

# **Finding Audrey Study Guide**

## **Finding Audrey by Sophie Kinsella**

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# Plot Summary

The following version of this book was used to create this study guide: Kinsella, Sophie. *Finding Audrey*. Penguin, 2015.

Audrey is a teenage girl attending high school in the United Kingdom. She suffers from social and general anxiety and depression after being bullied by a large group of girls at her school. Her parents pull her out of school for the remainder of the semester and she must find herself through two weekly therapy sessions and assignments given to her by her psychologist, Dr. Sarah.

In addition to her own turmoil, Audrey's family is falling apart. Convinced that Audrey's brother, Frank, is addicted to video games, their mother halts his addiction the only way she knows how -- by throwing his computer out the window while the neighbors gather to watch the spectacle. All Frank wants to do is compete in an upcoming video game tournament. All his mom wants him to do is suddenly grown an appreciation for classic literature instead of video games. Dad is stuck in the middle, but usually gives in to Mum's demands. Felix is just four, but he likes to repeat swear words he overhears.

In the midst of all the family drama, Audrey happens to fall for her brother's friend, Linus. The feeling is mutual, but Audrey finds it very hard to build a relationship with her fight or flight mentality. Luckily, Linus is patient and wants to help Audrey. Conflict between them grows, however, when Audrey gets too confident in her success and secretly stops taking her medication and goes against her parents' decision for her not to meet one of her former tormentors. Linus does not want Audrey to suffer a setback and he agrees with her parents that seeing the bully might cause a problem.

Linus and her parents were right. Audrey does suffer an anxiety attack after the secret visit to her former classmate. She leaves the house in the early morning hours to walk off the anxiety, but she falls asleep in the park. When her parents discover she is missing, they call the police and begin looking for her. She is found a little later that morning, asleep behind a park tree.

The incident shows Audrey that recovery is a process that cannot be rushed. She also learns the importance of taking her medication as it is prescribed. The incident also shows Mum that life's too short to worry so much about being perfect. She starts serving junk food and learning about video games with the kids. Dad even starts playing games himself. In the end, Audrey is happy to be recuperating without the shield of her sunglasses. She describes eyes as a window into the soul and is happy for people to see her eyes once again.



# Pages 1 - 23

## Summary

Audrey, a teenage girl, tells her story from the first person point of view in present tense. The book starts with Audrey's mother threatening to throw Frank's computer out the second-floor window of his house. Frank, Audrey's brother, watches from the yard and pleads with his mom not to do so. Various neighbors show up to watch the scene. Audrey's father arrives and asks her not to throw the computer because, if for no other reason, it would damage the family's car, which is parked in the driveway.

Their mother does not understand Frank's obsession with a video game called Land of Conquerors (LOC) and she is determined to rid him of his addiction. Frank tries to make her understand that he is practicing for an LOC competition. He maintains that the game is a competitive sport and that he can make a career out of it. His mother replies that what he speaks of is a hopeless and ridiculous dream.

Starting on page 7, Audrey explains what led to her mother to this scenario. The chain of events began a month earlier than the opening scene, although Audrey still tells it from the first person point of view in present tense. Her mother becomes convinced Frank is addicted to video games after reading an article on the matter in the Daily Mail called "The Eight Signs Your Child is Addicted to Computer Games." Audrey likens Frank's "symptoms" of irritability and moodiness to those of normal teenage years. She supposes, however, that her mom is addicted to reading the Daily Mail and outlines her eight symptoms. She:

1. Reads the Daily Mail every day.
2. Believes everything she reads in it.
3. Protects the paper if someone tries to take it from her.
4. Changes the family's vitamins based on stories she reads there.
5. Makes them wear sunscreen after reading pro-sunscreen articles.
6. Orders whatever face cream the newspaper says is the best.
7. Gets withdrawal symptoms when she doesn't get to read it during vacations.
8. Tried to give it up for Lent one time, but couldn't.

When Frank's friend, Linus, comes over to practice playing a video game with him, Audrey's mother suggests they play other games instead. She is infuriated to find them playing the internet versions of the board/card games she recommended. When showing himself out, Linus runs into Audrey and comments on the dark sunglasses she



wears inside. Panicked and embarrassed, she runs to her room and hides behind a curtain until her mother comes to check on her. Her mom gets her a pill for Audrey and a drink of water with which to wash it down. Audrey reveals that she has Anxiety Disorder, General Anxiety Disorder, and depressive episodes.

## Analysis

The author's choice to write the story from Audrey's point of view and to tell it in first-person present tense gives the reader the feeling that he or she is Audrey's friend, having the experience right there with her. It also helps to give immediate insights into Audrey's personality. Audrey is witty and sarcastic, and she finds humor in just about everything, despite her anxiety disorders. Her humor helps lighten the tone of the story to make it enjoyable for the reader. Audrey's point of view also affects the presentation of the text. For example, to emphasize Audrey's words, the author often uses italics and even uses all capital letters to indicate yelling or screaming. The author also writes in sentence fragments sometimes to better indicate a stream of consciousness style.

This section of the novel is heavy in irony and sarcasm from Audrey and her whole family, thus illustrating one significant source of dysfunction within the family. For example, Frank sarcastically compliments Mum while she threatens to drop Frank's computer out a window (3). The sarcasm is compounded by the fact that she cannot understand the compliment because it refers to a strong goddess warrior character in the video game Frank plays. Beginning on page 7, the reader learns that although Mum accuses Frank of being addicted to video games Mum, ironically, is addicted to reading the Daily Mail. Audrey compares the eight signs of video game addiction to her mom's addiction for the Daily Mail. Audrey's case actually seems stronger than her mom's case against Frank.

This section also identifies the generation gap in the family as another source of dysfunction. For example, Mum does not have an understanding of many modern electronics. When she asks Frank how much time he has spent on video games in the past month, he is not sure what she means. To Mum, video game means just that -- a video game. But Frank points out that gaming is more complicated. Does she mean computer games, console games, phone apps, etc.? Mum is overwhelmed with her lack of knowledge, which only makes her angrier.

In addition to the family conflict over Frank's video game "addiction," Audrey faces a challenge with the introduction of an outsider, Linus, into the family setting. Linus' appearance seems to act as a trigger for Audrey's anxiety. Her anxiety is so severe that she wears sunglasses in the house to decrease her noticeability, and she hides in the den for most of the time that Linus is in the house. Ironically, when she recalls seeing Linus' performance in a play, she seems to think of Linus fondly. He played Atticus Finch, a kind and sympathetic character in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This foreshadows that Linus will play a kind and sympathetic role in Audrey's life as well. Audrey tries to make light of the fact that she remembers him by adding that it is irrelevant (17), but it actually shows that Audrey has noticed Linus in the past, foreshadowing a sparked interest in



the boy. In addition, Audrey did try to stay to talk with Linus, further indicating her budding interest in him and suggesting that he may be a possible love interest in the novel.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the irony of the sentence "That's normal Mum insane" (1). How does it set the tone for the first section, pages 1 through 6?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the communication problem that is the base of the conflict in pages 7 through 14.

## Discussion Question 3

Audrey finally tells the reader her full diagnosis on page 23. How does she show the reader her symptoms in the section of pages 15 through 23?

## Vocabulary

insane, commentaries, hastily, competitive, murmur, striding, comically, bloody, monotonous, precariously, lorry



## Pages 24 - 44

### Summary

In the section that begins on page 24, Audrey tells her counselor, Dr. Sarah, about the panic attack she had when Linus visited Frank in their house. She also reflects on what it is like to deal with depression. Audrey admits that she feels stuck in depression (25). Dr. Sarah reminds her that the stuck feeling is not permanent and that the depression is fully treatable. Audrey also reveals that she has not done what her counselor told her – to take off her dark glasses for a minute or two each day with family members. Audrey explains that eyes make her uncomfortable because they are windows to the soul (27). Dr. Sarah assigns her to make a documentary about her family. Audrey is skeptical.

The section that begins on page 30 is written as though it is part of a documentary. Audrey calls it “My Serene and Loving Family,” and it focuses on various elements of her life. She narrates the film as she tours her house. She conveys a conversation her mom and dad are having as she eavesdrops. Mom wants to host a party to introduce Frank to girls. She thinks this will take his mind off video games. Dad fears the teens would be violent or have sex on the trampoline. As they leave the room and realize Audrey may have heard part of their conversation, her parents tell her they were discussing the crisis in the Middle East.

Audrey begins to tell her backstory in the section that begins on page 36. She omits details, but she does explain that her problems began with an incident at Stokeland Girls School that involved “all the girls” (36) and the head teacher, Miss Amerson. She goes on to mention that there was a scandal. Three girls were expelled and Audrey’s parents immediately took her out of the school. She will start at the Heath Academy at the beginning of the next school year. Dr. Sarah is working with her to help Audrey conquer her anxiety enough to be able to leave the house and attend the new school in the fall.

Audrey then details the extent of her anxiety disorder. She can have meals with her family and feels comfortable with Dr. Sarah, but the rest of the world is overwhelming to her. Audrey says that even before the school incident, she often stood alone and tried to hide behind her hair. She is also uncomfortable about her body image, feeling she is underdeveloped compared to the other girls in her class. Audrey explains that her teachers at Stokeland made her more uncomfortable and feel even more distanced from her peers by introducing her as the smartest or most talented at the school.

In the section that starts on page 39, Audrey says she’d rather not go into the specifics of the incident at school that caused her anxiety. The next page returns to her family “script” as she films more documentary footage. In this footage, she captures Mum scolding Frank for eating too much candy. She also tells him that they are going to start running together because he is out of shape. When there is a knock at the door, Frank tells Audrey that his friend Linus is there so she can hide if she wants. As Linus enters,



Audrey swoops the camera past him and hurriedly exits. Once safely out of the room, she uses the camera to zoom in on Linus' face. On the next page (44), as a supposed afterthought, Audrey notes that she only filmed Linus because he has a connection to her family. She also admits she rewound to see his face several times.

## Analysis

This section serves an important narrative function in helping the reader understand the nature and origins of Audrey's depression. Audrey reveals that she lived at a children's hospital for six weeks after her incident at school to help her cope with depression. She discusses her depression a little and explains that it is hard to diagnose or understand because it does not come with easily identifiable symptoms. The doctor says her feelings are her symptoms. Now Audrey sees Dr. Sarah twice a week to talk about her feelings. Counseling is good for Audrey because, as she explains, the answers to various problems seem to just come out of her before she really has a chance to think. She appears to be learning a lot about herself through counseling.

This section also develops the narrative's recurring motif of eyes. Audrey's fascination with eyes appears to function as a symptom of her anxiety. On page 27, Audrey discusses the power of eyes. She says that eyes are powerful, have range, and allow us to focus on others. Eyes show interest, are infinite, and act as windows into the soul. She also says souls can be sucked out if you make eye contact with someone. This is a heavy idea in an otherwise light-hearted narration. The fact that Audrey keeps her eyes covered with dark glasses shows how insecure she feels. Moreover, she can no longer focus on others because she is focusing so much on herself and her own problems. She fears having her soul sucked out if she makes eye contact with someone because of her negative experience at school. She used to make eye contact with people who were supposed to be her friends, but now she feels soulless because of her anxiety.

The use of a script format in the narrative appears to be a mechanism by which to give an intimate and direct view of Audrey's family life. The first script of Audrey's documentary, which she sarcastically calls "My Serene and Loving Family," starts on page 30. It reads like a script to give the reader a chance to see what happens when Audrey films, and it is also in present tense. It is correctly labeled as a "transcript" at the top of the page because it is the wording of her unscripted documentary segments after they have been recorded. With her documentary as an excuse, Audrey snoops a lot and even records a conversation she overhears between her parents. This conversation helps to reveal various worries and anxieties with which the parents themselves are struggling.

The narrative centers Audrey's anxieties around a specific event at her old school, but the narrative builds suspense and mystery surrounding this event by leaving out integral details. Audrey is unable to talk about the incident in enough detail for the reader to gain a clear picture of the incident. At this point, the reader only knows that all the girls at Stokeland Girls School were involved in the incident along with Miss Amerson, the head





teacher. Audrey is even in counseling so she can be ready to start a new school in September. The fact that Audrey still cannot talk about the incident, along with her counseling and anxiety symptoms, indicates just how traumatic the incident was for Audrey.

Audrey also reveals that various unalterable circumstances in her life contribute to her anxiety. For example, although teenagers primarily want to find a way to fit in, she had teachers who always found ways to differentiate her from the others. She describes herself as very tall and under-developed, which already makes her feel awkward. The teachers only added to her awkwardness when they described her as the smartest or most talented girl at school. Not only did it distinguish Audrey from the other girls, it likely made some of the other girls jealous.

