

# **Un Lun Dun Study Guide**

## **Un Lun Dun by China Miéville**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">Un Lun Dun Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 1-9.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 11-19.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 20-30.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 31-39.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 40-49.....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 50-59.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 60-71.....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 72-80.....</a>	<a href="#">31</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 81-90.....</a>	<a href="#">34</a>
<a href="#">Chapters 91-Epilogue.....</a>	<a href="#">38</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">42</a>
<a href="#">Symbols and Symbolism.....</a>	<a href="#">44</a>
<a href="#">Settings.....</a>	<a href="#">46</a>
<a href="#">Themes and Motifs.....</a>	<a href="#">47</a>
<a href="#">Styles.....</a>	<a href="#">49</a>
<a href="#">Quotes.....</a>	<a href="#">50</a>



## Plot Summary

Un Lun Dun by China Mieville is a young adult fantasy novel. At the beginning of the novel, Deeba Resham's friend Zanna starts to notice strange things around her, like a fox at the edge of the schoolyard looking straight at her. The fox bows before it scampers off. More than one person says that Zanna is "Schwazzy," but neither Zanna nor Deeba can figure out what that means. When Zanna stays overnight with Deeba, the two of them watch as a broken umbrella crawls spider-like up the wall outside Zanna's bedroom to peek in and spy on her.

The two friends chase the umbrella into a basement where they magically enter into a different London, where things are familiar and also profoundly unfamiliar. People are dressed in costumes from every period in London's history, and there are houses made out of old typewriters, hats, and other trash. Everyone who sees Zanna and Deeba is reverential towards Zanna, whom they treat as the "Schwazzy," the chosen one.

The task Zanna has been chosen to perform is to rid UnLondon of the Smog, a noxious, poisonous cloud that has developed consciousness and a will of its own. Zanna and Deeba are befriended by many people, each of whom is odd in their own unique way. Hemi is half ghost and half human. Skool is an undersea diving suit filled with water and fish. Rosa drives a bus that can also navigate as a balloon through the sky.

In her first encounter with the Smog, though, Zanna inhales the poisonous fumes, and she and Deeba are sent back to London where they should recuperate.

Deeba, however, realizes that something is wrong: Professor Unstible, a leading researcher in the fight against the Smog, is not in fact working in UnLondon. He has been killed in an explosion caused by the Smog. Deeba figures out how to return to UnLondon, where she brings the news that Professor Unstible is not who he seems to be. With her motley crew of friends and helpers, Deeba finds the weapon that will defeat the Smog and finally liberates UnLondon from its threat.



# Chapters 1-9

## Summary

### Prologue

Un Lun Dun begins with a brief prologue in which a man working on a chemistry project is stifled by a cloud of smoke, and presumably killed.

### Chapter 1

At the margin of the schoolyard, Zanna, Deeba, and their friends notice a gray fox that appears to be staring at them. When Zanna and Eva approach it, it bows at Zanna before it bounds away.

### Chapter 2

Deeba recalls the first time that someone approached Zanna at school and addressed her as “Schwazzy.” She and Zanna try to make sense of this strange moment, and then they see graffiti that says Zanna forever. After that, a post man delivers a package for Zanna, which contains just a note that says ‘we look forward to meeting you when the wheel turns.’ Zanna and Deeba also puzzle out what might be meant by the squirrels and dogs looking directly at Zanna, pausing and even bowing at her.

### Chapter 3

In French class, as Zanna learned that ‘Schwazzy’ is probably French for choisi, or chosen, but she has no idea about what she might have been chosen for. After school, as the students are walking home, a cloud of dirty air comes out of the gutters as Zanna’s father is driving toward the school. The cloud gets into his car and causes him to speed up and hit one of Zanna’s classmates, breaking her leg.

### Chapter 4

Zanna sleeps over at Deeba’s house. In the middle of the night, the girls are awakened by a scratching sound. In the faint light of the street lamp that they see across the way, an umbrella is climbing the wall outside Zanna’s house to look in her window.

### Chapter 5

Zanna and Deeba follow the umbrella into an open basement, where they see pipes and wheels that act as valves. When Zanna starts to turn one of the wheels, it seems as though she is turning off all of London, the lights, the traffic, and the noise.

### Chapter 6



Zanna tries to turn the wheel backwards, but finds that London still disappears. When she and Deeba come out of the basement, they're in a city they do not recognize. Deeba takes out her phone, to call her mother, but when she checks the battery, wasps fly out of the back of her phone. As the two girls try to figure out what to do, they find themselves surrounded by garbage, which seems to be closing in.

### Chapter 7

The girls hear a voice, which comes from a boy who throws stones at the garbage and chases it away. He asks the girls why they are in the Back Wall Maze, but they have no idea where they are. The area seems to be a market, filled with people of all kinds, including creatures neither of the girls has ever seen before. To add to the confusion, the light in the sky comes from an enormous doughnut-shaped circle which is called the unSun. They meet a man dressed in a suit made of printed paper—a man whose head is a pincushion—and he offers to make a suit for Zanna. The girls struggle to get out of the market and call their parents, but neither of their phones work. As the chapter closes, Zanna pulls out a travel card she had been sent, in hopes of finding some advice there.

### Chapter 8

The boy who had scared away the trash asks the girls whether an empty milk carton belongs to them. It has cozied up to them where they are sitting. He introduces himself as Hemi and asks them what they are doing. They tell him they don't have any idea, and you don't even know where they are. He tells them that they are in UnLondon, but then he is chased away by the pincushion-headed man, Obaday Fing, who tells the girls that the boy is a ghost, and that he might try to possess their bodies. He recognizes Zanna as the Schwazzy, and then others begin to recognize her, including Skool, a diver in an old-time deep-sea diving suit. Zanna tries to make the milk carton go away, but Deeba tells it that it can stay around, as long as it doesn't gang up with its friends, the other pieces of garbage.

### Chapter 9

Obaday warns the girls against the ghosts who live in Wraithtown, who will steal their bodies. They ask him what is going on, and he says that the Propheseers will be able to explain. The girls say that they want to go home, but Obaday says that he will take them to the Propheseers.

### Chapter 10

On the way to the Propheseers, the girls walk through UnLondon, where the houses are not empty, but 'emptish.' They are made of all sorts of discarded things from London, from hats to turtle shells to typewriters and telephones.



## Analysis

**Prologue:** This prologue starts the book on an ominous note, but without knowing any details about the personalities involved, the plot is a murder mystery, in which the audience sees the murder take place, and then pieces together the fact that will allow investigators to solve it.

**Chapter 1:** After the mysterious murder in the prologue, this first chapter seems to introduce a different storyline, one in which two junior high age girls acquire significance in the story they don't understand yet.

**Chapter 2:** Many magical children's books begin with children who are seen as outsiders starting to receive a lot of special attention. Neither Zanna nor Deeba—nor the reader—knows why this attention is being lavished on Zanna yet.

**Chapter 3:** Zanna and Deeba continued to witness incomprehensible events, and as the number of events builds, the only thing that they are sure of is that something important is happening. The fact that one of the events involves Zanna's father running over one of her classmates indicates that the stakes in this story will be high, and injury or death might be some of the consequences of what happens.

**Chapter 4:** Now that the girls have been paying attention, they are starting to look for strange events, and in the middle of the night they witness something that will be difficult to explain: an umbrella climbing the wall outside of Zanna's house. This is something that cannot ignore, and they will have to investigate.

**Chapter 5:** In this fantasy novel, this chapter provides the moment when the characters step out of an ordinary reality, and enter a new world, where the rules will be quite different, and where they will be much more important than they are at home.

**Chapter 6:** Zanna and Deeba's entrance to UnLondon is disorienting and scary, as they do not know any of the rules, or even the nature of the city, and everything seems like a threat, starting with the piles of garbage they see everywhere.

**Chapter 7:** The story gets more frightening for the girls, as they enter into UnLondon streets without any guide. It's their good luck that the boy comes to chase away the garbage, but he is not their protector yet, and he does not explain to them the nature of the market or the city they are in.

**Chapter 8:** Zanna is recognized as the Schwazzy, but this does not mean anything to her yet, only that her travel card has gotten her certain privileges. The nature of the city is still completely bewildering to the girls, and they are still threatened by the ominous sense that they are being watched.

**Chapter 9:** Up till this chapter, the girls think that they can still return home, but Obaday tells them that he will have to take them to the Propheseers first, and he warns them against their enemy, the Smog.



Chapter 10: The girls still do not know very much about their situation, or why they were summoned to UnLondon, but they are beginning to see the city, and also to find that they have friends, after a fashion.

## Discussion Question 1

Compare and contrast London and UnLondon. How are they similar? How are they different?

## Discussion Question 2

What is the genre of Un Lun Dun? What clues does the author give you about what will happen in this novel?

## Discussion Question 3

What are the advantages and disadvantages of creating an unreal world in a novel? How does the author convince you to suspend your disbelief?

## Vocabulary

battlements, geography, predatory, corridor, ventilation, makeshift, ambling, exaggeratedly, interrupted, queue, exasperating, kerfuffle, consoling, intricate, bedraggled, taboo, tarmac, audible, dissipated, staggered, hysterically, conversation, rubbish, bins, blatantly



# Chapters 11-19

## Summary

### Chapter 11

Obaday takes the girls to a bus stop, where they catch a red double-decker bus driven by Rosa and conductor Jones who takes tickets and protect his travelers. He greets Zanna with reference and says that he traveled across from London as well. Rosa and the others have heard rumors that the Schwazzy would come. Now they take her and Deeba to the Pons Absconditus where the Propheseers will be able to give them answers. The bus deploys its balloon and floats away.

