



## SETKÁNÍ S KNIHOU

# Impossible creatures

Katherine Rundell



Metodiku zpracovala:

Mgr. Helena Peřinová, ZŠ Petra Bezruče

Konzultace:

Mgr. Tereza Tesarčíková, ZŠ Petra Bezruče

Věková kategorie:

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Zaměření (cíl, obsah) lekce:

předvídání, vyhledávání na internetu, vymýšlení názvu knihy, pisatelství, porovnávání, kreslení, návrh obálky, udržitelnost a životní prostředí, charakteristika osob, psaní falešné zprávy (rozvíjení digitální kompetence a mediální gramotnost), řecká mytologie



**Spolufinancováno  
Evropskou unií**

RVP 2025:

Průřezové téma – Udržitelné prostředí

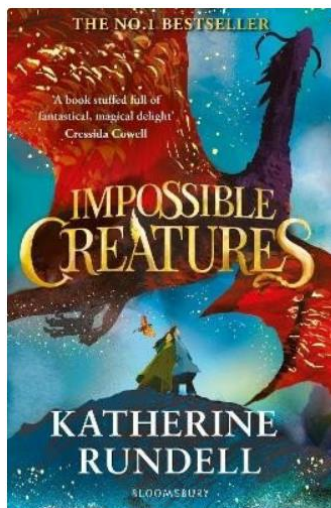
[PTU-000-000-ZV9-001](#)

**Vyhledá příklady, kdy lidské zásahy do prostředí přinesly původně nepředvídané důsledky, a vysvětlí, jak je možné se z daných příkladů do budoucna poučit.**

Žák by měl porozumět tomu, proč je potřeba uplatňovat princip předběžné opatrnosti, jaké jsou příčiny nejistot v předpovědích budoucího vývoje (např. zpoždění mezi příčinou a následkem, velký dopad původně malých zásahů do prostředí), a naučit se s nimi pracovat a vyrovnávat.

Vyučovací předměty: anglický jazyk, dějepis, výtvarná výchova

Bibliografie: RUNDELL, Katherine. Impossible creatures. London: Bloomsburychildren's books, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2023. ISBN 978-1-4088-9743-0.



### *Stručný obsah:*

Christopher je u vytržení, když se kolem něj na návštěvě u dědečka ve Skotsku prožene stádo zvířat, jaká dosud znal jen z bájí. Ale když vzápětí zachrání před utonutím v jezeře mládě gryfa, navždy se mu změní život. Dozví se totiž o existenci Souostroví, shluku ostrovů, které nenajdete na žádné mapě a kde odedávna žijí bájní tvorové. Jenže teď je jejich domov i oni sami v nebezpečí. Spolu s Mal, dívkou ze Souostroví, se chlapec vydává na dobrodružnou pout' a snaží se zjistit, proč mizí magie a bájní tvorové vymírají. Mimo jiné se utkají s krakenem, navštíví sfingy a jednají s draky. Čím víc se děti o tajuplném Souostroví dozvídají, tím jasněji chápou, že jen ony můžou bájný svět zachránit.

Román Bájní tvorové se stal knihou roku 2023 podle knihkupectví Waterstones, zároveň v rámci Britských knižních cen 2024 získal výroční cenu za nejlepší prozaickou dětskou knihu a Rundellová byla vyhlášena autorkou roku.

<https://www.databazeknih.cz/knihy/bajni-tvorove-pribehy-zo-suostrovia-bajni-tvorove-554518>

### *O autorce:*

Britská spisovatelka, autorka publikací pro děti a mládež. Též se zabývá anglickou literaturou. Žila i v Zimbabwe a Belgii. (zdroj životopisu: NK)

<https://www.databazeknih.cz/zivotopis/katherine-rundell-103506>

Předpokládaná délka práce s knihou – 2-4 vyučovací hodiny

**Story:**

Christopher is stunned when he discovers a passage to the Archipelago: a cluster of magical islands where all the creatures of myth still live and breed and thrive in their thousands. There he meets Mal: a girl from the islands, who is in possession of a flying coat and a baby griffin, and who is being pursued by a killer. Together they embark on an urgent quest to discover why the creatures are suddenly perishing, why glimourie is disappearing voyaging across the wild splendour of the Archipelago, where sphinxes hold secrets and centaurs do murder, in a bid to save both the islands and the world beyond them from a rising evil - before it's too late.

**EVOCATION**

- 1) What does the title of the book remind you of? Have you ever come across a similar title?
- 2) Read the students the description of a mythical creature from the introductory section (*The Guardian's Bestiary*) and have them draw it. Then, compare their drawings with the illustration in the book.

**Griffin**

Griffins have the body, tail and back legs of a lion, and the head, wings and front claws of an eagle. Though they do not speak aloud, they learn astonishingly fast, and can understand the entirety of a human language within days. When fully grown, their wingspan is broad enough to shelter a child underneath it. In cold weather, their bodies radiate warmth. The griffin is more reliant than any other creature on the glimourie in the soil and the air; they are among the world's most magical creatures. [Addendum, by Frank Aureate: For the last five years, griffins have become rarer and rarer. The reason is unclear, but it is possibly connected to a fading in the glimourie. Their status now is believed to be near-extinct.]

