

# **Sourcery Study Guide**

## **Sourcery by Terry Pratchett**

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# Plot Summary

Sourcery by Terry Pratchett is the story of the wizards that live on Discworld and the struggle that ensues when a new sourcerer shows up. Rincewind, a most inept wizard and coward, will travel the world and face unimaginable odds, against his wishes, in order to save the dirty streets of Ankh-Morpork.

Wizardry is for men, and sourcery is for the gods and so sourcery has long been banned since it will destroy the world if used. Ipslore the Red was the eighth son of a wizard. He became a wizard and had an eighth son as well. The eighth son, a wizard squared and so a sourcerer, was only a baby when Death, the skeleton that shows up when you are close to death, came for Ipslore. Ipslore captures himself in his staff to cheat Death and leaves the staff for his son, naming his son Coin. Death allows this because to destroy the staff and claim Ipslore's soul would be to kill Coin, and Death can't change destiny in that way since each man has his time.

Many years later the Archchancellor of the Unseen University, leader of the wizards, is due to be selected, and receive the Archchancellor's hat. Rincewind, librarian assistant and least of wizards, notices that something isn't right but can't convince the other wizards of it. The Archchancellor's hat, being powerful in itself, calls for a thief to come and steal him away so that he won't be put on the head of the sourcerer that the hat knows is coming.

The sourcerer, Coin, is a boy of about ten years old. He challenges one of the older wizards to a duel. Coin is able to kill him in a single stroke of magic and demands to be made Archchancellor. There are some of the wizards that are uncomfortable about this but all are too scared to say anything, since the boy's magic is so strong.

In a bar in Ankh-Morpork, Rincewind is having a drink when a young woman, Conina, a thief, approaches Rincewind and produces the Archchancellor's hat. The hat is able to communicate with sourcerers telepathically and orders Rincewind to help them, not realizing what an incapable wizard Rincewind is. While retreating they are attacked on the boat and the hat is captured. When they get to Al Khali, Conina and Rincewind are captured, luckily, by the same men that have the hat. The leader of these men is Creosote.

The wizards have become easily swayed by Coin and his power and decide they will take over the world since they will be better suited for ruling than normal men. They start to kill and use great magic that is flowing from Coin. The trouble with magic is that it will also change the very fabric of the universe and can be dangerous. One of the wizards sees that Coin is in a room at a later time and that he is curled up crying while the staff is looking over him. The staff follows the wizard, and before he has a chance to tell anyone, kills him.

The wizards have Ankh-Morpork under their control and head to the other cities of Discworld. The wizards make it to Al Khali and Rincewind, Conina, Creosote, and a



incompetent barbarian named Nijel flee out of the city then try and decide what to do. Rincewind makes his way back to the Unseen University, and Conina, Nijel and Creosote take a magic lamp and force the unwilling genie to take them to Ankh-Morpork. The young sourcerer, Coin, has done away with the gods of Discworld not realizing that this will start the apocalypse, being the end of the world.

Rincewind decides he can't stop the sourcerer with magic and puts a half brick in a sock and begins to swing it wildly over his head. He gets on his magic carpet and flies to the top of the sourcerer's tower. The little boy is shocked that the man holds only a sock and a brick. The boy begins to argue with the staff, and a battle between the two ensues with the staff attacking the little boy. Rincewind alone tries to help. The boy destroys the staff, and Death appears to take Ipslore the Red's soul as Death takes everyone eventually. Rincewind and Coin are able to stop the apocalypse and let the gods have Discworld back. In the struggle to save Discworld, Rincewind is caught somewhere in another dimension and is unable to return. Things return to normal. Coin is still a source of great power, which is still dangerous on Discworld and so he makes a world all his own and disappears into it. Conina and Nijel leave together to live happily ever after, and the librarian keeps what is left of Rincewind's hat knowing that a wizard will always return for his hat.



# Page 1-53

## Page 1-53 Summary

Sourcery by Terry Pratchett is the story of the wizards that live on Discworld and the struggle that ensues when a new sourcerer shows up. Rincewind, a most inept wizard and a coward, will travel the world and face unimaginable odds, against his wishes, in order to save the dirty streets of Ankh-Morpork.

Ipslore the Red gives his son a name, Coin, as he stands talking to Death. Death is a skeleton figure that shows up when a person is about to die. Ipslore was the eight son of a wizard and became a wizard who had an eighth son. Ipslore's son was a wizard squared, a source of all magic, a sourcerer. Ipslore passes on his magic staff to his infant son as his last minute of life passes. When Ipslore is struck dead, he is able to transfer his soul to the staff. Death can't get Ipslore out of the staff without killing Coin. The only way to separate a wizard from his staff is for the wizard to willingly throw it away, but no wizard has ever done this.

