

The Art of Racing in the Rain



INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF GARTH STEIN

Garth Stein was born on in Los Angeles, California. His mother is from Alaska and is of Irish and Tlingit Native American descent, while his father, a native of Brooklyn, is the child of Jewish emigrants. Stein grew up in Seattle and attended Columbia University for both his undergraduate and graduate degrees, earning a BA in 1987 and an MFA in film in 1990. After spending 18 years in New York, he returned to Seattle in 2001. Following his move to Seattle, he earned his racing license with the Sports Car Club of America and was involved with high performance driver education. He left racing several years later, after a serious crash that happened while racing in the rain. These experiences inspired the *Art of Racing in the Rain*. Before turning to writing, Stein worked as a documentary filmmaker and worked on several award-winning films, including *The Lunch Date* (1991), *The Last Party* (1992, featuring Robert Downey, Jr.), and *When Your Head's Not a Head, It's a Nut* (1993), which is a personal documentary following Stein's sister and family as she struggles with epilepsy, seeking treatment through surgery. Stein has also written several plays, the first of which, *Brother Jones*, was produced in Los Angeles in 2005 to glowing reviews. Stein is also the co-founder of Seattle7Writers, a nonprofit organization that promotes literacy by providing funding and donations of books to those in need. Stein lives in Seattle with his wife, Andrea Perl binder Stein, their three sons, and a lab/poodle mix.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Enzo's favorite driver, the Brazilian Ayrton Senna (1960-1994) died in a crash in Imola, Italy, during the San Marino Grand Prix. Enzo asserts during the novel that Senna's death is shrouded in mystery, but official records state that Senna was announced to be dead at 6:40 pm in the hospital, although Italian law indicates that due to the extensive head injuries that caused his brain to effectively stop working immediately following the accident, time of death was actually 2:17 pm, or the time that his car impacted the wall. Under Italian law his death was investigated for criminal culpability, and one of his team members was tried for manslaughter. The accident was deemed to have been caused by a failure in the steering column brought about by an improper modification made by Senna's team, but due to the statute of limitations for manslaughter in Italy, the team member in question was never prosecuted. The final verdict was pronounced 13 years later.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Novels that explore the relationship between dog and man very nearly make up a genre all their own, and so *The Art of Racing in the Rain* can be said to share thematic connections with classics such as *Old Yeller* (Fred Gipson, 1956), *Where the Red Fern Grows* (Wilson Rawles, 1961), and *Because of Winn-Dixie* (Kate DiCamillo, 2000). The more contemporary *A Dog's Purpose* (2010) and its sequel, *A Dog's Journey* (2012), by W. Bruce Cameron, are both narrated by dogs and explore the relationships between men and dogs, as well as dealing with reincarnation, something that is a goal for Enzo in *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. Finally, *The Art of Racing in the Rain* can even be said to share broad similarities with Anna Sewell's 1877 classic *Black Beauty*, a study in both the kindness and cruelty humanity is capable of, told from the perspective of a horse who is at the mercy of whomever is caring for him.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** The Art of Racing in the Rain
- **When Written:** mid-2000s
- **Where Written:** Seattle, WA
- **When Published:** 2008
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary
- **Genre:** Novel, Family drama
- **Setting:** Seattle, WA, over a ten-year period beginning in the mid-1990s.
- **Climax:** When Annika drops her assault case against Denny, allowing Denny to take full custody of Zoë
- **Point of View:** First person, narrated by Enzo

EXTRA CREDIT

A Story for All Ages. After writing *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, Garth Stein went on to write a spinoff series of children's picture books starring Enzo, Denny, and Zoë, illustrated by R.W. Alley. *The Art of Racing in the Rain* has also been adapted into a young reader's edition.

A Win of His Own. Garth Stein was briefly involved with car racing in the Seattle area, and won the points championship in the Northwest Region Spec Miata class in 2004.



PLOT SUMMARY

Enzo, an elderly dog, is sprawled on the kitchen floor of his owner, Denny's, apartment in a puddle of his own urine. He tells the reader that he's staging this display so that Denny, who has been through so much in the last few years, will see that it's

time to let Enzo go. When Denny gets home he gives Enzo a bath, cleans up the mess, and calls Mike, his friend and coworker, and asks him to cover for him the next day so he can take Enzo to the vet. He says he's not sure it's a round trip visit, and despite having set it up, Enzo is surprised. He reaffirms though that it's for the best, and now Denny can be free.

Enzo loves racing, and sprinkles racing strategy, wisdom, and stories throughout the novel. His favorite driver is **Ayrton Senna**, a charismatic driver who drove exceptionally well in the **rain**, just like Denny does. The events surrounding his death remain a mystery.

Enzo goes back in time to explain the ten years of events leading up to his “display.” Denny, a professional racecar driver, adopted him as a puppy and moved him to Seattle. For the first year it was just Denny and Enzo, but then Denny met Eve and quickly fell in love with her. Enzo tried to love her, but resented her for coming between himself and Denny. Denny and Eve were married within the year and Eve soon became pregnant. When the baby was born, Denny was across the country competing. After the birth, Eve asked Enzo to protect her daughter, whom they named Zoë. Denny returned the next day and shares that another driver on his team crashed their car and he never even got to drive.

The next several months passed quickly and happily until Eve and Denny went back to work and Zoë was put in daycare. Enzo was left home alone. He was bored and lonely until one day Denny left the **TV** on by accident, and Enzo spent the entire day watching. From that time on, Denny leaves the TV on for Enzo during the day, and Enzo's education truly begins. Enzo believes himself to have a very human soul, and uses television to learn how to be more human. After seeing a documentary on Mongolia, he learns that dogs are reincarnated as men when they die, and this becomes his goal. He spends the rest of his life trying to be as human as possible to prepare for his next life as a human.

After Zoë's second birthday, the family moves into a small house. Enzo can smell something wrong with Eve, although she doesn't know it yet. She begins experiencing sporadic episodes of migraines, nausea, and mood swings. One weekend, when Denny is gone for a race, Eve experiences a headache so bad she packs up Zoë and leaves for her parents' house, leaving Enzo alone for three days. Enzo rations the toilet water but can do nothing about food, and on the second night he begins to hallucinate. He sees Zoë's favorite toy, a stuffed **zebra**, come to life and molest all of her other toys. When Enzo goes to attack, the zebra eviscerates itself. When Denny returns to find Zoë's toys in ruin, he hits Enzo. Enzo believes the zebra framed him.

The following year, Denny secures a seat in a traveling racecar for a season. It means many absences, but Eve encourages him to go. The first few races go very poorly for Denny, and when he and Eve are discussing it at dinner one night, Denny says he

needs to go away the following week to practice with his crew. Eve is angry and scared, and Zoë is refusing to eat her dinner, leading to a bigger fight. Eve finally agrees to make Zoë a hot dog, but when she tries to cut open the package, the knife slices into her hand. Eve, terrified, refuses to go to the doctor and Denny agrees to bandage it at home.

The season improves for Denny, and Eve's health improves for no apparent reason. In August, the family goes to the Slippery Slabs, a spot on a creek where Zoë can play. While lifting Zoë, Eve slips and falls on the rocks, hitting her head hard. Denny rushes her to the emergency room where they discover a large mass in her brain. Eve spends months in the hospital. Trish and Maxwell, Eve's parents, talk Denny into having Eve stay at their house when she's released, and to allow Zoë to stay with them as well so she can spend as much time as possible with her dying mother. Denny begrudgingly agrees. On her first night home, Eve, terrified, asks Enzo to protect her and not let her die that night. He stays awake the entire night.

Several months pass. In February, Denny, Enzo, and Zoë go to the mountains with Eve's extended family so Zoë can meet them. While there, a teenage daughter of one of Eve's cousins, Annika, develops a crush on Denny. When she learns that Denny will be leaving early to beat predicted bad weather, she decides she needs to leave early as well, and Denny agrees to take her. The five-hour drive takes ten due to the weather, and Annika decides to stay with Denny that night. Denny and Enzo fall asleep, and Enzo awakes to see Annika at the foot of Denny's bed taking Denny's pants off, and Enzo tells the reader that what she did must have been without Denny's consent. Finally, Enzo barks and wakes Denny, who leaps away, horrified. Annika tells Denny she loves him, but he refuses to engage with her. She calls her father and he comes to pick her up.

In the spring, Denny takes Enzo to California with him to a racetrack where he'll be driving for a television commercial, and he takes Enzo out on the track for a speed lap. Enzo loves the experience and it cements his love of racing. A month after they return to Seattle, Eve dies. Denny gets the phone call while he's at the dog park with Enzo, and overcome by emotion, Enzo runs away and kills and eats a squirrel. When Denny finds him later, they drive to Maxwell and Trish's house so Denny can say goodbye. After he does, Maxwell and Trish tell Denny that they're suing him for Zoë's custody.

Denny hires Mark Fein, a lawyer whose car Denny works on at the auto shop. He tells Denny that the suit is bogus and it'll be an easy win. Later that day, however, police officers come to Denny's work to arrest him for felony rape of a child—Annika's family had decided to press charges for what happened in February. Mark pays Denny's bail, and Denny and Enzo attend Eve's funeral a few days later. Enzo is diagnosed with hip dysplasia after experiencing major hip pain from walking hours to and from the funeral.

As winter arrives, Seattle gets a light dusting of snow. On a walk

one night, Enzo is hit by a car. When Denny tries to pay the vet, he discovers he has no money, and Denny is embarrassed and ready to give up. A few weeks later, Denny and Enzo go to visit Mike to sign a settlement granting Denny a generous visitation schedule and settling for non-felony charges regarding Annika's case. Mike hands Denny a souvenir pen from the zoo to sign with, and Enzo sees a zebra floating in the pen. He realizes that the zebra isn't an outside demon, but rather a force within all of us, and he decides that Denny isn't going to accept the settlement. Ignoring the pain from his hips, Enzo grabs the papers off the table and leads Mike and Denny on a chase through the house, culminating in a leap out the window. In the backyard, Enzo urinates on the papers, and Denny decides he doesn't want to give up.

Later that summer while Denny is teaching at the Seattle racing school, Luca Pantoni, a man who works for Ferrari, asks Denny to show him around the track. After Denny lays down some hot laps, wowing the students and Enzo, Luca offers Denny a job testing cars and teaching for Ferrari in Italy. Denny declines, saying he can't leave the state, and Luca says the job will stay open until Denny is ready.

One winter evening when Denny and Enzo are out for a walk, they spot Annika sitting at an outdoor cafe. When they reach Annika, both Denny and Annika feign surprise at their meeting and Denny asks if he can sit down and speak with her for a moment. He apologizes for what happened and tells Annika that a relationship between them would never have worked. He says that the first time he saw Eve he could barely function, and he hopes that Annika finds someone someday that makes her feel like that. Finally, he says that because of her suit, he'll never be allowed to see Zoë again. When Denny is finished he and Enzo trot home, triumphant.

Denny's parents, whom Enzo has never met, come to visit. Denny's mother is blind and when she meets Zoë, Zoë sits very still while her grandmother explores her face. On the final night of their visit, Denny's father explains to Denny that they took out a reverse mortgage on their house so Denny could pay his legal fees. When Mike asks the next day, Enzo learns that Denny's parents effectively disowned him when he refused to care for his mother, but he had slowly built up a relationship over the last several years.

Denny's criminal trial begins soon after. Every day, Mike escorts Denny to court while Tony, Mike's partner, takes care of Enzo. On the third day, Tony receives a phone call that something is happening, and he and Enzo rush to the courthouse. They wait in the rain, and Enzo falls asleep and dreams of testifying in court using Stephen Hawking's voice synthesizer. He wakes to hear Denny saying that it's over, he won. Trish and Maxwell drop their custody suit the next day.

While Denny is making cookies in preparation for Zoë's return, the phone rings and it's Luca Pantoni. Denny says he'd like to accept Luca's offer, and asks Luca why he's made such a

generous offer. Luca says that his own wife died, and it was the help from a mentor, his predecessor at Ferrari, that saved him, and so he wished to pass the gift on.

The next day, Enzo can barely get up. He goes to the kitchen where Denny is making pancakes and collapses. Denny cradles him, and Enzo experiences visions of the fields where he was born and flashes of the documentary on Mongolia. He starts to run through the fields, still hearing Denny's voice, and dies in Denny's arms.

The text jumps to a point in the future, where Denny has just won a Formula One race on the same track where Senna died. Zoë, now an adult, pulls up in a golf cart with two of Denny's fans, a father and a son. They ask for Denny's autograph, and Denny asks the boy his name. The boy replies that his name is Enzo, and he's going to be a champion. Denny gives the father his phone number and offers to teach Enzo to drive when he's old enough.



CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Enzo – The canine narrator of the story; a lab mix. Enzo is owned by Denny, and later Eve and their daughter Zoë as well. Enzo believes his father was an Airedale Terrier because he believes terriers are smart and thinking dogs, and Enzo sees himself as extremely intelligent. However human he wants to be, though, he consistently remarks that he is a dog and will use that to his advantage. He is extremely loyal and does whatever he can to protect his family, including protecting them from the **zebra**. Through the many hours he spends watching **television**, Enzo learns as much as he can about humans and dedicates himself to becoming as human-like as possible. Enzo sometimes gets to accompany Denny to the racetrack, which he loves, and while they're at home, the two spend a lot of time watching old race videos of Denny as well as of past racing greats. This immersion in the world of racing leads Enzo to develop a life philosophy based around racing, which he shares with the reader throughout the novel.

Denny – A professional racecar driver, husband to Eve and father to Zoë. He picked Enzo out of a litter of puppies a year before he met Eve. Denny works at a specialty European car shop that services cars in the Seattle area and races or teaches driving on the weekends. He is an extremely loyal and loving husband and father; he adores Eve and Zoë and strives to provide everything he can for them. As a driver, he's very calculating and methodical about how he behaves on the track, and he's an exceptional driver in the **rain**. These qualities also extend to the person Denny is off the track, as he is methodical and persistent throughout his legal battles with Trish, Maxwell, and Annika. He fights tooth and nail to win custody of Zoë.

Eve – Denny's wife and Zoë's mother, and daughter to Maxwell

and Trish. Eve is a very organized and meticulous person who works in a clothing store in Seattle, and she is the family's primary breadwinner prior to her hospitalization. Enzo can smell that Eve has brain cancer long before she begins experiencing symptoms, and even after the symptoms begin, she refuses to see a doctor. Off and on for months, she experiences nausea, migraines, and mood swings that affect her judgment and ability to function. The cancer is finally discovered when she is taken to the ER after a concussion. For her first night out of the hospital, she fears death immensely and asks Enzo to protect her. Later, on the eve of her death, Enzo says that she was living as though she stole every day from death.

Zoë – Denny and Eve's daughter; she is eight years old at the end of the novel. She is a bright, happy, and loving child who admires Denny greatly and strives to please Eve. She loves school and riding the school bus, and insists on going to school even the day after Eve's death. Enzo cares greatly for Zoë and spends much of his time playing with her, and he learns a lot about how she sees life through the fantasy worlds she creates with her toys. Her favorite toy is a plush **zebra**.

Maxwell – Eve's overbearing father, Zoë's grandfather and Denny's father-in-law. Enzo often refers to him and his wife, Trish, as “The Twins” due to the fact that their clothes often match and they present an extremely united front. Maxwell cares deeply for his daughter and granddaughter, and doesn't care much for Denny. He insists that Eve and Zoë stay at his home while Eve is dying of cancer, and after her death, sues Denny for custody of Zoë because he believes he and Trish can provide a better childhood for her.

Trish – Eve's mother, Zoë's grandmother and Denny's mother-in-law. Enzo often refers to Trish and her husband, Maxwell, as “The Twins.” Trish cares only for the wellbeing of her daughter and Zoë, and believes that she and Maxwell can provide better care for them than Denny could. Throughout The Twins' legal battle with Denny, Trish is more interested in getting custody of Zoë than destroying Denny, and at times doesn't seem to believe Annika's claim that Denny assaulted her.

Annika – The daughter of one of Eve's cousins. She is 15 when Denny, Zoë, and Enzo first meet her and she develops a major crush on Denny. When Denny rejects her advances, she is devastated and later accuses Denny of assaulting her. She is described by Enzo as a vixen and a temptress, although extremely young and not fully aware of the damage she is causing.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Mike – Denny's best friend and a coworker at the auto shop. Mike is very supportive of Denny's racing career and his family, later providing care for Enzo when Denny is unable to be at home.

Tony – Mike's partner, a kind man who is charged with watching Enzo when Denny is in court.

Mark Fein – Denny's first lawyer, a very large and imposing man who allows Denny to pay him in part by servicing his cars for free.

Mr. Lawrence – Denny's second lawyer. Enzo describes him as competent, but without much of a presence.

The “Alpha Man” – The man who bred Enzo and sold him to Denny. Enzo considers him evil and greedy, particularly because he refused to pay for anesthetic when Enzo's dewclaws were removed.

Craig – Denny's boss at the auto shop.

Nurse – The nurse who cares for Eve during her first night at her parents' home.

Don Kitch, Jr. – The owner of Seattle's premier racing school where Denny sometimes teaches.

Luca Pantoni – A Ferrari representative who offers Denny a job working in Italy.

Boy Enzo – A five-year-old Italian boy, possibly a reincarnation of Enzo, who dreams of becoming a racecar driver.

Denny's Mother – Absent for much of the novel, Denny's mother went blind when Denny was a teenager. She's married to Denny's father.

Denny's Father – Denny's father cares for his wife, Denny's mother. When Denny refused to stay and take care of his mother, Denny's father cut him out of their lives.

Pat – A crewmember at the Thunderhill Raceway.

Jim – A crewmember at the Thunderhill Raceway.

Alpha man – The man who bred Enzo. He's mean and lies.

Doc – Enzo's puppyhood vet.



THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

The events of *The Art of Racing in the Rain* are relayed to the reader by Enzo, a dog who tries his hardest to be as humanlike as possible. Through his non-human perceptions of the people and events taking place around him, we're asked to consider what it truly means to be human, and what the limits of being human might be. Enzo has a unique view on humanity, since he himself isn't

human. By hearing the story from a non-human narrator, the reader is provided some distance from what they know of humanity to consider what it looks like from another perspective. First and foremost, the reader must question the truth of the story—does Enzo truly understand what's going on, since he's a dog? The reader knows, for example, that Enzo actually destroyed Zoë's toys, rather than the fantastical story that Enzo told and seems to truly believe. On the other hand, though, does Enzo understand more than a human could, since he's not human? Enzo is afforded a certain amount of privilege as a dog, as many people don't censor themselves around him and instead speak freely. Enzo learns a great deal about how Zoë forms an understanding of Eve's death by watching how she plays in the weeks leading up to it. Finally, as the reader is human, it's possible that he or she may grasp more of the true meaning or implication of the events in the book. The reader will likely understand that Denny and Eve try to conceive a second baby before Eve is hospitalized, but the "turkey baster" joke is completely lost on Enzo.

The text pays particular attention to the physicality of humans, and the physical attributes that make them human. Enzo believes that the most important difference between himself and people is that he lacks opposable thumbs and a tongue capable of forming speech. While he takes great care to try and think in what he believes is a more human way, Enzo's non-human conception of what it means to be human is tied directly to these physical attributes—which, moreover, are often discussed in terms of power. Enzo doesn't have the power to speak to people or open doors, as he's just a "dumb dog," but the people around him exert their power through the acts their bodies are capable of performing, whether that be speech, sexual advances, or even holding Enzo's leash.

Enzo sees human beings as being the top of the evolutionary pyramid, and he dreams of becoming a human after his life as a dog is over. However, despite Enzo's idolization of the idea of humanity and evidence of humans as good and righteous, humanity is also shown to be evil and selfish. The man who bred Enzo, for example, is described as pure evil, someone who only wants money and will go to any length to get it. We see the true extent of this evil when he refuses to pay for local anesthetic for Enzo's dewclaw removal as a puppy. With this act, the alpha man not only deprives Enzo of a physiological connection to man (as Enzo believes the dewclaw is a pre-emergent thumb), he makes it a painful, traumatizing experience. The people in opposition to Denny are also described in terms of evil: Annika is a vixen and a temptress, and at their worst Trish and Maxwell are conniving, nitrogenous life forms, out to ruin Denny and take away Zoë. While Enzo does come to the realization that good and evil are not purely black and white opposites, his understanding remains somewhat rudimentary. He finally accepts that Annika is young and not truly evil, but he doesn't understand that Maxwell and Trish are motivated primarily by

familial love for their granddaughter and a desire to do right by her—exactly the same motivation as Denny, but with a completely opposite final outcome.

Overall, the text presents a wide cross section of humans and a wide variety of human events and emotions to the reader, related through the lens of a narrator who is not human. The distance provided by the non-human narration allows the reader to consider if humans are truly as good or as evil as Enzo sees them to be, and to consider where their power lies.



LANGUAGE AND STORYTELLING

Enzo's preoccupation with language, as well as the setup of the story as embellished memories told to the reader, situate language and storytelling as integral elements to understanding the novel as a whole. Storytelling and language are portrayed as immensely powerful, with the power to reveal one's true thoughts on a subject, to tear families apart, and even to lead individuals to their deaths.

As a narrator, Enzo is very upfront about the fact that he has a flair for the dramatic. He also notes at various points that he doesn't know the full truth of what happened in the events he describes, being a dog who doesn't get to attend meetings or sit in a courtroom. Instead, he's recreated what he thinks happened for the reader. Enzo uses what he's learned from watching **television** to recreate events. For example, since he's watched a lot of *Law and Order* and other courtroom dramas, he's certain of how Denny's court cases unfolded. In this way, he uses the stories of others as source material for the story he tells. However, Enzo's admission that parts of the story may or may not be true turns him into somewhat of an unreliable narrator. Some of his untruths are obvious, as when his story verges into the supernatural with Zoë's **zebra** toy, but others are harder or impossible to pick out.

Enzo's story is not the only one; many other characters tell stories of their own over the course of the novel. These stories, for the most part, are purpose-built to either harm or help. Annika's claim that Denny assaulted her is treated as a mean story meant to help The Twins with their custody case for Zoë. Enzo also believes that Eve died because she had no choice but to believe the stories the doctors told her in which she died of her disease. In these cases, the stories are immensely powerful. They have the power to destroy a man's life and lead a woman to her death, if they're believed. Enzo is adamant that had these stories not been told or believed, events could have turned out very differently. On the other hand, Denny uses stories to protect himself and Zoë. He refuses to accept Eve's death until he finds out she has actually died, telling himself as well as Zoë that Eve will recover and everyone will come home. Later, when a restraining order keeps him from seeing Zoë, he and Enzo write her letters from a fictional trip to Europe to avoid telling her the truth of the situation.

Throughout the course of the text, Enzo implores the reader to listen, both to the nuances of spoken language and the stories of others. Since he's not capable of speech, Enzo spends his time either listening or trying to communicate via gestures or facial expressions. As speech is something unavailable to him but highly coveted, Enzo has an elevated sense of the importance of language and storytelling. This encourages the reader to read deeply into the words of the text and question not just what's being said, but what isn't being said. This emphasis on the importance of language can be expanded outwards to our own lives, as Enzo gives us tools and advice to more effectively use and engage critically with language and storytelling.



LOVE AND FAMILY

The Art of Racing in the Rain is, at its core, a story about family and relationships. It delves into the relationships between lovers, spouses, parents and children, and parents and their adult children. It also questions what love is and what forms familial love can take.

Throughout the novel, relationships are explored primarily in terms of what happens when someone or something comes between an already existing relationship. This asks the reader to question the shape and strength of familial bonds. Some characters, like Eve, first come between an existing relationship (Enzo and Denny) before being integrated into the family. Love for Denny is what causes Enzo to accept Eve into his family, albeit begrudgingly—although Enzo later tries to make it closer, their relationship is relatively standoffish because he never forgives Eve for taking the primary spot in Denny's life. Other characters, like Trish and Maxwell, do nothing but try to come between Eve and Denny and later Denny and Zoë. Despite their desire to cut Denny out of their daughter and granddaughter's lives, neither Eve nor Zoë ever waver in their love for Denny. Love, in this sense, is what allows the relationships to flourish despite adversity. When the family is separated for the first time—Denny in the hospital with Eve, Zoë with her grandparents, and Enzo with Mike and Tony—Enzo comes to the realization that despite their separation and the chance occurrences that may try to tear them apart, his family would always be together thanks to the love they share.

Yet despite Enzo's touching realization about his own immediate family, the idea of family, and how families show their love to each other, is more nuanced and multifaceted when the immediate family contends with the desires of extended family. Despite Enzo's portrayal of Trish and Maxwell as pure evil, their custody suit for Zoë comes from a place of love and a desire to care for her the way they believe she should be cared for. They take offense to Denny's busy schedule and need to travel for races, and believe they could provide Zoë a better childhood with stability and a steady

home life. In this way, money becomes a major factor in the way families in the novel show their love. Trish and Maxwell believe that they could better care for Zoë because they have the money to put her in a good private school and pay for her college, unlike Denny. Thus, they equate love with money and the things that money can buy. Denny's parents, absent for the majority of the text, also show their love through money. Denny lies for much of the text that his parents financed several races and trips to further his career, thereby fabricating that sense of love for the comfort of others. However, his parents come through in the end and take out a reverse mortgage on their house to pay for Denny's legal fees, which eventually reunites Denny and Zoë. The price for this help is that they get to meet Zoë, their granddaughter, for the first time. Forging an actually familial connection then becomes necessary for receiving parental love and care.

Throughout the course of the novel, Enzo comes to realize that family isn't something simple and unchanging. It moves and changes, and despite wildly differing conceptions of what love means, the novel suggests that family, in whatever form that might take, will come through and act in whatever way love means to them.



ILLNESS AND DEATH

Illness and death are immensely important forces throughout the text. The novel begins with an elderly Enzo staging a dramatic display of his declining health for Denny, with the intent of encouraging Denny to put Enzo down. Mere pages later, we learn that Eve, Denny's wife, died sometime over the course of the novel. Knowing all of this at the beginning forces the reader to consider how illness and death work within the text and how they drive and motivate at every turn.

Rather than just being an abstract idea or a state of being, illness is a physical thing to Enzo, or an entity unto itself. He can smell it in Eve long before she even begins experiencing symptoms, describing her illness as a living creature, a virus, or rot. Enzo states that Eve also knows she's ill long before she receives a diagnosis, despite not knowing exactly how or why. Eve is later accepting of her fate. Denny, in contrast, sees Eve's symptoms, but after her diagnosis he refuses to fully accept her illness or impending death. Enzo notes as well that Denny also refuses to fully accept the implications of Enzo's diagnosis of hip dysplasia and misunderstands the intent behind the dramatic display. In this way, Denny's willful ignorance of death is contrasted with both Enzo and Eve's knowledge that death is unavoidable. Enzo ties this difference back to the power of storytelling—Eve buys into the narrative the doctors tell her, while Denny refuses to do so. Enzo also practices willful ignorance with his own diagnosis. He refuses to allow the knowledge of what's going to kill him get in the way of what he believes he must accomplish before he dies.

The threats of illness and death are used to control and manipulate throughout the novel. Trish and Maxwell use Eve's illness and death to begin to break apart Enzo's family. It begins subtly when they ask that both Eve and Zoë stay with them at their house after Eve's release from the hospital, and culminates in their custody suit. They use death as a way to withhold love and care from Denny, whom they see as undeserving. In the same vein, Denny's parents attempted to force him into staying to take care of his mother when Denny was a teenager. When he refused and was cut out of their lives, he essentially rejected the hold that they wanted his mother's illness to have over him. Enzo, as well, does his best to ignore the illness he knows he has. He shares late in the novel that he had known since he was quite young that he had a degenerative hip condition, and he refused to let it dictate the course of his life, much like Denny refused his parents' hold on his life with his mother's blindness.

