that Jeffrey simply needs to explain the truth to his mother, but the girls insist he's tried. Skye draws on an experience from her younger years to convince her father that sometimes even parents who love their children can be obstinate and unwilling to listen to how they feel about some things. Mr. Penderwick finds himself apologizing for an issue that occurred six years previously.

Guilt is the primary emotion Skye feels thinking about Jeffrey and his predicament. She replays it in her mind over and over, telling herself that if she hadn't been wrestling with Jeffrey or yelled at his mother, perhaps things would have gone differently.

Spying is the next theme as Skye sits behind a rose arbor in the hope that Mrs. Tifton would return with Jeffrey. She brought books and math to pass the time, but before long hunger creeps in. Lonely and bored, she sits near the driveway until Jane appears. Their father had recommended a food break and grateful, Skye gives Jane instructions and leaves.

Pride is a theme that Jane can't help but feel as she thumbs her first copy of *Sabrina Starr Rescues a Boy*. She opens the cover, thinking about how good it looks and reads from the first page. When the opportunity to present her book to Dexter appears, Jane convinces herself that he must be a good person inside, and approaches him with the first copy of her book. He barely looks at it before giving her his 'educated' opinion – it's crap. He points out a spelling error and tells her the writing is lousy, proving his character to be self-involved and insensitive at best and without a shred of the alternate personality Jane hoped was inside.



Devastated is how Jane's character feels as she makes her way back to the cottage. Dexter had set himself up in her mind as an expert or at least as someone who was knowledgeable in the publishing world and his opinion of her work mattered to her. She is so disturbed by Dexter's anticlimactic assessment that she takes her book and shreds it, one page at a time.

The value of assessments are important but are not critical or necessarily always correct, Mr. Penderwick assures Jane when he talks to her. The parenting theme is strong here as he assures Jane that her work is wonderful and that she is a creative and talented author. This is just one of the many ways in which Mr. Penderwick proves his ability as a parent, contrary to Mrs. Tifton's opinion, by encouraging and supporting the things that are important to his girls.

Discussion Question 1

What single question reassures Mr. Penderwick when he talks to Rosalind the following morning, and how much does she reveal to him or her sisters about the events of the previous night?

Discussion Question 2

How does Dexter undermine Jane's efforts and why is his opinion so important to her?

Discussion Question 3

What does Mr. Penderwick tell Jane that convinces her that Dexter's opinion doesn't count?

Vocabulary

confessions, coincidence, illustrated, appalled, ferociously, provisions



Chapter Sixteen: The Runaway

Summary

Skye listens to the opera coming up through the floor from her father's room downstairs, waiting for him to fall asleep so that she and Jane can go and check on Jeffrey. She is looking out the window when a rubber tipped arrow hits the screen in front of her. Jeffrey steps out where she can see him, and she goes downstairs to let him in calling for an emergency MOOPS as she passes her sisters. She lets Jeffrey in, telling him they were just about to come to him when he informs them he's run away. Skye is once again convinced it is all her fault despite Jeffrey's assurances to the contrary.

They go upstairs and after invoking the Penderwick Family Honor, Jeffrey tells them his plans to go to Boston. He tells them about his trip to Pencey, and how he tried to convince his mother that he didn't want to go there, but that she just won't listen, and had left him no choice. He tells them he has money for the bus trip there, and a collection of rare coins from his grandfather to help him until he is on his feet. He admits that part of him hopes he'll find his father because he knows that his mother and father met in Boston. Jane immediately offers to keep him company on the way, and Skye jumps in claiming that as the older of the two of them, she should be the one to go. When Batty adds that she wants to come also, Rosalind calls them to order.

After more discussion, Rosalind agrees the Jeffrey has little choice but to run away, however she assures them that no one will be travelling with him. Instead, they can make plans to visit him in Boston and Jeffrey can come to see them in Cameron as well. After convincing Jeffrey to stay in Batty's room for the night, they all retreat to bed. Rosalind tells Hound to guard Batty so that he'll settle down, and soon everyone is asleep. She touches her head, thinking about Cagney and Kathleen and knowing she'll never be able to face him again. Then, she finally dozes off.

Analysis

Sorrow and loss are the emotions generated by the Italian opera Skye listens to through the floor as she remembers how her mother loved the opera, surmising that her father was missing her too. These are emotions that each of the Penderwick family members experiences where their mother/wife is concerned, revealing that their loss is still acute and painful.

Skye's character evolves as she learns difference between courage and temper and begins to understand the consequences of losing her temper. She realizes that perhaps she could have handled things better than she did. She knows now that the consequences of her temper are not always confined to her alone. Jeffrey sees it as courageous because he is afraid to stand up to his mother the way Skye did.



Rebellion is a theme that most characters agree is understandable under the circumstances when Jeffrey announces his intention to go to Boston although the idea of communication with his mother is floated and rejected as having been tried repeatedly and failed at.

The author notes how association with Jeffrey's circumstances affected the Penderwick girls to such a degree that they wanted nothing to do with the state of Pennsylvania from that day forward.

Family is an increasingly important theme as Jeffrey expresses an interest in knowing who his father is and perhaps finding him in Boston. This builds expectation that a search and possibly some answers are in Jeffrey's future.

Friendship is also a strong theme as Jeffrey not only entrusts his plans to the Penderwick girls but also feels safe enough to stay there overnight. The girls are so invested in helping him that a fly in the ointment is certainly being foreshadowed.

Rosalind's ability to give Hound what he needs by way of direction and expectations clearly expressed reveals again her adult-like understanding of children as for the most part the needs of dogs are not unlike those of toddlers or young children. Both require understanding of the need for rules and boundaries, and her role as the surrogate mother in this family is clearly established in her behavior throughout, with small exceptions that involve Cagney.

As this segment develops, Rosalind is acutely aware of her more adult role and feels isolated from the others who view life as a great adventure while she must consider the realities. She can't help but wish for more adult companionship which brings Cagney and Kathleen to mind. This is Rosalind's Achilles heel. Her embarrassment is so acute that she removes all physical traces of him and tries to purge her memories.

Discussion Question 1

What reasons does Jeffrey give for running away from home?

Discussion Question 2

What could be done differently by Jeffrey, if anything to resolve this situation and if nothing, how likely are his plans to succeed and why?

Discussion Question 3

How has Rosalind decided to deal with the situation with Cagney, and what could she do differently that would be better, if anything?

Vocabulary

fantasizing, discipline, associating, judgment, provisions, memento



Chapter Seventeen: The Next-to-Last Day

Summary

Hound wakes Batty before the alarm, wanting to go in to see Jeffrey, but when Batty refuses and heads downstairs, he follows. She lets him out for his 'morning rituals' and he begins barking wildly. Outside, Mrs. Tifton calls out to her. Batty is frozen until she hears a smack and a yelp. She opens the screen door to let Hound in and hugs him to reassure him.