- 3) Design a new cover: Ask students to reimagine and redesign the book cover, while drawing inspiration from Daniel Egnéus's original cover illustrations. They can use their artistic skills to create an eye-catching cover that represents the book's essence in their own eyes.
- 4) Let students use their imagination and make fun trading cards. Each card shows a mythical creature with simple details like its powers, where it lives, and its story.
- 5) Turn the classroom into a travel agency. Students become travel agents and make brochures to show the magical Archipelago. The brochures can have pictures of the islands, magical creatures, and exciting adventures.

### Working with texts:

***Neither Christopher nor Mal are ordinary children, and right at the beginning of the story, we see that unusual things happen to them.***

*Christopher's beginning (Christopher is a guardian, but at the start of the story, he doesn't know it. He only knows that every animal loves him, just as they once loved his mother.)*

#### THE BEGINNING (p. 1)

It was a very fine day, until something tried to eat him. It was a black dog-like creature, but it was not like any dog he had ever seen. It had teeth as long as his arm, and claws that could tear apart an oak tree. It says, therefore, a great deal in Christopher Forrester's favour that he refused – with speed and cunning and courage – to be eaten.

*Mal's beginning (Mal is an **Immortal**, but at the start of the story, she doesn't realize it at all. It is difficult for her to accept this role—an Immortal is constantly reborn and remembers everything with each new incarnation.)*

#### THE BEGINNING, ELSEWHERE (p. 2)

It was a very fine day, until somebody tried to kill her. Mal had returned home from her journey, flying back from the forest with arms outstretched and coat flapping, buffeted by the wind. Mal Arvorian could fly only when the wind blew. The weather that day was perfect – a westerly breeze that smelt of the sea – and she was sky-spinning, twisting in the cold air. Her flying coat was thick, and too big for her, and she wore it with the sleeves rolled up four times. When the wind was up – it didn't need to be strong, but some wind was necessary – she could catch at the corners and open it, like wings, and feel the breeze lift her off her feet. That day she had flown over treetops, her shoes brushing the tips of their branches, and swooped low, causing a herd of unicorns to scatter. In the kitchen, her Great-Aunt Leonor had grumbled at her cold hands, and given her a cup of hot cordial, when there was a knock on the door. It was the murderer.

*Characterization of Mal*

## ARRIVAL, ELSEWHERE (p. 9 - 10)

It had been years now since Mal had first learned to fly. A travelling seer had given her the flying coat soon after she was born. He had named her, and laid the coat at her small feet. He tried to say more – to explain why he had given the coat to her and her alone – but the house was in mourning, for Mal's mother had not survived the birth, and he'd been sent abruptly on his way.

So it was with no instruction at all that Mal took to the sky. The nearest neighbours had laughed at her, a small girl swamped in a coat running into the wind; so she'd flushed, and woken earlier the next day so nobody would see her. At first, when the wind dropped, she used to thump down to the ground with a bone-breaking crack; she had fractured both her ankles at different times, snapped a wrist and bent her little finger backwards to the wrist. Her big toenail had turned an interesting green-black and fallen off. But she had tried again, and again, licking the blood off her skinned knees, climbing up trees and jumping out of them. And she had proved her neighbours wrong. 'No, I will do it,' she said, when the neighbour's boy laughed at her. 'You don't know anything about it.' She wore her chin high, on those days. People were difficult – she felt herself grow spiky around them, liable to say the wrong thing and blush right up to her forehead – but the sky made perfect sense to her. She might be grubby and awkward on the ground, but in flight, the locals said, Mal Arvorian was a thing worth seeing. By the age of nine, she'd learned to glide to a gentle stop. By ten, she could land on the tips of her toes, or on one foot. By twelve, she could tuck her chin to her chest and throw herself forwards, somersaulting in the wind. That spring morning she had flown over the sea with her bare feet skimming the water, her boots in her pockets, the ocean spray flecking her ankles, laughing with the speed and joy of it.

## THE POWER OF NAMES (p. 121–122)

'I'll show you when it's done. The man who gave it to me told them I must never let down the extra material in the hem – look, see, here – or the coat will yoke me too high. I'd die, he said. I wish he'd told them more about it, but my Great-Aunt Leonor didn't like his face, or his smell, or any of it, so she threw him out.' 'What man gave it to you?' 'A traveller, on the ocean-boats – when I was born. He was my namer. You know, the person who gave me my name.' He shook his head, and she said, 'Well, how do you choose names?' 'Your parents just choose whatever they like the sound of. Or sometimes it's in the family – your grandfather, or great- aunt. Someone safely dead, usually.' Christopher was named after his Scottish great-great-grandfather: an old eccentric, who was said to have spent all his time outside, atop a hill. A man who must, he realised with a jolt, have been a guardian of the way between. Mal's eyebrows expressed an unfavourable opinion of this method of naming. 'Well, in the Archipelago you take the baby to the namer, and they go into a trance and name the child. It's a very old tradition – but it's dying out. Most of the namers are lovely old frauds, and you could slip them two bits of silver, and they'd say whatever you want. Not my namer though. He was a seer. Great-Aunt Leonor said she could tell, because he was



