

Xenocide Study Guide

Xenocide by Orson Scott Card

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Plot Summary

Xenocide continues Orson Scott Card's Speaker series and is a worthy sequel to the series' second novel, *Speaker for the Dead*. Over three thousand years have elapsed on Earth since the human-bugger wars detailed in the first novel, *Ender's Game*. Having been sentenced to planet destruction by Starways Congress, humans on the Brazilian colony planet of Lusitania search for a way to avoid their fate and also to solve a host of other problems they are facing, not the least of which is the virulent descolada virus that infects the entire planet and is continually adapting itself in order to destroy humans and their fragile existence.

Fortunately for the inhabitants of Lusitania, they have a powerful ally named Jane, an entity more than three thousand years old who exists in the computer and ansible (long distance communication) networks. Jane, has the power to stop the fleet from destroying Lusitania but by doing so must reveal her presence to the Starways Congress which is certain to retaliate with her destruction. Not until Congress gives the order to use the mass destruction device on Path does Jane actually make the fleet invisible by intercepting all its incoming and outgoing communications. Congress wastes no time in enlisting the help of the planet Path where the inhabitants believe that the intellectual and social elite are spoken to by the gods. Starways Congress turns to the greatest of the godspoken, Han Fei-tzu, in order to find the culprit in the Lusitania fleet disappearance.

Inevitably, Han's daughter Gloriously Bright and her secret maid Si Wang-mu puzzle out the mystery of Jane's existence and, convinced that Jane must be working against the gods, Han's daughter alerts Congress and sets the wheels in motion that restore the fleet and will destroy Jane in several months. In an effort to recruit Han and his daughter to the Lusitanian point of view, Jane turns up information that reveals that Congress has perpetrated unspeakable crimes against the citizens of Path. She turns over evidence proving that Congress made genetic modifications to the original settlers on Path which live on in their descendants. According to her information, the godspoken were given genes that cause obsessive compulsive disorder but are taught that their compulsions are really the gods speaking. They are also artificially enhanced to be extraordinarily intelligent. Han Fei-tzu realizes that Congress gave the godspoken their intelligence in order to serve them and their OCD in order to control them. Han and his daughter have a difference of opinion about whether the Starways Congress serves the gods and begin to drift apart. Gloriously Bright spends her days trying to honor the gods and save her father's honor now that he has begun working against Congress in order to help Jane discover a way to save herself and all the inhabitants of Lusitania.

The leadership of the Lusitanian colony is under extreme pressure. Unknown to most of the colonists, Ender has brought the hive queen to Lusitania in order to reestablish the buggers as a species. Now, not only the humans but also the buggers and the indigenous pequeninos (piggies) face annihilation at the hands of the Lusitania fleet. The buggers and piggies soon form an alliance in order to survive. The piggies allow the buggers to make a home on their planet and permit them to pollute in order to create



two colony ships, one for each species. Both piggies and buggers plan to get off the planet before Lusitania's destruction. While not wishing xenocide on either buggers or piggies, the humans on Lusitania debate whether or not to let them go since they will inevitably destroy all of humanity by carrying the descolada virus with them to other worlds.

Ender's step-son Quim goes on a mission to the forest led by Warmaker, the most belligerent of the piggy fathertrees. Having converted to a heretical version of Christianity, Warmaker is convinced that the piggies are God's true children and that the descolada is an incarnation of the Holy Ghost. That humans are destroyed by it, he argues, is a sign that they are unworthy in God's eyes. Upon his arrival, Quim is imprisoned by Warmaker in his trunk and denied the food that helps humans resist the descolada virus. For seven days Quim struggles valiantly and debates theology with Warmaker before succumbing to the virus. This is the first time since a pact was made between piggies and humans that the peace was broken and the colonists are outraged that the piggies would kill a priest. Riots break out in the colony and a nearby piggy forest - completely innocent of any involvement in Quim's death - is burned. Human and Rooter, two friendly fathertrees, appeal to the bugged queen for help. She puts bugged sentries in place and an uneasy peace is forced on humans and piggies. Ender's wife and Quim's mother Novinha blames Ender for not stopping Quim and leaves him.

With Jane acting as an interface between Han Fei-tzu, Wang-mu, Ender and several of his highly educated step-children, the think tank eventually begins to find solutions to the dangers they face. By questioning the hive queen about how she creates a new queen, Ender learns more about philotic technology and its role in Jane's birth. Jane, he discovers, was created by accident when the hive queen tried to co-opt him to her will using the philotic network. This revelation spells good news for Jane who will not be completely destroyed when Congress shuts down all the ansible computers in order to kill her. The other implication for Ender's group is that they use their knowledge of philotes and Jane's special abilities to develop a ship that can travel faster than light by traveling outside known space and then reentering at a desired destination. The initial test of the faster than light ship is successful but brings about some surprising results. Miro, Ender's crippled step-son, creates a healed body for himself while "outside" and Ender spawns a clone of his cruel brother Peter and a 13 year old angelic version of his sister Valentine.

By discussing the descolada with Ender's step-daughter Ela, Wang-mu asks questions that lead Elanora and her piggy associate Planter to realize that the descolada must have been engineered by unknown lifeforms in order to colonize space and terraform planets. Planter, worried that piggy consciousness may simply be an effect of the descolada, volunteers himself for an experiment that proves that piggies were and are conscious without the descolada. Sadly, the experiment costs him his life, since the descolada has adapted piggy DNA to be dependent upon the virus. Another of Ender's step-daughters, Quara, relents from her stubborn position of trying to respect the descolada as 'raman'- an alien species with whom humans can peacefully co-exist - and gives the knowledge of both how to create a bacterium that will destroy the descolada and a virus, the recolada, to replace it. The recolada still allows piggies to live as they



always have and is harmless to humans. As a special gift for Han and Wang-mu's help, the xenobiologists on Lusitania develop another virus for Path, one that will erase the godspoken's OCD and extend the benefit of increased intelligence to the underclass on Path.

While the Lusitania fleet is still closing in on the planet at the close of the novel, all three species now have the means to get off the planet before its arrival. Wang-mu joins "Ender's children" (Peter and 13 year old Val) searching for new planets suitable for colonization. Han and Gloriously Bright never reconcile, and she eventually goes mad, but to all outside appearances she continues to live her life in such devotion to both her father and the gods that she is eventually created God of Path after her death. Novinha comes to lead her own life of devotion, inviting Ender to join the Children of the Mind with her. Not ready to commit to the Order's strict precept of abstinence in marriage, Ender promises to visit her monthly until he can make up his mind.



A Parting

A Parting Summary

Xenocide thoughtfully continues Orson Scott Card's Speaker series and is a worthy sequel to the series' second novel, *Speaker for the Dead*. Over three thousand years have elapsed on Earth since the human-bugger wars detailed in the first novel, *Ender's Game*. Having been sentenced to planet destruction by the Starways Congress, the human colonists of Lusitania search for a way to avoid their fate and also to solve a host of other problems they are facing, not the least of which is the virulent descolada virus that infects the entire planet and is continually adapting itself in order to destroy humans and their fragile colony.

The novel opens on the remote planet Path where the upper caste (ruling class) called "the godspoken" try to live their lives according to the principles of "the Path." The godspoken are chosen from the inhabitants of the planet for their intelligence and believe they are in communication with the gods. The godspoken are expected to embrace the Path entirely and unreservedly and are punished with penances for their lapses of faith.

Han Fei-tzu sits by the death bed of his wife, Jiang-qing. She is wasting away from a disease that has eaten away most of her bones. At only eighteen kilograms (40 lbs), she has become so fragile that an embrace from their four year old daughter once resulted in a broken jaw. At first, Han and his wife banter philosophy and a very touching depiction of their relationship emerges. He truly loves her and realizes that she completes a part of him. Her belief and faith in the gods has been unflinching, whereas she points out he "insists on believing in a world where everything can be explained by natural causes." She is and always has been able to love the gods while he obeys but does not love them on account of many sufferings he has had to endure in his lifetime, not the least of which is losing her at a relatively young age. Han Fei-tzu doubts whether he has the ability to continue without her, but Jiang-qing makes him promise to teach their daughter to love the Path.

Their daughter, Qing-jao enters, bubbling over with excitement at having just counted 23 carp in the pond, wondering if this might be evidence that she too will be "godspoken." Jiang-qing passes away at that moment, but Han Fei-tzu is able to convince Qing-jao that "Mama" is just tired and needs to rest. Han Fei-tzu knows he needs to grieve his loss but the gods exact their penance for his doubt and he feels "the pressure to do the ritual of cleansing." A servant looks in and sees him writhing on the floor, misinterpreting Han Fei-tzu's condition as a sign of his piety since he is doing his duty to the gods even before announcing the death of his wife.

Later the same night, Jiang-qing's body is burned on a funeral pyre. Before the pyre is lit, both father and daughter make their customary "paper offerings" to the dead. On three pieces of paper Qing-jao writes "fish," "book," and "secrets." On three different



pieces of paper Han Fei-tzu writes "My body," "My spirit," and "My Soul." They both tuck their paper offerings into her sleeves and the pyre is lit.

A Parting Analysis

The opening is significant in that it establishes a number of questions to be answered as the novel progresses. Firstly, serious doubt exists about whether Han Fei-tzu will be able to keep his promise to his late wife. She has made him promise that he will teach their daughter to love the gods, yet he is unable to love them himself. The paper offerings also say a great deal about the characters. Han Fei-tzu is able to understand why his daughter writes "fish" since she shared her story about the 23 carp with her mother. He is also able to understand why Qing-jao writes "book" since reading with her mother was a favorite pastime. He cannot guess, however, why she writes "secrets."

For his part, Han Fei-tzu writes "My body," "My spirit," and "My soul" which signifies how entirely devoted he is to her. Before her passing, he suggests to her that if he were Japanese or Hindu he would commit suicide in order to join her in death. They both know he cannot since he has to remain alive to raise Qing-jao.

This chapter also demonstrates the importance of the Path in the lives of the godspoken. Other inhabitants of the planet are permitted to turn their backs on the Path for years, but the godspoken are not permitted to fall away from the Path for even a few hours. We know this because Han Fei-tzu is driven to perform a ritual in order to cleanse himself even before he can mourn his wife's loss.



A Meeting

A Meeting Summary

We are introduced to Valentine Wiggins and her husband Jakt who are on their way from their home planet of Trondheim to rendezvous with Miro, Valentine's brother's stepson, from the planet Lusitania. While Valentine and Jakt are over fifty and sixty years of age respectively, there is still a great deal of sexual chemistry between them. Each teases the other about getting old, but Jakt particularly seems to be showing signs of age, breathing heavily even while moving normally about the ship. As an effect of being in close quarters on the starship with their children, friends and crew, the couple has been abstinent since leaving home. Valentine has been busy writing subversive political essays against the Starways Congress under the pseudonym 'Demosthenes.' Congress passed a resolution to send a fleet of ships to destroy Lusitania since its human colony is considered to be in a state of rebellion for helping the indigenous pequeninos technologically and since the planet also hosts the descolada, a virus deadly to humanity but an essential part of the planet's ecosystem.

Their travel at near light speed (and therefore Einstein's relativity) causes a number of problems. In fact, Valentine has done so much travel at near light speed that over three thousand years have elapsed back on Earth since her birth. While this particular journey will only take a matter of a few weeks for them, relativity means that sixty-five years would elapse on their home planet were they to try to return. Jakt would be unable to return to his former life as a sailor, because everyone he knows will have died of old age. Relativity complicates Valentine's work too since even if she were to manage to produce an essay each hour while aboard the ship, in real time, she is only publishing an essay every three and a half weeks. Still, Jakt manages to entice her back to their quarters in order to steal a few private moments.

On another ship, the young man they are about to meet, Miro, awaits them. Miro reflects on his current state which is considerable disfigurement. Back on Lusitania, he suffered severe electrocution while trying to help the sapient pequeninos (or piggies) gain their freedom. As a result of the accident, he was transformed from a healthy twenty year old scholar to a twisted and near inarticulate cripple. Miro considers not rendezvousing as planned since he finds interaction with people to be painful. Most people, even Ender, the Speaker for the Dead and his stepfather, feel it necessary to finish his sentences for him and treat him as though his mind were crippled too. Only 'Jane,' a being that evolved from the collective communications technology in the human and bugger worlds, seems to understand him. Since she is machine-like, she can wait for him to communicate with all the patience in the world.

Valentine's ship links with Miro's and Valentine herself enters Miro's ship through an access tube. She immediately addresses his deformity which causes him to both respect and be irritated by her. He is to escort her back to Lusitania and she asks him to tell of his involvement with the piggies so she can use the information in her writings



against the Congress. He questions why she is so committed to stopping the invasion given that it might be the only way to save humanity which now inhabits about one hundred different worlds. She is horrified at his suggestion and points out that quarantine is sufficient to keep humanity safe and that Lusitania, in addition to being home to a human colony, is the only home of two different species that would be annihilated with its destruction: the piggies and the buggers. Miro again challenges her, pointing out that the buggers are an industrial species and that they will eventually build starships and transport the virus off the planet. Valentine condemns him for his pessimism but at the same time announces that she and her husband will be moving in with him for the rest of the voyage back to Lusitania. The ships are to remain linked in order to share resources and Miro actually looks forward to more contact with Valentine.

A Meeting Analysis

Some important background information is revealed about the three remarkable Wiggins children: Peter, Valentine and Andrew. All three have genius level IQ's but Peter is deemed psychologically unfit for Battle School so it ends up being his little brother Andrew (or "Ender") who is chosen to lead Earth's forces against the Bugger invasion. Peter, however, uses his remarkable gifts at manipulating not just people but entire states into doing his will and manages to get himself elected Hegemon, the absolute ruler on Earth whose authority transcends that of all other world leaders.

One of his means for seizing world power is through the publication of a series of essays between two pseudonyms, Locke and Demosthenes. Peter writes the essays by Locke and forces Valentine to produce the essays by Demosthenes. Perversely, Peter adopts his sister's ways of thinking in order to create Locke and requires her to adopt his while writing as Demosthenes. While flying to meet Miro, Valentine notes with satisfaction how she has been able to put Peter behind her and has now been able to make Demosthenes everything she wishes "him" to be. One of her greatest accomplishments as Demosthenes is her foundation of the "Hierarchy of Foreignness" which Miro acknowledges as an achievement. According to the hierarchy "utlannings are strangers from our own world. Framlings are strangers of our own species, but from another world. Ramen are strangers of another species, but capable of communication with [humans], capable of co-existence with humanity. Last are varelse... an alien life form that's capable of destroying all of humanity."