Rincewind, the most inept wizard of Discworld, is noticing that everything in the Unseen University seems to be running away, and the stones themselves seem to be shaking with fear. Rincewind is told not to worry about it and the other wizards continue getting ready for the coronation of the new Archchancellor, the leader of the wizards at the University. Rincewind leaves with the librarian to go to the bar not wanting to stay where there could be danger.

The new sourcerer appears and goes to the wizard's chamber who is to be named Archchancellor. The sourcerer, Coin, kills the wizard and then proceeds to the hall where the other wizards are gathered. Nearby there is another dark figure at the university. It sneaks through the halls to the exact room it wants to be and lifts up a box where a voice heard only by dark figures gives it instructions.

Spelter, the wizard conducting the Archchancellor ceremony, is waiting for the new Archchancellor to arrive. There is a knock on the great door to the hall and a boy of about ten enters with a large staff and announces that he wants to know who the greatest wizard there is because he wants to duel and then will be made Archchancellor. He is humored by an elderly wizard, who is quickly killed by the small boy. The others begin to fear him and he tells them his name is Coin. An hour later they are able to get the boy to sleep and the wizards discuss what is to be done. A few of them are excited that there is that much power for them to have control of, and elect Coin to be the new Archchancellor. They find soon that the Archchancellor's hat is missing but do not concern themselves with it as it is only a symbol. They are unaware of the power the hat has.

In the bar Rincewind is asked by a dark figure, who turns out to be a young woman, if he is a wizard. He has no desire to risk his life but soon is caught up in her running from



men, and he must go along or be killed in the cross fire. He can hear the hat talking and obeys almost as if it is a spell rather than a request. Rincewind is rather useless, but the young woman, Conina, is able to take on multiple armed men at once and come out victorious. The hat warns Rincewind that they can't go back to the University and must flee the new sourcerer.

## Page 1-53 Analysis

When Conina comes into the story, it seems Rincewind could become involved with her, but in fact she will fall in love with a different young man later on in the story. The reason she fights so well is because her father is Cohen the Barbarian. There are many stories about Cohen that will show up throughout the story, but Conina tends to fight against her urges to an extent.

Rincewind has a wizardry hat that has the word "Wizzard" written upon it. He complains about the fact that he doesn't have any respect and isn't taken seriously by the other wizards, but it will become apparent at the end of the story that he is the only one that is willing to try to save Discworld on more than one occasion. Rincewind's hat is more than just his wizard's hat. It will appear in the story that the hat has a strong meaning for Rincewind. While the reader never will fully understand it, there are many opportunities to see how strongly Rincewind feels he needs the hat.

Rincewind is an interesting character and it appears that he is a great coward. He constantly tries to pass off the responsibilities given to him, but there isn't anyone else to take over for him. He will be more reluctant as the story progresses but always ultimately will do the right thing. There are two main wizards that have decided they can "use" Coin. They will be two of the wizards that realize their mistakes but only after it is too late in the story. The fear that will grab them will replace their need to be in control and respected.



# Page 53-104

## Page 53-104 Summary

Conina and Rincewind reach the docks of Ankh-Morpork and find a boat. Conina tells him that her father was Cohen the Barbarian and that it is in her blood to fight the way she does and to pillage and plunder, but she really wants to be a beautician. The hat tells them they must head for Klatch to find a suitable head to fight the soucerer and other wizards. The hat tells Rincewind that it must not be worn by the soucerer because through the hat speaks all the Archchancellors of the past. This is what gives the hat great power. Rincewind is not easily convinced to get on the boat, but the hat threatens him with his magic and Rincewind accepts.

The wizards at the Unseen University have begun to do spells that are much harder than ones they were able to barley conceive the day before. The magic that Coin has brought with him is beginning to flow through the occupants of the University. The Librarian, formerly human but now an orangutan, has begun reading up on the Soucerer and has found that the return of sourcery will mean the end of the world. The two wizards that have devised a way to use Coin and his magic, Spelter and Carding, stand watching the magic flowing. Carding reaches out to touch Coin's magic staff and is knocked back with a warning that next time he will die. Coin uses his magic to change everything in the University. Coin tells them he wants to see the Patrician that rules Ankh-Morpork. Coin has convinced the wizards that the wizards should rule Ankh-Morpork. The Patrician is very angry at being called to the University and gets upset when Coin changes him into a lizard.

The hat tells Rincewind that the rule of sourcery has begun. Klatchian slave pirates attack the ship they are on. Conina and the others on the boat wait for Rincewind to do a spell and kill the men, but he doesn't even try, so it is left to Conina to save them all in hand to hand combat. She save the occupants on the ship but the hat is stolen.

Meanwhile the wizards take to the streets and begin to change the structure of the city with magic and kill any that speak out against them. Carding and Spelter are at the University and have just finished constructing the replica Archchancellor's hat that they intend to give Coin. Spelter notes to himself that Coin is never without his staff, which is odd. The staff seems to stare as if it knew the thoughts of those around it. Coin, Carding and others discuss the matters of the world and the fact that it has evil and therefore is not being governed well, and they should take over the entire world.

