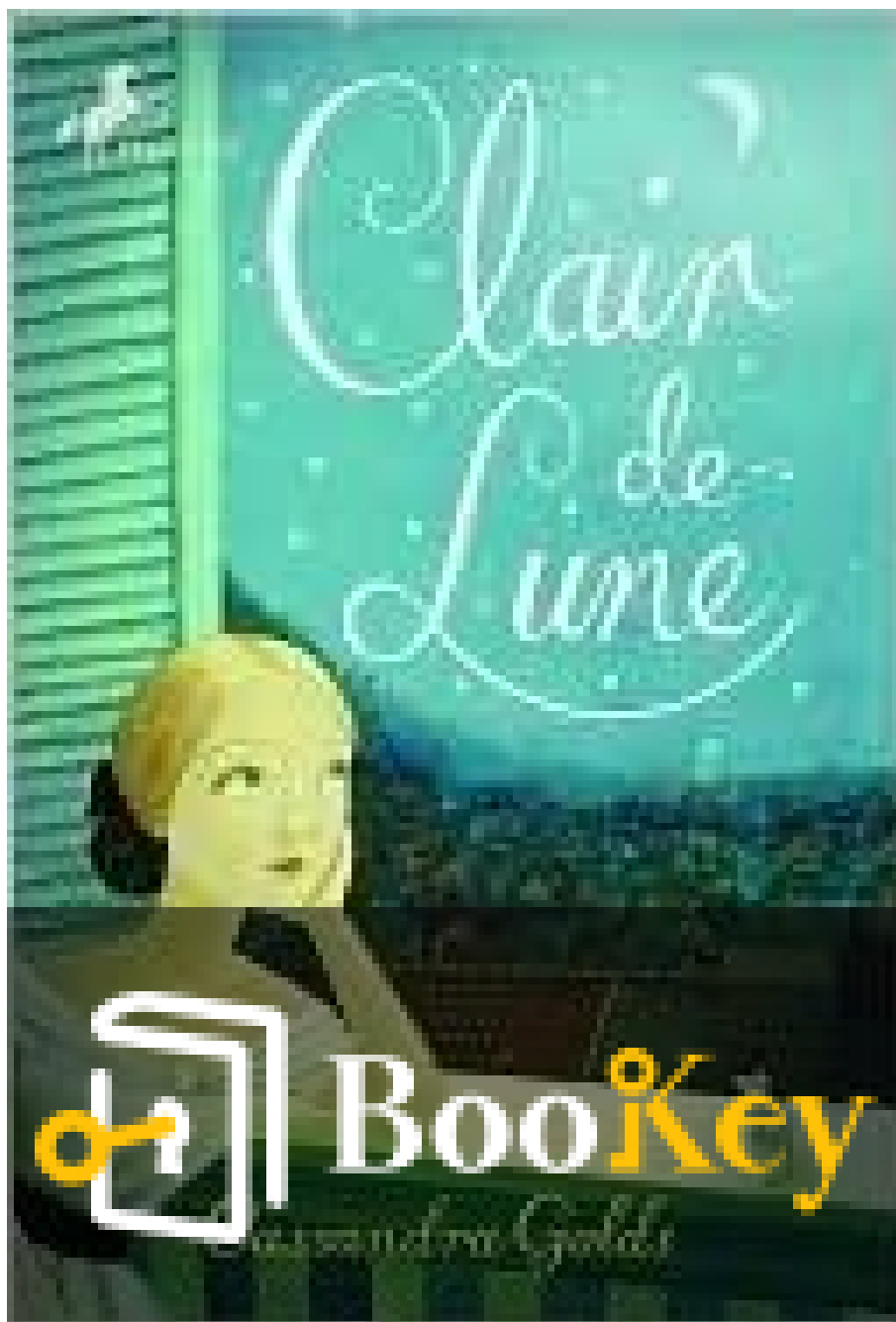


Clair De Lune PDF (Limited Copy)

Cassandra Golds



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Clair De Lune Summary

"A Journey of Solitude and Celestial Harmony."

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About the book

In "Clair de Lune" by Cassandra Golds, readers are transported into a whimsical and enchanting world where words dance and emotions run deep. The story centers around a delicate young ballet dancer named Clair de Lune, who lives with her mute grandmother amidst the echoing halls of an opera house. Hauntingly lyrical and steeped in magic, Clair seeks solace and purpose amid her silent existence, only to find her life entwined with the spirited antics of a mouse named Bonaventure, who dreams of composing a grand symphony. Together, they embark on a transcendent journey to rediscover the power of music, the warmth of friendship, and the eloquence of unspoken dreams. This magical tale invites readers into a world where the lines between fantasy and reality blur, and gentle melodies hold the secret to unveiling the soul's deepest desires, beckoning kindred spirits and afterthoughts to pause and lose themselves in its quietly powerful rhythm.

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About the author

Cassandra Golds, an acclaimed Australian author, captivates readers with her enchanting storytelling and richly imaginative worlds. Born in Sydney and raised in the vibrant performing arts scene, Golds developed a profound fascination with fairy tales and the magic inherent in everyday life. Her own unique brand of writing beautifully fuses subtle emotional depth with whimsical charm, aiming to take readers on introspective journeys through her narratives. With her distinctive voice, she explores themes of longing, identity, and belonging, often using the fantastical as a lens to delve into the intricacies of the human experience. As a celebrated writer of children's literature, she has received numerous accolades and awards, cementing her reputation as a luminous force in the literary world. Passionate about weaving tales that transcend the ordinary, Golds continues to enchant readers, drawing them into her delicate tapestry of charm and insight.

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Chapter 1 Summary: - The Girl Who Could Not Speak

Once in a time a century and a half ago, there lived a girl named Clair-de-Lune who, intriguingly, could not speak. She resided with her grandmother in a lofty attic atop an ancient, narrow building with six floors and twelve precarious flights of stairs. Despite their poverty, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother upheld a genteel demeanor, placing great emphasis on manners and ladylike behavior, even if it meant enduring hunger. The attic was cold in winter, with the wind seeping through window cracks and snow drifting in through the ceiling. However, in spring and summer, the mornings were filled with the enchanting sound of birds fluttering past the windows, a melody that seemed to compensate for the chillier seasons.

Clair-de-Lune's family had a legacy tied to ballet; both her grandmother and her late mother had been ballerinas. Consequently, Clair-de-Lune was groomed for the same path. She diligently attended ballet classes under the stern guidance of Monsieur Dupoint, three floors below her attic home. Her afternoons were spent absorbing knowledge in various subjects such as geography, history, and languages, and running errands for her frail but poised grandmother. Sundays were reserved for church, where she mimed along to hymns but never sang.

The mystery of Clair-de-Lune's silence was linked to her tragic infancy. Her mother, famously known as La Lune, passed away when she was just a



baby. La Lune was adored for her performance in a ballet about swans, creatures believed to be silent until their final moments when they release a hauntingly beautiful song. Her most celebrated role came when she danced as a swan mortally struck by a hunter, clad in a tutu adorned with tulle and swan feathers. On an unforgettable night, the audience was convinced they heard her sing a ghostly tune as her performance seemed to transcend the silent medium of dance. Tragically, after her final bow, La Lune collapsed on stage and never rose again. A doctor later confirmed that her heart had been too frail to endure the dance, leaving the audience and the ballet community to mourn her sudden departure amidst a flood of flowers and tears.

Rumors swirled among those present that instead of singing, La Lune had tried to speak in her last moments. This mysterious event had an irreversible impact on Clair-de-Lune, who was backstage as a baby during her mother's last performance. Though too young to comprehend fully, she seemed to grasp something profound, for from that day onwards, she never spoke a word.

While Clair-de-Lune never expressed distress about her silence, observers might wonder if the weight of unuttered words bore heavily on her heart, growing burdensome as time went on.



Chapter 2 Summary: - Clair-de-Lune Cries as if Her Heart Would Break

Clair-de-Lune, a mute young girl, begins each day in her attic room, kneeling at the window to embrace the peaceful and private view of the world outside. Despite the serene stillness, Clair-de-Lune harbors a deep longing to speak, a desire she feels intensely as she gazes at the landscape of rooftops, birds, and sky. Her solitude is interrupted by her grandmother's call, urging her to prepare for her ballet class.

Clair-de-Lune wears traditional ballet attire: rose-pink stockings, a white muslin dress, and pointe shoes she has personally reinforced, reflecting the era's blend of modesty and practical necessity. The daily breakfast is meager, typical for her and her grandmother as they are both quite thin. Before class, the importance of posture is emphasized further by her grandmother's reminders.

The building Clair-de-Lune lives in is a cultural hub, home to artists like an opera-singing baritone she sometimes hears. As she descends to her ballet class, the sound of a pianist warming up accompanies her journey, and her path often crosses with Mrs. Costello's appreciative cat, Minette.

Approaching the academy's door, marked by a sign for aspiring young artists, Clair-de-Lune faces a social barrier. Although part of the class, she feels isolated, lacking friends and often facing whispers from classmates.



Monsieur Dupoint, a small, thin man with a penchant for medicinal tea, leads the class. He appears stern but harbors a soft spot for Clair-de-Lune, inspired by her mother's legacy in dance. The studio is Clair-de-Lune's refuge, a place where she communicates through movement, where dance supplants her lack of spoken words, lightening the burden of her unexpressed thoughts and emotions.

The ballet class's pianist, Mr. Sparrow, is a passionate, haggard young man. At the end of each class, he plays music simply for its beauty. One day, his playing is so poignant that it deeply moves Clair-de-Lune, filling her with a longing for expression and connection. She approaches the piano, hoping to break free of her silence.