### Chapter 12

As the balloon/bus rises, the girls see UnLondon spread out beneath them. Obaday Fing explains that UnLondon is the place where worn-out things from London end up, like old money, and broken things. He says that things are called moilish, for Mildly Obsolete In London. He explains that the streets are patrolled by carnivorous giraffes, and that it's rare for someone to 'cross the Odd' by which he means coming from London to UnLondon. The girls are homesick for London, and they think they see things moving in the roof of the bus.

### Chapter 13

Obaday Fing gives the girls food, and points out the crocodile-head bridge, and the UnLondon-I, the UnLondon version of the London Eye Ferris Wheel. He explains that the unSun rises in a different place every day. The bus is approached by a grossbottle, which Obaday Fing says carries highwaymen and thieves. Zanna sees hands in the ceiling, and a man stands up and grabs her. Deeba says that the man must have heard who they were in the market.

### Chapter 14

The man holding Zanna pulls a sword as the grossbottle gets closer, but Hemi materializes out of the ceiling and protects her. The man backs into Obaday Fing's pincushion head, and leaps. The man threatens Zanna with his sword, but Jones electrocutes him. Jones shoots an arrow at the grossbottle, and Rosa takes evasive maneuvers as two more grossbottles lift off.

### Chapter 15

Jones says that they will put Zanna and Deeba off at the edge of Slaterunner territory, and meet up with them at the Pons Absconditus. The girls jump out and the bus zooms away.





### Chapter 16

Zanna and Deeba run up to the ridge of the roof lines where they were dropped, and soon they are surrounded by people. When these people see that Zanna is the Schwazzy, they say that they will take her where she needs to go.

### Chapter 17

Running along the rooftops, Zanna and Deeba aim toward a giant tree made of fireworks displays— which become real in UnLondon as they fade from London. As they continue, they see Hemi with his hand touching Zanna's pocket, before he disappears.

### Chapter 18:

Inessa Badladder, leader of the Slaterunners, says that Zanna and Deeba should look forward to seeing the Book, which contains the prophecy about the Schwazzy. Curdle, the milk carton that has become Deeba's pet, indicates the presence of other people. Inessa and another Slaterunner offer Zanna and Deeba their backs, to carry them. Pursued by nebulous characters who work for the Smog, the Slaterunners agree to descend, but Zanna and Deeba find that the roofs are only inches above the streets— there aren't actual houses, just a neighborhood of roofs.

### Chapter 19

Zanna and Deeba are close to the Pons Absconditus, but they cannot seem to find a way to actually get on it. They can walk under it, but cannot find the ends. Soon, they find themselves surrounded by garbage bins with little legs. They move with surprising speed and agility. These are the 'binjas.' The leader of the binjas points to Zanna and Deeba, and tells them to go, pointing out the way to the Pons Absconditus.

## Analysis

Chapter 11: UnLondon is a mixture of familiar and strange, as the girls catch a double-decker bus which is also a hot air balloon. They are greeted as a kind of royalty by everyone they meet, but none of the introductions allay their fears and uncertainties about what is happening.

Chapter 12: This first tour of UnLondon is as disorienting as their arrival, and the girls are no closer to being at home here, although they have seen more of their new environment, and its limits are starting to be known. They, and the reader, still hope that the Propheseers will shed more light on things.

Chapter 13: Between the highwaymen on the grossbottle and the hand in the ceiling and the man grabbing Zanna, this is a scary chapter, which increases the tension but does not resolve anything yet.



Chapter 14: The characters' powers are astonishing, as Hemi can move through solid walls and Jones can electrocute people. The reader—with Zanna and Deeba—is only starting to understand this new world of UnLondon.

Chapter 15: The girls are still confused in the midst of this chaotic scene, but with powers such as Jones and Hemi have, they have some reason to feel that they will be alright wherever they end up, which is a good feeling to have when the bus puts you off in a strange neighborhood in an unknown city.

Chapter 16: Zanna's travel card keeps opening doors for her, as this chapter shows her and the reader a new facet of UnLondon: Roofdom, and a new set of kindly people: the Slaterunners.

Chapter 17: This tour across the rooftops shows Zanna and Deeba more of UnLondon and its wonders, such as the November Tree, which consists of remnants of fireworks from Guy Fawkes Day celebrations.

Chapter 18: The book turns from tour to chase as Zanna and Deeba are pursued through Roofdom. It is still not clear who is chasing them, or why.

Chapter 19: When the girls find the Pons Absconditus at the end of this chapter, they are looking forward to going home, more than to solving the UnLondon problems that brought them here.

## Discussion Question 1

What kind of a place is UnLondon? What kinds of laws apply here? What kinds of people live here? How does the book's descriptions of this place move the plot along?

## Discussion Question 2

What have Zanna and Deeba learned about the crisis facing UnLondon? What they believe is expected of them, and where are they getting their information from? What do they still want to know?

## Discussion Question 3

What clues does the author give you about how the story is likely to unfold? What are you, like Zanna, afraid might happen? How do you think things are going to turn out? Explain.



## Vocabulary

bramble, terrace, ramshackle, mendicants, turpentine, lurched, mottled, arsenic, roulette, perspective, absently, hulking, conductor, truncheon, contraption, stammered, currency, hesitantly, enormous, ascending, hotchpotch, gargoyles, inflation, obsolete, sacred



# Chapters 20-30

## Summary

### Chapter 20

In the middle of the Pons Absconditus, Zanna and Deeba find an office where the Propheseers are at work. They are greeted wearily. When Zanna looks for her travel card that will prove her identity, she finds that it is gone. She can only think that Hemi, the ghost boy, stole it. The Propheseers named Mortar and Lectern consult the book, which speaks, and says that Zanna is in fact the one with they have been waiting for. As Propheseers gather around her, the unSun begins to rise.

### Chapter 21

Mortar and Lectern tell Zanna and Deeba that the bridge is only where you wanted to be, and it will be difficult for their pursuers to find them. They explain that UnLondon is at war and that they believe that the Schwazzy has come to save them.

### Chapter 22

Lectern says that “abcities have existed as long as the cities,” (p. 89), and says that it is often very hard to get from one to the other. She explains how the Smog came to be and how it got a cloud-brain of its own. She says that it wanted to grow, so it learned to be a predator. Lectern describes the Klinneract, which seems to be a magical weapon for defeating the Smog in London. However, in UnLondon, the Smog has been setting dirty fires to feed itself. The Propheseers and the book say that there is a prophecy that “the choker will rest, then rise, and fire, and grow, and return” (p 92). They explain that Unstible is the hero who is fighting against the Smog. Unstible has found allies in the Armets. Zanna says that the Smog attacked her in London when it confused her father while he was driving.

### Chapter 23

The Propheseers say that Jones and the others will return home when they can. Zanna and Deeba explain how they got to UnLondon. The Propheseers explained that Zanna and Deeba have already met a servant of one of the leaders in the war: Brokkenbroll, the Unbrellisimo, the leader of all broken umbrellas, or ‘unbrellas’ as they are called in UnLondon. The Propheseers say that Brokkenbroll has been recruiting broken umbrellas for the coming fight against Smog. They also explained that the ‘phlegm effect’ means that Zanna and Deeba’s parents have not really noticed their absence, but this makes them want to return home all the more.

### Chapter 24



Zanna and Deeba wait for the Propheseers to get word to Brokkenbroll. They all come under attack by stink junkies, who have been sent by the Smog. The binjas run up to fend them off.

#### Chapter 25

Stink junkies are men in suits with gas masks fed by Smog. They spread an oily fire with hoses. Zanna tears one of their hoses off, but one breaks through and hits her on the head, knocking her out.

#### Chapter 26

Brokkenbroll calls to the Propheseers to let him into the Pons Absconditus. His army of umbrellas attacks this stink-junkies, pulling the hoses out of their suits and fanning away the Smog. Unfortunately, Zanna has inhaled the Smog, which is very dangerous for her. While the book looks for an explanation of what just happened to the Schwazzy, a 'Smogger' starts to attack Deeba, shooting stones and coal and bullets.

#### Chapter 27

Brokkenbroll leaps in front of Deeba and protects her with his umbrella, while the other umbrellas attacked the Smogger by fanning it away. Brokkenbroll explains the strength of the treatment he has applied to the umbrellas, and he says that he can explain everything, if he can take Deeba and the others to Unstible's workshop. Deeba wants to go home, but the Pons Absconditus puts them down near a brick factory.

#### Chapter 28:

Brokkenbroll explains that his umbrellas are alive and awake and that they follow his commands. He claims that they have been treated with chemicals that will help the people of UnLondon protect themselves against what the Smog can rain down on them. Deeba meets Unstible, an enormous man in a filthy white lab coat.

