

Characters and characterisations

- **Ettie** → Real name: Juliet Seven; Protagonist, narrator (1st person); rebel, always looking for an escape; “The One”, as mentioned in the prophecy; selfish; uses people as she needs them; duplicitous; insecure; tricks people easily; emotional attachment to the Tree Museum; Drudge in a Mangerian home; protective of Larissa and Kitty. Ettie is loyal to and protective of those for whom she cares (only Kitty at first, as Kitty saved her life years earlier and she still feels indebted). She is resourceful, deceitful (she convinces Handler Xavier of her loyalty and innocence) and despises Handler Xavier because he exploits them. Her passion for books/reading is shown when she steals and hides a book. She appears to have few morals and no conscience, but the reader is aware that she does have values and acts in accordance with them and on her own terms. She has light-coloured skin and can pass for a Posh.
- **Kitty** → Real name: Katherine Seven; Ettie’s roommate; at first, she appears selfish and vain, but her deceit is later shown and explained; Ettie thinks that she is helpless and vulnerable; resourceful and intelligent; acts selflessly. She was tortured by the AR people when she was seven. Her hatred of the Mangerians stem from the treatment she, and her parents, endured. Although she appears to be selfish and vain, she is actually a noble martyr.
- **Nicolas** → Son of the Guardian of Justice and Peace; he is NOT like other Mangerians; although he is a Locust, he remains caring and sympathetic; he wants to remove his Mark; he loves Ettie; loyal; helps Kitty and Ettie to escape and lies in court to protect them. He is drawn to Ettie because he recognises his own longing for freedom.
- **Mistress** → She wishes to save Larissa at ANY cost; Ettie’s mother; not in a loving marriage; passionate about Trees; beautiful but selfish. Her character is paradoxical – she speaks kindly to Ettie and asks Larissa to do the same HOWEVER, she chooses Larissa’s life over Ettie’s. Shares a very close bond with Madam Merriem, whom she calls Merry.
- **Master** → Hylton, cruel to his wife and all Savages; elitist; power-driven; dismissive and unloving towards Larissa, killed in explosion
- **Larissa** → Little Miss; At first utterly selfish, inconsiderate, rude and malicious. She develops affection for Ettie; remains loyal; spoiled; sickly; betrothed to Nicolas in a family alliance
- **Handler Xavier** → Orphan warden’s son; controls The Game; important in the resistance movement; treats Ettie with indifference; cold; protects Kitty; Ettie’s father. Betrays Ettie on more than one occasion. Protective of Kitty
- **Reader** → blind man; teaches Ettie to read and write; appears cold but is very fond of her; perceptive, sly, accompanies Ettie on the boat when she escapes
- **Orphan Warden** → paid by the state to look after the orphans but abuses and exploits them. She drinks too much bug juice, which means she sleeps through the kids’ crying at night. She also gives the little children bug juice to ‘sedate’ them. She drugs them! She bribes the Mangerian Welfare Department Officer to ‘look the other way’. Madam Merriem’s sister. She dumped Ettie on the steps of the orphanage.
- **Nelson** → leader of the resistance movement, a Scavvie, plays boardgames with Witch.

- Rejects → people born disabled and deemed useless or those no longer useful in society; treated as rubbish. They live outside Slum City (or on rooftops in Slum City) and survive by foraging in the rubbish dumps.
- Bigs → older children in the orphanage
- Smalls → younger children in the orphanage. When they turn five, they join the Bigs.
- Cowboy → he buys the stolen goods from Ettie and the other children in the Game. He is a cheat and acts selfishly. Involved in the resistance movement.
- Me → owner of the Beautiful Like Me salon. He also works for the resistance movement. Ettie often steals creams from him to try and remove the mark on her spine. As his name suggests, he is narcissistic – he is mostly concerned with Ettie’s outward appearance.
- Hadedas → although not traditional ‘characters’, these birds can talk. They predict the future. Their eyes are removed to make them more intuitive. Witch’s hadeda keeps referring the Ettie as “The One” and screams that Ettie will go to Savage City. Princess Fannie is Larissa’s pet and also has her eyes gauged out when Larissa wants to know the future.
- Cockroach → head of the Locusts. He is cruel, violent man. Feared by all. Director of Justice and Peace. Like the insect, he is repellent and disgusting.
- Festis Four → Kitty robs his room in a hotel complex in order to be arrested and sent to Savage City.
- Madam Merriem → oversees Ettie and Dora in their duties as drudges. Cruel, uncaring. Orphan Warden’s sister.
- Dora → a drudge in the same Posh household as Ettie. Mean, deceitful and will do anything in her power to be a nursery drudge. Her slow voice and apparently amiable demeanour prove to be false. She is cunning and exploits any weaknesses in others.
- Bartholomew → Guardian of Justice and Peace, Nicolas’s father. He is accused of having Cockroach “in his pocket”.