However, Mr. Sparrow, lost in his own world of sadness, does not notice Clair-de-Lune. The missed opportunity to communicate overwhelms her, leaving her alone in the silent studio, overwhelmed by tears. Her sobs are so quiet that only a mouse could hear, symbolizing her unvoiced existence in a world filled with sounds and interactions.

In summary, Clair-de-Lune's chapter unveils her internal struggle with muteness in a vibrant artistic setting, highlighting her passions in dance and music as her means of silent expression and yearning for a voice.



Chapter 3 Summary: - A Girl Who Cannot Speak Meets a Mouse Who Can

In a dusty ballet school, hidden in the back corner is a mouse hole, an exact tiny replica of the dance studio dominated by mouse-sized mirrors and barres crafted meticulously from discarded items. Here lives Bonaventura, a mouse who shares a passion for ballet akin to the school's human students. One day, after a dedicated session, he hears someone crying—it's Clair-de-Lune, his favorite pupil among the students, known for her seriousness and dedication to dance.

Despite the risks, especially given the presence of a cat in the building, Bonaventura approaches Clair-de-Lune with gentle curiosity. He introduces himself with charming humility, revealing his name means "happy chance" or "good fortune," a fitting title for a mouse who dares to follow his dream of dance against societal norms. The tiny dancer is intrigued, especially since humans seldom expect such interactions.

Bonaventura shares snippets of his past, evoking nostalgia about his seaside upbringing and love for the arts—a path considered unconventional by mouse standards. He mentions his encounter with Brother Inchmahome, a wise and compassionate monk who encouraged him by noting that mice, with their graceful movements, are natural dancers. The monk's wisdom emboldened Bonaventura to dream of establishing a dance company of mice.



Their conversation is interrupted by the entrance of Monsieur Dupoint, the teacher. Bonaventura makes a swift retreat, promising Clair-de-Lune a visit to Brother Inchmahome to seek guidance. Meanwhile, Monsieur Dupoint, oblivious to the mouse and the girl's conversation, enters the room with a seemingly casual demeanor, teases Clair-de-Lune about a presumed cat, and comments affectionately on her skills. He senses a deep talent and affliction within her—a gifted dancer burdened by shyness.

After Clair-de-Lune departs, Dupoint reminisces about the theater's legacy and Clair-de-Lune's potential, pondering why she, so talented in dance, remains silent. The old ballet director immerses himself in quiet reverie, preparing a comforting tisane as he contemplates the century-old ballet company just across the street, guardian of rich traditions and potential dreams.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embracing the Unconventional Path

Critical Interpretation: In a world dictated by norms and expectations, Bonaventura the mouse offers a heartwarming lesson: Dare to believe in the possibility of more. His journey to become a dancer defies societal constraints and highlights the power of dreams, courage, and self-belief. Bonaventura's unwavering passion for ballet, despite being 'just a mouse,' inspires you to break free from traditional limitations and embrace your unique path. His story reminds you that even the most unlikely individuals carry an extraordinary potential within them, waiting to be unleashed. Life is not merely about adhering to what seems plausible but about creating what's possible when your heart truly resonates with a dream. As Bonaventura tells his tale, he encourages you to listen to your inner calling and to unabashedly chase after the aspirations that ignite your soul. Embrace your unique journey and let your passions shape your identity, much like Bonaventura's unyielding love for dance defines his existence.

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Chapter 4: - We Meet Madame Nuit

In the attic room of their home, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother, Madame Nuit, sat waiting for her granddaughter's return, though she hadn't noticed Clair-de-Lune's tardiness. Madame Nuit had spent her day cleaning and preparing a sparse lunch of bread and cheese, and now she sat reading a strict book on the virtues of discipline and dedication to one's craft. However, her thoughts kept drifting to the memory of her daughter, La Lune, a remarkable dancer whose anniversary of death fell on that day.

La Lune had been a fiercely talented yet rebellious spirit, much to her mother's dismay. Her unruly hair was a symbol of her wild nature which couldn't be tamed, a recurring source of frustration for Madame Nuit. La Lune's affairs with unsuitable men had eventually led to heartbreak and tragedy, leaving her mother with a deep sense of betrayal and loss. Madame Nuit believed that La Lune's inability to conform was her downfall and had never forgiven her for abandoning the path of dance for love.

Clair-de-Lune, on the other hand, was perceived by Madame Nuit as the epitome of the ideal granddaughter—quiet, obedient, and disciplined, especially in dance. Clair-de-Lune's inability to speak was seen not as a disability but as a blessing that protected her from the distractions and heartaches that speaking and forming relationships could bring. To Madame Nuit, the only world worth inhabiting was that of The Dance, a world



unmarred by the transient agony of life.

Madame Nuit reflected on her own past, recalling the forced exile during the Revolution and how it made her a perpetual outsider. The only true home for her was within the realm of dance. Standing by her window, she let her thoughts drift back to the tragic day after her daughter's death inside the theater, which marked a pivot in their lives.

In an effort to safeguard Clair-de-Lune's future, Madame Nuit had once visited a fortune-teller. The woman, after receiving a hefty fee, foretold that Clair-de-Lune would become a great dancer, yet there was a single looming obstacle that could thwart her destiny. The fortune-teller warned that Clair-de-Lune would require a unique balance, but Madame Nuit's fear blinded her to this, compelling her to seek a solution in prevention. The fortune-teller unwittingly disclosed that capturing the magical bird—an embodiment of Clair-de-Lune's soul—could disrupt this impediment.

Intent on ensuring her granddaughter's success, Madame Nuit trapped the mystical bird, believing she was securing Clair-de-Lune's path to greatness by removing a potential hindrance. However, the bird escaped, leaving behind a deep-rooted silence in Clair-de-Lune—a silence Madame Nuit recognized but rationalized as necessary.

Meanwhile, the fortune-teller, bound by her craft to reveal truths, regretted

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her part in this tale but found solace in her visions, which offered a faint hope that Clair-de-Lune's future might yet unfold harmoniously. Her whispered words to her crystal ball reassured her that, in time, all would be well.

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Chapter 5 Summary: - Duty, Discipline, and Devotion to The Dance

In this chapter, we are introduced to Clair-de-Lune, a young girl living with her grandmother in a world where the boundaries of reality blur with enchantment. Clair-de-Lune harbors a secret—she has met a talking mouse named Bonaventure who can also dance, but she is certain that her grandmother would disapprove of her communicating with mice. Her grandmother, fixated on discipline and propriety, is unaware of Clair-de-Lune's suppressed emotions and desires.

Clair-de-Lune's life is overshadowed by her mother's legacy, La Lune, a celebrated dancer who died on stage. Her grandmother continues to uphold La Lune's memory as the Perfect Dancer, emphasizing duty and sacrifice, values that are ingrained in Clair-de-Lune through meticulously structured lessons. These sessions delve into geography, history, languages, domestic skills, and literature focused on duty and discipline, shaping Clair-de-Lune into her grandmother's ideal of sensibility and control. Yet, what truly captivates Clair-de-Lune are stories of great dancers' sacrifices, which resonate deeply given her mother's own fate.

Despite this curated life, Clair-de-Lune is curious about her mother's personal life—the human details muted by her grandmother's singular focus on dance. These thoughts often frighten her, as if part of her seeks to



communicate through layers of suppression. Clair-de-Lune deeply admires her mother but realizes that unlike her mother's devotion to dance, she has a profound yearning to speak—a choice that dances in conflict with her grandmother's ideals.

On the anniversary of her mother's death, her grandmother insists Clair-de-Lune reflect on becoming more like La Lune, handing her granddaughter a list of errands and a few coins. These errands allow Clair-de-Lune a fleeting sense of freedom in the outside world, away from the peculiar architecture of her home, which is full of unexpected passages and hidden corners. The market, with its familiar shopkeepers, offers a brief escape where Clair-de-Lune revels in the illusion of wildness and freedom, though her exploration is inevitably curtailed by her brief allowance of time.

During one of her external excursions, Clair-de-Lune encounters Milly Twickenham and her friends, who mock her, intensifying Clair-de-Lune's self-consciousness and shame. Humiliated, she retreats but is invigorated by the memory of Bonaventure and his promise to take her to a monastery. Despite her struggles, Clair-de-Lune resolves not to surrender to fear or embarrassment, revealing an inner strength symbolized by her iron will.

This chapter paints a poignant picture of a girl trapped between the expectations of her grandmother's world and her own burgeoning desires, underlined by the ever-present shadow of her mother's dance legacy.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Clair-de-Lune's Resolve to Embrace Her Own Path

Critical Interpretation: In the midst of societal and familial expectations, Clair-de-Lune harnesses an unyielding inner strength, empowering her to persist in her quest for self-expression against the strictures imposed upon her by her grandmother. This chapter illustrates the powerful act of cultivating one's own voice amid external pressures to conform. It inspires us to recognize that true fulfillment often requires courage and the willingness to diverge from preordained paths, embracing authenticity even when faced with fear or judgement. Clair-de-Lune's determination to embrace her authentic self, embodied through her connection with Bonaventure, serves as a beacon of hope and resilience. It encourages us to trust our innate desires, nurturing them as whispers of our true selves waiting to emerge and guide our unique journey. Thus, Clair-de-Lune's steadfast resolve reminds us that living genuinely calls for bravery in pursuing passions that resonate deep within our souls, far beyond societal expectations. This is the essence of living an inspired and fulfilling life.