#### Chapter 29

Mortar is upset to find that Unstible still in UnLondon, as he thought he was dead. Unstible says that he found the Armets and learned his spells from them. He says that the Klinneract no longer exists because magic weapons don't last. He says that he realized the Smog was following him. So, he has been in hiding since his return. He says that he is working on a new treatment for Brokkenbroll's umbrellas. Mortar is impressed by the amount of planning Unstible and Brokkenbroll have done. Brokkenbroll says that if they call for the Smog, they can defeat it in battle. He tells the Propheseers that they should go back to the bridge, where he can demonstrate his powers by healing the Schwazzy of the Smog she has inhaled.

#### Chapter 30



Deeba is reunited Obaday Fing, conductor Jones and Skool at the bridge, where Zanna is no better. Brokkenbroll prepares to send Zanna and Deeba back to London, and Deeba follows his instructions to bring her unconscious friend home. Before they go, Obaday Fing gives them a glove made of print from the Book. The bridge touches down, depositing them back in London, and Deeba walks into her family's house.

## Analysis

Chapter 20: This chapter is satisfying, in a sense, because Zanna and Deeba have successfully arrived at a place where they are recognized, but their desires ( to return home) and the UnLondoners' desires (to defeat the Smog) are likely to pull them all in different directions.

Chapter 21: This chapter makes it clear that the Propheseers believe that the Schwazzy has come to save them, and getting her back home to London will not be their highest priority.

Chapter 22: Zanna and Deeba and the reader finally learn the history of the Smog, and what is at stake in the war they have been invited into. This pulls at their heartstrings, because they want to go home, but now that they see the fight going on here, they are also inclined to stay and help. It appears that there is much they will have to learn for they can really help although they seem to have quite a few resources and people on their side.

Chapter 23: As the Propheseers explained the nature of the war they are fighting, and the parties involved, they are making a case to Zanna about why she should stay to help them. But she and Deeba are both impatient to return home, and they wait for Brokkenbroll to come tell them why his umbrellas were spying on Zanna at her house.

Chapter 24: Zanna and Deeba cant seem to get a moment's peace, for even as they're waiting to decide whether they should even stay, they are under attack again by the stink junkies. As is often the case, the chapter ends just as the action is about to begin, propelling the reader into the next chapter.

Chapter 25: The prophecy in the book says that the Schwazzy will prevail in her first encounter, but she is knocked out by the first blow struck by this stink-junkie.

Chapter 26: The battle on the bridge throws the Propheseers into chaos, as the success of the stink-junkies rattles them, and knocks Zanna out. The battle does not end with this chapter, as Deeba herself is also under attack.

Chapter 27: Brokkenbroll is the first person to arrive with valuable information about what will happen next, but to the girl's dismay, taking them home is not the next thing. Zanna is injured and unconscious, but Brokkenbroll leads them and the Propheseers to Unstible's workshop.



Chapter 28: Brokkenbroll fills in the gaps in Deeba's understanding, bringing her up to speed, to a degree. His control over umbrellas explains how Zanna and Deeba were brought to UnLondon, and proposes the part of the solution to the fight against the Smog.

Chapter 29: The plotting gets a little convoluted in this chapter, as Brokkenbroll and Unstible described their whereabouts and their actions. They appear to be working together to defeat the Smog, although the reader will find that Unstible is the Smog itself, and that Brokkenbroll is being duped.

Chapter 30: This chapter would appear to conclude the novel, as Zanna and Deeba have discovered Unstible, back in UnLondon, working with Brokkenbroll on a formula to defeat the Smog.

## Discussion Question 1

In what way is the Smog like the Internet? In what way is it like the German Nazis? What else does it resemble? What suggestions does the author seem to make or discourage, for comparisons related to the Smog?

## Discussion Question 2

Who is vying for control of UnLondon, and what are their competing philosophies? What are their methods of winning control? What technology does each side develop, to help their cause?

## Discussion Question 3

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the constant fight or flight scenes? Does the author make a tradeoff, by keeping the novel in constant motion this way? What is gained, what is lost?

## Vocabulary

shuffled, eventually, nondescript, disapproval, frantic, reedy, groped, petered out, despair, communiqué, savvy, centuries, interpretation, pity, relevant, energetic, waterwheel, crematoria, effluvia, nonexistent, swilling, strangulated, appalled, guardians



# Chapters 31-39

## Summary

### Chapter 31

Almost as soon as she is home, Deeba starts to worry about her friends in UnLondon. She follows Brokkenbroll's instructions to the letter, and at 6 AM she plugs in some equipment. As Zanna begins to shake, a tentacle of Smog clamps onto Zanna's face, and she exhales a large cloud of dirty smoke. Deeba pursues this cloud with the fan, dispersing it and forcing it out the window. When Zanna wakes up she does not recall anything of UnLondon, but her mother comes in to ask about the noise and Deeba says that she is just happy to be home.

### Chapter 32

Deeba takes Zanna home and leaves her with her parents. She looks up the word phlegm and finds that her parents were being 'phlegmatic' by not being upset about her absence. Deeba reads the text on the glove made from the book, but she cannot make any sense of it. In a few weeks, things to be back to normal, but Zanna still does not remember anything. Deeba recalls her time in UnLondon, and the narrator says that she is certain she would never see it again.

### Chapter 33

This chapter says simply that she was wrong.

### Chapter 34

Deeba cannot escape suspicion that there are UnLondoners in London and vice versa. She looks up UnLondon on the Internet, but finds nothing. She looks for Armets and finds the Royal Meteorological Society, RMetS, whom Unstible said did not exist.

### Chapter 35

When Deeba calls the London office of RMetS and asks for Unstible, she is told that he has died. When she asks about the Klinneract, the person she is talking to says, you mean the Clean Air Act from 1956. Deeba has learned that Unstible is actually dead, and that he was working on a cure for the Smog when he died, just before he was supposed to meet with Minister Rawley, the MP in charge of the environment. Deeba puts her discoveries in order, she suspects that Unstible in UnLondon was not in fact Unstible but an impostor, and that none of the people in UnLondon knew it.

### Chapter 36





Deeba tries to tell herself that things will be alright without her, but she cannot be sure. She tries to ask Zanna, but she still does not understand what she's talking about, he starts looking for ways to return to UnLondon. With she sends a note to Mr. Rawley at the House of Commons, expressing her suspicion that UnLondon is in trouble from someone " who is Unstible." (p. 144).

#### Chapter 37

Deeba packs a bag with things she thinks she might need. At lunchtime, she goes to the school library. "Enter by book steps and story ladders," the text on the glove says. She starts to climb a bookcase and finds that she just keeps climbing.

#### Chapter 38

The library floor recedes behind her, but she continues in spite of her vertigo, using her umbrella as an ice axe, to pull herself up until finally she reaches the top. Deeba looks down on the city of UnLondon from the top of the enormous tower lined with books on the both sides. Looking down, she sees librarians on ropes working in the stacks of books, and they don't understand how she got past reception. She says that she is a visitor from London. The head librarian says that UnLondon is not doing so well, since they are at war.

#### Chapter 39

From the top of the book-stack, Deeba sees the Smog unfurl itself in front of the 'loon' the moon in UnLondon. The librarian tells her that people have been clearing out the Smog zones, and Deeba concludes that Unstible has been helping the Smog. The librarian also says that she has a treated umbrella if, so she herself feels safe and optimistic. Deeba is not sure what to believe but she needs to visit Wraithtown, to see the list of the dead, and whether Unstible is on it.

## Analysis

Chapter 31: Deeba enjoys a certain triumph in bringing Zanna back to consciousness, but is still worried about her friends in UnLondon. Brokkenbroll gains a certain respect by having given her the right instructions to save friend, but this is not enough to keep Deeba from inquiring further about the status of things in UnLondon.

Chapter 32: The novel tempts the reader with the possibility that the girls could both return to normal and that UnLondon and the disturbing and confusing events there could be relegated to a dream.

Chapter 33: This briefest of chapters is little more than punctuation for the previous chapter.



Chapter 34: When Deeba discovers the RMetS, she realizes that the business she learned about in UnLondon does correspond to what there is in London, but she also finds that Unstible was lying when he said that there were no Armets.

Chapter 35: The reader knows that Unstible died in the prologue, and this is now explained. But Deeba alone knows about the impostor Unstible in UnLondon, supposedly working on an antidote for the Smog. She suspects foul play, and worries about her friends, who suspect nothing.

Chapter 36: Even though Deeba is not Schwazzy, she is charged with a sense of mission, and wants to save her friends in UnLondon. Her appeal to minister Rawley is not immediately helpful, but she is doing everything she can.

Chapter 37: Deeba's return to UnLondon is not a matter of chance, this time, but of ingenuity and resourcefulness, as she has followed the clues laid out for her, to act upon the information she has discovered.

Chapter 38: If Zanna had arrived in UnLondon because she was Schwazzy, the fulfillment of prophecy, Deeba is now arriving in UnLondon because she is a girl on a mission with important information, and determination and courage to see her purpose fulfilled. It's not clear whether the arrival and departure of Zanna and Deeba had brought it about, but the fact that UnLondon is a war means that the information Deeba has discovered is more urgent than ever.

Chapter 39: UnLondon is at war, now, and Deeba can see the war taking place in the sky. She is not sure what to believe, but she knows that she has to find the Propheseers, to see what can be done. She needs to navigate some terrifying territory in order to accomplish her goal, and to unmask a powerful figure. She is an outsider and she will have to convince a lot of people that she is right—provided she can get where she needs to go, in an unfamiliar city at war.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Compare and contrast Zanna and Deeba how are they similar? How are they different?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Compare and contrast Deeba's first and second trip to UnLondon. How are the circumstances similar? How are they different?