After seeing a documentary on Mongolia on the National Geographic channel, Enzo believes that when they're spiritually ready, dogs are reincarnated as humans after they die. As Enzo's goal throughout the novel is to be as human as possible, death then becomes a *goal*, as it will finally allow him to be human. For both Eve and Enzo, death is thought of personally as freedom. In death, Eve is finally free from burdens and pain and wants, and Enzo is freed from pain and life as a dog. This conception of death as freedom works to place death in opposition to illness, which is portrayed as oppressive and controlling, rather than in opposition to life.



DESTINY AND SPIRITUALITY

For Denny and Enzo, racing is not just a hobby or a profession—it's a way of life, and takes on spiritual meaning for Enzo especially. The strategy involved and many racing sayings are treated as a sort of holy text for Enzo, as he uses these words and concepts to form a blueprint for how he sees the world.

After he first hears Denny say the phrase "that which we manifest is before us," Enzo develops a major belief in the idea of destiny and creating one's own future. Enzo applies this idea everywhere. He attempts to manifest a better relationship with Eve by choosing to spend more time with her, and he sees Eve's acceptance of her own death sentence as her manifesting her own death. He also sees this play out where it originated, as Denny experiences success on the track. In addition to this idea of manifesting one's future, Enzo also has a firm belief in what's meant to be, particularly in regards to his own death and near-death experiences. Enzo expands these ideas outward as well, and uses these opposing ideas to both make sense of the events that take place after Eve's death and flesh out Denny's character as a driver and as a person: calculating, dedicated, and in the game for the long haul. The juxtaposition of these ideas—one force that comes from within an individual, one that

is an outside force—asks the reader to question how much control we have over our lives, versus how much is up to chance or fate.

Spirituality is also explored through two opposing forces: Zoë's **zebra** toy, which symbolizes evil and the devil, and past car racing greats, **Ayrton Senna** in particular, which are held up by Enzo as gods of sorts. The zebra pops up whenever bad things are happening or have the potential to take place. While Enzo initially sees the zebra as the bringer of evil and the initiator of bad events, he eventually realizes that the zebra is actually symbolic of a force within all of us. This understanding that evil is something inside all of us shatters the dichotomy of good versus evil into shades of gray. The zebra becomes a personification of fear and self-destruction, and this realization allows Enzo to effectively do battle with the zebra and allow good to prevail. Enzo's journey to understand the role of the zebra, and then fight it, raises many questions about the role of evil in our lives and where it exists—and it becomes even more nuanced when one considers how different people view individuals, things, or events that may be considered evil. While Enzo sees the zebra only as evil, the zebra is Zoë's favorite toy and provides her with security and comfort.

On the flip side, much of the television that Denny and Enzo watch is old race footage, so Enzo knows all about the big names in racing. He particularly admires Ayrton Senna, and works Senna into his own conception of spirituality. Enzo consistently compares Denny to Senna, which can be read in several ways. First, Enzo can be said to be manifesting Denny's Senna-like success, which culminates in the final chapter of the book when Denny has just won a prestigious race on the same track on which Senna died. Then, as Denny is portrayed as the purest good Enzo can conceive of, Denny and Senna become symbols of the good in the world. Enzo believes they are such forces for good because of the qualities that make them good drivers, such as perseverance, the ability to think ahead, and love. It's these qualities that both bring about Enzo's realization that the zebra is a force within people, and then allows him and Denny to vanquish it by not accepting a settlement offer from Trish and Maxwell that doesn't give Denny full custody of Zoë.

Racing, destiny, and spirituality are brought full circle in the final pages of the novel, when Denny meets a five-year-old Italian boy named Enzo. The child Enzo is representative of a reincarnated dog Enzo, out to fulfill his destiny as a racing champion. This underscores the power and the truth of Enzo's belief system, as Enzo essentially manifested his reincarnation as a human child destined for racing greatness.



SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.



RAIN

One of the reasons Denny is such a good driver is because of his skill in driving in the rain. Rain, he says, magnifies a driver's mistakes, and therefore many drivers fear the rain. However, when Denny explains the idea of manifesting one's destiny, Enzo comes to understand that rain is a symbol for strife, struggle, or opposition. Enzo sees Eve as his personal rain; he fears and resents her for the change she brought to his family, but by regarding her as a driver might regard the rain and as an obstacle to be overcome, he's able to improve their relationship. As an overarching symbol, rain symbolizes all the things that Denny must battle throughout the novel. Denny must fight first a sub-par crew and the demands of family, Eve's illness and then death, and finally a custody suit and a sexual harassment charge as he struggles to piece his life together and pursue a life as a professional driver. The use of rain in this way allows Enzo to further flesh out the theme of destiny and spirituality, as they rely fully on the driving metaphor to be understood. Denny is not considered just in terms of the man he is, but oftentimes more so in terms of the driver he is, which is one who is skilled at driving in the rain, and therefore able to overcome off-the-track obstacles to achieve his goals.



TELEVISION

While Enzo has always believed his soul to be more human than those of other dogs, he begins to cultivate what he believes is a more human outlook on life once he's introduced to the idea of watching television by himself. Thanks to the variety of channels that Denny leaves on for Enzo, from the Weather Channel to the Discovery Channel, Enzo uses television to learn how to be human. Television fosters Enzo's love for the dramatic and storytelling. He consistently offers up lists of his favorite actors and movies, many of which are famous for a relationship of some sort to racing or cars. Further, Enzo cultivates his humanity and love of storytelling even more when Zoë is old enough to watch *Sesame Street* and Enzo is able to teach himself to read. Later in the novel, Enzo uses the television shows he's seen to reconstruct his own dramatic retelling of Denny's court case. In this way, Enzo sees television not just as entertainment, but as something emphatically human—something to learn from, to study, and then to expand upon and use as reference material as he tells his own stories.



ZOË'S ZEBRA, THE DEMON

The zebra is Zoë's favorite stuffed animal, a toy Enzo never liked because it was his biggest rival for Zoë's love and attention. However, when Enzo is left at home without food for three days and begins hallucinating, the zebra

comes to life in a living representation of the devil and evil. After this experience, the zebra returns when Enzo experiences fear or senses fear or evil in someone else. For much of the novel, Enzo believes that the zebra, or a corresponding demon, is truly alive, like he experienced during his hallucination. He believes it brings fear and mayhem with it, and is something to protect against. However, Enzo as well as the reader comes to realize that the zebra is actually symbolic of an evil and destructive force within individuals. Taken in this way, the zebra allows Enzo to flesh out a more nuanced conception of humanity, as he begins to understand that humans are not just pure good or evil. He comes to believe that there is a bit of the zebra in all of us, which gives humans something to work at and overcome.



AYRTON SENNA

Senna is Enzo's favorite driver, who died tragically and mysteriously during a race in 1995. Enzo says that Senna was charismatic and daring, and Senna is often conflated with Denny. Both Senna and Denny are exceptional drivers in the **rain**, which speaks to their intellectual capabilities and unflappable attitudes. Despite this conflation with Denny, however, Enzo remarks that he himself is often more like Senna than Denny is, as Enzo wants to be more spontaneous and carefree than Denny often is willing to be. Senna provides Enzo with something to idolize and look up to and is a huge player in Enzo's conception of spirituality, as he acts like a positive counterpoint for the evil of the **zebra**. Senna's persona also informs Enzo's idea of what he'd like to be when he's finally human.




QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the HarperCollins edition of *The Art of Racing in the Rain* published in 2009.

Chapter 1 Quotes

☞ Gestures are all that I have; sometimes they must be grand in nature. And while I occasionally step over the line and into the melodramatic, it is what I must do in order to communicate clearly and effectively. In order to make my point understood without question. I have no words I can rely on because, much to my dismay, my tongue was designed long and flat and loose, and therefore, is a horribly ineffective tool for pushing food around my mouth while chewing, and an even less effective tool for making clever and complicated polysyllabic sounds that can be linked together to form sentences.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 1

Explanation and Analysis


This text opens the novel and introduces the reader to the narrator, Enzo, and several of his most important interests and concerns. The text first makes it clear that Enzo is a dedicated student of communication. He mentions how he must communicate (via sometimes grand and melodramatic gestures), and then how he cannot communicate using human language. This leads to an understanding by the reader that Enzo is not human. Further, we see too that Enzo sees this difference as very much a physical one by the way he discusses his tongue and what it isn't capable of doing.

By making these concerns of Enzo's very clear from the absolute beginning, it underscores how essential these ideas are to understanding the novel as a whole, as well as understanding Enzo and how he sees the world. As Enzo is a dog and therefore sees the world differently than a human might, through his insights the reader is encouraged to consider the characteristics that make humans human and consider as well how communication and language work.

☛ After the 1993 Grand Prix, the best thing I've ever seen on TV is a documentary that explained everything to me, made it all clear, told the whole truth: when a dog is finished living his lifetimes as a dog, his next incarnation will be as a man.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:    

Related Symbols:  

Page Number: 2

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo is lying on the floor in a puddle of his own urine, waiting for Denny to come home. The purpose of this staged spectacle is for Enzo to impress upon Denny that he can let Enzo go and put him down. Enzo is addressing the reader and explaining why he's okay with dying: he'll be reincarnated as a man.

Throughout the text, Enzo offers ranked lists of things, whether it be the relative intelligence of other animals or his



favorite actors. In this very short list, he offers several important ideas that make up his understanding of spirituality and destiny. Ayrton Senna, Enzo's favorite racecar driver, won the 1993 Grand Prix, and is notable in that Enzo idolizes him and would like to be as much like Senna as possible. Then we're provided with the genesis of Enzo's belief in reincarnation, and why it is so important to him. Enzo is very upfront about the fact that he feels very human and he tries to behave in ways that he feels are more human-like, and he has this documentary to thank for giving him this idea.

Also important, however, is the fact that Enzo's relationship with Senna and his belief in reincarnation come from television. Television is often referred to as Enzo's method of education, and we see here how fully he embraces the ideas he comes across during his hours of viewing.

Chapter 6 Quotes

☛ And while I greatly resented the attention Eve lavished on her unborn baby, in retrospect, I realize I had never given her a reason to lavish that same attention on me.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Zoë, Eve

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 23



Explanation and Analysis

Eve and Denny are newly married and Eve has recently become pregnant. Despite a general dislike of the change that Eve brings to his life, Enzo finds himself unable to truly be angry at Eve because he knows she's pregnant, and he begins to pick apart the nuances of his relationship to her in this thought. When Eve joins Denny and Enzo's family, she essentially comes between them rather than simply joining them. Enzo perceives her as a threat and as competition for Denny's attention, and as such, is never particularly warm towards her. This in turn means that Eve is never very warm or affectionate with Enzo, either. However, when Enzo sees her love something else so fully as she loves Zoë before her birth, Enzo realizes the reason for their generally poor relationship. Realizing that the state of their relationship is mostly, if not fully his own responsibility sets Enzo up to later begin to take more responsibility and attempt to change their relationship for the better.

Chapter 7 Quotes

☝ What Eve said was not out of line, as most dogs cannot help themselves... but that sort of thing doesn't apply to me.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Zoë, Denny, Eve

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo is describing how he plays chase games with toddler Zoë, which Eve doesn't like because she believes Enzo will bite Zoë. Enzo's response is indicative of his belief that he's more human-like than other dogs, in that what he says is a normal canine instinct simply doesn't apply to him. This idea echoes throughout the novel as Enzo moves freely and fluidly between acting in what he describes as more dog-like or more human-like ways. Essentially, his ability to compartmentalize this instinct, recognize it, and then choose to not follow it is what allows him to behave and think in a more human manner.

☝ But I hadn't a facile tongue. So all I could do was watch and feel empty inside; Eve had assigned me to protect Zoë no matter what, but no one had been assigned to protect Eve. And there was nothing I could do to help her.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Zoë, Eve

Related Themes:    

Page Number: 37

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo has just told the reader that he didn't play rough with Zoë as to not worry Eve unnecessarily, because Enzo smells that there's something wrong in Eve's head. The fact that the reader and Enzo know this so early, well before Eve even begins experiencing symptoms of illness, creates a sense of dramatic irony. This leads the reader to begin looking for clues as to what exactly is going on with Eve, and how and when Eve's illness is going to manifest.


Enzo's preoccupation with communication and the physical characteristics of humans is also brought into play here. His lack of "a facile tongue" means that he's unable to do anything to help or warn them of what's to come. However, this leads to more questions about what it means to be human versus what it means to be a dog. While Enzo never voices the hypothetical situation himself, the reader is

forced to consider the fact that if Enzo were human, even though he would've had the physical traits that would allow him to voice his concerns, he in theory also wouldn't have a way to know that Eve was ill.

Chapter 8 Quotes

☝ That which you manifest is before you.

Related Characters: Denny (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 41

Explanation and Analysis

Denny, Enzo, and Eve are watching a video of a race Denny drove in Portland in the rain. Eve is questioning how Denny is able to drive so well in the rain, and he replies with this statement.


In this moment and later in the text, Denny explains that this phrase means not only that a driver must be fully in tune with his car and therefore able to anticipate its actions, but also that it implies a sense of control over one's life and destiny. Upon hearing Denny's explanation, Enzo is struck by the simple truth of the phrase, and he goes on to build his entire idea of spirituality and destiny around it. Enzo applies it to actions that he himself takes as well as the actions of other characters. He uses this idea of "manifesting" to understand others' thoughts and actions, and by doing so absolves himself of control over their decisions. Additionally, by returning to this idea, Enzo takes responsibility for his own reactions to others.

The phrase is repeated many times throughout the text, and serves as a touchstone for Enzo to return to. It reminds both him and the reader of the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions, and that we all have the power to influence change in our lives.

☝ I had always wanted to love Eve as Denny loved her, but I never had because I was afraid. She was my rain. She was my unpredictable element. She was my fear. But a racer should not be afraid of rain; a racer should embrace the rain.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Denny, Eve

Related Themes:   

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 44

Explanation and Analysis


After first hearing Denny's explanation of how one must drive in the rain and the phrase "that which you manifest is before you," Enzo immediately applies what he's learned to his own life. He turns first to his rocky relationship with Eve, seeing that it is his own actions and his own fear of the change brought about by Eve that created their less-than-perfect relationship. This point of the novel, then, becomes the point at which Enzo decides to do what he can to change his relationship with Eve for the better.

Further, Enzo's thoughts crystallize how rain functions throughout the novel. Rain becomes a symbol for strife and challenge and later often appears during times of struggle.

Chapter 11 Quotes

☝☝ I've always found great pleasure in the narrative tease. But then, I'm a dramatist. For me, a good story is all about setting up expectations and delivering on them in an exciting and surprising way.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Denny

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 59

Explanation and Analysis

Denny has returned from a race and is telling Enzo about his win in a particularly dramatic way, which Enzo loves. Enzo's love for the dramatic is indicative of several things. First, remember Enzo's constant refrain that gestures are all that he has, and that in order to communicate effectively his gestures often have to err on the side of the more dramatic. Thus, it follows logically that the methods to create good drama are not just known, but interesting to Enzo. Knowing this, the idea can be expanded to encompass the entirety of the novel. Enzo, as the narrator, has several hundred pages in which to set up expectations and then deliver on them in an exciting manner. This also further supports the idea that Enzo is an unreliable narrator, as he also states explicitly that he cares more for drama than for cold, hard facts.

☝☝ "Sometimes I think you actually understand me," he said. "It's like there's a person inside there. Like you know everything."

I do, I said to myself. I do.

Related Characters: Enzo, Denny (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 61

Explanation and Analysis


Denny, drunk, has finished telling Enzo about his recent win and has told Enzo that he loves him. Despite Denny's drunkenness, Enzo feels very loved. This exchange encapsulates Denny and Enzo's relationship, as the love and trust between them is obvious. Denny frequently speaks candidly to Enzo, as he does here, and Enzo often answers him, even though he knows that Denny can't hear or understand him. This candid style of speech simultaneously reinforces Enzo's state of being as a dog, as humans around him don't censor themselves while talking around him, while also giving a nod to his internal sense of humanity. It also reinforces Enzo's position as a narrator that, while not all-knowing, has a very different set of knowledge given his position as a dog.

Chapter 12 Quotes

☝☝ Demon. Gremlin. Poltergeist. Ghost. Phantom. Spirit. Shadow. Ghoul. Devil. People are afraid of them so they relegate their existence to stories, volumes of books that can be closed and put on the shelf or left behind at a bed and breakfast; they clench their eyes shut so they will see no evil. But trust me when I tell you that the zebra is real. Somewhere, the zebra is dancing.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:    

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 66

Explanation and Analysis

Eve's episodes are becoming more frequent and getting worse, and Enzo is describing how she explains the pain to him. He turns her pain from simply an intangible idea into a real object or a creature by conflating it with the zebra, as well as this list of other scary entities from stories. He

indicates that humans fear these beings and as such try to turn them into stories to minimize the power they hold. This further supports the novel's proposal that stories are a method of exacting power and control. However, Enzo sees through this story with his belief that the zebra cannot be truly controlled by turning it into a scary story. It exists within all of us and there's no containing it, as hard as humans might try.

Chapter 15 Quotes

☝☝ She rarely called me by my name. They do that in prisoner of war camps, I've heard. Depersonalization.

Related Characters: Trish, Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 85

Explanation and Analysis


Enzo is at Trish and Maxwell's house, and Trish has just referred to Enzo as simply "the dog." Enzo finds this very offensive, given that he believes himself to be almost a human in a dog's body. He wants to be treated like a person, since he feels so human, and here he ties being a person to being named. On the flipside, however, Enzo often neglects using Trish and Maxwell's names, referring to them instead as the Twins or the Evil Twins. Essentially, he co-opts this idea of not using someone's name as a method of depersonalization and turns it back on Trish and Maxwell. By doing this, Trish and Maxwell are able to escape having any sort of relationship with Enzo, and Enzo is able to turn Trish and Maxwell into nameless villains who are therefore easier to hate.

Chapter 18 Quotes

☝☝ Not all dogs return as men, they say; only those who are ready.
I am ready.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:    

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 98

Explanation and Analysis

In a pause in the narration, Enzo details the documentary he saw on Mongolia that states that dogs will be reincarnated as men. This documentary provides Enzo with the roadmap for how he sees his life as a dog and how he understands what will happen to his soul in the future. Enzo sees his soul as more human than dog, which provides him with evidence for the fact that he's ready to be reincarnated as a man. Further, since seeing this documentary, he's spent his life as a dog studying human behavior by both observing the humans around him as well as watching television in the hopes that his soul will retain what it's learned about humanity and will therefore be an even better human when it finally resides in a human body. By holding this belief so strongly in his mind, Enzo can be said to be manifesting his soul's future, adding another layer to his conception of destiny and spirituality by giving him the control to dictate his reincarnation.

Chapter 19 Quotes

☝☝ Here's why I will be a good person. Because I listen. I cannot speak, so I listen very well. I never interrupt, I never deflect the course of the conversation with a comment of my own.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 101



Explanation and Analysis

Denny, Mike, and Enzo are sitting in the parking lot of the hospital where Eve has been taken after getting a concussion. Enzo is listening to Denny and Mike's conversation, and he addresses the reader directly to implore them to listen. Enzo's respect for the power of language is apparent, and he sees conversation between two people with this power as essentially a power struggle. Despite wanting desperately to be able to speak and therefore engage in this struggle himself, Enzo understands how important it is to share power by listening. In this way, a person can learn and become involved with those around them in a more meaningful way, as listening is one way to create a sense of love and caring.

Chapter 23 Quotes

☞ So much of language is unspoken. So much of language is comprised of looks and gestures and sounds that are not words. People are ignorant of the vast complexity of their own communication.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 119

Explanation and Analysis

Eve has just been moved to Trish and Maxwell's house after being released from the hospital, and Trish, Maxwell, and Denny are talking in the kitchen about the situation going forward while Enzo looks on. Enzo notes here that while gestures are all that he has, as a mute dog, human communication is composed of a much more complex symphony of language and non-verbal gestures. Here, he indicates that as someone who relies on gestures because he cannot rely on the verbal aspect of communication, he's more in tune with the gestures and non-verbal elements of human communication. While this causes the reader to consider how this non-verbal communication works, it also sets up an expectation and a desire to look for these non-verbal communications throughout the rest of the novel.

☞ I marveled at them both; how difficult it must be to be a person. To constantly subvert your desires. To worry about doing the right thing, rather than doing what is most expedient.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Zoë, Denny

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 122

Explanation and Analysis

Denny and Zoë have just decided that Zoë will stay with Trish, Maxwell, and Eve while Eve is ill. Enzo sees that neither Zoë nor Denny truly want to do this, but agree to it in order to make other people happy. Enzo sees this as a sacrifice that is clearly and truly human, and this insight gives more nuance to how Enzo differentiates between dogs and humans. Were he given the choice, Enzo, presumably, would not agree to stay with Eve because of his desire as a dog to do what is expedient and most wanted. Realizing this about himself and about the people around him gives Enzo a bit of an existential crisis as he realizes that

being human is not just about being able to form language and possessing opposable thumbs, but exerting mental energy on painful decisions such as this one.

Chapter 25 Quotes

☞ The true hero is flawed. The true test of a champion is not whether he can triumph, but whether he can overcome obstacles—preferably of his own making—in order to triumph. A hero without a flaw is of no interest to an audience or to the universe, which, after all, is based on conflict and opposition, the irresistible force meeting the unmovable object.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes: 

Page Number: 135

Explanation and Analysis

Denny, Zoë, and Enzo are in the mountains visiting Eve's family, and Enzo is gearing up to share what happened that week between Denny and Annika. In this analysis of what makes a hero, Enzo's love for storytelling and television shine. By proposing that a hero can't be a hero without flaws or self-made obstacles, Enzo begins to humanize Denny and set up key elements of the story to follow. This discussion creates dramatic tension, as it becomes apparent that Denny, our hero, is about to face a flaw or an obstacle of his own making. However, it also makes it clear that Denny, as the hero of the story, is going to triumph. Knowing this now, this allows Enzo to take dramatic liberties with the telling of the story without sacrificing or jeopardizing the reader's knowledge that Denny is a true hero who will triumph in the end.

☞ "But I love you!" she howled, and then she was in an all-out crying fit, her eyes squeezed shut, her mouth contorted. "I love you!" she kept saying over and over. "I love you!"

Related Characters: Annika (speaker), Denny

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 145

Explanation and Analysis

Denny has just rejected Annika's sexual advances after their harrowing drive over the mountains to Seattle. Annika's

love for Denny motivates first these advances, and then what Enzo later perceives as a desire for revenge when she goes on to accuse and sue Denny for rape. However, this statement supports the idea that all the characters in the novel, whether Enzo perceives them as good or bad, are mostly motivated by love for another character. Trish and Maxwell sue for Zoë's custody because they love and care for her future, and Denny fights them because he feels the same way. Enzo likewise sends his imaginary friend to torment Trish and Maxwell because he loves Denny and Zoë and sees Trish and Maxwell as trying to tear them apart.

Chapter 28 Quotes

☝☝ I needed to feel myself, understand myself and this horrible world we are all trapped in, where bugs and tumors and viruses worm their way into our brains and lay their putrid eggs that hatch and eat us alive from the inside out.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Eve

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 164



Explanation and Analysis


Denny and Enzo have just learned of Eve's death and Enzo, overcome with grief and emotion, is running wild through the woods. As he runs, he's looking for some way to understand and make sense of Eve's death. He sees the world as a trap or as a prison, and turns inside himself to try to find a way out. This is also one place where Enzo's characterization of disease as a true living thing is most apparent. Illness and death are not just abstract ideas or actions; they're egg-laying bugs, tumors, and viruses. By turning illness and death into concrete entities, Enzo is better able to understand how they work and how to avoid death. We also see how in this time of heightened emotion, Enzo returns fully to being a dog and doesn't try to be human. In order to obtain some sense of understanding, he must be what he truly is.

Chapter 30 Quotes

☝☝ Racing is about discipline and intelligence, not about who has the heavier foot. The one who drives smart will always win in the end.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Denny

Related Themes:  

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 178

Explanation and Analysis

This is part of one of Enzo's deviations from the narrative to discuss racing strategy. These asides serve the purpose of providing a way for the reader to connect racing and racing strategy to the overarching narrative. Here, Maxwell and Trish have just sued Denny for Zoë's custody. This aside, then, sets the stage for the ensuing battle between Denny and Trish and Maxwell. By stating that a smart driver will always win, and making it clear that the fight of a race is about discipline rather than just speed, Enzo makes it clear that the fight for Zoë is going to be fought with intelligence rather than brute strength. Further, the reader is also encouraged to see Denny as the disciplined, smart driver, essentially alluding to his ultimate "win."

Chapter 32 Quotes

☝☝ I didn't care for the sensation, yet I realized it was possibly a natural progression of my evolving soul, and therefore I tried my best to embrace it.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Denny

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 188



Explanation and Analysis

The day after Eve's death, Enzo is at the garage with Denny, and he feels uncharacteristically anxious. Despite Enzo's attempt to explain away this anxiety, the reader is forced to question if there's a better reason for it than the one that Enzo offers. Again, we also see how Enzo conceptualizes being human. He connects feeling anxiety in this particular way with humanity, which provides further insight into how Enzo believes dogs and humans differ. Notice too that he uses the fact that he's experiencing this anxiety to further support his belief that his soul is more human than dog. Essentially, Enzo is continually on the lookout for instances like this that support his theory, and rather than attribute his anxiety to the fact that there may indeed be something to be anxious about, he chooses to interpret it in this very specific manner that supports his beliefs.

Chapter 33 Quotes

☝☝ My intent, here, is to tell our story in a dramatically truthful way. While the facts may be less than accurate, please understand that the emotion is true. The intent is true. And, dramatically speaking, intention is everything.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 196

Explanation and Analysis

Denny has just been arrested for rape, and Enzo is explaining to the reader how he will go about telling the story of what happened in the three years following Eve's death. Because Enzo is a dog and therefore didn't get to witness much of what happened firsthand, he sets out to use his knowledge of legal proceedings gleaned from courtroom dramas to tell the story. With this admission, Enzo is once again set up as an unreliable narrator. Essentially, the reader can't truly know what is fact and what is fiction from this point until Denny wins his case. This does several things, and first underscores Enzo's love for the dramatic. By unapologetically fabricating drama, Enzo is able to feed his need for dramatic storytelling, which in turn makes for a more enjoyable reading experience. However, the reader is then asked to question the truth of Enzo's statement that intention is everything. Is the story more successful when it contains the exact truth and nothing but, or does it matter that the story is embellished?

Chapter 37 Quotes

☝☝ I thought of Eve and how quickly she embraced her death once the people around her agreed to it; I considered the foretelling of my own end, which was to be full of suffering and pain, as death is believed to be by most of the world, and I tried to look away.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Eve

Related Themes:     

Page Number: 218

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo has just received his diagnosis of hip dysplasia and is considering how he will handle his diagnosis. In this moment, it becomes very clear how Enzo uses his belief of destiny and "manifesting" to make sense of what's

happening around him. He sees that the people around Eve essentially manifested her death, and she had no choice but to follow that belief and die as expected. Seeing this and understanding how it happened, Enzo applies what he learned watching it play out with Eve and then vows to do the exact opposite. He's pitting the manifesting of his vet and of Denny that he's going to die a painful death against his own manifesting that he can try to avoid that at all costs.

Chapter 47 Quotes

☝☝ He died that day because his body had served its purpose. His soul had done what it came to do, learned what it came to learn, and then was free to leave. And I knew, as Denny sped me toward the doctor who would fix me, that if I had already accomplished what I set out to accomplish here on earth, if I had already learned what I was meant to learn, I would have left the curb one second later than I had, and I would have been killed instantly by that car.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Denny

Related Themes:  

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 257

Explanation and Analysis



Enzo is in the back of Denny's car heading for the vet after being hit by a car. While he lies there, he tells the reader about the mystery surrounding Ayrton Senna's death. Enzo's belief in destiny and the idea that things and events are meant to be is apparent. Rather than simply believing in chance or accidents, he tries to make sense of events by relating them to racing and the mysterious lives of those he admires. Essentially, Enzo uses what he knows about Senna's death to inform his own beliefs about how death, and the timing of death, works in his own life. While Enzo doesn't say specifically what he still has to learn before he can die, the suggestion that he still has more to do or learn makes the reader look for that lesson throughout the rest of the novel.

