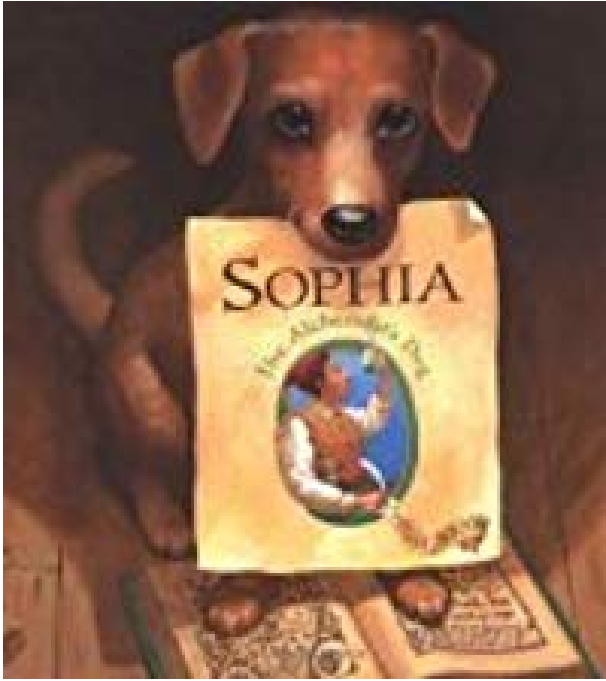


Sophia, the Alchemist's Dog



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The king's alchemist has only two weeks—and then his royal master is coming to the laboratory, expecting to see that the poor man has turned lead into gold. The king loves gold. Sophia, the alchemist's dog, loves her master, the man who, day and night, despondently ponders and dreams and draws and doodles panicky thoughts about gold on piles and piles of paper. He is tormenting himself for he can learn nothing, from anywhere, about the magic expected of him. And he is neglecting his friend Sophia who misses her fine walks and misses the man's loving company. So it is that Sophia, for reasons any dog will understand, sets up a laboratory of her own under the table while her master woofs and paws the pillow nearby in his unhappy sleep. What Sophia discovers about alchemy is unforeseen, a miracle that amazes us to this very day. The royal alchemist's dog is able to discover for herself the secret of making gold, but when the king comes to visit he finds treasure of a different kind.