Chapter 6 Summary: - A Mouse Lullaby—and a Stone Door

In this surreal and enchanting narrative, we follow the journey of Clair-de-Lune, who experiences a dream of cosmic wonder, imagining herself in a hollowed-out building with the night sky as its ceiling. The next morning, she awakens to the soothing albeit curious tune of a lullaby sung by a tiny mouse with a playful, whiskered nose. This unexpected creature introduces himself with courteous cheer as Bonaventure, offering to guide Clair-de-Lune to meet Brother Inchmahome, hinting at an adventure that awaits.

The mysterious morning unfolds as Bonaventure recounts his sighting of a silver bird with a radiant scarlet and gold heart perched on her bedpost—a presence that evokes an inexplicable sense of familiarity in Clair-de-Lune. This meeting blossoms into the start of an expedition, stirring newfound resolve within Clair-de-Lune, who yearns for help beyond the familiar confines of her life under her grandmother's care.

Despite her grandmother's slumber, Clair-de-Lune is driven by this uncharted clarity and follows the sprightly Bonaventure across their attic home and out. The journey through the building, which she has traversed countless times, now unveils a series of curious transformations. Familiar stairways shift into mysterious landscapes; rocks and waterfalls appear in the



periphery of her vision, blending the mundane with the fantastical.

As Clair-de-Lune wrestles with the strange reality around her, she musters the courage to embrace the unknown. She finds herself faced with a beautifully carved stone door, distinct and ancient. As Bonaventure beckons her from beneath its slightly elevated threshold, the door gently swings open, ushering in what promises to be an incredible and transformative adventure.

This chapter not only initiates Clair-de-Lune's physical departure from the ordinary but also signifies the beginning of her personal journey towards discovery and potential companionship in places she had never before imagined.

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Chapter 7 Summary: - Clair-de-Lune Meets Brother Inchmahome

Clair-de-Lune stumbled into a world she could barely comprehend. Stepping outside a mysterious building she had known all her life, she found herself in a wild garden, beyond which lay a cliff, the sea, and a monastery carved into a mountainside. She marveled at the vast sky above and the freshness of the salt breeze, feeling a mix of wonder and fear. Bonaventure, a tiny mouse who seemed well-versed with this enigmatic world, urged her forward.

As Clair-de-Lune navigated this foreign landscape, she joined Bonaventure at the monastery door and met an elderly monk. Here, Bonaventure introduced her to Brother Inchmahome, a wise and gentle monk engaged deeply in contemplation of a simple pebble on his stone desk. His room, filled with books and opening into a garden that seemed to merge with the sea, exuded calm and beauty. This serene haven instantly captivated Clair-de-Lune.

Brother Inchmahome was a man with an aura of joyful wisdom, possessing gray eyes as deep and fluid as water over stone. When Bonaventure introduced Clair-de-Lune, the monk displayed an uncanny ability to understand her silent sorrow. Despite Clair-de-Lune's inability to speak, Brother Inchmahome saw past her muteness, reassuring her that silence, too, held profound value, a concept practiced by the brothers through their ritual



"Great Silence" each night.

Brother Inchmahome suggested that Clair-de-Lune's silence could be remedied not by speech alone, but by someone willing to listen. His offer to help her find her voice delighted Clair-de-Lune beyond words. She learned that her visits to the monastery could become a daily occurrence, contingent upon permission from her grandmother or teacher. With an uncharacteristic optimism, Brother Inchmahome posed a reflective question for her to ponder: why she could not speak.

As Clair-de-Lune departed, the reality of her experience teetered on the edge of a dream. Yet, Brother Inchmahome's gentle assurance, mingled with a touch of humor, confirmed the truth of the day's wonders. Armed with hope and an unspoken gratitude signified by a dancer's graceful curtsy, Clair-de-Lune followed Bonaventure back into the dim interior of her home.

Navigating the transition from this vibrant new world back to her familiar old one was challenging. As she returned to her attic room, slipping past her still-sleeping grandmother, Clair-de-Lune was left to question the dreamlike quality of her adventure. Yet, the promise of continued lessons and the potential to uncover her voice brought a new dawn to her silent world.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Silence holds profound value and potential for self-discovery.

Critical Interpretation: Imagine stepping into a world where silence isn't seen as a limitation but as a language in itself. As you journey with Clair-de-Lune, you're invited to embrace the quiet moments in life—the moments where words are absent but observations speak volumes. Brother Inchmahome's wisdom reveals that within silence lies the power of reflection and introspection, encouraging you to listen closely and discover the deeper rhythms of your own heart. When you understand that silence has its voice, you open the door to new possibilities of communication and connection, not just with others, but within yourself. This chapter reminds you to find tranquility in silence and to trust the knowledge and truths it wishes to share. In cultivating this practice, you not only give voice to unspoken emotions and ideas but also unlock the path to understanding your true self.



Chapter 8: - Clair-de-Lune Does Not Ask

In this chapter, Clair-de-Lune is preoccupied with a question posed by Brother Inchmahome: why is she unable to speak? This question lingers in her mind throughout her ballet class with Monsieur Dupoint, a strict and renowned ballet instructor. Despite her efforts to focus, Clair-de-Lune is distracted by the wonders she recently discovered—a hidden monastery, cliff, sea, and sky within the building she thought of as confining—and the anticipation of seeking permission to visit the monastery again.

Monsieur Dupoint admonishes Clair-de-Lune for pointing the wrong foot during class, drawing giggles from her peers and surprising her little mouse friend, Bonaventure, who secretly participates in the classes from his mouse hole. Bonaventure indignantly defends Clair-de-Lune, albeit invisibly and silently, rationalizing that her developing voice is more important than the precision of her dance steps.

Although Clair-de-Lune can communicate by writing, her grandmother discourages this, fearing that letters foster unwanted relationships, as demonstrated by Clair-de-Lune's mother's controversial romance. Consequently, Clair-de-Lune resorts to writing only when absolutely necessary, such as when she contemplates requesting permission to visit the monastery by writing a note to Monsieur Dupoint during class. Despite having this chance while Monsieur Dupoint consults with Mr. Sparrow, the



pianist, Clair-de-Lune hesitates and decides against it.

With Monsieur Dupoint's encouraging words echoing in her mind, she resolves to seek her grandmother's permission instead. However, her attempts falter at lunch, during lessons, and even after completing errands,

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Chapter 9 Summary: - Beginners, Please!

In the enchanting world beneath a bustling city building, Bonaventura, a dedicated and imaginative mouse, was hard at work by the light of a discarded birthday candle. Driven by a dream, he prepared to open the first-ever ballet school exclusively for mice. Bonaventura had recently become friends with Clair-de-Lune and had pledged to escort her to Brother Inchmahome, but he hadn't let this sideline him from his own Sacred Duty: creating a ballet for mice. Fueled by the teachings of Monsieur Dupoint, a skilled human ballet master, Bonaventura had devised a unique teaching style tailored to his future students' needs.

The transformation of his mouse hole into a legitimate dance school required Bonaventura to use his resourcefulness, creativity, and the innate ability to adapt. He scuttled about, alternating between the roles of teacher and student to refine his lessons, drawing from his own challenges when he first learned ballet. Aided by the unintentional mentorship of Monsieur Dupoint, Bonaventura was confident yet humble in his revolutionary undertaking, recognizing the novelty and difficulty of teaching mice classical ballet.

To create an inspiring atmosphere, Bonaventura decorated his mouse hole with pictures of famous dancers cut from discarded theatrical handbills collected from a nearby theater. White handkerchiefs embroidered with the initials "CD," which Bonaventura whimsically wished stood for "dancing



class" rather than Charles Dickens, served as divisions for makeshift dressing rooms.

To announce the opening of his school, Bonaventura collaborated with Leonard, a fellow mouse who lived in a print shop, to produce posters. Leonard, skilled in utilizing the printing press for mouse purposes, printed a hundred posters, which Bonaventura diligently hung in strategic locations around the neighborhood at mouse-eye level. These posters, despite their size, quickly caught the attention of the local mouse community.

On the morning following the poster campaign, a young female mouse named Margot noticed a poster near the theater entrance. With her expressive whiskers twitching in excitement, she urged her fiancé, Rudolph, a mouse with a penchant for impressive jumps, to join her in the ballet classes. Despite Rudolph's initial skepticism, Margot's enthusiasm was infectious, and they decided to enroll together, making them Bonaventura's first students.

As the mouse grapevine buzzed with news of Bonaventura's ambitious endeavor, a vibrant community of aspiring dancer mice began to emerge, marking a delightful chapter in the urban warren's history where art, ambition, and collaboration converged, all thanks to one visionary mouse's dream of ballet.



Chapter 10 Summary: - The First Answer

Clair-de-Lune awoke one morning feeling unrested, conflicted about whether she should return to visit Brother Inchmahome. Despite her hesitation due to unfinished obligations, the thought of not seeing him pained her. Unwilling to potentially never see him again, she quickly dressed and allowed her mouse companion, Bonaventure, to ride with her instead of walk. Quietly, she sneaked past her sleeping grandmother and down the stairs, carefully making her way to the stone door, which opened almost magically as she approached, revealing the sound of the sea.

The garden, the mountain, and the sky seemed more beautiful than ever against her melancholy. On Bonaventure's inquiry, the porter informed them that Brother Inchmahome was in the sea garden. Walking past friendly novices, they arrived at the tranquil, herb-scented garden by the sea, where the monk was writing in a ledger on a stone bench, appearing almost like a living illustration in an ancient manuscript. His calm, attentive presence filled the air around Clair-de-Lune with peace and forgiveness, wiping away her anxiety.