Chapter 49 Quotes

☝☝ When it rained, it never rained on Senna.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes: 

Related Symbols:  

Page Number: 268

Explanation and Analysis



After Enzo keeps Denny from signing a sub-par legal settlement, the two later watch the 1984 Grand Prix of Monaco race tape. It was a rainy day and Senna was doing very well, but the race was canceled due to the rain. Remember that rain symbolizes struggle and challenges, while Senna is explored as a mythical figure and conflated with Denny.


At this point in the text, Denny is nearing the end of his legal battles, and he's come away from not signing the settlement renewed and reinvigorated. When Enzo's statement is applied to Denny's situation, it creates a sense that Denny is of course going to be victorious, because he's so much like Senna and the rain, or his challenges, can't truly touch him. Enzo, the dramatist, plays these moments of true hope and certainty of Denny's success off of descriptions of the extremely low points that Denny experiences. This serves to create drama, as Enzo certainly knows, as well as leading the reader to question the power of Enzo's belief system. Will Denny truly come out victorious, when his challenges are as great as they are?

Chapter 53 Quotes

☹☹ Tears ran down Denny's mother's cheeks during the entire encounter, raindrops spotting Zoë's flower-print dress.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker), Zoë, Denny's Mother, Denny

Related Themes:  

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 287

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo is describing Denny's mother, who is blind, meeting Zoë, her granddaughter, for the first time. Denny's parents agreed to help Denny pay for his lawsuit in exchange for finally getting to meet their granddaughter. Rain in this instance alludes to not only challenges and strife, but the idea that hope and renewal are able to exist after a cleansing rain—and Denny's mother herself represents this

idea of cleansing rain. With her visit, she effects positive change in the course of Denny's legal struggles, essentially helping to clear the more negative rain with her tears and the hope her tears offer.


This instance also suggests just how vitally important family is to the novel. The prospect of getting to meet her granddaughter causes Denny's mother to end a years-long absence from Denny's life. Again then, love is shown to be the most powerful motivator of all.

Chapter 56 Quotes

☹☹ But sometimes the truth is hidden in a hall of mirrors. Sometimes we believe we are viewing the real thing, when in fact we are viewing a facsimile, a distortion. As I listen to this trial, I am reminded of the climactic scene of a James Bond film, *The Man with the Golden Gun*. James Bond escaped his hall of mirrors by breaking the glass, shattering the illusions, until only the true villain stood before him. We, too, must shatter the mirrors. We must look into ourselves and root out the distortions until that thing which we know in our hearts is perfect and true, stands before us. Only then will justice be served.

Related Characters: Enzo (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 301

Explanation and Analysis

Enzo and Tony are sitting outside the courthouse on Denny's final day in court, and Enzo has fallen asleep. He dreams that he gets to testify, and this is his opening statement to the jury. By using the James Bond film as a metaphor, it becomes obvious how much Enzo's television viewing has influenced his worldview. Further, even though this is a dream, the reader gets a glimpse of what Enzo might say if he were given a way to speak. While Enzo often replies to statements and questions spoken by others, they're usually short and quippy rather than long and poetic as this monologue is. Notice as well that as Enzo is encouraging the jury to look within themselves to find what is perfect and true, Enzo is also looking within himself to find the part of himself that is human and capable of speech. This suggests that the "human" parts of Enzo are the parts of him that are the most true, further supporting his belief that he's more human than dog.



SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1

The narrator, a dog named Enzo, begins the story with a discussion of how he must communicate through gestures, since he's not able to form language with his long tongue. This need to rely on gestures is why he's currently lying on the floor in a puddle of urine, waiting for Denny (his owner) to come home and find him.

Enzo is old, but he says he doesn't really want to get any older. He believes that Denny would do whatever it took to keep Enzo alive, but Enzo doesn't want to be kept alive. Enzo says this is because of the second-best thing he ever saw on **television**—a documentary on Mongolia, which said that when a dog is finished being a dog, he will be reincarnated as a man. The best thing Enzo ever saw on television, he says, was the 1993 Grand Prix of Europe, in which **Ayrton Senna** drove like a genius in the **rain**. Enzo continues, saying that he's always felt almost human and different than other dogs.

The door opens and Enzo hears Denny call for him. Usually, Enzo gets up despite the pain, but he uses humanlike willpower to hold back and not get up. Denny calls for Enzo again, sounding concerned, and finally comes into the kitchen. Enzo wags his tail feebly. Denny sets down his shopping bag and reaches for Enzo, touching Enzo's head and asking him what happened. Enzo tries to get up, but finds he truly can't, which sends him into a panic. Enzo believed he was acting, but the act is real. Denny presses on Enzo's chest to calm him and tells him to take it easy before lifting him. In Denny's arms, Enzo smells Denny's day on him. Smelling beer, Enzo experiences a moment of clarity. He says that usually he's very good at marking elapsed time, but today he wasn't paying attention because he was "emoting."

Denny places Enzo in the bathtub and apologizes for being late. Denny trails off, and Enzo realizes that Denny believes Enzo's accident happened because Denny was late coming home. Enzo digresses into how difficult communication is; there's presentation and interpretation involved, and the two are dependent and make things harder to understand. Enzo's intent was to show Denny that it's okay to let Enzo go, now that Denny is through what he's been going through. Enzo says that Denny is brilliant and he needs to let Enzo go so he can go on and be brilliant. He remarks that he'll miss Denny and Zoë, but can't let sentimentality get in the way of his plan.

Enzo makes it extremely clear from the very beginning that he's not human, and the extent he must go to communicate with humans because of this. This will be one of his primary concerns throughout the text.



This is a broad intro to Enzo's belief system, which is made up of elements gleaned from watching television and being involved in racing. Enzo's goal is to eventually become human, which will allow him to participate in all the activities he sees on television. Television here acts as a symbol for Enzo's education and belief system.



Notice Enzo's insistent focus on storytelling and acting. He's acting to communicate and tell a story for Denny, and he's able to piece together the story of Denny's day by picking out the different smells on him. However, we see how old and ill Enzo really is, as it becomes obvious that Enzo's act isn't really that far away from the truth. Enzo's quips about humanlike willpower and "emoting" set up a hierarchy, with humans and humanlike qualities above canine qualities like "emoting."



As we're introduced to Enzo's family, we see how much they mean to him and how he's willing to essentially sacrifice himself to allow them to have a better life. Again, consider how Enzo talks about communication and language. For him, as a dog unable to speak, communication is tied up entirely in acting and performance, hence his previous statement that gestures are all that he has.



After Enzo's bath, Denny sets Enzo up in front of the **TV**, and asks if he'd like to watch a tape. Enzo replies he would, but Denny of course doesn't hear him. Denny puts in a tape of one of his old races, one of Enzo's favorites. The track starts out dry, but as soon as the race starts, it starts to **rain**. The other cars spin out of control, but Denny drives as though the rain doesn't affect him at all, just like the 1993 Grand Prix of Europe, in which **Ayrton Senna** passed four champion cars on the first lap like he was magic.

Enzo says that Denny is as good as **Senna**, but nobody notices Denny because he has responsibilities: his daughter, Zoë, and Enzo, and until she died, his wife, Eve. Denny lives in Seattle and has a job, but sometimes he goes away and comes home with a trophy and shows it to Enzo. At these times, Denny tells Enzo about the races, and tells him about what driving in wet weather is truly about.

After the tape ends, Denny suggests he and Enzo go out. Denny helps Enzo stand, and the two leave the apartment. They only go down the block and back because Enzo is in so much pain. When they return, Enzo curls up in his bed. Denny calls his friend, Mike, and asks him to cover for him tomorrow so he can take Enzo to the vet. Enzo says that they've been going to the vet a lot for medications that don't really work to make him more comfortable. In light of this, Enzo has now set his Master Plan in motion. Still on the phone with Mike, Denny's voice changes and says that he's not sure it's a round trip visit to the vet.

Despite having set it up, Enzo is surprised to hear Denny say this. Enzo knows it's the right thing for all involved, since Denny has done so much for Enzo. Enzo says he feels it's time to set him free; they had a good run that's over now. Enzo closes his eyes and half listens to Denny in the bathroom. He remarks that people sometimes cling so hard to their rituals.

Notice the conflation of Denny and Senna, particularly in relation to their abilities driving in the rain. Rain and water will be a symbol for strife and conflict later, and here we see that both Denny and Senna are capable of overcoming conflict.



The pull between racing and family will be a recurring conflict throughout the novel. We also learn now that Eve has died, which allows the reader later to engage with her story while knowing the ending.



We see, as Denny also does, that Enzo is not in good health. His pain management strategies are obviously not working, and this has led Enzo to formulate his Master Plan—which we can assume includes dying. This is also the first introduction to Mike, who will play a major supporting role in Denny and Enzo's lives. Note that Denny shares his fears that the trip is “one way” only with Mike.



Enzo will return later to the idea of repetition and rituals and why they're so appealing to both people and dogs. Here we see that Enzo interprets Denny's evening bathroom ritual as something comforting for him to cling to.



CHAPTER 2

Enzo goes back in time in his narration to tell the story leading up to the events of the previous chapter. He starts by saying that Denny picked him out of a pile of other puppies in an Eastern Washington town called Spangle. His mother was a lab, and Enzo never knew his father. Denny was told that Enzo was a shepherd-poodle mix, but Enzo doesn't believe this since there were no dogs like that on the farm, and the "alpha man" who bred him was mean and told nothing but lies. This man had definite opinions about the relative intelligence of different breeds and believed that shepherds and poodles were the most intelligent when bred with a lab for temperament. Enzo says this is junk; shepherds and poodles are reactors, not independent thinkers.

Enzo says he's sure his father was a terrier, because terriers are problem solvers who will do as they're told only if they wanted to do it anyway. On the farm, there was a big mean Airedale who stayed on a different part of the property. When this dog came up the hill, everyone stayed clear because he was extremely aggressive and would mount any female dog in heat without a care in the world. Enzo says he has the brown/black, wiry Airedale coat, and he likes to think that this dog was his father.

The day that Enzo left the farm, it was extremely hot. As he and his littermates tussled, a hand reached and grabbed him, and the man said "this one." The man was Denny. He was slender but assertive, with short hair and a beard. The lady of the farm said that this puppy was the pick of the litter, and the alpha man said that they were thinking of keeping him. Enzo, at only 12 weeks, had heard this line before—the man used it to get more money. Denny asked if he'd let this puppy go, and the alpha man said he would for a price.

CHAPTER 3

Stepping out of the narrative of his puppyhood, Enzo talks about watching racing videos with Denny. Denny always says that when driving in the **rain**, you must drive very gently, like there are eggshells on the pedals. When the two watch videos, Denny explains these sorts of things to Enzo: balance, kinesthetic sensation, driving by the seat of your pants, and Enzo's favorite: having no memory. Enzo says that memory is time folding back on itself, and when you remember, you disengage from the present. In racing, a driver can't remember. This is why drivers record their races from a variety of cameras. Enzo quotes a driving champion, Julian SabellaRosa, as saying that when he's working so fast, he can't think or he'll make a mistake.

Enzo sets up a very clear hierarchy of dog breeds. Notice that he doesn't value athleticism or size; he values intelligence and problem-solving abilities. This ties in with Enzo's belief that his soul is more human than dog, as he believes that humans are in some ways smarter than dogs. As the first dominating figure in Enzo's life, the alpha man is the only name Enzo knows for his breeder.



Enzo aligns himself with terriers because he sees himself as smart and with excellent problem solving skills. He wants to be a part of this family of dogs for this reason—it becomes a way for Enzo to shape his identity through his family of origin.



Even at 12 weeks old, we see how perceptive Enzo is of the people around him. He sees how mean the alpha man is and already knows his tricks for getting more money for puppies. This keen sense of perception will continue to serve Enzo throughout his life. Primarily through listening and watching, Enzo will formulate theories about how communication and language work.



Enzo will sprinkle several of these asides throughout the novel. This particular aside works to help flesh out Denny and Enzo's relationship, which revolves around racing and Denny teaching Enzo the technicalities of driving technique. Enzo's discussion of memory and how it pertains to racing relates back to the novel as a whole, as the narrative is Enzo's memory of the last ten years, and he disengages from his present (as an old dog in pain, close to death) to remember and tell his story.



CHAPTER 4

Denny moved Enzo into his apartment in Seattle, which overlooked Lake Washington. Enzo didn't enjoy living in an apartment much since he was young and used to open fields, but he liked their balcony that overlooked the lake, since he's part water dog. During the first year, Denny and Enzo formed a deep bond. Enzo was surprised, then, when Denny fell in love with Eve as fast as he did.

Enzo watches Eve and Denny have sex for the first time, saying that Eve said "the field is fertile—beware!" Denny replied that he embraced the fertility. Afterwards, when Denny went to splash in the bathroom, Eve patted Enzo's head. Enzo was just over a year old, immature, and intimidated by the screaming. Eve told Enzo she wouldn't come between him and Denny. Enzo says that he respected her for saying this, but found it disingenuous because he knew she would come between them.

Enzo says that he tried to act nonchalant because he knew how much Denny loved Eve, but he wasn't embracing of her presence. In turn, Eve was less embracing of Enzo. Enzo describes them as satellites orbiting Denny, struggling for supremacy, although Eve had the advantage of a tongue and thumbs. Sometimes she would wink at Enzo as if to gloat about her physical advantage in their battle.

CHAPTER 5

Enzo pauses the narrative to lament his lack of thumbs, beginning by saying that monkeys, practically the dumbest species on earth, have thumbs. The duck-billed platypus is the stupidest, but only marginally more so than a monkey. The thumbs of the monkeys were meant for dogs. Enzo says, "give me my thumbs, you fucking monkeys!" and then, as an aside, says he loves the Al Pacino remake of *Scarface*, although it is incomparable to the excellent Godfather **movies**.

Enzo says he watches too much **TV**. Denny turns it on in the morning when he leaves, and warns Enzo not to watch all day, but he does anyway. Fortunately, Denny lets Enzo watch a lot of Speed Channel and NASCAR because racing is Enzo's favorite, but Denny also insists on leaving other channels on for variety. When he's watching other channels like PBS or the Discovery Channel, Enzo learns about other cultures and ways of life, which leads him to think about his own life and what makes sense and what doesn't.

Enzo is still very much attached to his breeding—it's one of the ways he shapes his identity. He also builds his identity through his relationship with Denny, and this sets up both their very strong bond, and something that comes between it with the introduction of Eve.



Again, we see Enzo's sharp perception of language and how it works. Eve presumably isn't fully aware of how much Enzo understands, but Enzo reads into her words and what they mean. He understands that her words are meant to help, but they only serve to create a rift between Eve and Enzo.



Here the rift between Enzo and Eve is brought to the forefront. Notice that it's not just about language for Enzo, it's about Eve's humanity allowing her to triumph in their battle for Denny's affection. Enzo's love for Denny, however, keeps it from being overly hostile.



Again, one of the primary ways that Enzo sees humans as different from dogs is a physical trait: thumbs. He also, following his hierarchy of dog breeds, begins to set up a hierarchy of animal species. His aside about the movies will be a recurring motif throughout the novel. TV informs how he sees the world, and he uses movie references to make his points.



Enzo will later refer to TV as his "education," and we learn here what he's learned from all his viewing. Television gives Enzo a way to not just engage with racing, but also provides him with material and a starting point to consider more spiritual and theoretical questions.



Many shows discuss Darwin at length. The educational shows Enzo's watched on evolution are very well thought out and researched in Enzo's opinion, although he doesn't understand why evolution and creation can't coexist. Enzo sees spiritualism and science as one, the marriage of bodies and spirits in one human package. Instead, scientific theorists go on at length about how monkeys are the most closely related species to humans. Enzo believes this is speculation. Enzo says the most important idea isn't whether humans came from monkeys or fish, it's that when the body became human enough, a human soul slipped in.

Enzo's theory is that primates are not the closest relatives to humans, as those on **TV** believe, but dogs are. His first case-in-point is a dog's dew claw, which he believes is evidence of a pre-emergent thumb. Enzo believes, further, that men have bred the thumb out of certain dog breeds through selective breeding in an attempt to prevent dogs from evolving into dexterous and dangerous mammals.

Enzo believes that the domestication of dogs is motivated by the fear that if left to evolve on their own, dogs would develop thumbs and smaller tongues and would then be superior to men. This is the reason why dogs must live under constant human supervision. Enzo believes that this plan was hatched in a back room of the White House by an evil adviser and a president lacking in morality and intellect. Enzo believes they made the correct assessment that dogs are all progressive on social issues, although this assessment comes from paranoia rather than spiritual insight.

Enzo's second case-in-point is the werewolf. When the man steps out of the forest on the full moon, he doesn't find himself transformed into a monkey.

CHAPTER 6

At first, Enzo resents how Eve changes his and Denny's lives, particularly the attention Denny pays to her body. She is everything Enzo isn't—human, well-groomed (she keeps her hair colored, while Enzo goes weeks without a bath), and she keeps her nails a very certain shape and size. Her attention to detail extends to her personality as well. She is organized and always making lists, especially honey-do lists for Denny and Enzo. Their weekends are spent at Home Depot or at the recycling center, or at home fixing and washing things. Enzo doesn't like this, but Denny apparently does, since the longer the list, the more quickly he works to complete it and collect his reward. Enzo notes that the reward often means a lot of nuzzling and stroking.

This is one place where it's made more obvious that Enzo, as a dog, doesn't grasp things as humans do. His beliefs here are possibly due to his dislike of monkeys and his envy of their thumbs. However, also note the dissonance at play here—Enzo will later say that he wants to be human so he can partake in intellectual pursuits, but here he diminishes the intellectual pursuits of those who are already human.



Enzo thinks very highly of himself and dogs in general. Once again, he sees humans' physical traits as the reason for their dominance, rather than any of their intellectual advantages.



Further, Enzo sees that dogs have the potential to surpass humans if they were allowed to develop key physical traits. Notice also how Enzo interprets hearing about politics from Denny. We can't know exactly what he heard, but whatever it was manifests in a distrust of government because of what Enzo believes their position on dogs is.



Enzo sees the combination of man and dog as proof that they're nearly equivalent in the evolutionary hierarchy.



Again we see here that Enzo associates physical traits with humanity in his comparison of himself to Eve. Language also comes into play here with Eve's lists. The lists evidently hold some degree of power, as they dictate Denny and Enzo's weekend plans. These lists begin Enzo's exploration of the power of words and stories, which he continues throughout the novel.



Not long after Eve moves in with Denny and Enzo, she and Denny are married in a small ceremony that Enzo gets to attend. Eve's immediate family comes, while Denny's doesn't, but Denny says simply that they don't travel well.

This is the first mention of Denny's family, or the absence thereof. Their absence at their son's wedding creates a slight tension in the story.



After the family returns from the wedding, Enzo notices that Eve is much bolder in her moving and replacing of household things. Enzo, while unhappy with her for the change she's brought about, is unable to experience real anger. He believes this was because she is pregnant. He says there is something about how she'd exert so much effort to take off her shirt and bra to lay down and rest, and that her breasts remind Enzo of his own mother.

Enzo resents Eve's permanence and the change she's bringing to his family. However, he can't resent her for being pregnant. Notice that, while physical traits are often used to separate humans from dogs, here they're used to draw similarities between the two.



Enzo resents the attention Eve pays to the unborn baby, but in retrospect, he realizes that he never gave her a reason to treat him the way she treated the baby. Enzo muses that maybe this is his one regret, that he loved how Eve was when she was pregnant, but knew he couldn't be the source of her affection because he couldn't be her child.

An overarching idea throughout the novel is that every character is motivated by love. Enzo here wants to love and be loved by Eve, but his love for Denny first keeps him from doing so.



Enzo describes how Eve interacts with the baby before it is born, touching it through her skin, dancing to the stereo. She drinks orange juice to feel the baby kick. Once she asks Enzo if he wants to feel, and holds his face against her belly to feel the kick. Enzo knows that Eve and Denny made what was inside of her, and at the time, Enzo wished the baby would look like him.

Enzo's dogness is obvious here in his wish that the baby will look like him, as his understanding of the differences between himself and his human family is limited. However, this wish also shows just how connected he feels to Denny.



On the day the baby arrives, Enzo is two years old. Denny is in Daytona for the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona race. Enzo explains that endurance racing consists of four drivers each spending six hours driving, and this particular race is broadcast on **television**. The coincidence that Denny got this opportunity the same year he became a father changes depending on who's doing the interpreting. Eve is put off by the unfortunate timing, while Denny believes he's getting everything he could ever want.

Words and their different interpretations will be a recurring idea throughout the novel. Denny, the optimist, is able to see this timing as fortuitous, while Eve feels the opposite. Note the mention that this race is going to be on television. This elevates the importance of the race, particularly for Enzo, who loves television.



Regardless, the timing is wrong according to Enzo. On race day, a week before she is due, Eve feels contractions and calls her midwives. They assume Denny is driving and winning as Eve gives birth. Her midwives help her into bed and give her the baby, who begins to nurse. Eve asks for a minute alone, and the midwives move to take Enzo out of the room with them. Eve stops them and says that Enzo can stay. He watches the baby nurse, and after a few minutes notices that Eve is crying. He wonders why.

Enzo understands the significance of being not just allowed but invited to stay with Eve and the baby without Denny there to act as a buffer. This is the first time that Eve opens herself up to Enzo, which sets up the opportunity for their relationship to continue to improve in the future.



Eve puts a hand down and lets it dangle. Enzo doesn't want to assume she is calling him, but catches her eye and knows she is. Sobbing, Eve says to Enzo that she knows she told Denny to go, but she wishes he were here with her. Eve asks Enzo if he'll promise to always protect the baby. Enzo knows that she's actually asking the question of Denny, and that he's only a surrogate for Denny in this situation. Enzo says that he did, however, feel the obligation, and realizes that although he can't interact with humans the way he really wants to, he can comfort Eve and protect the baby.

Denny returns from Daytona the next day, unhappy. His mood changes when he holds the baby, whom they name Zoë after Eve's grandmother. Denny asks Enzo if he sees his little angel, to which Enzo mentally replies that he practically birthed Zoë.

Eve's parents, Trish and Maxwell, had been in the apartment since Zoë's birth to care for her and Eve. Enzo begins calling them "the Twins" because they dress exactly the same and both smell of chemicals. Since their arrival, they'd been giving Eve a hard time for having Zoë at home, as they believe that it's irresponsible to give birth outside of a hospital. However, once Denny returns home, they shift their negative attention to him. Maxwell gloats, saying that it's a lot of bad luck, and Trish only wants to know if Denny will get any of his money back.

Enzo isn't sure what's going on. Denny is distraught, and later when Mike comes over for a beer, Enzo learns why. Denny was supposed to take the third stint in the car. Everything was going well, the team was in second, but just before Denny was set to take over the second driver ran the car into the wall. The driver was unhurt, but Denny's opportunity of a lifetime disappeared. When Mike confirms that Denny doesn't get any money back, Denny says he doesn't care; he should've been home. Mike counters that you can't predict when babies are going to come early, and toasts Zoë. Denny joins, and Enzo toasts mentally and vows to always protect Zoë.

CHAPTER 7

After Eve became pregnant, Denny took a job behind the counter at a fancy auto shop that only worked on expensive German cars. Denny likes this job, but he and Enzo don't get to spend weekends together anymore. Some weekends, Denny teaches at high-performance driver's education programs put on by local car clubs, and often takes Enzo with him. Denny doesn't like teaching much because he doesn't get to drive, and it doesn't pay very well. He fantasizes about moving and trying to work at a big driving school so he can drive more, but Eve is very attached to Seattle and doesn't want to leave.

This is the moment when Enzo truly finds his place within his family. He can't be what he truly wants to be (human), but he sees the baby as his entryway into Denny and Eve's relationship as the guardian of their offspring. By speaking candidly to Enzo, Eve essentially allows him to feel more human, which is one way that Enzo feels loved and appreciated by those around him.



Again Enzo's mindset regarding his place in the family has shifted. Rather than seeing himself in opposition to Eve, he aligns himself with her and Zoë.



The reader only knows as much as Enzo does, so it's unclear at this point why Denny is unhappy and Trish is asking about getting money back. Notice though that Trish and Maxwell's concern is rooted in wanting the best for Eve and Zoë, despite their concern being misplaced. Maxwell's comment about bad luck foreshadows what's to come.



As Enzo discusses driving strategy more, we'll learn that Denny needs to rely on his ability to predict when and how things will happen, which accounts for how upset he is at this instance where his predicting was incorrect. Enzo is further settling himself within his growing family as Zoë's protector.



Denny feels a great sense of familial duty. He changes jobs so that he can better support his family, but doing so is in opposition to what he truly wants to do, which is be somewhere that's friendlier to the racing career he's half pursuing. His relationship with and love for Eve keeps him in Seattle for her sake, which is somewhat of a sacrifice on his part.



Several months after Zoë is born, Eve goes back to work. Denny offers to stay home and care for Zoë but Eve insists on putting Zoë in daycare. With everyone out of the house, Enzo is left home alone. He spends the hours napping and staring out the window at buses.

One day, Denny checks the weather on the **television** in the morning and forgets to turn the TV off. Enzo is enthralled with the Weather Channel. He says it's not about weather, but rather it's about the world and how weather affects everything. When Denny returns that evening, Enzo is still watching, fascinated.

Denny asks Enzo what he's watching, as though he's asking Eve or Zoë. Eve and Zoë are in the kitchen making dinner, however, while Enzo is absorbed in watching flooding on the East Coast. Denny scoffs that Enzo is watching the Weather Channel, and changes the channel to the Speed Channel.

Enzo says that he watched plenty of **TV** prior to this moment, but only when others were already watching. He even taught himself some degree of literacy watching *Sesame Street* with Zoë, but until this day, he'd never watched TV by himself. Denny offers to leave the TV on during the day, but tells Enzo that he has to limit himself and not watch all day. This new habit changes his life. Having the **TV** on eliminates the tedium of Enzo's days, and his education takes off.

Being so immersed in his education, Enzo loses count of the weeks and is surprised when Zoë's second birthday arrives. Denny and Eve throw a party at their apartment, and Zoë calls Enzo her big brother. The children make a mess with cake on the floor, and Enzo gets to help Eve clean it up. Eve even seems uncharacteristically happy cleaning the cake, and the two race to clean everything.

After the party is over, Denny has one last surprise birthday present. He shows Zoë a photo that she shows little interest in, but when he shows it to Eve, she starts to cry. They laugh and cry, and Denny shows Enzo the photo. It's of a house. Enzo is confused, but very soon there are boxes everywhere, and then his bed moves entirely. The house is small and Craftsman style, like Enzo had seen on *This Old House*. Eve and Denny love the house and spend the first night there naked in every room but Zoë's.

Enzo feels empty now that his family has moved on from those first few months at home. His previous feelings of connectedness are derailed now that everyone has gone.



Enzo's world opens up with this introduction to the Weather Channel. Note too that while rain is not singled out, it's encompassed by the idea of weather. Enzo essentially overcame the rain of boredom.



Denny's candid tone with Enzo indicates how close their relationship is and how human-like Enzo already seems.



Language is so important to Enzo that he even tried, and halfway succeeded, in teaching himself to read. Had he been fully successful, he would've had one more way to interpret the human world around him. However, television fills that gap and allows him to learn about the world and conquer his boredom and emptiness.



At this moment, it seems as though Enzo and Eve's relationship is improving. Even at such a young age, Zoë and Enzo are very close, and Zoë sees Enzo as basically a human (her brother).



Enzo's "education" through television works into how he sees the world—as here he compares the house to something he's seen on TV. We also see the limits of Enzo's understanding of events as a dog, as he doesn't truly grasp the real meaning of the situation from just seeing the photo. It takes actually moving for it to sink in.



