

Comprehension Questions Answer Key

Chapter 1: The Princess of the Sea

- 1) List three characteristics of the Great King of the Sea, and explain how his approach to leadership might've brought about the Era of Peace.

Wise, peaceful, just, patient, humble, caring, compassionate. Because he cared for the people and showed it by spending time with them, they knew they could trust his leadership.

- 2) Why are the elves surprised by the Great King's decision to adopt the baby?

A human has never stepped foot into Marindel before, let alone ruled it. Plus, the Great King already has a son, Prince Eli.

- 3) During the ceremony, what is foreshadowed by Melody's hesitation to answer the Great King's final question?

Either of these answers are acceptable:

1) Because Melody doesn't think through the consequences of her actions (saying "yes" simply to get her powers and be a princess), she will eventually put herself in danger.

2) Though she denies it now, a romantic relationship between her and Eli is likely inevitable.

- 4) In what form does the Great King grant Melody her royal inheritance? Under what condition is she able to use its magic?

A silver amulet with a rainbow gemstone that was formed using her signature energy. As long as she wears the amulet, she can use its magic.

Chapter 2: Compromise

- 1) List three adjectives that describe Eli and Melody's relationship.

Innocent, child-like, trusting, fun, friendly, (any synonym of these)

- 2) For what reason does Melody suggest playing hide-and-seek?

Melody wants to use her magic to beautify the halls of the palace (by helping the potted plants grow).

- 3) How does the voice disrupt Melody's trust in the Great King?

He uses flattery to lower her guard, uses Melody's inability to grow the plant as a springboard to question the Great King's character, and he promises to do for Melody what the Great King would not.

- 4) Why do you think the Serpent gives Melody her powers back?

(This question is open-ended, but here is the canonical answer) The Serpent wants Melody to believe she can flee or defend herself, 1) to increase her durability as the Serpent's play-thing (she won't be easily killed), and 2) so she will rely on her own abilities to resist, without asking the Great King for help.

- 5) Why can't the Kingdom of Marindel directly stop the Great Serpent?

He has Melody's inheritance (power, authority, royalty), and only she can take back what is rightfully hers.

Chapter 3: The Kingdom of Rhema

- 1) How does the Great King save Marindel from the Great Serpent's attack?

He orders the Royal Orchestra to play the Music of Marindel, which causes the city to vanish from the realm.

- 2) Define the Greek word "rhema." Why does Melody name the island Rhema?

Rhema: An utterance; a thing said; the spoken word. Melody names the island Rhema to honor the Great King, whose whispers led her there.

- 3) Which of Melody's weaknesses does the Serpent exploit to corrupt Rheman society? What is the end result?

Pride, fear, inadequacy/unworthiness, guilt. The kingdom is occupied by the Tethysian Empire.

- 4) What must Eli do to be successful in his mission to rescue Melody?

He must surrender his powers and Marindelian heritage to become just like her in every way (any variation of this answer).

Chapter 4: The Prince of the Sea

- 1) Describe Melody's first encounter with Eli. How does she react? How does he respond?

Eli meets her at the town hall, introduces himself, and asks her to come down and see for herself. She refuses and tells him to go away. He obliges, but tells her he will never give up on her.

- 2) When the Serpent attempts to discourage Eli, what does Eli say he has come to do?

He will take Melody's punishment (inheritance of death) upon himself.

- 3) Why is Eli's mention of hide-and-seek significant?

It was the game they played in the flooded palace. Eli implies she has been hiding all this time, and he has finally found her.

Chapter 5: The Prince of Mystery

- 1) How do you think Eli uses the sun and the apples to show Melody aspects of his own character?

(This question is open-ended, but here is the canonical answer)

- 1) *The sun rises to give life to all living things. It gives beauty, warmth, comfort, and light. Eli, the son, has come to bring life to Melody and all living things. Wherever he goes, he brings warmth, comfort, beauty, and light.*
- 2) *The apples are pleasing to the eye and bursting with flavor, without any hidden worms or parasites. Eli is handsome, delightful, and pure-hearted.*

- 2) What plan does Melody come up with to justify her walk with Eli?

She'll play along with him now, but will be waiting for him to make a mistake. When he does, she'll exploit it to uncover his fraudulent act, and have him killed like every Seer before him.

- 3) Why is Melody frustrated with Eli's friends in Jasper Village?

They didn't recognize her as the queen of Rhema.

- 4) While being chased by soldiers, what happens when Melody when she goes her own way instead of following Eli?

She trespasses into a yard where there's a dragon. (She puts herself in danger)

Chapter 6: The Prince of Wonder

- 1) How does Eli tame the dragon?

He sings in Elvish. (He uses the Music of Marindel)

- 2) What memory helps Melody reclaim her ability to sing in Elvish? What were Eli's instructions?

She remembers Eli in the palace garden, teaching her how to sing. He said, "Let it flow. Don't think about the words. Focus on the Great King. Think about how much he loves you. Rejoice in the freedom of knowing who you are and whose you are."

- 3) Why does Melody change her mind about returning to Diamond City at noon?

She's becoming fond of Eli, and curious to know if he really is the Prince of Marindel.