Clean Hands

Clean Hands Summary

Three years after her mother's death, Han Qing-jao is herself spoken to by the gods. She does not recognize at first that the gods are speaking to her but she does become aware that her hands are dirty and she is almost never able to get them clean enough to satisfy the gods. She spends so much time washing her hands that they become raw and bleed. Without a mother watching over her, her hands go unnoticed for some time until a servant notices and brings the matter to her father's attention. Everyone on Path recognizes this to be a good sign, that the gods have begun speaking to her.

In order to verify her claim, Han Qing-jao is taken to "the temple at Rockfall." She climbs into her father's sedan chair with him, feeling badly about how the bearers will have to take her extra weight. Her father gives her a short lesson on caste, explaining that the bearers are themselves honored to have the opportunity to bear the godspoken to the temple. Qing-jao admits that she is afraid and that she wishes the gods had not chosen her. Candidly, her father tells her that she will wish she had not been spoken to even more during the test itself.

For the purpose of the test, Qing-jao has any object about her person that she could use to harm herself taken away. They take her chopsticks, her slippers and the sash about her waist. Her father leads her into a room and thrusts her hands into a bucket of grease. She asks him when she will be able to wash but he simply answers "never" and leaves. Qing-jao is then locked in the room and left to deal with the problem of cleaning her hands on her own. She looks around the room which is occupied by tables, chairs, statues and large jars. Everything is brightly polished and nothing is suitable for use in helping her clean her hands.

At first she tries removing her gown so that she can use it as a cloth, but in the process she gets more grease on her back, face and in her hair. She yells out for her father to wash her hands, come back and that she no longer wants to be godspoken. She begins rubbing her palms on the wall so vigorously that the grease melts from her palms. She begins trying to gouge the grease from her face with her fingernails which makes it necessary for her to purify her hands again. But her labors are exhausting and she knows that she will not be able to get herself satisfactorily clean. She interprets her state as meaning that the gods have deemed her too unclean to live. She begins contemplating ways to die.

She tries running head-first into the wall and while she manages to stun herself she does not die. She climbs up onto a statue and throws herself at the ground headfirst. Her reflexes cause her arm to fly out in an attempt to break her fall, but not until it is too late. This time she succeeds in knocking herself unconscious. She awakens much later, badly injured and suspects she broke her left arm in the fall. She remembers a poem by her namesake "Li Qing-jao" and interprets it to suggest that reconciliation between her



and the gods might be possible. A couple of lines which reference "looking down" and "lines of geese" lead her to look at the lines of woodgrain on the floor. She finds one particular line in the floor and realizes that she must follow it all the way to the wall. Trying to follow it in the dark is near impossible and she cannot touch it with her filthy hands so she follows it doubled over. When she needs to blink, she closes one eye and then reopens it before closing the other. She follows the grain to the end and notes with satisfaction that the gods are satisfied. She is now able to stand on her own without them whispering to her about the state of her hands. She has found another way to satisfy the gods, through "Woodgrain-Tracing" rather than hand washing.

Father reenters and the priests are abuzz with excitement. Qing-jao has added a new penance to the "Catalog of Voices" which already includes such behaviors as "Pulling-Out-of-Hair," "Gnawing-at-Stone," and "Checking-for-Accidental-Murders." Father could not be more pleased but admits that he had to be restrained so as to not run into the room when she climbed up on the statue. It is a great honor to him that his daughter is so strongly possessed by the gods. The chapter ends with people whispering about Han Fei-tzu's possible godhood. Qing-jao hears these whispers many times as she is growing up and knowing that her father may one day be chosen a god of Path influences her a great deal.

Clean Hands Analysis

The godspoken experience is explainable in terms of obsessive compulsive disorder. In the temple, Qing-jao is only able to stop the gods whispering to her about her hands by substituting one OCD behavior with another.

Qing-jao, whose name means 'Gloriously Bright,' recalls another poem by her namesake 'Li Qing-jao,' a poetess from ancient China. Qing-jao recalls one line in particular touching on mortality and wonders if she soon may die. At only seven years old, she recognizes that death is terrible to contemplate but that in achieving it, she would at least be able to see her mother and the ancient poet. Through her thoughts and actions, Qing-jao reveals that she is literally 'gloriously bright.'

Chapter three is also significant insofar as we now see Han Fei-tzu in a slightly different light. It now becomes less likely that gods exist who demand penances of the godspoken and more likely that the penances enacted by Han beside his wife's death bed were simply symptoms of his own obsessive compulsive disorder.

Jane

Jane Summary

For several days the twinned ships have been making their way back to Lusitania. Valentine and Jakt have moved into Miro's ship. Plikt, a family friend and former tutor to Valentine and Jakt's children, as well as a former student of Ender's, has also installed herself in the ship though she seems to take a back seat, at first.

Following many discussions on Lusitania and its inhabitants, Miro begins to lecture on philotic technology. As it turns out, his physical limitations are such that he cannot possibly address the subject without Jane's help. Through a transmitter-receiver in his ear, given to him by Ender, his stepfather, Miro is able to communicate directly with Jane, who is then able to transmit Miro's image from a computer screen and have his voice sound from the speakers. As it turns out, Jane is herself a "living" being because of her own philotic workings. Her memories are stored in the databases scattered throughout the 100 worlds, but her existence is somehow a product of the instantaneous communication between ansibles. As it turns out, neither Jane, Ender nor Miro are yet aware of how her consciousness came into being among the developing network electronic communications throughout the galaxy. By the end of the lecture, Valentine becomes aware that the image is speaking without Miro's prompting. Eventually, the image transforms itself to that of a young woman and Jane reveals herself openly to Valentine. As it turns out, Jane welcomes the introduction because she needs to make a momentous decision: she has a means of stopping the fleet that is on its way to destroy Lusitania but her solution will effect her own annihilation. She asks Valentine, "Is it a cause worth dying for?"

Miro figures Jane's plan out at once and realizes that yes, with the power to inhibit ansible communications she could prevent the fleet from destroying his planet, but also that the Congress would eventually figure out that someone like Jane must exist and then be able to disrupt her being. He retreats to his bed and they have a very intimate conversation in which Jane asks whether it is relevant that she has never had an original thought and Miro assures her that most people do not. She seeks assurance that he would miss her were Congress to succeed in killing her and he contemplates how entirely lost he would be without her.

The party on the bridge breaks up with Jakt and Plikt heading to quarters. Valentine lingers to brood over her new knowledge. Tentatively she calls out to Jane to see if Jane will answer. Jane does not and Valentine herself retires. On her way to her bunk she stops by Miro's cabin, recognizing his irregular breathing as a signal that he has been crying. She hugs him and he asks her not to tell Jakt about his tears.



Jane Analysis

Philotic technology (which has enabled the creation of the 'ansible'— technology that enables instantaneous communication anywhere in the universe) is an instance of how Card is able to deal with serious scientific issues that other writers just brush under the carpet. Given the extraordinary distances between planets, communication becomes logistically impossible. Given the number of years that would need to elapse in order for messages to be sent even at light speed, negotiations between Lusitania and the Starways Congress would last longer than a life time. The ansible allows people to communicate instantly, in real time. Jane's extraordinary power is that she is able to use her access to the network to both know what is happening and act, anywhere in the Hundred Worlds.

Jane's potential extinction presents her with a possible solution for saving her "self." Given that she may no longer be able to access ansible technology, she is faced with the potential of looking for an alternative host for her "self." Miro suggests using the fathertrees on Lusitania as a potential host, but Jane feels their network is too rudimentary. What emerges is a more detailed picture of Jane's workings. She possesses incredible thinking powers, but ultimately it becomes apparent that she is modeled on a computer. Her causing the Fleet to fail in its mission will generate an overload of her processing power if she tries to cover her tracks indefinitely. Likewise Miro exhorts her to "think hard" about how to preserve herself, and Card goes on to detail the manner in which she thinks. She is able to think on many levels at once, but only able to give each level a certain amount of priority. Therefore, in order to answer the most pressing question facing her, she must give it top priority at the expense of the many other activities in which she is engaged.



The Lusitania Fleet

The Lusitania Fleet Summary

Qing-jao, now 16 years old, has grown into a very accomplished and self possessed young woman. In addition to her studies of language and arts, she has been working on developing the same sort of talent she witnesses in her father: the ability to defer the gods' penance. She notices her father, who is very strong, can postpone his obedience until he is in private. At first, even delaying a few minutes is agony, but she gets better with time. The only obstacle between her and full womanhood is that she must first fulfill a woman's task. She goes to her father in order to receive hers.

Han Fei-tzu asks his daughter what she knows about Lusitania. As a keen student of history, she knows a great deal about Demosthenes, the planet Lusitania, and the reason the Starways Congress scheduled it for demolition, namely the colonists' violation of Congress' policy of non-interference with sentient life. At first she is unable to believe Congress would actually send the Mass Destruction device to Lusitania, but her father assures her that it was indeed part of the mission. Father and daughter engage in a debate about ethics. Father suggests Demosthenes is an enemy of the gods because "he" opposes the Starways Congress. Han Fei-tzu asserts that the Congress must have the mandate of heaven, else it could not rule the 100 Worlds. Fei-tzu makes his daughter swear to uphold the Congress, which she does, provided that they keep the mandate of heaven.

The task he lays upon her seems impossible to Qing-jao. She is charged with the business of discovering what happened to the Lusitania Fleet. She is aware of the many people, worlds even, who have been searching for the missing fleet and is convinced she must fail. She promises her father, however, to give it her best try. Her father suggests she may be successful where 1000's have failed because she is too young to think herself wise and able to think original thoughts. After leaving her father, she is filled with the urge to purify herself. She does so, but follows up her intense scrubbing with 7 hours at her computer terminal going through all the data relevant to the search for the fleet.

Meanwhile, Jane watches. Her consciousness is structured in many levels, but eventually, with her dogged determination, Qing-jao makes her presence felt. Jane can sense that while it will still take some time at human speed, eventually Qing-jao will succeed. It is precisely because Qing-jao is not involved with any faction or affiliated with any government or government organization that she will be able to take in all the possibilities, not just the ones admitted by a narrowed world view. Jane even notes that Qing-jao, with her attention to detail, conducts the search even as Jane herself would do it. Jane is forced to find a way to stop Qing-jao from wanting to succeed at the search.



The Lusitania Fleet Analysis

A couple of important issues arise from Han's conversation with his daughter. She worries in general that by accomplishing more in her lifetime than her father has, she will eclipse him. Han tells her it is not so, that everything she does in her life will bring glory to her father and that the more accomplished she herself becomes, the more she will raise her father in stature. Qing-jao is satisfied with this and even thinks to herself that it may be possible if she is honorable and hardworking enough for her to contribute to her father one day being made a god of Path.

The other issue raised here that figures elsewhere in the novel is the issue of whom is best suited to the search for new knowledge. Qing-jao feels herself to be unworthy to find the fleet where so many others have failed and, in regard of her youth, too inexperienced and uneducated. Han fei-tzu regards the very same qualities his daughter is concerned about to be strengths. He feels that by not being overconfident or assimilated into one particular ideology, his daughter will be most likely to ask the right questions and the sorts of questions that others would not think to ask.



Varelse

Varelse Summary

Back on Lusitania, Ender is looking over some disturbing evidence. A recent crop of experimental potatoes, bio-engineered to withstand the descolada, has been wiped out by the virus. What is more disturbing is that the descolada seems to be getting more virulent. When Lusitanian scientists invent new strains of virus resistant potatoes, the descolada is able to adapt and kill them quicker and quicker. Initially, the scientists were able to get several years from a new strain, then months, and this most recent strain: six weeks. Ender reviews the situation. The colonists could spray the entire planet to eradicate the virus but in doing so they would exterminate the piggies who need the virus in order to move into their third life (becoming trees, at which point their reproduction occurs). Killing of the descolada is synonymous with killing off the pequeninos. Ender worries what the result will be if the other human colonists learn how aggressive the virus is becoming. He is afraid that when faced with their own extinction, the other humans might choose to kill off the descolada, and live. Even Ender questions whether he could sacrifice himself so that piggies could survive. Planter, a piggy and Ender's assistant, informs Ender that his wife wants him and then sets about cleaning up the destroyed crop.

Back at Ender's home, a lively debate is raging between his wife Novinha and his step-children. Grego is openly calling for the extermination of the descolada. Ela wants to develop a new strain that fulfills its reproductive purposes for the piggies but is harmless to humans. The debate becomes complicated by the fact that Quara's observations indicate that the viruses seem capable of transmitting information back and forth. In other words, the descolada may be a sentient species itself. Jane herself confirms that she has reviewed the data and it points to Quara being correct. Ender acknowledges openly that they have all been talking about the virus as though it were an actual enemy, speaking about it in terms of it trying to beat their defenses. Novinha, as the planet's chief Xenobiologist, orders them to take a balanced approach. The research on altering the virus should continue but Quara will also investigate whether it might be possible to actually communicate with the virus. They debate whether the piggies should have a say in what happens to the virus, but Ender advises that since it is the humans' lives at stake and no threat is posed to the piggies, then they are under no obligation to communicate with the piggies about their plans for the virus. Novinha actually orders everyone to be silent, but minutes later Ender witnesses Quara in conversation with one of the piggies. When Quara sees Ender she runs. Ender, guesses what they were talking about so he asks Human, the piggy fathertree, to trust he is acting with the best interest of humans and piggies in mind. He also asks Human to keep quiet. Human feels too much is at stake and decides to inform all the other fathertrees on the planet. Through negotiations with the hive queen, the piggies manage to get her to commit to building them a starship to get off the planet.



Varese Analysis

Piggies in space would be disastrous for humans since it would be the beginning of the virus' spread throughout the known galaxy. Also, politics have become much more complex on Lusitania. Initially, when humans first arrived, there were extraordinarily strict measures in place to prevent them from interfering with the pequeninos' natural technological and cultural development. Now, since the colonists decide to share their knowledge with the pequeninos, they are in a position of having to determine what knowledge to share. Also, since the buggers are quickly expanding their own presence on the planet, politics are even more complicated. The piggies and buggers are getting quite close (in return for their starship, the piggies have granted the hive queen permission to pollute as much as is necessary.) A situation exists by this point where even though all three species are on friendly terms, the buggers' aid to the pequeninos is directly counter to humanity's best interests. This thrusts Ender into another tough situation.