While Clair-de-Lune hesitated to disturb him, Bonaventure had no such reservations and eagerly greeted Brother Inchmahome, who acknowledged Clair-de-Lune and prompted her to respond to his earlier question. Clair-de-Lune struggled internally; although she felt ready to speak, her



voice failed her due to the lack of her grandmother's permission. With kind guidance from Brother Inchmahome, who seemed to grasp her silent communication, Clair-de-Lune managed to produce soft sounds, akin to a baby talking, though she despaired at her inability to speak clearly.

Intrigued by her efforts, Brother Inchmahome proposed that perhaps her grandmother didn't believe speaking was beneficial—an idea that bewildered Clair-de-Lune. He reassured her that the ability to speak was a divine right, not to be withheld by anyone, and encouraged her to think of another reason for her silence, promising to accompany her to seek her grandmother's permission.

Together, along with Bonaventure, they journeyed back through the mysterious doorway. Clair-de-Lune felt a mix of pride and excitement as she walked with Brother Inchmahome, no longer frightened by the looming shadows, but thrilled by the new companionship and hopeful at last for unlocking her voice.

Upon arriving at the attic, Clair-de-Lune remembered no time had passed, meaning her grandmother was still asleep. As Brother Inchmahome prepared to wait patiently for her grandmother to awaken, he mused on the complexities of listening deeply—a skill as profound as it was rare yet accessible. Clair-de-Lune felt reassured by his presence, performing an intricate curtsy to express her gratitude before heading back to her bed,



where she quickly fell into a deeply satisfied sleep, her heart lightened by the promise of a new beginning.

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Chapter 11 Summary: - Brother Inchmahome Is Still There

In this chapter, we follow Clair-de-Lune, a young dancer, as she navigates an unusual morning and a world filled with unspeakable expectations. She wakes up to find herself in an unusually joyful mood despite her and her grandmother oversleeping—a situation that would typically distress her, given her grandmother's insistence on punctuality, especially for a dancer. On her way out, she encounters Brother Inchmahome, a serene figure from the monastery, who reminds her of their early morning meeting. His presence fills her with inexplicable happiness, even though she can't find the words to express it.

At school, despite Clair-de-Lune's preoccupation with her thoughts from the morning, she finds herself the subject of unwanted attention from her classmates, led by Milly Twinkenham. The girls' laughter seems directed at her, exacerbating her silent struggle to communicate. Her speechlessness leaves her unable to confront the situation, and she retreats, holding onto her dignity as best as she can while Monsieur Dupoint chastises the girls for their behavior.

Later, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother reveals a surprising turn of events: Brother Inchmahome has offered to teach her the Expression of the Soul. This discipline, he argues, is essential for artists, and Clair-de-Lune's



grandmother agrees, hoping it might provide a steadying influence. While her grandmother sees it as a simple agreement where Clair-de-Lune will run errands for the monastery in exchange for her instruction, Clair-de-Lune senses more at play—though she fears her grandmother doesn't fully grasp the significance of this opportunity.

As the day winds down, Clair-de-Lune reflects on her inability to speak aloud, a predicament she's faced for years, largely influenced by her grandmother's disinterest in the power of speech. This inner turmoil quietly clashes with a curiosity about her deceased mother, La Lune. Clair-de-Lune imagines if her mother would have valued her voice, as she was renowned as a graceful ballerina, existing now only in memory and scrapbook clippings.

As Clair-de-Lune ponders, she is drawn into a labyrinth of introspection. Memories and shifting images of her mother fill her mind, as does a mysterious, muffled voice that she fears to confront. This trembling undercurrent reveals a deep-seated fear—not only of her speechlessness but of facing something within herself that she cannot yet comprehend. Although she considers confiding in Brother Inchmahome, she decides for now to unravel this quandary alone, meditating on why the very act of speaking terrifies her. And in response to her inward questioning, an answer arises: a personal revelation yet unspoken.



Chapter 12: - Caverns, Dark Valleys, and Sea Bottoms

Clair-de-Lune sat in the monastery garden, surrounded by the warmth of the sun and the gentle beauty of small, star-like white flowers. The tranquility was almost matched by the presence of Brother Inchmahome, a monk known for his calming and thoughtful demeanor. Joining them was a small mouse, both of whom seemed to share a special connection with Clair-de-Lune, evident in the quiet conversations she could have with Brother Inchmahome in a voice only he could understand.

In a moment of vulnerability, Clair-de-Lune expressed her fears—she was terrified of what might emerge from her mouth, fearing it would reveal an inner wickedness she believed she harbored. Despite the gentle setting, her words hung heavily in the air. Brother Inchmahome listened with grave consideration, his dew-beaded robe the only reminder of the monk's earlier meditative communion with nature.

When Clair-de-Lune described her internal struggle, she did so with a sense of inevitability, using the phrase "self-evident" to explain the traits she believed exemplified her wickedness: selfishness, ingratitude, cowardice. These were qualities she had inferred from the heroic dancers in her grandmother's books and from her mother's legacy, a formidable dancer with an equally noble spirit. Clair-de-Lune had often felt the burden of her mother's talent and the expectation to live up to her example, even as her



priorities shifted towards cherishing the friendships of Bonaventura and Brother Inchmahome more than The Dance itself.

Brother Inchmahome intervened with gentle firmness. He challenged her despair, insisting that inside her wasn't wickedness, but vast landscapes of

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Chapter 13 Summary: - A Few Good Mice

In a cozy yet often noisy nook behind the skirting board of a print shop, Leonard, a diligent mouse running an underground printing press, and his wife Virginia, were discussing their daughter, Juliet. Bonaventure, the mouse responsible for printing colorful posters, had inspired Juliet with his new dance school. While Leonard admired Bonaventure's vibrant spirit, he worried about his daughter's participation in ballet, especially given the lurking danger of a cat in the building.

Their concerns were rooted in love and caution. Young Juliet was talented in proofreading, following her family's intellectual pursuits rooted in bringing literature like Shakespeare's works to the mouse community. The notion of ballet seemed frivolous and risky to Leonard, who preferred Juliet to remain safe and focus on her academic skills.

Despite these concerns, Leonard and Virginia noticed Juliet's profound disappointment. Her longing to escape into beauty and dance clashed with their more intellectual values. Juliet felt like she never quite belonged in the family's literary pursuits; she desired to express herself through dance, not words.

This parental dilemma stirred Leonard and Virginia to reconsider. They realized that learning to navigate dangers like cats was a necessary part of



growing up. Finally, convinced by their daughter's yearning and their own reflection on the necessity of facing life's challenges, they decided to give her a chance.

Leonard offered to take Juliet to Bonaventure's school for a practice run. Overjoyed, Juliet promised to be cautious, adhering to her parents' advice to stay vigilant against potential threats, notably the nearby cat.

Juliet's situation mirrored various stories throughout the mouse community. Diverse mice, each with unique backgrounds and dreams, were drawn to Bonaventure's dance school. Some, like a mouse born in a ballet shoe or another performing at a public house, felt a kinship to dance; others sought joy, an emotional outlet, or the simple pleasure of wearing a tutu.

As Bonaventure prepared for his first class, a poster advertising his school fluttered away in a whimsical breeze, eventually landing in a distant town. It was discovered by a dazzling black-furred mouse whose soul brimmed with passion for dance. Although the journey to the city was fraught with perils, this mouse's enthusiasm was unquenchable.

By inspiring mice far and wide, even before the first lesson, Bonaventure's dance school was already crafting new destinies and fostering dreams, hinting at the profound changes to come within mice society.



Chapter 14 Summary: - Claie-de-Lune Changes Her Mind

In the early darkness of a morning at Monsieur Dupoint's Select Dancing Academy, a small mouse named Bonaventura embarked on a secret mission. Carefully checking for danger, he moved across the classroom floor and out onto the landing, carrying a tiny scroll. Once outside, he unfurled and pinned it beneath a stern sign announcing Monsieur Dupoint's prestigious school for aspiring artistes' children. The new addition was Bonaventura's own sign: a proud declaration of 'Bonaventura's Select School for Dancer Mice' with an invitation to inquire within his mouse hole.

Later, Bonaventura extended an invitation to Clair-de-Lune, a young dancer, to join him on a special visit to the school. He led her to the floorboards, urging her to look from his perspective. There, Clair-de-Lune discovered the diminutive sign and marveled at the mouse-sized dance studio—complete with toothpick-barre, mirrors, and portraits of renowned dancers. She responded with genuine admiration, delighting Bonaventura, who eagerly invited her to become the patron of his nascent school.

As Clair-de-Lune prepared to return to her attic home, her mood soured upon discovering a cruel caricature on the wall—a stick figure mocking her as a snob. This realization of mockery from her peers saddened Clair-de-Lune.



At home, her grandmother found Clair-de-Lune's lack of appetite pleasing, holding a dubious notion that real dancers, like the infamous Eleanor Wood, shouldn't need food. But for Clair-de-Lune, the morning's events weighed heavily on her mind. She hesitated to head back to class, burdened by the realization that her silence and the heritage of her famous mother, La Lune, alienated her peers.

Seated on the stairs beside Minette the cat, Clair-de-Lune pondered her social predicament. She once believed that finding her voice might help bridge the gap between her and other students. However, the drawing illuminated that their dislike ran deeper than misunderstandings. Her newfound awareness brought a protective instinct—her inability to speak now felt like a shield against further vulnerability. Resolving not to learn to speak, Clair-de-Lune dreaded telling Brother Inchmahome, whose hopes she'd disappoint.

As class approached, Clair-de-Lune faced a deeper dilemma concerning her talent. Her exceptional dancing set her apart, making her both a teacher's pet and a target. She could dance poorly to blend in, but that would betray her grandmother, her deceased mother, and the revered art of dance.