At the door, Mrs. Tifton says she is looking for Jeffrey and asks to come in but Batty locks the door instead. Calling her a naughty girl, she asks where her father is but Dexter reminds her Batty can't talk. Mrs. Tifton remembers how Batty called to Hound and Batty isn't sure what to do. Then she remembers Skye, and standing up straight, she faces Mrs. Tifton and tells her that she is able to talk but that her father had taught her that she could choose who she talked to. She tells Mrs. Tifton that she doesn't like her. Mrs. Tifton begins to lose her temper again, and just as Dexter is about to intervene, Mr. Penderwick comes downstairs.

Batty tells him they hit Hound and Dexter quickly assures him she's exaggerating. He introduces himself before going on to say Jeffrey is missing. Mrs. Tifton hands him the note Jeffrey left behind saying he'll never go to Pencey. Mr. Penderwick assures them they haven't seen Jeffrey, but Mrs. Tifton pleads with him to ask the girls if they know where he's gone.

He asks Batty, but she doesn't answer so Mr. Penderwick invites Mrs. Tifton and Dexter to come in before he heads upstairs with Batty and Hound. He stops at Rosalind's door first, just as the alarm goes off. Hound pushes in and barks at the closet. Skye and Jane join the commotion trying to look innocent. He asks them about Jeffrey and Rosalind says they can't answer. He asks if Jeffrey is safe and then realizes where Jeffrey is. The girls beg him not to tell Mrs. Tifton.

Mr. Penderwick decides to tell Mrs. Tifton that he's learned Jeffrey is safe, and that he'll call her when he knows more, adding that if they talk to Jeffrey, they should tell him he isn't alone. At that moment Jeffrey appears ready to handle the situation himself and realizes this is his chance to try to make her understand. He goes down, Mr. Penderwick and Jane following behind at his request.

Mrs. Tifton rushes to Jeffrey and holds onto him, and even Jane is touched but then Mrs. Tifton's anger bubbles back up. She insists they head home immediately where she will decide what punishment is appropriate, but Jeffrey refuses, insisting they talk first. She balks again, warning him, but Jeffrey plunges on. He tells her again that he will never go to Pencey and desperate to make her understand, he reminds her of a story



she once told him about her father trying to teach her how to swim despite her strenuous objections. She had almost drowned and never did learn how to swim.

Totally confused now, and feeling vulnerable, Mrs. Tifton insists that Dexter take her home immediately. Dexter half carries her to the door and the girls quickly say goodbye to Jeffrey before he follows them home. All they can do now is pack and get ready to go home. When that is done, they mope around until Mr. Penderwick suggests going away gifts for Jeffrey. They each make something meaningful, and spend the day hoping he'll show up, but he doesn't. They don't dare go over there. Later, Jane goes over but as they suspected, the rope ladder is gone. All four girls are acutely aware that they are leaving in the morning.

Analysis

What example set by Skye does Batty follow when she gets up and finds Mrs. Tifton and Dexter at the kitchen door and in what way?

Discussion Question 1

What does Jeffrey remind his mother of, and what might make her respond the way that she did?

Discussion Question 2

What example set by Skye does Batty follow when she gets up and finds Mrs. Tifton and Dexter at the kitchen door and in what way?

Discussion Question 3

How do the Penderwick girls pass the time on their last day in the Arundel cottage, and what do each contribute?

Vocabulary

mournfully, rituals, exaggerating, suspiciously, inspiration, impressive



Chapter Eighteen: Good-bye for Now

Summary

The next morning the car is loaded and only Harry is there to say goodbye, offering them a bag of tomatoes to take with them. Jane tells him they left presents for Jeffrey on the porch and though Jane wants to wait a little longer, Mr. Penderwick says it is time to go. They all look like they are about to cry, so Rosalind suggests they send a postcard to everyone when they get home. Mr. Penderwick promises to call Arundel Hall and talk to Churchie if they haven't heard from Jeffrey in a few days. They wave goodbye and pull away. Rosalind checks the route she'd marked the night before on a brand new map. Before they get to the first turn, Mr. Penderwick realizes he's forgotten his glasses, giving Skye and Jane one last chance to see if Jeffrey is there.

Sitting there, Rosalind realizes how foolish she'd been in avoiding Cagney. She was much too young to have him as a boyfriend, and he was too much of an adult to be interested in her that way. She regretted that she'd hid from him the last time he'd come and knew she would for a long time. A voice says hello and she turns to see him standing beside the car as cheerful as always. She almost falls over in her hurry to get out and he inspects the bruise. Cagney even brought the rabbits for Batty to say goodbye to, and she calls Batty out, glad for the distraction. Then he hands Rosalind a pot with a Fimbriata rose of her own, to commemorate the fact that she'd helped him with his. She thanks him, overwhelmed and grateful.

Mr. Penderwick returns with his glasses and pulling herself together, Rosalind tells Cagney to thank Kathleen for helping her out of the pond, but Cagney tells her that he and Kathleen didn't work out. Her communication skills were poor unlike Rosy's, he tells her and recommends she keep that skill for when she gets a little older. He kisses the top of her head and for a moment, she feels uniquely special, and then he kisses Batty as well. She puts the rose in the car and they all pile into the car once more.

They are just under way again when Skye shouts stop, seeing Churchie jogging towards them. She reaches them and the questions begin immediately. All she can say at first is that she is really going to miss them. The questions about Jeffrey he can answer himself, she says, as he'd cut through the hedge to see if they'd left yet sending Churchie ahead in case they had. He finally catches up, apologizing for coming so late, but assures them that everything is fine. He explains how the situation has resolved. His mother intends to marry Dexter but he doesn't have to go to West Point or Pencey if he doesn't want to; he is allowed to go to boarding school in Boston, his mother even promising to drive him herself. Jeffrey is even allowed to begin courses at the conservatory. Everyone is excited for him.

They talk about visiting back and forth and after congratulating Jeffery, they pull out once more. This time, Batty asks her father to stop, promising it will only take a minute. He stops and she gets out, calling Jeffrey back. She talks to him for a minute and then



takes off her wings and gives them to him. Jeffrey puts them on and Batty runs back, ready to leave. She explains that she is letting Jeffrey borrow them and says thanks and goodbye for now. They all liked that and repeating it, they begin the journey home.

Analysis

Goodbyes are the opening theme as the Penderwick family prepares to depart Arundel and head home to Cameron. The girls are surprised that only Harry is there to say goodbye to them.