There is a whole category of workers – called traders – outlined in the novel:

- Market Nags → they sell food in the market; they make the ‘bug juice’ which has the same effects as alcohol
- Locusts → security force, brutal and violent, often corrupt and easy to bribe. Like the insects, they are like a plague on the inhabitants of Slum City – they are corrupt and steal from the poor people.
- Pulaks → pull vehicles by means of ropes and cables, harnessed like oxen. Often left disabled and then they become Rejects. Like Rickshaw drivers
- Muti Nags → provide medicine to people
- Wardens → appointed to deal with groups such as children (ironic title – wardens are supposed to take care of children, instead they exploit them)
- Drainers → they deal with waste disposal in the streets
- Readers → teach the children of the Posh to read
- News Trader → journalist
- Scavvies → also called Necromunda; sea scavengers who raise relics from the underwater city, a city which was covered by the rising ocean. Often left disabled and then they become Rejects.
- Pleasure workers → they girls and boys from Section O who entertain the Posh by dancing for them and being their ‘escorts’ in the clubs.

- Guardians → those Mangerians in charge of all people. The leaders. Ironic title! Elected every two years.
- Drudges → people who do manual work, mostly in the homes of the Posh.

Places in the novel:

- Mangeria City → area for the Posh, the rich, the privileged. They have running water and heat/air-conditioning. Divided into sections, like the pleasure section where the Posh drink and laugh and mingle with the ‘pleasure workers’ and the beauty parlours.
- Slum City → area for the Savages, the poor, the working class. They have very few basic services and live in cramped, dirty apartment blocks. Ghetto-like
- Savage City → place where the convicted prisoners are sent. No prisoner ever escapes – they either serve their life sentences or die there. Place of incarceration and punishment
- The Laboratory → a manufacturing plant. They make all food by chemical process by copying the genetic material of samples saved after the conflagration. The conditions required for food production from the soil no longer exists. They also experiment on humans. They have found a way to remove the mark.
- Birthing Station → where women give birth to babies – implies futuristic setting
- Section O → part of Slum City where the orphans live
- Section AR → place for “attitude re-adjustment’ – problem children are sent here to be disciplined and according to Ettie, “when they come out, they do not have any attitude at all”. It implies that they undergo some form of lobotomy/operation which makes them submissive and incapable of rebellion.
- Section F → part of Slum City where families live
- Section PT → part of Slum City where past traders live
- Section D → part of Slum City where Drudges live
- Drudge School → where the children from Slum City are taught their chores for future lives as drudges in the Posh’s homes. The Machine determines which children end up where.
- Population Control → The Machine is housed there.
- Justice and Peace → another ironic title – there is neither justice nor peace in this society. This building is where the Guardians work – those who control the people in Mangeria. Headed by Cockroach.
- Parliament → where all laws are decided and enforced

Questions

Chapter 11: The Drudges

1. Why does Ettie say that 'families are overrated'?
2. Ettie thinks of Kitty and apologises (in her head) for 'being yellow'. What does that mean?
3. Why did the resistance movement wait for Kitty's 15th birthday before executing the plan to get her arrested?
4. Describe Ettie's feelings as the chapter progresses.
5. Who is Madam Merriem?
6. Discuss the character of Dora in detail. Include the details from the end of the chapter.
7. Explain the ambiguity in Ettie's reply to Dora's comment, "Adorable. I could just squeeze the breath out of them," Dora says. "I tell her I have had the same thoughts on occasion."
8. Describe the Mangerian family for whom the girls work now.
9. What is Ettie's first reaction to seeing Mistress?
10. Why is Ettie surprised to see dirt under Mistress's fingernails?
11. Why does Ettie interrupt Master? Why is this dangerous?
12. Why is Mistress happy about Ettie's news?
13. What do you think is in store for Ettie while she is in this house? Elaborate with evidence from the text.
14. Compare the life Ettie had with Kitty in Section O to the life she is going to have with Dora in Section D.
15. Evaluate the relationship between Mistress and Master as introduced in this chapter.