## **Discussion Question 3**

How does Deeba's time at home change review of UnLondon? What motivates her inquiries and searches? Why did she feel drawn back to the drama in UnLondon?

## Vocabulary

mercilessly, exhaling, smuts, suspiciously, winced, wrathfully, endearing, bewilderment, equanimity, wizardry, phlegm, guilt, snippets, wheezed, mysterious, resurgence, meteorology, unease, interrupted, canceled, inadvertently, ashamed, ensure, concentrate, battered



# Chapters 40-49

## Summary

### Chapter 40

Climbing down the iron ladders, Deeba aims for Wraithtown to see whether Unstible is listed among a list of the dead. On her way there, though, she hears screams and happens upon a carnivorous giraffe feasting loudly on its prey.

### Chapter 41

Deeba makes a noise that attracts the giraffe's attention, and it chases her right up to the point where she crosses into Wraithtown. Now she has the giraffe on one side and ghosts on the other.

### Chapter 42

Deeba yells at the ghosts to leave her alone, and she can see them talking to her, but she cannot hear them. Hemi arrives, and tells her that he has been on her side all along, and wanted to protect the Schwazzy. She tells him that she needs his help, and when she explains why, he agrees to help her.

### Chapter 43

Deeba pays Hemi for his help, and he tells her about his background. His mother was from London, and his father was from UnLondon. So, he is half-ghost, half-human.

### Chapter 44

Deeba and Hemi arrive at the Wraithtown Council Building, where Deeba inquires about whether Unstible is in fact dead. The computer shows that he is.

### Chapter 45

Deeba gets a printout of the death announcement, and now she aims for the Pons Absconditus, in order to tell the Propheseers. Hemi agrees to take her there, even though it means traveling through territory where he won't be welcome. When a storm starts, Hemi looks for cover in a manhole. People with treated umbrellas are safe, but many people die in the attack, in which metal and poison rain out of the sky.

### Chapter 46

In the market, Deeba sees Obaday Fing again, and Curdle, the milk carton. Obaday invites her for tea, and as she tells him what happened to Unstible, a bus pulls up outside.



### Chapter 47

The bus that comes for Deeba is driven by Rosa, and conductor Jones welcomes her back on board. On the bus is Murgatroyd, Rawley's man from the Ministry of the Environment. He wants to take her to the Prophesiers, who will want to know what she has found out. The bus puts her down in a place where she can talk without being seen by Smog, and she and Murgatroyd wait for their contact.

### Chapter 48

Murgatroyd brings Deeba into a dark alley where Brokkenbroll steps out. He tells Deeba that he needs everything she knows, and she tells about RMetS and Unstible's death. He asks her who else knows about this, and she says only her, Hemi, and Obaday Fing. At the very end of the chapter, she is pounced upon by something dark, presumably an umbrella.

### Chapter 49

Deeba wakes to find herself blindfolded, and tied to Hemi, and in this way, Deeba realizes that Brokkenbroll is in on the scheme. It seems that Brokkenbroll has been giving people umbrellas that should protect them, when in fact they will only be adding to the danger. Brokkenbroll is exasperated with Deeba, and he says that he tried to save her by sending her back to London with Zanna. Unstible—or the Smog pretending to be Unstible—comes in, breathing stinky fumes.

## Analysis

Chapter 40: Deeba has a plan that will clarify what she's discovered about Unstible, but accomplishing this plan means navigating dangerous streets, at night, and the first danger she runs into is a carnivorous giraffe.

Chapter 41: It is not clear that Deeba has saved herself by fleeing into Wraithtown, where the ghosts threaten to snatch her body.

Chapter 42: Hemi is used to being mistrusted as a half-ghost, half-human, and the distrust with which Obaday Fing and the others treated him is an obstacle he has to overcome with Deeba. But she is willing to believe him, because she needs his help, and he believes her.

Chapter 43: This short chapter makes Hemi's story clear, and it makes an ally for Deeba, who needs all the help she can get.

Chapter 44: The Wraithtown Council give Deeba the evidence she needs, to demonstrate that Unstible is, in fact, dead, and that the Unstible she met is not who he says is.



Chapter 45: Armed with evidence, Deeba tries to get to the authorities, but she still does not know where she's going, and needs Hemi's help. The attack of the Smog storm demonstrates the power the Smog has over the people in the city.

Chapter 46: Deeba has had very good luck, running into her friends in the strange city, but this time it seems that the authorities can find her, instead of her having to go looking for the authorities.

Chapter 47: If it was nice for Deeba to see old friends, now Minister Rawley's man, Murgatroyd, seems uncertain, if not suspicious. Deeba is taken away by Rosa and conductor Jones, whom she trusts, but if she is going to deliver this news as quickly as she can, she will need to trust others as well.

Chapter 48: For now, it seems that Deeba has found exactly the right person to help her, although it will be clear that Brokkenbroll is in league with Unstible and the Smog. Deeba realizes too late that she is in danger, when an umbrella swings down and scoops her up.

Chapter 49: This chapter seems to be a severe setback for Deeba, although it seems like she might still have friends and resources to call on.

## Discussion Question 1

What effect these anti-climaxes have on you as a reader? Are they satisfying or frustrating?

## Discussion Question 2

What are some other stories in which a resourceful young girl armed with vital information changes the course of events? Was the appeal of this kind of story?

## Discussion Question 3

How far is the author willing to go to explain the logistics and the rules by which magical powers are exercised? At what point does he just expect the reader to go along with the fiction?

## Vocabulary

epic, indignantly, sarcastically, pretend, inhabitants, haunting, jealous, suburb, impatient, remnants, dreadful, slaver, immense, emitting, ferocious, carnivores, accelerated, intention, wraith, wispy, squatter, translucent, apparitions, glimmered, spectral



# Chapters 50-59

## Summary

### Chapter 50

Unstible says that he is hungry, and that by setting things on fire, he absorbs their content in the smoke. Unstible is surrounded by Smoglydites of different shapes and sizes, and he threatens to return to London to take care of Zanna. The Smog throws the printout confirming Unstible's death into the fire, so Deeba no longer has any evidence of what she has found. Deeba says that the Smog will be defeated in UnLondon the same way it was defeated in London, but Unstible says that "everything will burn, and burn, and burn, and smoke." (p. 205). Unstible says that Brokkenbroll wants to run things, and make the people burn things for the Smog. Unstible says that he will find out what Deeba knows not by torturing her, but by burning her.

### Chapter 51

Deeba calls for help and Hemi slips through the ropes that bind them together. Free of the ropes, Hemi knocks Unstible over, and frees Deeba. The two of them run to the bus, where Jones and Rose are waiting for them.

### Chapter 52

Deeba explains to Jones that Brokkenbroll and Unstible and the man from the MP's office are all in on a conspiracy to put Brokkenbroll in charge of UnLondon, with Smog enforcing his power. Descending by rope ladder onto the Pons Absconditus, Deeba explains what she has learned to the Propheseers. She says that Brokkenbroll is giving out umbrellas for a reason she cannot explain. The Propheseers turn to the book for an explanation, but the book has nothing to offer—the book itself has been in a funk since the prophecy about the Schwazzy proved untrue. It is not sure why anyone should trust what it says. While Propheseers are trying to figure out what to make of Deeba's news, Brokkenbroll arrives and says there has been a misunderstanding. He blames Deeba's news on Hemi's influence, and, as we have already seen, the other UnLondoners are willing to believe bad things of the ghosts. Realizing that she and her friends are in danger, Deeba grabs the book and Curdle. Then, and bolts.

### Chapter 53

Pursued by Brokkenbroll and his army of umbrellas, Deeba, Hemi and the Book jump off the end of the bridge.

### Chapter 54

Deeba and Hemi land in a remote part of UnLondon. Fortunately for them, the Pons Absconditus was moving so fast that it put them down in a place no one controlled.



Hemi explains that the bridge got confused. Taking stock of their whereabouts, they find themselves at a crossroads, with no one around. Deeba asks the Book what it thinks, and the book says that it would explain some things, if her theory were correct. Deeba says that she has to finish this business in UnLondon before her family forgets her entirely, so she asks the Book what it still knows, and what knowledge they can use to defeat the Smog.

#### Chapter 55

Deeba asks the book if there is any mention of her, but there is only one mention of the 'funny sidekick.' She decides that the Smog would be taken off guard if they attacked instead of hiding, so she asks the book for information about attacking the Smog, and the book tells her about the seven jewels of UnLondon, the Heptical Collection. Hemi agrees to help, because he has no other options, but the book tells Deeba that she has nine days till her family forgets her, so she does not feel she has time for long quests.

#### Chapter 56

Deeba and Hemi go to Puzzleborough, where the forest house is, to find the featherkey.

#### Chapter 57

Deeba and Hemi arrive in Mr. Speaker's Talklands, where Deeba is looking for a phone to call her family to remind them of her existence. After a lot of searching, they find an old red London-style phone booth.

#### Chapter 58

Deeba's father can't really hear her, because the connection is poor, and figures approach Deeba while she is talking. These are utterlings, creatures spoken into existence by the Speaker who insists on being the only one who speaks in Talklands, and they drag her off to be condemned by him.