Secret Maid

Secret Maid Summary

Back on Path, Qing-jao is completing her righteous labor. In the midst of her work, a peasant girl approaches Gloriously Bright and boldly strikes up a conversation with her. Qing-jao converses with her long enough to determine that the girl is quite bright and asks whether she too is godspoken. The girl, whose real name is Wang-mu and whose ancient namesake is "The Royal Mother of the West," laughs bitterly and explains that she is poor and has only ever been given a rudimentary education. She says that she envies Qing-jao her privilege as godspoken and also her education. Qing-jao tries to explain that she would gladly give up her status if she could also give up her responsibilities. Through dialogue, each girl comes to see the world a little better from the other's point of view. Qing-jao figures out Wang-mu must have approached her specifically in order to try to obtain a service position since she has just reached the age when young godspoken ladies would normally begin hiring servants for their own households. Eventually, Qing-jao determines that Wang-mu would make a fantastic "secret maid," (a servant who also serves as a confidant) and promises to put the matter before her own father who has the final say on the matter. Qing-jao makes Wang-mu promise to act as her equal when the two are in private.

When they return home, Qing-jao purifies herself and then works on the Lusitania fleet problem awhile. Her father, meanwhile, interviews Wang-mu in order to assess what caliber of servant she would make. Qing-jao determines there is only one plausible explanation for how the fleet disappeared: the gods must be responsible. She also suggests that perhaps the Starways Congress has lost their mandate since they have directly intervened in human affairs. She goes to her father who agrees she must have the right answer but, he points out, the gods always work through an intermediary and her real task is to find their means of making the fleet disappear. He also insists Congress must still have Heaven's mandate since they continue to rule. The conversation turns back to Wang-mu and Han Fei-tzu whole-heartedly approves his daughter's choice of secret-maid.

Back in her room with her new secret maid, Qing-jao feels the need to purify again because she came so dangerously close to defying the gods by suggesting Congress had lost their mandate. Wang-mu asks if she should leave but Qing-jao feels she would like her new secret maid and best friend to remain with her. It turns into a very long night with Wang-mu astonished by the penance exacted by the gods after watching Qing-jao pour over the wooden floor all through the night until the sun comes up. Both women are exhausted, having missed their afternoon naps, but they are closer for their experience. Qing-jao reflects on Wang-mu having gotten access to her and realizes she must have bribed the foreman at the righteous labor farm. Knowing Wang-mu does not have any money, she imagines the foreman may have taken advantage of her. She determines to have the matter investigated and, if appropriate, the foreman dismissed.



Secret Maid Analysis

Of real significance here is Han's promise to his dying wife. Having promised her he would raise their daughter to always love the gods, he has to work very hard since he himself is often filled with misgivings about their sense of justice or even their very existence. Even though he does not fully believe his reasons himself, he is able to satisfy his daughter that the gods are just. He knows he has succeeded when he asks Qing-jao if she will promise to always love the gods and obey them no matter what. When she makes the oath he feels a tremendous weight lifted from him, feeling he has satisfied his own promise to his wife, a promise he was not sure he would be able to fulfill.

Wang-mu's reaction to Qing-jao's ritual to the gods is significant too. At first she is surprised at exactly what the gods require of the godspoken, but it does not take long before it all gives way to doubt about what kind of beings would demand such sacrifices. Wang-mu's skepticism grows when she notes that Qing-jao is sometimes punished for things over which she has no control, like Wang-mu openly questioning the gods' righteousness or existence.



Miracles

Miracles Summary

Back on Lusitania, Miro is reunited with his family. Again, because of relativity, one month has elapsed for him since he left Earth but 25 years have gone by for his family. His mother, Novinha, is over sixty, wrinkled and grey. His sister Ela is now in her forties and is unable to hide her pity and concern when she looks at him. His brother Quim is now an ordained priest, a missionary responsible for converting more than a dozen forests to Christianity and baptizing them. His brother Olhado, with his mechanical eyes, now a proud father of six stands with his arm around a beautiful wife. Miro tries to imagine how his wife is able to live with her husband's disability and is immediately ashamed, wondering how he can expect them to look past his handicaps if he is unable to see past his brother's. His family had forgotten how badly disabled Miro became from his accident and after trying to listen to his painstaking speech, they drift back to their regular responsibilities.

Valentine and Andrew greet each other awkwardly with some gentle ribbing. Both are married and are concerned about how their spouses will adapt to their closeness. Miro's half sister, Ouanda, is missing. Before they found out they were siblings, they had dated for more than six years. Fortunately they had been abstinent, but both suffered greatly when they had to end their relationship. Ouanda was forced to move on and now has a family of her own. Miro does not want to see her. In all, he is having a difficult time being back on Lusitania and wishes he could turn around and leave.

Immediately upon arrival Valentine insists upon meeting the hive queen along with Ender, Plikt, Ela and Miro. On the way to the lair, in the flying car, Valentine notices immediately that something is wrong with her brother. It makes her recall a time when they were children and she was sent to visit him. At that time she discovered that he had come completely disengaged from life but she was able to help him reconnect and he was able to go back to Battle School and successfully direct the Earth invasion of the bugger planet. She is worried that something similar is now wrong. She knows that at least, in part, he is preoccupied with the descolada which continues to adapt faster and faster and will kill humans if the human Xenobiologists are unable to keep devising new and improved remedies. As they get closer to the buggers' network of tunnels, Ender notices all the signs of industrialization. Since the hive queen and the piggies are in such a hurry to get off the planet, the piggies have given her permission to burn fossil fuels as much as necessary. Ender is troubled because the hive queen will not tell him exactly what she is doing, but he knows that there are likely to be two ships at least and that each ship that leaves has the potential to take the descolada to other human worlds.

The lair itself is uncomfortable for Valentine and Miro, but not Ender, who has a long history with the hive queen. He has also spent time in another bugger lair on the asteroid Eros circling earth, which had been a bugger forward station taken by humans.



Soon after they arrive, a bugger worker meets them and leads them through the dark to the hive queen. Very much like Jane, the hive queen can speak directly into Ender's mind. She also begins trying to communicate with Miro and Valentine. Communication is easier with Valentine but both she and Miro find it disorienting. Valentine tries to see all the beauty Ender wrote about in his book, *The Hive Queen*, but she is overwhelmed by the Hive Queen's alien nature and strangeness. The moment they catch a glimpse of her, she is in the process of fertilizing a queen egg with the dismembered remains of a bugger body. The queen is actually quite cheerful since, Ender explains, laying eggs puts her into a state of sustained sexual climax. She begins explaining to Val telepathically about how her phlotic connection with Ender enables her to overhear when the hive queen speaks into his mind. She jokes that humans are all like rogue buggers with free will. When the hive queen is confronted with a rogue worker, she forcefully captures his will by forcing a phlotic connection upon him. She confesses that she once tried to do the same thing with Ender, but that his will was too strong. The hive queen asks Ender if he will kill her and he says never, that he loves her. His emotion is so strong that Valentine herself feels the spillover. It becomes apparent that Plikt has established a strong link with the hive queen too, which surprises Valentine because she knows that it is a sign that Plikt has probably created an even closer bond with Ender than she has. The hive queen assures Ender that she promised to never kill humans and also to build a ship for the piggies so she will keep both promises. Ender is certain of her good intentions but concerned that the hive queen is not always able to follow through on her predictions. The buggers' bodies naturally adapt to the descolada and eliminate it from their systems, so their risk is low. However, the descolada will travel with them too on their colony ship. Ender's party soon leaves, with Valentine very uncomfortable about having had the hive queen, and Ender too, in her head.

Later, Miro suggests he does not want to go to mass but ends up at the cathedral anyway, just needing to be around people. Ouanda approaches him and tells him that she wishes she could have taken his disability on herself in order to spare him. She tells him how long she grieved for him, in fact, that she still does. She tells him he has not changed but the remark makes him bitter, asking her if indeed he has not changed, referring to his deformity. He leaves and finds himself near the two fathertrees, his friends Human and Rooter where he is approached by his brother Quim, dressed in his priestly attire. Quim asks whether Miro knows what a hero he is among the piggies since it was his sacrifice that gave them access to human knowledge and learning. Miro turns the conversation to Quim's faith, asking whether he really believes in all the miracles. Miro wants to know because he wonders whether he may be healed through a miracle. Quim suggests that he may be healed if he needs to be. Miro remarks that he has just seen Ouanda but states that he is beyond caring for her now that she is old and fat with too many kids. Both men throw an insult at each other and a fistfight breaks out. The fight ends with Quim taking Miro in his arms and praying for God to heal his body. They reconcile and Quim explains he is here because he was summoned in order for the fathertrees to tell him about heresies starting to circulate in other forests. Seemingly, some forests are of the opinion that the descolada is in fact the Holy Ghost and therefore, since it helps piggies, a sign they are God's chosen ones. The fact that the descolada kills humans is interpreted as a sign God wants to eliminate them. As soon



as they say their goodbyes, Miro asks Jane to let Ender know about the pequenino heresy.

Miracles Analysis

This chapter pushes Valentine's, aka Demosthenes', ideas of tolerance between species to the limit. She goes to meet the hive queen expecting to greet her as raman, an alien species with whom humans can communicate and co-exist peacefully, but is strangely appalled by her upon meeting her. In fact, she begins to question whether the hive queen might not be varelse, an alien species that humans cannot understand and must either destroy or be destroyed by. She knows her brother has accepted them as raman but cannot see them through her eyes. She sees only the hive queen's strangeness and focuses on her insect-like qualities rather than the many beautiful qualities Ender admires. Other differences are highlighted between the species here too. The hive queen thinks it peculiar that humans like to meet face to face since she can enter into the mind of anyone she is communicating with, or see through the eyes of any of her drones. Historically, she has existed in different parts of the galaxy all at the same time. In this sense, she is like Jane. With respect to her ability to communicate telepathically, she is more like the fathertrees. It would be difficult for she and humans to be any more different than they already are.



Pinehead

Pinehead Summary

On Path, Gloriously Bright continues working on the problem of the disappearance of the Lusitania Fleet, attended by her secret maid, Wang-mu. Initially Wang-mu, who has a lively mind herself, has many questions about being godspoken. Eventually she turns her attention to her mistress's work. Gloriously Bright is surprised Wang-mu knows anything about the fleet at all but she has picked up a great deal while observing Gloriously Bright's work. Wang-mu criticizes Congress for having sent the fleet to destroy Lusitania and Qing-jao is shocked at her treason. When Qing-jao presses her to learn where Wang-mu has adopted such a view of Congress, she realizes Demosthenes' influence on the common people must be great indeed. Eventually Qing-jao feels the need to cleanse after hearing so much traitorous speech. Wang-mu questions what kind of gods would force purification on an innocent person since Qing-jao had not said a word herself. Once Qing-jao is purified, she emphasizes to Wang-mu that their household is loyal to the Starways Congress, which confuses the secret maid who thought their first loyalty was to the Path. Qing-jao reminds her that as long as the Congress has the mandate of heaven, then their job is to uphold the will of Congress.

Wang-mu's questions about the disappearance of the fleet lead Qing-jao to think about the problem from a different angle. She begins thinking about who would want the fleet to disappear and realizes that Demosthenes is the best candidate. Not only would Demosthenes want the job done, but also Demosthenes has evaded detection, making it likely that "he" might have the technological capability to make the fleet disappear. Demosthenes has been dismissed as a subject by other investigators because he would have had to have existed for over three thousand years and his writings are generally attributed to local special interest groups all writing under a group name, Demosthenes. After a little more research, Qing-jao establishes there has only ever been one Demosthenes and he is the most likely person to have caused the disappearance of the Lusitania fleet.

About the same time, Jane checks in with Ender. She has used her influence to cause the Lusitania fleet's communication ansibles to go dead. She warns that on Path, Qing-jao is about to discover Demosthenes' true identity and her own existence soon thereafter. Ender tells her a story about a doll maker who lost a talking doll he had come to think of as a son, Pinehead. Three years later, the doll, now a little boy, approaches him, calling him father. His point is that Jane's essence may survive if they can just determine where she exists. Novinha wakes up, clearly disapproving that Ender is lying in bed talking to another "woman." Jane goes away, continuing to think about how to put Qing-jao off her trail. The only way to shut her down, she reasons, will be to get her father to order her to stop. She begins investigating data on Path more carefully and discovers that Congress has perpetuated an atrocious fraud on the people of Path. The godspoken have been genetically programed with two modifications. They have been given above average intelligence (in order to serve Congress better) and they have also



been given OCD (to keep the godspoken subservient to Congress). She does not find all the information she needs, but she does realize she is uncovering secrets that date back three thousand years.

Pinehead Analysis

At this point in the novel, Wang-mu begins to take on her role as the unsung hero of Xenophobia. It is her quick and lively mind, unfettered by much formal schooling or enforced ideology, which asks the questions that help her mistress along in the search. Even though Qing-jao tries not to be condescending to her maid, her own prejudices and pride prevents her from seeing how essential Wang-mu is to helping her solve the mystery of the fleet's disappearance.

Ender's relationship with Jane clearly tests his marriage with Novinha. Even though they can never be physically intimate, they are intimate in a mental and emotional way that Novinha and Ender can never be. At various points in their relationship, Jane and Ender have tried to keep away from one another, but they are connected in ways that, as of yet, neither of them understands. This late night conversation between Ender and Jane, overheard by Novinha, marks the beginning of a period of estrangement for husband and wife. Ender is unprepared for Novinha's objections since he has anticipated difficulties arising from Val's arrival on the planet, but never anticipated that his preexisting relationship with Jane would present a problem.



Martyr

Martyr Summary

On Lusitania, an emergency meeting has been called in Mayor Kovano's office regarding the piggies's intention to take the descolada into space. Novinha, Ender, the Mayor, the Bishop, Quim, Quara, Ouanda and Grego all attend. Quara's indiscreet conversation with the pequeninos about human plans to eliminate the descolada has caused some forests to begin to fear humans. Grego asks why the hive queen cannot build the colonists a starship to get off planet. Ender explains she is only worried about species' annihilation. Since humans are populous throughout the 100 worlds, her priority will be to save piggies and buggers. Ela suggests she is closing in on a virus to modify the descolada so it will still help piggies regulate their life cycle but also lose its powers of communication and adaptation. Quara is horrified, opining that Ela's plan will amount to a lobotomy for the descolada, which she believes to be sentient. Quim plans to lead a missionary expedition to the heretical forest in order to try to dissuade Warmaker from taking the descolada into space. The resolution, made despite Novinha's objection, is that Quim will leave on his mission at once. He leaves in a car since both time and the need to carry descoloda immune foodstuffs are important factors.