poor.' 'Is Mal your whole name then? Or is it short for, I don't know ... Mallory? Malinda?' She laughed. 'No! Is Mallory a name? It's short for Malum. My great-aunt used to say it was prophetic. Because it means "mischief".' She grinned at him. 'You know: Latin. Most names have a meaning, in one of the old languages. Latin, Old Norse, Old Centaur, Old Arabian. Old Manticore, if your parents take you to a namer who's a bit pretentious. Christopher had, grudgingly, learned a small amount of Latin at school, and he had a feeling that malum meant something else entirely. But he couldn't remember what.'

- **Start the lesson:** Ask students if they know the meaning of their name. Let them share interesting facts or stories about their names. Write their names on the board.
- **Discuss names:** Talk about questions like: Why did your parents choose your name? Do you know someone with a special or unique name? How do you feel when your name is said correctly?
- **Explain names:** Tell students that names are special. They help people know and remember us. Names can tell stories about who we are or what qualities we have, like kindness or strength.
- **Talk about uniqueness:** Say that every name is special, even if two people have the same name. Names show how unique we all are.
- **Cultural meaning:** Names can tell us about a person's background. Different places and cultures have different ways of choosing names. Some names are passed down from families and tell old stories.
- **Read a story:** Read a part of a book about names. Explain how names in the story carry secrets and traditions. Talk about the characters and their names.
- **Think about choosing names:** Discuss how Mal's name was chosen for her. Ask students if they would like to choose their own name when they grow up or keep their name.
- **Explore name meanings:** Students research their name's meaning, where it comes from, and how it is spelled differently. They make a poster or presentation about their name.
- **End the lesson:** Encourage students to talk to their family about their names and why they were chosen.

#### QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS:

1. Who are the characters talking in this extract? What are their names?
2. What is the tradition for naming children in the Archipelago? How is it done?
3. How are names chosen in our society? Have you wondered about your name's origin and what might have influenced or inspired your parents to choose it for you?
4. If you could choose any name for yourself, what would it be? Would you stick with your current name or swap with someone else?
5. What is the term for shortening someone's name, like using 'Mal' for Malum? (Abbreviation)

6. Imagine a world where people had no names. How would it change the way we communicate?

## **AWARENESS**

***It's not just Christopher, Mal, and the magical creatures who are in danger—but whole lands are at risk.***

***Who will save the glimourie—an ancient power, the energy magical creatures need to survive? Is Mal strong enough? Centaur Petroc isn't sure.***

SAVING THE GLIMOURIE (p. 245–246)

'My people speak of her,' the centaur said. 'It's an obsession. They've been waiting for her for a hundred years.' He scraped the ground with a hoof. 'But I didn't know it would be a child. The stars didn't say so. My people put a lot of faith in the skies, but I've always been sceptical about what they tell us. Too vague, too high.' He looked balefully at them, and wiped the rain from his face. 'I only trust things that you can touch – blood and gold and fire and dirt.' His eyes raked over Mal; he spoke lower. 'Is she up to the task? She's small. A little ant of a fly of a speck of a nothing much.' Christopher did not like the way the centaur looked at Mal. He put his hand on the long-bladed kitchen knife he'd tucked into his belt as they'd left. 'She's brave.' 'Is that true? Or some of your baffling human politeness, where you say neat and tidy things about people you despise?' 'It's true. I've seen it.' He wanted to force the centaur to see it. The fumes from the cauldron were making him thick-headed and ill, but he shook himself. 'She can fly. She escaped a murderer. She won't give up. It's not something she knows how to do.' Petroc still stared at Mal. 'They say, if the glimourie isn't saved now, it never will be saveable. It's a concept - you humans have always struggled to grasp - that time might run out.' The fire behind him sparked, and he sniffed the air. 'It will be an ending: a dark, cold end. We centaurs understand that. I understand it, very well. I see the power and beauty of such an ending.'

## **Time is running out**

- **Start the lesson:** Read the extract together and talk about it. Discuss why time is important in the story. Ask students to share their ideas about the characters, the setting, and the events. Highlight sentences in the text that show time running out. Talk about how the characters feel and what might happen if time runs out for the glimourie.
- **Talk about time running out:** Show a countdown on the board. Ask students if they know the phrase "time is running out" and what it means in daily life. They can share examples like finishing a game or completing a task before time runs out.



