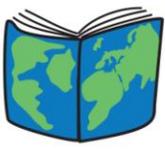




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The Last Thirteen: 7
By James Phelan

- In *The Last Thirteen: 7*, Sam travels to the Grand Canyon to meet up with the next Dreamer and attempt to locate the next Gear. What do you know about the Grand Canyon? Have you ever visited there? What did you see?
- During his nightmare, Sam learns about spelunking, or caving, from Cody. The Grand Canyon actually has about 1000 caves, but according to the National Park Service, only about 350 have been recorded and only a very few have been explored. Have you ever explored a cave? What was that like? If not, would you want to? Why or why not?
- In this same nightmare, Solaris asks Sam, "You think this is only about the Gears?" What do you think he means by this?
- Alex says *eureka* when he finds the pack of matches. What does *eureka* mean?
- When explaining his thoughts on the nature of Solaris, Tobias says, "My experience of the world tells me that too much power can change who someone is, even those with the best intentions." Can you think of historical or present-day examples that support this view?
- Eva figures out that the message from her parents is actually a warning to *not* visit them. Why do you think they might be warning her off?
- Alex's plan to escape from the laboratory demonstrates Archimedes' displacement principle. Who was Archimedes and what you can learn about him?
- Sam escapes from Tobias' uncle's ranch in what Tobias calls *Bullitt*. Can you explain or find out why Tobias calls the 1968 Mustang by this name?
- Cody and Sam venture out in kayaks. What do you know about kayaks? Have you ever been kayaking? How does a kayak differ from a canoe?
- The Denver, Colorado, airport not only has a 32-foot statue of a rearing mustang, but conspiracy theories abound about the airport itself. What can you learn about this statue? Is it actually black? Why do some claim the statue is "cursed"? How do the stories about this airport tie in with this book?
- Sam tells Cody about his recurring dream of sand dunes, admitting he doesn't know what it means. What do you think it may mean?
- The Washington Monument is the world's tallest obelisk as well as being the world's tallest all-stone structure. What is an obelisk? Have you ever visited the Washington Monument? What were your impressions of it?



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- What can you learn about the Olmec and the Hittite peoples? Where were these civilizations actually located?
 - Were you surprised by Cody's reaction to finding his parents in the underground temple? Do you think the zip line in Sam's nightmare described in Chapter 2 was a clue that Cody might have been keeping something from Sam? Imagine you are Cody and explain how he might justify his betrayal.
 - What do you think is triggering Cody's unease as the aircraft approaches the Denver airport?
 - As Mac finally admits his obsession with acquiring the power of the Dream Gate, and the lights go out in the underground bunker, Sam tells himself, "Maybe right now the enemy of my enemy is my friend." What do you think he means by this?
 - What can you learn about Mount Blanca in Colorado? Are there any stories about this area that the author may have built upon for this story?
 - As Mac sets in motion his plan to detonate a nuclear device, Solaris arrives. He proceeds to give the Gears to Sam and then speeds up the detonation countdown. Why do you think he does this? What are your thoughts about the nature of Solaris and his plans? Has your thinking about him changed since Sam's encounter with him in New York City in *The Last Thirteen: 13*?