Novinha refuses to speak to Ender, feeling he could have stopped Quim from going on his mission but not doing so. For his part, Ender acknowledges there is risk in the mission but that it is extraordinarily low. Two days later, they still are not talking until Ela forces a confrontation by reporting that Quara has learned to communicate with the descolada and has been feeding it information on all the anti-descolada medicines the xenobiologists have been developing. Ender suggests they need to tell the mayor but Novinha overhears and begins arguing that, as chief xenobiologist, she should be the first one they consult. She then launches into a list of reasons Ender should not be involved at all, accusing him of being nothing but a professional meddler in other people's lives. She also accuses him of having stolen most of her children away from her, including Ela, and states she will hold Ender personally responsible if anything happens to Quim. She storms off and Ela does her best to comfort Ender, who suggests she should try to follow and comfort her mother.

Several hours away by car, Quim arrives at Warmaker's forest. He feels confident knowing that many pequeninos will be monitoring their interactions and doubting Warmaker would actually try to harm him given there are no secrets among Fathertrees and harming him would be a violation of the treaty Ender negotiated between humans and pequeninos. Near Warmaker himself, Quim is seized roughly by the piggies and dragged toward Warmaker. After a little banter, Quim is shoved into a hollow inside Warmaker who restrains Quim. Warmaker explains he has devised a test in order to determine whether humans are worthy in God's eyes. Quim will be held captive for 10 days and denied the descolada-immunizing food he brought. Quim explains it is a death sentence, that the descolada will ravage him to death in about half that time. Warmaker will not relent, stating Jesus survived for forty days and nights in the desert and Quim



only needs to be one quarter as holy to survive. For the next few days Quim and Warmaker battle theologically in proportions unseen since the height of the Christian church on Earth. Quim holds out for seven days but finally succumbs to the virus.

News travels back to the humans through piggies in other forests, many of whom condemn Warmaker's actions, and Ender leads an envoy to retrieve Quim's body. Ender demands his "son" and charges Warmaker with breaking the oath of peace sworn between their kind at Human's death. Many of the piggies in Warmaker's forest try to distance themselves from Warmaker's actions, but Ender curses them for having been complicit in the act. Jakt asks Ender whether he will speak for Quim, that is, tell his life story, but Ender explains there is no need given that his whole adult life he told his own story by serving God and preaching to the little ones.

Martyr Analysis

When Miro first meets Quim upon his return to Lusitania he is struck by how very priestly Quim seems. In his confrontation with Warmaker, Quim demonstrates he is one of the best priests who ever existed. He never loses his faith for a second and even as his body is being ravaged by the descolada, he manages to counter each and every one of Warmaker's theological attacks. When Warmaker suggests that he is undergoing a trial similar to Jesus being taken into the desert by Satan, Quim points out that in casting him in the role of Jesus, Warmaker has inadvertently cast himself in the role of the devil. By dying in the Lord's service, Quim is a true martyr. He is so successful in life, so well respected by his many piggy converts to Christianity, and dies so bravely, that his nearby piggy forests rise up planning to burn Warmaker's forest to the ground.

Quim's death is very important symbolically since it represents the piggies being the first to break the oath of peace they swore as a species with the humans. Quim's death also highlights exactly how fond so many of the piggies are of humans and how many would rather side with humans than the very brutal Warmaker.



The Jade of Master Ho

The Jade of Master Ho Summary

In her mistress's chambers, Wang-mu is awoken by a terrible cry, a man she thinks. She gets up to investigate and notices that Qing-jao's computer has generated a search result after so many failures. She awakens Gloriously Bright who discovers the computer has identified Demosthenes' real name: Valentine Wiggin. The search result also indicates her present location to be aboard a starship closing in on Lusitania. This immediately generates speculation about how Demosthenes could be distributing his writings. With a great deal of prompting by Wang-mu, who has already determined the answer, Qing-jao concludes there must be a secret program on the ansible computers. Both girls marvel at the power such a one controlling the secret program would have. They also begin to wonder at how that vast power could exist without being used for the gain of any one individual or group. Wang-mu begins to suspect the program must be sentient. Qing-jao is driven to cleanse, Wang-mu continues to read and discovers who Valentine's siblings are, including Peter, who ended up Hegemon. Both girls are summoned to see Han Fei-tzu.

Qing-jao tells her father she has found Demosthenes and discovered a secret ansible program. He is astonished at the coincidence since he has made his own discovery. A friend, in fact, a former lover who was a scientist studying genetic drift on Path, contacted Han with evidence of what Congress has done to the godspoken. Father tries to explain the nature of OCD to the girls, but Qing-jao will not accept any of it. She can not bear to think that maybe the gods do not speak to her so she rationalizes how her father must be mistaken. A terrible fight erupts with Han doing two things he never does: his purification ritual in front of other people and he also strikes Wang-mu. Jane takes this moment to reveal herself on Han's computer by appearing as his namesake or "ancestor of the heart" from ancient Earth. She tells the story of Master Ho who, according to the story, found a rare piece of jade in the mountains and tried to present it as a gift to three different kings. The first two kings thought it to be a piece of worthless stone and each ordered the amputation of a foot. The third king, who has more wisdom, orders the jade to be cut. It is cut and then dubbed "The Jade of Master Ho." Jane, still appearing as Han's namesake, pleads with Han to "look in the matrix" for the fine piece of jade existing there. Qing-jao determines that Jane must be the sentient secret program and is outraged she would try to deceive them with her father's "ancestor of the heart's image." She flies off to her quarters to "write her report." Jane tries to reason with her but Qing-jao is determined to expose her. Jane threatens to not allow Qing-jao's messages to be sent but soon relents when they establish that were Path to stop using ansibles then Congress would likely assume they had rebelled and send an M.D. device to annihilate Path. Jane, bound by her conscience, indicates her complacency by admitting she will let the messages through.

Jane relays her conversation with the people on Path to Ender in real time. Just by listening, Ender is able to size up the two girls. He likens Qing-jao to the pequeninos



who watched his stepson die because they were too bound up by their own mythology. Wang-mu, however, he determines is not owned by any particular story. Jane asks Ender if he will order her to block all the messages from Path, not being able to do it on her own in good conscience. He commands her to shut off all communications but she decides she will allow the messages to be sent because closing down communication will not help Lusitania and it may well harm the people of Path. Jane tells Qing-jao that she will not interfere and Qing-jao and Wang-mu end up in a dispute. Wang-mu asks how Qing-jao will be different from Ender the Xenocide if she kills Jane. Qing-jao denies Jane is anything more than software and transmits her knowledge of Jane to Congress, including a suggested outline for how to shut down all ansible computers in forty weeks in order to exterminate the "secret computer program." Qing-jao sends the message using the seal and authority given to her by her father. She tells her father, who is very far from pleased. He begs Jane's forgiveness though she is silent. He needs to purify himself and thus begins his estrangement from his daughter.

The Jade of Master Ho Analysis

Ender points out the power of ideology. Ideologies fuel wars and Qing-jao's crusade against Jane is little different. She is so blinded by the dogma in which she has been raised that she can not conceive of the possibility that her gods could be false, or that Jane could actually be a compassionate, sentient being with a right to life of her own. Increased contact with Jane, Ender and the xenobiologists on Lusitania are sufficient to convince Han Fei-tzu and Wang-mu which is the right side of the dispute between Congress and the Lusitania colony.

This chapter exposes one of the cruelest ironies about Jane's nature, an irony Qing-jao is unable to perceive in spite of her giftedness. Were Jane a hostile, unfeeling or malevolent entity, she could quite easily shut down Qing-jao's ansible transmissions to Path, but she realizes that by doing so, Congress will certainly interpret the act as a rebellion like the one on Lusitania. She has no doubt Congress would respond in the same way, by sending the mass destruction device to destroy all of Path. Therefore, Jane permits Qing-jao to transmit to Congress details of her existence and the means of extinguishing her. The fact that Jane values the lives of the people on Path more highly than her own is evidence that she is a creature with a right to life of her own. Han and Wang-mu see this and become determined to help Jane. Qing-jao is unable to believe Jane is anything more than a cold computer program because doing so would challenge some of her most fundamental beliefs about the gods and the world she lives in. Interestingly, Card establishes a parallel between Jane's situation and the possibility that the descolada may also be raman. We have sympathy for Jane because she acts humanely but the descolada seems too alien to ever be able to coexist peacefully with humanity. However, does its otherness give the descolada any less right to exist?



Grego's War

Grego's War Summary

Novinha's family assembles at her house where news of Quim's passing is relayed. Ender has not yet returned with the body but Novinha forbids anyone to speak his name. Miro tries to speak up for the fact that Quim died in a way he would have chosen, doing the Lord's work but Novinha slaps him. Ela and Grego quickly drag her away from their crippled brother. Novinha throws him out of her house when he accuses her of not even knowing her own son. Grego is also left seething after bickering breaks out between him and Quara. Ultimately, all of Novinha's children walk out, one by one, leaving her alone and devastated. Ela and Quara end up at the shrine dedicated to their grandparents, the very first two xenobiologists on Lusitania who lost their own lives to the descolada but successfully developed the first remedies for the virus before they succumbed to it. They say a prayer, importuning their grandparents to ask God on their behalf to find a way for humans, piggies and buggers to resolve their tensions peacefully.

Valentine is called to an emergency meeting with Bishop Peregrino and Mayor Kovano. They have read her writings and solicit her guidance on how to proceed in the wake of Quim's murder. The previous night there were a number of violent eruptions in some of the local drinking establishments by humans looking for revenge on the piggies. The leaders are looking to diffuse tensions. Quim's brother, Grego, was a chief instigator in several incidents. Valentine advises they cannot possibly under react, that they should in fact impose martial law in order to send the message that the authorities are in control. They argue against her position, worrying that imposing martial law may send the message they are panicking. She realizes the two leaders are not receptive to her point of view and so she approaches Grego herself, asking him to please not fan the flames of anger any more.

At about the same time, Miro is curled into one of Human's roots. He learns that the piggies are ready to take justice into their own hands and retaliate against Warmaker by burning his forest to the ground. After a number of attempts to reason with them, he decides there is nothing he can do to stop them and sets out to inform the bishop.

In a nearby common area, Grego is standing before a crowd of people and discovers a gift he did not know he had. He rails against the bishop's justice and asks the crowd if they are satisfied, to which they shout back a resounding, "No!" He continues to stoke their anger and before long the crowd is so incensed it is shouting for piggy blood. Grego, who is not entirely stupid, tries to point out that their grudge is against Warmaker, but the crowd is mad with mob mentality and hungry for any piggy blood. Soon, the crowd is in the piggy forest slaughtering piggies and burning fathertrees. In a particularly ghastly affair, the humans burn a mothertree which was host to hundreds of piggy babies. The crowd devours almost the entire forest and begins making its way toward Human and Rooter. Miro stands between the crowd and the trees and makes it



known that, in order to harm the trees, the crowd will have to get through him. Grego joins his brother and the crowd loses its appetite for killing, unable or unwilling to go as far as killing humans. The riot ends with the hive queen sending in bugger guards who take up positions outside the human colony and act as a buffer between the humans and the piggies. In response to the riots, the Bishop decides all human Lusitanians will do penance. They are all to go home and to their places of work and to the city buildings and rip bricks out of their walls in order to use the materials to build a new church over Quim's body and the bodies of the many piggy victims. They will live in discomfort, exposed to the elements, until a new church has been built as a monument to and reminder of their sin.

To try to avert the worst case scenario, which would be complete extermination of Human and Rooter's forest, Ender, Valentine, Miro, Ela, Quara, Ouanda and Olhado all attend a ceremony to create a new mothertree from the most honored of the wives in order to nurture the many little piggies who were orphaned with the killing of the other mothertree. It is a bold move with no certain outcome. If the mothertree does not mature quickly enough to act as a surrogate to the babies, or if the babies are all male, Human and Rooter will be doomed to live out their days alone, without the opportunity to populate the forest with their children. The mothertree opens a crevice after only a day and a half. Three dozen young are transferred to her and there is hope the forest may again thrive.

At the monastery of The Children of the Mind, Ender tries to reconcile with Novinha who still wants nothing to do with him. Since she left her work at the lab, he asks permission to access her files. Bitterly, she asks him why he has not had already had Jane crack the files and tells him to get her to do it. She still blames Ender for Quim's death and turns away. Ender is left struggling with the many problems he faces: the fleet coming to destroy Lusitania, Jane's impending demise, the descolada, Warmaker and the local civil unrest. Worst of all for him personally, Ender is now wifeless.

Grego's War Analysis

Grego's War is a thorough study of violent conflict. While the instigating incident is between Quim and Warmaker and Warmaker is regarded as a bit of a zealot by most of the other piggy forests, humans and piggies soon begin to line up on opposite sides of the species divide. Certainly many piggies are willing to spill piggy blood in order to voice their repudiation of Warmaker's shameful act, but after the humans spill the blood of piggy innocents, Warmaker's status is increased and there is a consensus among piggies that blood has been answered with more than enough blood. Only the intervention by the neutral buggers prevents a larger conflict from breaking out, one that might lead to Xenocide for the piggies, given that the humans still possess a great technological advantage, even though they are relatively few in number. Quim's death is also a lightning rod for a great deal of unease among the colonists of Lusitania. Even though they have been at peace with the piggies for an entire generation, they have never given up the symbolic protection of the fence around their encampment, an act due entirely to their own prejudices. The colonists have lived in fear for a long time and



the riots provide them an outlet for the negative emotions they have suppressed for years.

The human slaughter of the piggies also illustrates the role of ignorance and mob mentality in violent conflict. Because most humans lived in ignorance of the piggies, their culture and their reproductive habits, they unknowingly perpetrate some of the worst acts imaginable: the butchering of piggy women and children, none of whom had any part in Quim's death or ever engaged in war, unlike the male warriors. Mob mentality exists when humans carry out, as a group, vile acts which they would never be capable of committing as individuals. Miro and Grego are able to expose the mob's hypocrisy when some of the rampaging humans insist killing any piggy is justified since they are all the same. They ask whether the humans would be willing to be held responsible for the actions committed by other humans. This and other challenges enable the brothers to begin breaking down the mob mentality which is necessary to restore order.