Every day when Denny comes home from work, he greets Eve and Zoë and then takes Enzo outside to play fetch. When Zoë grows big enough, she and Enzo run and Enzo pretends to chase her. Eve doesn't like their game and tells Zoë that Enzo will bite her, but Enzo explains that he has willpower strong enough to overcome his primal instincts to chase and bite, and these instincts simply don't apply to him. Eve doesn't understand, though, so Enzo takes care to not play rough with Zoë.

Partially, Enzo doesn't want to give Eve anything to worry about because he can tell she's sick. He can smell a bad, wet, soggy decay in her head when she feeds him, and knows there's something in Eve's head that's bad and doesn't belong. Enzo notes that had he a human tongue, he could've warned them of her condition long before the doctors discovered it. But Enzo doesn't have the ability to warn them. All he can do is watch. He'd been assigned to protect Zoë, but he realizes that nobody is there to protect Eve, and there's nothing he can do.

Despite their moments of closeness like at Zoë's birthday party, Eve and Enzo are still somewhat at odds. Further, it's Enzo's inability to successfully communicate with Eve that keeps them this way. Notice too that Enzo is continuing to set himself above other dogs with his comment that he's above these base, primal instincts to chase and bite.



Enzo's existence as a dog has major upsides as well as major downsides. He knows something's wrong with Eve, even though she herself has no idea, but the fact that he's unable to communicate keeps him from saving her before it's too late.



CHAPTER 8

One summer weekend, Denny and Enzo sit down in front of the **TV** to study a tape of an enduro race that Denny drove in Portland a few weeks prior. The team finished first in class thanks to Denny's heroics. Enzo shares with the reader that watching a race from in-car video is quite the experience, as it gives a perspective on the driver that is lost when one watches a race on a television broadcast. Denny starts the tape near the end of the race. The track is wet and it looks as though it's going to **rain** again, and Denny's team decided to switch to rain tires, putting Denny far behind the other competitors.

As the **rain** begins, Denny starts passing other cars that aren't using rain tires and are therefore struggling. Eve, standing in the doorway watching, asks why Denny can take turns so fast. Denny replies that many of them aren't using rain tires. As they watch, Denny strategically passes a Camaro, and Denny translates his strategy for Eve and Enzo. Eve remarks that Denny is driving as though the track isn't wet.

Denny softly says, "that which you manifest is before you." Noting Eve's confusion at the phrase, Denny describes learning to drive in the **rain** when he was first in driving school. All the students were extremely confused after the instructors shared all their secrets, and Denny looked at the guy sitting next to him, who smiled and said, "that which you manifest is before you." Denny says that drivers are afraid of the rain because it amplifies mistakes and can make a car handle unpredictably, which then necessitates reacting at speed. Reacting at speed is reacting too late.

Watching races together is one way that Denny and Enzo express their love and affection for each other. It also ties in with Enzo's education, as Denny explains things to Enzo while they watch—again treating him like a human. Here we see Denny's ability to plan and control his surroundings through his choice to put on rain tires before the rain even started.



Denny is an excellent driver in the rain because of his ability to predict. Throughout this scene, the idea of rain as an obstacle or a challenge is developed, as well as the idea that Denny isn't hindered by the rain or challenges as much as others are.



"That which you manifest is before you" will become the guiding phrase of the novel itself, and will especially influence Enzo's belief system and how he interacts with the world. Denny's description of why rain is such a scary element for drivers essentially comes down to it being dangerous to be in a situation where one might have to make sudden decisions that may not end well.



Denny continues, saying that if he makes the car do something, he can predict what will happen next. Eve asks if that means spinning the car before the car spins itself, and Denny replies affirmatively. Still watching the tape, they watch Denny nearly start to spin, but he corrects before the spin fully starts. Denny says that all drivers spin because all drivers must test the limits. Eve watches for another minute before standing up and leaving for the kitchen while Denny and Enzo continue to watch.

Denny says nothing more as he and Enzo keep watching, but Enzo mulls over what Denny just said. It's a simple concept, he thinks, but so true that individuals bring on success or failure through their own intention or ignorance. Enzo considers his relationship with Eve, thinking that his resentment of her is mirrored by her aloof nature with him, and there is still a great deal of distance between them. Enzo gets up from the **TV** and lays down by the refrigerator in the kitchen to be with Eve, manifesting something.

Eve is self-conscious about Enzo's presence, but Enzo believes she simply doesn't understand his intentions. As she gets caught up in dinner preparations, she forgets Enzo, who drifts off to the smell of food. He awakens later to find Eve scratching his belly. She returns to making dinner, rubbing him occasionally with her foot as she passes by. Enzo tells the reader that he always wanted to love Eve like Denny loves her, but never did out of fear. Enzo believes that Eve is his fear, his unpredictable entity: his **rain**. At this moment, Enzo decides a racer should embrace the rain rather than be afraid of it, and Enzo says he believes he can manifest a change.

CHAPTER 9

A few years later, the family experiences a very scary event. Denny had secured a seat for a race at Watkins Glen, NY. Earlier in the spring he'd taken a trip to France for an expensive testing program, which Denny told Mike his parents had paid for. Enzo had his doubts, but decided it didn't matter. Regardless, Denny had done very well because it was **rainy** in France, and a scout approached him one day and asked if he could drive as fast when it was dry. Soon after, Denny was offered the seat for an enduro race at Watkins Glen. Enzo adds, "that which you manifest is before you."

When Denny leaves for New York, everyone at home is excited to watch the race on Speed Channel. Zoë drives around in her little racecar and pretends to be a champion, and Enzo is so excited he spends time doing "idiotic dog things" like chasing things and digging up the lawn, and he remarks that it was the best of times.

Denny's advocating here for being entirely aware of one's surroundings and the events taking place around you. Denny indicates that everyone has to test their own limits in order to learn, but by being aware and in control, you can better understand where the limits are and not have to make potentially dangerous, rash decisions.



This is the first time we see Enzo explicitly take a piece of racing wisdom and apply it directly to his life or the lives of those around him. He understands that he in some sense "manifested" and created his rocky relationship with Eve, but he also understands that he has the opportunity to fix it through manifesting a different way.



Whether Eve is aware of Enzo's intentions or not, she shows herself to be open to his "manifesting." For Enzo, by considering Eve a challenge to be overcome rather than criticizing her and seeing her as a one-dimensional, negative entity, he's able to see his path forward with her.



Enzo sees Denny's good fortune as good manifesting and planning, and we again see Denny experiencing success in the face of adversity (rain). Note Enzo's attitude about Denny's parents. They don't fit his idea of what parents should be, as he has Eve and Denny (and TV, presumably) to provide an example of close and loving parents.



When Enzo experiences an overload of emotion, he acts in a more dog-like way than his usual controlled manner of behaving more like a person. Note too that the family is going to experience Denny's expected success through television.



It then, suddenly, became the worst of times. Eve wakes up early on the morning of the race in so much pain that she vomits repeatedly. She speaks candidly to Enzo, saying she doesn't know what's wrong with her. Enzo notes that the last time she spoke to him like this was after Zoë's birth. Enzo knows what's wrong, but has no way to tell her, so he merely stands with her and tries to comfort her, afraid. Eve says that someone is crushing her skull, and suddenly she packs some bags with clothes and toothbrushes, gathers Zoë out of bed, and leaves the house with Zoë. Enzo is left behind.

When Eve experiences intense emotion or fear, the walls between herself and Enzo begin to come down, resulting in this more candid style of communication. Enzo, however, is unable to truly communicate with Eve, and can only provide comfort—not even protection. The walls remain to a degree, as Eve neglected to take Enzo with her.



CHAPTER 10

Enzo takes a break from the story to discuss some racing strategy and theory. Ideally, a driver controls his car so that he can correct a spin before it happens. However, we don't live in an ideal world, mistakes happen, and drivers must react sometimes. When reacting, according to Denny, a car is only as good as its tires, and if the tires lose traction and a skid is initiated, nothing else matters. In that situation, a driver is at the mercy of momentum. If a driver panics at that point, he'll lift his foot off the accelerator and the car will spin. A good driver will try to correct by turning the wheels the direction the car is moving. If the car does find traction though, the wheels will be turned in the wrong direction, inducing a far more dangerous counterspin.

The overarching theme of this discussion is that one can't panic when faced with adversity or unforeseen circumstances. The placement of this discussion within the text, when we know that Enzo would be fully within his rights to panic after being left, provides the reader a starting point for understanding Enzo's actions and decisions in the next chapter as he deals with being abandoned.



However, if at the beginning of this chain of events the driver had increased pressure on the accelerator and followed the movement of the wheels, the spin would have been corrected, although the driver would be at risk of running off the track. The driver, while not where he intended to be, is still in control of the car and can still complete the race. Enzo finishes, saying that if the driver's manifesting is good, he may even win.

Enzo's belief in manifesting and destiny is apparent, and again can be applied to the narrative surrounding this discussion. We see, before Enzo even explicitly tells us, that Enzo's strategy will be to not panic and do his best to manifest a positive outcome of this unfortunate turn of events.



CHAPTER 11

Returning to the narrative, Enzo takes stock of his situation, locked in the house alone. He thinks that Eve is ill and it's affecting her judgment, and Denny will be home after two nights. As a dog, Enzo says he knows how to fast, thanks to a cruel exchange in which humans got big brains in exchange for being susceptible to salmonella, and dogs gave up thumbs in exchange for being able to survive without food for long periods of time. For three days Enzo rations the toilet water, fantasizes about a bowl of kibble, and searches for errant food scraps. He defecates and urinates on a mat by the back door and tries not to panic.

Here the discussion from the previous chapter is put into play. Enzo takes stock of his situation and the skills and resources he has, and does his best to not panic and induce a real life "spin." In the aside, we again get a taste of Enzo's conception of evolution and creation, as he sees his ability to fast as something he received in return for not being physically human.



On the second night, Enzo says, he thinks he started hallucinating after eating some long-forgotten yogurt remnants on Zoë's high chair. He hears a noise coming from Zoë's bedroom and when he goes to investigate, Zoë's stuffed **zebra** is moving on its own. Enzo is surprised to see the zebra, since it's one of Zoë's favorites, but he reasons that Eve was in so much pain she overlooked it when she was packing.

Seeing Enzo, the **zebra** begins to dance and then starts sexually assaulting one of Zoë's Barbie dolls. Enzo growls, offended, but the zebra just smiles and moves on to Zoë's other toys, assaulting and humiliating them. When Enzo can take no more and moves to attack the zebra, it stops, stands on its hind legs in front of Enzo, and rips open its belly seam. It then proceeds to dismantle itself, pulling out handfuls of stuffing. When it has reduced itself to a pile of fabric and stuffing on the floor, Enzo leaves the room, traumatized. He hopes that what he witnessed was just a vision, but knows somehow that something true and terrible just occurred.

The next afternoon, Enzo hears Denny's taxi pull up outside. As Denny enters the house, he steps right onto the squishy doormat. Surprised, he hops off the mat and calls for Eve, but Enzo is the only one home. Denny picks up the phone, and after a minute says into it that Enzo is home. Realizing that Enzo has been home alone the entire time, he curses and hangs up. Denny shouts in frustration, cleans up the doormat, and fills Enzo's food and water bowls. Eve and Zoë arrive minutes later. Zoë hides behind Eve as Eve tries to explain how sick she was. Denny's anger doesn't recede, and Eve breaks down and says she can't deal with Denny's absences anymore.

Hearing crying, Enzo and Eve look over and see Zoë weeping in the hallway and Eve rushes to comfort her. Zoë cries, "my animals," and Eve, Denny, and Zoë go down the hall to Zoë's room. Enzo doesn't follow, as he doesn't want to be anywhere near where the evil **zebra** had been. Suddenly, Enzo hears loud footsteps and Denny calls Enzo stupid, grabbing him by the scruff of his neck. Denny drags him into Zoë's room, which is a mess of eviscerated animals and dolls. Enzo thinks that the zebra must have put itself back together and destroyed the other animals after Enzo left the room, and that he should've eaten the zebra when he had the chance.

Denny's towering anger fills the room, and he rises up and strikes Enzo on the head, yelling "bad dog!" When he moves to hit Enzo again, Eve protects Enzo. Denny stops, and Enzo knows that he won't hit Eve. Enzo says Denny didn't actually hit him, even though he can feel the pain—Denny had hit the **zebra** and believed the evil demon was inside Enzo. Enzo believes he was framed by the demon that had possessed the zebra.

Notice here that Enzo at least considers the fact that what he's seeing is possibly a creation of his mind and not actually real. Besides the fantastical nature of his story, this pushes the reader to assume that this is a hallucination.



Enzo's belief that what he saw was somehow true, despite his earlier admission that he was probably hallucinating, turns him into an unreliable narrator in this situation. It also creates questions about the truth of the rest of Enzo's narration. Notice too that the zebra's antics are ones of sexual power. The idea of the zebra as being linked to taking sexual advantages will be recurring.



The reader and Enzo are aware of the events of the situation while Denny and Eve are forced to piece together what happened. Denny's intense show of anger at Eve is indicative of how much he cares for Enzo, but we also see just how ill Eve is and how seriously affected she is by Denny's absences.



Enzo's moment of righteousness is short lived as he's forced to confront what happened in Zoë's room. The reader here can piece together what actually happened with the zebra (Enzo was so hungry—and probably hallucinating—that he destroyed Zoë's toys), but Enzo's inability to come to this conclusion shows the limits of his perception.



Enzo begins to grasp an understanding of how the zebra works and possesses individuals. Further, Enzo can't quite conceptualize that Denny would hit him, hence the belief that Denny hit the zebra instead. Eve and Enzo's growing relationship is also evident.



Enzo slinks towards Zoë, understanding her pain since he knows so much about her fantasy world. He says that she allows him to play with her, and her games have significant meaning. Through her games, he learns that Zoë worships her father and tries hard to please her mother. Lying on the floor next to her, Enzo raises his eyebrows to ask for forgiveness for not protecting her animals. After a long wait, Zoë reaches out and puts her hand on Enzo's head.

The stories that Zoë tells through her fantasy games are powerful in that they show how she truly sees herself and the world around her. Because of this, Enzo understands that her grief is not just for silly stuffed animals, but an entire world of her creation that reflects her intimately.



Later that evening, Enzo finds Denny on the porch drinking hard liquor. Enzo approaches cautiously, but Denny pats the step next to him and Enzo approaches. Denny apologizes and finishes his drink, pouring himself another. Speaking candidly to Enzo, Denny says his team got first place, and asks if Enzo knows what that means. Enzo does—it means that Denny was the champion. Denny answers and says it means he got an offer for a seat in a touring car next year.

Enzo understands Denny's win, but the true meaning of getting first place actually means more than Enzo thought. These early wins build up a sense of how good of a driver Denny is. His candid tone with Enzo is indicative of their close relationship and makes Enzo feel appreciated and more equal.



Enzo, brimming with anticipation, says he loves when Denny talks like this, dragging out the drama. Enzo loves the narrative tease, since he's a dramatist, and that telling a good story means setting expectations and then delivering them in exciting ways.

The drama and storytelling devices are thrilling to Enzo. This idea can be applied to the novel as a whole, as Enzo, the dramatist, gets to use these devices to tell his own story.



Denny continues, saying that the offer means coming up with sponsorship money and then spending most of six months away from home. He asks if he's willing to do that. Enzo is torn. He thinks about how much Denny loves racing, but he notes the pit he gets in his stomach when he thinks about Denny leaving. Denny finishes his drink and says he doesn't think he can leave like that.

Denny leads Enzo to believe that he's prioritizing his family over his racing career in this situation. Enzo cares deeply for Denny as a racer, however, and knows what a sacrifice it is for Denny to make this decision.



Denny says he can't believe Eve left Enzo for days, even if she did have a virus that made her unable to think. Enzo wonders if Denny truly believes this or if he's lying to himself, thinking that if he were a person he could tell him the truth. Enzo experiences a moment of questioning though, and thinks that if he were a person, he's not sure Denny would want to hear what Enzo had to say.

Note Enzo's questioning of humanity as he wonders whether Denny would want to hear or listen to Enzo's knowledge of Eve's illness. Also, Enzo's conception of his own humanity includes his dog-specific abilities, which he would presumably lose were he human.



Blathering and drunk, Denny tells Enzo he loves him. Enzo feels the love and feels proud for surviving, laying his head on Denny's leg. Denny says he thinks sometimes Enzo truly understands him, and Enzo think to himself that he does.

This poignant moment highlights the communication disconnect between Denny and Enzo, but their love for each other transcends their inability to speak to each other.



CHAPTER 12

Enzo describes Eve's condition as elusive and unpredictable: one day headaches, the next nausea, another dizziness and anger, with weeks or days of normalcy in between. The nature of her illness is beyond Denny. Enzo says the screaming fits and anguish are things only dogs and women understand, because they connect directly to the pain and can enjoy the beauty of it while taking the pain straight in the face. Enzo says men treat pain like athlete's foot, where the spray does nothing to treat the actual cause, which may be something seemingly unrelated to foot fungus. This causes the actual problem to express itself later in a deeper way.

Denny begs Eve to see a doctor and get medication, but she refuses. Denny doesn't understand, as Eve and Enzo do, that a doctor couldn't actually explain or treat the true cause of her illness.

Enzo understands Denny's frustration at his inability to do anything, likening it to being locked in a soundproof box where you can see and hear everything but can never speak. Enzo says it's driven many dogs mad, citing dogs found eating their owner's face after he or she fell asleep. Enzo says you see it on **TV** regularly, where the dog's mind just finally snapped. Enzo, however, says he's found ways around the madness, like watching television to learn about human behavior. Denny, however, avoids the madness by driving through it, making a commitment to do everything else since he can't help Eve feel better.

Enzo notes that sometimes, bad things happen to racecars in the middle of races, like losing gears or brakes overheating. He says bad drivers crash, average drivers give up, and great drivers drive through it, like one driver in 1989 who drove the final 20 laps of a race with only two gears.

Denny cuts back hours at work so he can take over the running of the household, with the intent of relieving Eve of any burden or stress. This does not, however, allow him to continue to engage Eve in physical affection. Enzo believes that Denny's prioritization was appropriate.

Enzo addresses the reader and says he sees green as gray and red as black, but does that make him a bad potential person? He continues, saying that if he had a computer system like Stephen Hawking's, he would write great books. But humans don't give him that, and he asks whose fault it is then that he is what he is.

Enzo conceptualizes illness as a living, breathing thing, something that you can see and can be considered beautiful despite the pain it causes. Also note that gender here works to equalize dogs and women, much as it did for Enzo when Eve was pregnant. Consider Enzo's analysis of how men handle pain, as it foreshadows Denny's later reactions to pain and tragedy.



Both Eve and Enzo experience a deep distrust of the medical community, although the reason for Eve's feelings on this are never shared.



Enzo sees the inability to truly communicate as the path to madness, and he sees it happening with Denny and Eve through Eve's inability to communicate her fear of seeing a doctor. Both Enzo and Denny have to come up with ways around their inability to understand or communicate. Note that Denny's method is discussed in terms of driving, further developing his character as one intrinsically linked to racing.



Again, the discussion about racing serves as a roadmap for the reader to use to understand the actions and thought processes of characters in the novel, Denny in this case.



Here, Denny is "driving through it" by taking over the household, although he still can't have it all. Using Enzo's racing metaphor, the lack of physical intimacy between Denny and Eve is the real-life "missing gear."



Enzo blames humans, evolution, and the aforementioned sinister White House plot for being a mute dog who can only do so much.



Enzo says that Denny simply delegated his love-giving of Eve to Enzo. When Eve experienced episodes, Denny would take Zoë to movies or to the zoo and tell Enzo to take care of Eve. Enzo would curl up by the bed or next to Eve on the floor if she collapsed, and Eve would hold Enzo close and tell him about the pain. She'd say that she screams because if she's silent the pain will find her.

Enzo discusses demons, ghosts, phantoms, and spirits. He says people are afraid of them and therefore keep them in stories that can be put on shelves and left behind. Enzo implores the reader, then, to trust him that the **zebra** is real, and somewhere, it is dancing.

Through the winter, Eve loses weight and becomes drawn and pale. Despite Denny's concern, Eve continues to refuse to see a doctor. One evening after dinner, Enzo notes the odd occurrence that Denny and Eve both appeared naked in their bedroom. They hadn't "played" in a long time. Eve says, "the field is fertile," and Denny questions if she really is. Eve asks him to say it anyway, her eyes dimmed. Denny says he embraces the fertility, but Enzo thinks they seem unenthusiastic. He can tell Eve is pretending when she waves Enzo off. Enzo goes to another room, falls asleep, and dreams of crows.

CHAPTER 13

Crows are sinister bastards, according to Enzo. Since they're the smaller cousin of the raven, they're resentful of being genetically dwarfed. Enzo says it's said that the raven is the next step on the evolutionary ladder from man, since according to Northwest Coast Indians, ravens created man. Enzo notes too that the corresponding deity in Plains Indian folklore is the coyote, a dog. Enzo says the crow, rather than fitting in at the top of the ladder with humans and ravens, fits in the garbage. In a group, they're called a "murder" because when they're together, you want to kill them. When Enzo has nightmares, he dreams of the crows attacking him ruthlessly.

For Eve, Enzo has been a surrogate for Denny since Zoë's birth, and they develop a degree of closeness through this surrogacy. Language plays a huge part in this, as their relationship improves when Eve speaks candidly to Enzo.



Here, pain is equated with demons and the zebra. Eve's pain is so great that it haunts her and can't be left behind in a book—it's a real live thing that follows her everywhere.



Eve is trying to hold onto some sense of normalcy despite her illness. Their sex here is treated as an attempted indicator that life is normal more than anything else, as it's clear that neither Eve nor Denny is getting much out of the experience. As such, their language follows the course that it usually does, which further adds to the normalcy, while their attitudes about the language admit that nothing about the situation is normal.



The crows are a spiritual antagonist for Enzo. They haunt his dreams and are never pleasant in real life. Note that Enzo again has created a hierarchy, and in this case a relative of dogs is above humans. Enzo occasionally seems to be of the mind that dogs are above humans in certain ways, which here ties in with his interest in Native American folklore that presents this idea as fact and religion.



Not long after they moved into their house, Enzo had a crow experience that made them hate him. Denny always picks up Enzo's excrement in little bags and leaves the smaller bags in a grocery bag on the porch. The crows generally love going after bags of groceries and often try to steal items when Denny and Eve make multiple trips and leave bags on the porch. On this occasion, Eve brought home groceries as the crows watched from a nearby tree. The crows noticed she left a bag on the porch. Being smart, the crows waited until Eve was in the bath with the door safely locked, and Enzo inside. They swooped in and dragged the bag into the yard, gleefully taunting Enzo with their find. But when they dove into the bag, they came out with mouthfuls of dog poop.

The crows flew away to wash themselves in a neighbor's fountain and then returned, angry, and sat on the lawn staring at Enzo, taunting him to come out. Enzo didn't and the crows left. When Denny got home from work he questioned the mess on the deck, and Enzo says that if he'd had a Stephen Hawking computer, he would've made a good joke. Denny washed the deck and picked up the poop bags as the crows returned to watch from the telephone wires. When Denny wanted to play fetch, Enzo pretended to be sick so he didn't have to go outside with the crows. Enzo says it was a good laugh, but his nightmares since then always include a murder of crows.

CHAPTER 14

Enzo says the clues were there—Denny spent the winter obsessively playing a racing video game, racing only on American circuits. He ate no sugar and stopped drinking, ran several days per week, and lifted weights—but that Enzo didn't read the clues correctly, until the March day that Denny comes downstairs with his track bag packed and his special helmet. Eve and Zoë seem to know what's going on, but Denny hasn't told Enzo. Enzo is confused as they say goodbye, cocking his head, and Denny tells him that he took the seat in the touring car and is off to Sebring for a race. Enzo is both elated and devastated. He thought Denny couldn't do that, since he'd be away so much, and he worries about the emotional wellbeing of Eve and Zoë.

Enzo mentally collects himself, saying that he's a racer at heart, and racers never let something that's already happened affect what's happening now. He wags his tail enthusiastically, happy that Denny is being selfish and looking out for himself, like a good driver needs to do.

Enzo describes the crows as tricky and malicious. However, in Native folklore, it's the ravens and coyotes that often feature as the "trickster" character, and here we see Enzo getting to play that part in this experience with the crows. This further situates him, as a dog, as being far above crows in the animal hierarchy, underscoring his original idea that crows belong in the garbage.



Despite the fact that Enzo undeniably won this battle with the crows, he doesn't come away unscathed. Rather, the crows continue to torment him in his dreams. Enzo will regularly discuss his dreams going forward and his dreams can often be interpreted in terms of him "manifesting" their contents, so this mention of the crows in his dreams creates a sense of foreboding.



This disconnect in communication is very distressing for Enzo—he's used to Denny not only speaking candidly to him, but telling him the truth about his life and his choices. In considering what this choice of Denny's means for those left behind, Enzo certainly remembers what happened to Eve last time Denny left. Enzo's growing sense of care and affection for Eve shows as he considers this.



Again, Enzo uses racing truths to interpret and decide how to react to events in his life. Despite his fear, he's able to act supportive of Denny in what Enzo might consider a more human subversion of true emotions.



Denny asks Enzo to look over the girls, hugs Zoë, and kisses Eve. As he turns away, Eve grabs him and starts to cry, imploring him to please come back. Denny soothes her, but Eve keeps repeating, "please come back." Denny doesn't know what she means, but Enzo knows the truth: that Eve doesn't fear Denny not returning, but knows that something's wrong with her and fears that it will return when Denny is gone. Enzo thinks of the **zebra**. He vows to be steadfast in Denny's absence, and Denny finally leaves. Eve collects herself and tells Enzo that she insisted Denny go, and that she thinks it'll be good for her too.

The first two races go well for Zoë, Eve, and Enzo, but poorly for Denny, who finishes 24th and 30th. Denny is frustrated, saying over dinner one night that it's his pit crew's incompetency that's keeping them from winning. Eve suggests getting a new crew as Zoë picks at chicken nuggets and Enzo stays respectfully out of the dining room, listening. Denny says the only way to fix it is to practice, which means going away for a few days the following week to do so. Eve is shaken, and Enzo can taste the adrenaline coming from the dining room. He knows that Eve prepared herself for Denny's race absences, but not sudden absences, and she feels anger and fear.

Enzo hears Eve stand and gather plates and tell Zoë to eat her nuggets. Zoë declares that she's full, and then that she doesn't like nuggets. When Eve replies that she can't leave the table until she eats her nuggets, Zoë shrieks that she doesn't like them. Enzo tastes and smells anxiety, fear, and anger coming from the dining room. The argument escalates as Denny offers to make Zoë a hot dog, Eve refuses, and Zoë begins to cry. Furious, Eve finally agrees to make a hot dog.

Bursting into the kitchen, Eve grabs the hot dog package from the freezer and as she tries to cut it open, the knife slices into her left hand. Eve screams and Denny rushes to help her. He tells her she'll need stitches at the hospital, and Eve vehemently refuses. Denny groans and agrees to try to fix it at home. Zoë and Enzo stand in the doorway, watching, and Denny asks Zoë if she can find bandages for him. Zoë deliberates and finally leaves to find the bandages while Denny and Eve go to the bathroom. When Zoë returns, Enzo guides her to her parents, Denny takes the bandages, and he tells Zoë to go watch **TV** or play, and then closes the door.

The demon/zebra is back to haunt Eve. Eve has resolved to fight the demon, though, and note that here Enzo purposefully conflates himself with Denny. He's essentially setting himself up to be Denny's surrogate while Denny is gone, in an attempt to help Eve cope.



Eve is successfully battling the demon, since she's doing well with Denny's planned absences. However, her emotional resources to deal with Denny's absences are finite, and she and Enzo understand that she may not be able to handle any more than what was originally agreed upon. Enzo, as a dog, can sense emotion differently than humans can, which allows him to understand the situation without actually seeing it.