#### Chapter 59

With an enormous voice, the Speaker condemns Deeba for talking in his lands. As he speaks, utterlings leap into existence from his mouth. He wants Deeba to stay and talk to him, to tell him new words, and she tells him Bling, Lairy, Brer and Diss, and he is delighted.

## Analysis

Chapter 50: As in many superhero movies, the hero is here trapped in the lair of the villain, and the villain is explaining the plan that the hero has nearly foiled. Deeba and her friend would seem to be a great deal of danger, although the reader probably has a sense of how the story ends and still has some optimism about a narrow escape and





the rallying of forces. But as villains go, Unstable is a simple hunger for content, without any need for, or appreciation for other people or any relationships.

Chapter 51: Unsurprisingly, Deeba and Hemi make a clean escape from Unstable's workshop. They now know almost the full extent of the diabolical plan, and now have to figure out how to muster the forces that will defeat it. They have only a few friends, but in stories like this, a noble cause gathers its own adherents.

Chapter 52: One place where Deeba might hope to be protected is the Pons Absconditus, where the Propheseers seem to be devoted to fighting Smog, but Brokkenbroll arrives there and now she is not safe wherever she goes. She and her friend Hemi have already been discredited to everyone, but now the book is the only authority left that could bolster their case.

Chapter 53: Just when it seems that there is no way out for Deeba, she and Hemi jump from the Pons Absconditus to escape from Brokkenbroll. Something will have to happen to save them, since they are up against so many enemies.

Chapter 54: Now that Deeba is on her own, with only Hemi and the book for resources, she has to dig deeper than she has, to find the way forward in her fight against the Smog, and this means working with Hemi's wariness about other people's suspicions, and rejuvenating the Book's poor self-esteem after the failures of the prophecies regarding the Schwazzy.

Chapter 55: Deeba's resources are thin, but the book does have information about how to fight the Smog, and she is willing to use what she's got. Instead of hiding, she decides to attack, to get the Heptical Collection and the UnGun, and fight it out, but this decision is accompanied by a time constraint, which is going to limit her ability to fulfill the necessary steps. Nevertheless, there are tools to fight the Smog with, if Deeba can get them.

Chapter 56: Even with so much on the line, the novel returns to the tour-guide-through-an-unreal-city mode in this chapter, preparing the reader and Deeba for another new aspect of UnLondon. It's a forest in an apartment building.

Chapter 57: Communication in UnLondon is quite complicated, and the map of the Blabyrinth keeps shifting, but with a lot of persistence, Deeba and Hemi find a payphone so Deeba can keep herself alive in two realms simultaneously.

Chapter 58: Some of the creatures in Un Lun Dun are quite whimsical, and the utterlings are both frightening and delightful, both in their drawings, and in the concept of creatures spoken into existence.

Chapter 59: The Speaker's chapter is a diversion from the quest, but an entertaining one, as the speaker creates creatures by speaking rich words. Deeba is not as threatened by him as she is by other characters.



## Discussion Question 1

Compare Unstible to other well-known villains. What characteristics make Unstible unique? What characteristics does Unstible share with other villains?

## Discussion Question 2

What does the Smog represent? Why is it important the Deeba fight it, metaphorically?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the importance of communication in the novel and how it applies, specifically, to Deeba and Hemi.

## Vocabulary

Not available.



# Chapters 60-71

## Summary

### Chapter 60

Deeba wants to leave UnLondon, and when the Speaker has his utterlings restrain her, she tells them that words don't have to do what their speaker alone wants: They can do other things too. With the words in rebellion, she is free to go. She takes Diss, Bling, and Cauldron with her.

### Chapter 61

The book leads Deeba and Hemi to the forest-house, and on the way there, they engage the help of Yorick Cavea, a bird who lives in a birdcage that lives where a man's head might be on his body. Sometimes Cavea flies free, sometimes he stays in the cage, and the man walks around. Cavea agrees to come with them.

### Chapter 62

Progress in the forest-house is slow on account of the dense growth. Cavea flies off to find Parakeetus Claviger, who possesses the featherkey. The party has not gotten far, before the UnSun goes down and they decide to camp.

### Chapter 63

In the morning, they avoid quick-growing tendrils of forest, and make their way to the top of the house, where they prepare to greet Claviger, the bearer of the featherkey, whom they find perched on top of the toilet from which a forest stream descends through the house.

### Chapter 64

The book translates for Deeba as she asks for the featherkey, but Claviger says that he refuses. He needs his crest because chicks dig it, he says. Deeba insults Claviger, then the utterlings jump out from the foliage to grab the featherkey off his head. Diss gets lost to piranha in the stream from the toilet, but the other make a quick retreat. On their way out to the street, they are greeted by a smombie, a zombie resurrected by the Smog.

### Chapter 65

The smombie has hacked his way into the forest house with a machete, effectively clearing a path of retreat for Deeba and the others, and they leave after they fight their way past him and throw him into the piranha stream.

### Chapter 66



Deeba is impatient to return home, and also to win the battle with the Smog, so she tells the book to cut to the chase, and tell her about the UnGun. She decides to skip the other tasks, and proceed straight to the final weapon.

#### Chapter 67

After arguing over whether you can skip parts of the prophesy, Deeba and the others proceed to Webminster Abbey, where the Black Window lives, and guards the UnGun. On their way, they hear Murgatroyd calling them from Rosa and Jones' bus, where Obaday Fing and Skool are waiting as well.

#### Chapter 68

Deeba runs, at first, but she thinks that Murgatroyd and the others are on her side. Murgatroyd starts to menace Deeba, but Jones electrocutes him, and together, they all fly off to Webminster Abbey and the UnGun.

#### Chapter 69

Deeba and the others decide not to kill Murgatroyd—whom the others say they needed, as cover so they could find her. On their way to Webminster Abbey, they talk about the rumors about the Smog, and how various people have tried to appease it or even profit by it.

#### Chapter 70

All night the bus travels to Webminster Abbey. Skool stays outside, because his heavy diving gear hinders him on the silk webs. Almost as soon as they are in, Rosa is taken away suddenly by a window-spider.

#### Chapter 71

Deeba and the others meet the bishops who want to know which side won the chess match from which they were each removed, but Deeba never got the crown of the black or white king, so she has no idea, and so she cannot get their help.

## Analysis

Chapter 60: Truth, Nietzsche says, is a mobile army of metaphors, and Deeba mobilizes the words themselves, to mean what they want to mean, and to defy their speaker.

Chapter 61: People in UnLondon have strange things where their heads might be. First a pincushion, now a birdcage—and the bird is the person, the person's body is just a vehicle. The seven jewels of UnLondon raise a certain tension, in Deeba and the reader, about carrying out all seven tasks before the Smog attacks or Deeba's family forgets her or both.



Chapter 62: The forest-house is not so threatening, yet, but it does threaten to slow the search down to a crawl, so there is still an urgency to Deeba's quest, in that regard.

Chapter 63: Deeba and Hemi aren't in much danger in this chapter, but the pace of their progress is quite slow, and they are nervous about what will happen next, as they try to convince Claviger to give them what they need.

Chapter 64: If Deeba is taking the quest to save UnLondon seriously, Claviger is the opposite, a self-involved male who cannot give anything up for fear of losing his status. Diss' death in the stream warns the reader, and Deeba, that death is one of the options for these characters. The smombie they meet in the forest is a threat, but it proves to be a help, in having cut a way out for them.

Chapter 65: With pluck and verve, Deeba and Hemi and the others overcome the smombie and survive to get out of the forest house, but at a price that makes them wonder how much more they can do.

Chapter 66: This first task strained Deeba resources, as she does not have the time or manpower to complete six more such tasks. She is succeeding, and surviving, with help, but she cannot manage many more of these errands.

Chapter 67: The question of whether you can skip six of seven tasks in a prophecy is a valid one, and Deeba might be setting herself up for a fall, but the prophecy has been pretty unreliable, so perhaps she is safe.

Chapter 68: Help arrives, although there is a twist: Obaday Fing and Conductor Jones were just using Murgatroyd to get to Deeba before abandoning him and helping her. Now she has more help, but it remains to be seen, what she will be up against.

Chapter 69: The bus ride gives the author a chance to explore other people's responses to the Smog, and the idea of appeasement: the possibility that people could live with the Smog if they just gave it what it wanted.

Chapter 70: The novel starts to put the characters in position for the final task, in advance of the final showdown. When Skool is left outside, an attentive reader will see that this will be an advantage at some later point. Rosa's sudden disappearance reminds the reader that the author is willing to do away with minor characters to keep the tension.

Chapter 71: Deeba seems to be up against the problem of skipping tasks, and the reader is curious at the same time that Deeba is nervous about how to overcome this limitation.



## Discussion Question 1

What is the Smog's influence over people and bodies, and what kinds of negotiations have others tried to make with the Smog, to appease it and share UnLondon with it? What are the problems with appeasement?

## Discussion Question 2

What kinds of dangers are created by skipping tasks in a prophecy? How will those dangers likely be overcome?

## Discussion Question 3

What kinds of strengths has Deeba shown so far? What kinds of strengths remain for her to demonstrate, as she saves UnLondon? Does looking at her character this way give you clues about what will be demanded of her?