Free Will

Free Will Summary

The godspoken, hearing that Han Fei-tzu has restored the fleet, begin paying homage to him at his home. Han threatens Qing-jao in front of Wang-mu that he will tell all the visitors it was really his daughter who restored the fleet and, in his opinion, it was a great crime. However, he needs to purify himself immediately and they all know he cannot utter such blasphemy without showing obvious signs the gods are censuring him which will undermine his credibility with anyone he tries to tell. Wang-mu reflects upon what a thorough job Congress has done of enslaving the godspoken. Qing-jao assumes the responsibility of welcoming the visitors herself, dismissing Wang-mu after a fight. Wang-mu makes ready to leave her mistress' home, but Han Fei-tzu retains her as a servant. He values her intelligence and wishes to keep her on as an associate. Jane, in turn, solicits their help with the numerous projects she has on the go, including finding a way for her to survive. Jane fills them in on all the problems Lusitania faces, including the existence of the buggers and the hive queen. The solution she argues, lies with their ability to find faster than light travel. Han feels he is not qualified to solve the problem but Jane argues that trained physicists tend to think along similar lines whereas he and Wang-mu will be able to "think outside the box." She also informs them of her work on finding a way of neutralizing the descolada. The third problem she says she is working on is the nature of the genetic alterations to the people of Path. She enlists their help collecting DNA samples from everyone they can. The work begins. Wang-mu is able to collect most of the samples because as a servant she is disregarded by their many visitors. Her estrangement from Gloriously Bright continues.

Meanwhile, Ender is working on the problem of Jane's existence until Miro begins goading him a bit about Novinha. They begin by bickering, but soon Miro is consoling Ender. Jane interrupts to tell them to get back to work. Ender and Miro debate the nature of her existence. Ender has been looking at a model of the philotic network trying to imagine wherein Jane could exist. Miro suggests that perhaps she is just the sum of many little computer programs contributing to her being but Ender feels there is still an issue of will that needs to be resolved. Humans have demonstrated the ability to affect their philotes with their will. If Jane is alive, she should be able to influence philotes too whereas a computer program clearly cannot. Ender posits that philotes are the foundation of our being and since philotes have been in existence since the beginning of time, we have all existed since then. That, he argues, is where our free will comes from. Jane has a philote, he argues and Miro points out the need to find its physical location in order to save her. Miro suggests Grego might be able to figure the problem out but Jane speaks up begging them to not waste time on her, so they can find answers to her several other pressing problems. Ender argues that no one can think about only one problem at a time and there might be advantages to thinking through multiple problems at the same time. He instructs Jane to also relay their conversation to the people on Path, meaning Han fei-tzu and Wang-mu. Ender also resolves to discuss Jane's existence with the hive queen.



Free Will Analysis

By this point in the novel Qing-jao and her father are at loggerheads, but Wang-mu becomes his "daughter of the heart." While some might suspect an older man of having ulterior motives for retaining a young maid, Han treats her with nothing but honor. His closeness with Wang-mu is in sharp contrast to the increasing distance between him and his daughter. Never could he have imagined he might succeed in fulfilling his pledge to his late wife only to lose his daughter's love and respect.

Understanding more about Philotes is essential for the advancement of human knowledge and technology. Humans have used philotic technology for over three thousand years to make ansibles work. They discovered the technology when they first came into contact with buggers over three thousand years ago, but they have never been able to determine why or how the technology works. Ender suspects if they can uncover more information about philotes then they may come to understand where Jane came from and even a way to travel faster than light.



Virus Makers

Virus Makers Summary

Needing help with her problem unlocking the science behind the descolada, Wang-mu approaches her former mistress. Han has asked her to ask Qing-jao for help but Wang-mu knows Gloriously Bright will not help them in their "revolt against Congress." So she presents Qing-jao with her papers and passwords and lets Qing-jao assume Han fei-tzu is unaware that Wang-mu has asked her for help. Qing-jao immediately dismisses the information as rubbish, asserting it cannot possibly be true. Evolution, she explains, would have created a much wider variety of species on Lusitania than the number which actually exists. Not only that, but since the virus continually corrects mutations in its host's DNA, it prevents evolution. Were the data valid, Qing-jao points out, the species on Lusitania could not evolve, which is necessary for any species to survive in the long run.

Not finding Han in his chambers, Wang-mu begins discussing the descolada with Jane, who relays their conversation back to Ela and Ender on Lusitania. Ela gets very excited because Qing-jao's comments lead her to realize the descolada must do the genetic regulation on the planet. When Lusitania is warming or cooling in keeping with its natural biorhythm, the descolada causes the piggies to become peaceful or belligerent with one another, thereby expanding or decreasing the number of forests in order to keep the planet's temperature in a habitable range. They realize the most likely explanation for the origin of the descolada is that it was developed by a highly intelligent species in order to colonize new planets and terraform them. All present realize the piggies are not likely to be pleased by this discovery as it raises the possibility they are all just slaves to the virus.

Ender realizes the piggies need to be informed about the descolada and calls Planter into Ela's office. He is distressed and shows his agitation like a piggy, by scampering about the room and touching everything. Finally he bumps into Ender and clings to him the way he would a fathertree. Planter worries that perhaps the piggies were only "tree rats" before the descolada came and made them sentient. He also worries that all the great wars were not fought for worthy causes, but were nothing more than exercises in planetary regulation. Valentine and Ender try to get Planter to accept that sacrifices made by individual piggies are meaningful, whatever their cause. Planter proposes an experiment to see whether the piggies actually have free will. Ela agrees that the best way to find out is to put a piggy in a sterile environment and purge him of every trace of the virus in order to see whether he retains his free will. Planter demands to be the subject of the experiment, feeling it is the only way to be truly free of the virus.



Virus Makers Analysis

The significance of the descolada having originated on another planet and likely spreading elsewhere in the galaxy is that the Lusitanians need feel no moral qualms about killing it. As an entity engineered by humans, the Lusitanians find it easier to think of the descolada as a mere virus, rather than a potentially sentient species. Furthermore, given its voraciousness and absolute disregard for most life, the colonists are closer to being able to justify either eradicating it or re-engineering it to suit their own purposes.

Planter's desire to serve as a subject for the descolada experiment raises some questions about how far scientists can ethically go in order to increase knowledge. Ela objects that the experiment will be very poor science but Ender points out it is exactly the type of experiment one does when one is out of time and in desperate need of information. Interestingly, Ender does not try to talk Planter out of the experiment for it is only by doing the experiment that they can know whether tampering with the descolada may turn piggies into tree rats, as Planter fears.



Life and Death

Life and Death Summary

Valentine pays a visit to Olhado. He confides to her that Andrew was a tremendous role model in his life, so much so that he has become the man he is because of Ender's influence. He manages a brick factory, which, incidentally, is booming now that all the humans on Lusitania are ripping holes in their walls and building a church to mark their penance for the pequenino slaughter. However, Olhado really lives for his wife and their many children. His wife too is like him, living mostly for their domestic existence. Valentine observes she is a remarkable woman to be still so beautiful after so many children and also to have seen past Olhado's mechanical eyes. She remarks that her brother told her Olhado was actually the brightest of all the Ribeira children and gets to the point of her visit. She and Andrew want his brain working with them on their problems, particularly the problem of faster than light travel. He demurs at first, protesting that he does not have the training and he has been out of school far too long. Valentine suggests those factors may actually be an asset as he will be looking at the problems with a fresh perspective.

Miro approaches Quara, who has been shut out of the lab and locked out from her own computer files by her mother as a consequence for trying to aid the descolada. Specifically, he asks her for permission to access her locked files, feeling somewhat guilty since Jane has already decrypted them. He also bears a request from Planter to come and see him before he dies. Quara resists telling him what she knows about how to fight the descolada, still clinging to the possibility that the descolada may be sentient. Miro argues that even if it is sentient, it is varelse, not raman. Quara actually begins to listen. When she asserts that the descolada viruses have rights too, Miro counters that so do piggies and humans. He gets no argument from Quara who promises to go and see Planter.

Ender goes to see the hive queen who is visibly fatigued. Certainly her ambitious agenda of creating drones (extra are now required to police the human settlement) for colonization in addition to two colony ships and a space station is sufficient to exhaust her. Ender begins questioning her about the possibility of faster than light travel. He reminds her that she successfully projected an action across many light years when she found him, which leads them into a deep discussion on the nature of philotes. The buggers are all networked through their philotic connections, enabling the hive queen to see anything any of her drones sees, even if it happens to be light years away. She describes for him the process of birthing a new queen. Birthing a queen is different because it requires calling a powerful philote into being. She refers to the need to imagine and hold a pattern in the philotic web until a queen's philote is united into a queen's body. Because of the nature and the complexity of a queen's work, special philotes are necessary. Now the hive queen reveals that when she was at war with humans, she tried to gain control of Ender's philote through the human network of computers and ansibles. Ender realizes Jane must have been created inadvertently by



this action. What's more, each philote has to have an endpoint and Ender realizes that Jane's must be in him.

Jane contacts Han-fei-tzu on Path. Wang-mu is sleeping nearby but Jane announces that she has news important enough to warrant waking the girl up. Ela begins to relate their analysis of all the genetic samples of the people of Path. She has already identified the gene given to the godspoken by Congress and designed a splicer bacterium which will neutralize the gene and free the godspoken. The good news is that the genes that give the godspoken their extraordinary intelligence will be unaffected. They also found among the samples one citizen of Path who has the gift of intelligence but not the OCD, Wang-mu. Ela also suggests they will be able to use a modified version of the descolada to extend the gifts of intelligence to all the people of Path. She knows that introducing the virus could cause a great deal of unrest on Path so she asks Han and Wang-mu to think about whether or not it should be done and how to introduce the cures in a way that will cause the least civil unrest.

On her way to visit Grego, who is in prison for his role in the recent riot, Valentine notes the differences around the town. Most buildings are scarred by the holes made from torn out bricks. The humans largely avoid being out, even during the day, and when they do walk about, they look to the surrounding fields where mostly invisible buggers stand watch over the settlement. The humans of Lusitania have become morbidly fascinated with buggers, checking out all available historical material from the local library. When she arrives, Grego and Olhado are working hard on the scientific implications of Ender's talk with the hive queen. They realize that by emulating the queen's ability to call philotes into being by imagining a pattern, they may be able to transport a simple ship out of known space and then back in again at a destination point. The most important component is a knower, like the hive queen. They theorize that Jane has the capacity to enable this instantaneous form of travel. Still, there is some doubt about her ability, as she actually has to hold every atom inside the cargo ship in a pattern and reproduce that pattern at the destination point.

Miro takes his turn with Planter in the sterilization room, wearing a decontamination suit so as not to reinfest Planter with the descolada. By this time, Planter is very sick, but he has stayed lucid and continues to demonstrate his lucidity by repeating old tales of piggy legends and mythology. As Miro enters, Planter is telling about a fathertree named "Skysplitter, a piggy who called thunder." Miro realizes the tale may describe a time preceding the descolada's arrival on Lusitania. Miro points out the story is evidence the Pequenino's were intelligent even before the arrival of humans. Planter points out the the story takes place 29 generations ago and there is no telling which piggy genes the descolada saved and which ones it threw out. Miro is recalled because Quara has arrived in order to see her old friend, Planter, but she insists on speaking in absolute privacy with all monitoring equipment switched off. Jane relates their conversation to Miro's earpiece. Planter urges her to tell what she knows about the descolada in order that the humans may tame it. Quara protests, stating her knowledge is certain death for the descolada, but Planter exclaims that she should do it anyway, calling it a tyrant and a murderer. She is very disturbed, but when she leaves, she tells Ela everything she knows about the virus, all of the key information she left out of her computer files.



Immediately, Ela and Quara set about designing a virus they call the recolada, which will still help pequeninos reach the third life and keep all the other species on Lusitania functioning normally. The virus will no longer be able to adapt or communicate, which will mean human remedies for the virus will remain effective forever. However, designing and building are different challenges and Ela has to declare the creation of the recolada to be impossible. The problem she runs into is time—the virus repairs itself before she can make all the necessary changes to transform it. The only way the recolada can be produced is if all parts of it can be modified simultaneously, which is practically impossible. Now the worst case scenario for Quara has been realized. Humans have designed a bacterium which can kill the descolada but have not been able to create a safe version of it. Planter dies and Warmaker's people work harder than ever to get off the planet in the wake of news that the humans have developed a descolada-killing bacterium.

Ender, the mayor and the bishop meet to discuss the plans for evacuation using faster than light travel. Jane announces how the testing will go. The hive queen will build them the simple cargo ship they will need. Ender will have to travel on it since he "contains" the pilot and Miro too, given his strong connection to Jane. Ela will go too since she is determined to use this new technology in order to create the recolada by knowing it while in outspace.

Life and Death Analysis

The new knowledge about Jane's existence means she is more than just software running on the human network of computers. She and her friends are now confident she will survive the shutdown of the ansible computers but they all agree she is likely to be severely impaired and will spend a great deal of time trying to restore herself. Philotic theory also answers a number of unexplained human phenomena. Human philotes become intertwined, like Ender and Val's for instance. This instantaneous connection explains why two people who are so very close can often know when some harm or momentous event affects the other. It also brings new significance to the line "and the two shall be as one."

Wang-mu's test results are also an important vindication for her. For some time she has felt herself to be her mistress' equal intellectually but has had to endure Qing-jao's many snubs. Now she has the genetic pedigree to prove she is every bit as able as the godspoken, more so in fact, since she is free of their genetic predisposition to OCD.

Olhado's creation of domestic heaven is both a tribute to Ender's extraordinary influence over all the Ribeira children and also a reminder of the sacrifice made by many of his brothers and sisters who have spent their lives married to their work. That Olhado is so instrumental in the development of faster than light travel suggests that it is possible to be both a family person and make important contributions to the advancement of knowledge. Perhaps the price exacted by Ela and Quara's responsibilities is too great. Xenocide, the novel, suggests that the most individually fulfilled characters are those

who both engage in significant work but also those who choose to nurture relationships with others rather than a computer terminal or a microscope.



Voyage

Voyage Summary

Han tries to reason with Qing-jao about the nature of the godspoken. She continues to believe wholeheartedly in the gods and refuses the possibility that Congress may have committed such an outrage against the people of Path. He tells her of plans to introduce a virus that will cure the godspoken. She begs her father not to make the gods fall silent but she also tells him she does not fear the virus and Fei-tzu determines to release it.

The test run of Ender and Jane's ship is successful but produces a couple of unanticipated results. While the ship is "outside," a second, completely healthy Miro is created. The new Miro becomes the real Miro and the old Miro's body quickly disintegrates on the floor. Ender is also surprised to see he has inadvertently recreated his brother Peter and, a thirteen year old angelic version of his sister Valentine. Peter is quite sarcastic and insulting. He suggests that previously he was only able to conquer Earth, but now he could amuse himself by trying to take over The Starways Congress and rule over the Hundred Worlds. When Jane returns the ship to the test site, Ender has to disembark with Peter on one side and thirteen year old Val on the other. The real Valentine teases him, suggesting he could have made anything in outspace he wanted but instead returns with these two. Rather modestly, she suggests she was never as beautiful or as perfect as Ender imagined her to be in order to create such a perfect "Valette."