Regrets are also a theme as each of the children is experiencing their own regrets as they pull away from the cottage. Rosalind regrets her behavior with Cagney and her foolishness where Kathleen was concerned; Skye and Jane regret that they were unable to say goodbye to Jeffrey; Batty regrets that she didn't have a chance to see the rabbits one more time before leaving; and all of the children regret having to leave Arundel Hall already.

Friendships are a strong theme in this final segment as each of the characters has an opportunity to express the way they feel, providing they have the nerve to do so. Rosalind is able to say goodbye to Cagney, knowing that she will always treasure the rose bush he gave her, and the kiss he plants softly on her head; Skye and Jane are able to express how much they'll miss both Jeffrey and Churchie; Jeffrey is able to say goodbye, and assure the girls that he will visit them from school; and Batty gets a chance to say goodbye to the bunnies, and then also to loan Jeffrey her wings, assuring herself that she will see him again.

Relationships that evolved during the three weeks of the Penderwick vacation are brought to a climax in this final segment as the characters all have an opportunity to say goodbye to the new friends they've made. While in the beginning, Skye and Jeffrey started out butting heads, they grow to be close friends as do Jane and Jeffrey. Rosalind realizes that she isn't ready to be part of an adult relationship, and is able to be happy with the warmth and sincerity of the friendship she has with Cagney. Batty learns to trust Cagney, Jeffrey, Churchie and even Harry, learning to separate friends from enemies. She also learns to share, giving her most prized possessions to Jeffrey before they leave – her wings and a framed photo of Hound.

Beginnings and endings permeate this segment as the Penderwicks begin the journey home and end their vacation; Jeffrey begins to stand up to his mother and ends any likelihood of going to Pencey; Jane begins and finishes a new Sabrina Starr book; and Mrs. Tifton begins a new life with Dexter, agreeing to be his wife and ending her life alone.

Good bye for now is how they choose to leave each other, foreshadowing more adventures between them, and acknowledging that this goodbye is temporary as the promise to return is implied.



Discussion Question 1

What does Rosalind realize as she is sitting in the car with Batty, waiting for her father, Skye and Jane to return, and what wish does she make in that moment?

Discussion Question 2

How many false starts do the Penderwick family have before they actually leave Arundel and what are they?

Discussion Question 3

What resolutions does Jeffrey come to with his mother, and what is the final gift he is given before the Penderwick family leaves?

Vocabulary

miserable, resolutely, concussion, precisely, conservatory, consciences



Characters

Jane Penderwick

Jane is ten when this story starts and her father describes her as 'the short one'. She is a girl who has a great deal of energy and a wonderful imagination. She is the second daughter of four born to Martin and Elizabeth Penderwick, and is an intelligent, well-adjusted young lady who loves to play soccer. She is the school teams' center forward and the coach from middle school is already coming to watch her play. When Jeffrey learns about this, and the fact that Hound punctured her ball, he generously loans her his.

Jane also writes stories in her spare time all of which center around a main character named Sabrina Starr. Sabrina is the heroine who rescues a variety of things in trouble beginning with a baby sparrow and most recently, a young boy named Arthur.

Jane is a bit of a dreamer which is a terrific quality for a writer. She is frequently trying out lines and looking for scenarios that she can work into her next story. Jane is determined that she will be a writer one day when she grows up.

Rosalind Penderwick

Rosalind is twelve as this story starts and has just graduated from sixth grade at Wildwood Elementary and is looking forward to going into the seventh grade this year.

Rosalind is a practical young lady, older than her years in her many ways because she has had to assume the responsibilities of wrangling her siblings and helping her father to keep everything moving along smoothly since the death of her mother four years earlier.

Rosy is beginning her teenage years and as such her hormones are running wild as is evident when she meets Cagney, Arundel Hall's groundskeeper. She allows her feelings to run away with her until she inadvertently discovers Cagney kissing another girl in the gardens one evening. Embarrassed, she tries to back away, but ends up falling into the pond, and banging her head on a rock. Afterward, she avoids Cagney right up until they are leaving for home at which time she realizes her folly.

Luckily, Cagney values their friendship and comes to say goodbye to her and the rest of the family.

Skye Penderwick

Skye is eleven years old as this begins and is the only child in the family that has blue eyes. Skye is the child in the family who most looks like her mother. She herself doesn't



often see the resemblance beyond the fact that they share the same colored hair and eyes. Skye is an explorer who loves the freedom of wandering around without restraint.

Skye also loves math. She often does algebraic equations in her spare time - something most children avoid at all costs. She has a logical mind that enjoys the challenges of math often seeing the problems as to easy.

Skye tends to act more out of impulse than after careful thought and reflection, but she is a good sister and a more loyal friend can't be found. Skye and Jeffrey become fast friends in this story. When Jeffrey announces his intention to run away to Boston, Skye immediately offers to accompany him just so that he gets there okay.

Batty Penderwick

Batty is just four years old when this story begins and loves to wear orange and black butterfly wings. A little bit shy, Batty is the youngest of the family.

Batty is terrified of Mrs. Tifton from their very first meeting onward. She freezes up and refuses to speak making Dexter think that she is mentally unwell, and Mrs. Tifton think that she is deaf. Eventually, Batty takes a page from Skye's book and stands up to Mrs. Tifton, telling her that she doesn't speak to her because she doesn't like her and her father told her that she doesn't have to talk to people she doesn't want to.

Batty doesn't remember her mother, who died when she was just a baby, but she loves to hear the stories that Rosalind tells her, asking most nights for multiple stories although she knows them all by heart.

Batty makes friends with Cagney's rabbits, Yaz and Carla and soon afterwards she begins to trust Cagney as well.

Hound Penderwick

Hound is a lovable, clumsy, big and black dog who makes the unfortunate mistake of eating the map the Penderwick family was following after Batty put his sandwich in it to keep it safe.

Hound is Batty's protector. He loves her to distraction, and just the idea that something might be wrong is enough to have Hound on the offensive. When Batty is left behind by Jeffrey, Skye and Jane, and inadvertently ends up in a pen with a bull, Hound senses her distress and comes to her rescue, but by the time he gets there, Batty is fine, so he doesn't intervene. When Batty is first cornered by Mrs. Tifton in front of Cagney's house however, she is in such distress that Hound feels it and again manages to free himself from his pen to go to her rescue. This time, she is running away, and heading home because she'd done something she considered unspeakable - she'd let Yaz get loose and lost him. Hound manages to find her, and keep her from going any further.



Jeffrey Tifton

Jeffrey is about Skye's age and has straight brown hair. His face is full of freckles and first meets Skye in the hedge tunnel.