As the fight escalates, we see that Eve has been subverting her true desires (to have Denny home) in order to support him in his dreams, but we also see the sacrifice she's making to do so. Enzo will characterize the subversion of one's desires as a decidedly human trait.



In Eve's moment of heightened emotion, pain, and fear, her fear of doctors and what may be wrong with her comes to the forefront. She's willing to not get the care she needs for her hand in order to not face that something else far more serious is going on with her. We see how much of a family member Enzo is in how he treats Zoë. Zoë is also upset and confused, like Eve, and Enzo takes responsibility for her, like he promised Eve he would.



Enzo leads Zoë to the living room where she turns on a kids' show. When Denny and Eve appear a few minutes later, they sit down with Zoë and watch. When the show is over, Eve tells Zoë that the cut isn't bad and she can still make a hot dog, and then Eve bursts into tears, apologizing for being mean. Enzo thinks to himself that the **zebra** hides everywhere. Zoë starts crying as well, and Denny joins in.

Enzo leaves, feeling as though they'd resolved their issues. He looks for dropped food in the dining room and finds a chicken nugget, which after a sniff, he realizes is rancid. He feels bad for Zoë, but reasons that they probably needed this moment together that the fight brought. Enzo says that in racing, your car goes where your eyes go, which is another way of saying that which you manifest is before you. He knows it's true, and that racing doesn't lie.

CHAPTER 15

The following weekend when Denny is away racing, Eve, Zoë, and Enzo go to stay with Trish and Maxwell. Eve's hand is bandaged, which Enzo thinks means it's worse than she let on. Trish and Maxwell live in a fancy house on Mercer Island with a gorgeous view of the lake and Seattle. Enzo notes that for as beautiful as their home was, they were the unhappiest people he'd ever met.

As soon as they arrive, Trish and Maxwell start ragging on Denny to Eve. They stand in the kitchen drinking, and Maxwell asks Eve what she's going to do, clarifying that he's asking about Denny. He continues that Denny isn't contributing or spending enough time with his family. Eve defends Denny, saying he's her husband and Zoë's father and she loves him. Eve continues to defend Denny and Maxwell finally relents. Eve forgives him and takes her drink outside.

Maxwell opens a jar of his favorite hot peppers, and Trish comments on how frail Eve is. Maxwell shakes his head and wonders where they went wrong with Eve. After a minute of silence, Trish comments that Enzo is watching Maxwell. Maxwell offers Enzo a pepper, which he takes, despite the fact that he was watching Maxwell to better understand what he meant, not to beg for food.

As this minor tragedy is resolved, Enzo attributes it to the zebra, which helps to build the zebra's power in Enzo's mind and belief system. However, there's also the suggestion that the zebra is hiding within Eve, pointing to the realization that Enzo will eventually make.



Enzo essentially believes that Zoë was in possession of a story that had the power to keep the fight from happening. He then makes further sense of the situation by relating it back to his conception of destiny and manifesting, implying essentially that the family manifested this fight.



Trish and Maxwell's unhappiness leads them to try to control whatever they can in an attempt to create some version of happiness for themselves and others, without necessarily taking into account how those around them define happiness. This idea will play out throughout the novel.



Again, it's obvious that Trish and Maxwell are motivated by love, concern, and a desire to care for Eve and Zoë, although the way they express their love and concern doesn't match up with Eve's conception of love. Note that Trish and Maxwell believe they know best what Eve needs—think back to the way they treated her after Zoë's birth.



Trish and Maxwell can't believe that they raised their daughter to conceptualize love and care so differently from the way that they do. Enzo needs language—his actions are unable to communicate this intent.



The pepper is unpleasant—Enzo swallows quickly, thinking his stomach acid will take care of the unpleasant sensation, but it doesn't. Enzo goes outside and lies down under a bush in the shade until the burning stops. Later that night, when Trish and Maxwell take Enzo outside, Enzo notes that his stool is watery and foul smelling. After this experience, he says that he remains wary of trying new foods and never accepts food from someone he doesn't trust.

This proves to be a learning experience for Enzo. He learns, first of all, what the cost of eating a hot pepper is, which will be important later. Then, even though he already experiences a dislike of Trish and Maxwell, it's implied that he's beginning distrust them as well.



CHAPTER 16

Spring and early summer pass quickly as Denny experiences victory after victory. People start coming over for dinner, and more than just Mike—racing greats like Luca Pantoni, a powerful man from Ferrari who is in town visiting Don Kitch, Jr., Seattle's best racing tutor. Enzo begins spending time in the dining room, against his personal code, to be closer to the greatness. Zoë drops racing truths at various moments and impresses everyone, which Enzo feels allows him to vicariously impress these men, since he can't show them his knowledge himself.

We see how important racing is to Enzo, and particularly how much he admires these greats of the racing world, as he's willing to compromise his personal code in order to bask in their glory. We also see how his relationship with Zoë has developed as she's gotten older. She provides a way for him to more fully experience this greatness in a more human way.



Eve has recovered from her episodes with no explanation, although her hand injury continues to give her trouble. She regularly alerts Denny about the needs of her “fertile field,” and the two are regularly intimate and happy again.

The fight that resulted in Eve's hand injury had lasting consequences, despite her spontaneous recovery. It's implied that Eve is no longer having to fake her pleasure.



However, things soon begin going downhill: Denny gets caught in the first turn of a race in Phoenix, and the damage done to his car means he finishes “DFL,” or dead fucking last. Eve doesn't think it's fair, since it was the other driver's fault, but Denny says it was his for being where he could get hit. Despite this, Denny, Eve, Enzo, and Zoë are crushed. Enzo says they came so close to greatness, and greatness smells like roast pig. He questions what is worse, smelling the pig and not eating it, or never smelling it at all. That hot August, Denny spends his time doing math, figuring that he could still finish in the top ten and win rookie of the year, which would allow him to continue racing the next year.

The idea that it's one's own fault for being in the wrong place at the wrong time will crop up again later in Enzo's personal philosophy. We also see Denny working to try to have it all and figure out how to have racing and family at the same time. Additionally, Enzo doesn't answer his own question about the roast pig here, but the idea of this dilemma will also be a recurring question going forward.



One day Denny and Eve sit on the porch while Enzo soaks up the sun and Zoë plays in the sprinkler. Eve suggests that maybe “it” isn't meant to be. Denny says it'll happen when it happens, and Eve replies that Denny's never home when she's ovulating. Denny invites her to come with him next week and come to the track for the race.

Here we see the limits of Enzo's perception as a dog and how that affects the narrative style. The reader likely understands that Denny and Eve are trying to conceive another baby, but Enzo is unable to directly articulate that.



Eve says she can't go to the track now that she's feeling good, as she's afraid that the noise and excitement might give her a bad reaction. She asks Denny if he understands, and he says he does. Enzo says he does too. He says the track is such an energetic experience, noisy and hot, and he and Denny feed off of it, but he understands that the energy could be toxic to Eve.

Again, although it's not mentioned, the idea of the demon or the zebra here is symbolized by the track. Like the original zebra, which is Zoë's favorite toy but evil to Enzo, the track is a positive experience for Denny and Enzo but a very negative one for Eve.



Denny suggests they use a turkey baster, and Eve starts laughing uncontrollably. He continues, saying he could leave a cupful of babies in the fridge for her, and Eve continues to laugh. Enzo doesn't understand the joke. Eve gets up, goes in the house, and returns with the turkey baster. They giggle and watch Zoë shriek and run in the sprinkler.

Enzo, again, doesn't understand at all the very human process of trying to conceive, illustrating the limits of his understanding because of his non-humanity.



CHAPTER 17

Enzo begins, saying the car goes where your eyes go. The family goes to Denny Creek for a hike, and Enzo is let off leash. He says the smell would've given him an erection if he still had testicles, but it was fantastic nonetheless. He lets himself go like a crazy dog, chasing animals and rolling in the earth.

Beginning with this racing-ism, which is another form of "that which you manifest is before you," creates tension and forces the reader to wonder where the proverbial eyes are going.



They arrive at the Slippery Slabs, a series of flat slick rocks in the creek. Denny, Eve, and Zoë strip to their swimsuits, and since Zoë is old enough to navigate parts of the creek herself, Eve stands upstream and Denny stands downstream and they slide Zoë down the rocks as she splashes and laughs. Enzo says that people and dogs love repetition because even though each incident is similar, it's so very different from the last. They keep sliding Zoë down the rocks.

Enzo occasionally mentions these moments where dogs and humans are so very alike, this time with repetition. Keep in mind, though, the racing truth from the beginning of the chapter, as we're presented with the repetition, but are still left to wonder where exactly it's leading the story.



Then, Eve dips Zoë into the river and rather than splashing, Zoë pulls her feet out of the water and upsets Eve's balance. Eve manages to release Zoë onto a dry rock, but isn't able to recover her own balance. She slips on the slick rock and falls, her head bouncing on the rock twice. Eve is still and Zoë sits, not knowing what to do. Denny runs to them. They make it to the hospital by early evening.

We finally see the one very different instance of repetition, and it has devastating consequences. The reader knows that there's something wrong with Eve's head, thanks to Enzo's narration, and now she has no choice but to seek medical attention.



On the drive Eve keeps saying she's okay, but she obviously isn't. Her words slur and she keeps nodding off, and Denny keeps waking her up. Eve, Denny, and Zoë go into the hospital and leave Enzo in the car with the windows cracked. He curls up and sleeps.

Notice how much Eve resists going to the hospital even now. This illustrates just how strong her fear and distrust of hospitals and medicine is.



CHAPTER 18

Stepping out of the narrative, Enzo tells the reader that in Mongolia, when a dog dies, they bury him high in the hills so nobody can walk on his grave. The master whispers to the dog that he wishes for the dog to return to life as a man, and then the dog's tail is cut off and put beneath his head. A piece of fat is put in the dog's mouth to sustain him, and until the dog is reincarnated, he can run as long as he'd like to. Enzo says he learned this from a **program** on the National Geographic Channel, and he believes it is true. He says that not all dogs return as men, just the ones who are ready. Enzo says that he is ready.

Television again appears here to educate Enzo on how the world works, before and after death. Further, we see the roots of Enzo's desire to be human, and the strength of Enzo's belief that he wants to take this path. The occurrence of this segment in the middle of the narrative serves to remind the reader of the outside framing device of the story, where we know Enzo is old and about to die.



CHAPTER 19

Hours later, Denny returns and lets Enzo out of the car. Denny apologizes for leaving Enzo and pulls out a package of peanut butter sandwich crackers—Enzo's favorite. Enzo tries to eat slowly but is too hungry. He remarks at what a shame it is to waste something so wonderful on a dog, and that he hates what he is sometimes.

Here, Enzo doesn't hold dogs in very high regard when he considers how good this particular snack is. His disdain for his current state of being coincides with his desire to be human, or essentially a being that can fully enjoy these crackers.



Denny and Enzo sit on the curb. Enzo knows Denny is upset and sits with him quietly. Enzo remarks to the reader that parking lots are weird places, where people hurry away from the cars they seem to love so much when they're moving. Enzo says the only people who sit in parked cars are police and stalkers, but Enzo can sit in a car for hours and nobody thinks anything of it. He questions what would happen if he were a stalker dog. A short while later, Mike pulls up and sits down next to Denny. Denny says that Zoë is with her grandparents, and they sit quietly for a few minutes.

It's quiet musings like this one that show how Enzo really conceptualizes his place in the world and humanity. Enzo understands Denny's need for comfort and tries to comfort him as best he can. Further, in his musing, Enzo obviously sees his own potential for errant human behavior, despite still being a dog, and recognizes this instance of a double standard between dogs and humans.



Enzo then tells the reader why he'll be a good person: he listens. He never interrupts or changes the subject. He says that people speaking to each other is like having a passenger in your car grab your steering wheel and turn you down a side street suddenly. Enzo gives an example of trying to tell a simple story and the twisting avenues the conversation takes away from the original subject, and the story Enzo originally wanted to tell is then lost and unimportant. He implores the reader to learn to listen and not steal other people's stories.

In this address to the reader, Enzo crystallizes what and how he believes humanity should be. Throughout the novel, we see that Enzo's idea of the kind of person he'll be is very much a marriage of the dog he is and an idealized version of the humans around him. Also, notice that Enzo makes this plea to the reader using a driving metaphor, further showing how important driving is to how he sees the world.



Mike asks how bad it is, and Denny says the doctors might just go in and get the “mass” because it's causing Eve's problems whether it's malignant or not. Mike jokes that maybe *his* wife has a tumor, since she too experiences mood swings, but Denny doesn't laugh and corrects him that it's just a mass until it's tested. Mike apologizes and says he'd be freaking out if he were Denny. Denny says he is freaking out, and both Mike and Enzo say that they can't tell, which is probably what makes Denny such a good driver.

Denny gives Mike the keys to his house, telling him where Enzo's food is and how to ask Enzo to find his dog, his favorite toy. After a moment of silence, Mike tells Denny he doesn't have to keep his emotions inside. Denny just looks down at his shoes, and Enzo thinks about how Denny always wanted a new pair of hiking boots for Christmas, but everyone insists on buying him driving gloves. Enzo quips that *he* listens.

Denny looks up at Mike and says this is why Eve didn't want to go to the hospital. Mike doesn't understand but agrees. He asks about his next race, and Denny says that he's going to call and tell them he's out for the season.

Mike takes Enzo to the house to get Enzo's things. He asks, “where's your dog?” as instructed, which humiliates Enzo. Enzo doesn't want to admit that he sleeps with a stuffed animal, but he does admit that he hides it for several reasons. Mostly, he's afraid of the virus that possessed the **zebra**. He retrieves his dog and they get back in the car to go to Mike's house.

Mike's wife, who isn't a wife but “a man who is wife-like,” asks how it was, and Mike pours a drink in response. Mike's wife picks up Enzo's dog and asks if they have to keep it, and Mike sighs that everyone needs a security blanket. Mike's wife declares that it stinks and puts it in the washing machine. Enzo is stunned, as nobody had ever washed his dog before. He sits and watches it in the washing machine as Mike and his wife, whose name is Tony, watch and laugh at him. Tony dries it when the washer is done, and when it's dry, offers it to Enzo.

Enzo wants to hate Tony and everyone else for splitting up his family and washing his dog. He wishes he could go to Mongolia and live by himself and guard the sheep. Enzo takes his dog from Tony and takes it to his bed. Ironically, he finds he likes his dog better clean, something he'd never imagined would be the case, but this realization gives him something to hold onto. Enzo realizes that his family can't be broken by a chance occurrence, an accidental washing, or illness. The familial bond is deep, and however things may change, the family will always be together.

Consider how the non-human narration works in this moment. Enzo never says outright that Eve has brain cancer; the reader has to imply that from Enzo's dog perception of what's wrong with Eve. This forces the reader to read into the language of the text and make inferences; essentially, to listen carefully, as Enzo just asked us to.



We again see how Enzo, as a dog, has no choice but to listen in the way he wishes humans would. As this scene plays out, the relationship between Denny and Mike is also fleshed out more, indicating the importance of platonic love and friendship in addition to familial love.



Denny here prioritizes his family over racing. Finally, too late, he understands what Eve and Enzo have known for a long time.



Enzo here suggests that the zebra is not a physical being, but an illness, and notably a virus, which can't be cured—it can only run its course. Enzo's sense of humanity is also apparent with his embarrassment regarding his dog toy.



Consider how Enzo's upbringing and the people around him influence his description of Tony. Enzo is unable to move beyond his idea that a couple is made up of a husband and a wife, regardless of the gender dynamics within a relationship. This illustrates an extent of his understanding of the intricacies of humanity and human relationships.



By having his expectation completely turned upside down, Enzo is able to come to terms with the tragedy that is happening to his family. Notice as well how the documentary on Mongolia is integrated into his anger here, as he wishes he could escape his life in Seattle in favor of this fantasy spirit land. Essentially, he wishes for divine intervention to make this situation right again.



CHAPTER 20

Because he's a dog, Enzo doesn't get to go to the hospital to hear what the doctors have to say about Eve. Enzo laments this fact, saying that nothing was expected of him except to do his business outside and to stop barking when told to stop.

Eve stays in the hospital for weeks. Denny cares for Enzo and Zoë, and visits Eve regularly, and these tasks take up all of his time. Enzo describes how their schedule changed from spontaneous restaurant and coffee shop visits to regimented days with bagged lunches and dinner at home every night. Enzo says that while not colorful, it was efficient, which was all that could be expected considering Eve's illness. Enzo's walks and trips to the dog park are infrequent, and he receives little attention from Denny or Zoë. Enzo tells the reader that despite this, he was willing to make the sacrifice to preserve the family dynamic and for Eve's sake.

After two weeks of their regimented schedule, Maxwell and Trish offer to take Zoë for a weekend to give Denny a break, and Eve supports the idea. Denny is hesitant but agrees. He and Enzo do everything they used to do—jogging, watching movies, ordering pizza, watching racing tapes. They go to the dog park to throw a tennis ball, but a surly dog gets after Enzo and Enzo isn't able to retrieve the ball. Enzo says the absence of Eve and Zoë feels wrong, and that there is no joy in their day—something is missing.

After dinner, Denny stands up, takes Enzo outside, and then says he has to go see Eve, telling Enzo to stay. Enzo lies down in his bed, and Denny leaves. Several hours later, Denny returns, crawls into bed, and tells Enzo twice that Eve is going to be okay.

Enzo is somewhat jaded by his existence as a dog in this situation. He's denied the opportunity to listen or communicate, and is reduced to doing only what we might consider normal dog things.



The reader understands that Eve is likely extremely ill given the length of her hospital stay. However, Enzo's narration focuses on how those at home are affected by Eve's absence, and particularly the sacrifices Enzo chooses to make in order to help Denny. Notice that Enzo doesn't mention the sacrifices that Denny is surely having to make with this arrangement, which further illustrates Enzo's non-human understanding of events.



Despite his initial dislike of Eve, Enzo's world is turned entirely upside down now that she and Zoë are removed from it, even just for a weekend. It's indicated that they are the bringers of Denny and Enzo's joy, the joy that is missing over the course of this weekend. We see how Enzo has gradually accepted Eve into his life when he makes this realization.



Enzo, being a dog, can't go see Eve. We can't know what happened at the hospital, but Denny's statement makes the reader question whether he's telling the truth or "manifesting."



CHAPTER 21

The Tuesday after Zoë's weekend with Trish and Maxwell, she and Enzo play in the back yard. After running around for a while, she calls Enzo over to a corner of the yard, where one of her Barbie dolls sits in the wood chips. Telling the doll it's going to be okay, Zoë unfolds a dishcloth and pulls out scissors, a Sharpie, and tape. She pulls off the doll's head, cuts off all of its hair, and draws a line in Sharpie on the doll's skull. Still whispering that the doll will be okay, she tears off a piece of tape and puts it on the doll's head, pressing the head back onto the neck and laying the doll down. She and Enzo stare at her handiwork, and Zoë says that the doll can go to heaven now, and she herself can go live with Grandma and Grandpa. Enzo is suspicious, seeing that Trish and Maxwell are establishing an agenda and sowing the seeds of a story for a future they hope will come true.

This is a concrete example of what Enzo has discussed previously regarding Zoë's fantasy world having deeper meaning than just silly fairy tales. The Barbie doll is obviously supposed to stand in for Eve, and Zoë has a definite idea of what has happened to Eve and what is going to happen to her in the future. We've gotten tastes of Trish and Maxwell's overbearing nature before, but here we see, through Zoë's eyes, where they hope to lead events going forward. While he doesn't state it outright, Enzo would probably say that Trish and Maxwell are manifesting like Denny is, but for an opposite outcome.



CHAPTER 22

Labor Day weekend arrives and Zoë is very excited to start kindergarten. On the first day, Denny and Enzo walk her down the street to the bus stop and wait with other parents and children, excitement in the air. As the bus comes down the hill, Zoë asks Denny to kiss her then so that her friend won't see, and Denny obliges. Denny then talks through the schedule for the rest of the day with Zoë, who is not impressed. She makes a face before climbing onto the bus, and Enzo swears for a moment that she's Eve. As the bus pulls away, another father asks Denny if it's his first. Denny says yes, and the man replies that there's nothing like your first, they grow up so fast. Denny agrees, and he and Enzo return home.

Despite the medical tragedy taking place, life continues, and milestones like the first day of kindergarten continue to arrive. As Zoë gets older, we begin to see more personality from her, and particularly how she is so like her parents. Enzo, further, since he's allowed into her fantasy world, arguably has a better sense of this since her fantasy world is her uncensored view of the world and by extension, her personality.



CHAPTER 23

One evening at the hospital, Enzo listens to Denny, Maxwell, and Trish talk while Zoë works on a book of mazes. Trish and Maxwell do all the talking, and say simply that it's best, although what "it" is is left unsaid. In the car on the way home, Zoë asks when Eve is coming home, and Denny replies that she's going to stay with Trish and Maxwell for a while until she feels better. When Zoë asks why, Denny replies that it'll be easier.

Again, Enzo's narration as a dog influences our reading of the text and the questions we're encouraged to ask. Enzo takes note of the power dynamic during Denny's conversation with Trish and Maxwell. They do all the speaking, and Denny is forced to listen and agree.



The following Saturday, Denny, Zoë, and Enzo go to Trish and Maxwell's house. The living room now has a fancy moveable bed and a nurse who doesn't care for Enzo. The nurse puts Enzo outside, but Zoë joins him and they play. Enzo remarks that it was a wonderful day with the family all together again.

Here, consider what Enzo's expectations for Eve's homecoming might be compared to what the reader's are. The reader is probably more aware of what Eve has been going through in the hospital than Enzo is.



Denny calls from the back door that Eve is here, and Zoë and Enzo come inside. Trish and an unknown man help a “mannequin” with dead eyes into the bed, Zoë calls the figure Mommy, and Enzo realizes the figure is Eve. Eve is wearing a stocking cap and looks sunken and ill. She remarks that she feels like a Christmas tree, and then calls Enzo. Enzo thinks that she looks sicker now than when she went into the hospital. He doesn't like any of this, so despite his audience, he hides behind Zoë and looks out the window. Eve remarks that she offended him by being sick, which Enzo denies to the reader. He says his feelings were just too complicated, and he lies down beside her.

Eve's homecoming is very much a spectacle for all involved, which likely contributes to Enzo's discomfort. The fact that Eve looks more ill now than when she went into the hospital will provide further evidence for Enzo's distrust of medicine and medical professionals.



As dinnertime rolls around, the mood lifts. Eve showers and shows everyone her scars, and, wearing her own dress rather than the hospital gown, Enzo says she looks almost normal. Eve tries to read a book to Zoë but can't concentrate, so Zoë reads to Eve instead and reads very well.

We see how Zoë is growing up despite the tragedy taking place all around her. She's now able to read fairly well. This underscores the fact that life indeed continues to go on.



Wandering into the kitchen, Enzo finds Denny conferencing again with Trish and Maxwell. The Twins say that they think Zoë should stay with them, “until.” Enzo remarks to the reader that language is mostly unspoken, comprised of gestures and looks, and Trish repeating “until” revealed everything about the situation. Denny is irritated and accuses Trish of condemning Eve before they even know, and Trish begins to sob. Maxwell says the doctor said six to eight months, and that this is going to be the only time that Zoë will get to spend with Eve. Enzo sees Denny's dilemma—deprive his daughter of her mother, or be pushed to the periphery of his family-- and Denny says that he'll talk to Zoë.

Enzo, unable to speak or truly participate in the conversation, is able to instead see all of it as though he's watching a play. He's able to read the gestures and read meaning into “until,” even though it's unclear if he fully understands the conversation. The reader, on the other hand, knows very well that Eve is terminally ill and has been given six to eight months to live. We again see how Zoë is growing up and becoming her own person as Denny feels the need to consult her about Trish and Maxwell's desire to keep her.



After dinner, Denny takes Zoë outside to talk and tells her that Eve would like it if she stayed with her. Zoë is concerned about being able to take the bus to school, and remarks that Grandma and Grandpa really want her to stay. Denny is upset, and Enzo notes that Zoë seems to understand what's going on despite the situation being far too mature for her. But Zoë agrees and tells Denny she knows he won't leave her there forever. Enzo marvels at them worrying about doing the right thing and subverting their true desires, and doubts his ability to ever be a human like that.

Here, as concepts of what is right or not get more nuanced, Enzo begins to consider humanity more in terms of these more emotional decisions and in terms of managing one's desires to in turn manage the desires of others. Keep Zoë's comment that Denny won't leave her forever in mind; the idea that Zoë doesn't necessarily want to stay with her grandparents will be important later.



Later that night, Enzo finds Denny sitting with Eve, saying that he wants to stay too. Eve says no, and Denny asks what he's done to be sent away. Eve replies that she doesn't want Denny to see her in this way, and when Denny says he doesn't care, Eve says she does. Denny finally agrees. He kisses Eve, tucks Zoë in, and leaves. Enzo understands that Eve wants Denny to remember her as she was, but says that Eve doesn't understand that Denny was capable of looking beyond her physical condition. He says that maybe if Eve had that ability, things might have turned out differently for her.

Here, we get some really important information regarding Enzo's sense of destiny and Eve and Denny's characters. Denny and Enzo are able to look at the big picture, look forward, and see the positive. Eve, on the other hand, is only able to see what's in front of her, presumably her six to eight months to live and her poor physical form right now. Enzo alludes to Eve's future when he says that things may have turned out differently had she been more like Denny.



Everyone goes to sleep except for the nurse, who soon wakes Enzo and leads him to the garage. Enzo is puzzled, thinking that he wouldn't disturb Eve, but she locks him in anyway. Enzo says his prison is dark, the only light coming from an electric clock, and he watches it tick and daydreams about his favorite movies. Enzo lists his favorite actors for the reader. Many are favorites because of their relationships to cars or racing.

Even when Enzo isn't actively watching television, he engages with aspects of television. Besides providing roadmaps for how he views the world, it gives him a mental escape route from his "prison." Additionally, unlike the nurse, we see how much Enzo cares for Eve, as he has no intention to disturb her.



Hours later, Eve appears and calls Enzo back into the living room. She tells him she needs him and not to go away again. She says she's afraid, and asks him to get her through the night. Enzo promises and stays awake all night, guarding Eve from the demon (**zebra**). In the morning, Enzo relinquishes his guard duties to Trish and Maxwell, and Eve quietly thanks Enzo for his protection.

Eve is afraid of dying and takes comfort in Enzo. We see the fruits of Enzo's manifesting—Eve is finally willing to call on him, and Enzo is more than willing to oblige. Enzo sees Eve's fear as caused by the demon zebra, thus creating a concrete enemy he can "guard" against.



CHAPTER 24

For the first few weeks, Denny visits Eve and Zoë nightly, but by Thanksgiving, he only visits twice per week. Denny gives Enzo positive updates on Eve, but Enzo sees her on the weekends and knows that she isn't getting better and certainly isn't coming home soon. Enzo spends the occasional night with Eve, but she never needs him quite like she did on her first night. Zoë spends every Saturday night with Denny, but never seems very happy.

As time passes, Enzo begins to see Eve's fate in a way that Denny can't. Denny is still optimistic, but Eve and Enzo know that it's hopeless. As she approaches her death, Eve also begins to come into herself and build confidence about facing her death, as evidenced by not needing Enzo like she did before.



Maxwell and Trish eventually ask to transfer Zoë to a school near their home, since commuting is a burden for them, but Denny refuses. Maxwell counters by offering to pay for private school, but Denny remains firm, and eventually wins the argument.

Money here is a way for Maxwell and Trish to show their love and care for Zoë, and we see that at this point, Denny values Zoë's happiness over her grandparents' desires.



Occasionally, Denny keeps Zoë overnight during the week and he and Enzo get to walk her to the bus stop. On these mornings, the house is filled with energy and excitement at getting to spend time with Zoë. On some of these mornings, the man who'd spoken to Denny on the first day of school offers to buy them coffee and they go sit at a coffee shop. One day he asks Denny if his wife works, and Denny replies that she's recovering from brain cancer. After that, the man makes himself busy whenever Denny and Enzo takes Zoë to the bus stop, and they never speak again.