Chapter 12: The Party

1. Briefly describe a typical day in the Number 3 Mangeria Compound.
2. By referring to at least one extract from this chapter, describe Ettie's conflict with
 - Dora
 - Nicolas
 - Little Miss
 - Madam Merriem
 - Herself
3. Describe Master's treatment of the drudges.
4. Describe Mistress's treatment of the drudges.
5. Describe the relationships between:
 - Master Hylton and Mistress
 - Madam Merriem and Mistress
 - the parents and Larissa
6. How does a Mangerian home differ from the homes in Slum City? Refer to two aspects.
7. Who is Bartholomew and what is his Guardian position?
8. Explain the power relationships among Mangerian families.
9. Discuss how life has changed for Ettie since becoming a drudge.
10. Why does Ettie fear Nicolas's testimony in Kitty's trial?

Chapter 13: The Trial

1. How does Madam Merriem try to comfort Mistress?
2. Do you agree with Ettie when she says she does not know Kitty and states that she is “not really lying”?
3. Discuss how the servants at Number 3 exploit each other.
4. Refer to the character of Mistress. Identify and describe the kind of person she is using past and present behaviour.
5. How do outside drudge workers and Locusts take advantage of other drudge workers in order to make money on the side?
6. Describe Kitty’s appearance when she enters the courtroom.
7. Briefly describe how the trial unfolds.
8. Why is Festis Four not in court to deliver his testimony?
9. Why does Cockroach not want Nicolas to testify?
10. How does Ettie change her nicknames for Nicolas? Why?
11. Ettie experiences internal conflict now. Nicolas is becoming a feature in her life, Handler Xavier will not think twice about exposing her to Master and Mistress, and Hylton himself seems to have deep secrets.
Discuss how Ettie can use all three men to free herself and rescue Kitty.
12. What does Ettie find in the Tree Museum? How does this link to Kitty?
13. What does Handler Xavier ask of Ettie? How does she respond? Why?
14. Describe Ettie’s tone when she says, “I am back in the game. But this time, I play alone.” Explain.
15. Considering the entire chapter, discuss to what extent corruption is rife in this society.

Chapter 14: Porridge

1. Describe and account for Ettie’s mood at the beginning of the chapter.
2. Name the three things she wants to do whilst Master and Mistress are away.
3. Discuss how the relationship between Master and Mistress has changed since the dinner party.
4. Describe the plan Ettie has to get the servants of Number 3 out of her way in order for her to do what she wants in the house.
5. What does it say about Ettie when she does not want to poison Larissa’s porridge?
6. Explain what Ettie finds in Master’s library.
7. How does Ettie react to Larissa being unwell?
8. Why does Ettie tell Larissa the “Magic Faraway Tree” story?
9. Describe the garden to which she takes Larissa for their stroll.
10. Explain what is done to hadeda chicks. Why?
11. Why does Ettie help Larissa to hide Princess Fanny?
12. Discuss Ettie’s strategy to use Larissa for information. Do Ettie’s actions in this chapter shock you, or could you justify her poisoning the servants and using an innocent little child to get what she wants?

Chapter 15: The Laboratory

1. Describe how Ettie came to be Larissa's caregiver.
2. How/Why does Ettie "taste power" (pg 193)?
3. Compare the attitude of Master and Mistress towards Ettie in this chapter.
4. Explain how the relationship between Ettie and Larissa is evolving, from beginning to now.
5. Describe your reaction when you found out that Mistress and Master are fate-mates (chapter 12), and that Larissa has a mark on her back too.
6. Summarise the main events of the visit to The Laboratory.
7. Describe your impression of The Laboratory and the type of work that is done there.
8. What evidence is there of the Mangerians' indifference to others?
9. What signs are there that Ettie is genuinely becoming fond of Little Miss?
10. Why does Ettie refer to the doctors as Frankensteins?
11. What does Ettie spy between Mistress and Handler Xavier?
12. How does she feel about Nicolas at this stage?