- 4) What comparison does Eli draw between Melody and Kaya?

They're both stubborn, but can be pacified/redeemed.

Chapter 7: The Prince of Legend

- 1) List two similarities and two differences between the dragon-flight scene and the flooded palace scene.

Similarities: Melody has never done this before. Melody must overcome fear. Eli performs tricks and maneuvers / is a thrill-seeker. The two of them frolic and enjoy themselves. Melody goes off on her own at some point. (Additional answers may be applicable)

Differences: Melody trusted Eli from the start in the palace, but not while flying dragons. Melody and Eli had magic in the palace, but must rely on dragons while

flying. Melody was carefree and innocent in the palace, but held back by dark memories while flying. The palace was underwater, and now they're in the sky. (Additional answers may be applicable)

- 2) Describe the symbolic meaning of the cavern mural.

The Great King sits enthroned in the center. Seated on either side of him are Melody (regal and beautiful) and Eli (as a human). It foretells the coming of Eli as a human to restore Melody's position as the Princess of the Sea.

- 3) What claim does Melody make about Eli's identity?

"You are Eli, the Great Prince of the Sea. The Son of the Great King."

- 4) Why do the Rheman officials feel threatened by Eli? How about the Tethysians?

Eli is exposing the officials' lack of concern for the people, and turning Melody against them.

The Empire has dealt with sorcerers and political instigators before. Eli is suspected to be both, as well as favored by the people.

Chapter 8: The Prince of Love

- 1) Explain how the Serpent uses nightmares to weaken Melody's trust in Eli.

In the nightmares, Melody trusts Eli in doing something, but she dies (he lets her down). When she awakes, the Serpent uses Melody's own voice to validate the possibility that it could happen someday.

- 2) What enables Melody to run through the twilight forest without any exhaustion or fear?

She keeps her gaze on Eli.

- 3) Why does Eli regularly spend the night at the giant camphor tree?

It's a solitary place where the presence of the Great King dwells strongly. There, Eli communes with the King (devotes himself to hearing the King's voice) and receives strength, confidence, focus, and direction.

- 4) According to Eli, to whom will the Great King soon grant his royal inheritance, and in what form?

To all sentient beings who choose to follow the Great King. It will dwell in their hearts.

- 5) Why does Eli begin to weep? How does Melody interpret his response?

He knows he must return to Marindel and cannot take Melody with him (he must die in order for Melody to be set free). Melody believes Eli is leaving her.

- 6) What is the significance of Eli planting a camphor seed? Refer to John 12:24.

“Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” Eli is predicting his own death, a necessary sacrifice to bring life to all who will choose to follow the Great King.

Chapter 9: The Prince of Sorrow

- 1) List three ways in which the elder is able to gain Melody’s trust. What valuable information does she give him?

Any of the following answers apply: the elder apologizes for his narrow-mindedness, agrees to let Melody make her own decisions, empathizes with her pain/fear, offers to help her get what she wants, calls her “Melody” instead of “Milady,” and shows emotion (his eyes well up).

Melody tells him that Eli spends the night at the hill with the giant camphor tree.

- 2) Why must the elder and Matthias carry out their plan with the perception of Melody’s approval?

To legitimize Eli’s trial/execution and avoid the possibility of public rebellion.

- 3) How is Melody’s latest nightmare different from those previous?

In previous nightmares, Eli let Melody down. In this one, Melody lets Eli down.

- 4) Why do the soldiers claim that Melody ought to be arrested? How does Eli respond? Why is that significant?

Melody uses magic to walk through the flames, so they assume Eli taught her sorcery, which is an Imperial crime. Eli convinces them to take him only, and leave her alone. This is an illustration of Eli taking Melody's punishment upon himself.

Chapter 10: Penumbra

- 1) Why are the people of Diamond City afraid of Melody?

They believe she betrayed Eli. (She is responsible for his trial/execution)

- 2) What does Caruso conclude about Eli's trial? Why is this significant?

*"It's as if a greater power has taken control of their minds to destroy that one man."
Caruso has correctly observed that the Great Serpent is backstage, pulling the strings.*

- 3) What is Melody's plan to save Eli?

She'll ride to Point Nex on Hunter, the only dragon fast enough to make it before Eli is killed. She will sing to tame Nex, and turn the monster against the Tethysians.

- 4) Describe how prisoners are executed at Point Nex.

Prisoners are hung from an altar near a seaside cliff, and a gong is struck to summon Nex, a sea monster. Prisoners are tortured by Nex's secretion of flesh-dissolving acid, and subsequently eaten.

- 5) Why does Eli say that one of the soldiers carrying him will be forgiven, and the other will die?

The first soldier apologizes for the Empire's brutal treatment of Eli, and declares his belief in Eli as the Great Prince. The other soldier mocks Eli and the first soldier.

Chapter 11: Umbra

- 1) When the Serpent says, "You must realize how misplaced your faith in your father is," what example does he give? What does this imply about the Serpent's origin?

“(The Great King) found it wise to dismiss me from the royal court, and then he turned and gave his inheritance to an abandoned human girl.” The Serpent was once a Galyr with royal authority.