Confronted by whispers of 'snob' from her classmates and struggling to make a choice, Clair-de-Lune joined the class. Torn between excellence and



acceptance, she attempted to dance neither too well nor too poorly, though suppressing her natural talent proved difficult. Monsieur Dupont observed the peculiarity in her performance but chose to remain silent, leaving Clair-de-Lune in her silent struggle.

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Chapter 15 Summary: - It Is Better to Have Loved and Lost

In the emotionally charged morning light, Clair-de-Lune, a dancer with a soul full of apprehension, confides in Brother Inchmahome, a monk with a serene disposition and a penchant for pondering life's mysteries. “I have decided not to learn to speak,” she declares, her voice tinged with sorrow. Brother Inchmahome, who had been observing the tiny, nearly invisible crabs against the rock pool, turns his gaze to Clair-de-Lune with a gentle curiosity, asking, “But why?”

Just hours earlier, Brother Inchmahome had shown Clair-de-Lune and Bonaventure, a talking mouse with a lively past and dreams of starting a company, an incredible sight: a spiral staircase hewn into the rock beneath the monastery leading directly to the beach. This secret pathway represents a venture into the untamed outside world for Clair-de-Lune, whose life has largely been confined within walls, shaped by the rigorous discipline of dance under the watchful eye of Monsieur Dupoint.

Clair-de-Lune has been trained in feats of physical bravery; she's soared through the air in dance performances with only a single hand to guide her descent. Yet, the prospect of the unknown—cliffs, beaches, and the natural world beyond her familiar rooftop-bordered existence—awakens a deeper fear in her. She hesitates at the precipice of this new world, unsure if her



indoor courage can withstand the vast openness outside.

Encouraged by Brother Inchmahome's calm assurances—who pauses partway down the clandestine stairway to invite her cheerfully—Clair-de-Lune finds the resolve to descend. As stone walls give way to the open sea, Clair-de-Lune is overwhelmed. The boundless ocean confronts her with a world without limits, a stark contrast to her cloistered life.

Sitting in stunned awe on the beach, Clair-de-Lune grapples with her decision to remain silent. She tells Brother Inchmahome, in a voice only he can understand, that not speaking shields her from being disliked because it keeps her true self hidden—untouchable by the judgments of others. But terrestrial considerations haunt her: the fear of speaking brings with it the risk of causing hurt.

Brother Inchmahome, with his thoughtful eyes like a predawn sky, counters her rationale with gentle wisdom. He suggests that while speech might expose her to rejection, it also opens the possibility of connection, love, and even healing. His words prompt Clair-de-Lune to reconsider the profound impact of voicing her thoughts not only as a risk of hurt but also as a potential means of help.

Clair-de-Lune is moved to acknowledge that speaking might indeed allow



her to connect meaningfully with others. Brother Inchmahome, with humor and insight, reminds her that every person she's spoken to thus far—himself included—has warmed to her, hinting at unseen potential within her quietude.

Faced with this revelation, Clair-de-Lune is asked a poignant metaphor by Brother Inchmahome: Does a seed consider gaining acceptance before it grows into a bloom? This inspires further introspection on her part about acceptance and identity, particularly in light of her past experiences with peer rejection.

Yet the fear of unintentionally causing harm through speech lingers. Brother Inchmahome's response is both simple and profound: speech is a tool, capable of healing and fostering understanding as much as it might inadvertently wound. Encouraged, Clair-de-Lune decides to continue her lessons, opening herself to both the vulnerabilities and the potential her voice can bring.

Brother Inchmahome assigns her a new task: to discover even more reasons why she hesitates to speak, reflecting on the layers of understanding that lie ahead. Thus, Clair-de-Lune begins a journey inward as much as one outward, threading through the complexity of voice, self-expression, and human connection.



Chapter 16: - Clair-de-Lune Hears Something Subversive in Church

On Sundays, young Clair-de-Lune refrained from dancing and instead attended church, much to her grandmother's contentment. Her grandmother had always harbored a vague concern about something she dreaded possibly occurring at church. On this particular Sunday, Clair-de-Lune experienced a moment that would shake her understanding of the world. A momentous revelation came to her through a sermon, one that spoke of love surpassing all, even her cherished dance.

Clair-de-Lune's connection to her mother, La Lune—once a celebrated dancer—was palpable through the clothes Clair-de-Lune wore, repurposed from La Lune's illustrious past. Her grandmother had meticulously preserved these garments, a bittersweet reminder of both legacy and necessity. Clair-de-Lune cherished these hand-me-downs; they offered her a semblance of closeness to her late mother and reminded her of the dual nature of La Lune—the famed dancer depicted in newspapers and stories, and the tender woman whose clothing continued to comfort her daughter.

Her favorite church attire, a violet dress with an emerald-green sash, had once belonged to her mother and was viewed by Clair-de-Lune as a symbolic bridge to her. Pondering her mother's youth, Clair-de-Lune realized that her mother, too, was once a young girl, filled with dreams and



innocence, a thought that momentarily broke through a mental barrier she always encountered—a voice she would ignore by thinking of something else. It seemed to speak truths she feared to acknowledge.

Before setting out for church, Clair-de-Lune collected her lavender-scented handkerchief, a coin for the collection, and her dear friend Bonaventure, a mouse, who sought refuge in the comfort of her pocket as they headed to her customary pew in St. Mary's Church. Meanwhile, a host of mice from the theater district, eager and anxious for Bonaventure's dance class, prepared themselves in their peculiar ways.

As Clair-de-Lune reflected on her place within the congregation, the hymn and sermon unfolded. The reading that day was from a passage declaring love as the ultimate virtue, resonating with Clair-de-Lune deeply. For her, the passage meant that love surpassed even the esteemed Dance, an idea she previously thought unimaginable. She had always been led to believe that nothing was as vital as dance, instilled by her grandmother and the memory of her mother, La Lune.

Shaken and disoriented, Clair-de-Lune stumbled out of the church. She was now confronted with a paradigm shift that suggested love could be more significant than her art form, a belief that diverged from everything she had been taught. The notion that speaking was a mere tool for love and that love could be more critical even than the Dance or speaking dared her to question



her convictions—a subversive thought indeed, one that her grandmother had long dreaded would take root. Clair-de-Lune was at the dawn of a new understanding. The day—and her journey—was just beginning.

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Chapter 17 Summary: - Bonaventure's First Class

In this chapter, we are introduced to Bonaventure, a nervous yet determined mouse who aspires to teach dance. Despite his anxiety about starting his class on a Sunday, he is consoled by Brother Inchmahome's assurance that the Sabbath was not made for mice and draws courage from his belief that even teaching a single student would make his effort meaningful.

Clair-de-Lune, a young girl who communicates in a voice akin to a baby bird, encourages Bonaventure, though he cannot fully understand her words.

As Bonaventure's class commences, Clair-de-Lune observes a delightful sight: not just one but twenty-four mice ready to learn, including familiar faces like Margot and Rudolph. Each mouse is unique, bringing their own personality and story. Meanwhile, Bonaventure proudly introduces Clair-de-Lune to his students as their patron and begins their lesson with enthusiasm and skill.

The story takes a twist when Monsieur Dupoint, the human owner of the classroom, enters with a dancer from the Company. Clair-de-Lune, deeply engrossed in the mice's ballet class, stealthily hides to avoid drawing attention to the mice, fearing it could lead to traps and dangers for them. As she stays hidden, she overhears a poignant conversation about a past dancer, a woman torn between her love and her art, who tragically died of a broken heart. The mention of a child connected to this woman catches



Clair-de-Lune's attention, hinting at her own mysterious origins. Stunned, she learns of the love story that poses a crucial question: is love more important than dance?

The chapter closes with Clair-de-Lune grappling with this revelation as she returns home to her grandmother. Despite her inner turmoil, she maintains composure but begins questioning the core of a dancer's life and the absence of love and friendship in the stories she has known. Suddenly, the sacrifices made for dance, seen as a god-like pursuit, appear hollow without these vital human connections. This introspection marks a deepening self-awareness and a pivotal shift in Clair-de-Lune's understanding of her own life and legacy.

Section	Summary
Introduction	Bonaventure, a nervous mouse, aspires to teach dance and begins his class with encouragement from Clair-de-Lune.
Bonaventure's Dance Class	Turns out successful with 24 mice attending, including Margot and Rudolph. Bonaventure is enthusiastic in teaching them.
Monsieur Dupoint's Entrance	Clair-de-Lune hides when Monsieur Dupoint and a dancer from the Company arrive, to protect the mice from potential harm.
Revelation	Clair-de-Lune overhears a story of a dancer who died of a broken heart, hinting at her mysterious origins.
Clair-de-Lune's Inner Conflict	She questions the value of dance versus love, reflecting on the hollowness of dance sacrifices without human connections.

Section	Summary
Conclusion	Clair-de-Lune returns home pondering the dancer's life, legacy, and the need for love and friendship.

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Chapter 18 Summary: - Bonaventure's Vision

In the delightful world sketched within these chapters, we are introduced to Bonaventure—a mouse with a passion for ballet—and his unfolding journey of inspiration and creativity. At nightfall, Bonaventure paces restlessly in his cozy mouse hole. His surroundings, furnished with dollhouse miniatures, echo his fervent dreams of dance. This night, his excitement is palpable; his mind races with thoughts of his small but determined ballet class and the potential that lies within their whiskers and tails.

Previously, Bonaventure's spirits had been dampened when Clair-de-Lune, an avid observer of his passion, had to abandon witnessing his class. Yet, inspired by stories of artists overcoming personal struggles to deliver their best, he persisted. Despite lacking a pianist—with negotiations underway with a talented, albeit deaf, mouse musician—Bonaventure led his students through exercises and techniques. His innovative inclusion of tails in ballet, a groundbreaking idea, adds a unique fifth dimension to their choreography.