Spelter goes to the library doors and warns the Librarian not to let in anyone. Spelter is heading back from the library when he hears faint crying.

Conina and Rincewind make it to Al Khali. They decide that getting themselves captured will most likely be the best and quickest way to find who has the hat. Conina has a hard



time being taken without a fight, but when they are surrounded by bowmen they surrender.

## Page 53-104 Analysis

The sobbing that Spelter hears is actually Coin crying. The staff that holds his father's spirit is standing by itself over the boy. His father is harsh and cruel to the child. The reader doesn't see that the child tries to withstand his father's direction at this point in the book and by the end of the story, it is apparent the child doesn't agree with what the father is doing.

Conina is proud of who her father is it appears, but it appears she wishes she was a little different. She wants to be a hairdresser and talks about the fact that no young man would want to stay with a woman that kills and thieves the way that she does. When she meets the young barbarian later on in the book, it will be a perfect match for her as he is a young man of a very plain background striving to be a barbarian.

It appears to the reader that Rincewind is becoming attracted to Conina very deeply. He has managed to not let her know how he feels, but the wizard training seems to have a lot of influence on what he says and his convictions about women. Wizards are not supposed to marry or have anything to do with women. Rincewind doesn't do much magic in the story, but it is clear that in his heart he believes he is a wizard. He will conduct himself throughout the story in the way that he believes is proper for wizards, even if others don't feel that he is a proper wizard.





## Page 104-150

### Page 104-150 Summary

The following morning Spelter tries to tell Carding that he found Coin crying in the broom closet and that the staff has a life of its own. Carding and the other wizards are too busy watching Coin build a new residence tower for the wizards. After Coin has finished the new tower constructed out of solidified magic, he tells Carding and Spelter to have the Unseen University Library books burned because they no longer need that knowledge.

Spelter sneaks out of the Tower that night and warns the Librarian that the books are to be burned. He tries to ask the Librarian for help but is slowly turned around, not by his own will, and faces Coin's staff. The staff chases him to the kitchen and kills Spelter before he can warn anyone else. The Librarian gets the attention of the library books and begins to plan the escape.

Rincewind and Conina have been taken to a strange place that belongs to Creosote the Seriph of Al Khali. The place is his manmade Wilderness, and he is the richest man in the world. He writes bad poetry and has no time for the business of captives so turns Rincewind and Conina over to his Grand Vizier, Abrim. Abrim agrees to take them to see the hat. The hat won't tell Abrim what it is. Abrim has decided it must be magic but can't understand what it is. Abrim sentences Conina to go to the harem and Rincewind to be thrown in a snake pit. The hat has decided to negotiate with Abrim. As Rincewind is dropped into the snake pit, he finds that the snake can speak and is very docile. After announcing his plans to escape, a young man steps out of the shadows revealing the source of the snake's speech. The young man is dressed in barbarian garb.

The young barbarian tells Rincewind his name is Nijel the Destroyer, son of Harebut the Provision Merchant, and he has been a barbarian for three days. They are trying to find a way out when Rincewind points his finger at a spot on the wall of the snake pit and says a quick word and fire blasts a hole in the wall. Rincewind has never done magic with any accuracy before and has to be pulled along behind Nijel because of the shock that he is in. The wizards from Ankh-Morpork, led by Coin, are attacking Al Khali and all its citizens. Rincewind watches in terror as people in the streets are killed. Then Nijel and Rincewind go to save Conina.

Meanwhile in Ankh-Morpork at the Unseen University Library, several wizards have gathered to burn the terrified books. They step into the library and are quickly attacked by the Librarian. The wizards are thrown forcibly one by one out of the library by the Librarian. The wizards fetch barrels of oil and kindling and prepare to fry the library. High up on top of the roof there is a sound of glass being broken before the fires are lit.

Rincewind and Nijel find Conina guarded by several guards. Nijel does some impressive sword work but ends up with his sword stuck in the ceiling. Rincewind begins to attempt



more magic, but before he can try Conina steps up and dispatches the guards in a fluid motion.

## Page 104-150 Analysis

The Librarian is an orangutan with a heavy sense of duty. He doesn't want to fight but does whatever it takes to rescue the frightened books from the library. The reader finds later on that the breaking glass was the Librarian getting the books out of the library and into the safety of the Unseen University Tower that has been abandoned by the wizards. The Librarian never says anything other than "Oook" and "Eeek," but it appears that he is a constant voice of steady thought. He will be a force that helps Rincewind save Discworld.

Rincewind notices that his feelings for Conina could be considered love but you find that he easily seems to get over that feeling after Conina and Nijel are introduced. Rincewind also begins to decide what it is about him that makes him a wizard. He doesn't do magic and is a level zero wizard when almost every person is born at a level one. His hat is the only thing about him that tells people he is a wizard, but he is unable to get rid of it and stop being a wizard. His hat is not magical like the Archchancellor's hat, but by the end of the story the reader will see that it is a symbol to Rincewind.