The layout of the text also relates various messages to the reader. Even though the chapters are not numbered, sections are indicated through spacing. For instance, the text on page 38 begins about mid-way down the page, indicating what would be a new chapter, if this book had designated chapters. When the transcript of her documentary section ends on page 43, there is plenty of room on the page to add the text that appears on page 44. However, moving those five sentences to the next page and considering them as a "chapter" on their own indicates that the lines are an afterthought. However, even though Audrey is trying to downplay the fact she recorded Linus, she contradicts herself when she admits she has watched the clip showing his face several times (44). Including Linus in her family documentary shows that she is accepting him and foreshadows that he will become like a member of their family in the future.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss why Audrey wears dark glasses all the time. How does her reason relate to her theory on eyes?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss Audrey's self-esteem when she was in school, before the incident. Cite examples from pages 24 through 44 to support your claims.

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the irony in the title of Audrey's family documentary shown in this reading section. Also discuss the significance of her including Linus in it.

## Vocabulary

reassurance, moniker, unruffled, persistence, vortex, infinite, serene, sotto voce, deluded, trauma



## Pages 45 - 81

### Summary

In the section that begins on page 45, Mum is scolding Frank for not being dressed to run. She is in leggings, a crop top, and running shoes. He is wearing jeans, a t-shirt, and his regular sneakers. Mum rants to Frank about how he only gets one body so he must take care of it. He quips that robotic body parts will be available by the time he is her age. She insists that he is not healthy because of the amount of time he spends playing video games. As Frank and Mum stretch, Audrey's little brother Felix runs in and plays alongside them. Before leaving for their run, Frank asks his mom if she has forgotten the press-ups (pushups). He does 30 while she barely does five without getting winded. He tells her he learned how to do them in P.E. and mentions that he is on the cross country team too. She had no idea. He jokes that he read an article in the Daily Mail that said middle aged women don't do enough press-ups. After a 45 minute run, Frank and Mum return. He barely broke a sweat, but Mum is still red and breathless. Dad is worried about her. As he walks into the playroom, Frank shakes his head and tells her she needs more exercise and that she should treasure her body because she only gets one.

In the section that begins on page 50, Frank tells Audrey that Linus is coming over to practice video games and that he wants her to get to know him. He explains that Linus got freaked out the day he bumped into her and she ran and hid. Frank says he and Linus will be competing to win six million dollars in an upcoming contest. They can't practice at Linus' house because his grandmother lives with them and has dementia; she would interrupt them. Frank says Linus asked for her phone number, but she does not have one since the school incident. She calls herself "phone-averse" (52). Audrey does not commit to getting to know Linus.

Felix comes into the room to watch television with Audrey. She takes off her glasses with him because she does not want to scare him. She also finds comfort in his innocent gaze. Frank enters the room again to give Audrey a note from Linus. The note simply apologizes for freaking out Audrey the last time he visited. She writes back an apology and asks Felix to deliver it to Linus in the other room. They send notes back and forth through Felix. Their note writing interferes with Linus' video game practice with Frank so they stop.

The next section begins on page 58 and is another script segment of Audrey's documentary. She documents preparations that are being made for her mother's birthday. Dad bought a cake with a big "39," but the year is wrong. Mum is only 38. Just as they try to figure out how to solve the problem, Mum comes home. He decides to fix the problem by rewriting the number and sends Frank for "anything edible" from the kitchen (61). Frank returns with ketchup. Dad plans to just change the 9 to an 8, but Audrey suggests going over both numbers to make them match.



The next section, starting on page 63, is the narrative of what follows after the cake debacle. Audrey says the cake looks like the Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Mum scrapes away the ketchup to see the “39” on the top of the cake. She is upset that her husband thinks she is older. He takes her out for a dinner date to make up for the mistake. Before they leave, Mum tells Frank he must work on his homework and not play computer games. She takes his computer power cord so he can't use his computer. As soon as they leave, Audrey and Frank head to the playroom. He gets a power cord out of his backpack and Audrey is amused to find out that he has several on hand because Mum has done this in the past.

Mum returns for her phone and sees Frank on the computer. He shows her that he is doing his French homework – homework that must be done on computer. She does not get angry with him but is skeptical that he has been working the whole time. He finally convinces her and she leaves again. Just a few minutes later, Mum climbs up on Felix's playhouse to spy on Frank through the window. She catches him playing games, but falls through the playhouse's weak roof. Frank reminds her, as she's lying on the ground in the rubble, that she previously told him that standing on the playhouse sets a bad example for Felix. This angers Mum. For disobeying and lying, Dad thinks Frank should be grounded from computer use for one day; Mum says two months. They step aside to decide what to do and finally announce that Frank is grounded for 10 days from using his computer and phone. Frank is upset that he will let down his teammates training for the video game competition. Frank apologizes and his parents leave for their date. Frank's biggest concern is training for the video game competition. His 10-day grounding will put him at a disadvantage but he's thankful it wasn't longer. Frank tells Audrey it is important that she gets along with Linus so Mum will still let him visit.

The next two pages, 73-74, are another script from Audrey's documentary. It starts with Frank giving his mom the silent treatment when she asks for his after-school plans. Dad is too busy playing with his phone to notice Frank's rude behavior. When Mum finally gets Dad's attention, he scolds Frank and tells him that their family communicates. Mum says she wants Frank and Dad to go through their shirts that afternoon. Dad does not hear because he is playing with his phone. Frank finally gets Dad's attention, but Dad's responses show he clearly was not paying attention.

In the section that begins on page 75, Frank brings Linus in to say hello to Audrey. She is tense and anxious, but uses techniques Dr. Sarah taught her to help calm herself. It is difficult to sit alone with Linus instead of running to hide. Linus is interested in her condition and asks if it's because of what happened at her school. He mentioned that everyone was talking about it, which made Audrey really uncomfortable. He mentions the names of three girls that were involved in the incident and Audrey feels worse. She tells him she does not want to talk about it, so he changes the conversation to her dark glasses. She finally decides just to be honest with him. She says that eye contact is hard for her, so he passes her a note instead of talking. In the note he reveals that he remembers the color of her eyes from the day he dropped by and accidentally frightened her. He also says he is sorry she's having to go through the anxiety. He likens her anxiety to rhubarb. He says she will be in the dark for as long as needed, then she



will come out of it. As he excuses himself to go visit Frank, Audrey wishes she could look at him or at least use her body language to let him know she likes him.

## Analysis

Mum's stretching and run with Frank is full of irony that serves to point out Mum's lack of awareness and consideration. Mum is dressed to work out. She looks like someone striving to be healthy. Frank is in his jeans and regular sneakers. While he does not appear to be interested in his health, he is much healthier than Mum thinks he is and is ironically much healthier than she is. She says he is not healthy because he plays too many video games. Ironically, she plays no video games and has trouble keeping up with Frank on his run and his press-ups. Naturally, the reader can blame the age difference between the two for the difference in their fitness levels. However, this same age difference relates to their difference in understanding of technology. Just as Mum clearly has no knowledge of Frank's fitness level, she also has no knowledge of the role technology and gaming plays in the lives of people in his generation. It is also ironic because it shows just how little Mum knows about Frank. Because the Daily Mail printed an article about video game addiction, she was quick to pin the symptoms on Frank based on basic observations she has made. But she did not have all the information about Frank when she did so, which is clear when she learns for the first time that Frank participates on his school's cross country team. Until this, she had no idea he was in a school sport. As much as she has been in his personal business lately, it is ironic that she has no idea about his school extra-curricular activities.

The section that begins on page 50 reveals more information about Linus and develops the tentative attraction between himself and Audrey. First of all, Audrey learns that Linus wanted to text or call her because he asked Frank for her phone number. She does not seem excited about this fact because she has a phone phobia after the school incident that left her with depression and anxiety. She also learns that Linus' grandmother lives with his family and that her dementia keeps the boys from practicing their video game at his house. So, he must be patient and understanding to deal with that situation at his own house. She also learns that he is caring when he sends a note to her apologizing for scaring her during his last visit. Linus seems like a sensitive guy, much like the Atticus Finch character he once portrayed in the play Audrey recalled seeing.

The segment of documentary that begins on page 58 shows how Dad and the kids work amicably together as they try to hide a mistake on Mum's birthday cake. In the section following, starting on page 63, the story reveals a little more about Mum's character. She is shallow to make such a fuss over the wrong age put on her cake and the fact that the family tried to hide it from her with ketchup. She is very worried about how she looks and about aging. Mum also reveals in this section that she is not as clueless as Frank thinks she is. She anticipates that he is lying to her about doing homework on his computer, so she stands on Felix's playhouse to spy on him. When it is time to punish Frank for lying to Mum, the reader gets a clear sense of difference between the two parents. Dad is more lenient. Mum is strict. Dad has never agreed that Frank's gaming is an issue. Mum, however, insists that Frank has a problem. While Dad usually caves



to Mum's demands, this time he negotiates on behalf of Frank. Dad thought the punishment should only be for one day, but Mum thought two weeks. They compromise on 10 days instead of a full two weeks. This compromise shows that Dad actually does have some bargaining power in the family and he is not as powerless as Audrey recently believed. In the next section, pages 73 and 74, the reader sees that Dad is as focused on his phone as Frank is on his video gaming. That shared interest in electronics is why Dad does not believe Frank has a gaming addiction.

Also on page 73, Audrey makes hot cocoa, which serves as a metaphor for the way she views her own life. She describes the process simply, explaining that adding hot water to the mix transforms the powder into something different and delicious. The powder needed only one simple thing to transform it. Since she and Frank are discussing Linus as she makes the cocoa, this foreshadows his importance as a transformer in the future. It also creates a metaphor. Audrey is hot chocolate mix, but with Linus as her boiling water, she can become something totally different and well-loved.

Audrey faces one of her biggest fears in the section that starts on page 75. She has a conversation with Linus at Frank's insistence. Linus expresses interest in Audrey's condition and talks vaguely about the school incident. Realizing he is making Audrey uncomfortable, he changes to note writing again. He apologizes for making her uncomfortable and expresses sympathy for her anxiety. He uses rhubarb as a metaphor to describe her anxiety. He says that rhubarb needs time in the dark before it is ready to harvest and said that once she's had enough time in the dark, her condition will be better. He also notes that his aunt grows rhubarb and that it's good and she makes a fortune with it. This symbolizes Audrey -- she is good and has value. It also suggests Linus is interested in Audrey and foreshadows potential romance between the two. She jokes about being rhubarb and he draws a picture of a stalk of rhubarb wearing sunglasses and gives it to her.

Audrey refers to body language as a type of dialect, thus exploring the various frightening methods of communication. Most of the time, dialect refers to a verbal word or phrase that is well-known in a particular region or subgroup. But since Audrey has such a hard time talking to Linus and is largely writing notes to him, body language becomes a dialect. She wants to face him so he knows she likes him, but just cannot bring herself to do it. This conversation and her admittance that she likes Linus adds to the rising action of the plot.

## Discussion Question 1

Compare and contrast Dad and Frank. How do they differ in terms of values and personality?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the generation gap between Mom and Frank. What makes it worse?



## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the rhubarb metaphor and explain specifically how it relates to Audrey and to Linus.

## Vocabulary

rhubarb, resolutely, amygdala, sublime, lame, huddle, mutterings, wedged, element, shredding



## Pages 82 - 104

### Summary

Mum joins Audrey and Dr. Sarah as they watch what Audrey has recorded in her documentary so far. Dr. Sarah challenges her to record someone other than family, possibly an old school friend. Audrey immediately thinks of Natalie, her best friend. Natalie has written letters to Audrey, but Audrey just cannot face her after the school incident. She does not blame Natalie, but her mother does. Dr. Sarah cautions that if she does not start making contact with the world, she will begin to feel like the whole world is talking about her. Audrey explains that Linus said the whole town was talking about her and Dr. Sarah catches the familiarity of his name and recalls that he is Frank's video gaming friend. Mum interrupts about Frank's video game addiction, but Dr. Sarah shifts the conversation immediately back to Audrey. Dr. Sarah suggests exposure therapy – a trip to Starbucks to get accustomed to being in the public again. The next day, Audrey slips into depression just thinking about her Starbucks goal. Mum comforts her by telling her that recovery just takes a little time.

The next section begins on page 87 and picks up three days after Audrey's depression began. She's beginning to come out of her depression and argues with Frank over cereal. Mum notices that Frank looks tired and advises him to sleep 14 hours a night or 10 at the minimum. She gives him about 10 different kinds of vitamins to take and gives several to Audrey, too. Felix won't take his vitamin so Mum does, then sprays herself with Skin Enhancer. Mum thinks she has weaned Frank off the video games, but she learns that he is counting down the hours, minutes, and seconds for his grounding to be lifted.