## Vocabulary

promise, misbehaved, spluttered, screeching, squashed, renegade, tentacle, inquisitive, brilliant, quiddity, existence, chaotically, accompanied, particular, reconstituted, shortage, endeavors, corset, entice, vulgar, khaki, engagement, plumage, interior, rumors



# Chapters 72-80

## Summary

### Chapter 72

Deeba convinces the bishops that their real desire has been to keep from finding out which king won, and so they agree to help her.

### Chapter 73

Deeba and the others build a trap and descend into Westminster Abbey. They are connected by a rope to Skool on the outside. Windows on legs and webs descend and climb in and out of each other, tangling the reality of all the rooms that exist inside each of the windows.

### Chapter 74

Deeba and her friends make a mirror image of the inside of the window containing the UnGun, and hope to attract the Black Window. Eventually the Black Window comes to the decoy window, and when it touches it, Deeba and the others spring the trap, catching the Black Window by the legs.

### Chapter 75

The others hold the Black Window still while Deeba climbs through the window into the room with the UnGun. She is disoriented and feels like wandering around, but her friends yell to her. She comes to and jumps out.

### Chapter 76

Deeba loads the UnGun unconsciously, as she drops bits of food, hair, and salt into its chambers—but she does not know this, she thinks that she neglected to get the bullets for the gun, and everyone is disheartened, and considering quitting. Then the neighborhood is under attack by Smoglydtes, and they all have to flee.

### Chapter 77

Pursued by Smoglydtes, Deeba turns and fires the UnGun, and vegetation fills the block, walling the Smoglydtes in, and forcing the Smog to retreat. Deeba does not want to be the one to wield the UnGun, but none of the others will take it. Deeba tells the others they don't need to come with her, but none of them will abandon her now.

### Chapter 78



On their way to Unstible's workshop, Deeba and the others see fires everywhere in UnLondon: The Smog must be setting them to feed itself. They hear a rumbling under the street, and a burrowing machine pops out, with London police who place Deeba under arrest.

#### Chapter 79

The police have obviously been working with Minister Rawley in London, and they threaten Deeba's family if she resists them. They arrest her for terrorism, and all her doubts about not being the Schwazzy, and missing her family make her want to return. She is about to go with them, but then realizes what she has fought for—she fires the UnGun, and a bit of brick turns into a city of brick houses, walling the cops in, so Deeba and the others can make their escape. They travel through UnLondon by night and start to sense that people are ready for the fight that is coming.

#### Chapter 80

Deeba and the others try to stay out of sight, staying in emptish houses during the day, but the graffiti headlines announce the coming fight. The locals find Deeba and the others in their camp, and offer to help. In the morning, the Smog is thicker than ever, and they see someone trying to negotiate with the Smog by 'Smog-fishing,' but the man is devoured, and Deeba and the others are a little disheartened by what they're up against.

## Analysis

Chapter 72: Deeba demonstrates her diplomacy and reason in convincing the bishops to give up their war with each other, and help her in spite of it.

Chapter 73: Deeba just untangled a longstanding feud, but these window spiders are creating a tangled world by climbing in and out of each other's windows. Hopefully the trap Deeba and the others have built will work, for capturing the Black Window.

Chapter 74: The trap Deeba and the others make is 'inelegant,' but it works, and things look good for Deeba getting the UnGun and getting out of Webminster Abbey alive.

Chapter 75: Deeba is almost caught in the parallel universe inside the Black Window, but her friends yell to her, and bust her out with the UnGun.

Chapter 76: The disheartening realization that Deeba did not get the bullets seems like a real setback, but this novel has overcome so many setbacks already that it seems like a puzzle the author has created: how will it be overcome this time? The reader might feel some despair with the characters, but more likely sits back waiting for the magic/twist/explanation.





Chapter 77: Firing the gun raises everyone's hopes: The gun is obviously magic, as strange as everything else in UnLondon. Deeba is not the Schwazzy, but no one will take the UnGun from her, because she is obviously the only one who should use it.

Chapter 78: The novel takes yet one more turn when the Bobbies show up, but these events are almost excuses for the author's creativity, more than actual setbacks for the characters, now.

Chapter 79: The UnGun comes to the rescue again, with magnifying powers that turn a bit of brick into a city. Deeba is offered a chance to return to her family, but the work at hand will not let her go—there is too much at stake.

Chapter 80: The night before the battle is always a night of nerves and fear, and this is the case for Deeba and the others, who are horrified by what the Smog is capable of. But, their cause has brought troops and helpers, so they are not entirely without support.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does Deeba decide to stay in UnLondon and fight the Smog instead of returning home? Why is this a good decision?

## Discussion Question 2

What is the most inventive obstacle Deeba and the others have to overcome? What is the most inventive technique the author has found, for getting Deeba and the others out of a jam?

## Discussion Question 3

Which secondary characters are liable to be killed in the coming fight, and which characters are sure to survive? How can you tell? Can you?

## Vocabulary

greed, encourage, bishop, scornfully, penultimate, kiboshed, quizzical, simultaneously, incredulity, reversed, surrendered, eagerly, filigreed, vibrations, absolutely, irregular, smothered, tarantula, furtive, arachnid, occurred, regurgitate, succession, vault, inelegant



# Chapters 81-90

## Summary

### Chapter 81

The Slaterunners show up, and the Wraithtown ghosts, among others. Lectern shows up, one of the Propheseers, and she apologizes for distrusting Deeba before. Lectern says that Mortar and the others are so afraid of the Smog and so in thrall to Brokkenbroll that they are blind to the reality Deeba has been describing. Mortar in particular shows blind allegiance to Unstible, ignoring the evidence. To take Deeba and the others to the neighborhood of Unstible's workshop, allies bring a flotilla of upside-down cars turned into boats that will float them. Deeba names her boat the Diss and Rosa, in honor of the two friends who have died on this quest.

### Chapter 82

The procession of car-boats is joined by Yorick Cavea, whose person-vehicle was eaten by piranha, but he arrives in a birdcage on top of a different body. An army approaches, and a battle begins, but Deeba fires the UnGun, and hair fills the stink-junkies' suits, incapacitating them.

### Chapter 83

The boats enter the canals, and Skool goes into the water to pull the boat when it is too narrow to use oars, but he is attacked by Smog and shudderwrack in the water. Deeba fires a salt crystal into the canal, turning the canal to brine, to save Skool.

### Chapter 84

Arriving at Unstible's workshop, Deeba and the others are greeted by an army of smombies, but the binjas and the ghosts fight with them. Skool's suit is punctured, spilling the water and fish that constitute Skool. Some of the fish die, but many are pushed into the briny canal. Hemi tells Deeba to go inside while he and his ghosts fight outside.

Chapter 85: Unstible's workshop is protected by the Hex, a group of six magicians, and Deeba and the others overhear them talking about Unstible's betrayals before they confront them. The Hex casts spells by speaking. They fling electricity at her, but Obaday Fing jumps in with a mirror to redirect it.

### Chapter 86

The redirected bolt brings a table full of fruit to life, and it menaces Deeba and the others, but she fires the UnGun, and it shoots a swarm of ants at the fruit and it is eaten. The Hex casts a spell to stop Deeba's heart.



## Chapter 87

Deeba already has experience convincing words not to follow orders, and her utterlings come to life in fighting them. She rewards them by showing them how to articulate themselves, to speak so they can keep themselves alive by being spoken.

## Chapter 88

By the time Deeba reaches Unstible's workshop, she has only the book and Curdle with her, as the others have stayed behind to protect her. Deeba and the book are trying to figure out how Unstible and Brokkenbroll are planning to win, but Brokkenbroll spies them, and sends an army of unbrellas to break through the workshop windows and attack them.

## Chapter 89

Brokkenbroll bursts into the factory where Deeba is going to confront Unstible, and she tries to tell him that the Smog is his enemy too, but he is too in love with the power he has been promised, he cannot see it. She goes to draw the UnGun, but Lectern has it, and is about to hand Deeba over to Brokkenbroll. Brokkenbroll's unbrellas pinion her arms and start to strangle her.

## Chapter 90

Deeba wakes up in Unstible's workshop. Unstible wants to 'breathe' her, by which he means set her on fire and inhale the smoke. Unstible sends Brokkenbroll to take Mortar and get Murgatroyd. Unstible wants to inhale the book and the UnGun and Deeba, and when Brokkenbroll goes, Unstible tells Deeba that Brokkenbroll hasn't realized he's being double-crossed, yet. Deeba gets Curdle to get her sewing kit from her bag, and she fixes her umbrella, so it doesn't answer Brokkenbroll's commands any more. It helps her free herself, and she repairs other unbrellas, which are loyal to her, now—she calls them rebrellas.

## Analysis

Chapter 81: The fight is pulling all the clans together, and it's making clear who has the strength of conviction and who is too weak to take sides, as Mortar is blindly following Unstible, even though it should be clear that Unstible is not about to solve the problem of the Smog. The upside-down car flotilla is a cute UnLondon touch, and Deeba shows some class by naming the boat for their lost friends.

Chapter 82: Deeba saves the day with the UnGun, but now is worried about how many more shots she can use. The arrival of Yorick Cavea indicates that people might not really die, but the book will keep them alive.

Chapter 83: The UnGun is kind of miraculous, the way what ever it fires saves the day in a really creative way, like turning the fresh canal water to brine to save Skool.



Chapter 84: Skool's death is another casualty among the main secondary characters, but most of his fish are saved. Deeba could stay and be upset by this, but Hemi convinces her to get going.

