

Summary after p. 104, before scene 26

NARRATOR: As had happened time and again before, the world was becoming disenchanted. This time, there was a Humbug flying around, beating on his humdrum.

The disenchantment had spread almost everywhere but a basement classroom in Winthrop, Massachusetts. And the only one in all the world who could get him to change his tune was the Lizard of Oz, who lived in Ome, the nicest part of Oz.

At least that's what Mr. Shermin said. Mr. Shermin knew lots of things. He used to be a teacher before he became a fish. And not many people, even teachers know how to change themselves into fish. So the class believed him, and they all set out on a quest to Oz and to Ome to save the world from disenchantment.

There were lots of them, all crowded into one little green VW -- Eugene and Mark and Linda S. and Linda C. and Gaynell and Kathy and Timmy and Kevin and Cindy and Donny and Peter and Miss Morgan and Miss Prysby.

They fell down through a pothole, passed through Potheadland and Eggheadland, and suddenly found themselves lost in the Underworld. There they met Mr. Carroll, the writer. He seemed to know a lot about these lands they'd been through, and he offered to take them down to the next underworld, where they could stand

under and understand both the world and the Underworld. There are many levels of understanding, he explained. Maybe somewhere down there they could find someone to help them get back to Home or go on to Ome.

Soon they arrived in Camelot, where they heard that the Lizard of Oz was actually a huge and dangerous dragon. St. George gave them a few pointers on how to fight dragons, with upper cuts and back strokes and breast strokes and the stroke of luck and the stroke of genius.

Led by Mr. Carroll, the class visited the Mothers of Fact, Miss Hap, Miss Take, and Miss Fortune. Then they arrived at the home of the muses on Mount Parnassus. But instead of telling them how to get to Home or Ome, the muse just made funny shadow pictures on the wall of the cave and made the kids laugh. Maybe they knew what the pictures meant, or maybe it was just the shadowy shapes that made them laugh. But whichever it was, Miss Morgan didn't find the show at all funny. She felt very empty and very helpless, until Mr. Plato motioned her off to the side and explained in words the story of the shadows.

He told her about the world and the unworld, about the unworldly place called Ome where a great dragon radiated a strange light that draws people to it like a magnet draws steel. He let her know that her mission really was important, that she must bring back some of the dragon's strange fire to the world, to enchant