Another film transcript begins on page 91. The family is finishing a movie, "Great Expectations," based on the Charles Dickens novel of the same name. Audrey is filming, Dad is on his phone, and Frank stares at the ceiling. Mum is trying to convince Frank that the movie is better than his video game. Frank explains that there is a similar character in his video game. He and Audrey explain to Mum that the video game character is more interesting than the one in the movie. She is appalled and stays mad about it. Audrey refers to the incident as Dickensgate.

The section starting on page 95 follows up on the argument seen in the transcript. Mum makes them clean their rooms the next day. Frank hurries to meet Linus who is coming to play video games. Frank, still grounded, explains that he is only going to watch Linus play. Audrey hopes Linus stops in to say hello to her. She feels funny, but she thinks it's in a good way instead of an anxious one. Very soon, Felix brings her a note from Linus. It says, "Hi, Rhubarb." Her note back to him says, "Hi, Orange Slice." She called him that because his smile was big like an orange segment. They talk a little and he tells her that his grandmother is "proper crazy" (98). She begins to feel like he thinks she is crazy. She thinks about several times when her mother told her not to over-react. Linus tries to explain himself and she notices that his voice is easy and caring. He asks if she





ever goes out and she explains that she is supposed to go to Starbucks for exposure therapy. She explains that she's not ready for social contact and he encourages her to try shoe contact. With his encouragement, Audrey is able to move her foot slightly toward him and they touch shoes for a minute or so. She feels breathless and notes that he acts like he has proven a point. Audrey asks if she may interview Linus for her documentary and he agrees to do so when Frank is un-grounded.

## Analysis

The section that begins on page 82 gives Dr. Sarah a first-hand look at the relationship between Mu and Audrey, thus further developing this relationship through a fresh perspective. Mum attends Audrey's counseling appointment with her and consistently interrupts Dr. Sarah and even tries to turn the session into a discussion about Frank's supposed video game. Dr. Sarah is a pro, however, and politely but firmly stops Mum. Dr. Sarah is happy to hear Audrey mention Linus again. Overall, the appointment went well, until Audrey was assigned to do some exposure therapy by visiting Starbucks. Audrey dreads getting out of the house so much that she slips into a bout of depression. This bout of depression symbolizes a slip in Audrey's progress and that she still has a long way to go in terms of healing.

Mum continues to show how little she knows about children despite being mother to three of them. At first, she tells Frank he should be getting 14 hours of sleep. She dispenses vitamins to them quite randomly and sprays herself with out of date skin toner that ironically starts to break out her skin. Mum is definitely the antagonist of this story. Her personality quirks affect everyone in the family. She is bossy to Dad and Frank, and interferes in Audrey's counseling appointment. She has a conflict with each member of the family except Felix, and he is only four.

Ironically, Mum has an opportunity to find common ground between her and the children when they compare the movie character Magwitch to a video game character. Instead of using the opportunity to connect with her children, she allows their discussion to drive them apart. She will not change her ways to adapt, or even consider adapting, a point of view that is more in tune with the younger generation. The fact that she will not change her ways foreshadows more conflict or a possible resolution; if she refuses to adapt, conflict will continue, but if she does adapt, it might bring about a resolution. Appalled that her children would liken a video game character to one in a classic movie, Mum stays mad for a few days, prompting Audrey to nickname the ordeal Dickensgate, referring to a political scandal in the early 1970s called Watergate.

Audrey's relationship with Linus continues to grow in the section that begins on page 95, taking on a new dimension of tentative intimacy. They identify with each other based on similes with edible plant products. He calls her Rhubarb and she calls him Orange Slice. Symbolically, these nicknames go beyond just a simile; they show the reader a budding relationship between the two characters who created the cute nicknames. They symbolically show their growing affection for each other by touching shoes. Some young couples would hold hands, but that is not an option for Audrey, who cannot even



look Linus in the eye yet. He shows his interest in her by pursuing the shoe contact. For Audrey, it is as important as holding hands or a first kiss as the shoe contact leaves her breathless. In addition to the feeling she gets from physical contact with Linus, Audrey may also be feeling effects of her anxiety, although she is doing a good job of controlling her urges to flee. With the confidence of their shoe contact, Audrey feels comfortable enough to ask Linus if she can interview him for her documentary. This element of rising action demonstrates that Audrey is getting stronger and foreshadows that the two will have more conversations in the future. The conversation between Audrey and Linus take place in the den, which is Audrey's safe place, her refuge. This symbolizes that Linus, too, serves as a "safe place" for Audrey. He is nurturing, caring, and encouraging, as exemplified when he encouraged her to try shoe contact.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss Mum's role as the antagonist in this book, using evidence from this section to substantiate your claims.

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the two reasons her shoe contact with Linus is important to Audrey.

## Discussion Question 3

Select an element of foreshadowing in this section and discuss its significance to the story.

## Vocabulary

perjorative, pleasant, tinge, sensations, exposure, magnesium, surreptitiously, fossilized, grubby, midsentence



## Pages 105 - 132

### Summary

On page 105, another transcript for Audrey's documentary begins. She catches Dad sleeping in his study, and wakes him to do her documentary interview. She notices a picture of a foreign sports car on his computer screen. He is an accountant, but was once in a band called the Moonlit Turtles. He likes to talk about the band because he thinks it is more interesting than his accounting career. He suggests Audrey use his band's music as a soundtrack for her documentary. He offers to buy editing software so they can work on the project together. He starts playing the music loudly and she backs out of the room.

The next section starts on page 109. While trying to fall asleep, Audrey thinks about how nice it would be to greet Linus at the front door like normal people do the next time he visits. Audrey knows it is not likely to happen, but she recalls that Dr. Sarah encourages her to practice positive visualization. She knows Frank's grounding ends the next day so Linus will be visiting again soon.

A shrieking alarm wakes Audrey at the beginning the section that starts on page 111. She grabs her old teddy bear and a photo of her with her grandmother and heads down the hall, expecting to evacuate. Then she realizes the screeching she heard was not an alarm at all; it was her mother who'd caught Frank playing video games at 3:43 in the morning. He tells Mum that he couldn't sleep so he logged in to play his video game around 2 a.m. Dad comes into the room and begs Mum to let it go until morning because he has an 8 o'clock appointment. They all went back to bed.

At breakfast, Mum grilled Frank over how many times he'd played his game when she was asleep and how long he's had insomnia. She asks why he doesn't drink Ovaltine before bed, but Audrey explains that Mum never buys it. She often talks about Ovaltine, but has never bought it; Audrey doesn't even know what it is.

Later in the day, when Frank is still at school, Dad comes home from work early at Mum's insistence. They go to another room to talk and Audrey moves to a closer room so she can eavesdrop. She hears Mum say that she took Frank's computer to her Pilates class to have Arjun look at it. Arjun is a computer developer who is also in the class. He checked Frank's computer and learned that he has been playing video games from 2 to 4 a.m. all week long, every night. With the knowledge that Frank has been lying and sneaking around to play while grounded, Dad says he needs to be grounded for life, or at least until he's an adult. Mum suggests they also give up TV as a family, but Dad reminds her that they have two favorite TV shows. Mum says she means the TV rule is just for the children because they need to read books.

Felix comes home from a play date and throws a tantrum over his lunch. Mum gives him a bath to calm him down; then he happily eats a sandwich. Audrey is stuck watching



Felix eat his sandwich. She wants to meet Frank to warn him about Mum's discovery. Frank comes home from school and Mum begins her questioning. He insists that he takes his game seriously and hopes to become a professional gamer. He has no reaction when she tells him he's banned from the computer for good. So she grabs it and heads upstairs, threatening to break it.

The section that begins on page 123 returns the action to where the story first began, with Mum threatening to throw Frank's computer out the window. Audrey says the computer bounced twice and was not nearly the spectacle they expected it would be. Frank has been silent all night. Audrey wonders if Linus will stop coming over since Frank can't play video games.

The section that starts on page 125 is another documentary transcript. Mum talks to Audrey's camera, saying that she did the right thing, although it was an extreme measure. Audrey does not talk to her mom during the recording. She moves the camera to see that Mum is looking up "spa breaks for single women, no children allowed" on her smart phone. Mum tells her it is nothing.

The section that begins on page 127 begins with Frank speaking to no one. He ignores questions from Mum and Dad during dinner and keeps his eyes down. Felix comes into the dining room with a sheet of homework that he must do. The assignment is to ask his family members what they love about their family. Felix's answer is pizza. Frank writes a sarcastic remark about Mum destroying his computer. Mum says Frank needs a hobby. Dad says they can start playing music together in the garage, but Mum decides Frank will volunteer. Later that night, Audrey asks Frank if Linus will be coming back to visit. Frank says he will not because Linus dropped Frank from the competition team.. Audrey can tell Frank wants to cry, but he does not.

## Analysis

This reading section seems to imply that Mum and Dad are having some marital issues. In the section that starts on page 105, Dad has been looking up foreign sports cars on the Internet. The section that starts on page 125 shows Mum looking up spa time for single women. Audrey has made commentary about Mum's bossiness and she and Dad obviously have different ideas of punishment. While their possible problem does not affect the plot, it does show the amount of conflict going on in Audrey's home: she has anxiety issues due to a school event, Frank has conflict over his computer gaming, and Mum and Dad are apparently having conflict. When Audrey is filming Mum in the section that begins on page 125, she has no voice over for herself listed in the transcript. She has nothing to say to Mum's comments about how destroying Frank's computer was the right decision, indicating that Audrey, Frank, and Dad are in agreement.

While Audrey's main conflict in the book so far has been her own social anxiety and depression, now it is Mum. Mum's irrational decisions are based on doing what she thinks is right for the family. She takes Audrey to counseling and pulls her out of school for her own health and safety. She bans Frank from video games for his own health and



safety, too. Ironically, her decision to “help” Frank will actually hurt Audrey’s social progress. Mum does not see the damage because she refuses to adapt or to see a viewpoint other than her own. This is clear, too, when she suggests that Dad and Frank spend time together. When Dad agrees and is interested in sharing a music hobby with Frank, Mum changes her mind and says Frank will volunteer instead (130). It seems as though she is destined to argue with him and serve as the antagonist of the family.

Mum also shows a double standard in the rules she makes, thus adding another dimension to Audrey's frustration with her mother.. When Mum talks to Dad about eliminating TV, she means only for the children in the family. Mum and Dad watch two TV shows together that they say they must watch, which ironically indicates an addiction of their own.

The content in the transcript section that begins on page 125 is ironic compared to the title of the documentary, “My Serene and Loving Family.” In this section, Mum defends herself with no comment from Audrey, the filmmaker/narrator. Audrey’s silence shows discord.

After having his computer destroyed, Frank seems to have more in common with Audrey, as he recedes into his own introversion. He chooses not to make eye contact and stays quiet most of the time. He does take an occasional opportunity to be sarcastic. Audrey recognizes that Frank is depressed like she is. Audrey tries to talk with him after dinner and she learns that he has been kicked off his gaming team. While the situation is different, Frank has also lost all his friends. His mother failed to understand that Frank used his game to communicate with people all over the world, too (129).

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the similarities between Audrey and Frank after Mum wrecks his computer. What does this imply about Frank's relationship to his games and to the world?

## Discussion Question 2

Explain how Mum inadvertently halts Audrey's progress in therapy. If she wants Audrey to recover, why does she do this?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the irony in Mum's decision that Frank should volunteer as a hobby. What does this irony reflect regarding Mum as a character?



## Vocabulary

flexes, armory, ancient, crouching, ominous, anticlimax, farsighted, devastated, grimly, sonorous



## Pages 133 - 149

### Summary

The section that starts on page 133 shows Audrey's visit with Dr. Sarah. She tells the doctor that she's tired a lot, spending a lot of time in bed, and that she just wants to be normal again. Dr. Sarah reminds her not to rush things and to rest whenever she is tired so she can heal. Dr. Sarah says she has made tremendous progress and suggests she contact Linus to ask him about doing the interview since he hasn't come to visit lately. Audrey worries that she will feel stupid if he says no, but Dr. Sarah tells her it's nothing personal if he doesn't agree to the interview. The decision is his and concerns his own desires, and thus it does not reflect on Audrey at all.