Chapter 85: The magic is really starting to be needed, to work out the fights between these unreal parties, but there is magic on both sides, as Obaday Fing leaps in to save Deeba from the Hex.

Chapter 86: In perhaps the most hilarious of the threats, Deeba is menaced by a fruitbot, but she kills it with a swarm of ants from the UnGun. These problems and solutions are very well fitted to one another.

Chapter 87: Deeba is saved by language, which is mildly ironic, since she is created by language (as a literary character) who has definite characteristics. But she saves herself by relying on the indeterminate nature of language here, one more way for her to keep herself alive.

Chapter 88: Deeba and the book watch the battle play out, and they are not sure which side the people will be on, since Unstible and Brokkenbroll have played games with their loyalties and misled them. But Deeba is heartened when she sees people smacking the umbrellas out of their fellows' hands—the people must know that Unstible and Brokkenbroll are in cahoots.

Chapter 89: Yet another twist, as Lectern doesn't want to die, and is willing to hand Deeba over to Brokkenbroll. Even Deeba's own umbrella has been turned into an umbrella in Brokkenbroll's command.

Chapter 90: Like the Speaker's words, Deeba finds that Brokkenbroll's umbrellas can be taken from his control, and even used against him. Unstible's diabolical plans threaten every single living thing in UnLondon, all of which will be consumed if the Smog has its way, so Deeba is protecting everything, now, and no one but her can see the reality that even Brokkenbroll is being played.

## Discussion Question 1

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the plot twists and shifting loyalties surrounding Unstible and Brokkenbroll? How does this complicated storyline help define Deeba's virtues and strengths?

## Discussion Question 2

What would Deeba have done without the UnGun? What other kinds of weapons could you imagine that would fit in UnLondon, and work against the Smog?



## Discussion Question 3

What keeps Brokkenbroll, or Mortar, from recognizing the facts of the power dynamic around them, and Unstible's plans for them and everything?

## Vocabulary

overlook, bureaucrat, ostentatiously, librarians, abandoning, criticism, routed, geometric, vertically, nondescript, apocalyptic, companion, vessels, jerkin, sluiced, spanner, cylinder, procession, dreadlocks, translated, amphibious, submerged, obstacles, descended, disperse



# Chapters 91-Epilogue

## Summary

### Chapters 91-Epilogue

#### Chapter 91

Deeba bursts into Unstible's workshop, accompanied by her rebrellas, and Deeba sees Unstible's plan at last: the Smog has created a chemical that will ignite the treatment on Brokkenbroll's unbrellas, effectively making them all incendiary devices, instead of offering protection against the Smog. Unstible demonstrates by thrusting one of the rebrellas into the dip, where it goes up in flames. Deeba's rebrella retrieves the UnGun for her.

#### Chapter 92

Unstible says that he wants to bring UnLondoners into the open, with the unbrellas, so he can burn them and 'know' them in their smoke. Brokkenbroll arrives with Lectern in the elevator, and Deeba tries to warn him, but he does not listen to her.

#### Chapter 93

Deeba shoots the UnGun and it fires paper airplanes at Unstible. One of Deeba's rebrellas knocks Brokkenbroll unconscious, while Unstible inhales more and more Smog from the boiling vat of the chemical. Finally Unstible says that it's time, and bursts out of the Unstible skin, to fly into the sky as a cloud of green toxic gas. The building starts to collapse, but Deeba's rebrella darts around, protecting her and the others from falling bricks. All around UnLondon, Smog leaves the bodies of smombies and smoke junkies, to gather in the sky, where it can carry the inflammable gas to the unbrellas.

#### Chapter 94

Deeba sends Mortar to the Pons Absconditus to spread the news not to use the unbrellas. Mortar and Lectern depart, and the clouds begin to descend, to start the conflagration.

#### Chapter 95

Deeba realizes that the prophecy as printed in the book is correct as printed: 'nothing and the UnGun'—not 'nothing but the UnGun,' as she had supposed.

#### Chapter 96



Deeba aims the UnGun at the Smog cloud, and fires it—with the effect that a large chunk of it is absorbed into the gun. Five more times she fires it, until the Smog is completely absorbed into the gun, and the sky is clear.

#### Chapter 97

Brokkenbroll comes to, and runs away, but the book says that they will deal with him later. Obaday Fing and Jones and the others come in, and Deeba explains her victory. She makes plans to dispose of the unbrellas, and people begin to adjust to the end of the war.

#### Chapter 98

All through UnLondon, people are fixing their unbrellas and turning them into rebrellas. The Propheseers plan to deal with the people who worked with the Smog. Deeba asks why the prophecies were wrong, and the Propheseers say they will become the Order of Suggesters, in recognition of their fallibility. Deeba drops the UnGun into a five foot by five foot square of concrete being poured beneath the Pons Absconditus, and the rest of the cement is poured in, locking the UnGun away for good. Deeba says that she wants to stay, but she plans to simply return from time to time. The others take pride in the fact that she called UnLondon 'our' abcity, including herself in it. Hemi gives Deeba her money back, so that she will still owe him, and have to come back in the future. The Pons Absconditus deposits her in her neighborhood in London, and she walks in her family's door.

#### Chapter 99

Deeba arrives at dinnertime, and her family has only set three places. Her parents are a little confused by her arrival, but they tell her to get a plate, and join them. She goes to Zanna's to see that she's alright, but Zanna still doesn't remember anything about UnLondon, and Deeba can't tell her anything.

#### Epilogue

Deeba makes an appointment with Minister Rawley, who has become popular with environmentalists by shipping carbon hazards to UnLondon. Rawley had been frightened by Deeba's letter, and now Deeba shows up with Jones and Obaday Fing and a binja, to meet with her. Her agents try to shoot them, but they are protected by rebrellas and by Jones' electricity. Outgunned, the minister is ready to hear what Deeba and the others might say.

## Analysis

Chapter 91: This chapter reveals Unstible's diabolical plan to use the unbrellas to light all of UnLondon on fire, so it can feed itself on the smoke. Deeba has created an army of her own, though, in the rebrellas, and her rebrella grabs the UnGun for her. The battle is hardly over.



Chapter 92: Deeba is in full possession of the facts, but it is still not clear how she will overpower Unstible, who seems to be holding all the cards, including Brokkenbroll's ignorance and vanity, thinking that he can be in control of anything.

Chapter 93: The final 'bullet' from the UnGun does hardly anything to Unstible or Brokkenbroll, and Deeba feels powerless to stop the Smog from inhaling its brew and bursting out of the Unstible skin to gather in the sky for the final triumphant assault on UnLondon. But she is still alive, and she can still try to save herself and the others, so the fight is still not over.

Chapter 94: This moment seems to be the moment of Deeba's least power, as the Smog has burst its bounds, and is preparing the final assault, but there are still some tricks in the author's and Deeba's, bags.

Chapter 95: Realizing how to read the prophecy correctly is the source of all of Deeba's final power.

Chapter 96: In one fell swoop, owing to the magical qualities of the UnGun, Deeba kills the Smog.

Chapter 97: There is not much cleaning up to do, from the novel's point of view: Brokkenbroll needs to be caught, and Rawley needs to be dealt with, but the main point now is for Deeba to get safely home before her family completely forgets her.

Chapter 98: This is the denouement, the wrapping up, which concludes the business of the novel. The battle is over, and Deeba is planning to return home, and as she starts to say her goodbyes, she starts to feel sad for missing her friends, but she says that she plans to return often, and this softens the discomfort of leaving.

Chapter 99: Deeba's return home is just a little unnerving, but she is welcomed, and there is no disaster from the phlegm effect: she is still remembered, and even though Zanna does not remember anything, she knows that she saved UnLondon all by herself.

Epilogue: By the time they meet again in Minister Rawley's office, Deeba and her friends have become an efficient fighting force, ready to expose the minister's diabolical plans, and to stand up for the UnLondon abcity.

## Discussion Question 1

What has Deeba learned by the time she has vanquished Unstible? What lessons does the novel offer the reader?

## Discussion Question 2

What opportunities are there for a sequel to Un Lun Dun? Who might make plans to free the Smog from its concrete tomb, and put it to use in another diabolical scheme?





## Discussion Question 3

What is your final impression of Un Lun Dun? Would you recommend it to a friend? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary

encased, fug, impressively, canopy, ballet, spigot, hors d'oeuvre, convoluted, crooning, laboratory, strides, hurricane, onslaught, triumphant, infiltrated, unconscious, grossly, tinged, cauldron, mournfully, filaments, celebrates, congealing, appetizer, murderous



# Characters

## Deeba Resham

This person is the hero who saves UnLondon from being on fire.

## Zanna Moon

This person is regarded as the chosen one who will save UnLondon from destruction.

## The Smog

This is a chemical stew that has developed its own form of consciousness and will. It seeks to devour all of UnLondon, and possibly London as well.

## Mortar

This person is one of the Propheseers, who govern UnLondon and interpret its future.

## Curdle

This is an animate milk carton in UnLondon.

## Joe Jones

This person is a conductor on the bus in UnLondon, and he takes care of the person who saves UnLondon.

## Benjamin Unstible

This person is a chemist who is killed while working on an antidote to the Smog that plagues UnLondon.

## Hemi

This person is a half-human half-ghost resident of UnLondon.