Having these moments that seem almost normal helps Denny maintain his optimism, although we see as well how Eve's illness is capable of coloring these situations. Denny is still looking ahead with optimism, while the other man presumably is made uncomfortable by the situation and doesn't want to become a part of Denny's tragedy.



CHAPTER 25

In February, Denny, Zoë, and Enzo take a trip to a cabin in north-central Washington owned by a relative of Eve's. Eve and her parents don't attend, but a variety of other cousins and relatives are there. Eve insisted they go so that Zoë would have the opportunity to meet the relatives, the reasoning put forth by others being that Eve is going to die soon. Enzo takes great offense to this reasoning and wonders why the relatives waited until Eve became ill to be available to Zoë and Denny. Despite Enzo's inner turmoil with the situation and dislike of the intense cold, he greatly enjoys the nightly gathering around the fire pit where he can see stars and listen to the coyotes.

Enzo has a deep sense of justice and right and wrong, and he sees the family situation at play here as a clear wrong. Enzo's sense of familial responsibility presumably entails being available and present even during good times, not just times of tragedy. However, he's still able to find some good in the situation. Remember that coyotes are a trickster character in Native folklore, and are at the top of the "spiritual food chain." Enzo is able to feel close to them during this time.



Around the fire pit one night, Enzo notices that Denny has an admirer, Annika. She is a young teenager whom Denny apparently met years ago, but Enzo notes that her body is fully developed and is therefore, for all intents and purposes, an adult. Throughout the week, Annika positions herself near Denny whenever she can, doting on Zoë and openly admiring Denny. Enzo notes that he can't tell if Denny is unaware or not, but that he acts like he is.

Enzo here sets up how the reader is supposed to view Annika: as physically an adult, but with the mind, foresight, and social standing of a child. She's not particularly clever as she tries to spend time with Denny; even Enzo can see right through it. Denny's apparent lack of awareness, though, creates tension.



Pausing the narrative, Enzo asks who Achilles is without his tendon, and says that since he himself is mute, he's been able to study rhetoric without distractions and therefore knows what makes a true hero: flaws. He says that the true test is whether a champion can overcome obstacles, preferably of his own making, and that a hero with no flaw is uninteresting. As examples, he suggests Michael Schumacher, who is a fantastic driver, but not a fan favorite because he's remote and unapproachable, unlike the charismatic **Ayrton Senna**. Similarly, nobody applauds the sun just for rising, since it hasn't overcome adversity to do so. Finishing, Enzo says that to truly tell Denny's story, as Denny is a true champion, he must include his missteps and failings.

To some extent, we can reasonably attribute Enzo's careful characterization of heroes and how they function within a narrative to his studying of television, his understanding of driving personalities, and his position as a listener. We see as well how much Enzo idolizes Denny, as he's conflated here with Senna, Enzo's hero. This passage further works to create tension and a sense of dread, as the reader is now aware that Denny is about to make a grave mistake.



Near the end of the week, the weather reports become unpleasant, and Denny decides he needs to leave early. Annika, coincidentally, decides she too needs to leave early, buying herself hours of time sitting next to Denny. On the morning of their departure, the weather is horrendous, and the cousins implore them to stay, but Denny insists on leaving. Zoë, in the backseat with Enzo, is frightened of the car slipping on the ice, and Enzo works himself into a frenzy until Denny demands that Zoë make him calm down. Zoë grabs Enzo, holds him tight, and begins to sing to him. Enzo tells the reader that he wishes he were a master of destiny enough to have orchestrated the situation, but he was truly scared.

Enzo wishes he could “manifest” a different situation than this one, but often he’s just too subject to his natural dog instincts. Annika continues to position herself close to Denny, and Enzo’s tone makes the reader question what she’s going to do.



The drive is horrendous. Roads are closed and Denny is forced to take detours. After seven hours, Denny asks Annika to call her parents so they can try to get them a hotel room, but there are none available. They keep going after Denny installs their chains, and at the top of a mountain pass, **rain** suddenly begins. Denny removes their chains and they begin their descent down the mountain toward Seattle. Their five-hour drive had turned into more than ten.

Annika gets even more than she bargained for with their drive so extended due to the weather. Denny is described as a hero for getting them over the mountains in one piece and overcoming the adversity of rain, ice, and snow to do so. The rain, further, heralds success, but also alludes to a coming challenge.



Annika calls her parents, who tell her that they just missed the closing of a highway due to flash flooding and rock slides. Enzo thinks to himself to beware the whimsy of Fate, for she’s a “mean bitch of a lab.” Still on the phone, Annika tells her parents that she’ll stay with Denny that night. Denny is confused, but doesn’t object. Enzo tells the reader he doesn’t know why Denny didn’t take action, suggesting that maybe he needed to connect on some level with someone who reminded him of Eve and the passion they shared.

This passage recalls Enzo’s earlier statement that a good narrative is reliant on setting up expectations and delivering on them in exciting ways. Here, he’s setting up the expectation for what’s going to happen between Denny and Annika, and the reader understands that it’s not going to be positive.



After they arrive home, Denny puts Zoë to bed, changes his clothes, and pulls out a beer. Annika asks to shower and Denny sets her up in the bathroom. He goes to his bedroom, sits down on the bed, and falls asleep. Enzo lies down and falls asleep with him. A short while later, Enzo opens his eyes to see Annika standing over Denny, wearing nothing but his bathrobe, watching him sleep. After a moment, she shrugs off her robe and pulls down Denny’s pants. Denny mutters “don’t,” but he’s still mostly asleep. Annika tries to shoo Enzo, but Enzo is angry. He doesn’t attack, but says the **zebra** keeps dancing. Annika returns her attention to Denny.

Remember that Annika is a teenager, and Enzo has encouraged the reader to see her essentially a child in a woman’s body. The reader is asked in this scene to consider the potentially dangerous intersection of this state of being, as evidenced by what is described as assault of Denny. The zebra makes an appearance in this awful situation, as again its presence is associated with sexual domination.



Enzo says he has to believe that what Annika did was without Denny's consent. Finally, thinking of how he failed to protect Zoë's toys from the **zebra**, Enzo barks and Denny wakes up, sees Annika, and leaps away. Enzo continues to bark at the demon in the room. Denny, frantic, asks Annika what she's doing, and where his pants are. Annika replies that she loves him, and crawls onto the bed, reaching for Denny. Denny replies that he's married and yells at her to stop.

Annika darkens and says she thought Denny liked her. Denny implores her to put her robe on, telling her he'll take her home, and it's not legal. Finally, Annika melts, saying that he kissed her and she thought he loved her. Denny says relatives kiss on the cheek, and Annika continues to cry and say she loves him. Denny wants to comfort her but can't, and finally tells her that he's leaving the room and when she's clothed they can discuss it further.

Annika emerges in the bathrobe a while later, puts on her own clothes in the bathroom, and sits down with Denny. He offers to take her home, but she says she already called her father to come get her. Denny cautiously asks what she told her father, and Annika says that she said the bed is too uncomfortable here. Denny apologizes for giving her the wrong impression, but that she's too young. When her father arrives, Annika gets in the car. Her father waves to Denny standing in the doorway, and they drive away.

CHAPTER 26

As spring approaches, life proceeds as usual. Eve continues the process of dying while she and Zoë remain with Trish and Maxwell, but Enzo says that Denny is allowing himself one diversion. He received a job offer to drive cars for a television commercial at Thunderhill Raceway Park in California, and decided to drive himself and Enzo down for it. Enzo remarks that he feels like he and Denny are partners in crime escaping their troubles.

Finally, Enzo is able to overcome the zebra's spell by thinking about how he was unable to offer his protection before. Denny is portrayed as though he's been taken advantage of, despite Enzo's earlier admission that Denny possibly craved the passion he'd shared with Eve. This leads the reader to wonder how complicit Denny may have been.



Like other characters, Annika is motivated by love, however misguided it may be. Denny is very careful to not touch Annika and it's made clear that he sees how terribly wrong this situation is.



Here, the power of story is acknowledged, and it's indicated that the degree of power that the story will have varies depending on who tells it. Denny is aware even at this early stage how the events of this night could be spun to harm him. Annika too acts as though she's well aware of the power she holds with her account.



Enzo finally acknowledges directly that Eve is going to die and he believes it's true. Despite this, Denny and Enzo's relationship remains strong and Enzo is thrilled to get to spend this time with Denny. We see how Enzo prioritizes Denny's happiness with his support for this diversion.



The track is beautiful, new, and well maintained. After they arrive, Denny and Enzo go out to jog on the track and Denny explains that he's looking for visual markers to help him drive it later. When they return to the paddock area, Denny meets Ken, the person in charge of the event, and he tells Denny he can take his personal car out on the track if he'd like. Denny asks Pat, one of the crewmembers, for a tie-down, glancing at Enzo. Jim, another crewmember, comes over with a sheet. They make Enzo sit in the front seat and use the sheet to tightly secure him. Enzo, realizing what's going to happen, is beside himself with excitement. As Denny gets in the driver's seat, he tells Enzo to bark twice for faster and once for slower, and Enzo barks twice, making Pat and Jim laugh.

Denny and Enzo cruise onto the track and take several slow laps as Denny studies the track, explaining his strategy for Enzo. After three laps, he asks Enzo if he'd like to try a hot lap, and Enzo barks twice. Denny laughs, and they're off. Enzo loves the experience and describes the turns as magnificent. He tells the reader that Denny unfolded for him that day, and Enzo gained a greater sense of understanding of the type of driver and person that Denny is watching him drive from inside the car. When Denny finishes and they release Enzo from the car, Enzo tells the reader that there's nothing more to tell about that trip, because the experience of being out on the track with Denny was so tremendous. He says that sometimes in his dreams, he dreams of being on the Thunderhill track with Denny and barks twice.

CHAPTER 27

On the first of May, Denny and Enzo are invited to Trish and Maxwell's for dinner. Eve is absent, and Enzo finds it awkward, so he wanders into Zoë's room and finds her playing. He tries to engage her in a game, but she tells him seriously that "Enno-Fetch" is a baby game and she has to be a grown-up now. Disappointed, Enzo turns to leave the room, and Zoë says to herself that sometimes bad things happen, sometimes things change, and we have to change too. Enzo thinks that these words are someone else's, and he thinks that Zoë probably doesn't believe or understand them.

Denny here speaks candidly to Enzo, which continues to build the idea that their relationship is a very close (and almost humanlike) one. Further, Denny is explaining racing to Enzo, which Enzo loves and will later use to flesh out his ideas of spirituality and destiny. Enzo's non-human narration provides pacing of understanding for this scene, as the reader finds out at about the same time that Enzo does that he's finally going to get to experience the track firsthand.



Denny continues to explain his strategy and racing theory for Enzo, which Enzo files away for later use. As Enzo watches Denny drive, Denny's character becomes clearer for Enzo as well as the reader. We begin to understand better how Denny's driving experience influences his real-life experiences, which Enzo will later continue to consider as he offers the reader more analysis of this intersection. We see how much this experience affected Enzo, as it goes on to influence his dreams, in much the same way that the crowds did.



It's clear that Zoë is growing up now that she can read, but in this scene we see the very difficult situation she's in. At a very young age, she's being asked to deal with the untimely death of her mother while being fed words of questionable wisdom by her grandparents that she doesn't understand. Enzo sees through Zoë's words and sees that they're likely a way that Trish and Maxwell are manifesting the future they're hoping for.



Returning to the living room, Enzo waits with Denny until Eve comes out of the bathroom, assisted by a nurse. Eve is radiant, dressed in a beautiful dress, her makeup and hair done. She tells the room that today is the first day she's not dead, and they're having a party. In an aside, Enzo tells the reader that he'd like to live life as though it were stolen from death, as Eve was living on this day. The party is festive and everyone, whether truly happy or not, pretends to be happy, even Zoë. When it's time for Denny and Enzo to leave, Denny kisses Eve and tells her he wishes she could come home. Eve replies that she will.

Eve sits on the sofa while Denny gets Zoë ready for bed. Eve calls Enzo to her and scratches his ears. She tells him that she knows everyone is disappointed, but that it, whatever it is, is bigger than she is. She tells him that she regrets not insisting on going home, and then asks Enzo to take care of Denny and Zoë for her. Finally, she tells Enzo that she's not afraid of it anymore, because it's not the end. She laughs, and says finally that she knows Enzo knew that because he knows everything.

Enzo says he doesn't know everything, but he knew that Eve was right about the doctors and the course of her illness, and that once she and everyone around her accepted her diagnosis, there was no way to stop it from coming true. Denny and Enzo leave, and rather than sleep in the car, Enzo watches Seattle go by through the window. He tells the reader that if he ever finds himself in front of a firing squad, he'll think of Eve and what she said. In his dream that night, Enzo sees Eve die and let go of her needs and her body and continue her soul's journey.

CHAPTER 28

The next morning, Denny and Enzo, unaware of Eve's passing, head to a dog park to play fetch. As Denny and Enzo play, Denny talks to himself, saying that they'll move Eve back home this week. Denny throws the ball far out into the lake and when Enzo returns with it, Denny is on his cell phone. He hangs up, says, "she's gone," and starts to cry.

Finally, both Eve and Denny share Denny's sense of hope and optimism, and to some degree, the rest of the partygoers do as well. Enzo admires Eve for this sense of optimism and defiance, and it also adds more suspense—might Eve recover after all?



Any hopeful expectations the reader might have had disappear as we see that Eve has accepted her fate. She again charges Enzo with taking care of Zoë and Denny, like she did after Zoë's birth. Her final words to Enzo are spoken candidly, indicating that their relationship will end positively.



We see the truth of "that which you manifest is before you": Enzo sees that everyone around Eve saw her death, and she in turn had no choice but to see and manifest it as a result. Enzo's dream of Eve dying acts as a sort of prophecy, although note that in his dream her dying is a positive act, freeing her from her earthly troubles without consideration of those left behind.



Denny is rather naively optimistic until this is shattered by the phone call with news of Eve's death.



Enzo, for the first time and the last time in his life, runs away from Denny. He runs through the park fence, looking for untamed wilderness as he experiences waves of sadness and anger. He finds the wilderness he's looking for and keeps running until he sees a squirrel. The squirrel fills Enzo with hatred, and it doesn't see Enzo in time. Enzo charges the squirrel and attacks it, breaking its back. Enzo proceeds to eat the squirrel, feeling as though he can't be human and feel the pain that humans feel. Eating the squirrel lets him feel like an animal again, and he notes that trying to live to human standards did nothing for Eve. After he finishes, he falls asleep in the bushes. Denny finds Enzo when he wakes, puts Enzo in the backseat of the car, and Enzo falls asleep. He dreams of chasing, catching, and killing crows.

Overcome by grief and emotion, the only way that Enzo can deal with all that he's feeling is to stop acting human and give into his animal instincts. While he never before indicated that he tried to act human for Eve's sake, necessarily, we see that he feels some responsibility for her death with his statement that trying to be human didn't help her. In this time of emotional turmoil, Enzo dreams of crows, which further create a sense of looming doom and negativity. Remember that real-life crows are always out to hurt Enzo.



CHAPTER 29

Enzo tells the reader that while what he did in the park was selfish, it was possibly the most merciful thing he could've done for Denny given what they were going to find once they arrived at Trish and Maxwell's house. When they arrive, a white van is in the driveway. Denny goes into the back yard and washes Enzo. Trish comes out and hugs Denny, and Maxwell and Zoë come out of the house too. Denny goes inside alone to say goodbye to Eve. Enzo feels as though he has to do something, and seeing a tennis ball, drops it at Zoë's feet. Zoë ignores it, but Maxwell picks up the ball and throws it into the woods with an impressive heave. Enzo doesn't chase it.

Again, Enzo creates a sense of dramatic irony by setting up an expectation that Denny isn't going to find anything pleasant at Trish and Maxwell's house. While Enzo notes that he's not entirely sure of his intent with the tennis ball, the reader can guess that he's attempting to provide some sense of normalcy and care for Zoë.



Denny comes out of the house and embraces Zoë. Trish says that she and Maxwell will take care of the arrangements before the end of the week. She tells Denny that there's something they wanted to talk to him about, and takes Zoë inside to get her some breakfast. Denny, Maxwell, and Enzo sit outside in silence and Maxwell awkwardly tries to start the conversation, telling Denny they're concerned. Trish reappears expectantly, and Maxwell informs her that the conversation has just started. Denny, annoyed, asks Trish why they're concerned, and she tells him that she and Maxwell discussed it with Eve, and they think it's best if they take custody of Zoë so they can raise her in a stable family environment and provide the privileges their money can buy.

The reasons Trish and Maxwell give are entirely rooted in their financial situation and what they can provide for Zoë in a material sense. Trish tries to give her story more weight by saying they discussed this issue with Eve, which will remain a nebulous point. However, while the reader may see that Trish and Maxwell are misguided, the reader will likely also see that they're motivated by love for Zoë.



Denny and Enzo are perplexed, and Denny tells Trish and Maxwell they can't have custody. Trish tries to explain that they have the experience and finances to properly raise Zoë, but Denny again refuses. Trish states that Eve wanted them to have custody, and Denny says she never told him that. Sighing, Maxwell hands Denny an envelope. Denny opens it, and Maxwell tells Denny he should get a lawyer because they're suing him for Zoë's custody.

Trish and Maxwell again try to bolster the gravity of their story by saying that Eve agreed, but finally resort to supporting their story with legal documents.



Zoë returns to the adults and crawls into Denny's lap. Enzo watches Denny's face change, and Denny tells Zoë to pack her things, telling her they're going home. Maxwell tries to stop her and Denny is furious. Zoë doesn't know who to listen to, and Trish finally tells her to pack while the adults talk. Trish pleads with Denny to let them keep Zoë while the lawyers work something out, but Denny refuses.

Maxwell, shaking with anger, starts asking Denny how he's going to care for Zoë, and asks if she gets sick if Denny is going to keep her from the doctors like he did with Eve. Denny retorts that Eve refused to see a doctor, and that nobody could make Eve do what she didn't want to do. Maxwell says that's why Eve is dead, and Denny refuses to continue the conversation. He calls for Zoë and straps her into the car. Maxwell tells Denny he's going to regret this decision as Denny, Enzo, and Zoë drive away. Denny mutters to himself that he services the cars of the best lawyers in town and has their home phone numbers as a result. As they pull out of the driveway, Enzo notices that the white van and Eve are gone.

It's obvious that Zoë wasn't consulted about the fate of her custody, and the reader has both past evidence and the fact that she goes straight to Denny here to support Enzo and Denny's belief that Denny should have custody of her. Trish shows herself to be still open to compromise.



The root of Maxwell's desire for Zoë's custody, as well as his anger, is revealed: he blames Denny for Eve's death. He's motivated entirely by fear and love, and sees Denny as an obstacle to be overcome. Additionally, we see how Denny saw Eve and respected her. He treated her as her own, responsible person, and didn't force her to do anything she didn't want to do. While he saw this as love and respect, Maxwell sees it as exactly the opposite.



CHAPTER 30

In a pause in the narrative, Enzo discusses driving strategy. He says that sometimes, a driver being chased by another competitor will sometimes realize that it's best to let the other driver pass and force the new leader to concentrate behind him. However, he says, sometimes it's important to not allow another driver to pass for strategic or psychological reasons. Finally, he says that racing is about discipline and intelligence, and the smart driver will always win.

The reader is asked to consider how this discussion fits in with the overarching narrative. It sets up the expectation that the following legal battle is going to be a psychological one, a battle fought with discipline and intelligence rather than brute strength. The reader is of course encouraged to see Denny as the smart driver Enzo mentions.



CHAPTER 31

The next day, Zoë insists on going to school. Denny and Enzo drive her to school and then continue to a coffee shop. Denny purchases coffee and returns to an outdoor table. Fifteen minutes later, a very large and round man appears and offers Denny his condolences. The man comments that Enzo is a good-looking dog and asks if he's a terrier. Enzo is impressed that the man even noticed him.

This first meeting will greatly influence how Enzo later talks about this man (Mark Fein). Mark unknowingly flatters Enzo by not only noticing him, but asking if he's a terrier. Remember how Enzo characterized terriers as smart and problem-solving dogs—this is a major compliment.



The man tells Denny that this consultation will cost him an oil change, and then asks for the paperwork. He looks over the papers as Denny desperately says that Eve couldn't have possibly meant that she wanted Trish and Maxwell to have custody of Zoë. The man replies that he doesn't care what Eve said, and that children aren't chattel. He asks Denny a string of questions about his marriage, his criminal record, and drug use. The man says then that Denny will get custody, and a child's custody is always awarded to a biological parent unless he or she is cooking meth in their kitchen.

The man instructs Denny to call Trish and Maxwell and direct all correspondence to him as Denny's lawyer. He says grandparents are always hard because they've already ruined the lives of their own children, feel they're better parents than their own children, and have money. He asks Denny if he has money, and Denny offers oil changes for life.

The man, whom Denny calls Mark, says that oil changes won't cut it. Denny replies that this is his daughter, and Mark will get every dollar he's owed. Mark says he understands, says it will be seven or eight grand to make the custody suit go away, and that he'll waive the retainer fee. Standing up, he tells Denny the suit is bogus and that Trish and Maxwell are looking for an easy fight. He instructs Denny to call Trish and Maxwell and say that everything is in Zoë's best interest.

Mark suggests Denny take time off, but Denny refuses, saying he needs to work and keep moving, and that he's taking Enzo with him to work today. As he gathers his things, Mark tells Denny that watching him win a race on **TV** the previous year was sweet. Denny smiles, and Mark tells him to take care of Zoë and he'll take care of the suit. Mark leaves, and Enzo notices that Denny's hands are shaking. Enzo thinks that if Denny just had a steering wheel to hold onto, his hands wouldn't shake and everything would be okay.

CHAPTER 32

Enzo spends the day in the garage, feeling anxious in what he deems a very human way. He says that dogs, unlike humans, can slow down their anticipatory metabolism and sit still for hours with no effort, but figures that his inability to do so today is a result of his soul evolving to be more human. He tries to embrace it despite the discomfort.

The power of Eve's alleged complicity with this story is dismantled as Mark invokes what we're encouraged to believe is a more powerful legal story. Mark's comment about children not being chattel provides some context and language for articulating Maxwell and Trish's views of the situation: that Zoë is a commodity to be obtained rather than a person with thoughts and feelings of her own.



Mark's assessment of intergenerational family relationships again provides context for considering Eve's relationship with her parents. Remember that Trish and Maxwell wondered where they went wrong with Eve and felt responsible for what they saw as her poor choice of partner.



We see that Mark and Denny believe that Trish and Maxwell are more hoping to scare Denny into backing down without a fight than they are interested in truly fighting. Mark encourages Denny to speak of Zoë as a person rather than a commodity, which hopefully would solidify his position as her rightful guardian.



Despite his brisk and straightforward attitude towards the suit, Mark is portrayed as being a truly caring person. Denny's hands, a physical trait that denote him as human, give away his fear and discomfort with the situation. Enzo again relates Denny's character back to driving, blurring the line between Denny the driver and Denny the person.



Enzo gives the reader another way to consider humans and how they differ from dogs. He sees humans as being less in control of their emotions, and the reader is then encouraged to consider the truth of this assessment.



As the day drags on, a Seattle police car pulls up outside the open garage doors and two officers get out. An employee offers them a car wash, which they refuse. The officers go into the lobby and Enzo goes through the doors into the lobby as well. Mike is at the counter and the officers ask for Denny, telling Mike they have a warrant for his arrest. Mike, very uncomfortable, tells them Denny may have left, but goes into the back to check. Denny is on a computer in the back room, and Mike tells him about the police. Denny heads to the lobby.

Denny introduces himself and politely asks the officers what they want and asks to see the warrant. After he's read it, the officers ask him to step out from behind the counter so they can pat him down, and Denny complies. His boss, Craig, approaches and tells the officers that what they're doing isn't necessary and can be conducted outside, but they refuse. When the officers move to cuff Denny, Craig angrily says they don't need to, and the officers tell him to hold. The police read Denny his rights and Denny asks when they'll be done so he can pick up Zoë. They tell him to make other arrangements, and Denny instructs Mike to call Mark Fein.

Mike asks what Denny is being arrested for, and the officers wait for Denny to answer. Denny finally says rape of a child in the third degree, and then says he didn't rape anyone and asks what child. The officers pause, dragging out the drama. They finally answer, "the one you raped," and lead Denny away. Enzo remarks to the reader that he despised the cop for what he was doing, but he had to admire his dramatic flair.

CHAPTER 33

Enzo explains to the reader that what happened to Denny concerning the custody suit and the criminal rape charges weren't witnessed by Enzo directly. He says the events took almost three years, as Maxwell and Trish wanted to deplete Denny's bank account and destroy his desire to win. Enzo says he only attended a few meetings with Mark Fein, and only when they occurred at Mark's favorite coffee shop. He admits that much of the story that follows is reconstructed from the knowledge that Enzo was able to compile from overheard conversations and the legal and courtroom procedures he's aware of thanks to watching *Law and Order* and its many spinoffs on **TV**, as well as *The Rockford Files*, *Columbo*, *The Verdict*, and *12 Angry Men*. Finally, he says his intent is to relate the story in a dramatically truthful way, and while the facts may not be accurate, the emotion and intent are true, and dramatically speaking, intention is everything.

We see that Enzo's anxiety is not completely unfounded, as it's obvious that something bad is about to happen once the police arrive asking for Denny. Mike's loyalty to Denny is obvious as he tries to protect Denny from the police. Further, we see how confident Denny is in his innocence, given how nonchalant he seems (or tries to seem) about the situation.



The police's story is apparently more powerful than anything else in this situation. Remember Enzo's love of the dramatic, and note the drama created by only Denny and the police officers knowing the story at this point. The reader, as well as the rest of the characters present, are forced to wonder what Denny could possibly need to be arrested for.



Enzo's love of dramatic storytelling doesn't stop him from hating the story itself, but he's instead able to separate the style from the story and appreciate the style. This ties back to how Enzo described how dogs and women feel pain, as being able to appreciate the beauty of it while taking it straight on.



Enzo makes it very clear that he's a narrator who's more interested in intention and drama than the actual facts of what happened. This turns him into an unreliable narrator and forces the reader to question how much of the following story, as well as the events leading up to this point, are true. Further, Enzo is upfront about how he goes about reconstructing his story, and television again influences how he interprets the snippets of information he hears. The reader is encouraged, however, to take the described emotions as truthful and not fabricated. Emotion, then, and love by extension, are indicated to be more important than the truth of the story.



CHAPTER 34

Enzo begins to relate his story. He says the police took Denny to a small windowed room inside an office, just like on *Law and Order*. After taking fingerprints and photographs, they left him for hours with nothing to distract him. Enzo wonders if Denny despaired, or if he realized what it's like to be a dog and understand that being alone is not the same as being lonely. Enzo likes to think that he was alone but not lonely, and that he didn't despair.

Then, Mark Fein burst in, started shouting, and bailed out Denny. On the street, Mark demanded to know what the charge was about, and Denny replied that she's lying. Mark asks if he had intercourse with the girl, or if he penetrated her with anything. Denny refused to answer. Mark said that this charge is part of a plan—that a sex offender is not in the best interest of a child. He demanded that Denny be at his office the next morning. Denny, angry, asked where Zoë was, and Mark answered that Trish and Maxwell got to her first. When Denny says he's going to get her, Mark snaps that he can't do that, he also can't leave the state, and definitely shouldn't look at any other 15-year-old girls.

CHAPTER 35

Enzo tells the reader that hands are the windows to a man's soul, and you can see the truth of this by watching in-car race footage. He says a driver's hands should be relaxed and sensitive, as a too tight grip will stop information getting to the brain. He says that receptors all over the body give the brain information on body position and emotions, and restricting information is foolish. Enzo says that Denny's hands shook often after Eve's death, and it was unsettling to them both.