# Page 150-203

## Page 150-203 Summary

When Nijel and Conina look at each other for the first time they are unable to take their eyes off of each other, and Rincewind realizes the two have fallen in love. He introduces Nijel the Destroyer, Son of Harebut the Mighty and starts to tell Nijel that Conina's father is Cohen the Barbarian. Conina quickly stops him because she doesn't want to scare off Nijel. It takes Rincewind some time to get the two back to the situation at hand of finding the hat and getting out of Al Khali.

The tower of sourcery that had been built by Coin looms over Al Khali as the wizards continue to take over the city. They are told to all stand very still by a voice heard only in their heads. They turn to find Abrim wearing the Archchancellor's hat. Rincewind realizes that Abrim is being controlled by the hat, and the hat explains that Abrim has the right kind of mind that could be controlled. The hat commands Rincewind, Nijel, and Conina to come with him. They are unable to argue as they walk towards the tower. The hat tells them that they can fight back and rally the magic of wizardry against the sourcerer. Rincewind tells the other two where the hat can't hear that they must find an opportunity to run if they can. When the magic begins there will be no place safe from it, and everyone and everything will be in danger of turning into different species, objects, and worse.

The hat, controlling Abrim, casts a spell that melts the tower door. There is magic thrown at Abrim but it doesn't affect him. Death shows up seen only by Rincewind and waits to take the wizard that Abrim is fighting. While Abrim is busy fighting the spell, Rincewind and the other two are momentarily released and are able to run. When they make a dash for safer areas, they find a pile of rubble with legs sticking out of it. Creosote is dug out and joins them in their retreat. They go to Creosote's hidden room and retrieve his flying carpet and a magic lamp. Creosote's treasury has been looted and he has no money left but is happy enough as long as he still has some wine. Rincewind tells them not to touch anything in the room other than the magic carpet because magic uses a person and changes them and there is too much magic about already.

As the four of them fly away from Ank-Morpork, Nijel notices that another tower is being built. Rincewind realizes that the hat has won at least a part of the battle and is now constructing his own building. Conina asks Rincewind if he is steering the carpet and he says that he is not. He realizes shortly that his conscience is guiding the carpet. They camp on a beach but can still see the lights from the magic battle continuing at Al Khali. Creosote has run out of wine and is beginning to get angry with Rincewind and tells him that wizards make him sick, He talks badly about Rincewind. While he is yelling about disliking Rincewind they notice that Rincewind has left on the carpet. Rincewind touches his wizard hat as he heads toward Ankh-Morpork. Rincewind reaches the Unseen University Library to find that it has burned.



Conina and Creosote are deciding what they should do when Nijel produces the magic lamp that had been with the carpet. They rub it and get a genie that is not in a big hurry to help them and tells them that he will get back to them as he disappears. Conina summons him back and forces him to take them to Ankh-Morpork to find Rincewind.

## Page 150-203 Analysis

Rincewind is struggling with his thoughts. He seems to earnestly believe that being a wizard isn't about how well you do magic but what knowing what you truly are. The reader sees that he touches his hat almost as if he is making sure that the part of him that he holds as his identity is still there. The reader will see that while the library has been burned that the Librarian and the books were able to escape for the most part.

Creosote has been a happy figure in the story but becomes angry and rude when his wine runs out. The reader will see when Creosote is able to get a drink again that he regains his love of poetry and happy demeanor. The words that Creosote say that hurts Rincewind so badly causes Rincewind to feel betrayed. Rincewind hasn't gone anywhere without his companions at this point, but he leaves them without a goodbye when Creosote insults him. Rincewind had been a librarian assistant and it seems that when he finds his home and everything he had built his life around destroyed, it changes something in him. It isn't that Rincewind becomes unafraid but more that he becomes far more willing to fight for something.

There hasn't been much in the book for a while regarding Coin, but he and Rincewind will have a large part together in the coming pages. The reader will begin to see that Coin is a boy that is hurt and scared and doesn't want to hurt people. Coin has been used by his father, whose sole is in the staff.



## Page 203-260

### Page 203-260 Summary

Rincewind realizes there weren't enough ashes for all the books to have burned. He is trying to decide what to do when he notices a small door at the base of the Tower of Art which opens when he gets near it.

Meanwhile Nijel, Conina, and Creosote are flying to Ankh-Morpork in a strange thing with curved metal walls. Nijel soon realizes that he is holding the magic lamp but that they are flying inside it at the same time. The genie warns Nijel not to think about it, but it is too late and the universe spits them out

Inside the Tower of Art the Librarian grabs Rincewind's hand shows him the library books hiding quietly in the tower. The Librarian is working to fix the ones that got torn or scorched in the blaze; a few of the books didn't make it out in time. The Librarian and Rincewind discuss what need to be done. Rincewind is no good at magic but decides he will have to do something to save his world.