Audrey asks her mother for a mobile phone in the next section, which starts on page 138. Her mother demands to know who she is going to call, which makes Audrey uncomfortable. She got rid of her phone after the school incident and explains that she got "toxic" text messages on it (139). Mum asks if she wants to call Natalie. Audrey says she might, and tries to hide the fact that she wants to contact Linus. Mum doesn't want her to be hurt by Natalie or any of the other girls at her old school. Audrey reminds her that Dr. Sarah tells her to text her any time and that she will know when she's ready to use a phone again. Mum agrees, happy that Audrey is making progress.

Audrey notices Mum is reading a book called *How to Talk to Your Teens*. Mum is embarrassed and Audrey is shocked that her mother spent 12.95 for the book. Audrey knows her mom has read the book because the next day, she heard a conversation between Mum and Frank that sounded very much like a therapy session. It starts with Mum pointing out a problem and asking Frank for a solution. When he gives a phony solution, she replies that it's an interesting idea (141). She also keeps repeating "I hear you," which is frustrating Frank. Audrey tells Frank about the book and he curses. Mum steps out of her clinical-sounding role and snaps back into her usual demanding self, scolding Frank for cursing. Felix repeats the curse word, which makes Mum madder. Mum tells him he can play music with Dad on this day, but she has arranged for him to volunteer at a nursing home event the following week. He will be making sandwiches for it.

The section that starts on page 144 finds Frank and Dad having a jam session in the garage. It is written as another transcript of Audrey's documentary. Dad is disappointed to learn that Frank does not know how to play his old band's popular song. He tells Frank some chords to play and begins to play along, singing the band's old song. Frank mouths, "Help," to the camera. After the jam session, Audrey films Dad taking to Mum. who hugs him and tells him he did a good job bonding with Frank that day.

The transcript continues again, starting with page 147. Audrey interviews Frank, who ponders why their dad wants to play "old-man rock" with him.



## Analysis

The situation with Audrey in the first section of this selected reading can apply to all teens, not just the ones with anxiety or depression. Audrey says she will feel stupid if Linus does not come over for the interview. Dr. Sarah reminds her that his rejection of her request is not a rejection of her. It takes a while for Audrey to grasp this, but she finally does.

There are several reasons Audrey may not want to tell her Mum that she wants to contact Linus, and these reasons illustrate a possibly destructive interference between Audrey's home life and her personal life. Mum may worry that Linus is a bad influence for Audrey. Mum might refuse to allow him to visit. She might also make a big deal out of Audrey's interest in a boy. Remember, Audrey is at a point in her life where she wants to hide from attention. If her mom made a big deal out of Audrey's interest in Linus, it would only give her the attention she does not want. This section also reminds the reader that Mum does try to have the others' best interest at heart. While she seems rather nosy about why Audrey wants the phone, she does admit that it shows Audrey is making progress in her healing. The same section also reveals a little more about the incident that initiated Audrey's debilitating anxiety and bouts with depression. She was receiving "toxic" text messages (139). Her phone was the source of much of her anxiety, so it is doubly concerning for Mum that she wants one again. This shows some personal growth in Mum's character. She is actually trusting Audrey to make some decisions for herself. This growth in Mum also signifies that the story is getting some closure and shows the reader that the writer is trying to start wrapping up the story. We even see a kinder Mum after Dad and Frank's jam session when she hugs Dad and tells him he did a good job during their father-son bonding time.

The book "How to talk to Your Teens," symbolize yet another facet of difficulty with regards to intergenerational communication. Audrey is upset with the book because it casts people of her generation in a different light, putting them in a category that makes them sound difficult to talk to, so difficult that an instruction book is required. It makes her feel different or difficult when she really needs to feel normal.

The language in this section has a little more profanity than the others have, indicating that the conflict is rising, especially between Frank and Mum. Frank talks to Audrey about his problem with Mum. He points out another thing Mum fails to see – the games he plays are based on various aspects of literature and history in addition to intercultural communication (148).

This section also further develops the character of Dad, whose complexity and nostalgia is revealed through his musical interests. In the last section, Frank ponders why his father wants to play "old man rock" with him (147). Ironically, this music is young man rock for Dad. It is the music he played when he was young and in a band. This is the second time in the book that Dad has discussed the music of his former band. He always gets excited to talk about it with Audrey and Frank. It sounds as if Dad is trying





to recapture part of his youth, when he felt exciting and creative. Now, his creativity seems stifled in his accounting career.

## **Discussion Question 1**

Discuss the visualization process that Dr. Sarah uses to convince Audrey that her fear of asking Linus to do the interview is unfounded. What psychological value does this visualization process seem to possess?

## **Discussion Question 2**

Identify and discuss two examples of growth in Mum's character in these assigned sections. What do they suggest about Mum?

## **Discussion Question 3**

Explain why Audrey is so upset to see the book her mother is reading. How does this reflect upon their parent-child relationship?

## **Vocabulary**

crinkles, overreaction, strained, vivid, fete, incredulous, jammed, chord, structure, Latin



## Pages 150 - 170

### Summary

Audrey sends a text message to Linus to set up the interview for her documentary. She is surprised that he answers right away. She invites him to her house, but he suggests Starbucks, knowing it is part of her exposure therapy. Audrey knows Dr. Sarah would encourage her to go, so she agrees.

In the section that begins on page 152, Audrey walks to Starbucks to meet Linus. They give fake names when they order coffee. Audrey gives Rhubarb as her name. Linus gives one that is impossible to pronounce so he spells it. The barista tells him she is writing John on his cup. Audrey buys their drinks, since it's her documentary, and Linus says he will buy next time. They talk about the gaming team and their fathers' musical interests. Linus encourages Audrey to remove her sunglasses which makes her very uncomfortable. She starts to have a panic attack and gets up to leave. She apologizes to Linus. He is confused because she seemed fine just a few minutes before this. She sent Dr. Sarah a text message when she got home to let her know that she went to Starbucks but had a meltdown.

Linus tries texting her, but Audrey does not answer. He gets worried and goes to her house to slip a door through the mail slot. She sees the note and realizes he is still standing outside. They pass the note a few times through the mail slot. Audrey apologizes for running out of Starbucks and Linus asks her what was going through her mind at the restaurant. She answers honestly, saying that she felt like a failure who does not deserve to exist (161). Linus writes back a long list of her positive qualities and asks if she will open the door. This surprises Audrey, but she just isn't up to it yet. He sends her a kiss in the note.

Audrey talks about the incident and Linus with Dr. Sarah in the section that starts on page 164. She wonders if Linus just pities her or if he's befriending her so he can laugh behind her back with his friends. Dr. Sarah says that a kiss is a kiss, even if it's a virtual one sent via note. She also tells Audrey that stressing over what boys are thinking is not fully treatable, suggesting that it's very normal.

Three days after the Starbucks incident, Frank drops by to see Audrey. He enters the den with her while she has QVC on the television. Audrey comments that she's nuts and Linus tells her a story about his grandmother. She wears mini-skirts and thinks she's 25 due to her dementia. He said that his grandmother is not 25 and that Audrey is not all the bad things she thinks she is. Linus asks her to try shoe contact again and she does with no problem because the room is dark. Next, he moves closer to her for jeans contact. Then they try thumb contact and eventually kiss. After the kiss, Audrey falls asleep with her head on his chest. She awakens in the floor and finds a note from him saying he will see her soon, signed with X's.



## Analysis

One of Linus' main traits and narrative functions appears to be pushing people to do their best. As Frank's friend, he pushed him to be a better gamer. Now as Audrey's love interest, he pushes her to become all she can be as well. He is kind, thoughtful, and well-meaning. Mum means well, too, and wants what's best for her kids, but her protection approach makes her the antagonist of the story. Linus' approach is more freeing. While he is not the main character of this book, he does play the role of a hero. Since he plays a role opposite of the antagonist, the reader can see Linus as the protagonist of the book. Since Audrey is the main character, she assumes the role of anti-hero. She does not have the qualities of an archetypical hero; she is just a girl trying to deal with her disorder. But the reader can identify with her and her insecurities.

Dr. Sarah plays an integral role in expositing the lessons and morals represented by the Starbucks incident. Ironically, this confusion is a normal part of new relationships. The fact that Dr. Sarah says there is no cure for stressing over what boys are thinking shows that Audrey is having some typical, or normal, teen girl problems. Audrey is very right to question Linus' motives in her situation. She does not know for sure if Linus is being genuinely nice to her. From the ongoing tidbits of information released about Audrey's school incident, it sounds like she has reason not to fully trust people. She was severely bullied by girls at her old school and she wants to be cautious not to get into a similar situation with Linus. However, she seems to instinctively know that kindness is his motive, not sympathy or mockery.

While dealing with her anxiety problems, Audrey communicates differently with people, but Linus is able to navigate these altered methods of communication, thus further cementing his value as a friend and person. She makes little eye contact and is very reserved with her body language. Because she relies on notes to communicate with Linus most of the time, the kiss he sends her in his note is very real to her. She even gets lightheaded and experiences the joy she would get from a real kiss from his virtual version. When she finally does share a real kiss with him, it releases tension and she falls asleep on him. Linus has to be careful in his approaches with Audrey. Where a typical date might include hand holding or putting his arm around her, he initiated shoe contact first because he knows she is already comfortable with that. From shoes, he moves closer to her through jeans contact. This does not imply anything blatantly sexual. He simply puts his leg over on hers after their shoe contact. Then, their jeans are touching. He slowly moves closer to her and asks for thumb contact, which finally leads to hand holding. He does not ask her for a kiss because once they hold hands, he feels more secure about her liking him. Ironically, Linus has insecurities, too, just like all other people who start a new relationship.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the changes in Audrey's body language toward Linus since their first meeting. What do these changes indicate?



## Discussion Question 2

Discuss Linus' role in the story. Does it conform to the hero archetype? Why or why not?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss Audrey's role as the focus of this story. In what ways is she not a conventional protagonist? Support your answers with examples from the book.

## Vocabulary

trembling, palaver, wincing, scrawls, snuffle, bravado, faint, prickling, exclusive, concentrate



## Pages 171 - 198

### Summary

Audrey starts the section that begins on page 171 with a comparison of her improved life to Frank's video game, *Land of Conquerers*. She says if she was a character in the game, she's gone up a level or found extra weapons. She reveals that Linus has been to see her a few times and that she's happy it's Friday. She hears the ice cream truck and wants to get Felix a popsicle, but she notices Mum is sick. Audrey tells her to go to bed and gets her some flu medicine. When Frank arrives from school, Audrey asks him to go buy grapes for Mum along with a juice and a fever reducing medication. Frank points out that Audrey is healing because she is taking charge of the situation.

Audrey realizes that Mum has not gone to work in forever. She was a freelance brand consultant, so she did not report to an office daily, but after seeing pictures of her mom taken at work, she realizes she has not worked since Audrey has been home. As she drinks the flu medicine, Mum cautions Audrey to be careful with Linus because she is vulnerable. Mum knows Dr. Sarah is pushing Audrey to develop relationships outside the family again, but she would have preferred Audrey's friend had been a girl friend instead of a boyfriend. Audrey considers calling Natalie, but talks to Frank about Mum's job instead. He confirms that she has not worked since Audrey's been home and suggests she might go back to work when Audrey gets better. Audrey decides to get better.

In the documentary transcript that starts on page 178, Frank consistently interrupts Dad's work phone calls and his computer work so he can use the computer for his homework. Since Mum threw out Frank's computer, he must use Dad's.

In the next transcript, which starts on page 182, Dad tells Mum that Frank needs his own computer. Mum won't hear of it. She thinks books are more important and gets mad when Dad mentions how much he likes reading on his Kindle.

On the transcript section that starts on page 184, Audrey goes to interview Frank in his room where he is playing an old Atari console that he found in the attic. Mum knocks on his door and he throws clothes over the Atari before she enters. When she asks what he is doing, he looks at the camera and says, "The usual" (185).

In the narrative that begins on page 186, Audrey says she is doing much better. Her family, and Linus, all went out to eat pizza and she did well until dessert time. She sees Linus every day after school and he gives her a special t-shirt he had made with a rhubarb on it. When Mum and Dad ask why, he tells them it is their "thing (187)." This makes her want to call Natalie. She wants a friend to tell this happy news. She texts Natalie, who replies right away then rushes to see her, bringing lots of get well gifts she has been storing all this time. Natalie apologizes for not trying to help Audrey during the incident. Audrey tells her there is no need to apologize and blurts out the news that she



has a boyfriend. Natalie assumes he is someone from the mental hospital where Audrey went right after the school incident. She is shocked to learn it is Linus.