- **Connect to real-world issues:** Explain how time running out is important for real problems like climate change. Show pictures of melting ice caps, pollution, or forests disappearing. Discuss other problems like plastic pollution, endangered animals, or helping refugees. Talk about why action is urgent for these issues.
- **Reflect on actions:** Help students think about small actions they can do, like using less plastic or helping their community. Share examples of how small actions can make a big difference when many people work together.
- **Create and share:** Give students an activity sheet to write or draw their ideas for actions they can take. Let them share their work with the class and explain why their actions are important.

#### QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS:

1. The centaur says his people waited 100 years for "her." Who is "she," and why is the centaur worried she is a child?
2. The centaur does not trust the messages from the stars. Why might someone not believe predictions or stories about the future?
3. Christopher says, "She won't give up." What does this tell us about Mal's personality? Do you know someone who didn't give up when things were hard?
4. Christopher touches a kitchen knife when the centaur looks at Mal. Why do you think he does this? Does it show he wants to protect her?
5. The centaur thinks Mal may not be ready. How does Christopher answer? Why does he think Mal is brave?
6. Petroc, the centaur, explains why saving the glimourie is important. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
7. Petroc talks about time running out for the glimourie. What does he mean? Why does he think this is happening?
8. The centaur says time is running out for the glimourie. Can this idea also relate to real problems like climate change or saving nature?
9. Petroc says humans sometimes wait too long to fix problems. Do you think this makes people act too late? Why?
10. If you were Petroc, what would you say to make others care about saving the glimourie? What reasons would you give?

**REFLECTION**

***But why did all the bad things start happening? Who is hurting the land, nature, and magical creatures—and why?***

LEONARDO DA VINCI (p. 298 – 299)

**maze = bludiště**

Christopher fought back his panic: he pushed it back, tried to think. The man, he saw, was human; or once had been. Humans need to speak aloud. There was a hundred years of speech, pent up, bursting to erupt. If Christopher could keep him talking – if he could keep the man from directing the force of his power at him – perhaps he could think of a way to survive. 'But how did you get here?' he asked. 'Only the Immortal knows the path to the centre of the maze.' 'The Immortal, yes. And two others.' 'Who?' He exhaled; the mist eddied, choking and acrid. 'The men who made the maze.' 'But **Leonardo da Vinci**, and his cousin – they took a potion. They forgot.' 'They did. But Leonardo's cousin Enzo was an intelligent man, and an angry one. Leonardo, in the Archipelago, as in the rest of the world, was the one who claimed credit. Leonardo sketched on paper; Enzo worked in stone. Enzo sweated; Leonardo merely basked.' 'And what then? What happened?' The face in the tree turned its eyes full on Christopher. He was taking pleasure, Christopher could feel it, in his story. He breathed, and the mist rose, and with it a wind that eddied at Christopher's feet. 'Enzo grew first disgusted, then angry. And then he made a plan. Before he took the potion, he made a secret copy of the plans for the maze, and hid them. He returned home, his memory a blank, and he did not understand the importance of the plans. But he put them among his books – a child's dream, he supposed.' The grey exhalation of mist came again, and again the air filled with the dread that clutched at Christopher's chest. 'Hundreds of years later, one of his descendants – me, Francesco Sforza – found them. I had no interest in his grubby little quarrel. But when I found what was in the heart of the maze – the tree, and its vast power – then I understood what was possible. I found a way into the Archipelago, at the equinox. I followed the plans and found my way to the island. And when I reached it, I found that the Immortal – the great protector – was gone. Think, first, of my astonishment. Think, then, of my pleasure.'

***Mal arrives with a magical knife, and Christopher uses it to separate the man from the tree. Sforza loses his power, and the tree comes to life, along with its magical energy.***

***Mal sacrifices herself for the world, into which she will soon be reborn as an Immortal, remembering everything.***

## SHARED POWER (p. 315)

'The day after the funeral march, Naravirala visited Christopher in the sphinxes' cave. He sat with his back to the mountain wall, and told her about the man in the maze, and his vicious hunger: his furious desire not to be exposed to the world's indignities, to chance and to other human people. She nodded. 'That is why great power must never reside in only one person. It must be shared.' Her rough voice was rougher than before. 'It must be spread, among as many good women and men as can be found; not because it is kind or polite or fair, but because it is the only way to beat back against horror.'

- **Start the activity:** Ask the class, "What does the word 'power' mean?" Write their answers on the board.
- **Explain power:** Share a simple definition: "Power is the ability to control or influence things and people." Give examples like a teacher guiding students or a superhero saving the day.
- **Group activity:** Split the class into two groups. One group will think about the good sides of having power, and the other group will think about the bad sides. Give them time to discuss and write their ideas.
- **Share ideas:** Let each group share their points. Write their ideas on the board under "Good" and "Bad." Compare the lists and talk about how power can be used for good but can also cause problems if one person has too much.
- **Reflect on sharing:** Talk about the importance of sharing power. Use simple examples like sharing toys or ideas to help explain the concept.

## QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS:

1. Naravirala says one person should not have all the power. Why is it better to share power with others?
2. How can sharing power stop people from using it in the wrong way? What problems happen if one person has too much power?
3. Can you think of a time when having too much power caused problems in real life?
4. Naravirala says sharing power helps stop bad things. What do you think she means by "bad things"?
5. Naravirala says sharing power is not just about being nice. Why else is sharing power important?
6. Do you think sharing power is a good idea? Can sharing power make things better in your life?
7. If you had a lot of power, how would you feel about sharing it? What might be good or hard about sharing power?
8. Are there times when one person needs to have all the power? When is it important to make quick decisions?
9. In your class, school, or home, how do you and others share jobs or make decisions together?
10. Is it always easy to share power? Why can it sometimes be hard to do?

Which character represents in the story:

- A) envy, wealth, power
- B) selfless help

Is this statement true?

"I don't have to be big and strong to save the world."

Explain using a story.

**Key:**

- A) Sforza
- B) Mal, Christopher ...

Those were children who saved the world.

**What was the story about? Was it only about mythical creatures? How important is nature and its sustainability for us – for humanity?**

*In this part of the lesson the teacher can discuss environmental problems with pupils, such as: How do you protect the environment in your family? Is it enough? What else could you do?*

*sustainability = udržitelnost*

*environment = životní prostředí*

**How would you change the title of the book to better capture the essence of the story? Suggest an alternative title for this story.**

**English texts:****GUARDIAN'S BESTIARY****Griffin**

Griffins have the body, tail and back legs of a lion, and the head, wings and front claws of an eagle. Though they do not speak aloud, they learn astonishingly fast, and can understand the entirety of a human language within days. When fully grown, their wingspan is broad enough to shelter a child underneath it. In cold weather, their bodies radiate warmth. The griffin is more reliant than any other creature on the glimourie in the soil and the air; they are among the world's most magical creatures. [Addendum, by Frank Aureate: For the last five years, griffins have become rarer and rarer. The reason is unclear, but it is possibly connected to a fading in the glimourie. Their status now is believed to be near-extinct.]

**Ratatoska**

(pronunciation: rata-TOS-ka. Alternative spelling: ratatoskr)

Akin to large squirrels, green-furred with a short horn, the ratatoskas spread news across the Archipelago.

- They know more of the world's secrets – the gossip, the tall tales, the truths and half-truths and quarter-truths – than anyone else. Though physically harm less, they can, when young, be giddy chaos-merchants with a liking for mischief. If you wish to spread a piece of news, and are not too concerned about accuracy, tell a ratatoska.

**Sphinx**

Sphinxes are gifted mathematicians and scholars, ruthlessly loyal allies and implacable enemies. The tooth of a sphinx, held in the mouth of a human, allows its owner to understand any language; a lick from a sphinx can heal most wounds. Originally found primarily in Northern Africa and South-East Asia, sphinxes migrated across the world before coming to rest on the mountainous peninsula of the Island of Lithia. Those wishing to visit the sphinxes' mountains should be aware that, if you should fail to answer the riddle they pose, the sphinx has an ancient right to eat you.

*Christopher's beginning (Christopher is a guardian, but at the start of the story, he doesn't know it. He only knows that every animal loves him, just as they once loved his mother.)*

**THE BEGINNING (p. 1)**

It was a very fine day, until something tried to eat him. It was a black dog-like creature, but it was not like any dog he had ever seen. It had teeth as long as his arm, and claws that could tear apart an oak tree. It says, therefore, a great deal in Christopher Forrester's favour that he refused – with speed and cunning and courage – to be eaten.

*Mal's beginning (Mal is an **Immortal**, but at the start of the story, she doesn't realize it at all. It is difficult for her to accept this role—an Immortal is constantly reborn and remembers everything with each new incarnation.)*

#### THE BEGINNING, ELSEWHERE (p. 2)

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#### *Characterization of Mal*

#### ARRIVAL, ELSEWHERE (p. 9 - 10)

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So it was with no instruction at all that Mal took to the sky. The nearest neighbours had laughed at her, a small girl swamped in a coat running into the wind; so she'd flushed, and woken earlier the next day so nobody would see her. At first, when the wind dropped, she used to thump down to the ground with a bone-breaking crack; she had fractured both her ankles at different times, snapped a wrist and bent her little finger backwards to the wrist. Her big toenail had turned an interesting green-black and fallen off. But she had tried again, and again, licking the blood off her skinned knees, climbing up trees and jumping out of them. And she had proved her neighbours wrong. 'No, I will do it,' she said, when the neighbour's boy laughed at her. 'You don't know anything about it.' She wore her chin high, on those days. People were difficult – she felt herself grow spiky around them, liable to say the wrong thing and blush right up to her forehead – but the sky made perfect sense to her. She might be grubby and awkward on the ground, but in flight, the locals said, Mal Arvorian was a thing worth seeing. By the age of nine, she'd learned to glide to a gentle stop. By ten, she could land on the tips of her toes, or on one foot. By twelve, she could tuck her chin to her chest and throw herself forwards, somersaulting in the wind. That spring morning she had flown over the sea with her bare feet skimming the water, her boots in her pockets, the ocean spray flecking her ankles, laughing with the speed and joy of it.