Voyage Analysis

The successful test of the faster than light ship suggests that the colonists on Lusitania may be safe from destruction at the hands of the fleet. The colonists can be transported off the planet long before the fleet arrives. However, the logistics of making multiple voyages with the ship are troubling. What if Ender continues to create more copies of his brother and sister every time the ship travels? The effort required by Jane to move the ship also brings her closer to understanding human fatigue than she has ever been before.

Little Val and Peter are physical representations of Ender's own emotional makeup. He has succeeded at every major task he has ever attempted because he is comprised of both Peter's ruthlessness and Val's extraordinary empathic ability. Peter's ruthlessness helped him in battle school and to gain the upper hand over the buggers. Val's empathy helped him in his role of Speaker for the Dead, which enabled him to create understanding among humans for both buggers and piggies as well as to heal the deep rifts in the Ribeira family by speaking the death of Novinha's first husband.



Ender's Children

Ender's Children Summary

Ela successfully tests the recolada virus she brought back with her from outspace. Ender announces that the pequeninos have indicated their willingness to accept it and see the real descolada destroyed. Peter scoffs at the piggies for accepting the virus instead of using the threat of the descolada to get what they want. Ender is puzzled by the problem of what to do with his "children"—Val and Peter. He feels guilty for thinking about killing Peter and he is embarrassed by Val's presence since she is visual evidence of exactly how he feels about his sister. They are difficult to be around: since they were born knowing everything he knows, he has no secrets from them and Peter torments him constantly with his intricate knowledge of Ender's thoughts. Upon meeting Mayor Kovano, Peter immediately begins using his charisma—a combination of flattery and candor. Ender is horrified to see Kovano falling under Peter's spell, even as Grego has. The bishop immediately baptizes Miro, since he has a new, unbaptized body, but he will not recognize Peter or Val. In his view, only God has the power to create, and therefore Ender's children are abominations. As a temporary solution, Ender enlists Peter and Val's help to aid Jane operate her faster than light ship.

Ela makes a touching visit to Planter's tree. Unfortunately, without the descolada present in his body at the time of his death, he was unable to enter the third life as a fathertree and now stands as a brothertree, devoid of memory or sense. Another piggy volunteer, Glass, is successfully taken into the third life after being cured of the descolada and infected with the recolada. This paves the way for widespread distribution of the virus.

Meanwhile, older Val tries to take care of young Val by inviting her to come and live in her home, rejecting Ender's place for her on the grounds that Peter is living there. Little Val has been tested and it turns out that her DNA is identical to the older Val's. Living with the young Val turns out to be quite uncomfortable and, in a discussion with Miro, she mentions that little Val is likely to be sent with a mission looking for new worlds for buggers and pequeninos to colonize. At a gathering at Planter's tree, Peter announces he will take the special virus to Path and then continue on in his mission to become Hegemon again. The gathering is also used in order to distribute the anti-descolada bacterium and recolada to the piggies. Peter leaves, but Ender is approached by Novinha. While she does not directly apologize, Novinha indicates that she is much more at peace and has come to understand that Quim was fulfilling God's purpose. She invites him to join the Children of the Mind of Christ as she has done. Ender is taken aback, not ready to embrace the Order's vow of abstinence that every couple must take. She is insistent that only by staying abstinent can she have peace, having long committed the sin of adultery while married to her former husband. Since Ender is not ready to join the Order with her, he pledges to visit her once a month. He seeks out Valette and notices her nurturing Nimbo, Olhado's son who was burned the night of the riot. He approaches young Val and asks her about her plans. She says that she and



Miro will voyage away and look for habitable planets. They say their farewells and Ender checks in with Jane. She ribs him a little for pitying himself in the wake of their many accomplishments. He feels guilty when he remembers that, in about three weeks, she will experience a severe mental crippling.

Ender's Children Analysis

This chapter brings some resolution to the novel's central issues but also opens others for continuation in the series' next novel, *Children of the Mind*. The colonists now have a means to escape Lusitania before the fleet arrives, however, many piggies and buggers will still perish with the planet unless Ender's group can somehow stop the fleet. Peter and little Val will be occupied for some time finding habitable worlds but no one can be sure what ruthlessness Peter may perpetrate in his quest to become Hegemon again. Likewise, Novinha has more peace personally than she has had in her entire adult life but in order for Ender to reunite with her, he must in effect agree to be married to her in only the legal sense. Also, the piggies can survive and continue their way of life using the recolada virus but have no way of knowing how profoundly they have been altered by the descolada since their first contact with it. More frighteningly, now they are truly free from the descolada's influence, they will have to accept responsibility for all their actions and also work on their own to face problems such as climate change.



The God of Path

The God of Path Summary

Wang-mu and Master Han receive the virus from Peter. Peter invites Wang-mu to join him and the offer appeals to her since she can go places where she will not be perceived as a mere servant. Master Han begins spreading the virus within his household immediately. The virus makes the People of Path, severely ill at first but passes quickly and is entirely successful at purging OCD from the godspoken. The other effect, the introduction of extra intelligence to all the people of Path, also works, although its effects are harder to discern, given its impact on adults who have mostly finished growing and developing. Qing-jao recovers from the virus too and questions whether maybe her father and Wang-mu were right all along until she sees a news report that the same message has been turning up on computers all over Path. The message claims it is the gods' will that the godspoken be released from the necessity of constant purification. Qing-jao suspects it is Jane and confronts her father who admits it was his and Jane's strategy to avoid repercussions on Path. She despairs that even as she is arguing with her father the gods are silent, until she arrives at the conclusion that they are testing her. She drops to the floor and begins her woodgrain ritual.

The revolution on Path is peaceful. A few godspoken who abused their privilege were put to death at the hands of those they injured, but overall a new order emerges. Remarkably, teachers note that even their former dullest pupils are now achieving at an incredible rate. Han Fei-tzu dies as a very old man with much honor heaped upon him. Qing-jao spends all of her time purifying herself in order to also atone for her father's sins. Her devotion to the gods earns her the reputation of a great holy one and pilgrims come from as far as neighboring worlds to see her. In her old age she is permanently bent from her devotions and dies a few weeks after her one hundredth birthday. The people of Path choose her to be the protector and guardian of the planet. In short, they appoint her God of Path.

The God of Path Analysis

The final chapter returns full circle to the beginning and the question of how Gloriously Bright would be raised by her widower father. Nothing would have pleased her mother more than to know her daughter would one day be elevated to God of Path, and yet nothing else could have driven a larger wedge between Han Fei-tzu and his daughter. Qing-jao's obstinacy demonstrates how unassailable religious conviction can be. Surrounded by overwhelming evidence that Congress abused its power and the gods do not exist, Qing-jao interprets every bit of information that has the potential to undermine her faith as a test by the gods. That she is the most gifted citizen on all of Path suggests that intelligence and the ability to think critically are no guarantees against religious indoctrination.



Characters

Andrew Wiggin, Ender, Speaker for the Dead

Andrew Wiggin, nicknamed "Ender" as a child by his sister Valentine, is the title character in all the novels in the Speaker series. In the first novel, *Ender's Game*, he saves humanity by leading Earth's ships against the bugger home planet while participating in what he thinks is routine training. Ender is recruited by the commanders of Earth's forces because he is perfectly suited to the task of defeating the buggers. Both highly intelligent and creative, Ender possesses the ruthlessness of his brother Peter when necessary but also a great deal of the compassion of his sister Valentine. Not until he has almost entirely destroyed the buggers does he realize they never intended to destroy humanity. In fact, their colonization of Earth was based on the assumption that humans were no different than animals. By establishing a relationship with the last remaining hive queen, Ender comes to understand the buggers as a species that is highly civilized and capable of coexisting peacefully with humans. Ender, having almost committed Xenocide and having been exiled from Earth by his brother Peter, travels to the bugger home planet in order to save the hive queen. She cocoons herself and Ender carries her with him promising to find her a new home planet upon which to reestablish her species. At this time he writes what becomes an incredibly popular book entitled *The Hive Queen*. This book is a sympathetic portrayal of the buggers, or formics, and lays the groundwork for humanity to embrace them as friends once they are reestablished as a species.

Ender's great charisma and empathy are the qualities that earn him his Speaker Role. As *Speaker for the Dead*, Ender travels to different planets in order to tell the life stories of important people. Given that many of the people he speaks for die with a good number of secrets, he has to do considerable investigation in order to tell their life stories. In the second novel, *Speaker for the Dead*, Ender is dispatched to the planet Lusitania in order to speak the death of Pipo, the colony's xenobiologist who is seemingly murdered by the piggies. In the process of investigating Pipo's death, and as a result of his incredible empathy and problem solving ability, Ender uncovers a great deal more information about the Ribeira family, a family heavily involved in the scientific work within the colony under the direction of their mother, Novinha. Prior to Ender's arrival, Pipo's death is regarded as something like an act of war and the Ribeira family is badly fractured. As a result of the understanding Ender brings to the events by writing about them in another book entitled *The Life of Human*, the colonists realize that the piggies were attempting to bestow the ultimate honor on Pipo by taking him into the third life as they do with their own most honored brothers. In addition, Ender elects to speak the death of Marcao, Novinha's dead husband who was regarded within the colony as a drunk and violent man. By the time Ender is finished speaking his death, the colonists understand that there was an underlying story of which they were never aware. Novinha had married Marcao in order to keep Libo, the love of her life, from accessing information she believed might kill him, but continued to sleep with him until his death. In fact, Libo was the father of all her many children and Marcao took that



secret with him to his grave. In spite of having to endure the pain of the very public speaking, Novinha and her children come through the experience much more whole than they began. Novinha is grateful for Ender's understanding and he is attracted to her strength and ability. They eventually marry.

Interestingly, Ender does not have any official position of responsibility or affiliation with any one government or culture. He truly stands up for and represents all of humanity. Always seeming to find himself at the crossroads of major historical events, he usually has to find his own way in order to effect favorable resolutions to unprecedented problems. The challenges he faces and triumphs over are multi-dimensional, with scientific, political and ethical aspects. He does have considerable resources at his disposal. With the ability to communicate with Jane (see below) through a transceiver implanted in his ear, and the hive queen in his head, he is privy to virtually all the knowledge and happenings in the known galaxy. He also has a great deal of personal wealth too, since Jane has been managing his finances for him for over three thousand years. Imagine the compound interest on even modest savings after three thousand years. Although he presents himself quite modestly and does not bother to keep track of his fortune, Ender is wealthy enough to acquire and dispose of state of the art Starships without a second thought.

Jane

Jane is truly an old friend to Ender. One of a kind, Jane exists within the computer and ansible (long distance communication) networks throughout the Hundred Worlds. Having first contacted Ender over three thousand years ago during the time he was engaged in fighting the buggers, neither he nor she knows how or why she exists. She simply is. In some senses she is like a computer program, having actual lines of code, but she also has consciousness in a way her code cannot explain. She is capable of feelings and desires but she is also able to act quite selflessly, like when she stops the Lusitania Fleet, risking of her own destruction. While she can exist or communicate with any human she chooses, something keeps drawing her back to Ender. In fact, she resembles him a great deal with respect to both her personality but also her vast capacity for empathy. She has a very special bond with another human too, Ender's stepson Miro (see below) and communicates with him through a similar earpiece.

In many ways Jane is god-like. She is very nearly omniscient given she can know anything happening anywhere near any communication device. She has become so adept at listening in on human activities that she is able to "hear" by interpreting the vibrations sensed through almost any sensor, speaker or device plugged into the grid. She also has access to any information stored electronically (encrypted or not) which gives her access to almost all human history. Jane is also masterful at covering her tracks. By moving information around and deleting evidence of her activity, she is able to remain invisible which is why her existence is unknown to the Starways Congress until she blacks out the Lusitania Fleet. Jane is not quite omnipotent, however. Her ability to multi-task is leveled so that only her top priorities are able to receive her full attention. Trying to take on too many tasks at a time can overwhelm her, which is why



she is unable to continue to hide her existence once it is discovered. The more monitoring and covering up she would have to do while more and more people around the Hundred Worlds try to broadcast knowledge of her existence would eventually consume her. Her ability to communicate instantly using ansible technology enables her to relay conversations between Ender's group and the citizens on Path even though the planets are many light years away, creating the perfect environment for the cross-fertilization of ideas and enabling Ender to head up the resolution of a number of problems.

Han Fei-tzu

Commonly regarded as the greatest of the godspoken on the Planet of Path, Fei-tzu truly is a great man. Having lost his wife when their daughter, Qing-jao (or "Gloriously Bright") was just 4 years old, Han Fei-tzu grants her her dying wish in spite of his own doubt and raises the child according to the principles of "The Path." He is a good father and by the time his daughter is 16, she is herself recognized as one of the greatest of the godspoken.

Given his reputation for wisdom, Congress turns to him to solve the mystery of the disappearance of the Lusitania Fleet, a responsibility he gives to his daughter in order for her to complete a task which will allow her to pass into womanhood. When her investigation causes her to doubt Congress and even the gods themselves, Han teaches her how to love and understand them. In fact he does such a good job that even after the gods are revealed to be no more than a hoax laid on the godspoken by Congress, his daughter continues to believe in their existence.

Han Fei-tzu is responsible for freeing the citizens of Path who are heavily oppressed. Regular citizens serve as an underclass to the godspoken who are themselves frequently compelled to do all sorts of trivial and demeaning rituals to "satisfy the gods." When he learns that the voice of the gods is no more than common Obsessive Compulsive Disorder resulting from genetic alterations made by Congress to the original settlers on Path in order to keep them subservient, he allies with Ender, Jane and the xenobiologists on Lusitania in order to develop a virus that will extend the intellectual abilities of the godspoken to all the citizens of Path, while erasing the OCD among the godspoken.

Qing-jao, or Gloriously Bright

An extraordinarily precocious child, Qing-jao demonstrates a stronger connection to the gods and also greater intelligence than most of the other godspoken children. By the age of 16 she is well versed in the arts, particularly the poetic works of her namesake from ancient earth, Li Qing-jao. But Qing-jao's knowledge of science and computing is extraordinary, rivaling that of the most highly trained adults. When she is presented with scientific data from the Lusitania colony, she draws conclusions in a few minutes that has evaded the Lusitania scientists all their lives. While she is very pious, truly living



only to serve the gods and to bring honor to her father, her character is afflicted with pride. Once, when she suggests her work is more important than spending the day doing her customary (and expected) "righteous labor," her father smashes her computer terminal in front of her to make the point that righteous labor is necessary in order to preserve humility. Later on, when she is working on the disappearance of the Lusitania Fleet, she is several times blinded by her pride in her dealings with her secret maid, Wang-mu. Though she tries to check herself, she is unable to see objectively the extent of Wang-mu's contributions to the project.