Natalie tells Audrey about the changes at school and asks if she is coming back. Audrey tells her she is going to a different school and will repeat this school year since she missed so much. Natalie hugs Audrey; they've missed each other a lot. Natalie's mom calls to check on her and Natalie explains that she was supposed to text her mom every five minutes to let her know she was okay since Audrey is "mentally unstable (192)." Natalie says that Audrey is bipolar, which angers Audrey. Audrey tells Natalie that she's not bipolar but she knows people who are and they are completely safe to be around. Natalie tells her that they've heard so many rumors that they don't know what to believe. Audrey knows Natalie and her mom are not very knowledgeable so she drops the conversation. Instead of arguing, they finish eating a chocolate bar.

In the section that starts on page 195, Audrey says she laughs and talks a lot more with Dr. Sarah now. Dr. Sarah thinks she needs to develop outreach educational programs to better inform people about anxiety and depression after hearing Audrey's story about her first visit with Natalie. During this meeting, Audrey tells Dr. Sarah she is cured and gets angry when the doctor points out otherwise. Dr. Sarah warns her that putting too much pressure on herself to be cured can cause a setback.

## Analysis

Despite Mum's insistence that video games are bad, her children still reference them in their lives, thus examining the value that these games actually possess. For instance, Audrey can only describe her improved condition as going up a level or finding extra weapons in a game. Her life has improved; she even wants to get Felix a popsicle (an ice lolly) from the ice cream truck until she realizes how sick Mum is. In the section that begins on page 171, Audrey makes reference to several British cold remedies. Lemsip is a cold and flu medication that is mixed with warm water and sipped. Nurofen is a fever reducer and pain reliever. Ribena is a juice made of black currants.

This section gives added depth to Mum's restlessness and unhappiness. When Audrey sees a photo of how happy her mom was at work, she suddenly realizes that Mum no longer goes to work. She also realizes (and Frank confirms) that Mum quit her job to stay home with her. Mum was once a great consultant, but without her work to keep her busy, she has become the busy-body mother that is now the source of much of the family's conflict. Audrey realizes that she must get better so her mom can get her life back, too. Audrey does not like when Mum refers to Linus as "This Linus," but she understands that her mother is concerned about her vulnerability. What Mum doesn't know is that Audrey has already discussed her own concern about her vulnerability with Dr. Sarah. Audrey feels like she has already worked through this issue.

This section also explores the nature of hypocrisy and need through the character of Frank. Frank pesters his father to use his computer to make a point. Dad, tired of the interruptions, tells Mum that Frank needs a computer. She refuses to listen. Ironically,



the homework that Frank insisted was so urgent was not really urgent at all. When Audrey enters Frank's room to interview him for her documentary, she sees Frank has hooked up an old Atari game console and is playing it. He was not doing important homework after all; he was just bothering Dad to get him on his side in his campaign to get a computer. Technically, the Atari is not a computer since it hooks to a TV, but Frank knows his mom's main contention is his video gaming. When Frank admits in Audrey's documentary that he is just up to "the usual (185)," he is actually admitting that he has been playing games all along despite Mum's demand. Mum found out twice before when he lied to her about his gaming, so there is reason to believe she will find out about this, too. After all, it is on film.

Audrey is happy in her relationship with Linus, and this represents a major step forward for Audrey's recovery. When he gives her the special rhubarb t-shirt, she wants a friend to tell so she calls Natalie. Natalie rushes right over because she has wanted to see Audrey for so long. However, it becomes apparent Natalie has misconceptions about Audrey's illness. First of all, she assumes Audrey's boyfriend is from the mental hospital. The notion shocks Audrey, who denotes the shock with the profane acronym FFS, which stands for "for f---'s sake (190)." She is also appalled to learn all the rumors circulating about her wearing the sunglasses and she is very upset that Natalie is worried about the rumors. Still, Audrey forgives her because she knows Natalie and her mother are both dullards who have no concept of mental health illnesses.

However, the section also emphasize the slow and painstaking process that mental recuperation represents. Audrey wants so much to be cured that she takes offense to Dr. Sarah's reminders to take it slow and that recovery is a process. Dr. Sarah warns her that too much pressure can cause a setback, foreshadowing that the very situation will occur. Audrey is putting pressure on herself so she can be well enough for Mum to go back to work. She does not want her frailty to keep Mum from doing the work she loves and finds so fulfilling.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the cold and flu items Audrey sends Frank to the store to retrieve. What do these items represent? What does Audrey's flue symbolize?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss the rumors Natalie says she's heard about Audrey. Explain Audrey's reaction to the rumors.

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss Audrey's rant in Dr. Sarah's office when she tells the doctor she is cured. What initiates the rant and why? What appears to be the underlying tension of this rant?

## Vocabulary

defensively, consultant, casual, vulnerable, strides, tense, flabbergasted, acrimonious, shrug





## Pages 199 - 222

### Summary

The transcript that starts on page 199 shows that Linus is an accepted part of Audrey's family. He plays chess with Felix, Mum wants him to translate instructions from German for her, and Frank wants to show him something in a starts on page 217, Audrey and Frank talk about the fete. Frank wonders if Mum would buy him a set of professional knives and says Ade offered to let him learn more skills at the restaurant where he works. The camera cuts to Mum and Dad who are whispering about a letter. Someone asks them to do something that she fears will damage Audrey. They agreed to collaborate on an email to respond. When Audrey asks what's happening, they don't answer. As voice over, Audrey tells them to stop trying to kidnap her boyfriend.

In the section that starts on page 202, Linus and Audrey are at Starbucks for more therapy. Dr. Sarah wants her to stalk to more strangers, so Linus makes a game out of it. They pick random strangers that the other must approach and talk to briefly. The first man he picks for Audrey to talk with is rude to her and calls her a "f---ing moron (204)." Linus goes back to the same man and continues to aggravate and politely insult him. Before walking away, Linus calls the man a "wanker (206)." Excited about her contact with strangers, Audrey declares that she is heading for the stars.

Audrey lies to Dr. Sarah in the section on pages 208 and 209. She tells her that she has no problem with worrying or controlling her worries on most days. She also does not tell Dr. Sarah she has stopped taking her medication on her own. She takes the pills out of the packs and hides them in an envelope so Mum won't know. She has not told anyone what she's doing with her medication.

In the section that starts on page 210, volunteers arrive at Audrey's house to make sandwiches for the fete. Mum bought ingredients for egg salad sandwiches. A volunteer named Ade says he thinks they can do better than that. He suggests some fresh ingredients for the wraps, a Spanish omelet, and a nice salad. He also brought catering supplies and chill boxes to keep the food fresh. Ade assigns Frank to dice and teaches him how to do so professionally. Audrey is sent to the store for more ingredients. When she gets back, she sees Frank acting quite disciplined and dicing food like a professional chef.

In the transcript that starts on page 217, Frank tells Audrey that he'd like to learn more about cooking and says Ade offered to show him more. As she's filming, Audrey notices Mum and Dad talking about a letter. She hears Mum say she's worried it would be detrimental to Audrey and agrees to collaborate with dad to email a response. When Audrey asks what's going on, however, her parents tell her it's nothing.



## Analysis

Audrey seems to be coming out of her shell in the section that begins on page 199, and the narrative relates several important signs of her recovery. She openly proclaims Linus as her boyfriend. The family is happily interacting with him while she films her documentary. Even Mum seems to like Linus. Her unlikely fondness for him foreshadows a pending unhappiness with him. He also seems like one of the family. Ironically, most members of the family have a conflict with Mum, another indicator of foreshadowing that predicts a change in the relationship between the two.

Linus continues helping Audrey with her therapy at Starbucks, and this help represents further development in their intimacy. He turns her requirement to talk with strangers into a fun game they play together. Despite the man cursing at her and calling her names, Audrey makes it through contact with the first man. Linus, appalled at the man's rudeness, approaches him just to aggravate him further and to make him leave. When the man gets ready to leave, Linus politely calls him a "wanker." The term wanker means to masturbate, so a wanker would be one who masturbates. The term is meant to be degrading, although it denotes a sexual regression as well. Still happy from making it through this exposure therapy, Audrey declares she is headed for the stars, straight up – not jagged – on her graph of improvement. This foreshadows a dip in her improvement will follow soon.

The metaphor of the graph helps to represent the necessary vicissitudes of life and how one must deal with them. The reader gets the idea that Audrey's graph downslide will come soon when they learn on pages 208 and 209 that she has secretly stopped taking her medication. She also lies to Dr. Sarah, which is never helpful to do in a counseling situation. Dr. Sarah cannot effectively help or monitor Audrey's progress when she lies about her emotions and her medication. Audrey makes it to the grocery store to buy extra supplies for the fete in the section that begins on page 210. In addition to feeling fulfilled for making the trip alone, she is also happy to see Frank interested in something for the first time since he was banned from video games. He seems to enjoy dicing and even picks up the discipline chefs use in work situations. He seems to be developing work ethic.

In the transcript section that starts on page 217, Audrey and Frank excitedly praise the food, and this serves as a platform for the growth of trust and kindness between them.. Frank is really interested in cooking; he has looked up the cost of a professional knife set on the family's laptop. At this point, a reader might wonder why Frank doesn't use the laptop for gaming. His mom and dad have proven they are not very adept at gaming knowledge, so the laptop likely does not meet the memory or graphic card requirements for most video games.

The object of the letter foreshadows possible further conflict, and it symbolizes uncertainty and anxiety. Audrey hears her parents whispering about the letter they have in hand on page 219. She can tell from their words and from Mum's body language that the letter is important in some way. She also hears them discuss replying by email,



which suggests that is the manner in which they received the letter themselves. This foreshadows that some additional conflict will enter Audrey's life. Since the book is physically nearing its end, the reader knows the conflict will arise soon.

## Discussion Question 1

After talking with strangers in Starbucks, Audrey feels elated, but the narration implies foreshadows she will have a setback. What else in these selected pages foreshadow a setback for Audrey and explain how these elements suggest foreshadowing.

## Discussion Question 2

Linus seems like one of the family in the transcript section that begins on page 199. What are the positive and negative aspects of this dynamic?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the elements of foreshadowing surrounding the letter Mum and Dad are discussing in the transcript on pages 218-222. How does Audrey know it's important if they refuse to discuss it with her?

## Vocabulary

brandishes, random, confrontation, adamant, prevaricate, wanker, barista, loo, rustling, condemned, goggles, saint



## Pages 223 - 252

### Summary

Mum and Dad spend two hours in Dad's study. Afterward, Dad goes to play squash and Mum heads for a relaxing bath. Audrey asks Frank to hack into Dad's emails to see how the mystery letter pertains to her. Frank tells her that every other email is about her. He quickly finds an email with the subject line "Your request" (225). It is a letter to Mrs. Lawton. Her daughter, Izzy, is having problems and they think it will be helpful for her to talk with Audrey. However, Mum will not hear of it. Izzy was one of the girls that bullied Audrey at school. Audrey, although she feels sick at the mention of Izzy's name, thinks she should meet with her to let her apologize.

In the next section, starting on page 229, Audrey reveals that everyone – not just Izzy – went along with Tasha against her. She also recalls how detailed and comprehensive their bullying was, but she does not discuss it further.

The next one-page section, page 231, shows Audrey marching into the kitchen and telling her parents that she read the email and she wants to see Izzy.

Mum and Dad said no and Mum was very mad. She was mad at Izzy's mom for asking and mad at Audrey for looking. Audrey can't explain why she wants to see Izzy, but she knows Dr. Sarah will not be for it. She often tells Audrey that she is not validated by other people. Audrey turns to Frank with her idea. He sends Mrs. Lawton an email as though he is Dad. They offer Audrey's phone number as a text contact and ask they use it instead of email. Frank agrees to go with her to their meeting.

Audrey plans to tell Linus about her secret plan to see Lizzy when they meet at the park. He has arranged for the ice cream truck to offer her favorite flavor – coconut – that day. They both admit that they are in love. Then, she tells Linus her plan. He gets mad because he doesn't want her to harm her progress. She insists she's well, but he points out that she's still wearing sunglasses and practicing conversations with strangers. He says her plan is dangerous. Audrey gets defensive and tells him to leave her alone. She runs home.

In the section that starts on page 242, Audrey replays her fight with Linus over and over again in her mind, something that Dr. Sarah has told her not to do. But two nights later, Audrey cannot sleep. Mum doesn't notice because she found Frank's Atari and is mad at him again.

Audrey anxiously awaits for 3:00, when she and Frank will meet Izzy and her parents at Starbucks. The Lawtons expected the Turners to come with Audrey, but Frank insists he is there representative. Mr. Lawton tells them that Izzy has had "some pretty hellish months" like Audrey has (247). Izzy looks like an 11 year old girl now with a pony tail, ribbon t-shirt and strawberry lip gloss. Frank and Audrey learn that Izzy has written a



poem, not an apology. Audrey realizes she has fallen into their plan for Izzy to be a hero for apologizing, which lessens Audrey's suffering. She decides to leave and signals Frank. Mr. Lawton comments on their bad behavior. Audrey speaks up and says, "You want to talk about behavior? (251)" He understands her point and says nothing else.