Jeffrey is reserved and quiet most of the time, but after three weeks with the Penderwick girls, he is able to stand up to his mother and insist that he not attend Pencey Military School or West Point despite her wishes. Jeffrey plays piano and wants to be a composer one day.

Jeffrey learns to be more confident after watching Skye defend herself and her family against the slanderous comments made by his mother. He tells her later how courageous he thinks she is, although by then she's already decided that she had allowed her temper to run away with her.

In the long run, this example benefits Jeffrey as he manages to alter what appeared to be a very bleak future in which he was headed to a military academy. Now, instead of that, he has a music conservatory in his future.

Cagney

Cagney is the gardener at Arundel Hall and is the first person that the Penderwick family meets when they arrive. He is a boy in his late teens who has light brown hair and looks nice to Rosalind. He is wearing a Red Sox cap and is gardening at Arundel Hall when the Penderwick's meet him.

Talking to him, Rosalind learns that Cagney is saving his money so that he can go to college, with an eye to eventually becoming a history teacher. He hopes to coach basketball on the side and once he has accomplished all of that, he hopes to buy a country house and raise enough children to form a basketball team. During that period, he hopes to write Civil War books in his spare time.

Cagney dates a young lady named Kathleen, but only briefly as she is not a good conversationalist.

Mrs. Brenda Tifton

Mrs. Tifton is in charge of Arundel Hall and has been since the General and Mrs. Framley, the former caretakers passed. Brenda left home at a young age, not too long after her mother died. What was a life of opulence and parties turned to a house of silence and mourning.

Unable to cope with the situation, Brenda enrolled in a small Boston college. There, she met her future husband and they were married before she turned twenty. The General insisted that she return to the Tifton name after her marriage failed after just one year



and she returned pregnant. The name Tifton came from the General's mother who was a Tifton. No one beyond Brenda knows who Jeffrey's father is or how to find him.

Mrs. Tifton has always presumed that her son Jeffrey would follow in her father's footsteps, attending military school and then West Point, but it takes Jeffrey running away from home before she realizes that it just isn't what he wants.

Brenda is dating Dexter Dupree and while Jeffrey isn't fond of him, they plan to marry.

Harry the Tomato Man

Harry is the farmer who is manning the tomato stand that the Penderwick family stops at to get directions. A regular fixture in the region, Harry not only gives directions but also provides the family with a sack full of ripe tomatoes as well.

Harry loves Churchie's gingerbread and manages to be a regular fixture in her kitchen when she is baking.

Sabrina Starr

Sabrina is the heroine of the books that Jane likes to write. The main character Sabrina rescues something different in each story.

Sabrina has saved a baby sparrow, a turtle, a groundhog, and in her most recent escapades, she saves a boy by using a hot air balloon to free him from the tower he is being kept in.

Mrs. Churchill (aka Churchie)

Churchie is the Tifton's housekeeper. She is a comfortably plump woman who has short gray hair and a friendly and open manner.

Churchie is the kind of woman who is as comfortable in the kitchen as she is with children. She can bake, cook and sew and enjoys doing all of it.

When Churchie first meets the Penderwick girls, it is when she invites them over to have gingerbread. During that visit, she mentions that she will be making Jeffrey's birthday cake which inadvertently leads to him inviting them to come to his birthday dinner. Since the event is a fancy occasion, Churchie takes the girls up to the attic where she helps them select dresses from the racks of clothing discarded over the years by Mrs. Tifton. She spends the next week altering the clothing they chose.



Anna

Anna is the grounding force that Rosalind writes blow-by-blow descriptions of their vacation for, wanting her to know everything. It is clear that they are best friends.

Rosalind writes to her every day, and relies on her advice and insights. It is Anna's advice that helps her to strengthen her friendship with Cagney by telling her that the most valuable conversational tool she has are her ears.

Mrs. Robinette

Mrs. Robinette is part of Mrs. Tifton's Garden Club and comes over with her son Teddy.

She is the winner of the Garden Club competition this year after the judge comes across Jane, Skye and Jeffrey covered in mud and in the center of spilled Jasmine from the urn they'd knocked over.

Teddy Robinette

Teddy is a bully, who Jeffrey describes as the kind of person who would enjoy flushing someone else's homework down the toilet.

Jeffrey ensures he doesn't visit again by telling him that if he did, he would tell his mother that he cheated on his math homework most of the previous year.

Dexter Dupree

Dexter is Mrs. Tifton's gentleman friend. He is a handsome man, but one who knows how handsome he is.

The General

The General is Mrs. Tifton's father and is the role model that she holds Jeffrey up to.

Sir Barnaby Patterne

Sir Barnaby Patterne is the judge for the Garden Club competition. He is a distinguished man. He has a surprisingly nice face and a smile that is friendly and reveals many laugh lines. He has a son who plays soccer in England.



Symbols and Symbolism

Fimbriata

The Fimbriata is a large white rosebush that grows next to the driveway and which Mrs. Tifton wants to have removed because it scratched Mrs. Robinette's car the last time the Garden Club committee met at Arundel Hall. The rose bush was planted by Cagney's uncle thirty years previously who wrapped it in burlap every winter to keep it from dying.

The rose symbolizes a continuity of family that Cagney is determined to preserve.

MOOPS

A MOOPS is the acronym the Penderwick girls have for a 'Meeting Of Older Penderwick Sisters'. It symbolizes a unity between the sisters and invokes a trust and secrecy that they swear to keep from all others.

MOPS

A MOPS is the acronym the Penderwick girls have for a 'Meeting Of Penderwick Sisters', which includes all of the girls while adding an 'O' in the middle changed their meeting to one of older sisters only.

This version of the Penderwick sisters' meetings are G rated to include Batty but is still kept secret from all others and symbolizes a unity and trust between the sisters.

Penderwick Family Honor

Penderwick Family Honor is the oath the children swear before each meeting to "keep secret what is said, even from Daddy, unless you think someone might do something truly bad."

The Penderwick Family Honor is a tradition taken from a book about a family named Bastable, and implies that once invoked, can not be broken without forfeiting the family's honor.

Hedge Tunnel

Cagney created a hedge tunnel so that Jeffrey could escape the older women from the garden club when they came.

The existence of the hedge tunnel implies the need for escape and symbolizes freedom.



Carriage House

The carriage house is where Cagney lives on the property of Arundel Hall.

It is a symbol of the wealth of the family, allowing for a residence kept simply for staff or service people.

Tomatoes

Harry the Tomato Man sells tomatoes from his stand by the road, and gives the Penderwick family directions to Arundel Hall.

The tomatoes are a symbol of friendship and Harry offers them as gifts to both the Penderwick family and Churchie.

Golf Clubs

A set of golf clubs is what Jeffrey gets from his mother and Dexter for his eleventh birthday.

