

Fledgling

Discussion Notes

Please note there are spoilers in these questions!

1. What did you expect from reading *Fledgling* based on the cover and description of the book? Were you surprised by the story?
2. Cassie lives in a house “perch[ed] on top of a tall rock” (p.1). What unusual features does Cassie’s house have? Would you enjoy living there? Explain why or why not.
3. “Our hearts are beating in the same rhythm” (p.33). How would you describe Cassie’s relationship with the cherub?
4. Cassie and Raphael are best friends and communicate secretly with Morse code. At one point, Cassie’s mother says “You’d rather spend time with the cobbler’s son, than with your own mother” (p.18). Why do you think Cassie hides her friendship with Raphael from her family?
5. Cassie’s Papa’s “soul was shattered, after what happened in the war” (p.22). How do you think Papa’s experience of being at war affects his behaviour and how he feels?
6. The word “fledgling” means a young bird that has grown feathers and is ready to fly. It can also be used to describe someone or something that is new or inexperienced. What do you think the title *Fledgling* might mean in relation to the story and its characters?
7. In *Fledgling*, angels are described as “quite different to normal people, despite their outward similarity” (p.187). Are the angels in this book what you expected them to be?



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8. The nurses Crunch and Grind are described as “*tight-lipped and unspeaking*” (p.170) and Cassie doesn’t like them very much to start with. How and why does her opinion of them change?
9. Frau Fischer says she found Raphael in an owl’s nest in the woods, but no one believes her at first. Why do people think she is as “*mad as hops*” (p.120)?
10. Raphael’s father is a cobbler and described as “*like someone out of a fairy tale!*” (p.18). Are there any other characters or places in *Fledgling* that remind you of any fairy tales you’ve read before?
11. Were there any parts of the book that you found spooky? Discuss how you think the author developed tension and atmosphere in the book.
12. Cassie has a difficult relationship with her opera-singing mother throughout the story. What was your first impression of Cassie’s mother?
13. When Cassie thinks Raphael is going to rise and join the other angels, she says, “*He’s not ready to go!*” (p.267). Why does Cassie think this? How could you prepare yourself for such a big change in your life?
14. Cassie is shocked when she finds out her mother is an angel and wonders, “*How do you tell someone you are going to leave them forever?*” (p. 269). Why do you think Cassie’s mother kept the fact that she is an angel secret from her family? Was that the right decision in your opinion?
15. How did you feel at the end of the book? Do you think this story had a happy ending?



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