## Analysis

Mum and Dad's behavior gives away that they are working on something they don't want Audrey to know about when they spend two hours closed in Dad's study. Add to that the comment Mum makes about finally finishing when they exit the room and Audrey is easily convinced they were answering the letter she learned about previously. Frank admits that he frequently reviews Dad's emails and that the majority of them are about Audrey. Until this, she doesn't realize how much her parents focus on her health and the school situation that brought about her depression and anxiety.

Audrey knows something important about Tasha, and Audrey's knowledge give important insights about the nature of Tasha and of bullying in general. Tasha bullied because she could. As a popular student, the others joined her (or in Natalie's case simply did not stop her) because they did not want to be the one she bullied. She bullied simply because she could. For this reason, she seems to not hold Izzy fully accountable for her actions against her. She considers that she should forgive Izzy, for her sake and for Izzy's. When Mum and Dad insist that Audrey is too fragile for such a meeting, she balks and develops the plan to meet her anyway. She is surprised when Linus will not stand by her and go along for the meeting. She is more surprised that he is mad that she wants to go and that he calls her selfish. She resorts to her old habits and flees. Right after exchanging "I love yous," she tells him to leave her alone and runs away, which adds to the rising action of the story.

The meeting with Izzy also adds to the story's rising action, helping it build to a thematic and dramatic climax. Audrey sees that Izzy has gone through a transformation of sorts herself, reverting to dressing and acting like an 11 year old girl. The experience has been a dark one for Audrey. She hides in dark rooms and wears dark sunglasses to hide herself from the world. Izzy, however, becomes a little girl again, blameless in the eyes of her parents who arrange this meeting solely so Izzy can feel better without any real regard for how Audrey feels. Neither of the girls speak at first. When Izzy reads the poem, she does not even look toward Audrey. When Audrey and Frank get up to leave, Mr. Lawton remarks that they have bad behavior. Audrey quietly, but firmly remarks, "You want to talk about behavior? (251)" Her single comment points out the irony in Mr. Lawton's statement. When she speaks, he finally as to see her for herself and what the bullying did to her. Audrey goes to the meeting expecting to forgive Izzy after a getting a heartfelt apology. The change she hopes to see in Izzy just isn't there.

Both girls, however, are fundamentally changed by the bullying incident. At the meeting, Audrey wears dark clothing and dark glasses that symbolize the darkness into which the incident thrust her. Izzy, however, is dressed in a ribbon t-shirt and looks and acts younger than she is, symbolizing her attempt to maintain innocence in the ordeal. Her



parents perpetuate Izzy's innocence. Neither Mr. or Mrs. Lawton ever remarked about their concerns for Audrey nor did they offer apologies. They were using her just to make their own daughter feel better about her role in the bullying incident.

## Discussion Question 1

Compare and contrast Audrey and Izzy when they meet at Starbucks. How do their personalities and backgrounds differ?

## Discussion Question 2

Discuss how and why Audrey's mood changed after she and Linus exchanged statements of love in the park. What is the result of this mood change? What is its significance?

## Discussion Question 3

What reasons do Audrey's parents and Linus give for not wanting her to meet Izzy? Why does Audrey ignore these reasons? What is the significance of Audrey's choice to meet with Izzy anyway?

## Vocabulary

aback, rubbish, dismay, crap, surreal, commended, fragile, tedious, intemperate, gesticulating, bollocks, relapse, cauldron



## Pages 253 - 286

### Summary

Audrey thinks she should feel good after walking out on Izzy's poem but she does not. Mum and Dad are at their dance class and Frank isn't at home. Audrey, home alone, sends a text to Linus to tell him about the meeting and to apologize for yelling at him in the park. She says she wants to see him, too. He does not text back. Several hours pass and she does not hear from Linus. At 1 a.m., Audrey is up worrying about what she's ruined with Linus. She starts to panic, claw her arms, and feels weird in general. She takes three anti-anxiety pills but still does not calm down. She decides to go for a walk to calm down and burn off energy so she can go to sleep.

The transcript on page 257 reflects Frank is recording it instead of Audrey. He reveals that she is missing. They all woke up to discover she was gone. They've looked everywhere and the police are also looking. His parents blame Frank since he accompanied her to the meeting with Izzy. Linus comes into the room. When Mum sees him, she is furious with Linus. He says he has no idea where she is and that he just got text messages from her just now. They were sent last night, but he has just received them. She accuses Linus of challenging her to go to the meeting with Izzy and challenging her to leave the house late at night. Mum says she was on an even keel until she met Linus. He leaves and Frank tells Mum she wasn't fair to him. Dad appears and says the police have found her behind a park tree.

In the section that begins on page 263, Dad points out in the police waiting room that Audrey has lost her dark glasses. Audrey gets back on her medicine and promises never to stop taking them without supervision again. For a couple of days, she sleeps. When Mum comes in to watch a movie with her, Audrey asks her why she doesn't go back to work. She assures her mom the rest of the family can work together to cover any scheduling issues. Mum says she knows Audrey stopped taking her meds so she would lose the jagged graph. The jagged graph, however, is life, Mum continues. She says everyone is on the jagged graph.

In the section that starts on page 267, Dad informs Mum that he's ordered Frank a new laptop. He doesn't ask; he informs. Audrey overhears them talking about parenting. Mum laughs so hard that she cries. Audrey doesn't disturb them; she lets them have this moment.

Audrey watches the footage of Mum accusing Linus. Mum sees it, too, and feels horrible about how she treated him. They all decide they need to apologize to Linus -- even Frank, who'd argued about Land of Conquerers (LOC) with him. Frank sends him a text message asking him to meet at Starbucks. When Linus arrives, he is surprised to see the whole family there. They all take turns apologizing to Linus and he comments on how great it is to see Audrey's eyes. Mum offers to do something special to make up for treating Linus poorly and he asks if Frank can play with him in the LOC tournament.



Frank is excited and also happy to hear he has a new laptop on the way. They create an LOC team consisting of Linus, Frank, Audrey, and Ollie. The rest of the family leaves Audrey and Linus at Starbucks and they exchange professions of love again.

In the section that starts on page 276, the LOC team meets at Audrey's house to practice. There is junk food everywhere. Mum and dad laugh about an article in the daily mail in which a family with six kids makes them dress alike every day. Instead of falling into the notion, Mum uncharacteristically rejects the idea.

In the transcript that starts on page 279, Dad records the kids practicing LOC. Mum is even watching, learning, and asking questions as they play. Dad gets into the game, too, shouting at an opposing character to die.

The team was stomped in the competition. Mum told them how well they all played and complimented their skills. She offers to take them all out for pizza. Frank says after dinner, he plans to go to the restaurant where Ade works. He's going to start helping out in the kitchen on weekends. Dad takes Frank place in the game while he goes to make the call. The kids are surprised to see that Dad can play the game.

In the last transcript of Audrey's documentary, she finally shows herself in the film. She says she realizes that life is a jagged graph that is all about climbing up, and slipping back down a little before climbing up again. She is excited that her mom bought her some eye makeup and about learning how to apply it. As she moves to turn off the camera, her eyes get closer. She winks at the camera, then turns it off.

## Analysis

Audrey's meeting with Izzy indicates the remaining progress that Audrey must undergo with regards to her recovery. Audrey sees that her parents and Linus were right to not want her to meet with Izzy. She believes she should feel great after walking out on Izzy's poem, but she does not. This is the downfall that Dr. Sarah, her parents, and Linus alluded to when they said she is not cured yet. Her stress and anxiety make her begin to harm herself, clawing at her own skin as if she's trying to peel it off her arms. She irrationally takes three anti-anxiety pills then goes for a walk. She fails to think about how she often collapses in sleep after taking the medication.

The climax of the story comes when Frank takes over the video documentary, signifying that something is wrong with Audrey. The reader learns through Frank's narration that Audrey is missing. This is the only section in the book told from a point of view other than Audrey's. Mum blames Frank and Linus for Audrey's disappearance and Frank catches it all on film. The mood is grim and the tension is high. Within the same transcript, Dad gets a phone call that resolves the conflict and leads the plot then into its resolution.

With Audrey safe at home, the story focusing on resolving its other conflicts -- the one between Mum and Linus and the one between Mum and the rest of her family. When Mum sees the video of how poorly she treated Linus, she wants to make up with him.





She also wants to make amends with her family. Mum's talk with Audrey about the jagged graph representing life is as much a reminder for Mum as it is Audrey. Mum has been acting irrationally while trying to make sure her family is perfect. There is no such thing as human perfection, and Audrey's desire to have a straight graph reminds Mum of this. The jagged graph is a metaphor for life. The lines that go up and down symbolize life's up and downs. Mum and Audrey are watching a movie called *Little Women* when they discuss life's ups and downs. Audrey notices the ups and downs in the movie, too, and realizes that all lives experience conflict.

The relationship dynamic between Mum and Dad fundamentally changes starting on page 267 when Dad tells Mum he ordered Frank a laptop without discussing it with her first. She wants to argue, but instead has an honest talk with him about how hard it is to be a good parent. They end up laughing and crying a little, ultimately repairing the bond that she was tearing apart with her desire for perfection and resolving the conflict between the parents.

To conclude the novel's overarching narrative, Mum and Dad become actively involved in Frank's gaming when he forms a competitive team with Audrey, Linus, and Oliver. They compete but don't win the tournament. They do win figuratively when Mum lightens up on her perfection attitude and allows herself to explore their interest. She buys junk food for them and even watches over their shoulders as they play *Land of Conquerors* so she can ask questions about the game. Dad even gets into the act by playing the game with Oliver.

The book ends on an ironic yet hopeful note when Audrey finally steps in front of the camera. After hiding her eyes for so long, they become the focal point of her goodbye as she winks and blinks at the camera during her last recording, thus signifying a newfound confidence.

## Discussion Question 1

Discuss the symbolism of the jagged graph. How does it apply to Mum? How does it apply to Audrey?

## Discussion Question 2

Even though Frank's gaming team does not win the contest, in what ways are they still successful? What are the significances of these successes?

## Discussion Question 3

Discuss the significance of Frank narrating the transcript section that begins on page 257. How does this affect the tone of the novel?



## Vocabulary

sparkling, gulps, anguish, erupts, lecture, robustly, ventures, ratty, deflates, preen, triumvirate, deadpan



# Characters

## Audrey Turner

Audrey is a teenage high school girl in 10th grade. She does not reveal full details, but she has recently been bullied by her entire class at her all-girls school. She suffers from Social Anxiety Disorder, General Anxiety Disorder and Depressive Episodes. She attends counseling sessions twice a week and forms a nice bond with her psychologist, Dr. Sarah. Audrey wears sunglasses day and night, even inside the house, to give her an enhanced sense of privacy.

Audrey, despite the odds stacked against her, develops a relationship with her brother's friend, a boy named Linus. Certain she is cured from her mental afflictions, Audrey secretly stops taking her medications and has another meltdown. With the help of her family and Linus, she gets back on track and finds her place in society while learning a lot about herself in the process.

## Mum

Mum rules the house throughout most of the book. She tells Dad what to think or at least heavily influences his decisions. Mum is a perfectionist who wants her family to be healthy and happy, and unfortunately, those characteristics sometimes don't go easily hand-in-hand. To help her be a better parent, she reads a book about how to parent teenagers.

Mum, convinced that Frank is addicted to video games, throws his computer out the window while a small group of neighbors gather to watch. She also tells off Mrs. Lawton, Izzy's mother who wants to arrange a meeting with Audrey.

In the end, Mum lightens up. She even buys the kids junk food and team shirts for their gaming team. She also makes time to learn about her kids' interests so she can be more involved in their lives. Mum once had a successful career as a freelance brand designer, but has quit to stay home with Audrey while she recovers.

## Dad

Dad is an accountant by trade, but he misses the band he was in when he was younger. He often tries to incorporate his old rock music into their activities -- Audrey's documentary and Frank's free time. Dad usually lets Mum make all the decisions. He prefers to ignore her while playing on his smartphone. However, in the end, he makes a decision on his own and firmly tells his wife that he has ordered Frank a new laptop.



## Frank

Frank is Audrey's brother. He is about a year younger than she is. He forms a competitive gaming team and is training for a competition in Land of Conquerors when Mum gets mad and throws out his computer. Frank is tech savvy and prepares for a variety of situations. For instance, when Mum takes his power cord, he has another one on standby.