Nijel, Conina and Creosote are dropped in Ankh-Morpork. They find four horses and steal three of them. The innkeeper is serving drinks to the owners of the horses, Pestilence, Death, War, and Famine. Nijel and Conina realize that something is odd about the rides they have chosen when they are above the clouds riding onward.

At the tower of sourcery Carding is beginning to dislike the direction they have taken with destroying and changing so much of the world. Carding, fearing the staff, continues to try and focus all his attentions to fighting Abrim and the Archchancellor hat. Abrim is distracted by magic luggage that is attacking him and implodes. Carding then hears the four horsemen coming that signify the end of the world. In a panic Carding grabs the staff that Coin holds and tries to smash it, but the staff kills him.

Death is talking to War, Famine, and Pestilence and explaining that his horse can't carry all four of them and that they will have to find another way into the city. Death rides off and War and the others decide to go back into the bar to have another drink or two.

Carding lies dead on the floor and the other wizards tell Coin that the end of the world is coming and try to talk to him about the gods of Discworld. Coin then tells them that he will show them the gods.

The Librarian explains to Rincewind that the staff is the trouble because it tells Coin what to do. Rincewind knows that he is on his own and marches to the door. Rincewind takes off one of his socks and puts a half brick in and replaces his shoe. He swings the sock wildly above his head and gets on the carpet to fly to the tower of sourcery.

In the tower, Coin has captured the gods in an iridescent pearl. Rincewind enters through a window and announces that he is there to challenge the sourcerer. Coin is



amused by Rincewind and refuses to destroy him as the staff commands. The staff then begins to yell at Coin. Death shows up and speaks with Rincewind, but much to Rincewind's surprise Death isn't there to take him. A struggle ensues between the boy and the staff. The other wizards run away leaving only Rincewind to help Coin. There is an explosion in the air.

War, Pestilence, and Famine have had far too much to drink and don't remember that they are supposed to be riding into the city for the apocalypse, the end of the world. They stay at the bar and continue to drink. Meanwhile Conina and her two companions are watching fierce snow begin to fall. The Ice Giants are taking over the world since the gods that imprisoned them have been done away with.

When Rincewind gets up he realizes that his hat is gone. Death says that he finally has Ipslore the Red. The blast sent Coin and Rincewind into the Dungeon Dimensions where horrible creatures are trying to get through to Discworld. Rincewind distracts the beasts while Coin escapes back to the Unseen University. He frees the gods and they put the Ice Giants back into captivity and mend the rip in the fabric of reality with Rincewind still in the Dungeon Dimension.

Conina and Nijel go to look for Rincewind, but he is still in another dimension when the rift was closed. Coin uses his powers on them to convince them to go off and live happily ever after. The Librarian tells Coin that he should make a world all his own and go live in it since his magic is too powerful for Discworld and the boy does so happily. Creosote goes into the Mended Drum tavern in Ankh-Morpork and spends his days drinking and writing poetry about the tavern owner's daughter. The Librarian sits at his desk and keeps Rincewind's hat, knowing wizards always come back for their hats.

## Page 203-260 Analysis

The book doesn't explain what happens to Rincewind but does end with the information that the Librarian is keeping Rincewind's hat because a wizard will always return for his hat. Rincewind has spent much of the story trying to convince people around him that he is in fact a wizard. This is a finally testimony to who he was and that he did fit in.

Nijel and Conina seem to be a good fit. She never tells him who her father is but it seems that Nijel realizes that something is different about Conina. He more or less offers to marry her and be Mr. and Mrs. Harebut but then asks her if she intends to be the Mr. or Mrs. Neither of them were close friends with Rincewind but it appears at the end of the book that they did care about him and were worried when he couldn't be found.

Creosote becomes his happy normal self once he is able to return to drinking and writing poetry. He is an odd character in the book that seems to change his attitude with the situation, much more so than any other character. We are not told what happened to the hat other than that Abrim imploded. The hat had been willing to fight the sourcerer even though it meant that it would put the world in harm's way. It was ironic that the only

wizard able to stop the sourcerer was the one that couldn't do real magic. The only time he was able to do any spell was when he was near the tower of sourcery.



# Characters

## Rincewind

Rincewind is the least talented wizard at the Unseen University. He spends a great deal of the story trying to justify the fact that he is a real wizard. We only see one time when he even attempts any magic which is an accident when it happens. When he decides that he must face the sourcerer and will surely die he doesn't try magic but uses his sock with a brick in it. The fact that he was the least of the wizards may be the thing that made him the only one who could save them.

Rincewind is naturally a coward and wants desperately not to have anything to do with the Archchancellor's hat or the sourcerer. The reader will see him try to run, hide or ignore the things that his conscience knows he must do. There are many opportunities for Rincewind to put himself before everyone else but by the end of the book the reader sees that Rincewind ultimately cares more for his home and Discworld than he does for his own safety. He is the only one among the wizards willing to help Coin when he begins to battle his father embodied in the staff.