They are symbolic of wealth and opulence, a gift that included instruction in Dexter's private and exclusive club and couldn't be further from what Jeffrey wants.

Brownies

Brownies are a favorite of Cagney's and Rosalind makes a batch so that she can bring him some.

They symbolize her feelings for him, and her ability to take care of him, even if she is too young to do so yet.

Carrots

Carrots are what Batty likes to bring to Cagney's rabbits.

The carrots are a symbol of Batty's love for the rabbits, and for all creatures.

Soccer

Soccer is the sport that Jane excels at, and Skye and Jeffrey help her practice every day.

It is symbolic of team effort, cooperation and spirit.



Piano

Jeffrey plays piano and has one in his bedroom. It is symbolic of his wish to become a composer one day and offers him a source of escapism from his day to day life.

Frescoes

On the ceiling of the dining room where Jeffrey's birthday dinner is held are an assortment of frescoes that Dexter assures everyone cost a fortune.

They are a symbol of a life of opulence and serve no purpose beyond being artistic and revealing that the family had money to burn, at least at the time of their creation.

Gingerbread

Churchie makes gingerbread for everyone when Mrs. Tifton is busy elsewhere, covering them with whipped cream and strawberries.

It is symbolic of her love - soft and warm inside, sweet and freshly concocted for her friends.



Settings

Cape Cod

Cape Cod is where the Penderwicks typically spent their summer vacation time.

Cameron, Massachusetts

Cameron is where the Penderwicks live.

Berkshire Mountains

The Berkshire Mountains are where the Penderwicks went for three weeks of their summer vacation when they were unable to go to Cape Cod.

Arundel Hall

Arundel Hall is the name of the place in the Berkshire Mountains where the Penderwicks will spend three weeks in August when Cape Cod is booked up. Arundel is run by Mrs. Tifton who is described as a beautiful woman.

Arundel Cottage

Arundel cottage is a creamy, buttery color of yellow with pink roses climbing around the front porch, surrounded by large shade trees. The cottage is snug and small, but warm and charming inside and out. There is a study off the living room which Mr. Penderwick claims as his.

The cottage is found by taking the driveway to the left, following it beyond the carriage house, past sunken gardens on the left and a Greek pavilion on the right. Driving through the hedge that forms a boundary, the yellow cottage is ahead by a mere few hundred yards.

Framley

Framley is the name of the town the Penderwick family is supposed to pass on their way to Arundel.

Stafford Street

Stafford Street is the street on which Arundel is located.



Wildwood Elementary School

Wildwood Elementary School is where Rosalind went before she graduated into the seventh grade last year.

Hedge Tunnel

The hedge tunnel is how Skye gets into Mrs. Tifton's garden and how Jeffrey gets out.

Carriage House

The carriage house is where Cagney lives on the property called Arundel Hall.

Boston

Boston is where Brenda Tifton enrolled in college as a young lady, and also where she met and married Jeffrey's father before she was twenty years old.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is where Skye tells Mrs. Tifton that Rosalind got the dress she wore to Jeffrey's birthday party.

Sistine Chapel

Dexter compares the frescoes on the ceiling at Arundel Hall to those painted by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel.

Pencey Military Academy

Pencey Military Academy is where Mrs. Tifton and Mr. Dupree plan to send Jeffrey as soon as he turns twelve years old. It is the same academy that his grandfather attended.

West Point

West Point is the military installation that Mrs. Tifton and Dexter fully expect Jeffrey to attend after he finishes at Pencey Military Academy.

New England Conservatory of Music

The New England Conservatory of Music is where Jeffrey would most like to go to school, or at least attend a school close enough so that he could attend weekend classes.



Themes and Motifs

Gardens and Gardening

In this story, a great deal of credence is given to the creation of the perfect garden - one worthy of first prize in the Garden Club competition. Cagney is the one who is in charge of tending the gardens, and Mrs. Tifton routinely reminds him that his time is short. She makes no secret of the fact that this year she wants to win first prize.

Cagney takes his position seriously, doing all he can to bring the gardens up to the standard Mrs. Tifton wants. He carefully plans using color and presentation together, knowing how important winning the Garden Club competition is to Mrs. Tifton. The garden is just a symbol of status to Mrs. Tifton however, and she cares little for the plants or flowers themselves as is evident when she insists on the removal of a Fibriata rose bush because it had scratched someone's car the year previously. Rather than cut it back, she insists it be removed, despite thirty years that Cagney's uncle had lovingly tended it, and nursed it through each winter. Cagney refuses to kill it simply because Mrs. Robinette couldn't drive.

Cagney's love for the gardens is evident immediately when he is horrified by her decision. Skye hears the conversation, and to her Cagney sounds just like her father did when Hound had eaten one of his rare orchids. Rather than dispose of the rose as Mrs. Tifton suggested, he plants it near the cottage carefully.

The gardens themselves are a collection of statues, fountains, urns and flower beds all carefully planted to create beauty around every corner. The mansion is located in the middle of the gardens and is surrounded by flowering hedges.

The Penderwicks have trouble finding Arundel Hall at first, but some directions from Harry the Tomato Man help them to find their way. He only talks to them for a moment, but in that brief time, he warns them to stay out of Mrs. Tifton's gardens, and to especially keep control of Hound. When the Penderwick family first pulls into the lane leading to the mansion, Jane can't help but compare the sight to a 'dwelling fit for kings'.

Cagney is obviously knowledgeable where flowers and gardening is concerned, able to hold his own in conversation with Mr. Penderwick who is a botanist. They hit it off immediately, and agree to converse about the native flora in the future. He directs them up the driveway, telling them to go into the formal gardens, implying still more beauty to come, and past the sunken gardens and Greek pavilion and then on past the boundary hedge revealing an extravagant and sprawling garden landscape.

Even the cottage is surrounded by beauty. The front porch is a riot of pink climbing roses, and the yard around the cottage has lots of trees that provide shade.



Rosalind can hardly believe the beauty of the gardens, going there late one evening before their vacation ends to experience it one more time. She runs past the marble thunderbolt man and is stopped in her tracks, seeing the gardens as a fairyland.

Rabbits and Responsibility

Batty learns the basics of responsibility after Cagney allows her to befriend his pet rabbits, Yaz and Carla. At first, they are merely a way to break the ice with Batty who is shy when she first meets people, but Batty is so taken with the rabbits that Cagney allows her to visit them daily.

Batty is first invited to come over with Rosalind. It is a privilege that is only extended to her, because according to Cagney, the rabbits get frightened when there are too many people around. Rosalind and Batty meet Cagney at ten o'clock as planned, and the first thing they see is the Beware of Attack Rabbits sign next to his screen door. They go inside and Cagney produces some parsley to help coax the bunnies out from under the couch.

