Setting

Time

The story takes place in modern time. There are schools, haunted houses, and Halloween costumes that suggest things are similar to how they are now.

Place

The story first takes place in the real world, but then transfers to a magical world called [the Outskirts](#Outskirts). It contains five kingdoms, each with different kinds of magic called “[shaping](#Shaping).”

Characters

Cole

Cole, a 6th grader from Arizona, is the main character of the book. He is brave, loyal, hopeful and smart. When faced with peril, he says things like “Fun to think about!” When times seem terrible and chances of saving his friends, Dalton and Jenna, are slim, he still pushes forward and keeps up hope of saving them. His greatest strength is his bravery and his greatest weakness is being indecisive about who to save.

Mira (Miracle)

Mira is an experienced and optimistic, old princess. Even though her father stole some of her [remarkable shaping power](#Shaper), she still finds something happy to think about. Without her stolen powers, she doesn’t age. Whatever the situation she always knows what to do to have the best outcome.

Jace

Jace is a brave, stubborn young hero. He won’t agree to anything anyone says, not even the princess, Mira. For instance, when a slave treated him badly, he dumped soup on the slave’s head. Furthermore, when Mira chastises him for his rudeness, he ignores her and argues, “…I can survive just fine on my own.” Although he can be rude, when it is important, he is always quick to rush to the rescue.

Twitch

Twitch is a young boy whose original form is a flying bug. He is cautious and loyal. When in danger, his first instinct is to run away. Despite his timidness, he is very loyal to anyone who treats him kindly.

Liam

Liam is a mischievous and creative [shaper](#Definitions), and a servant of [Declan](#Declan). When having to conquer a dangerous enemy, he laughs at it and creates something out of thin air to defeat it. He creates and transforms many funny things including a giant pig made of carpet, a room made of edible furniture, a room with furniture balancing on one leg, flying robot bugs, a talking happy face and transforming poison into honey.

Declan

Declan is a wise old [shaper](#Shaper). He was very helpful to Cole and Mira in discussing what they should do about overthrowing the king. He and his servants conjured gifts to help Cole and his friends on their journey.

Dalton

Dalton is a young 6th grade boy with a sense of humor. Although he was kidnapped, he still continued to smile and make jokes. Aside from his sense of humor, he is also very aware of his surroundings. For example, he noticed a door locking and odd things about a haunted house that turned out to be a kidnapper’s trap.

Jenna

Jenna is a kind, young, and hopeful girl. She followed along with Cole as long as she could, even though things seemed scary. She was nice to her kidnappers despite their crimes, and when Cole promised to rescue her, she never gave up hope.

Conflict

The characters’ goal is to overthrow the king of the [Outskirts](#Outskirts) and save many kidnapped children. The problem is that they were all branded as slaves and have many armed soldiers trying to capture them.

Main Idea

The main idea of the story was that you can do great things no matter where you come from. For instance, Cole, was just a regular 6th grader but when he was brought into [the Outskirts](#Outskirts), he saved many people many times. Also, as ordinary slave forced to work on many long and dangerous missions, Jace continued to be brave and continued to keep up his hard work and eventually escape his owners. Mira, although a princess, was treated badly by her father. Despite her unfair treatment, she kept up hope of someday escaping her father’s wrath and made incredible progress towards her goal.

Summary

Cole and his friends were kidnapped by a group of slave traders, and brought through a magical portal in a haunted house on Halloween. After going through the portal, they end up in a magical world called [the Outskirts](#Outskirts). Cole was sold as a slave to a company called the Sky Raiders. The Sky Raiders purpose was to salvage magical items from floating sky castles. There, he met some friends, one of which was the king’s daughter, Mira. Mira was hiding from her father to prevent him from harming the kingdom by harnessing more of her special shaping power. In close pursuit by the king’s legionnaires, Cole and his friends escaped the Sky Raiders. With the help of an exiled old shaper and his servants, they defeat a monster called Carnag, that formed from Mira’s [shaping power](#Shaping). They then continue on their journey to save Mira’s sister, Honor, who they had recently been informed was in peril.

**Word definitions:**

**Shaper** = a person containing the power to create an object using magic

**Shaping** = the art of creating an object using magic

**Outskirts** = a magical land in which many kidnapped children were brought to