Frank is generally sarcastic and brooding. He spends most of the book grounded from computer play, or finding loopholes around his grounding.

Frank finds a new interest in the book when his mother volunteers him to help make sandwiches. He even gets a weekend job in a restaurant so he can learn more from his mentor. Frank is important to this story because it is through him that Audrey meets Linus, her love interest.

## Felix

Felix is Audrey's four year old brother. He is happy to play chess with Linus or to play with any of his siblings. He is cute and stubborn like many children his age. He does not like to eat sandwich crusts and likes to repeat things he hears Audrey and Frank say.

## Linus

Linus is Frank's friend that becomes interested in Audrey when he accidentally surprises her and causes her to hide. Linus is sweet and sensitive like the Atticus Finch character he played in the school production of *Too Kill a Mockingbird*. He makes her therapy fun by creating games and encouraging her to make contact with strangers as Dr. Sarah requires her to do. Audrey describes his smile by saying it looks like an orange slice. He says his mother uses the term crescent moon to describe it.

Linus is Audrey's first contact outside the family. At his encouragement, she is able to enjoy shoe contact with him. After shoe contact, they try jeans contact, thumb contact, then finally share a kiss in her den. Everyone in the family likes Linus, including Felix who likes to play chess with him.

## Dr. Sarah

Dr. Sarah is Audrey's psychologist. She helps her work through the anxiety and depression Audrey suffered at the hands of her class bullies. Dr. Sarah is adept at reading Audrey's cues and helping her sort through all of her social concerns except for figuring out boys. Dr. Sarah says that figuring out boys is just not fully treatable.



## Natalie

Natalie is Audrey's best friend, but they have not seen each other since the school incident. When Linus gives her a gift, Audrey desperately wants a friend to share the news with and texts Natalie. Natalie rushes right over, bringing a ton of gifts that she's had for Audrey. She also greets Audrey with a number of unexpected stereotypes about anxiety and depression. Since she knows Natalie and her mother are basically clueless, Audrey overlooks the stereotypes and just enjoys being with her friend for a little while.

## Izzy

Izzy is one of the girls from school that tormented Audrey in the bullying incident. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawton, contact Mum and Dad to see if Izzy can meet with Audrey to talk about the incident. Mum and Dad refuse, but Audrey and Frank go anyway. Audrey is shocked to see Izzy dressed like a little girl, wearing a ponytail, ribbon, and ribbon-adorned shirt. She also wears child-like strawberry lip gloss. Izzy ironically looks like an innocent little girl, but the torment she helped inflict on Audrey was far from innocent.

Audrey thinks Izzy wants to apologize to her, but she only wants to read a poorly written poem that she wrote about her own depression. Audrey leaves and does not hear the entire poem.

## Tasha

Tasha is the popular girl who led the bullying against Audrey. She was always fashionably dressed and all the other girls looked up to her. That's why it was so easy for Tasha to lead the bullying against Audrey. Audrey knows that if girls did not join Tasha in bullying her that they, too, would have found themselves bullied by the girls. The whole incident led by Tasha caused a school-wide scandal and included the head mistress being replaced.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## The Jagged Graph

Dr. Sarah shows Audrey a line graph that forms many jags since it has a number of ups and downs. Dr. Sarah explains that this graph shows recovery -- some days are better than others, but there is always another spike upwards. Audrey is anxious to be cured and wants her graph to skip the jags and just go straight up. She stops taking her medication and tries hard to stay positive and upbeat, and on path for upward movement without any setbacks.

Mum points out to Audrey that the jagged graph is symbolic of life. We all have our ups and downs. Some days are better than others. Still, there's always another incline just ahead. When Audrey begins to see the jagged graph as a symbol that represents normal life, she begins to get back on track with her recovery again. Audrey wants to be perfect so the idea of a graph that went straight with no jags seemed ideal to her.

Ultimately, Audrey begins to recognize the jagged graph in movies and in the lives of others around her. She sees that the jagged graph is normal; a straight one is not.

## Rhubarb

Linus explains to Audrey that his aunt harvests rhubarb and gets paid a good deal for her crop. Rhubarb must be harvested in the dark. When it is ready to harvest, it re-enters into the light. He metaphorically describes Audrey's condition as rhubarb. She will be in the dark until it is time for her to re-enter the light. He also alludes to her value with this metaphor, which symbolizes his growing affection for her.

The rhubarb metaphor continues throughout the book. Linus even has a t-shirt made for her that has a rhubarb on the front of it. When he explains to her mom and dad that it is "their thing," she is very happy because they share something special and she officially has a boyfriend.

## Frank's Computer

Frank's computer symbolizes illiterate, unmotivated youth to Mum. She cannot fathom how or why anyone would spend so much time playing a video game. She thinks young people should be reading books and watching movies instead of playing games. Frank's computer is especially a sore spot for Mum because he lies and cheats to use it even when he is grounded. Convinced of his addiction to gaming, Mum throws his computer out the window.

At this point, Frank's computer symbolizes parental control. Once Mum drops it, she believes she has taken full control of his life. For Frank, his computer symbolized life



itself and his own self esteem. Without it, Frank has no friends because all his friends were connected through gaming. Ironically, Mum bullied Frank by throwing out his computer just like the girls in Audrey's school bullied her and damaged her self-esteem.

## **Dad's Band**

Dad's band symbolizes his youth. Audrey and Frank catch him looking up sports cars on the internet, indicating either a mid-life crisis or a desire to be young again. Dad's music brings back memories of his youth. He really enjoyed the creative aspect of making music, but now works as an accountant. Dad misses his youth and his creativity, both of which are symbolized by his old band.

## **Coconut Ice Cream**

Linus knows Audrey's favorite ice cream is coconut flavored and that the ice cream truck in the park does not carry it, but he goes to extra trouble to get the man to carry it for one day as a special treat for her. This gesture with the coconut ice cream symbolizes what Linus wants to provide for Audrey in their relationship. He wants to provide her with treats, to give her something she loves, and most importantly, to show her that she is worth having the things she loves.

## **Junk Food**

Junk food provided by Mum near the end of the story symbolizes the fact that she is lightening up and not being so demanding. She previously did not want her kids eating junk food. Now, however, she buys them donuts, takes them for pizza, and lets them drink sodas instead of water. Her willingness to provide them with junk food symbolizes her renewed interest in her children and her desire to connect with them at their level.

## **The Strategists T-shirts**

The Strategists t-shirts symbolize Mum's commitment to her kids and to their interests. Instead of arguing about the affects of video games on them, she decides to watch and learn about the games to improve her relationship with her kids. Providing the t-shirts for them is also a symbolic peace offering.

## **Audrey's Sunglasses**

Audrey's sunglasses symbolize several things. First, they symbolize the darkness of anxiety and depression. They also symbolize her desire to hide from the world. After so much unwanted attention has been placed on her, she just wants to be incognito. The sunglasses also symbolize a protective shield that keeps her eyes safe from those soul-sucking vortex eyes that she fears. The sunglasses that are supposed to be hiding her,



ironically, create unique attention, especially when a neighbor refers to her as "the celebrity."

When Audrey loses her sunglasses, she decides immediately that she does not want them back. She is ready for the light and ready to give up the darkness that she's worked hard to overcome.

## Audrey's Camera

Audrey's camera is supposed to provide her a reason to talk with people, but it also gives her an important look at her own family and her own life. It takes the emphasis off herself and places it on the rest of the family.

When she films Linus for the first time, she zooms in on his face with the camera. In this case, the focus of the camera directly reflects her interest in Linus.

## Eyes

In the beginning of the story, Audrey describes eyes as scary and as soul-sucking vortexes. She hides her eyes with sunglasses through most of the book because she cannot stand the idea of facing strangers or people who might suck out her soul if her eyes are not protected. At the end of the story, however, she knows that eyes offer a reflection of the soul. She says her mom looked into her eyes when she was born. Her eyes identified her. She closes the story by playfully blinking and winking at the camera, symbolizing her new-found love of her own eyes. This is also symbolic of her new outlook on life.





# Settings

## The Turner home, 5 Rosewood

Audrey and her family live in this house at 5 Rosewood. The address is on each page of transcript that takes place at the house. Audrey lives at the house with her parents and brothers, Frank and Felix. The home has a mail slot in the door through which Audrey and Linus sometimes pass notes when she is too anxious to talk in person.

Much of the story takes place at this location because Audrey is dealing with anxiety that occurs when she leaves home. She stays home with her family a lot until Dr. Sarah begins mandating outside exposure therapy and until Linus makes it fun to leave the house. After she's had some recovery time, one of her favorite things to do at the house is to play table tennis with Linus in their back yard.

## The den

The den is Audrey's safe place inside her home. When Frank has company, Audrey stays in the den to avoid contact until Linus comes along. By welcoming him into the den, Audrey symbolically welcomes him into her world and shows that she views him as safe, too. She does not welcome him into the den immediately, though. They work up to that by exchanging notes through Frank and Felix when he comes to visit.

The den transforms from Audrey's hiding place to her place of discovery with Linus. With him in the den, she experiences shoe contact, jeans contact, thumb contact, hair and face contact, and finally their first kiss.

## Starbucks

Starbucks is a popular coffee shop that exists in real life. Since it is so popular, it is a place that Audrey naturally wants to avoid during her anxiety and depression. Ironically, it is just the treatment she needs to begin exposing herself to outsiders according to Dr. Sarah.

Knowing the therapist wants her to go to Starbucks, Linus agrees to meet her for his documentary interview if she will meet him at Starbucks. The meeting goes well until he tries to remove her sunglasses. Her anxiety returns and she must leave. Linus and Audrey work through the anxiety, though, and Starbucks becomes one of their favorite places to go. They even make games out of her Starbucks exposure therapy and have fun while Audrey conquers her fears.



## Dr. Sarah's office

After leaving the hospital, Audrey visits Dr. Sarah at her office twice a week for continued therapy. During her office visits, Audrey is surprised at how much she says about feelings she doesn't even realize she has until she begins speaking. Dr. Sarah is very encouraging to Audrey, but also cautions her about moving too quickly. Doing so can, and does, create a setback for Audrey.

## The park

Linus and Audrey also enjoy spending time in the park. Playing their stranger contact game, Linus tells Audrey to ask the ice cream stand owner if he has coconut ice cream. She knows he doesn't have it, but Linus insists. Linus made arrangements with the man to have coconut ice cream that day so he could surprise Audrey with a cone of her favorite flavor. This is the day that Linus tells her he loves her and she says the same to him.

The park is also important because it's where the police find Audrey when she wanders away from her house during her panic attack. She thought she could walk off the attack, but she fell asleep behind a park tree, leaving her family to worry because she was missing.



# Themes and Motifs

## Mental Illness

The basis of Audrey's conflict is that she must learn to cope with her mental illness. Audrey's sense of humor and wit make her seem "normal" to the reader, which emphasizes the fact that people with mental illness do not always present the typical symptoms that make their problems obvious. The first person narrative builds a bond between the reader and Audrey so that the reader becomes a trusted friend who gains first-hand knowledge of the problems Audrey faces due to her mental illness.

To complicate matters, Audrey must also overcome the stereotypes others place on mental illness. She is appalled at how little her own best friend knows about mental illness and realizes after talking with her that there are many stereotypes to overcome. Hiding behind her dark sunglasses and quitting school for the semester only worsens public suspicion of Audrey's condition.

While Audrey learns to cope with her mental illness, so does her family. The entire family makes a number of sacrifices to accommodate Audrey's needs but the two most affected are Mum and Frank. Frank tries to maintain his normal friendships, but it can be difficult to do when Audrey panics whenever visitors arrive. If she panics too often, he fears their parents would make his friends stop visiting. It is also evident that Frank does not really know how to approach the topic of her mental illness with Audrey. She knows he is uncomfortable talking about it with her.

However, it had not been for Frank, Audrey would not have confirmed the impact of her illness on Mum. One day Audrey realizes that Mum no longer goes to work. Frank confirms that she quit to take care of Audrey. Because of Audrey's struggle with her mental illness, Mum gives up the job that gave her a creative outlet, along with the success and money from that job. Without work to focus on, Mum turns her attention to obsessing over articles in the Daily Mail. That obsession, which is borne out of Audrey's mental illness, ends up tormenting the whole family.

Ironically, Mum and Frank also have their own links to mental illness. Mum is convinced that Frank is addicted to video games; but her own obsession with the Daily Mail can be seen as an addiction, as Audrey notes. It is also ironic that, although Audrey is the only one with a diagnosed mental illness, all the members of the family are alienated in the beginning. Audrey, understandably, was focused on herself; but Dad, Mum, and Frank also internalized their emotions. Felix is least affected because he is a child. Once Dad and Mum resolve to lighten up on their strict no gaming rule, the parents set the tone for ending the family alienation.