*About the flying coat and names*

## THE POWER OF NAMES (p. 121-122)

'I'll show you when it's done. The man who gave it to me told them I must never let down the extra material in the hem – look, see, here – or the coat will yoke me too high. I'd die, he said. I wish he'd told them more about it, but my Great-Aunt Leonor didn't like his face, or his smell, or any of it, so she threw him out.' 'What man gave it to you?' 'A traveller, on the ocean-boats – when I was born. He was my namer. You know, the person who gave me my name.' He shook his head, and she said, 'Well, how do you choose names?' 'Your parents just choose whatever they like the sound of. Or, sometimes it's in the family – your grandfather, or great-aunt. Someone safely dead, usually.' Christopher was named after his Scottish great-great-grandfather: an old eccentric, who was said to have spent all his time outside, atop a hill. A man who must, he realised with a jolt, have been a guardian of the way between. Mal's eyebrows expressed an unfavourable opinion of this method of naming. 'Well, in the Archipelago you take the baby to the namer, and they go into a trance and name the child. It's a very old tradition – but it's dying out. Most of the namers are lovely old frauds, and you could slip them two bits of silver and they'd say whatever you want. Not my namer though. He was a seer. Great-Aunt Leonor said she could tell, because he was poor.' 'Is Mal your whole name then? Or is it short for, I don't know ... Mallory? Malinda?' She laughed. 'No! Is Mallory a name? It's short for Malum. My great-aunt used to say it was prophetic. Because it means "mischief".' She grinned at him. 'You know: Latin. Most names have a meaning, in one of the old languages. Latin, Old Norse, Old Centaur, Old Arabian. Old Manticore, if your parents take you to a namer who's a bit pretentious. Christopher had, grudgingly, learned a small amount of Latin at school, and he had a feeling that malum meant something else entirely. But he couldn't remember what.'

## LEONARDO DA VINCI (p. 298 – 299)

**maze = bludiště**

Christopher fought back his panic: he pushed it back, tried to think. The man, he saw, was human; or once had been. Humans need to speak aloud. There was a hundred years of speech, pent up, bursting to erupt. If Christopher could keep him talking – if he could keep the man from directing the force of his power at him – perhaps he could think of a way to survive. 'But how did you get here?' he asked. 'Only the Immortal knows the path to the centre of the maze.' 'The Immortal, yes. And two others.' 'Who?' He exhaled; the mist eddied, choking and acrid. 'The men who made the maze.' 'But **Leonardo da Vinci**, and his cousin – they took a potion. They forgot.' 'They did. But Leonardo's cousin Enzo was an intelligent man, and an angry one. Leonardo, in the Archipelago, as in the rest of the world, was the one who claimed credit. Leonardo sketched on paper; Enzo worked in stone. Enzo sweated; Leonardo merely basked.' 'And what then? What happened?

The face in the tree turned its eyes full on Christopher. He was taking pleasure, Christopher could feel it, in his story. He breathed, and the mist rose, and with it a wind that eddied at Christopher's feet. 'Enzo grew first disgusted, then angry. And then he made a plan. Before he took the potion, he made a secret copy of the plans for the maze, and hid them. He returned home, his memory a blank, and he did not understand the importance of the plans. But he put them among his books – a child's dream, he supposed.' The grey exhalation of mist came again, and again the air filled with the dread that clutched at Christopher's chest. 'Hundreds of years later, one of his descendants – me, Francesco Sforza – found them. I had no interest in his grubby little quarrel. But when I found what was in the heart of the maze – the tree, and its vast power – then I understood what was possible. I found a way into the Archipelago, at the equinox. I followed the plans and found my way to the island. And when I reached it, I found that the Immortal – the great protector – was gone. Think, first, of my astonishment. Think, then, of my pleasure.'

#### SAVING THE GLIMOURIE (p. 245–246)

glimourie = prastará kouzelná moc, kterou potřebují ke svému životu bájní tvorové

'My people speak of her,' the centaur said. 'It's an obsession. They've been waiting for her for a hundred years.' He scraped the ground with a hoof. 'But I didn't know it would be a child. The stars didn't say so. My people put a lot of faith in the skies, but I've always been sceptical about what they tell us. Too vague, too high.' He looked balefully at them, and wiped the rain from his face. 'I only trust things that you can touch – blood and gold and fire and dirt.' His eyes raked over Mal; he spoke lower. 'Is she up to the task? She's small. A little ant of a fly of a speck of a nothing much.' Christopher did not like the way the centaur looked at Mal. He put his hand on the long-bladed kitchen knife he'd tucked into his belt as they'd left. 'She's brave.' 'Is that true? Or some of your baffling human politeness, where you say neat and tidy things about people you despise?' 'It's true. I've seen it.' He wanted to force the centaur to see it. The fumes from the cauldron were making him thick-headed and ill, but he shook himself. 'She can fly. She escaped a murderer. She won't give up. It's not something she knows how to do.' Petroc still stared at Mal. 'They say, if the glimourie isn't saved now, it never will be saveable. It's a concept - you humans have always struggled to grasp - that time might run out.' The fire behind him sparked, and he sniffed the air. 'It will be an ending: a dark, cold end. We centaurs understand that. I understand it, very well. I see the power and beauty of such an ending.'