## Coin

Coin is the eight wizarding son of an eight wizarding son. He is a wizard square and is a source of great magic called a sourcerer. He is about ten years old and is guided and directed by his father's spirit inside his magic staff. For much of the story, the reader sees nothing of Coin except his desire to rule and be Archchancellor. It isn't until he is found crying by Spelter, a wizard at the University, that the reader sees just how much control the staff has over the young boy. There won't be any further demonstration that the child has any good in him until Carding is killed. When Carding dies Coin seems to honestly regret it. The fact that Rincewind posed no threat to him is the only reason that Coin was able to stand up to his father. The reader will see that the little boy wants to be good and has simply been unable to have anyone to help him. Rincewind and the Librarian seem to be the only two in the story that will care for the little boy enough to give him an option other than being the most powerful being in the universe.

## Conina

Daughter of Cohen the Barbarian and a temple dancer. Has her father's genetics, which gives her the instincts to kill, fight, and steal. Wants to be a hairdresser.

## Ipslore the Red

Ipslore the Red is the father of Coin. Ipslore placed his soul in the staff that he gave to his son in order to cheat death and ruin the Unseen University.





## **Spelter**

One of the wizards who dies fighting Ipslore.

## **Nijel the Destroyer son of Harebut the Mighty**

Has been a barbarian for three days. Follows a book written by Cohen the Barbarian, a how-to guide for new barbarians. Falls in love with Conina.

## **The Librarian**

Caretaker of the books that live in the Unseen University Library. Has been turned into an orangutan long ago but refuses to be turned back.

## **Lord Vetinari**

The Patrician of Ankh-Morpork. Is turned into a lizard and kept in a jar on the Librarian's desk.

## **Creosote**

Creosote is the Seriph of Al Khali. He is very rich but has never been outside his own palace walls where he spends his days drinking wine and writing bad poetry.

## **Abrim**

The vizier to Creosote. The hat takes control of Abrim's mind to fight the sorcery that the wizards are using.

## **Death**

Shows up just moments before someone's demise. Very good at his job. When he speaks it is never in quotation marks but always in capital letters.



# Objects/Places

## Unseen University

Home to the Wizards at Ankh-Morpork. Magic flows through the University and has the ability to change whoever lives within its walls.

## Archchancellor's hat

The hat asks for Conina to steal it when it knows the sourcerer is coming. It has great power because the voices of the past Archchancellor's speak through it.

## Luggage

Luggage is made from magic wood and claims Rincewind as his master. Eats anything that gets in his way including people.

## Flying Carpet

Owned by Creosote. The carpet takes Rincewind back to Ankh-Morpork to face the sourcerer.

## The University Library

Home to the books of the Unseen University. Holds the knowledge of past wizards from years past as well as a door to other dimensions.

## Magic Lamp

Belonging to Creosote, the magic lamp has a rather unreliable genie that might or might not answer when the lamp is rubbed. The magic lamp holds Creosote, Nijel and Conina when they travel back to Ankh-Morpork.

## Staff

Holds Ipslore's spirit and commands young Coin. Is able to kill without Coin's help or control.



## **Ankh-Morpork**

City on Discworld where the Unseen University is located. It has dirty streets and dishonest citizens where crime has become a legitimate business.

## **The Mended Drum**

The Mended Drum is a bar in Ankh-Morpork. It boasts being "the most reputable disreputable tavern on Discworld." It's bouncer is a troll and it is visited many times by different characters.

## **The Shades**

Very disreputable side of town where one is more likely to be mugged and killed than not. Only ten minutes from the Unseen University but a place to avoid.



# Themes

## The Desire for Power

Sourcery is a book that has two different places where the desire for power affects the characters. The first few pages of the story tells about Ipslore the Red's last few moments alive. As he stands there talking to Death, it is easy for the reader to see that Ipslore was unable to get the power and respect he wanted in his own life. He tries to force his own desires for power, and ultimately revenge, upon his son. When Ipslore is talking to Death, he is reminded that he had seven sons before that wouldn't do what he asked them to do and eventually all seven of them left.

The second group in the book that had a desire for power were the wizards. They were led by Ipslore and Coin, but the wizards own wants and greed are what started their plans to rule the world. There were some of the wizards that even thought they might be able to control the power of the staff and Coin themselves. It is seen that Spelter, even at the moment of his demise, was wondering to himself how he could harness the staff and its power for himself. It appears that once the power is gone and Coin is no longer under the control of the staff that the wizards go back to the Unseen University as if nothing had happened. The reader has some indications that they are perhaps ashamed or embarrassed by their actions; however, there are no apologies made.