## **Obaday Fing**

This person is has a pincushion for a head, and makes clothes out of sewn printed pages from books and newspapers.

## **Inessa Badladder**

This person is the leader of the Slaterunners in Roofdom.

## **Rosa**

This is a bus driver in UnLondon.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Umbrella

This is a broken device for keeping the rain off.

## The Schwazzy

This is a mythical role to be occupied by the person who is prophesied to save UnLondon.

## The Bus

This vehicle uses a hot air balloon to navigate the streets and skies of UnLondon.

## The Black Window

This is a spider that is also a window, in an old church that is full of hanging windows that open on different rooms.

## The Umbrella Treatment

This is a dip that allows UnLondon residents to protect themselves from the Smog's bullets and heavy metal fragments.

## The UnGun

This is the weapon that allows Deeba to restore order to UnLondon by absorbing the Smog.

## The Featherkey

This is one of the trophies Deeba is meant to acquire in the process of fulfilling the prophecy that will banish the Smog.

## Travel Card

This identifies Zanna as the Schwazzy to the UnLondoners.



## **The Loon**

This is the Un-Moon that fills the sky over UnLondon.

## **Heptical Collection**

This group consists of the seven jewels of UnLondon, which Deeba needs to defeat the Smog.



# Settings

## London

This is the contemporary start of the novel, where the main character and her best friend live.

## UnLondon

This is the place where things go when they are broken or obsolete, and no longer needed in the city.

## Unstible's workshop

This is where the final battle takes place, between the forces trying to set the city of UnLondon on fire, and the forces trying to stop them.

## Wraithtown

This is the place where the dead and the half dead live in UnLondon.



# Themes and Motifs

## Changing Fate

The beginning of the novel rides on the momentum that comes from strangers looking at Zanna in a telling, important way. Then Zanna and Deeba discover that Zanna is the chosen one, who is going to liberate UnLondon from the Smog, and Deeba feels left out and belittled beside her friend. But, when Zanna is injured by inhaling Smog, Deeba becomes the caretaker who will help her friend. When they arrive home, she suspects that there is more to the story than she has been told. By questioning the authorities around her (Brokkenbroll in particular), she takes her fate—and the fate of UnLondon—into her own hands. She trusts herself to find the secret to Unstible's death and to defeat the Smog. Turning against a fate that was already written to a different fate that is created turns Un Lun Dun into a self-creation story, a bildungsroman.

## Trust

Zanna and Deeba arrive in UnLondon as complete strangers, who are used to one reality and then show up in a completely different reality. They are disoriented from the first, and afraid, but they meet Hemi and Obaday Fing, and then the Propheseers, who take their side and help them. Every time Zanna and Deeba need help, they find friendly people who take their sides, and it is rare that they meet people they need to distrust or be afraid of. Distrust comes more from Brokkenbroll and Unstible—who are supposed to be friends—than from the people they meet casually.

## Destructive Hunger

The Smog is not a criminal mastermind, scheming to make life miserable for people, but a simple hunger for more and more food. In this sense, it is not a mastermind but a force of nature, more like pure evil than a particular villain with a history and a set of particular desires. The Smog just wants to consume everything, and it employs smart people in its goal. Most of these helpers are merely smoke-junkies or smombies, which are hardly animate, but it uses Brokkenbroll's vanity and Unstible's mind to devise a plan for setting everything on fire. In front of a simple destructive desire like this, friendship and loyalty and courage and the affection of friends—even the ingenuity of the Book and the Propheseers is powerless in front of this destructive force, and it is only the magical force of the UnGun that allows Deeba to save UnLondon from the Smog. The only thing she herself can do is to threaten Minister Rawley with consequences if London allows any more smog to be sent to UnLondon.



## Teamwork

Zanna and Deeba are complete strangers to UnLondon when they arrive, although the prophecy is that Zanna will be important in UnLondon's fate. As total strangers, Zanna and Deeba can hardly get around with Hemi's help, and it is only when the Propheseers tell them about the prophecy that they can make any plans. Deeba has a moment of inspiration when she returns home to London, but when she returns, she is as powerless as before, and it is only because her friends are there to help her that she can do anything. She does develop the ability to transform the unbrellas into rebrellas, which brings adherents to her cause, but fortunately for her, they can operate independently, and help her when she is incapacitated by Brokkenbroll or Unstible.

## Courage Against Appeasing Threats

The Smog represents an absolute threat to UnLondon, and in the face of that threat, many people have different responses. People like Mortar blindly adhere to Unstible, even after Deeba unmask him as the Smog incarnate. Others, like Brokkenbroll, believe that they can retain some position of their own, and share power with the Smog, blinding themselves to the fact of the Smog's voracity. Many in the city think that they can broker a deal with the Smog, so that they can stay alive on its terms, but Deeba knows, because Unstible has exposed his plans to her, that the ultimate goal is to burn all of UnLondon and London. In the face of this threat, Deeba has to show real courage and determination, and to avoid even the comfortable option of returning home, and avoiding the whole confrontation. She decides to take on the fight, and go down swinging, if necessary.



# Styles

## Point of View

Un Lun Dun is told from a third-person limited point of view, which does not give the reader access to the characters' thoughts, but does follow their actions. The narrative voice is neutral and disinterested. It does not make the reader aware of itself.

## Language and Meaning

The language in Un Lun Dun is unusual. Mieville invents words to populate an entire alternate universe. In some cases, his names for things are campy and obvious—like the binjas or the unbrellas. However, in some cases the names are inventive and interesting, like the Pons Absconditus or the 'Schwazzy.' The language is not very metaphorical or symbolic, so the story does not resonate with additional meanings or suggested meanings. Actually, the reader has enough work to do in keeping up with the plot twists and the constant stream of unique UnLondon creatures that Deeba and the others are always discovering.

## Structure

Un Lun Dun starts off as reality and switches over to fantasy. Then, it switches back and returns one final time. The story is told chronologically, from beginning to end, without more than the cursory flashbacks to fill in the characters' back stories. UnLondon is meant to be the flip-side of London, so there is a psychological mirroring in effect. The cities are so different and distinct in time—since there is a lag, and UnLondon is populated by the obsolete things in London—that the mirror effect is not exact. The effect the structure of the book is more like a shifting mirror, in which the reader, like Zanna and Deeba, sees the present then the past, then distortions between them.



## Quotes

Zanna forever!

-- Graffiti (Chapter 1 paragraph Page 8)

**Importance:** This graffiti gives Zanna a sense that something odd is going on, something she doesn't understand, but might be involved in nonetheless.

The rubbish was close. It had slowed, and was creeping towards them.

-- The narrator (Chapter 6 paragraph Page 28)

**Importance:** This takes place during Zanna and Deeba's first moments in UnLondon, and it frightens both of them to live in a place where rubbish is animate and hungry for attention.

I conduct passengers to safety. I conduct myself with dignity. And there's one other thing that all of us who take the oath learn to conduct.

-- Conductor Jones (Chapter 14 paragraph Page 61)

**Importance:** Conductor Jones says this right before he electrocutes the man who is attacking Zanna and Deeba.

Certain substances in UnLondon exist in prologue form in London, and enter a second lifecycle here with new purposes, even as sentient denizens of the abcity.

-- Mortar (Chapter 23 paragraph Page 95)

**Importance:** Mortar explains the rules of UnLondon to Zanna and Deeba, and this is as clear a statement as the reader gets, of the difference between the two cities, and the different laws that apply in either place. The rest is hidden behind the action.

I climbed out of my library. And I came here.

-- Deeba (Chapter 38 paragraph Page 154)

**Importance:** Deeba indicates that her journey was a literary one, by which she got to UnLondon, and this forces the reader to see the present novel is a journey itself.

The destiny didn't work with the Chosen One. So I'll do it instead.

-- Deeba (Chapter 54 paragraph Page 225)

**Importance:** Deeba, Hemi, and the book all feel a certain flaw in themselves for not having been whole in the light of the prophecy of the chosen one. But, something must be done while the class is at home with no memory of UnLondon, and Deeba chooses to take that task upon herself.

He says, uh...that the chicks dig his threads.

-- Parakeetus Claviger (Chapter 64 paragraph Page 263)



**Importance:** Claviger is too vain to be able to see the larger struggle surrounding him and the danger to which his featherkey might be a solution.

If this place has the UnGun in it, what else might be here? Maybe there's a garden.  
-- Deeba (Chapter 75 paragraph Page 312)

**Importance:** In the alternate reality inside the Black Window, Deeba is lulled into thinking that there are yet other worlds that might be more pleasant than the world she left, where she was responsible for winning a monumental battle. Fortunately, her friends call her back to herself, and she is not trapped inside the Black Window forever.

Its' poison with a mind—you do not want to be here if it runs things.  
-- Deeba (Chapter 81 paragraph Page 351)

**Importance:** Mustering the troops for the fight, Deeba succinctly describes the threat of the Smog. It is not remotely human, but a living toxicity, which cannot be bargained or reasoned with.

Minister, we need to talk.  
-- Deeba (Epilogue paragraph Page 429)

**Importance:** At the end of the novel, Deeba goes to Minister Rawley's office to expose the whole plot to feed the smog in UnLondon. Deeba has overcome many obstacles to get to this meeting, and the reader can have confidence that she will tell the minister a thing or two.