- 2) How is the Din of the Serpent different from the Music of Marindel?

The Music of Marindel uses beautiful songs to quell negative emotions and amplify positive ones.

The Din of the Serpent uses chaotic racket to amplify negative emotions and subdue positive ones.

- 3) Why is Melody unable to resist the Serpent’s attack?

Her love and trust for Eli are not wholehearted.

- 4) What are Melody’s final words to Eli? How does he respond?

“Eli, I hate you.” “Mel, I forgive you.”

- 5) What happens to Melody at the end of the chapter?

She is absorbed into the Serpent’s tongue.

Chapter 12: Void

- 1) Why do you think Matthias is interested in the mound concealing Eli’s body?

He saw the way Eli died, and feels remorse/regret for his role in the execution.

- 2) When the Serpent appears over Diamond City, for how long has Eli been dead?

Thirty-six hours. (A day and a half)

Chapter 13: Antumbra

- 1) On his way to Point Nex, Caruso senses that a greater power is at work, like he did during Eli’s trial. What’s different about this time?

Previously, Caruso sensed the Great Serpent working behind the scenes. This time, he senses the Great King working behind the scenes.

- 2) Which notable characters meet Caruso at Point Nex? Why are they all there?

Auben, Trisha, Trevor, Lia, the pineapple farmer, the soldier who apologized to Eli, and Matthias. They sensed the Great King directing them to visit Point Nex.

- 3) What creature appears after the group sings Eli's Song? What does it symbolize?

A butterfly, symbolizing new life / transformation.

- 4) What is the most prominent feature of Eli's fighting style?

He uses words/songs to direct his magic.

- 5) Why does Eli now have the authority to directly challenge the Serpent?

He took Melody's punishment (inheritance of death) upon himself. Now raised to life, Eli has authority to reclaim the Serpent's power in Melody's stead.

- 6) How does Eli rescue Melody? What does this symbolize?

He uses his light-sword, crafted by the words of his mouth, to remove the Serpent's tongue and extract her from it. This symbolizes Eli's words (truth) rescuing Melody from the Serpent's lies.

- 7) What object does Eli claim from the Serpent?

Melody's amulet.

Chapter 14: The Prince of Victory

- 1) Why is Matthias hesitant to approach Eli? How does Eli respond?

He has remorse for role he played in Eli's death, and doesn't believe Eli would want to see him. Eli asks what's troubling him, prompting Matthias to apologize. Eli embraces and forgives him.

- 2) What does Eli do to Melody's amulet? What does it symbolize?

Eli breathes on the amulet and releases it into the sky, where it bursts into magic sparks and spreads over every horizon. It symbolizes the Great King's inheritance granted to all sentient beings who declare allegiance to him.

- 3) List three commands Eli gives to his friends.

Resist (be vigilant against) the Serpent.

Never forget who you are (sons of the King and heirs to the throne of Marindel).

Never forget / always remember my love for you.

Undo the works of the Serpent by:

Loving others.

Standing up for the innocent.

Telling all sentient creatures about the Great King.

Take care of Melody in my absence.

- 4) When will Eli return?

When Melody calls for him.

Epilogue: The Final Days

- 1) How much time has passed since the events of the last chapter?

Ninety-four years. (Ninety-four and a half)

- 2) Why do you think, after everything Eli did, Lia suggests Melody may be worse off than before?

(This question is open-ended, but here are several canonical answers) Melody has continued in her stubbornness, as Eli said she would. She wavers between hating Eli and blaming herself for his death (as she did in Chapter 11, Umbra), and won't listen to anyone who tells her he's alive. Because she lost Rhema, she wanders like a vagabond and is difficult to locate.

- 3) List two similarities and two differences between the Tethysian Empire and the Rebellious Empire.

Similarities: They are empires. They scorn/persecute citizens of Marindel. They vainly resist their coming destruction. They serve the Great Serpent in some capacity. They provoke the rage of the Great King. They will be destroyed. (Additional answers may be applicable)

Differences: The TE already exists, while the RE doesn't yet. The RE is far more powerful than the TE. The Serpent directly rules the RE, not the TE. Melody/Rhema will not compromise with the RE like she/they did with the TE. (Additional answers may be applicable)

- 4) What will be the final destiny of the Great Serpent and the Rebellious Empire?

They will be permanently destroyed.

- 5) List five attributes of the Great Prince Eli.

Any answer may be derived from the following:

“Prince Eli’s leadership is of the highest quality. He excels in every way! He is devoted to his father, the King, and to Melody, his beloved, with vigorous zeal. His wisdom is the very wisdom of the Great King. His emotions, passions, and affections are extravagant in their abundance and diversity. His words are sweet and pure, enlightening and convicting, alive and creative, always giving life to those who bear his name—and terror to those who stand opposed. His ways and purposes unfold with strength, orderliness, beauty, and permanence. His impartation of royal authority upon all sentient races is a tremendous honor and a wonderful mystery. Friendship with him is sweetness itself. Nothing is more delightful! His tender compassion is wholesome and dynamic, with power to heal every heart. He is radiant in his majesty, beautiful in his love, and he humbled himself to be our friend.”