## The Importance of History

The sourcerer comes into the world by a wizard having eight sons and then his eighth son, who must be a wizard, has an eighth son. The reader sees later on in the story that the reasons that wizards aren't allowed to marry is so that this can be prevented. The reader will see many more things that end up lost to the wizards, and on occasion the other people of Discworld, because they don't know their own history. The Librarian discovers information about the sourcerer and that his being in the world will cause the end of the world. The other wizards seem to have forgotten this, if they ever knew it. There is a possibility that they didn't care because of the power that Coin controlled, but the reader sees that the only two that seem to immediately know the significance of the sourcerer are the two that work in the Library.

There may have been other things that could have been avoided if the History of Discworld had been known and believed. Perhaps Coin never would have imprisoned the gods of Discworld if he had known what it would bring about. When Conina is riding War's horse toward the Ice Giants, it seems that only after talking to Nijel and running facts through her head does she realize they are looking at the beginning of the apocalypse.



## The Need for Love

Wizards are set apart from the rest of the world. They don't have friends and cut all ties with the outside world once they become wizards. The reader sees at the beginning of the story that Ipslore the Red left wizardry because he wanted to marry. He also states that he blames the other wizards for the death of his wife. If it had been allowed for wizards to marry or at least to have companionship, there may not have been the alienated feelings created. The reader sees again that Rincewind desires love. He wants to be accepted as a wizard and even develops feelings for Conina. Rincewind is able to understand that he has missed something by being at the Unseen University. He sees how different his own thought process is from Conina's and Nijel's when they meet for the first time.

Even Coin displays a need for love. The reader sees that the little boy is willing to do anything it takes to be accepted by his father, who is inside the staff. Near the end of the book, Coin says he thinks it is wrong to hurt people. He has been doing the bidding of his father, not because he thought his father was right or because he enjoyed it but because he wanted love and acceptance from his father. His father unintentionally drove Coin away because he was unable to give the child the love the boy wanted.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view in *Sourcery* is in the third person. The author spends most of the book following Rincewind, and the view is always omniscient with Rincewind, but it varies between omniscient and limited with the other characters. The examples of this are shown with the wizards in the castle when they fear the staff. This point of view is very helpful to the reader in realizing the emotions and driving points with certain people. There are other times when you are left to wonder what people are thinking. When Conina first enters the scene, the reader doesn't know who she is or what she is thinking. The author uses the limited point of view in parts of the book to create mystery and moments of foreshadowing.

There are times when the author depicts what is happening with the other characters in the book and follows their exploits. The author doesn't limit the reader to just seeing what is going on with Rincewind, which helps in understanding the fate of Discworld as a whole. This also helps to add information about the things that are going to happen such as the apocalypse. The reader is never allowed to know what the Gods are thinking, just that they are angry at the end of the story. The rest of the story we are allowed a brief glimpse into every part of Discworld's character list including Death, War, Famine, and Pestilence.

## Setting

The majority of the story takes place on Discworld. Discworld is a fantasy land that is described much like our world but with the addition of magic elements. The creatures and people of Discworld don't follow normal rules, but the author has a standard for the norm that is easily learned by the reader. For example wizards conduct themselves very differently from barbarians. Wizards have a place in society to which people expect them to conform. The reader is given the basis for the wizarding world. This makes Rincewind much more understandable as an outcast. The reader sees what it is that makes him so different and is able to identify with him.

The world has several properties that the reader must understand to make sense of the things going on in the story. The author uses sights and smells to describe the city of Ankh-Morpork and other places that the characters visit. There are moments when the characters leave Discworld and travel through a rip in the fabric of reality and land in the Dungeon Dimensions. The author takes time to explain this setting, but we are left with the thought that it is magical and not stable. The Librarian states that anyone there could come back to Discworld but it could be tomorrow or yesterday that they return since it is so unstable.



## Language and Meaning

The language and the meaning in the story takes on a different style with each character. Creosote speaks largely in poetry that has a very odd meaning while most of the wizards are much more refined in their speaking. The overall effect is very relaxed and easy to read. There are certain characters that have a distinct attribute to their style that indicates who is speaking. Death speaks only in capital letters but his words are never in quotation marks. It can be a little confusing until the reader realizes that the capital letters signifies Death alone. The author also uses italics for the Archchancellor's hat. The hat is only heard through a type of telepathy but is very different in its appearance in comparison to the others. The author also uses different styles when he introduces War, Famine, and Pestilence.

The author has the Ice Giants and the stone gargoyles talk with misspelled words. This emphasizes the fact that they have an odd speech but their speech still easily understood by the reader. The reader will also see a strong change in the wording and spelling of the characters that are drinking. It creates a very effective realization that they are intoxicated and is rather humorous as well. There are times in the story where the reader will have to read further in the story to understand what has happened.