Si Wang-mu, Qing-jao's Secret Maid

Every bit as gifted as Qing-jao but raised among the serving class, Wang-mu truly is a gem. Bold enough to manipulate her way into the position of being Qing-jao's secret maid, Wang-mu is instrumental in solving the disappearance of the Lusitania Fleet and in helping Han Fei-tzu loosen Congress' grip on Path. Her oppositional stance to Congress and questioning of the gods eventually lead to her dismissal as secret maid but Han Fei-tzu retains her as a servant in name but "daughter of his heart" in practice. It is Wang-mu who feels the most guilt for Congress' decision to terminate Jane and works tirelessly to help her master oppose Congress and also aid Ender's group on Lusitania. Seeking a fresh start after she and Han succeed, Wang-mu leaves Path to explore for new worlds suitable for bugger and pequenino colonization.

Si Wang-mu is unique among on the colonists on Path. She carries all the intellectual enhancements of the godspoken but does not have their predisposition to OCD. Interestingly, her name translates to "Royal Mother of the West" which becomes true in a sense when her DNA becomes the basis for a genetic overhaul by the Lusitanian xenobiologists of all the inhabitants on the planet Path.

Miro

Miro, Ender's stepson, is partially crippled and paralyzed as a result of a bold and daring act he committed while trying to help the piggies. Miro was hung up on an electric fence during the Lusitania rebellion and suffered impaired speech and mobility as a result. While in many ways the closest human to the piggies (he grew up as a child playing with them), he is now regarded as a hero because of his sacrifice. Miro, however, finds interaction with humans so difficult that he actually volunteers to go into temporary exile in space to meet Ender's sister's incoming ship. As a gift, Ender presents him with an earpiece so he can get to know Jane. Jane and Miro become very close. Because she is in some ways machine-like, she has infinite patience for listening to him communicate. He is made somewhat whole emotionally by Ender's sister, Val who has the knack of speaking to him with candor and without pity. Ironically, "Miro" suggests miracle which is what he seeks in order to restore his body to its former health. Despite his infirmity, Miro is so courageous that he is able to turn back a human mob in order to save his piggy friends Human and Rooter.



Valentine nee Wiggin

Valentine is Ender's sister and fully one of the three remarkable Wiggin children. Both she and Ender were sent into exile over three thousand years ago (Earth time) by their brother Peter who regarded them as a threat to his position as Hegemon, the ultimate ruler of humanity. Their frequent travel at near light speed occurs while thousands of years go by on Earth, but only about fifty years for them in their own lives. Valentine's distinguishing characteristic is her empathy, a quality which Ender too possesses and one that draws them together, closer than most siblings. Valentine played an important role during the last human-bugger war. When Ender shut down, she was allowed to visit him and made him feel well enough to continue. She also inadvertently helped Peter climb to power. Peter forced her to write essays as "Demosthenes" to his "Locke," only he adopted her point of view and she was compelled to write his. Locke's empathic writing enabled Peter to capture humanity's number one position. Val, in her completely understated way, succeeds at helping Miro reintegrate into the world upon their return.

The Fathertrees

While no one fathertree warrants special treatment here, they do play an important function as a group. Fathertrees represent the third and final stage of pequenino existence and also provide leadership among the piggies. Only the most honored of the brothers (males in the second stage of existence) are granted a third life as a Fathertree. The fathertrees grow out of the corpses of the brothers during a special ritual, retain all their memories, and can live many hundreds of years, in a kind of small scale immortality. The fathertrees are able to communicate with each other through philotes, much in the same way the hive queen does with her workers. In fact, the fathertrees can even speak with the hive queen herself philotically (like telepathy) and will even be able to communicate between worlds once the pequeninos colonize other planets. Piggy societies are grouped into forests and fathertrees form the centers. Pequenino children are created when the "little mothers" are brought to a fathertree for fertilization. The little mothers then give birth to many larvae-like infants (representing the pequeninos' first stage of existence) who are nursed within mothertrees. Because every piggy in a forest is ordinarily the child of a single fathertree, being awarded the third life is another way for brother pequeninos to achieve a certain type of immortality: the privilege of passing one's genes on to future generations.

In *Xenocide*, three fathertrees figure in the narrative as characters. Warmaker is the most belligerent of them all and ultimately responsible for the death of Ender's stepson, Quim. Human and Rooter are the two fathertrees closest to the human colonists both in terms of geography and kinship. During the second novel, Ender sends Human into the third life by sacrificing him with his own hands, thereby sealing a peaceful compact between piggies and humans. Ender routinely talks with Human and Rooter who are in constant contact with other fathertrees and the hive queen herself.



The Hive Queen

Somewhat resembling a large queen ant, the hive queen is so much more than an overgrown insect which Ender comes to appreciate while both battling and communicating with her during his war against the buggers. Both Ender and the hive queen have a great deal of difficulty understanding one another given their radical differences. She is nearly unable to comprehend human individuality, ways of thinking or the value we assign to a single life. For her, her consciousness animates every one of her drones and individually they are both expendable and without free will. When an occasional rogue worker develops, she immediately binds it to her will. She attempts this process with Ender, but it fails utterly.

Following the near total annihilation of buggers (or formics) during the last war with humans, the hive queen was the only remaining bugger alive. After sorting out the numerous misunderstandings that existed between buggers and humans with Ender, he rescues her with the pledge to keep her existence a secret until he can find a safe planet for her to reestablish the buggers as a species. Once Ender lands on Lusitania, he and the hive queen agree that with the piggies' permission, the planet would be quite suitable for her to begin her work. In surprisingly little time, she succeeds at creating thousands of drones and even new hive queens to send out into space to colonize other planets. Her alien exterior obscures an entirely benevolent essence. She often pledges aid to Ender and the pequeninos out of a simple desire to help. She honors her agreements with both species and even agrees to build the piggies a colony ship so they do not have to face complete extinction if the Lusitania Fleet successfully destroys the planet.

Novinha

Ender's wife, Novinha, has the most interesting past of any character on Lusitania. Orphaned as a child when her own parents, who were the colony's original xenologists, succumbed to the descolada, Novinha was taken in by the father and son team of Xenobiologists, Pipo and Libo. Novinha thrived in this environment, quickly learning enough biology to herself become the planet's chief xenologist. She came to view Pipo as a father and fell in love with Libo. Around the time of Pipo's death, Novinha learns information about Pipo's death that she fears will lead to Libo's death as well. Since colony law states that a husband is legally entitled to access his wife's information, Novinha marries another man, Marcao Ribeira, to protect Libo. However, she still loves Libo and all her own children are fathered by him. Her marriage with Marcao is unhappy, he is perpetually drunk and knows his marriage is a sham. He is noble too, however, for even though he knows his wife's children are not his, he never reproaches her publicly, thereby bringing scandal upon them and "their" numerous children.

Eventually Libo dies in the very same way his father did. Wanting their lives to be remembered as more than their senseless apparent murders, Novinha calls for a Speaker of the Dead to Speak their deaths. She gets Ender. In spite of Novinha



changing her mind about the speaking, Ender investigates every aspect of their lives and work. Eventually he speaks the deaths of all three men and while bringing considerable shame to the Ribeiras, he allows them to set aside their many lies and begin healing. Whether or not he approves of all her past choices, Ender recognizes that Novinha has a great number of redeeming qualities. In her own way she is noble and she is a fitting matriarch for her talented (and often squabbling) children: Grego, Elanora, Quara, Quim, Olhado and Miro. Eventually they marry and Ender assumes the role of stepfather to the children.



Objects/Places

Starways Congress

This is the ruling body of all the human settled galaxy, known as the Hundred Worlds. With increasing colonization Starways Congress has increased in power, power it has misused. The Congress creates the godspoken on Path as a caste do Congress' thinking and shackles them with genetic alterations causing obsessive compulsive disorder. Another of Starways Congress' shameful acts is its resolution to send a fleet to destroy the planet Lusitania, an act that would extinguish both piggies and buggers as a species.

Ansibles

Ansibles are the devices that allow instantaneous communication anywhere in the galaxy. The technology uses philotes, one dimensional particle strands that connect everything in the universe. The technology was learned from the buggers during their first invasion of Earth but human scientists still do not know why it works. The technology permitted Ender to direct Earth's fleet from many light years away and is also somehow involved in Jane's existence. Ansible technology also leads Ender to suspect that faster than light travel is possible.

The Life of Human

This is the name of a text Ender wrote chronicling the life of a piggy named Human in order to show the people of the Hundred Worlds that pequeninos were ramen—an alien species capable of being understood and capable of a peaceful co-existence with humanity. This text helped humans understand differences in the nature of pequenino existence (See entry on Fathertrees in Character Section), including how the piggy "murder" of the colonist Pipo was actually a gesture of friendship. Ender seals a compact between humans and pequeninos by sacrificing Human in order to take him into "the third life."

Little Doctor

This is the name of the Molecular Disruption (M.D.) device sent with the fleet to destroy Lusitania. It was the same weapon used over three thousand years before against the buggers on their home planet. It represents humankind's most terrible capacity for destruction. The threat of the "Little Doctor" being used on both Lusitania and Path is why Jane is forced to reveal herself.



Descolada

The descolada is an extraordinarily complex and deadly virus present in all life forms on Lusitania. "Descolada" literally means "ungluing" in Portuguese and it gets its name from its effect on any Earth born species. Without anti-viral medicines, humans and their crops are quickly destroyed by the virus. The virus adapts quickly in order to overpower anti-viral treatments. Originally from off the planet, the descolada now pervades and regulates all life on Lusitania. For indigenous species, it actually binds organisms together. Killing the descolada in species of Lusitanian origin has a similar effect to introducing it into Earth-born species. The virus is also responsible for enabling Piggies to achieve their third life.

Stark

This is the most commonly spoken language throughout the Hundred Worlds and is based on 21st Century American English.

Brothertree

When ordinary male piggies die, their corpses turn into brothertrees. Brothertrees resemble fathertrees except they do not retain their consciousness or memories from their second life. Brothertrees are very much like the hive queen's drones, when piggies need tools, weapons or building materials, the brothertrees fashion them from their own bodies. Thus the piggies have little need to industrialize.

The godspoken

This is the name given to the ruling class on Path. Most of the planet is populated by a servant class but all are taught that a special group of people is intended to rule over the others. People in this special group are spoken to by the gods, hence "godspoken." Supposedly the godspoken are privy to special knowledge because of divine favor, but they are also required to do frequent penances in order to keep the gods happy. Han Fei-tzu discovers that the whole idea of being "godspoken" is a hoax perpetrated by Congress.

Philotes

One dimensional strands connecting all matter in the universe. Given that they go everywhere and have no dimensions, they enable instantaneous communication. Philotes enable the hive queen and fathertrees to communicate telepathically.

Aiua

The Sanskrit word for "life," it is used to describe the special philote associated with sentience that holds all the other philotes comprising a living being in a pattern. Aiua is what Jane, the humans, piggies and buggers all have in common and also explains their differences. Every human has an aiua while only hive queens do among the buggers.



Themes

Xenophobia

Demosthenes' Hierarchy of Foreignness has a great deal of relevance for contemporary conflicts here on Earth. According to the hierarchy, there is only one class of alien species with whom humans must inevitably go to war: the varelse, who must be destroyed in order to avoid their destruction of humanity. Other alien species are raman, who may be understood and who are capable of understanding humans, thereby providing a basis for peaceful co-existence between humans and aliens. Looked at in these terms, it is difficult to imagine why humans must necessarily war with one another, when clearly we should be capable of understanding one another to a greater degree than we are likely to understand alien species.

Card's novel suggests the Hierarchy may work well in theory but can be hard to implement in practice with the way he has Valentine, the actual creator of the hierarchy, respond to the hive queen during their first meeting. More than any other human, Valentine should be able to greet the hive queen as raman and yet she finds herself struggling to control her repugnance of the queen. She tells herself she should be able to see and love the queen as Ender does but she is unable govern her feelings. This is significant because Card seems to be acknowledging the difficulty that attends acceptance. To a certain extent, xenophobia exists on a visceral level, but Valentine knows that as a civilized being, she needs to learn to control her instinct to recoil from the hive queen just as her brother Ender has. This suggests humans may need to step away from their own prejudices in order to find common ground upon which to base lasting peace.

Xenocide

The most obvious theme the novel explores is xenocide itself. Xenocide, or the complete destruction of an alien species exists as a possibility in many different ways in the novel. Starways Congress destroying Lusitania runs the risk of extinguishing both buggers and pequeninos. Likewise, were the human biologists on Lusitania to kill off the descolada they would annihilate not only the virus, which demonstrates many qualities of being a higher functioning species, but also the piggies who depend on the virus for survival.

In fact, given that so much of Ender's adult life has been devoted to trying to help the buggers and the piggies survive as a species, the humans on Lusitania would seem to be the most expendable of all since Humans have a fairly certain chance of species survival given that they are established throughout the Hundred Worlds. The problem Ender faces at one point in the novel is whether he would be justified in destroying the descolada in order to save the humans. He is uncomfortable with the idea because it



would make him a Xenocide but he also realizes he is unwilling to choose his own death in order to save another species.

The very crux of the issue is humans' survival instinct. Grego asks Ender why the hive queen cannot build the humans a colony ship too and Ender responds that she places no value on individual life. She knows humans are not facing extinction and will therefore choose to divert her resources to herself and the piggies, who are both threatened with species extinction. As humans, we would have to override our own survival instincts in order to put the survival of another species before the saving of our own lives. The novel weighs in on this rather ethically tangled problem of what right one species has to destroy another. Before the xenobiologists are able to determine whether the descolada may only occur on Lusitania or if it may be communicated with, the humans destroy it and replace it with the recolada; the risk to humanity justifies the risks of neutralizing the descolada.

The Purpose of Existence

Without waxing too philosophical, Xenocide invites its readers to think a little bit about what activity is meaningful. All of the characters have work of some description but not all manage to have much of a personal life. Some of the Ribeira children seem to exist solely for the purpose of their research while Olhado exists mostly for the sake of his family, working only to produce the income that allows him to enjoy a great deal of quality time with his wife and children. Ender has no job per se but always seems to get involved wherever his help is most needed. Even Planter, Ela's piggy associate, seems to get excited about his work as a scientist and helper. Jane has only a finite amount of time to exist as she always has and she chooses to spend it trying to solve other people's problems. The one common denominator would seem to be that all the people on Lusitania are doing what they are passionate about.