After introducing his bunnies to them, they immediately go to Batty - an honor, he assures her and tells her they can come and visit anytime. From that day on, Batty and Rosalind go to visit the bunnies almost every day. After a week and a half of daily visits, Rosalind is unable to take Batty to see them one morning, and Batty isn't prepared to wait. After asking her sisters if they will take her, and being refused, she sneaks out of the yard to see them herself.

Batty knows the most important rule where the rabbits are concerned. She is not to let them out and to make sure the screen door is securely latched. Unfortunately, everything goes terribly wrong then.

First, Batty is trapped by Mrs. Tifon and Dexter who come up the path unexpectedly, and she is so afraid that she forgets to latch the screen door. Yaz escapes into the garden while Mrs. Tifon berates her for being there. Terrified, Batty says nothing until after they leave. Then she begins to hunt for Yaz, but Batty is unable to find him.

Batty searches through all of the gardens, looking under bushes and flowering hedges, hoping to find Yaz before something happens to him, Cagney's warnings ringing in her ears. She knew immediately that she'd made a terrible mistake in coming to see the rabbits alone, and now, because of her, Carla would be lonely forever and it was all her fault. Yaz would likely be eaten by a fox or an eagle.

Unable to find Yaz, Batty is so distraught that she can't face her family or Cagney, so she decides that her best course of action is to find her way back to their home in Cameron. Her fear of facing Cagney and her family is much larger than her fear of the unknown, so she sets out on her own, heading in the direction of Cameron, and hoping that by the time the rest of the family comes home, they will have forgiven her.



While Batty continues morosely homeward, Rosalind runs into Mrs. Tifton on her way to Cagney's carriage house, and learns that Batty had already gone before her. As soon as she can get free, Rosalind goes to Cagney's and discovers the open screen and the missing rabbit. Rosalind can only guess what happened, but begins to look for Yaz immediately. Hound, who had gotten free, finds Yaz first and to the horror of everyone watching, snatches Yaz off the ground and brings him back to them. Thankfully, Hound doesn't hurt Yaz, just putting him on the ground in front of the others happily.

Before they can return Hound to his pen, he tugs in the opposite direction, barking furiously. It is only then that they realize Batty is missing, and the hunt for her ensues. Batty has managed to make her way to a road, and stands at the side knowing that to cross would be breaking another rule. Fortunately, Hound finds her before she does, but the experience teaches her a lesson she won't soon forget about responsibility and following the rules.

Temper vs. Courage

When Mrs. Tifton comes home to find that Batty has turned her music room into a large fort and Jeffrey and Skye are rolling around on the floor laughing, she is appalled. She throws Skye and Batty out, Batty dissolving into tears as soon as they are out of her sight.

Skye is worried that they have gotten Jeffrey into trouble and creeps back to the door to listen, but what she hears stuns her. Mrs. Tifton not only tells Jeffrey that Skye is a 'sneaky, sarcastic blonde' but continues to add that she and the rest of her family are 'uncouth, rude and conceited'. She cites that this is the result of parents who refuse to do their jobs.

Skye might have ignored all of it, but Mrs. Tifton doesn't stop there. She comments that Rosalind is behaving like a lovesick puppy and that one day someone will end her wide-eyed innocence. Even Batty is a subject of her scorn. She claims that there is no one who could convince her that there wasn't something wrong with Batty, citing her 'tacky' wings and her way of staring at people without speaking to them. The worst of it however was when she told Jeffrey that their father was a pushover and that no one knew where their mother was - but she had likely run off after getting tired of caring for all those girls.

Skye bursts into the room and corrects Mrs. Tifton, no longer afraid or intimidated by her. She assures her that her mother didn't run off but had actually died, and insists that Mrs. Tifton take her nasty comments back. Skye is so angry and determined that Mrs. Tifton becomes fearful, and calls Churchie in to help her as Mrs. Tifton shrieks that Skye was spying again. Skye admits that she was, but only to ensure that Jeffrey was okay. Mrs. Tifton tries to backtrack when she learns that the Penderwick's mother had died, but Skye isn't ready to let up. She accuses her of never listening too Jeffrey. Batty is crying again and Churchie finally manages to convince Skye to take her and leave.



Later, Jeffrey tells Skye that what she did was brave, but Skye corrects him, assuring him that what she'd done wasn't brave - it was merely her losing her temper. The fact that she had done so really bothers her. In fact, she talks to Rosalind about it afterward, but even though Rosalind agrees that her outburst was justified, Skye is embarrassed by her behavior.

The outburst has a positive effect on both Jeffrey and Batty however, both remembering Skye's reaction and finding courage in it themselves. The event helps Jeffrey to stand up to his mother and convince her not to send him to military school, although Jeffrey has to run away to get her attention at the outset.

Skye's outburst helps Batty as well. Batty remembers how her sister stood up for what was right, and when Mrs. Tifton and Dexter come to find Jeffrey, Batty finds the strength to stand up to Mrs. Tifton, telling her that she is not a mute or stupid as she and Dexter suggested. She simply didn't like Mrs. Tifton, and her father had always told her she didn't have to talk to people she didn't like.

Parenting Pros and Cons

This story shows two very different parenting styles - one in the Tifton's household and one in the Penderwick's. In the Tifton household, there is little in the way of feelings expressed beyond anger or frustration. Jeffrey is expected to do as he is told, and to be seen and not heard. Jeffrey is told what his future will be and how he is expected to get there, regardless of his own wishes. As such, Jeffrey is anxious and angry about his future. He has tried to tell his mother over and over again that he has no interest in military school or having the military as a career. What Jeffrey really wants to do is attend a school of music, and perhaps become a conductor one day. He is so distraught about his mother's plans for his future that he decides to strike out on his own for Boston. There, he hopes to attend the school of music instead of the Military Academy that his mother has in mind for him.

In the Penderwick household, child rearing takes on a different approach. While both family units have only one parent, Martin Penderwick believes in encouraging his children to discover themselves and their talents. He is positive and nurturing, telling anyone who asks that he has four very talented daughters. Even when they become discouraged, or allow others to discourage their efforts as Dexter had done with Jane, Martin knows that with a bit of encouragement, his girls will flourish, and they do.

Martin takes the time to listen to what his girls have to say. Their opinions and ideas matter to him, and he encourages their growth on all fronts. He challenges them to be creative and intelligent, allowing them a reasonable amount of freedom in return for their respect and trust. As such, his girls are well-adjusted and emotionally stable despite having lost their mother years earlier. Rosalind takes on a nurturing role with her siblings, sharing the responsibility of raising her sisters with her father.