Later that night, Mike and Tony bring Enzo to Denny's house. Denny tells them he doesn't want to talk about what's happening, and can't anyway. Mike asks if they can come in, and Denny refuses. Mike and Tony can't decide whether to honor Denny's request or stay anyway, and Enzo can smell their anxiety. Mike asks if they need to worry about Denny leaving the gas oven on and him lighting a cigarette, and Denny replies that his stove is electric and he doesn't smoke. Mike makes several more offers to help as Tony pulls him away.

This series of events is obviously fabricated, and Enzo takes the opportunity to further discuss the difference between humans and dogs with this dramatic story. The reader is asked to consider the difference between being alone and being lonely, and also consider the dramatic heft carried by that statement.



It seems as though Denny only spends a few hours in jail, but that doesn't mean he escapes without a sentence. Remember that these events are all fabricated by Enzo, but consider the intent behind this exchange. We learn that Denny can't see Zoë, and he can't leave the state, which means he can't participate in any driving or racing events that don't take place in Washington. We also learn that Denny's legal battle is going to be significantly more difficult than he originally believed.



Once again, Enzo draws connections between hands (a human-specific physical trait), driving, and how they link back to ideas of spirituality. He also connects television when he says that all of this can be seen and understood through watching in-car race footage. This allows us to see how poorly Denny is coping with events.



Mike and Tony care deeply for Denny's wellbeing in his time of grief, and they cared for Enzo while Denny was in jail seemingly unasked. Denny's discomfort and unhappiness are obvious, and the reader wonders what physical signs of distress he's showing, like shaking hands. Enzo again can sense their more primal reactions when he smells their anxiety.



Heading into the kitchen, Enzo worries that Denny lied and they do have a gas oven, but Denny goes to the cupboard and pours himself a drink. Enzo decides he can't stand for that, and barks at Denny. Denny asks if it's too much of a cliché, and Enzo thinks that it's a pathetic cliché. Denny drinks his drink and Enzo judges him, thinking that now Denny will quit fighting and turn into a pathetic drunken character from a bad **television** drama. Enzo leaves and curls up in Zoë's room to be far away from Denny.

Later, Denny appears in the doorway and tells Enzo he put the booze away. He returns to the living room and Enzo joins him, satisfied that Denny got his point. Denny is watching an old home video of himself, Eve, Zoë, and Enzo playing on the beach when Zoë was a toddler. Enzo remarks that this was long before they ever knew they'd be separated. Denny says to Enzo that no race has been won in the first corner, but plenty have been lost there. Denny scratches Enzo and says if they're going to be a cliché, it's better to be a positive one. Enzo agrees and tells the reader that the race is long, and to finish first, first you must finish.

CHAPTER 36

Enzo describes how much he loves the drizzle Seattle is known for, since a light **rain** amplifies scents and brings odors to life. Eve has only been dead a few days, but since she died Enzo and Denny have been inside doing nothing. Denny and Enzo leave for a walk and Enzo thinks that Denny is craving a change, as he's dressed in slacks, a cashmere sweater, and his trench coat.

Enzo and Denny walk north and once they reach the park, Denny unclips Enzo's leash and lets him run. Enzo gleefully runs off the path, enjoying the smells. At the point where they usually turn around, they keep going. They cross a large road into another park, and Enzo keeps running until he's exhausted. They emerge from the park and stop at a coffee shop where Denny buys coffee and brings Enzo water, and they keep walking. Enzo tells the reader that he loves walking, but he's very tired after their two-hour walk. As they continue, Enzo recognizes Volunteer Park and Lake View Cemetery, and notes that Bruce and Brandon Lee are buried there. They don't look for their gravestones, however, and keep walking.

The extent of Enzo's understanding of the world around him takes a humorous turn here when he questions the type of stove Denny has, providing some lightness to a very dark situation. For all Enzo's discussion of the good television he's seen, we also now see that he has a sense of bad television characters, ones who give up on life and drown their sorrows.



Denny here is applying racing truths to his own life, much in the same way that Enzo does. Enzo too adds his own racing truth, which shows how both he and Denny center their lives around what racing has to teach. There's a sense of the dramatic again here with the discussion of clichés, which are often a dramatic element.



For Enzo, rain doesn't just represent challenges, it also means a state of heightened awareness. Notice how Denny is dressed and how Enzo makes sense of his clothes. The reader may understand that more is going on than Enzo realizes, bringing into question how much more aware the rain actually makes Enzo.



It's becoming obvious that this isn't a normal walk. The clues are there, such as Denny's clothing choices and the length of the walk, but the extent of Enzo's perception is being tested and the reader is forced to keep pace with Enzo. Television is again shown to be an extremely important part of Enzo's life when he notes that the famous actors Bruce and Brandon Lee are buried at Lake View Cemetery, and he puts this together before reaching an understanding of why they're there.



Finally, Enzo sees a temporary tent with many nicely dressed people, and he notices Zoë. He says the light switch in his head came on, and that Denny had dressed for the event. They approach the milling group, but as they get close, three men break off and walk to meet them. They are Maxwell and two of Eve's brothers, and Maxwell tells Denny he's not welcome. Denny replies calmly that Eve is his wife, and at that point, Zoë notices Denny and waves. Maxwell threatens to call the police, and the men start to argue. Maxwell leaves, telling his sons to escort Denny away. Zoë jumps up and runs towards Denny.

One of Eve's brothers calls Denny a child molester, and Denny doesn't budge. Zoë reaches them and jumps into Denny's arms. Trish rushes up to them and tells her sons to leave, and then tries to reason with Denny. Enzo notices that Denny's eyes are full of tears, and Zoë tells him that it's okay to cry and that Grandma says crying helps to wash away the hurting. Denny sighs and tells Zoë to help her grandparents be strong while he takes care of things, and that she'll stay with her grandparents for a while longer. Trish suggests to Denny that they compromise, Denny refuses, and Zoë suddenly notices Enzo. She squirms down and hugs him.

Trish whispers to Denny that he must've been very lonely to take advantage of a fifteen-year-old, and Denny abruptly tells Zoë that he and Enzo will watch from a spot far away. Denny and Enzo walk to a hill top to watch the proceedings, and after the funeral is over, they watch everyone leave. They stay and watch workers dismantle the tent, and finally watch workers shovel dirt on Eve's grave. When the workers leave, Denny and Enzo walk down the hill and cry at Eve's grave. When they finish, they begin the walk home.

CHAPTER 37

The following morning, Enzo finds that he can barely move. He says that by now he's eight years old, which is too young to suffer from an arthritic condition in his hips, although that's exactly what the problem is. He tells the reader that while it's an unpleasant condition, he's happy he can focus on his own difficulties rather than dwell on the fact that Zoë is stranded with Trish and Maxwell.

Finally, we realize (along with Enzo) that he and Denny have walked all this way for Eve's funeral. Maxwell is still brimming with anger at Denny. It's apparent that Maxwell and Trish have kept the less savory facts of their argument with Denny from Zoë, as she seems to adore her father as much as ever. This indicates that they're not as coldhearted as Enzo might like us to believe; they do care for the emotional wellbeing of their granddaughter.



Zoë again is repeating phrases that are not her own, indicating the amount of power Trish and Maxwell have over shaping the future they'd like to have. Denny and Zoë also once again subvert their own desires to please those around them. Trish continues to show herself to be not entirely willing to fight so directly with Denny. She'd like to have it be an easy settlement and seems to not be as anger-driven as Maxwell.



Denny knows his limits here, which Enzo would likely say is a result of his driving training. Further, Trish certainly knows that the rape charges are a sensitive topic for Denny, and is not above needling him despite her desire for an easy resolution.



Enzo's age is finally beginning to show, although like Denny, Enzo looks for the positive aspects of the situation. We see how he's further characterizing Trish and Maxwell as evil given the language he uses to describe the situation. Zoë being "stranded" paints a very different picture than a word like "staying" might.



Enzo explains that he learned his hips were abnormal very young, when he became old enough to go to dog parks. He realized that keeping his hind legs together, despite being more comfortable, was a sign of defective hips. He didn't want to be labeled a misfit, so he learned to walk and run normally. As he matured and cartilage began to wear away, the pain increased, although he tried to hide the problem. He wonders that maybe he's more like Eve than he's admitted, since he distrusts the medical world and behaved in such a way as to avoid a diagnosis that would bring about his untimely demise.

Enzo continues and says that he doesn't know why Eve distrusted medicine, but his own distrust stems from an event that took place when he was a week or two old. The alpha man introduced Enzo to a friend of his, Doc, who examined Enzo's front legs and said his dewclaws should be removed. The alpha man offered to hold Enzo, but Doc said he needed anesthetic. The alpha man said he wasn't wasting money on a dog, and Doc complied. He snipped off Enzo's dewclaws one at a time, and the pain was horrible and intense. Blood ran everywhere.

When Doc applied salve to the wounds, he whispered to Enzo that it's a mean bastard who won't pay for anesthetic, but Enzo tells the reader that it's a mean bastard who will cut without anesthetic for money, and that's why he distrusts doctors.

Returning to the present, Denny takes Enzo to the vet where he is diagnosed with hip dysplasia and prescribed anti-inflammatory medication. On the ride home, Denny repeats the diagnosis and shakes his head, and Enzo tells the reader that if he'd had fingers, he'd have shoved them into his ears to avoid listening. He knows that the diagnosis will bring his slow and painful end. He repeats that the visible becomes inevitable and the car goes where the eyes go. Enzo says that he saw what happened with Eve, that she was unable to escape when those around her agreed that she would die. Enzo says that, unlike Eve, he's going to try to look away from his diagnosis.

CHAPTER 38

Due to the criminal charges against Denny, Trish and Maxwell are granted a temporary restraining order that means Denny isn't allowed to see Zoë for several months. Denny and Enzo are wracked with grief. Mark Fein negotiates a letter exchange between Denny and Zoë, and he and Denny concoct a story that Denny is driving racecars in Europe to explain his absence. Enzo tells the reader that he admires Denny's restraint and likens him to one of Denny's favorite drivers, who never took unnecessary risks. Enzo, in contrast, says he'd like to be like **Senna** and pack their things, pick up Zoë unannounced from school, and escape to Canada.

Following Eve's death, Enzo begins to realize and voice the fact that he and Eve were probably more alike than he ever considered. This retroactively adds another layer of interest to Eve and Enzo's relationship, as the reader is then made to wonder how else the two were alike.



Remember that Enzo believes that the dewclaw is indicative of a pre-emergent thumb in dogs. Essentially, the alpha man and Doc remove Enzo's most prominent physical connection to his belief that he's more human than dog. The alpha man further is characterized as being wholly evil when he refuses to pay for pain relief for Enzo, essentially adding insult to injury.



Money is equated with human evil several times throughout the novel.



Despite the similarities that Enzo just drew between himself and Eve, he's setting out to differentiate himself from her in his handling of his diagnosis. By invoking driving truths again, Enzo ties his resolution to look away from his diagnosis back to his ideas of destiny, and he also ties ideas of humanity to it by mentioning his hypothetical fingers. Essentially, he would've used his human traits to avoid his destiny.



Notice the differences here between Denny and Enzo. Denny is cool, calculated, and doesn't take risks, while Enzo would rather be like the charismatic Ayrton Senna and take the biggest risk of all. It's unclear whether Enzo understands what the consequences of embodying Senna in this situation would be, which adds a degree of mystery and questioning to Enzo's understanding. Remember too that Enzo has said that it's the disciplined driver that wins. Essentially, he knows Denny is right.



The made up story, while successful, forgot to account for Enzo's whereabouts, leading Trish and Maxwell to panic when Zoë asks to see him. Denny tells Mark that for the story, Enzo is staying with Mike and Tony, and Mike can take Enzo to visit on Saturday.

When Mike brings Enzo back to Denny on Saturday evening, Denny eagerly pesters Mike for updates on Zoë. Mike tells Denny she's doing well, and Enzo wonders if Mike didn't see Zoë's sadness and loneliness, or hear her whispered plans to Enzo that they'd escape to Europe to find Denny.

Enzo addresses the reader and says that Denny was offered several jobs throughout the summer that he was unable to accept since he was unable to leave the state. Enzo says he understands, though, that Denny allowed this situation to befall him to test his endurance and stamina. He comes to realize as well that he himself is integral to the drama, as Denny quizzes Enzo in the evenings after Enzo returns from visiting Zoë. Enzo tries to form words and communicate telepathically, with no success, but Denny smiles and accepts Enzo's gestures.

CHAPTER 39

One weekend that summer, Denny finds a teaching job in Spokane, and Mike arranges for Enzo to spend the weekend with Zoë, Trish, and Maxwell. The night that Enzo arrives, he finds his bed already in Zoë's room. He dozes off and later wakes to find Zoë also awake, busy stacking her stuffed animals in a tall circle around Enzo's bed. She whispers to Enzo that they'll keep him company, and Enzo finds it amusing and touching. He falls asleep again. Later in the night, Enzo stirs and notices that on top of the pile, staring at him, is the replacement **zebra**, its eyes glinting. Enzo tries to stay awake to keep an eye on it, but keeps drifting off, only to wake again and find the zebra still staring.

The following afternoon, as Enzo naps on the porch while Trish and Maxwell drink their afternoon cocktails, he overhears their conversation. Trish wonders if Annika isn't as innocent as she's making out to be, and Maxwell is livid. Trish points out the coincidental timing of the rape suit, and Maxwell retorts that he'll use any opportunity to keep Zoë.

The power of storytelling is strong, but not infallible.



Enzo, as a dog, sees how unhappy Zoë is in a way that Mike either can't see or doesn't want to tell Denny he sees. We see how powerful storytelling can be, but also must consider how the power changes depending on the narrator.



The reader is reminded that parts of Enzo's story are a fiction. Despite the fact that his family is in very real danger of being forever changed for the worse, Enzo still considers the events partly in terms of their dramatic qualities. Enzo also once again considers Denny in terms of the driver he is and in terms of destiny.



The zebra's resurrection here while Enzo is well-fed and in his right mind acts as a symbol for evil or mayhem to come. Notice that it doesn't attack Enzo, Zoë, or any of Zoë's possessions-- it just watches Enzo and creates a sense of surveillance and discomfort. Further, it still seems to be Zoë's favorite, which complicates Enzo's perception that it's pure evil since it's loved by someone he loves and cares for greatly.



Trish continues to indicate that she'd rather not fight over Zoë. She may be a more sympathetic character than Enzo or the reader gave her credit for, despite her willingness to go along with Maxwell.



Enzo, stunned, thinks that despite their clever tricks, they don't understand Denny's persistence. He continues to fume and decides that Trish and Maxwell are now the Evil Twins, and his anger fuels a thirst for revenge. When Maxwell pulls out his favorite peppers, Enzo begs and Maxwell offers him one. Enzo decides against biting Maxwell but takes the pepper, telling the reader he's not above using the fact that he's "just a stupid dog" to exact revenge.

In this situation, Enzo plots how to use his dog-ness as a tool or a weapon and doesn't see it as something bad. He's willing to play the part of a "stupid dog" to win this fight. Enzo creates some dramatic tension when he takes the pepper, as the reader knows or suspects the consequences, unlike Maxwell.



When Maxwell opens the door to let Enzo outside later that night, Enzo thinks about what Maxwell is doing to Enzo's family. Enzo crouches right there on the expensive, light-colored carpet and lets loose a pile of pungent diarrhea. When he's finished, he runs happily to Zoë's room and growls at the **zebra**. Enzo says the zebra understood, and the demon knew not to mess with him that night or ever again.

By exacting revenge on Maxwell and Trish, Enzo is also able to get even with the demon zebra. By purposefully leaving his foul mess on Maxwell's carpet, Enzo arguably tapped into the bit of the zebra that's within him, although he hasn't made this connection yet.



CHAPTER 40

When September arrives, Denny's court date arrives with it. Denny leaves in the morning wearing a suit and returns late in the afternoon. He smiles at Enzo, and behind him is Zoë. The family spends a joyous afternoon playing, and after dinner, they have ice cream. Suddenly, Zoë asks if Denny is going back to Europe. When he says no, she's overjoyed at getting her room back. Denny explains to her that she can't come home yet because the lawyers still have to make a decision on where she'll live. Frustrated, Zoë instructs Denny to tell them that she wants to live with him. He tries to explain that he's been accused of doing something bad and he has to prove he didn't do it before she can come home.

The power of the story that Zoë was told through the letter exchange still holds, as she obviously still believes that Denny was in Europe. Zoë's explicitly stated desire to live with Denny adds to the sense of frustration at the situation. The reader, as well as the characters, know that the rape suit is bogus, but the power of that story is strong enough to maintain the status quo and keep the family apart for the time being.



After thinking for a moment, Zoë asks if it was her grandparents who accused Denny. She stares into her bowl of ice cream and says that she made Trish and Maxwell love her too much, and that she should have misbehaved so they didn't want to keep her. Denny is dismayed, but the conversation is over.

Enzo has previously commented on how perceptive Zoë is for her age, and here we see the heartbreaking result of her precociousness.



Later, the doorbell rings and Mark Fein is there to pick up Zoë. Mark reminds Denny that this is a victory and lays out the custody arrangement, where Denny gets Zoë one day after school and every other weekend. Mark calls Denny a champion, and then takes Zoë back to Trish and Maxwell.

Mark Fein, in trying to impress upon Denny how great this win is, uses driving language to connect with him. This first victory provides a sense of hope for the outcome of the impending rape trial.



Enzo finally understands that the trial that day had been only about Zoë's custody and not Denny's criminal charges, and that the trial had been put off while all the lawyers took vacations. However, having seen Zoë and Denny together again, Enzo's faith is restored. He tells the reader that now that Denny has fresh tires and a full load of fuel, he'll continue the race as a formidable foe.

Enzo also uses racing language to interpret Denny's win. He sees the restored contact with Zoë as emotional fuel for Denny as well as himself to get them through the grueling trial ahead.



CHAPTER 41

In another narrative pause, Enzo introduces the reader to a forgotten historical driver, Luigi Chinetti. Chinetti is best known for winning the first Ferrari victory at the 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race in 1949. He drove for 23 and a half of the 24 hours. A brilliant businessman, he later convinced Ferrari to begin selling vehicles in the United States. He ran the first dealership in the US, keeping his client list confidential. He died in 1994. Enzo wonders if a child somewhere knows that he possesses Chinetti's soul. Enzo says he doubts it, but somewhere, he knows a child is accomplishing something easily that others find hard, and this child's soul is awakening.

Enzo's belief in reincarnation doesn't only include dogs being reincarnated as men; it extends to include men, particularly great ones, being reincarnated as other men. At this point in the novel it seems to matter little that Enzo is discussing Ferrari, but Ferrari will become an important entity later (and Enzo Ferrari is probably Enzo's namesake). Additionally, Chinetti is loosely tied to Denny by their shared skill at driving endurance races.



CHAPTER 42

Denny abides by the custody arrangement and takes Zoë to museums, zoos, and the aquarium, and sometimes he takes her to the go-karts. Enzo says that she was just big enough to fit the first time he took her, and she knew how to drive immediately with no fear.

Consider here the previous discussion about a child potentially possessing Luigi Chinetti's soul. Zoë at a young age is easily accomplishing something that's difficult, as if her soul already knew how.



One day at the karts, the teen on duty asks Denny if he's going to take Zoë to Spanaway, an outdoor go-kart course, telling Denny that Zoë could kick his ass. Denny laughs, and the worker boy challenges Denny, telling him that if Zoë wins, Denny pays, and if Denny wins, he rides for free. Denny accepts. As the race begins, he stays behind Zoë, and after a few laps, he tries to pass her. She blocks him, again and again, and wins the race. Enzo is so happy that he doesn't mind sitting in the car while Zoë and Denny get fries and milkshakes after.

There's no question in Denny's mind that he can easily beat his single-digit aged daughter at something that he's been doing professionally for years. However, with Zoë's win and strong intuition regarding how to drive and win, the reader is again asked to consider Enzo's ideas of reincarnation, and whether a driver's soul currently resides in Zoë.



Enzo notes that Denny has a secret. He says that while Trish and Maxwell may restrict Denny's access to Zoë, when he does see her, he gets all the energy he needs to maintain focus for the fight ahead.

Denny's love for Zoë is what keeps him going through his battle with Trish and Maxwell. His love for her is his primary motivator.



CHAPTER 43

Spring has come, and Enzo is with Denny at an outdoor cafe, meeting with Mark Fein. Enzo sleeps and notes that the passersby on some level all want to be able to enjoy a nap in the sun without guilt, like Enzo can. Mark tells Denny that Denny owes him a ton of money, and Denny asks for 30 days to pay in full. After some back and forth, Mark agrees.

Cracks are beginning to appear in Denny's confidence as we find out that money is becoming an issue for him. Enzo understands that being a dog has its benefits, and realizes that people might envy him those perks that aren't afforded to them as humans.



CHAPTER 44

Enzo addresses the reader and says that Mark Fein suggested to Denny that if he quit his claim to Zoë, the criminal charges would disappear. Mark said that Annika's family only wants Denny to be registered as a sex offender, and sex offenders don't get custody of their daughters. Mark points out that should he accept, Zoë would get a stable, comfortable childhood and a quality education, and Denny would be able to participate in racing series and accept more jobs out of state. Mark assured Denny that he'd work out a liberal visitation schedule. Enzo shares that he wasn't convinced that this path was appropriate, because he sees that Denny is capable of having both a racing career and his daughter.

Despite Mark Fein's earlier confidence that he could win Denny's case, the reader wonders if his confidence is shaken when he makes this suggestion to Denny. This creates a sense of tension and drama, even as Enzo steps in to allay the reader's fears by stating his belief that Denny can both parent Zoë and drive professionally at the same time.



Enzo relates an experience watching one of Denny's races long ago, where, on the second to last lap, Denny was in third, but as he came around for the final lap, was driving alone and won. Returning to the present, Enzo says that Denny tells Mark that it's never too late and that things change. As if to prove it, Denny sells their house to pay Mark and moves to a small apartment across the city, with carpet that smells of chemicals and no cable TV. Enzo says he tries to make the best of it and squeezes himself into the corner by the window, where he can see the Space Needle and watch its elevators go up and down.

By invoking one of Denny's own success stories, Enzo further paints Denny as a dedicated champion who won't give up, and Denny follows through and makes Enzo's description come true. However, it comes at a cost, as Enzo's education via television is now over. Enzo again shows how deeply he cares for his family by stating that he tried to make the best of it. He once again tries to not make himself a problem.



CHAPTER 45

Not long after Denny pays his account with Mark Fein, Mark is appointed to be a circuit judge. Enzo admits he knows little about this except that it's a lifetime appointment that you don't refuse. Denny finds a new lawyer, Mr. Lawrence, who asks for a continuance to read all the paperwork, and Enzo is concerned for their fate. He says that Mark had an energy about him, while Mr. Lawrence seems sad and slow. Soon after, Trish and Maxwell sue Denny for child support, which Mr. Lawrence says is legitimate, if ruthless.

Both sides are getting more dug in on this battle, and Enzo's description of Mr. Lawrence makes the reader fear for Denny's fate along with Enzo. With what we know of Trish and her desire to have an easy fight, we can imply that suing for child support was Maxwell's idea. It's obviously a tact to bankrupt Denny, as Maxwell and Trish have made their comfortable financial situation very clear.



Enzo tells the reader that he has an imaginary friend called King Karma. He says that he fully understands the concept of karmic justice, but doesn't like the fact that karma sometimes doesn't work until lifetimes later. Thus, King Karma helps Enzo exact revenge in *this* life. King Karma kicks people who are mean and administers other fitting punishments for bad deeds. At night before Enzo sleeps, he talks to King Karma and sends him to Trish and Maxwell. Enzo says that King Karma gives them bad dreams in which they're chased by a pack of wild dogs, and when they startle awake, they're unable to fall back to sleep again.

Enzo has a very clear sense of justice and right and wrong, and he uses his spiritual beliefs to help him obtain justice, even if it's just in his mind. His imaginary friend is based on actual beliefs of Karma, but he's altered how Karma works to fit his own system. This is in line with how he constructs the rest of his belief system—he learns about an idea or a concept, and then tweaks it to fit his own needs.



CHAPTER 46

Enzo says that that winter was especially hard for him, although he's unsure if it was the stairs, his hip dysplasia catching up, or if he was just tired of being a dog. He says he longed to shed his dog body and spent his days watching people outside, unable to greet or interact with them but wishing he could.

Enzo equates his advancing age with not just physical decay, but also his weariness with being a dog at all. Note that he's not wishing to not be in pain; he's wishing to be able to truly interact with people.



Enzo says that looking back, his state of mind attracted the car to him. It's snowing in the evening as he and Denny walk home from Volunteer Park, and Enzo is unsettled by the snow. Denny allows Enzo to walk unleashed, and Enzo loses track of Denny momentarily, ending up on the opposite side of an empty street. Denny calls for him and Enzo starts across the street. Denny suddenly screams for Enzo to wait, and then a car, hushed by the snow, hits Enzo.

While the rain amplifies mistakes, according to Denny, here the snow hushes mistakes, although the consequences are seemingly worse. Enzo's belief that he attracted the car to him with his state of mind follows his belief in manifesting. He felt down and tired, and therefore attracted a situation that would make him feel that way even more.



Lying on the pavement, Enzo thinks of how stupid he is for wanting to become a man when he was just hit by a car. Denny tries to settle Enzo and speak with the driver, a shaken teenager. Denny asks the teenager to drive him and Enzo home. As Denny and Enzo sit in the back seat, Denny comforts Enzo and instructs the boy to drive.

Enzo sees being hit by the car as a failure of his soul to be human enough to avoid such a thing.



CHAPTER 47

As Enzo lies in the backseat of Denny's car on the way to the vet that night, it occurs to him that **Ayrton Senna** didn't have to die; he could've walked away. He tells the reader that the day before the fateful race in Imola, Italy, one of Senna's friends was seriously injured on the track and another driver died during a practice session. Senna, upset about the safety conditions on the track, assembled a new driver's safety group on the morning of the race. However, despite thinking seriously of retiring and not participating in the race, Senna decided to race.

Compare the lead-up to Senna's death to the events that took place before Enzo was hit by the car. Both of them experienced low moods, and their ensuing freak incidents or accidents (snow in Seattle; the other drivers getting injured and dying) seem to indicate that bad things are about to happen—if one follows Enzo's belief in manifesting.



In the extremely dangerous Tamburello corner, **Senna's** car left the track at 190mph and he was killed instantly when suspension pierced his helmet. Or, Enzo suggests, he died in the helicopter en route to the hospital, or he died on the track. Enzo says that there's still great controversy over Senna's death, as on-board footage of the race disappeared and politics entered. In Italy, if a driver dies on the track, the race is stopped, severely affecting revenue. However, if a driver dies in a helicopter, the race can continue. Enzo wonders what the truth is regarding Senna's untimely death at the age of 34, and answers himself. He says that Senna, a great man, died because his body had served its purpose, and his soul had learned whatever it came to learn and was free.

Take note again of Enzo's mentioning of how money influenced the reporting of Senna's death, and remember that Enzo sees money as an entirely negative thing. However, despite the intrigue and mystery, Enzo is able to make sense of Senna's tragically early death by choosing to believe that Senna's soul had learned everything it needed to. This provides Enzo with a way to make sense of death in his own life and further shape his sense of destiny.



Enzo thinks of this on the trip to the vet, and tells the reader that if he'd already accomplished what he was meant to, the car would've killed him. But since he wasn't killed, he knows he still has work to do.

Enzo is able to use Senna's death to make sense of the fact that he didn't die. He escapes this incident with a renewed sense of purpose.



CHAPTER 48

At the vet, Enzo remembers the doctor manipulating his hips painfully, and then he was given a shot and fell asleep. When he wakes, groggy, he hears things like "dysplasia," "chronic arthritis," and "pain threshold." Denny carries him to the lobby, where he continues to understand only snippets of conversation, especially "eight hundred twelve dollars." Denny hands the vet tech a credit card and kneels down to comfort Enzo on the floor.