By way of contrast, the people of Path spend a lot of time wrapped up in activity predetermined by Starways Congress. Commoners serve the godspoken, with no means of ever elevating themselves out of servitude. The godspoken spend a great deal of their time engaged in unnecessary and demeaning rituals. Looked at from this point of view, the real tragedy of Congress' genetic alterations on Path becomes more apparent. The colonists on Lusitania may be facing death, but they have purposeful existences, the people on Path do not. It is in acts of resistance that the most meaningful human activity exists. Jane blacking out the Lusitania fleet at risk of her own life and Han Fei-tzu resisting Congress and the Gods at the cost of losing his only daughter are both extraordinary acts of purposeful existence.



Style

Point of View

The novel is written from a third person, omniscient and retrospective point of view using almost all of the characters as reflector characters at one point or another. This point of view is necessary considering the scope of events Card depicts within the novel, events that span two planets and a good deal of the space in between. Within a single chapter the narration shifts from Path to Lusitania or to several different locations on Lusitania.

Card is adept at capturing the psychology of his different characters by using them as reflector characters. At different times the narrator is able to reveal Ender's empathy, Qing-jao's determination or even conversations between Human and the hive queen just by exposing the inner workings of their minds. He also uses this point of view to include context information from events that occur in the preceding two novels. This point of view is also well suited to the plot, which features a number of conflicts unfolding simultaneously. At precisely the same time, Ender and his allies are concerned with Lusitania's destruction, the threat of the descolada to humanity, Jane's termination, the oppression of the inhabitants of Path by Congress and Warmaker's belligerence. Shifting from character to character, the third person narrator is able to juggle multiple plot lines with the skill of a master busker.

Most of the novel is comprised of narration and dialogue with very little exposition. An ongoing telepathic conversation between Human and the hive queen provides the introduction to each chapter and the humor and irony of seeing humankind through their eyes is wonderful. At one point they marvel at how both their species evolve through different stages of being, but humans perpetually exist as hairless slugs. Another time they chide each other for having each drawn first blood against the humans and then realize that humans ended both conflicts with extraordinary violence.

Setting

Most of the novel takes place on the Brazilian colony planet of Lusitania, although a certain portion also occurs on Path. In much the same way as Card is able to make his characters stand out from one another, his planets are very individualistic too. Certainly Path owes a great deal to Earth's ancient Chinese culture, but he also does a wonderful job of depicting how stratified society on Path is. The common people exist to serve the godspoken, thankful that the godspoken bear the burden of the gods' whisperings on their behalf.

Lusitania, on the other hand, is a planet home to several different species. It is covered with large forests and expansive plains. Humans have been allowed only a small area upon which to establish a colony, now fifteen thousand inhabitants strong. The buggers



have also been given an area which they are quickly industrializing. Originally started as a Roman Catholic mission, Lusitania's official language is Portuguese and the planet only bears the most superficial resemblance to Path, which is light years away in another star system. Like Path, Lusitania is considered a colony and therefore not given all the rights and privileges of full member status in the Hundred Worlds.

Some of the novel is set on starships while Valentine is traveling to Lusitania with her family from her home planet of Trondheim. This setting helps Valentine make the transition from her location in the Speaker series' second novel to Lusitania in order to help Ender avert destruction by the fleet. By having Miro fly out from Lusitania in order to educate her about the planet and the piggies, she is able to hit the ground running when she arrives on Lusitania, without losing precious time. Also, spending time aboard the ships enables her to disseminate essays as Demosthenes, her alter ego, in order to make Starways Congress accountable for its abuses of authority.

Language and Meaning

Card's prose style has a number of interesting features. His diction is relaxed without being careless. He uses contractions throughout his narration which helps to capture the personalities of his reflector characters. His strength is in being able to develop extraordinarily complex scientific theorems in a way that makes them accessible to the common reader. Relativity, for instance, is almost mundane because of his easy handling of the time differentials created by travel at near light-speed. The phenomena of ansible communications and faster than light travel are explained quite naturally in dialogs between characters and in ways that provide clarity and generate excitement.

A great deal of the flavor of Card's diction comes from his borrowing from different Earth cultures. Because of its beginning as a Roman Catholic mission, the official language of the colony on Lusitania is Portuguese and, predictably, the characters have Portuguese names and often utter exclamations in their mother tongue in a way that lends authenticity to the narration. Path on the other hand, owes its cultural origins to Ancient China. Each of the characters not only has a Chinese name, but an ancient Chinese namesake. Si Wang-mu, for instance, is actually named after the ancient "Royal Mother of the West." Ironically, Wang-mu ends up becoming a mother to almost all the inhabitants of Path when a virus is created to extend some of her genes to all the common people of Path. Another element closely related to language and culture is the stories Card invokes within the novel. At various points Jane and Ender tell stories, such as "The Jade of Master Ho," in order to illustrate their points. This intertextuality both reinforces the cultural elements of the novel and also establishes parallel narratives, depicting the events of the novel more dramatically.

Structure

The novel is eighteen chapters long and any given chapter is likely to be subdivided into at least three or four sections describing the events unfolding in a particular location.



The events unfold chronologically but the characters occasionally think back to or explain events that happened earlier in the series. While the plot is rather linear, it is subdivided into several sub-plots, including the Lusitania biologists' struggle against the descolada on Lusitania itself, Qing-jao's search for the disappearing fleet, the threat of the descolada traveling into space with the piggies and Han Fei-tzu's transformation of Path.

The novel moves full circle with both the opening and closing scenes taking place on Path. In the first chapter, Han Fei-tzu is mentioned as the greatest of the godspoken and there is speculation among the servants that he may one day be elevated to God of Path. While Fei-tzu never obtains this honor himself, Qing-jao does in the final words of the novel. Fittingly, he explains to her many years before that she can never outshine him, for any accomplishment of hers heap more honor on him as her father and ancestor.



Quotes

"Because the spirit is of the earth, it is that part which makes new things out of old ones. The husband longs for all the unfinished things that he and his wife were making when she died, and all the unstarted dreams of what they would have made if she had lived. Thus a man grows angry at his wife for being too much like him and not enough like his dead wife. Thus a man hates the house they lived in together, because either he does not change it, so that it is as dead as his wife, or because he does change it, so that it is no longer half of her making." Chapter 1, A Parting, pg 3.

"Out of a moral wasteland like Peter's soul came harmony and unity and peace. While Ender's legacy, as far as humanity remembered, was murder, slaughter, xenocide". Chapter 2, A Meeting, pg. 13.

"The desperate need to be clean overpowered even her weeping. So with tears streaming down her face, she began to search desperately for some way to get the grease off her hands. Again she tried the silk of her gown, but within a little while she was wiping her hands on the walls, sidling around the room, smearing them with grease. She rubbed her palms on the wall so rapidly that heat built up and the grease melted. She did it again and again until her hands were red, until some of the softened scabs on her palms had worn away or been torn off by invisible snags in the wooden walls." Chapter 3, Clean Hands, pg. 30.

"It was then that people began whispering about the possible godhood of Han Fei-tzu. 'He is great and strong enough that the gods will listen to him,' said the people of the planet Path, 'and try to do good for us.'" Chapter 3, Clean Hands, pg. 35.

"'Life is life,' said the computer program. 'Life is when a single philote has the strength of will to bind together the molecules of a single cell, to entwine their rays into one. A stronger philote can bind together many cells into a single organism. The strongest of all are the intelligent beings. We can bestow our philotic connections where we will. The philotic basis of intelligent life is even clearer in the other known sentient species. When a pequenino dies and passes into the third life, it's his strong-willed philote that preserves his identity and passes it from the mammaloid corpse to the living tree.'" Chapter 4, Jane, pg. 43.

"'To colony worlds, Demosthenes gave warning that the Lusitania Fleet was a dangerous precedent—it would be only a matter of time before Starways Congress used force to compel their obedience, too. To Catholic worlds and Catholic minorities everywhere, Demosthenes charged that Congress was trying to punish the Bishop of Lusitania for sending missionaries to the pequeninos to save their souls from hell. To scientists, Demosthenes sent warning that the principle of independent research was at stake—a whole world was under military attack because it dared to prefer the judgment of the scientists on the scene to the judgment of bureaucrats many light-years away.'" Chapter 5, The Lusitania Fleet, pg. 59.



"Your task is not to discover the true cause of the disappearance of the Lusitania Fleet—all of Path would know at once that the true cause is that the gods wished it to happen. Your task is to discover the disguise that the gods have created for the event." Chapter 7, Secret Maid, pg. 100.

"Each bugger was just another of the hive queen's organs of action and sensation. In a sense the hive queen was already present with them—was present wherever one of her works or drones might be, even hundreds of lightyears away." Chapter 8, Miracles, pg.122.

"The hive queen isn't an insect. She and her people are warm-blooded, just like the pequeninos. They respire, they sweat like mammals. They may carry with them the structural echoes of their evolutionary link with insects, just as we have our resemblances to lemurs and shrews and rats, but they created a bright and beautiful civilization....I should see them the way Ender does, with respect, with awe, with affection." Chapter 8, Miracles, pg. 130.

"Only Congress—someone with Congress, anyway—had the power exile these scientists, and their families. What was it that had to stay hidden? That we, the godspoken, are not hearing gods at all. We have been altered genetically. We have been created as a separate kind of human being, and yet that truth is being kept from us. Qing-jao, Congress knows the gods speak to us—that is no secret from them, even though they pretend not to know. Someone in Congress knows about it, and allows us to continue doing these terrible, humiliating things—and the only reason I can think of is that it keeps us under control, keeps us weak." Chapter 11, The Jade of Master Ho, pg. 193.

"Any animal is willing to kill the Other," said Ender. "But the higher beings include more and more living things within their self-story, until at last there is no Other. Until the needs of others are more important than any private desires. The highest beings of all are the ones who are willing to pay any personal cost for the good of those who need them." Chapter 11, The Jade of Master Ho, pg. 205.

"So when you make a hive queen, you already have the biological body, and this new thing—this philote that you call out of the non-place where philotes are—it has to be one that's able to comprehend the complex pattern that you have in your minds of what a hive queen is, and when one comes that can do it, it takes on that identity and possesses the body and becomes the self of that body—" Chapter 15, Life and Death, pg. 313.

"Instead of trying to physically move all the particles that compose the starship and its passengers and cargo from Star A to Star B, we simply conceive of them all—the entire pattern, including all the human contents—as existing, not Inside, but Outside. At that moment, all the Philotes that compose the starship and the people in it disorganize themselves, pop through into the Outside, and reassemble themselves there according to the familiar pattern. Then we do the same thing again, and pop back Inside—only



now we're at Star B. Preferably a safe orbiting distance away." Chapter 15, Life and Death, pg. 327.

"The descolada came and enslaved my people. So what if it's sentient or not! It's a tyrant. It's a murderer. If a human being behaved the way the descolada acts, even you would agree he had to be stopped, even if killing him were the only way. Why should another species be treated more leniently than a member of your own?" Chapter 15, Life and Death, pg. 340.

"The pequeninos gathered at Planter's tree. It would have been Glass's tree, since he was the first to pass into the third life with the recolada, but almost his first words, once they were able to talk with him, were an adamant rejection of the idea of introducing the viricide and recolada into the world beside his tree. This occasion belonged to Planter, he declared, and the brothers and wives ultimately agreed with him." Chapter 17, Ender's Children, pg. 374.

"He thought about all that had been accomplished. Ela's viruses. Miro's healing. Young Val's kindness to Nimbo. The smile of peace on Novinha's face. The pequeninos' rejoicing as their liberty began its passage through their world. Already, he knew, the viricide was cutting an ever-widening swath through the prairie of capim surrounding the colony; by now it must already have passed into other forests, the descolada, helpless now, giving way as the mute and passive recolada took its place. All these changes couldn't possibly take place in hell." Chapter 17, Ender's Children, pg. 380-381.

"Her father died as a very old man, with much honor for his many deeds, though no one ever knew his role in the coming of the Plague of the Gods, as it was now called. Only Qing-jao understood. And as she burned a fortune in real money—no false funeral money would do for her father—she whispered to him so that no one else could hear, 'Now you know, Father. Now you understand your errors, and how you angered the gods. But don't be afraid. I will continue the purification until all your mistakes are rectified. Then the gods will receive you with honor.'" Chapter 18, God of Path, pg. 393.



Topics for Discussion

Pride has been referred to as the original sin. Even Qing-jao, for as much as she tries to escape it, cannot help being condescending to Si-Wang-mu. Discuss ways in which Xenocide depicts pride as a stumbling block or obstacle to humanity.

Who is qualified to seek knowledge? The people of Path are supposed to be some of the brightest out of all of humanity but it is the people of Lusitania who develop faster than light travel, and solutions to both the descolada and the genetic problems of the people of Path. Likewise, virtually all the authorities in the Hundred Worlds are looking for the fleet, but it is sixteen year old Si Wang-mu, largely uneducated, who actually solves the mystery. What leads to discovery? How important is a post-secondary education in advancing knowledge?

The nature of existence. Card pushes this theme to the limit with his portrayal of a wide variety of sentient species. Not only do the buggers have conscience, but they also have compassion, immediately capitulating during the colonization of Earth when they realize humans are also sentient. Piggies have consciousness and there is even evidence to suggest that the descolada virus might have not only the ability to communicate but also memory and its own awareness. What qualities must a species possess in order to have the same right to exist as humans?

The situations the characters find themselves in raise the question, "under what circumstances killing is justified?" Discuss what actions by the colonists would and would not be justified. How important was it for humans to get permission from the pequeninos before destroying the descolada and introducing the recolada?

Power. Jane possesses extraordinary power and potential to do harm or good. Fortunately, she is only interested in exercising it for the sake of promoting good and wellbeing among her friends, but her actions can have unintended results. Given that she sometimes uses her powers in ways that may or may not be ethical, explain what rules you would develop in order to prevent her from abusing her abilities.

Marriage. Jane refers to herself as Ender's bastard child and thinks of her relationship with him in terms of being his daughter. Yet clearly their closeness alienates his wife Novinha. To what extent can or does a platonic third relationship constitute infidelity within a marriage? Explain whether and why you feel Ender should have ended his relationship with Jane in order to preserve his marriage.

The politics of Lusitania are triangular, with humans, buggers and piggies all working hard to remain peaceful but at the same time promote their own interests. At several points in the novel, events seem like they may spiral out of control and result in war, particularly between piggies and humans. Using the novel to illustrate your points, argue whether a peaceful resolution is always possible or whether there are times when war is necessary or unavoidable.