*Mal arrives with a magical knife, and Christopher uses it to separate the man from the tree. Sforza loses his power, and the tree comes to life, along with its magical energy. Mal sacrifices herself for the world, into which she will soon be reborn as an Immortal, remembering everything.*

*Sphinx about sharing power among people:*

SHARED POWER (p. 315)

'The day after the funeral march, Naravirala visited Christopher in the sphinxes' cave. He sat with his back to the mountain wall, and told her about the man in the maze, and his vicious hunger: his furious desire not to be exposed to the world's indignities, to chance and to other human people. She nodded. 'That is why great power must never reside in only one person. It must be shared.' Her rough voice was rougher than before. 'It must be spread, among as many good women and men as can be found; not because it is kind or polite or fair, but because it is the only way to beat back against horror.'

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## SIMPLIFIED ENGLISH TEXTS

### Griffins

Griffins have a lion's body, tail, and back legs.  
They also have an eagle's head, wings, and front claws.  
Griffins cannot talk, but they learn very quickly.  
They can understand a human language in just a few days.  
Their wings are big enough to cover a child and keep them safe.  
In winter, griffins' bodies are warm like a blanket.  
Griffins need magic from the soil and air to survive.  
They are one of the most magical animals in the world.  
Griffins are now very rare, almost extinct.  
People think this is because the magic in the world is fading.

### Ratatoska

Ratatoskas are big squirrels with green fur and a little horn.  
They live on islands and share news with everyone.  
They know many secrets, stories, and gossip.  
Young ratatoskas love to make trouble and play tricks.  
If you have news to share, you can tell a ratatoska, but it might not be true.

### Sphinx

Sphinxes are smart animals who love math and studying.  
They are loyal friends but dangerous enemies.  
A sphinx tooth helps people understand any language.  
A sphinx lick can heal cuts and wounds.  
Sphinxes live in the mountains on the Island of Lithia.  
If you visit a sphinx and cannot solve their riddle, they can eat you!

### The Beginning

It was a nice day, but something scary happened.  
A big black creature tried to eat Christopher.  
The creature looked like a dog but was much scarier.  
It had very long teeth and sharp claws.  
Christopher was fast and smart, so he escaped.

### The Beginning, Elsewhere

It was a nice day, but someone tried to hurt Mal.  
Mal had just flown home from the forest.  
She could fly when the wind was blowing.  
Her coat was like wings and helped her fly high in the sky.  
That day, she flew over trees and scared some unicorns.

When she got home, her Great-Aunt gave her a warm drink.

Then there was a knock on the door—it was the person who wanted to hurt her.

### **Arrival, Elsewhere**

Mal learned to fly many years ago.

A man gave her a special flying coat when she was born.

He also gave her a name but didn't explain the coat's powers.

Mal's mother died after she was born, so the man left quickly.

Mal started flying without any instructions.

At first, people laughed at her, but she didn't stop trying.

She fell many times and hurt herself badly but kept practicing.

By nine, she learned to land gently, and by twelve, she could do flips while flying.

Flying made her happy and free, even when people were unkind.

One morning, she flew over the sea, feeling joyful and fast.

### **The Power of Names**

Mal's flying coat has a secret hem that she must not open.

Her Great-Aunt threw out the man who gave her the coat because she didn't like him.

In Mal's home, a "namer" gives babies their names during a special ceremony.

Many namers are not honest, but Mal's namer was different.

Mal's name means "mischief" in Latin, which her Great-Aunt said was special.

Names often have meanings from old languages like Latin or Old Norse.

Mal thinks names should be chosen with care, not like in other places.

Christopher was named after a relative but feels it has a deeper meaning.

Mal laughed when he asked if her name was longer, like Mallory or Malinda.

Christopher didn't know the full meaning of Mal's name but was curious.

### **Leonardo da Vinci**

maze = bludiště

Christopher met a man who used to be human but had strange powers.

The man said only a few people knew the way to the maze's center.

He told a story about Leonardo da Vinci and his cousin, Enzo.

Leonardo drew the maze plans, but Enzo worked hard to build it.

Enzo got angry because Leonardo took all the credit.

Enzo hid a secret copy of the maze plans before forgetting everything.

Later, Francesco Sforza, a descendant of Enzo, found the plans.

Francesco used them to find the maze's power on a special island.

When he arrived, the protector of the maze was gone.

Francesco was happy to take the maze's power for himself.

