

The Beatryce Prophecy by Kate DiCamillo

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A fantastical meditation on fate, love, and the power of words to spell the world.

We shall all, in the end, be led to where we belong. We shall all, in the end, find our way home.

In a time of war, a mysterious child appears at the monastery of the Order of the Chronicles of Sorrowing. Gentle Brother Edik finds the girl, Beatryce, curled in a stall, wracked with fever, coated in dirt and blood, and holding fast to the ear of Answelica the goat. As the monk nurses Beatryce to health, he uncovers her dangerous secret, one that imperils them all—for the king of the land seeks just such a girl, and Brother Edik, who penned the prophecy himself, knows why.

And so it is that a girl with a head full of stories—powerful tales-within-the-tale of queens and kings, mermaids and wolves—ventures into a dark wood in search of the castle of one who wishes her dead. But Beatryce knows that, should she lose her way, those who love her—a wild-eyed monk, a man who had once been king, a boy with a terrible sword, and a goat with a head as hard as stone—will never give up searching for her, and to know this is to know everything. With its timeless themes, unforgettable cast, and magical medieval setting, Kate DiCamillo’s lyrical tale, paired with resonant black-and-white illustrations by Caldecott Medalist Sophie Blackall, is a true collaboration between masters.

Discussion, revision & competition-like questions for this book are below.

Reading Rivalry Is Not a test!

Note the Reading Rivalry questions are tools used to discuss the book(s) and topics the students read.

The intent of RR is to foster a love of reading, introduce the students to books they may not otherwise choose, provide opportunities to work as a team and have fun!

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1. What was Answelica's favorite game in the monastery?

Lull the monks into complacency by behaving for a few weeks, then butt the Monks in the backside with her head and send them flying through the air, then bite them when they landed.

2. Who found the child, Beatryce, in the barn?

Brother Edik.

3. What were her brothers' names?

Asop and Rowan.

4. What mark is on Brother Edik chest?

A red arrow pointing to his heart, a partial outline of Answelica's hoof.

5. What are the Chronicles of Sorrowing?

The Chronicles tell the story of what happened and of things that might yet happen, those things which have been prophesied.

6. Why could a girl not read or write?

It was against the law.

7. Who could read and write?

- Brothers, monks, and men of God,
- Tutors and scholars who came and studied the prophecies,
- Counselors to the king,
- And the king himself.

8. What made Brother Edik think Beatryce could read?

When he told her about the Chronicles of Sorrowing, she said, "that is not a book I would care to read."

9. What shape was Brother Edik's mother's hairbrush?

It was shaped like a mermaid.

10. What was Brother Edik's plan?

Keep her hidden in plain sight, say she is a young boy who came to learn his letters, a brother in training. Meanwhile, she can help write the happenings of the world. Give her a chance to return to full health before they have to send her away.

11. According to the prophecy the councilor read for the king, what will a girl do?

One day a girl child will unseat a King and bring about a great change.

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12. What creatures did Granny Bibspeak like?

Bees

13. Name any one of Jack Dorys talents?

(i) He was fast / fleet of foot, (ii) he had a good memory, (iii) he was a great mimic.

14. What did Brother Edik put in the satchel for Beatryce before she was sent her on her way?

A quill, ink & parchment, a candle, a piece of flint, and maple candy.

15. What did Father Cadice command of Jack?

Father Cadice commanded Jack Dory not to bring Beatryce back to the monastery and take the goat with them too.

16. What did Beatryce write instead of the soldier's confession in the Inn?

"Once there was a mermaid."

The soldier's confession was too upsetting for Beatryce to write.

17. When Cannoc found Beatryce, Jack and Answelica in the woods, where did he bring them?

Into a trunk / hollow of a tree, through a door in the side of a massive tree.

18. Name one of the shapes of the maple candy Brother Antoine gave to Brother Edik before he left the monastery.

Candies in the shape of:

flowers, birds, leaves, crescent moons, stars, and bewildered people.

19. What did Beatryce remember after her dream in the tree hollow?

-Beatryce remembered who she is, Beatryce of Abelard.

-Her tutor and her brothers were killed by a soldier (the one in the Inn who asked for a monk to write his confessions).

-It was done at the command of the king.

- The king wanted her dead.

20. How did Cannoc rescue Brother Edik from the black-bearded robber?

By laughing, there is nothing more terrifying to evil than joy.

21. What are the four darkness' Beatryce experienced?

- I. when she lay beneath her brothers
- II. when she found her way to the monastery & woke in the barn
- III. when she heard the confession of the soldier in the Inn
- IV. when she captured and wrapped tightly in cloth on the back of a horse.

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22. What did Cannoc teach Jack Dory?

How to use the sword.

23. How did Jack Dory know the black-bearded man?

The black-bearded man was a robber and the one who killed Jack's parents.

24. Who was the first person to visit Beatryce in the cell in the dungeon?

The king's counselor, he had been Beatryce's first tutor.

25. What was the name of the one-eyed seahorse and the mermaid in Beatryce's story?

The one-eyed seahorse was Morelich, and the name of the mermaid was Rosellyn.

26. What did Brother Edik say to convince the guards to let them enter the castle?

He said he was a prophet, and he had a prophecy the king must hear.

27. In the castle, who did Cannoc reveal himself to be?

King Ehrengard

Discussion questions

1. What is your favorite thing about the book?
2. Beatryce's father believed in knowledge and learning. Do you think knowledge is important?
3. What would life be like if you were not allowed to read or write?
4. According to Brother Edik, to be brave is not to turn away, to go forward, to love. What do you think it means to be brave?
5. According to the counselor, "It is better to be the king or the man behind the king, the puppet or the puppet master." What do you think?