In conducting the class, Bonaventure has a revelation: mice are naturally gifted dancers, unlike humans, who must work painstakingly to master the art. This understanding lights a spark within him. His modest troupe—comprised of a dedicated group of mice—could indeed evolve into an actual dance company. Elated, he takes inspiration from the stars viewed from a classroom window, envisioning a ballet for mice.



The night air briskly cools his enthusiastic reverie, reminding him of the need to capture his ideas. Back in his mouse hole, by candlelight, he begins writing "The Prince's Quest," a ballet narrating a tale of valor and sacrifice centered around a Mouse Prince. The imaginative narrative begins to unfold on sheets of paper made from flattened toffee wrappers.

Meanwhile, in a neighboring room, Monsieur Dupoint, a human ballet instructor, ponders over an old manuscript—it causes him to recall past triumphs and sorrows on the ballet stage, including a haunting memory of a dancer who never took her final bow. Dupoint's protective instincts towards Clair-de-Lune clash with the allure of revisiting ambitious ballets, acknowledging the potential risks in the world of dance.

Unbeknownst to Dupoint, Minette, a cat with hunting prowess, prowls the night outside, her nocturnal wanderlust seemingly at odds with Bonaventure's creative immersion. Unlike Bonaventure's dedication to creation, Minette seeks the thrill of the hunt. Her relentless attempts to infiltrate the mouse-populated ballet school stem from a primal instinct, despite being well-fed by her owner, Mrs. Costello—a woman who showers Minette with her singular affection.

Thus, this narrative intertwines the aspirations of a determined mouse, the cautious musings of a seasoned ballet master, and the lurking presence of a



feline on her nightly prow, each pursuing their unique dance of life under the same vast, starlit sky.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embrace uniqueness and innovation to overcome challenges.

Critical Interpretation: Throughout Bonaventure's journey in Chapter 18, the discovery that mice possess natural talents for dancing—gifts that humans must laboriously refine—serves as a powerful metaphor for recognizing and embracing the innate talents and unique perspectives we all hold. By pioneering the groundbreaking inclusion of tails in ballet choreography, Bonaventure not only redefines the norms of his art but also showcases the beauty in thinking outside conventional boundaries. This chapter inspires you to harness your distinctive strengths and revolutionary ideas, transforming obstacles into opportunities for creativity and advancement. Embrace the individuality that makes your personal journey profound and transformative, much like Bonaventure's embrace of his troupe's distinctive abilities that leads them toward reimagining dances for mice.



Chapter 19 Summary: - The Last Answer—and a New Question

In this poignant chapter, the narrative follows Clair-de-Lune during a night filled with deep reflection and important realizations. As others around her, including Bonaventura and Monsieur Dupoint, are occupied with their creative pursuits, Clair-de-Lune lies in bed, grappling with complex emotions about her mother, La Lune. She learns that La Lune was not the perfect ballerina devoid of personal attachment as her grandmother described, but a woman torn by a heart-wrenching choice. This revelation causes Clair-de-Lune immense sorrow as she empathizes with her mother's past pain.

As the night progresses and the stars outside her window slowly fade, Clair-de-Lune contemplates the choices before her. She makes a profound decision, softly declaring, "I choose love," to the dawning sky, experiencing a moment of clarity and connection with the universe. This signifies her determination to balance personal aspirations with emotional truths, an internal choice between pursuing her art and embracing love and life in its entirety.

Yearning for guidance, Clair-de-Lune is comforted by the thought of Brother Inchmahome, her confidant, and reflects on her good fortune to have someone who truly understands her despite her inability to speak. At dawn,



Bonaventure, teeming with enthusiasm, wakes Clair-de-Lune, eager to share his achievements as a teacher and choreographer of dance—a pursuit he likens to charting new territories for mice. His excitement highlights the pioneering nature of their artistic endeavors, where mice, like humans, express themselves through dance.

The pair visits Brother Inchmahome, whose gentle presence provides a safe space for Clair-de-Lune to confront her tangled emotions. Bonaventure shares his excitement with the monk, who acknowledges and encourages his path-breaking work with heartfelt warmth. After Bonaventure drifts to sleep from exhaustion, Brother Inchmahome turns to Clair-de-Lune, perceptively addressing her struggle with communication. He imparts crucial wisdom: the importance of listening, especially to one's own heart, as the foundation for true expression.

Despite Clair-de-Lune's initial despair at being unable to articulate her feelings, Brother Inchmahome reassures her that the root of her challenge lies not in speech, but in listening without fear. This insight is both enlightening and frightening for Clair-de-Lune, as she realizes the journey ahead requires confronting her inner fears and truly understanding her own heart. An enigmatic vision of a young man glimpsed fleetingly in Brother Inchmahome's eyes hints at deeper mysteries and connections, hinting that the journey of self-discovery is far from over.



The chapter closes with the urgency of daily life resuming as Bonaventure hastily departs, pulling Clair-de-Lune back into her routine with renewed purpose. Yet, as she prepares for her dance class, there is a solemn awareness of the significant step she stands before—one that promises further adventures and revelations in her quest for both voice and truth.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Choosing love over perfection

Critical Interpretation: In this chapter, Clair-de-Lune experiences a pivotal moment of introspection, leading her to choose the path of love over a perceived need for perfection. As she reflects on her mother's struggles and the pressure of societal expectations, Clair-de-Lune makes a conscious decision to embrace love as her guiding principle. This choice emphasizes the importance of authenticity and emotional connection over conforming to external standards or the relentless pursuit of flawlessness. By choosing love, Clair-de-Lune highlights a significant life lesson: the courage to prioritize genuine, heartfelt connections and self-acceptance can lead to a more fulfilling and truthful existence. This choice not only influences her personal journey but can inspire us all to embrace love and authenticity as guiding lights, reminding us that it's through love and acceptance that we find true meaning and purpose in life.



Chapter 20: - Listening

In this chapter, Clair-de-Lune experiences a profound shift in her perspective, beginning with a new awareness at breakfast. As she listens to her grandmother's stern demeanor, Clair-de-Lune is struck by an unexpected insight: her grandmother is deeply sad. The narrative introduces a fresh lens for Clair-de-Lune as she begins to listen with more empathy and curiosity to the world around her, starting with her classmates Milly, Fenella, and Prudence at the dancing school. She realizes, perhaps for the first time, that they fear her more than she fears them, which diminishes their power over her.

This day marks a transitional period for Clair-de-Lune; she observes kindness among the boys in Monsieur Dupont's class and returns a smile from one of them, beginning to understand the power of small gestures of friendliness. She perceives undercurrents of worry in Monsieur Dupont and notices subtleties in Mr. Sparrow's piano playing for the first time. Clair-de-Lune's acute listening even extends to an imagined hearing of Bonaventure, a mouse with big ideas, rallying his student mice with excitement.

On the same afternoon, Clair-de-Lune encounters Monsieur Dupont on the stairs and sees him dressed unexpectedly for a visit. Unbeknownst to Clair-de-Lune, Monsieur Dupont is on his way to visit her grandmother



with challenging news. The narrative then shifts focus to this encounter, where Monsieur Dupont approaches Madame Nuit with a difficult proposition. The ballet company plans to honor Clair-de-Lune's late mother, La Lune, at their hundredth-anniversary celebration by reviving her renowned last dance. The suggestion is for Clair-de-Lune, her daughter, to perform it.

The chapter delves into Madame Nuit's initial resistance, revealing her pain over her daughter's memory and her disdain for the notion of a successor. However, as she faces Dupont, she concedes that Clair-de-Lune will perform the dance. This decision is rooted in her belief that the dance itself did not cause her daughter's death but a broken heart from a failed love affair. She is convinced that Clair-de-Lune, whom she has shielded from emotional attachments, is not at risk of the same fate.

Monsieur Dupont is troubled by the decision, wary of the superstition surrounding the dance and concerned about the emotional toll on Clair-de-Lune. However, he feels powerless against Madame Nuit's resolve and accepts his role in coaching Clair-de-Lune, aware that he might be her only protector.

In the final moments of the chapter, the narrative returns to Clair-de-Lune, who learns of her grandmother's decision. Cloaked in the literal and figurative shadow of her mother's legacy, Clair-de-Lune feels an intense



burden. As she lies in bed, the realization that she must confront her mother's death through the dance brings an almost unbearable emotional pain. She dreads the performance not for the fear of the audience but for the personal anguish it will force her to relive. The chapter closes with this heavy shadow looming over Clair-de-Lune, a metaphor for her unresolved grief and the daunting connection to her mother's untouchable past.

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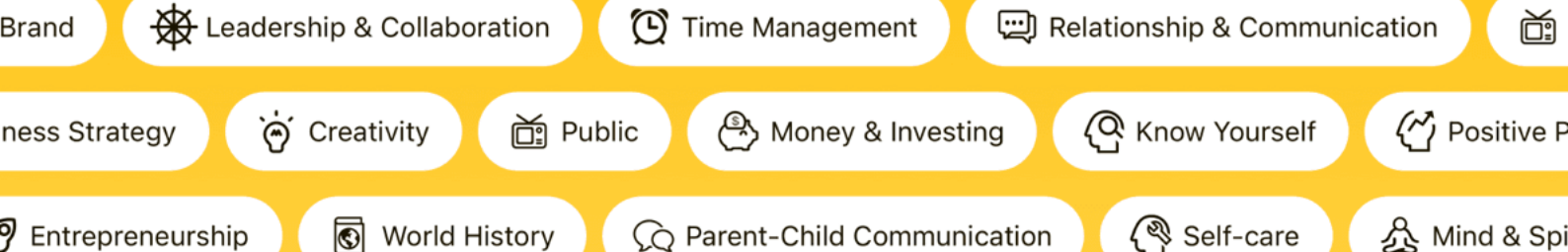




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Chapter 21 Summary: - Not Listening

In the afternoon, Clair-de-Lune began a rigorous rehearsal schedule, determined by Monsieur Dupont to perfect her performance to his standards. She was to attend morning classes, rehearse in the afternoon, and run errands later, leaving her little time for anything else, including her lessons, which she had to forego temporarily. With duties mounting, Clair-de-Lune found herself questioning what would keep her grounded as she mechanically moved through her ballet positions.