The reader has to follow Enzo through his drug-induced groggy state, and we learn only as much about the situation as Enzo does. Again, the idea of money sticks out to Enzo, and the reader understands that this is not an inexpensive visit to the vet.



The tech calls for Denny and tells him his card has been declined. Denny offers another card, which also doesn't work, and then finally his ATM card. Beginning to panic, Denny offers the vet and the assistant the \$300 he took out in cash when he deposited his paycheck earlier that day. The vet tells Denny to relax and offers to take the cash and run the balance in the morning. Embarrassed, Denny asks if he can keep \$20 to put gas in his car. The vet nods and gives Denny his receipt.

Trish and Maxwell have accomplished their goal of draining Denny's bank account. Consider Enzo's earlier discussion of what makes a hero, and his belief that a hero's problem being self-made is important in making the reader care. Here, we see the result of Denny refusing to drop the custody suit.



At home, Denny sits on his bed with Enzo and tells Enzo that he can't keep going. He tells Enzo that he can't even afford to keep Enzo. Enzo wishes desperately that he had thumbs and a tongue and could shake Denny and tell him that this is just a crisis that will pass, but he can't. He can just sit and listen.

Denny is broken and beaten, and Enzo is forced to reckon with the fact that he's a dog and can't do anything for Denny except listen, and wish for human traits that would allow him to communicate better.



CHAPTER 49

A few weeks later, Denny and Enzo go to Mike and Tony's house. Tony is out, but Mike and Denny sit in the kitchen with a manila envelope. Mike, pacing, is talking Denny up, telling him that this is the right thing—Mr. Lawrence negotiated a generous visitation schedule, an end to the child support payments, Zoë will receive a private education and have her college paid for, and Annika's suit will be settled with only harassment and probation charges. Denny finally asks Mike for a pen and, holding it over the documents, tells Mike that he feels like they've sliced him open and gutted him, and the only good thing is that now he isn't broke. Mike agrees that it's rough, and Denny comments on how nice the pen is.

Enzo looks more closely at the pen, which is a souvenir pen with sliding figures from Woodland Park Zoo. He then notices that the sliding figure in the pen is a **zebra**. Suddenly, he realizes that the zebra isn't something external—it's inside all of us and is our fears and the worst parts of humans. As Denny moves the pen towards the documents, Enzo says he knows it's not really Denny signing. It's the zebra, and Denny won't give up his daughter for a few extra weeks of custody and an exemption from child support.

Enzo, thankful for the pain medication he's still on, snatches the papers off the table and proceeds to lead Mike and Denny on a low-speed chase through the house. They finally corner him in the living room, and just as they're about to catch him, Enzo notices that one of the windows is open. Ignoring his pain, he dives through the window, crashing through the screen, and then runs into the back yard. Denny and Mike follow, stunned. They stand on the deck and watch Enzo, still refusing to hand over the papers. Enzo digs at the papers, and as Denny warns him that he's going to be in trouble, Enzo lifts his leg and urinates on the papers.

At this, Mike and Denny finally laugh. Enzo goes to Denny, and Mike suggests calling Mr. Lawrence for another copy, but Denny tells him that he's with Enzo, and he's not giving up.

When they get home, Denny bathes Enzo and then puts on one of Enzo's favorite races, the 1984 Grand Prix of Monaco, in which **Ayrton Senna** drives in the **rain**. Enzo tells the reader that Senna would've won, but they canceled the race due to the weather. He says that when it rained, it never rained on Senna.

The extent of Denny's horrible financial situation is finally exposed as he prepares to accept a settlement he doesn't truly want or believe in, but which will keep him from being broke. Mike is trying to make the settlement seem better than it is, and essentially turn it into a more positive, powerful "story" through the language he uses to talk about it.



Enzo has been right all along; the zebra is all around us, but in a different way than he originally thought. This light-bulb moment represents a breakthrough in Enzo's understanding of not just humanity, but what it is to be alive. Nobody is just good or just bad; it's all shades of gray, and the zebra resides in all of us to some degree.



In this moment, Enzo channels his inner Ayrton Senna with his heroics. He overcomes pain, age, and the inability to speak, and successfully does battle with the zebra in what is truly an epic display, and one that underscores the fact that gestures are all that he has with which to communicate. Further, his motivation is the preservation of his family and his love of Denny and Zoë as much as his newfound knowledge of good and evil.



Like Enzo, Denny has overcome the zebra by making the decision to not give up easily and continue fighting.



Enzo's statement about it never raining on Senna works to further set him apart and above as a spiritual figure. He's so much better than the other drivers that challenge and adversity don't even touch him.



CHAPTER 50

That summer, Enzo turns ten. His hips had healed poorly after being hit by the car, but vowing to not cost Denny any more money, he ignored the pain as much as he could. Denny had been taking some instructing gigs at Don Kitch's driving school, and often took Enzo with him. Enzo tells the reader he very much enjoyed being a track dog.

One day near the end of July, while Denny is out on the track with a student, a red Ferrari pulls up to the school. Don calls the students in for lunch and then calls Denny over, reintroducing him to Luca Pantoni, the man from Ferrari. Don asks Denny if he'd show Luca the track. He agrees, and Luca asks Denny to drive. They head off onto the track and Don, Enzo, and the students head to the bleachers to watch. Don cryptically says that Denny has an audition. As the students watch, Denny takes a few slow laps, and then all of a sudden the car turns from a car into a blur. The students are stunned.

Denny and Luca, after a cool-down lap, return to the paddock and the students fawn over the car. Don herds the students into the classroom, and Luca offers Denny a business card. He tells Denny he'd like Denny to work for him in Italy, teaching but mostly testing vehicles. Denny would be provided with an apartment for himself and Zoë. Denny, stunned, asks why, and Luca replies that he hears Denny is an exceptional driver in the **rain**, and offers to explain further when Denny can join him for dinner at his house in Italy. Denny tells Luca that he must decline, to which Luca says that he knows what Denny is going through and will keep the position open for when things are resolved.

Luca drives away, and Don appears to ask Denny how it went. He tells Denny that Luca's been interested in him for years and respects how Denny is fighting for Zoë. Denny asks what happens if he doesn't win, and Don replies that there's no dishonor in losing, only in not racing for fear of losing.

CHAPTER 51

As winter arrives, Enzo is having more trouble with his hips and has developed a mild case of urinary incontinence. Denny begins coming home on his lunch break to take Enzo out, telling Enzo that the walk helps him deal with the frustration he experiences as the cases drag on at a glacial pace. One evening, Denny and Enzo go out for a walk. Enzo ignores the urge to sniff the gutter and another dog's behind, but still urinates on the street because it is his only option as a dog.

The narrative that Enzo is telling us is beginning to catch up with the opening scene of the novel. Enzo is old, he's in pain, and he's doing his best to not make a big deal out of it. Presumably, he also still hasn't accomplished what his soul is supposed to.



The reader already knows how much Enzo admires the Ferrari brand and the way they do business (remember his discussion of Luigi Chinetti), so Denny having an "audition" with an important Ferrari man, while certainly an achievement in its own right, takes on deeper significance. The language used to describe the experience of watching Denny drive underscores how good of a racer Denny really is.



This story seems too good to be true, and Luca's statement that he's offering Denny this job because of his skill driving in the rain provides a very Enzo-esque sense of drama to the situation. While Enzo was there and watching, keep in mind that parts of the story are also admittedly fictional and fabricated for the sake of a more dramatic retelling. Thus, it's somewhat unclear if this is truly what Luca said, or if this is a fiction in which Enzo continues to draw similarities between Denny and Ayrton Senna.



This tidbit of information about Luca's longstanding interest in Denny serves to create mystery and drama. Once again, a racing truth is applied to real life to underscore how integral driving is to Denny's selfhood.



The reader is again given the sense that the Enzo of the narrative is catching up with the Enzo from the beginning—we realize that Enzo's puddle of urine from the first chapter was likely not entirely on purpose. Further, as he ages, Enzo takes issue more and more with his life as a dog, indicating the unsavory things he resists or has no choice but to do.



Suddenly, Denny and Enzo stop as they notice Annika, now 17 or 18, sitting at a café down the street. Enzo is gripped with hate, and calls her many names to express his displeasure to the reader. Enzo thinks that they'll cross the street to avoid her, but Denny keeps walking. Enzo resists, and Denny takes his muzzle in his hands and tells Enzo that they can make this work, and that Enzo needs to love her when they reach her. Enzo doesn't understand, but agrees since Denny has the leash.

Enzo is very in tune here with the power dynamic between himself and Denny, which is the way it is due to Enzo being a dog. He continues to narrate as though he's very tired of this situation, further indicating his age and his waning patience with his existence as a dog.



As they reach Annika's table, Denny acts surprised and greets her. Annika, also acting surprised, greets Denny and Enzo. Enzo greets her enthusiastically, inwardly seething. Denny asks if they can talk, asking Annika's friend to stay and witness that nothing improper happens. Sitting down, he addresses Annika and tells her that everything is his fault. He says that he may have given her signals, but that he was unavailable for a variety of reasons. He continues that she did nothing wrong, but asks if she knows what the consequences of her suit are. Denny tells her that he'll never be able to see Zoë again without supervision. Annika is silent, listening. Finally, Denny says that the first time he saw Eve, he couldn't breathe or function. He tells Annika that someday, she'll find a partner that will make her feel that way, but it could never be Denny.

Enzo's love and trust of Denny is apparent as he plays along with Denny's plan despite his anger. Finally, several years later, Denny and Annika can have the adult conversation they weren't able to have on the night of their incident. This shows the power of language and communication, as the entire suit is constructed around unclear language and communication. Although the reader has been shown throughout how much Denny loved Eve, finally getting to hear it in his own words creates a bittersweet feeling and indicates how much his love for her still motivates him.



Denny apologizes and implores Annika to not take Zoë away from him, and then he and Enzo leave the girls. As they walk away, he tells Enzo that he thinks Annika heard him. Enzo barks twice in response, and they trot home.

Enzo, despite his age and pain, understands the gravity of what has taken place with Annika, and this allows him to forget his age for a moment and provides a sense of hope.



CHAPTER 52

An elderly couple stands in Denny's doorway, and Enzo tells the reader that he doesn't recognize them at all. Denny embraces them, takes their suitcases, and shows them where their room is. They say nothing in response. Enzo notes that the man is long and stringy, while the woman wears sunglasses inside and often stands still, waiting for the man to come to her before she moves.

Enzo's limited perception here is obvious. The reader is likely aware that this woman is blind, but because Enzo only describes that she wears sunglasses and waits to move until she has help, it's unclear if he understands that she can't see.



The woman whispers in the man's ear, and the man says to Denny that his mother would like to use the washroom. Denny offers to show her, but his father takes the woman's arm. As they go into the bathroom, Denny rubs his face and says to himself, "good to see you; it's been so long."

The reader finds out at the same time as Enzo that these are Denny's parents, present for the first time in the novel. Their strained relationship with Denny is clear from the start.



CHAPTER 53

Enzo addresses the reader and says that if he'd known he was meeting Denny's parents, he would've greeted them differently. Enzo says that they stayed for three days, and on one day Denny fetched Zoë to meet them. Enzo says that Zoë sat quite still with Denny's mother as she touched Zoë's face and cried. Once during the visit, Denny's father came up behind Enzo as he watched the Space Needle, asked Enzo what he saw, and touched the crown of his head the same way that Denny does. Denny's father then said to take good care of him, and Enzo wonders who he was speaking to—himself or Denny, and was it a command? He notes how wonderfully vague language can be.

On the final night of their visit, Denny's father hands Denny an envelope and tells Denny to open it. Denny asks what it came from, and tells his parents they don't have any money. Denny's father explains that it's a reverse mortgage and when they die, the bank will get their house, but Denny needs the money now. Denny and his father embrace, crying, and his father says that they never did right by Denny, but this will make it right. They leave the following morning, and Enzo notes that their visit was brief but powerful, and life will soon begin again.

Despite the fact that Enzo has previously spoken of Denny's parents as though he's exasperated by their absence in Denny's life, we see how much Enzo values family with his wish that he'd greeted them differently. Enzo also draws connections between generations as he considers the touch from Denny's father, much the same way as he's compared Zoë to Eve. This further underscores the connectedness of family.



Throughout the novel, Enzo has implied that love and care are best shown through one's presence. Finally Denny's parents demonstrate their care with their presence, and with what we can assume is a substantial check. This creates a sense of closure now that Denny's parents are no longer such a mystery, and Enzo's language alludes to the sense of relief created by their visit.



CHAPTER 54

Enzo pauses for another discussion of racing strategy. He tells the reader that a driver must have faith. When a driver is forced off his line for whatever reason, he finds himself at a turn exit with too much speed and no more track. At this point, the driver must make decisions. The driver must accept that mistakes have been made and be willing to pay the price, which is to go off track into the gravel. While in the gravel, other drivers will pass him, but Enzo suggests considering the drivers who have suffered great tragedy by over-correcting and spinning their cars. Rather, he says, the driver must wait to get back on the track when it's safe, and while he may not win, he'll at least be alive. He finishes by offering the advice that it's better to drive within oneself and finish last than it is to drive too hard and crash.

The reader knows that Denny is nearing the end of his legal battle. He's made mistakes and has been paying the price for them, and here Enzo makes the case that Denny should continue to stick it out, have faith, and persevere through this grueling rough patch, keeping in mind that at this point, an "overcorrection" could lead him to failure. "Driving within oneself" could allude to the fact that Denny knows he's innocent, and that holding onto this piece of knowledge will help him finish this race.



CHAPTER 55

Thanks to Mike's prodding questions, Enzo learns the story of Denny's parents over the next few days. His mother began going blind when Denny was a child, and he cared for her until he left home after high school. His father told him that if he didn't stay to help, Denny shouldn't bother keeping in touch. Denny called every Christmas until his mother finally answered but didn't speak, and after years, she finally asked Denny how he was doing.

Here we learn the roots of Denny's sense of familial responsibility. Throughout his life, he's been a caregiver to various family members, first his mother and then his wife. Again, the fact that Denny reconnected with his parents provides a degree of hope for the rest of the storylines, especially given the money they gave Denny.



Denny's parents hadn't paid for the testing program in France or contributed to his sponsorship for the touring car season. Denny had paid for those with a home equity loan and a second mortgage. Denny continued to end up on the phone with his mother, begging her for help so he could keep Zoë. Finally, she responded that she'd help if she could meet Zoë. As Denny finishes his story, Mike comments on how sad the story is, and Denny counters that he believes it has a happy ending.

Denny fabricated the story that his parents paid for these experiences in order to create the sense for those around him that his parents were involved and cared about him. This further complicates the idea of family and familial love by questioning the relationship between the outward performance of familial love versus the reality of the situation.



CHAPTER 56

Enzo narrates the commencement of the trial, but notes that what he is telling the reader is reconstructed from what he heard and what he knows of court proceedings from courtroom dramas. He wasn't there, because he was a dog. The first day was devoted to pretrial motions, and on the second day they selected the jury. Both days, Mike and Tony arrived at Denny's apartment in the morning, Mike to escort Denny to court while Tony stayed behind to take care of Enzo. Tony and Enzo didn't do much besides read and occasionally walk to a nearby café so Tony could use the free wi-fi to check his email. In the years since Tony washed Enzo's dog, Enzo decided he liked Tony, although Enzo's dog finally fell apart and was thrown away.

Enzo's advancing age and growing displeasure with his existence as a dog is becoming more and more obvious. While it's not said outright, it's implied that Enzo's incontinence is bad enough to warrant constant supervision. Mike and Tony demonstrate their love for Denny by actively supporting him and Enzo through the case, essentially acting as Denny's "pit crew" for this race.



On the third morning, Tony, Mike, and Denny are all tense, as this was the day that would decide Denny's future. Enzo says he later learned that Mr. Lawrence began with an impassioned opening statement, and the prosecution brought a string of witnesses, all cousins who had been at the cabin, who detailed Denny's predatory behavior with Annika. When Annika was called to the stand, she described every look and incidental touch, but said she had no idea what she was getting herself into and that she'd been tormented ever since.

Again, remember that this is all secondhand information and that we can't be entirely sure that this is the full truth. Annika constructs her story to play off her youth and the lack of understanding she had of the situation. It's implied that she understands more about the situation now, but it's unclear what changed, or if Denny's conversation with her made a difference.



Enzo tells the reader that he would've asked in what way the events tormented her, by her innocence or by her guilt? Enzo reiterates that he wasn't there to ask, and continues that when Annika was done, nobody in the courtroom except for Denny was sure he hadn't assaulted Annika.

Annika's story was convincing enough that everyone without firsthand evidence of that night wonders what truly happened, further exploring the power of a story.



Later in the afternoon, Enzo and Tony are at the cafe. Enzo is dozing as Tony pockets his cell phone. He tells Enzo that it was Mike, and the prosecutor asked for a special recess, which means something is happening. Tony and Enzo hurry to the courthouse. Enzo struggles with the pain, but Tony insists they keep moving. When they arrive at the courthouse, Annika is in the middle of a group of people outside, but as Tony approaches it starts to **rain** and the group hurries inside. Enzo notes that Annika is crying and winces when she notices Enzo. He wonders what's going on and wishes for an intervention from a **movie** star to make everything right again.

In Enzo's mind, a splash of drama from a charismatic movie star would have the power to make this confusing and tense situation make sense and end well. Consider that the logic of films often allows for exactly what Enzo is craving, while real life is usually more nuanced, mundane, and significantly less dramatic. Enzo's wish here demonstrates again how vitally important cinema and drama are to the way he makes sense of the world.



Tony and Enzo escape the **rain** under an awning. Enzo wishes he could intervene in the courtroom, and Tony says they can't change anything now. Enzo wonders if that's true as he lies down on the wet concrete and falls asleep.

The characters are in the midst of an intense challenge as indicated by the rain. Enzo's sense of destiny comes into play as the reader wonders if he can manifest a positive outcome.



In Enzo's dream, Mr. Lawrence calls Enzo to the stand. The prosecution objects, but the judge asks if this dog can speak. Mr. Lawrence says that he uses Stephen Hawking's voice synthesizer, and the judge overrules the objection and swears Enzo in. Mr. Lawrence asks Enzo what happened that night, and Enzo, before answering, says that the truth lies in all of us, hidden in a hall of mirrors. He mentions a James Bond **film** in which Bond shatters mirrors to reveal the villain, and Enzo continues that we also must root out distortions until the truth stands before us.

Finally, Enzo gets the ability to not just speak, but to perform. He isn't human, but he is finally in full possession of the language he's spent the entire novel trying desperately to use. Note that even in his own performance, he recounts a film performance of James Bond. Even now, at his most human point, he still relies on what he's learned from film and drama to formulate his actions and words.



Pausing, Enzo then says that Denny did nothing to Annika, but that it was clear that she loved Denny and offered herself to him, which Denny refused. The judge asks Annika if this is true, and she bursts into tears and drops her accusations. The judge dismisses the case and awards Denny custody of Zoë, and Denny, Zoë, and Enzo embrace.

Enzo makes it very clear that Annika was motivated by love for Denny, not simply evil intentions. His conception of the goodness and evil in humans is growing more nuanced.



Enzo wakes to hear Denny's voice saying it's over. Denny continues and says that Annika recanted. Mike hugs Denny, and Denny cries. Tony thanks Mr. Lawrence, who says that he got Annika to admit that the story she'd been telling was what she'd hoped had happened, not what had actually happened.

Now that the trial has finished, Enzo's dream can be seen as a prophecy—or as him manifesting Denny's win.



Enzo glances around and sees Annika leaving the courthouse with her family. Enzo says he realized then that she wasn't bad, and that a driver can't be angry at another driver for a track incident—a driver can only be upset at himself for being there at the wrong time. Annika waves, and Enzo barks in reply.

Enzo realizes that Annika is not pure evil, which completes his understanding of what it means to be human. We all are composed of good and bad elements; there's a bit of both the zebra and Senna in all of us.



CHAPTER 57

The following day, Mr. Lawrence calls to tell Denny that Trish and Maxwell have dropped their custody suit, but requested 48 hours with Zoë before returning her to Denny. Denny agrees to the 48 hours and makes cookies the night before Zoë's return.

As Denny works, the phone rings, and he answers it on speaker. Enzo hears Luca Pantoni's voice. Denny thanks him for calling and tells him that his issues have been resolved, and asks if the position is still available. Luca says it is, and Denny replies that he, Zoë, and Enzo would love to join Luca in Italy. Luca comments on Enzo's name and then tells Denny he'll need a three-year contract. Denny agrees and says that Zoë is very excited.

After a moment of silence, Denny asks Luca why he's made such a generous offer. Luca tells Denny that when his own wife died, he himself almost died from grief, but a mentor helped him. This mentor was Luca's predecessor at Ferrari, and his help saved Luca's life. Luca continues and says that the gift isn't for him to keep—he must pass it on, and he feels fortunate to be able to offer his hand to Denny. Denny thanks him, and Luca welcomes Denny to Ferrari. After they say goodbye, Denny offers Enzo his cookie dough-caked fingers to lick. Denny tells Enzo that sometimes he believes.

CHAPTER 58

The morning of Zoë's arrival, Enzo hears Denny in the kitchen making breakfast. Enzo thinks about death, and thinks that while many think death is dark and frightening, it's not frightening for him. He pulls himself up and thinks that growing old is pathetic, but tells the reader he thinks that it's something we've chosen to do, and someday a mutant child will be born and refuse to age, and this child will live for hundreds of years and humans will cease to grow old and die.

When Enzo reaches the kitchen Denny asks him how he's feeling, and Enzo silently replies that he feels like shit. Denny hands Enzo a pancake, his favorite food, but Enzo can't taste it. It falls to the floor. Enzo thinks that he doesn't want Denny to worry, and he doesn't want to force Denny into taking him to the vet. Enzo muses that euthanasia has merit, but it's too emotional, and he'd prefer assisted suicide because there's nothing passive about it. He tells the reader that when he returns as a human, he'll invent the suicide machine for dogs, and will shake hands with men and teach people everything he knows, and help everyone he can.

Trish and Maxwell aren't all bad either; they're capable of losing graciously. Enzo finally witnesses them as dimensional characters rather than as the Evil Twins.



Enzo is almost certainly named after Enzo Ferrari, the founder of Ferrari. This makes Denny's move to work for Ferrari an even more fortuitous event than the reader was originally led to believe, and it also ties back into Enzo's idea of destiny.



The idea of reincarnation is loosely tied in here with the idea of the gift. The opportunity or gift of working with Ferrari is not a gift to be given just once; it must be passed on and allowed to continue for many lives to come. While this explains past events, it also opens the door for future events, as we know now that Denny too must eventually pass on this gift.



Notice that Enzo conceptualizes death as an act that humans (and dogs) have chosen to participate in, giving one final layer to Enzo's idea of manifesting and destiny. Enzo himself chose to not accept his own diagnosis when he received it; potentially, he began the work of refusing to age.



Enzo again wants control of his destiny and his death, hence his desire for assisted suicide over euthanasia. He wants to make the decision himself rather than force Denny to make it, even though we know from Enzo's urine stunt the night before that Denny has essentially already made the decision. Enzo's belief in reincarnation is as strong as ever as he faces his death, and we see him manifesting a positive next life for himself.



Enzo goes to Denny and Denny scratches Enzo's ears. Enzo's legs buckle and he falls. Denny turns off the stove and sits down with Enzo. Enzo thinks of Denny's future, that he and Zoë are going to Italy and Denny will experience success on the track and become a Formula One driver like **Ayrton Senna**. Enzo says he'd like to see this happen, but his soul has learned what it came to learn. Denny cradles Enzo and comforts him.

Enzo tells the reader that he knows that racing in the **rain** is about balance, anticipation, and patience—it's about the mind, and believing you are everything and everything is you. He says that to be a champion, a driver must have no ego at all.

Enzo says he saw a **documentary** on Mongolia, which said that a dog will be reincarnated as a man. Enzo says he's ready, but Denny will be very sad. Denny tells Enzo that if he needs to go, he can go. Enzo turns his head and sees his world and the fields of Spangle, where he was born. Enzo starts again that he saw a documentary, but feels Denny's breath on his neck and says the fields look like they go on forever. He remembers the documentary said that a dog will be reincarnated as a man, and Enzo says that when he comes back as a man, he'll find Denny, shake his hand, and tell him that Enzo says hello.

Denny tells Enzo he loves him, and Enzo takes a few steps into the field. He starts running, still hearing Denny. He barks twice and doesn't turn back. He keeps barking twice to tell Denny "faster," and says that what he wants now is all he's ever wanted: One more lap, faster.

IMOLA, ITALY

An unnamed champion sits alone near the Tamburello corner on soggy grass. Everyone in the world is celebrating this champion's Formula One victory. A golf cart stops near him, and a young woman with long blonde hair gets out. She has two people in the cart with her. She calls the champion "Dad," and says that the two people are big fans and that she thinks he'd like to meet them.

The man and his child walk toward Denny and Zoë. The man says they're Denny's biggest fans and that his son worships Denny. Denny asks the boy his age and asks if he races. His father says he races the karts and he's very good. He then asks if Denny will sign their program. Denny takes the program and asks the boy his name. The boy replies in Italian that his name is Enzo, and he wants to become a champion. Denny, stunned, stares too long before signing the program and handing it back.

Denny is compared one final time to Ayrton Senna, and given Enzo's previous success with manifesting Denny's future, it indicates that Denny will indeed experience this success. In this emotional moment, Denny provides for Enzo what Enzo has previously provided Denny: comfort and understanding.



This is what Enzo's soul needed to learn before it could move on to the next life. Overcoming adversity is about being patient and immersing oneself in the struggle.



In his dying moments, Enzo manifests what he desires for his soul's future as he faces once again his beginning (the fields of Spangle). This further reinforces the idea of the cyclical nature of life and of Enzo's beliefs. As his soul contemplates these fields, which are Enzo's version of the afterlife he learned about in the documentary on Mongolia, he repeats his final desires, manifesting until the end.



After receiving verbal proof of Denny's love, Enzo is able to step into the spirit land where all of his beliefs coalesce: racing, love, destiny, the documentary on Mongolia. These beliefs accompany him to his death.



Remember that the Tamburello corner is where Senna died. Here, on the same track and at the same corner, this champion (whom we assume is Denny) has just won a Formula One race. Enzo predicted and manifested this before he died, and we see that it came true.



It's implied that Enzo the dog has been reincarnated as Enzo the boy. Denny understands the serendipity of the situation, hence his stunned reaction. Enzo the boy seems like he's going to accomplish what Enzo the dog always wished for and tried to manifest: to be a champion, to be human, and to meet Denny as a man and speak to him.



The man looks at the program and asks what Denny wrote, and Denny replies that it's his phone number, and when the boy, Enzo, is ready, to call him and Denny will make sure he gets instruction and opportunities to drive. The man thanks Denny profusely and tells him that Enzo says that Denny is better than **Senna**. Denny ruffles the boy's hair and says he's a racer at heart. Enzo says, in Italian, that your car goes where your eyes go, and Denny laughs and agrees.

In the final act of the novel, Denny completes the cycle of the gift given to him by Luca by promising to pass it on to boy Enzo. Boy Enzo, like Enzo the dog, believes that Denny is better than Senna, and repeats dog Enzo's guiding phrase, further reinforcing that he's a reincarnation of Enzo the dog and further completing that cycle as well.





HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

MLA

Brock, Zoë. "The Art of Racing in the Rain." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 17 Feb 2017. Web. 21 Apr 2020.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Brock, Zoë. "The Art of Racing in the Rain." LitCharts LLC, February 17, 2017. Retrieved April 21, 2020. <https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-art-of-racing-in-the-rain>.

To cite any of the quotes from *The Art of Racing in the Rain* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

MLA

Stein, Garth. *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. HarperCollins. 2009.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Stein, Garth. *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. New York: HarperCollins. 2009.