

2. Who is involved?

Simon

- Simon shows great courage in climbing the mountain alone to investigate the beast. His climb is a search for truth.
- We see Simon's compassion and strength of character when he frees the rotting body that is so awful to look at it has made him vomit.
- Simon shows more courage by ignoring the warning of his vision and going down to tell the boys that the beast is only a harmless, dead man, so they can be freed from their fear. He can be said to have sacrificed his life to bring them the truth.
- The **chapter title**, "A View to a Death", refers to Simon's view from the mountain of Jack's group on the beach, at the place where Simon will die. The chapter title **foreshadows** Simon's death. In literature, foreshadows means to give a hint about something that will happen later in the story.

Ralph

- Ralph wisely understands why the boys have joined Jack: it is not only for meat but also for "pretending to be a tribe, and putting on war-paint". (The boys feel secure because they are part of a tribe.)
- Ralph tries to stand up to Jack but, when the dance begins, he joins in with the group, which makes him feel safer during the violent storm: "They were glad to touch the brown backs of the fence that hemmed in the terror and made it governable." Ralph becomes part of the mob. The word "brown backs" refers to the backs of the other boys.

Piggy

- Piggy loves food and uses the weak excuse of making sure nothing goes wrong to persuade Ralph to go to the feast.
- Because of his knowledge of people Piggy urges Ralph to leave when he realises there is going to be trouble.

Jack

- Power has corrupted Jack and he behaves like a typical dictator, demanding total obedience and service from his tribe.
- Jack's contempt for any laws except his own is shown when he tells Ralph the conch does not count on his part of the island.
- Ironically, Jack has now become the evil beast to be feared.

The Littluns

- The littluns, who are innocent, soon start imitating the dance of Jack's tribe.

3. Themes

Good and evil

- In this chapter we see evil triumphing. It is hard to resist being drawn into it as it seems to have good things to offer – food and belonging, in this instance. Even Piggy and Ralph give in to temptation.
- From the vicious murder of Simon it seems that evil and violence have defeated goodness.

Civilisation and savagery

- Savagery seems to replace civilisation when Piggy and Ralph join the dance.

Innocence and corruption

- Jack has been corrupted by power. Innocence has vanished from the island.

Fear

- Jack, like all dictators, uses fear to control his people. It is the beast inside him that is to be feared.

4. Symbols

The beast

- The real beast is the dead airman and it is not a threat at all. But the boys do not know that. When Simon comes out of the jungle the boys attack and murder him believing they are freeing themselves from "the beast" of whom they have been so scared.

5. Diction and figurative language

This chapter contains very dramatic descriptions of the storm and the killing of Simon. The writer builds up an atmosphere of danger and evil by linking the approach of the storm to the growing violence and evil on the island. The beginning of the dance is made more dramatic by the thunder and lightning, as if nature was pointing out the horror of the violence.

Metaphor and simile

- Golding uses vivid description to help us imagine the storm:
The dark sky was shattered by a blue-white scar. An instant later the noise was on them like the blow of a gigantic whip.
- In a **metaphor** the lightning is compared to the scar of a wound that has torn the sky apart, "shattered" it. "Shattered" makes us picture something being violently broken. A **simile** describes the noise of the thunder: it is so loud it hurts the ears the way a big whip would hurt your body if it struck you with force. The metaphor and simile help us to see and hear the fierceness of the storm.