## Imperfection

Perfection cannot be attained, as demonstrated by the visual motif of the jagged line graph. The graph indicates the ups and downs normal people experience in their lives. Audrey thinks a perfect life goes straight up with no downs to interrupt the incline. After talking with her mother about it, she sees that the perfect straight line graph does not exist. There must be decreases to appreciate the increases, and imperfection is normal.

Ironically, imperfection seemed anything but normal to Audrey at school. She explains the awkward feelings she had when comparing herself to classmates she thought of as pretty and talented. One bully, Tasha, saw Audrey's insecurities and organized the whole school against her. So, despite Audrey's awkwardness being normal, it was magnified by Tasha and the others to make Audrey feel even less adequate, exacerbating Audrey's self-esteem and mental health.

Mum also learns that perfection cannot be attained, yet she strives for a perfect family according to articles published in the Daily Mail. Without work as a creative outlet, Mum overcompensates by trying to make the family perfect. She starts by trying to replace Frank's "addiction" with a good habit – reading. She refuses, however, to listen when Frank and Audrey try to explain that some video games have character development that is equal to or better than what Mum declares to be classic literature. Since she has no understanding of gaming culture, she cannot (or will not) adapt beyond her own expectations for the notion of a perfect family. It is Audrey's disappearance that finally makes Mum realize she has been striving for unattainable perfection. Once she accepts imperfection, the whole family is more relaxed.

Mum and Dad's relationship survives imperfection. Mum is obsessed with perfection according to the Daily Mail while Dad is obsessed with reliving his youth. He sees no harm in gaming and electronics, but Mum sees nothing but harm. Most of the time, Dad relents to Mum so he does not have to deal with her arguments, but when he stands up to her and buys Frank his own laptop, the parents actually reconcile their differences and begin to embrace imperfection. Together, they devote more time to the family as a whole and become happier with their own relationship.

## Discovery

The title of the book, *Finding Audrey*, implies discovery, a theme that carries throughout the book. First, Audrey must find herself amidst the struggles of her anxiety and depression. With the help of her counselor, Dr. Sarah, Audrey consistently works to discover herself by conquering her fears and re-entering society. While she spends most of her time physically hiding from her family and others, Audrey does a lot of self-reflecting, trying to make sense of the bullying incident that sent her into a downward spiral and to rediscover her self-confidence and self-worth.

Even though she had no visitors of her own at first, Audrey discovers Linus when he comes to visit her brother. Initially, she does not mention him as a romantic interest, but



the reader catches the implication when she secretly uses her video camera to zoom in on Linus from the security of another room. Linus is also discovering Audrey, who of course is conflicted by his interest. She wants to be isolated, but does find Linus attractive and interesting. As they continue to get to know each other, Audrey must discover whether or not Linus is really interested in her because of who she is or because she is a curiosity.

The family panics when Audrey goes missing and they must literally discover her whereabouts. Rewatching the scene Frank recorded with Audrey's video camera gives her mother a chance to discover how mean she was to Linus when he stopped by to express his concerns about Audrey's disappearance. When Dad tells Mum he has bought a laptop for Frank without discussing it with her, he discovers Mum is almost relieved instead of ready for a fight. Mum realizes she has gone overboard in trying to create a perfect family; and Mum and Dad both discover that they are each just as confused as the other about rearing teenagers.

The end of the book resolves Audrey's hunt for herself. She has discovered the importance of her eyes and is happy to see the world and her life for what they are -- imperfect but beautiful in their own way.

## Hypocrisy

The reader never learns all the details about Audrey's school incident, but it appears that hypocrisy is at its roots. The head mistress of the school dismissed Audrey's complaints, which led to the event that was so devastating for Audrey. The incident was so bad that the woman lost her job because of it. Mum, who also dismissed Audrey's initial complaints, is hypocritical in that she finds fault with Audrey's best friend, Natalie, for not stepping up at school to confirm her complaints to the head mistress. Mum blames the head mistress for allowing the bullying to happen when she herself did not give it much consideration.

Rob, Ollie's father, is also hypocritical. As an adult, he should know better than to tease Audrey by calling her "Celebrity," a name he gives her because of the dark sunglasses she always wears. himself. He is disrespectful to her parents and to Audrey because he does not stop calling her the nickname even after her parents discussed the matter with him. As an adult, he should be nurturing, or at least polite. Instead, he is effectively bullying Audrey himself after all that she has suffered at the hands of her peers, making Rob a very hypocritical adult.

Mum and Dad are hypocritical when they discuss omitting screens from their home. At first, Mum implies doing away with their television like another family she knows. When Dad mentions the two shows they like to watch, she decides the screen ban would only be for the children, not them. This is hypocritical for two reasons. The obvious reason is that she wants to watch her shows, but does not care whether or not the children have shows they enjoy watching. It is also hypocritical because Mum and Dad must watch

these two shows, which alludes to addiction. It is very hypocritical for Mum and Dad to consider eliminating Frank's addiction when they refuse to eliminate their own.

## **Bullying**

Audrey is proof that bullying can have devastating effects on teens. When she sought help, her claims were ignored, which only fueled the bullies to continue and increase their efforts. While she already had insecurities about herself and her body image, the bullying made it all much worse for Audrey, ultimately leading to extreme anxiety and depression.

The reader can learn several things from Audrey's story. Audrey reported the bullying to her teacher, but was ignored. Her mother noticed changes in Audrey's behavior, but chalked them up to teen angst or a temporary school squabble and did not bother to get involved until the serious incident occurred. Being ignored by authority figures made Audrey suffer even more. This serves as a reminder to parents and teachers who need to investigate all claims of bullying.

The head mistress' disregard for Audrey's claims had an impact on Natalie, too. Once she saw that Audrey's claims were ignored, she stopped standing up for her. The message to her was clear -- the head mistress allowed bullying and would not stand up for the students. Natalie realized that if she stood up for Audrey, she would be bullied by her peers and ignored by the school's head mistress.

When Audrey's claims were dismissed or belittled, she began to lose self-worth. Students reading the book should see this as a reminder to keep complaining to authorities if they find themselves in a bullying situation.

The story is also a reminder that what may seem like gentle teasing to one person may have a serious impact on another. Rob, Ollie's dad, teases Audrey by calling her "Celebrity" without concern for her feelings, even after both her parents have asked him to drop the nickname. Maybe he does not understand the impact the teasing has on her, or perhaps he does not care, leaving the reader to witness how adults can be bullies, too.



# Styles

## Point of View

The story is told from the first person point of view. Audrey tells her own story as the narrator and the main character of the book, leaving the reader to feel as though Audrey is confiding in him/her like a friend would do. Audrey deals with things many teens do -- a sibling that's annoying, parents who have their own eccentricities, stress and anxiety. As if that's not enough for any teen to deal with, Audrey's situation is made worse by a debilitating social anxiety that can be blamed on school bullying. Audrey needs a friend, and the reader becomes that friend. The first person point of view is told in the present tense, which brings the reader directly into the action with Audrey as she deals with her disorder with both drama and humor.

The only section that is not told from Audrey's viewpoint is the transcript section narrated by Frank when Audrey is missing (257). It is told from his first person, present tense point of view because Audrey is not there to narrate it. It also adds suspense to the conflict of her disappearance.

## Language and Meaning

The language in this story reflects British spelling and terminology. Mum is Mom, but other than that, the language is straightforward. Occasionally, Audrey does use some medical terminology when she reveals her anxiety disorders, but her explanation of the terms is simply put in the words of a teen explaining it to another person of her own age. From time to time, there is profanity and abbreviated profanity that teens might use in their normal or texting conversations. For instance, Audrey writes FFS when Natalie expects her boyfriend to be from the mental hospital. FFS stands for "for f---'s sake," a profane phrase.

The author also uses similes and metaphors to help Audrey tell the story. For example, she is metaphorically a rhubarb, staying in the dark until she is ready for harvest. She uses an orange slice to create a simile to describe Linus' smile.

## Structure

The book is structured without labeled chapters, but there are clear breaks noted between each section that indicate a chapter change. If the chapters were numbered, there would be a total of 53 in the 286 page book. Some of the "chapters" are only one or two pages.

The story starts with Mum threatening to throw Frank's computer out the window, then Audrey begins backtracking to catch up the reader on how it got to that point. On page 123, Audrey picks up the story just after Mum drops the computer.



The story has documentary transcripts spliced throughout it to show that Audrey is recording her documentary for therapy. The transcripts also give the reader a "look" into Audrey's home. Since the reader obviously cannot see the video, the author provides the transcript so the reader does not have to miss anything. The documentary plays another role in the book as well. It is the reason Audrey has to contact Linus to ask him to meet her and it is her first step in recovery when she agrees to meet him at Starbucks.

After the story's climax, when Audrey is missing then found safe, the story wraps up in shorter sections as the author winds down the denouement.





## Quotes

Look, it's the celebrity!

-- Rob (Ollie's father) (Page 5 paragraph 7)

**Importance:** This is the first reference to Audrey wearing sunglasses. She explains that her parents have asked him not to call her that because it is insensitive, but she does not explain why.

Do you mean literally computer games? Or do you mean all screen games, including Xbox and PlayStation? Do you include games on my phone? Define your terms.

-- Frank (Page 10 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** Mum demands to know how much time Frank spends playing computer games each week. Frank points out that there's more to gaming than just games played on a computer. His response to her demand only makes her angrier and more certain than ever that he is indeed addicted to video games.

Do you always wear those?

-- Linus (Page 22 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** This is the first meeting between Linus and Audrey. He accidentally surprises her in the den, her safe place. He notes that she is wearing sunglasses indoors and asks if she always wears them, showing his interest in her.

Episodes. Like depression is a sitcom with a fun punch line each time.

-- Audrey (Page 23 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** Audrey makes this quip when she informs the reader about her diagnosis of Social Anxiety Disorder, General Anxiety Disorder, and Depressive Episodes. Audrey's sense of humor shows that she still has her witty, funny traits even though she is dealing with anxiety and depression. This breaks stereotypes the reader may have about how people with anxiety and depression are always sad or down.

You have no idea how many people there are in the world until you start getting freaked out by them.

-- Audrey (Page 37 paragraph 3)

**Importance:** Audrey says this when explaining to the reader what her social anxiety is like. She can deal with her family. She even got used to the people in her group therapy at the hospital. It's everyone else with whom she is not familiar that poses problems for her.

Then, slowly, from a further distance, it comes ack to rest on Linus' face. It zooms in.

-- Audrey (Page 43 paragraph 6)



**Importance:** Audrey hides when Linus comes to visit Frank, but keeps recording and zooms in on his face from a distance. The camera's focus is Audrey's focus; both are zooming in on Linus. This is how she begins to admit her interest in him to herself.

It won't be forever. You'll be in the dark for as long as it takes and then you'll come out.  
-- Linus (Page 80 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** Linus uses this analogy when writing notes to Audrey. He then describes the process of harvesting rhubarb in the dark, leading to metaphorically referring to Audrey as rhubarb.

Yeah, there's a Magwitch character in LOC too. Only he has, like a better backstory than the Dickens one. He's a convict, the same, but he can help any competitor.  
-- Frank (Page 92 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** Forced to watch the movie version of Dickens' Great Expectations, Frank finds similarities between a character from the movie and the Land of Conquerors game he plays. Mum is appalled that he thinks the video game character is better, which only makes her more certain of his video game addiction.

You're not reacting. Why aren't you reacting?  
-- Frank (Page 121 paragraph 11)

**Importance:** Frank's emotionless reaction to being banned from his computer for life infuriates Mum and is the catalyst for her throwing his computer out the window.

So do I. You.  
-- Linus (Page 140 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** This is Linus' way of telling Audrey that he loves her. She first says she loves her coconut ice cream surprise he arranged for her. Then he makes this remark. Audrey says the same to him.

My sister Audrey is missing. It's a nightmare. We woke up this morning and there she wasn't.  
-- Frank (Page 257 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** Frank narrates this section of video transcript in Audrey's absence. She is missing. This is important because it is the climax of the story.

My eyes. They're me. They're who I am.  
-- Audrey (Page 285. paragraph 9)

**Importance:** Audrey concludes the book with a statement about her eyes. In the beginning, she feared eyes because they were soul-sucking vortexes. Now, she loves her eyes and is happy to not wear her dark sunglasses any longer. She now sees eyes as a window into the soul, a much more pleasant attitude.