## Structure

Sourcery consists of 260 pages. There are breaks between scenes that change. For example when it switches from the Unseen University to the Mended Drum, there will be a page break but there aren't chapters in the book. The author does a good job in breaking the paragraphs where they make an easy transition. There is also in the book a description of characters, places and some objects that have a role at some point in the Discworld books. The characters, items, and places listed do not all show up in Sourcery. The author explains that some of them are in almost every book, even if only mentioned, but others almost never appear. The descriptions in the back can help the reader identify what characters are in the action because the author often doesn't explain it. There are also times where a character is mentioned but never appears. The index in the back is helpful in those instances.

The author has moments where there are poetry and book passages. These moments are clearly indented, so it is easily identified by the reader. The author made sure that his passages and thoughts didn't run into each other; however, there are moments when characters are speaking without the author identifying who is speaking. At these moments, it is easy to confuse who has spoken which sentence, but the structure is over all easily understood.



## Quotes

"And I say that my son shall go to Unseen University and wear the Archchancellor's hat and the wizards of the world shall bow to him! And he shall show them what lies in their deepest hearts. Their craven, greedy hearts." Page 3-4

"On the other side of the campus the Sourcerer was walking toward the gates of the University. Where his feet touched the cobbles blue sparks crackled and evaporated the early evening dew." Page 18

"Sourcerer, n. (mythical). A proto-wizard, a doorway through which new majik may enterr the world, a wizard not limited by the physical capabilities of hys own bodie, not by Destinie, nor by Deathe. It is written that there once werre sourcerers in the youth of the world but not may there by nowe and blessed be, for sourcery is not for menne and the return of sourcery would mean the Ende of the Worlde... If the Creator hadd meant menne to bee as goddes, he ould have given them wings. SEE ALSO: thee Apocralypse, the legende of thee Ice Giants, and thee Teatime fo the Goddes." Page 61

"Spelter shuddered. In his heart of hearts an inner Spelter had woken, and was struggling to make himself heard. It was a Spelter who suddenly longed for those quiet days, only hours ago, when magic was gentle and shuffled around the place in old slippers and always had time for a sherry and wasn't like a hot sword in the brain and, above all, didn't kill people." page 93

"If it pulls it off, however, Rincewind will have a serious philosophic idea. If it doesn't, a nearby brick will have an important insight which it will be totally unequipped to deal with." page 123

"That's what makes sourcerers so powerful. The important thing is to know what you really are." page 157

"Two thousand years of peaceful magic had gone down the drain, the towers were going up again, and with all this new raw magic floating around something was going to get very seriously hurt. Probably the universe." Page 183

"In other words, it's the familiar hot sinking feeling experienced by everyone who has let the waves of their own anger throw them far up on the beach of retribution, leaving them, in the poetic language of the everyday, up shit creek." Page 194

"Not every book had made it. Most of the important grimoires had got out but a seven-volume herbal had lost its index to the flames and many a trilogy was mourning for its lost volume." Page 208

"There was no way to explain that every gene in her body was dragging her onward, telling her that she should get involved; visions of swords and spiky balls on chains kept invading the hairdressing salons of her consciousness." Page 213





"Rincewind had heard quite a lot about the power of the sourcerer, the staff of the sourcerer, the wickedness of the sourcerer and so on. The only thing that no one had mentioned was the age of the sourcerer." Page 229

"'Oook,' observed the Librarian, contriving to imply that Rincewind was in a region where even things like time and space were a bit iffy, and that it was probably not very useful to speculate as to his exact state at this point in time, if indeed he was at any point in time at all, and that, all in all, he might even turn up tomorrow or, for that matter, yesterday, and finally that if there was any chance at all of surviving then Rincewind almost Certainly would. 'Oh,' said Coin." Page 250

"Silence gradually reclaimed the Library. Silence drifted around the remains of a hat, heavily battered and frayed and charred around the edges, that had been placed with some ceremony in a niche in the wall. No matter how far a wizard goes, he will always come back for his hat." Page 260



## Topics for Discussion

Given Rincewind's reaction at the end of the story, regarding his decision to face Coin and to save Coin from the Dungeon Dimension, do you think that Rincewind really is a coward? Why or why not?

Do you think Conina and Nijel are well suited to each other? Do you think they got married? Why?

Do you think Creosote was attempting to insult the young bar maid at the Mended Drum with his poetry? What about his poetry makes you think so?

What do you think Nijel's reaction will be when he finds out that Cohen the Barbarian is Conina's father? Do you think she ever told him? Why?

The wizards returned to the Unseen University at the end of the story almost as if nothing had happened. Do you believe they were more ashamed of what they had done or embarrassed that it didn't work? Why?

Do you think the law forbidding wizards to marry is just? Why or why not?

Why do you think Luggage attached itself to Rincewind? Explain.

Death tells Ipslore the Red that the fates demand a small chance. Given that statement, speculate on the reason the Archchancellor's hat was able to summon Conina's help specifically but looked for the first wizard they could find? Do you believe it was chance or fate? Why?