Monsieur Dupont, frustrated by being tasked with transforming a mere child into a professional dancer within weeks, expressed his agitation. His anger was a misplaced emotion as he genuinely felt protective of Clair-de-Lune. Despite her hesitations, Clair-de-Lune's eyes were drawn to a manuscript in Dupont's possession, which detailed her deceased mother's last choreography, a work by the late Gilbert de la Groix.

Fear gripped Clair-de-Lune as she encountered the music tied to painful memories and profound emotions she wished to avoid. Nevertheless, when Dupont called her to the center, she steeled herself, clinging to concentration as a defense against the overwhelming tide of emotions. This piece of music was intimately linked to her past, invoking memories of her mother's dance.



As the rehearsal progressed under Monsieur Dupoint's guidance, Clair-de-Lune mimicked his demonstrations. She danced with mechanical precision, desperately shielding herself from the music's emotional resonance. Dupoint, observing her technical prowess, was pleased but noted the absence of emotion in her performance—a stark contrast to her mother, whose dancing was all about feeling.

Despite the mental and emotional toll, Clair-de-Lune persevered, unwilling to disappoint her grandmother or bring dishonor to her mother's legacy. She found herself in a cycle—attending rehearsals, performing meticulously, but emotionally distancing herself to protect against a resurgence of grief and fear.

Meanwhile, Bonaventure, a mouse and Clair-de-Lune's friend, prepared for his company's upcoming ballet performance, "The Prince's Quest." Bonaventure and his troupe worked passionately, seizing the centenary as an opportunity for a professional debut. Through trial and revision, Bonaventure crafted roles for his talented dancers and found resources to secure a toy piano for music contributions from a gifted, deaf mouse composer residing in a nearby church.

Later, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother instructed her to try on a tutu—a poignant artifact from her mother's past performances. This costume represented not just her mother's legacy but an unspoken truth buried



beneath its beauty—a connection to her mother that felt both comforting and haunting.

In her moments of solitude in the sea garden with Brother Inchmahome, Clair-de-Lune expressed her turmoil, confessing her struggle to listen and open her heart due to fear. Brother Inchmahome encouraged her to embrace love and listening, asserting that true communication stems from openness and acceptance of love's challenges.

Despite her trepidations, Clair-de-Lune knew she faced a crucial decision: to potentially endure emotional upheaval by genuinely listening—or remain in silence. Her journey was as much about overcoming fear as mastering dance, symbolizing the broader challenge of facing one's inner demons to wholly embrace her identity and familial legacy.

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Chapter 22 Summary: - The Locket

In the silent attic, under the cool caress of moonlight filtering through the latticed window, Clair-de-Lune stood awake. She wrapped herself in her cover and quietly descended twelve flights down to the cobbled streets, clutching her mother's altered swan tutu and a pair of pointe shoes. The key in her possession, given by Monsieur Dupoint, let her into the theater through the stage door. She navigated the darkened lobby and ascended the stairs, away from the dressing rooms, towards the stage, where the moon shone brightly through another latticed window, creating a surreal spotlight.

Clair-de-Lune performed her mother's dance on the very stage where her mother had perished, embracing the struggle and beauty of a swan's fight against death. Her performance was an homage to her mother, revealing a profound connection that transcended life and death. In an emotional climax, Clair-de-Lune gleaned a message from her mother's dance as she lay on the stage in whispered wonder about a mysterious connection she could not comprehend.

Unknown to Clair-de-Lune, a small heart-shaped locket had fallen from the dress during her dance. Bonaventure, a mouse intent on staging his ballet on the theater's stage, had witnessed Clair-de-Lune's performance. Her inspired rendition was unlike anything he'd seen during mundane rehearsals, convincing him of its secret beauty, reserved for the right moment.



After Clair-de-Lune departed, Bonaventure approached and discovered the locket, pondering its significance before Minette, Mrs. Costello's cat, intervened, her paw pinning it to the stage. Bonaventure, faced with a perilous choice, decided that love was worth the risk, seizing the locket and darting away.

While Bonaventure made his escape, Minette, familiar with both the theater and Clair-de-Lune's building, took a strategic route. The agile cat leapt from the theater's roof to that of Clair-de-Lune's residence, positioning herself to intercept Bonaventure on the staircase outside Clair-de-Lune's door.

Despite his determination, Bonaventure, burdened by the locket and oblivious to Minette's tactical maneuvers, unknowingly ran into the trap she laid. As dawn began to break, and he neared the final step to Clair-de-Lune's attic, Minette's soft paw descended once more, threatening his mission to return the meaningful locket to its rightful owner.



Chapter 23 Summary: - The Monastery is Hidden

In this poignant chapter, Clair-de-Lune emerges from the attic, only to stumble upon a heart-wrenching sight—Mrs. Costello's cat, Minette, has caught the beloved mouse, Bonaventure. Holding his tiny, wounded body, Clair-de-Lune is overwhelmed with sorrow. Bonaventure, with his last breaths, tenderly bids her farewell and insists she keep a mysterious locket, emphasizing its importance and urging her to share it with Brother Inchmahome.

Bonaventure's tender declaration of understanding Clair-de-Lune's words echoes Brother Inchmahome's teaching that true listening brings comprehension. Though Clair-de-Lune pleads with the mouse to survive, accepting the inevitability of his fate, she is struck by his calm acceptance of life's dangers, even from cats. With his parting words filled with memories of home, Bonaventure passes away, leaving Clair-de-Lune devastated.

In her grief, she decides that Brother Inchmahome, a wise and kind figure, would make sense of this tragedy. Struggling to find the hidden stone door leading to his monastery, Clair-de-Lune becomes disoriented and exhausted. In her feverish state, she finally rests in a shadowy alcove, falling into an uneasy sleep with Bonaventure's body cradled against her chest.

Upon waking later, still haunted by vague memories, she finds herself at



Monsieur Dupont's door in a daze. Sensing her illness, Monsieur Dupont takes immediate action, instructing her grandmother on how to care for her. Despite their poverty, he promises to arrange for medical assistance and nourishment, showing kindness and hope for Clair-de-Lune's future, recalling the community's affection for her late mother.

Left alone, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother tends to her feverish granddaughter, watching over her as she prays for divine intervention, symbolized by the vision of a silvery bird.

Meanwhile, an unusual nocturnal procession unfolds as a group of dancer mice retrieves Bonaventure's body from the waste basket, reflecting the deep bonds of friendship and community among the mice. Their quiet weeping resonates through the night, a testament to the unspoken connections that bind them together.

This chapter delves deeply into themes of love, loss, and the enduring strength of community, both human and animal, while painting a vivid picture of Clair-de-Lune's inner turmoil and perseverance.



Chapter 24: - The Golden Cage

In this chapter, a sense of urgency permeates the air as Clair-de-Lune's worsening condition prompts a flurry of visits and interventions. Monsieur Dupoint departs just before the arrival of the concerned doctor, who examines Clair-de-Lune and expresses his grave concern over her frail state. Despite the grandmother's care, Clair-de-Lune's thinness alarms the doctor, and he leaves instructions with the promise to return.

Following this, deliveries of various nourishing goods arrive, ordered by Monsieur Dupoint in an attempt to aid Clair-de-Lune's recovery. However, amidst the bustle, Clair-de-Lune remains unaware, lost in an unending dream where she endlessly climbs stairs in search of something precious but forgotten, while mourning for someone named Bonaventura—a memory that has faded.

The doctor is troubled by her condition, sensing that Clair-de-Lune's ailment might be more emotional than physical. Her grandmother, however, remains outwardly stoic, seeking help from Monsieur Dupoint to watch over Clair-de-Lune while she departs on an urgent errand. She ventures into a storm, driven by desperation to find a fortune-teller she hasn't seen in twelve years—a person who once offered guidance.

The journey is arduous, filled with memories of carrying Clair-de-Lune as a



baby in similar winds and rain. Upon meeting the fortune-teller, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother offers a black velvet dress as payment for wisdom. The fortune-teller chastises her for the past decision to separate two vital elements, warning that it was this separation that might lead to Clair-de-Lune's demise.

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Chapter 25 Summary: - The Lady

Late at night, Clair-de-Lune, a fragile young girl, lay in bed when she felt the soft touch of a tiny nose on her cheek. Opening her eyes, she found Bonaventure, a small mouse with a surprising mission. He urged her to accompany him to meet a mysterious Lady who awaited her. Despite Clair-de-Lune's frailty, Bonaventure insisted, revealing his newfound wings that promised to support her.

As Clair-de-Lune slowly sat up, an inexplicable force helped her rise from bed, giving her a weightless sensation. With Bonaventure's assistance, whose wings fluttered like a hummingbird's, she felt buoyed by an unseen strength. Above them was not a ceiling, but the vast, starry night sky, a scene reminiscent of her dreams.