Though Jeffrey and the Penderwick sisters are all intelligent, well-mannered children by most standards, Jeffrey has been deprived of the kind of parenting that he would thrive under. Their influence over Jeffrey during the three weeks that they spend in the cottage is profound. When they first meet Jeffrey, he is hiding in the hedge tunnel, looking for a way to avoid his mother. After three weeks of Penderwick influences, Jeffrey not only stands up to his mother, and even outright defies her on one occasion, but also finds the courage to tell her what he really wants from life and continues to tell her until she finally hears him. By the time the Penderwick family heads home, Jeffrey's life has changed. He will not be attending the Pencey Military Academy the way his mother had planned, and will not be attending West Point in the footsteps of his grandfather. Instead, he will attend school in Boston where a course at the musical academy can be added.

Growing Up

When Rosalind meets Cagney for the first time, everything changes. Despite the fact that she has been the surrogate mother to her three siblings for the last four years, her level-headed and responsible nature goes out the window when she sees Cagney is concerned. Hormones take over and Rosalind finds herself daydreaming in a manner that is much more like her sister Jane than she usually is.

Rosalind and Cagney get along well, and start spending more and more time together, Rosalind orchestrating more time with him whenever she can. When they are apart, she daydreams about the possibilities of a future with him. She learns all that she can about him by asking him questions about himself, and relays that information to her friend Anna, including any new events of interest. She even takes the time to learn more about the Civil War - a subject of great interest to Cagney, but all of that comes apart when Skye tells her what Mrs. Tifton said about her.

Mrs. Tifton calls Rosalind a lovesick puppy who follows Cagney around and adds that someday a man will end her wide-eyed innocence. Too embarrassed for words, Rosalind wants to do no more than hide in her room. She refuses to talk to anyone else about the situation, and resolves to avoid Cagney if she can.

The situation becomes even worse when Rosalind slips out at night to walk in the gardens alone, and while lying down and looking at the stars, she hears giggling nearby. She looks around and notices a girl standing near Cagney. She tries to justify the fact that he is with her, but when he kisses her, Rosalind wants to sink under the earth to avoid notice. Unfortunately, that doesn't work either. Instead, as she tries to back out quietly, she loses her balance and stumbles into the pond, cracking her head on a rock and temporarily losing consciousness. When she comes to, Cagney is about to head to the cottage to get her father, but Rosalind's embarrassment is already acute enough. Rather than wait for her father to come, she struggles to her feet, protesting that she is fine. Cagney picks her up and carries her back to the cottage, while Kathleen walks alongside, chatting happily.



She hides from Cagney after that, unwilling and unable to face him. Soon after, they are in the car and ready to leave when the reality of the situation hits her. The simple truth was that she was only twelve years old, and that Cagney was too old or she was too young to have him as a boyfriend. She realizes that she should have been grateful just to have such a great friendship, and just as she is about to mourn the fact that she didn't get a chance to say goodbye, he arrives.

Behaving with as much dignity as she can muster, she even tells Cagney to thank Kathleen for her help. Cagney admits he is no longer seeing her as she isn't as easy to talk to as she is. He tells her to hold onto that skill for when she begins dating.



Styles

Point of View

The Penderwicks is a story told in an omniscient viewpoint in which the story is told by an omnipotent being (the author) who knows the intimate minds of all of the characters rather than by any single character. By telling the story in this manner, the author is able to reveal details that the individual characters might not know regarding the past, present or even future activities or occurrences.

Each character is given a distinctive voice, and by writing in this style the author is able to explore sub plots that may or may not be connected to each other. For example, some of the subplots that exist include the story that Jane is writing; or the fact that she practices soccer daily as she is an important member of the soccer team at school. Another sub-plot is Jeffrey's upcoming transition to boarding school, and the difference opinions he and his mother have as to where he should go. Mrs. Tifton is also entered in the yearly Garden Club competition, with expectations that she will win this year. Rosalind develops a crush on Cagney and Skye is revealed as having aspirations to become an astrophysicist.

Each of these sub plots is well formed and well-rounded, without confusions in their stories, or timelines.

Language and Meaning

The Penderwicks is a story about four children, their widowed father, Martin, and the vacation they take at Arundel cottage. Martin is a botanist who tends to insert Latin in his everyday conversation, including even in his instructions to his daughters. They are so used to his English/Latin combinations that for the most part, they are able to decipher his instructions. While Mr. Penderwick uses Latin, Batty also has a language of her own. Her language comes from her young age however, and Rosalind easily deciphers things like porridged instead of foraged; Cangaroo instead of Kangaroo and bandoned instead of abandoned.

Mr. Penderwick also cites the Latin terms for the flora and fauna he sees along the way, enjoying the discovery of *Linnaea borealis* along the drive for example, but he is looking for a species called *Cyripedium arietinum*, he informs Cagney when they meet.

The children are enthusiastic about their new vacation place, Jane even convinced that her bedroom contained a famous author before her. Batty immediately loves the door between her and Rosalind's bedroom, a secret passage she can use if she needs it. Skye loves her room too, but for reasons that are different from the others. Skye loves the clean perfection of her room so much that she doesn't want to unpack anything and ruin the overall effect. Even Mr. Penderwick finds a room that is perfect for him.

Structure

The Penderwicks is a story of 159 pages which is further divided into 18 chapters. Each chapter is further labelled by a few words that describe the main theme therein. The chapters range in length from five to eleven pages with an overall average of eight or nine pages.

The first chapter, for example, is titled 'Boy at the Window' and it encompasses the Penderwick's trip to Arundel Hall and briefly reveals that Jane notices Jeffrey in the window of the main house. Skye is convinced that she imagined him, but the fact that she'd seen him gives her ideas for her next Starr story. The second chapter has Skye and Jeffrey meeting in the Tunnel Through the Hedge while the third chapter explains what a MOOPS is. Each chapter that follows is mostly self-explanatory in that the brief titles reveal the main plot of each chapter.



Quotes

Maybe we'll discover something wonderful while we're lost.
-- Jane (chapter 1 paragraph 7)

Importance: This comment is made by Jane when her sisters are becoming impatient and worried about being lost. Rather than feel that way, Jane chooses optimism, believing instead that fate might play a hand in life.

You and your sisters better stay clear of Mrs. Tifton's gardens."
-- Harry (chapter 1 paragraph 38)

Importance: Harry's warning to Rosalind foreshadows just how much trouble she and her sisters will get into where Mrs. Tifton's gardens are concerned.

I'm sure that some famous writer has been here before me.
-- Jane (chapter 2 paragraph 34)

Importance: Jane is so thrilled with the atmosphere in her room that she is quite sure that someone who shares her enthusiasm for the written word must have shared this space as well. It bodes well for her continuing adventures of Sabrina Starr.