### **Saving the glimourie**

The centaur said his people waited 100 years for a special person.  
He didn't know it would be a child like Mal.  
The centaur didn't trust the stars; he trusted things he could see and touch.  
He thought Mal was too small to do the job.  
Christopher defended Mal, saying she was brave and strong.  
He told the centaur Mal could fly and never gave up.  
The centaur said they must save the glimourie now, or it would be too late.  
He believed time could run out and bring a cold, dark end.  
The fire behind him burned brightly as he spoke.  
The centaur saw both power and beauty in an ending.

### **Shared Power**

After the funeral, Naravirala visited Christopher.  
Christopher told her about the man in the maze and his hunger for power.  
She said great power should not belong to only one person.  
Power must be shared with good people to stop horror.  
Sharing power isn't just kind or fair—it's necessary.



## Worksheet

- 1) What does the title of the book remind you of? Have you ever come across a similar title? Suggest an alternative title for this story.

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- 2) Listen to the description of a mythical creature from the introductory section (*The Guardian's Bestiary*) and draw it. Then, compare your drawing with the illustration in the book.

- 3) Design a New Book Cover - Imagine a new cover for the book. Look at the original cover by Daniel Egnéus for ideas. Use your art skills to draw a colourful and interesting cover. Your cover should show what the book means to you.

- 4) Make fun trading cards. Each card shows a mythical creature with simple details like its powers, where it lives, and its story.

- 5) Can you explain the word extinct? If not, look it up. Which extinct animals do you know?

- 6) Imagine: You are travel agents. Make brochures to show the magical Archipelago. The brochures can have pictures of the islands, magical creatures, and exciting adventures.

- 7) Who was Leonardo da Vinci? Find the information on the Internet.

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- 8) Finish the sentence:

If I had Sfinx's tooth and understood all the languages, I would .....

.....

- 9) Were the sphinxes in Greek mythology kind? Compare them with the sphinxes in our story.

.....

- 10) Write fake news about fantastic beasts (they appeared somewhere, they helped somebody ...). Use generator <https://breakyourownnews.com>

- 11) How important is nature and its sustainability for us – for humanity?

How do you protect the environment in your family? Is it enough? What else could you do?

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**Key:**

1) Fantastic beasts and where to find them by J.K. Rowling + různá individuální řešení pro názvy knihy

2) 3) 4) 6) 8) různá individuální řešení

5) extinct = not now existing, e. g. dinosaurs

7) [https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo\\_da\\_Vinci](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonardo_da_Vinci)

**Leonardo Da Vinci** (15 April 1452 – 2 May 1519) was an Italian polymath who lived during the Renaissance. He is famous for his paintings. He was also a scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, sculptor, architect, botanist, musician, and writer. Leonardo wanted to know everything about nature, and wanted to know how everything worked. He was very good at studying, as well as designing and making all sorts of inventions.

9) **A sphinx** is a make-believe animal from old stories. It has a lion's body, a woman's head, and sometimes bird wings. Sphinxes in Greek myths were not kind. They asked tricky riddles to people. If they couldn't answer, the sphinx got angry and hurt them. The most famous riddle was: "What has four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon, and three legs in the evening?" It's about people growing up—babies crawl, adults walk, and old people use a stick.

A brave man named Oedipus answered the riddle, and the sphinx went away. It shows how cleverness beats danger.

In the book Impossible creatures sphinxes are kind and helpful.

10) různá individuální řešení - viz

[https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/23814/fake-news-it-exists-.html?\\_gl=1\\*yke4o5\\*\\_ga\\*NTMxNDY1ODMwLjE2OTM5MzA0MDE.\\*\\_ga\\_DB0ZYB52FX\\*M\\_TcyNTk3NzAxOS40OC4xLjE3MjU5NzgyODUuMC4wLjA](https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/23814/fake-news-it-exists-.html?_gl=1*yke4o5*_ga*NTMxNDY1ODMwLjE2OTM5MzA0MDE.*_ga_DB0ZYB52FX*M_TcyNTk3NzAxOS40OC4xLjE3MjU5NzgyODUuMC4wLjA)

11) The balance in nature is important for humans as well, which is why we need to think about sustainability and environmental protection—such as waste sorting, not littering in nature, and maintaining green spaces.

**Zdroje:**

[https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/23814/fake-news-it-exists-.html?\\_gl=1\\*yke4o5\\*\\_ga\\*NTMxNDY1ODMwLjE2OTM5MzA0MDE.\\*\\_ga\\_DB0ZYB52FX\\*M\\_TcyNTk3NzAxOS40OC4xLjE3MjU5NzgyODUuMC4wLjA](https://clanky.rvp.cz/clanek/c/Z/23814/fake-news-it-exists-.html?_gl=1*yke4o5*_ga*NTMxNDY1ODMwLjE2OTM5MzA0MDE.*_ga_DB0ZYB52FX*M_TcyNTk3NzAxOS40OC4xLjE3MjU5NzgyODUuMC4wLjA)

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