Bonaventure declared that the Lady resided in the Land Behind the Stars. Clair-de-Lune wondered how they would reach such a place. Just then, a luminous, ethereal rope ladder descended from the sky, appearing as delicate as a spider's web yet strong as steel. Bonaventure reassured her that there is always a way to where one needs to go. Encouraged, Clair-de-Lune began to climb.

As she ascended, the world below became a tapestry of wonders. She saw her attic diminish into a speck and the city became a small circle surrounded



by fields and streams, eventually revealing the vastness of oceans and continents. With each step, she glimpsed the beauty of the Earth until it became a distant blue sphere, invoking a sense of tenderness within her.

Pausing to rest, Clair-de-Lune felt like an actress on a cosmic stage, spotlighted by the moon. Bonaventure nudged her to look up, and she beheld not the moon, but the face of a celestial Lady with hair of night and eyes like stars. This Lady, she realized, was her mother.

Reaching out instinctively, Clair-de-Lune's heart yearned to stay with her mother, who explained that she had left against her will. The Lady urged Clair-de-Lune to live fully, to say what she could not, and to make what was wrong right.

As the dawn approached, Bonaventure reminded Clair-de-Lune she had to return. Filled with an overwhelming light of tenderness, she climbed down the ladder, holding onto the memory of the Lady's face. Upon descending, the Earth grew larger, and Clair-de-Lune re-entered the mundane world, yet forever changed.

Returning to her bed, Clair-de-Lune marveled at the night's journey. Bonaventure bade her farewell, and the Lady's voice bestowed her blessing. As Clair-de-Lune drifted into a deep sleep, dawn spread across the sky, and she clutched Bonaventure's last gift—a locket—as a tangible reminder of the



magical encounter.

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Chapter 26 Summary: - Everything—and One Thing

Clair-de-Lune awoke in the quiet attic room she shared with her grandmother. Too weak to move, she realized someone was holding her hand. Brother Inchmahome, a gentle and caring figure in her life, greeted her. He quietly acknowledged her return from a journey that had left emotional scars, specifically mentioning Bonaventura, a figure from Clair-de-Lune's past associated with loss and love. As Brother Inchmahome tended to her, giving her barley water for strength, he probed gently about her time away and the knowledge she might have gained, acknowledging that discussions could wait until she was stronger. However, Clair-de-Lune, feeling a growing strength, insisted on speaking immediately.

She expressed her yearning to communicate something profound, yet understood that the depth of what she felt was beyond words. Instead, she reached out and embraced Brother Inchmahome, a silent expression of love, as if to communicate an ineffable truth. Amidst this touching scene, they heard a mysterious fluttering at the window. A bird with silver feathers and a heart that glowed like fire seemed to demand entry, and Brother Inchmahome obliged by opening the window. The bird flew into the room and into Clair-de-Lune's heart, symbolizing a profound connection and understanding between them.

In that moment of clarity and verbal expression, Clair-de-Lune uttered her



first words, observing that Brother Inchmahome's eyes always seemed to be looking at beautiful things, to which he responded with agreement, revealing a deep and abiding affection for her perspective and spirit.

Then, a revelation emerged as Brother Inchmahome noticed a locket around Clair-de-Lune's neck. It had opened, revealing a picture of a young man with strikingly familiar features—gray eyes and a kind face, a reminiscent image of Brother Inchmahome himself in his youth, captured in a moment of gazing at something beautiful. This discovery sent Brother Inchmahome's mind spiraling into his past, questioning the connection between them and the significance of the image now revealed. It was a poignant reminder of the cycle of life, love, and the passage of time, deepening the bond between Clair-de-Lune and Brother Inchmahome.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Embracing Silence to Communicate Love

Critical Interpretation: In a world where words often fall short, your heart can be the most profound communicator of all. Clair-de-Lune's decision to embrace Brother Inchmahome instead of speaking epitomizes the power of silent gestures. When faced with moments that are too complex or deeply emotional to describe with mere language, let your love and warmth transcend syllables. Open your heart, as this non-verbal exchange may convey 'I understand' or 'I'm here for you' more potently than any uttered sentence. By allowing the gentleness of a touch or a look to speak in your stead, you foster a genuine connection rooted in empathy and silent understanding, revealing a depth of emotion that words could only hope to capture. Allow these instances to inspire you in your life, understanding that sometimes the most profound messages are those delivered without a single sound, reshaping how you connect to the people you cherish most deeply.

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Chapter 27 Summary: - The Disreputable Young Man

A young man, desperate and drenched from the rain, stood at a stage door, pleading with a doorman. He revealed that he was engaged to a dancer, and it would mean everything to him to be allowed inside, but he had nothing to offer in return. The doorman, though initially refusing, showed compassion and offered the young man money for a meal, advising him to move on. The young man, consumed by his sorrow, stumbled away into the night, narrowly avoiding traffic, as the doorman muttered about the unfortunate night and Mademoiselle Moon's sudden passing.

Meanwhile, inside, Brother Inchmahome was overcome with tears as he recounted his tragic love story to Clair-de-Lune. In a past life, he had been deeply in love with a dancer who had suddenly cut off contact. Despite sending letters, none were returned, and he was left with uncertainty about what had happened between them. He frequently attended her dance performances, sensing her unhappiness but unable to help. She died suddenly, and even then, he was denied a final farewell. Overwhelmed and lost, Brother Inchmahome wandered aimlessly until he stumbled upon a monastery, where he found solace and embarked on a journey of healing through listening and reflection.

Clair-de-Lune dreamily shared a poignant memory of her mother sewing a picture of her beloved into her tutu, keeping it close to her heart on the night



she died. It was revealed that Clair-de-Lune was the child her mother had been trying to tell Brother Inchmahome about, as she died of a broken heart, longing for a love she was forbidden to keep. Now, with father and daughter reunited, they embraced with all their might, as if to never let go again.

Nearby, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother laid in a state of peaceful limbo, precariously between slumber and consciousness. It was a bright morning, and despite the tasks waiting for her, she felt content to rest. She could hear Clair-de-Lune's voice, filled with life and promise, and felt reassured that the young girl would not only live but also thrive as a dancer, surpassing all expectations. Her granddaughter was safe and loved, thanks to Brother Inchmahome.

Gradually, Clair-de-Lune's grandmother allowed herself to drift away towards a serene, imaginary island, her life's duties fulfilled. She had done her best, and now it was time to rest. In the cold fireplace, a dull lump of metal—the remnants of what used to be a cage—resembled a heart, symbolizing the enduring love and connection between past and present, and the hope for new beginnings.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Enduring Love and Healing

Critical Interpretation: From Clair-de-Lune's grandfather, Brother Inchmahome, and his past love story, you are reminded of the powerful resilience of love and the path to healing. Even when life denies you the happy ending you longed for, you can find solace and strength in unexpected places. Brother Inchmahome's journey teaches you that opening your heart to healing and reflection can transcend loss, leading to profound connections and renewed purpose. It inspires you to believe in the enduring power of love, knowing that even in pain, love can guide you towards fulfillment and peace.

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Chapter 28: - The Island of Day

In the depths of Bonaventure's mouse hole, the members of his ballet company gathered to mourn their beloved maestro. The twenty-four mice sat together, their hearts heavy with grief, as their small community struggled to come to terms with the loss of Bonaventure, a revered figure within and beyond the world of mouse ballet. His influence had touched many lives, prompting numerous mice—some who knew him well, others who had only heard of his legendary devotion—to pay their respects with flowers and candle stubs, transforming the mouse hole into an enchanted, flower-filled sanctuary that seemed reminiscent of the magical settings Bonaventure created through his art.

For days, silence dominated the company, who had not danced since the somber morning news of Bonaventure's death reached them. According to mouse tradition, they solemnly retrieved his body from the sixth floor, constructing a raft from twigs to send him on his final journey down an underground stream that would carry him to the sea. Despite his physical absence, the mice felt that Bonaventure's spirit lingered among them, a sentiment highlighted by Juliet's nightly dreams of him.

Breaking the silence, Rudolph, a mouse who had once been indifferent to the art of dance, stood up with a fervent resolve, inspired by Bonaventure's passionate legacy. Encouraged by Margot, his partner who shared his grief



and vision, Rudolph reminded the assembly of Bonaventure's likely insistence that "the show must go on." He passionately articulated that true art is born of love, reflecting Bonaventure's own life and work. He urged the company to celebrate their mentor's legacy by continuing the performance they had prepared, dedicating it as both memorial and celebration.

As the mice pondered this proposal, a practical concern arose: without Bonaventure, they lacked a Mouse Prince for their performance. Despair threatened to settle again, but just then, a newcomer appeared—a travel-worn yet noble mouse with fur like black silk, who expressed his lifelong dream of joining the ballet. The light of devotion in his eyes and his princely demeanor revived the company's hopes, as they recognized this stranger might be the new star needed to fulfill Bonaventure's vision.

Meanwhile, outside the inner circle of the mouse world, two figures stood at the threshold of a new beginning. Clair-de-Lune and Brother Inchmahome, both wearing mourning dress, hesitated momentarily before stepping into the world together. Brother Inchmahome, clad in borrowed attire, exuded a youthful spirit almost as vibrant as in his earlier days. They realized that their journey mattered less than their companionship, echoing the philosophy of unity and love celebrated within Bonaventure's teachings. Together, they embraced the unknown with the optimism that the daybreak brought, akin to the metaphorical Island of Day in the Ocean of Dreams—bright, hopeful, and promising.



Through these intertwined narratives, the story celebrates the enduring power of love, art, and togetherness in overcoming loss and continuing dreams, seamlessly blending the lessons from the enchanted world of mouse ballet with the broader human experiences of hope and renewal.

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