My mother's calling me and you're in my way.
-- Jeffrey (chapter 2 paragraph 54)

Importance: Jeffrey's first meeting with Skye is not the most pleasant experience, and in fact necessitates that a formal Penderwick apology be given which acts as the beginning of a wonderful friendship between Jane and Jeffrey.

Tell me how Mommy gave me my name.
-- Batty (chapter 3 paragraph 13)

Importance: Batty asks Rosalind to tell her one more bedtime story. A frequent request is one that involves her mother, as Rosalind's memories are all she has of her mother. The stories have become such an important part of Batty's life that she knows them by heart.

All swear to keep secret what is said here, even from Daddy, unless you think someone might do something truly bad.
-- Rosalind (chapter 3 paragraph 30)

Importance: This statement is the Penderwick Family Honor code, established by the children and adhered to whenever they have MOOPS or MOPS meetings giving them a sense of family and cohesion that establishes confidence and strength.



I remember Mommy singing that song about all the little chocolate chips goin' to cookie heaven and I remember putting batter in Jane's hair.

-- Skye (chapter 4 paragraph 3)

Importance: Skye tells Rosalind that she doesn't remember their mother teaching her how to stir the batter, but she shares what she does remember. These memories are important as they are all that is left of a mother who loved them.

Your little sister won't talk to me.

-- Cagney (chapter 4 paragraph 14)

Importance: Cagney meets Batty for the first time, but she doesn't talk to him. Rosalind comments that she is shy and won't talk until she gets to know you. In truth, Batty had been told by her father that she could pick and choose who she talked to, and later on in the story she will be accused of being deaf or slow witted, neither of which is true.

He gored a man right in this very field.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 5 paragraph 8)

Importance: This quote is important as it reveals just how much information can change as it travels from one person to another. Each person adds their own embellishment or improvement. The truth of the story was that a man who wandered into the field with the bull was scratched on the leg, and had his camera trampled on.

She was hiding behind a bush when we were at the gate.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 5 paragraph 25)

Importance: Jeffrey, thankfully, is paying attention to where Batty is, as neither one of girls knew where she'd disappeared to. The fact that she'd climbed under the gate is one they don't know at this point.

You swore not to tell anybody what happened.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 6 paragraph 3)

Importance: Jeffrey teases Batty lightly, chastising her for telling Hound their secrets, but Batty insists that she tells Hound everything, and he's good at keeping secrets.

She takes care of me because Mommy died when I was a tiny baby.

-- Batty (chapter 6 paragraph 8)

Importance: Batty answers Jeffrey when he asks her if she misses her mother, but the truth is that Rosalind is all she remembers.

And Jeffrey will be able to escape that way, too.

-- Jane (chapter 7 paragraph 6)

Importance: Jane is responding to the comment Jeffrey made that Cagney is putting a



rope ladder in the tree outside his window for them. Now, not only will they be able to escape when necessary, but Jeffrey can also escape.

Mother is out again, in case anyone cares.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 7 paragraph 9)

Importance: Jeffrey has just invited the Penderwick family over for gingerbread, but adds that his mother is out, knowing that the girls are much more likely to come if she isn't there than if she is.

Please and thank you to everything, keep your napkin on you lap, and don't argue with or make faces at Mrs. Tifton.

-- Jane and Batty (chapter 8 paragraph 22)

Importance: Jane and Batty recite the rules for the evening together, knowing them by heart and wanting Rosalind to know that they remember.

Wow, you girls look great.

-- Cagney (chapter 8 paragraph 30)

Importance: Cagney's simple observation is one that Rosalind will remember fondly for some time, although his comment was innocent in nature. It is also a testament to Churchie's sewing capabilities.

That was the worst birthday party ever in the history of the world.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 9 paragraph 5)

Importance: Jeffrey discusses his birthday party with the Penderwick girls who try to minimize the degree of disaster that his birthday dinner truly was.

Whenever I try, she starts talking about how wonderful my grandfather was and how much I remind her of him.

-- Jeffrey (chapter 9 paragraph 13)

Importance: Jeffrey is responding to the Penderwick girls when they ask him about going to Pencey Military Academy, and whether or not he's told his mother that he doesn't want to go.

Cagney says the bunnies expect me in the mornings now.

-- Batty (chapter 10 paragraph 7)

Importance: Batty asks Rosalind to take her to the bunnies, having established a habit of going there each morning, but this morning Rosalind refuses, busy with other things and when her sisters also refuse her, Batty sneaks off to Cagney's house alone.

Run along back to the cottage, Bitty or whatever your name is.

-- Mrs. Tifton (chapter 10 paragraph 23)



Importance: Mrs. Tifton can't even get Batty's name right, mostly because she doesn't care to, and her mannerism is so abrupt that Batty is fearful of her.

I checked all around the carriage house and my house and with Churchie.
-- Jeffrey (chapter 11 paragraph 8)

Importance: Jeffrey helps the girls look for Batty who is headed back to Cameron alone because Yaz got free and it was her fault. She can't bear to face Carla or Cagney, not to mention her own family.

Can he track people?
-- Jeffrey (chapter 11 paragraph 17)

Importance: Jeffrey comes up with the brilliant plan of getting Hound to find Batty. The attachment Hound has to her is enough to have Hound on her trail in a heartbeat.

Where boys become men and men become soldiers.
-- Skye (chapter 12 paragraph 6)

Importance: Skye reads from the Pencey pamphlet that Jeffrey found and brings to them, bereft that they offer next to nothing for music classes.

I know a kid whose sister goes to boarding school in Boston just so she can take viola classes at the New England Conservatory of Music on Saturdays.
-- Jeffrey (chapter 12 paragraph 12)

Importance: Jeffrey expresses his true desire which is to go to a school that either offers music classes or is close enough to somewhere that does.

Mother let me come out of my room this morning, and then she and Dexter left for Vermont to shop for antiques.
-- Jeffrey (chapter 13 paragraph 11)

Importance: Jeffrey makes it over to the college after he and the younger Penderwick's chased a soccer ball into the gardens during the contest judging, and his mother had been very angry - even more so when she discovered that she didn't get first place.

I needed some air, so I took a walk, fell into the lily pond, and hit my head on a rock.
-- Rosalind (chapter 15 paragraph 2)

Importance: Rosalind is too embarrassed to admit the truth behind her slip and fall, and doesn't want to face Cagney either.

The Gods of fate may be kind."
-- Jane (chapter 16 paragraph 35)

Importance: Jane says this to Jeffrey when Jeffrey talks about finding his father, giving him encouragement despite the fact that without his name, address or anything to identify him by, the odds are astronomically against success.