

Lost Study Guide

Lost by Gregory Maguire

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Contents

Lost Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle.....	4
Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk.....	6
Stave Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney.....	11
Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio.....	15
Stave Five: For the Time Being.....	21
Characters.....	23
Objects/Places.....	30
Themes.....	32
Style.....	35
Quotes.....	37
Topics for Discussion.....	39

Plot Summary

Gregory Maguire's novel *Lost* is inspired by Charles Dickens's novel, *A Christmas Carol*. *Lost* is a fictional novel about an author of young adult novels, Winifred Rudge, who travels to London to work on her latest book, but finds far more adventure and self-exploration than she bargained for.

Winifred or Winnie is writing a novel about a young woman named Wendy Pritzke who is haunted by the ghost of Jack the Ripper. Winnie plans to stay with her step-cousin and good friend, John Comester in London while she researches famed Jack the Ripper tourist spots for the novel. Although Winnie proves to be a bit of a curmudgeon who holds most people at arm's length, she clearly views John as her one true friend and is quite excited to see him. When Winnie arrives in London however, John is nowhere to be found.

John lives in the top level of a large house built and owned by their ancestor who is also believed by their family to have been the real life inspiration and model for the Charles Dickinson character, Ebenezer Scrooge. Winnie makes herself at home in John's flat while she waits for him to return, growing increasingly alarmed that something may be wrong. John has hired workers to renovate his kitchen, but Winnie quickly learns that they are frightened by noises and strange occurrences in the walls of John's kitchen, and it is drastically slowing their work. It is not long before Winnie also hears strange noises coming from the chimney behind the kitchen wall and begins witnessing occurrences that seem to have no explanation other than the house is haunted.

While trying to find rational ways to deal with the apparent hauntings of John's flat, Winnie also reaches out to John's friends, neighbor and girlfriend Allegra, and finally John's work colleagues, trying to track him down and assure he is alright. Almost two weeks later, John finally appears in the book, and is not the person that Winnie has portrayed him to be. He seems angry and hostile with Winnie, forcing her to acknowledge some painful memories she has been suppressing as well as face some very tough realizations about herself. Readers follow Winnie through her adventure of facing her ghosts of the past, present, and the future still to come.



Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle

Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle Summary

Gregory Maguire is also the author of recognizable titles such as *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* and *Wicked*, which has been transformed into a highly successful Broadway play.

The book opens immediately with action; the main character, Winfred Rudge (Winnie) has just witnessed a multi-car accident directly in front of her. Although she does get out of her car into the rain to check on the passengers of the cars involved in the wreck until the ambulances arrive, readers are made privy to her thought process, which reveals that Winnie is very matter-of-fact, arguably cynical, and more removed from the situation than one may expect. She is worried about being late for a meeting.

Despite the hold up of the car accident, Winnie makes it to her Forever Families meeting, led by Mabel Quackenbush. The Forever Families group consists of couples who have experienced the loss in one form or another and are now looking to adopt a child. Winnie is the only person attending the group without a partner, and the reader is delayed in learning the Winnie is only there to observe and research for a novel she is writing. Winnie refuses to participate to any significant degree with the group although they encourage her to join in. When the Forever Families meeting is broken into smaller groups, Winnie's group ends up talking about the upcoming holiday, Halloween, and who they would want to be haunted by. This question strikes a chord with Winnie and she jots it down in her writer's notebook just before she is asked to leave the meeting because she is not there as someone who legitimately wanted to adopt a child.

Winnie heads home in the dark and spooky setting of an early Fall storm. Her house alarm goes off when she enters and she struggled for a few minutes to get it shut off; she finally has to trip the breaker. Instead of the call from the security company, or a visit from the police in response to the alarm as she expects, all Winnie receives is a call from one of the men she met earlier at the Forever Families meeting, Adrian Moscue, who called to apologize for getting her kicked out. Winnie hangs up on him.

Winnie catches her early morning flight the next day to England to visit her stepcousin and friend, John Comestor. The weather is still poor as Hurricane Gretel is approaching. Readers learn that London holds many childhood memories for Winnie, as most of her favorite children's stories take place in or around London. When Winnie arrives in London, she heads directly to visit John, but is caught off guard when he does not meet her at the door and does not appear to be home. The section leaves off here creating a sense of anticipation for readers.



Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle Analysis

Readers are introduced to the main character, Winnie, and it is apparent she has many sides to her personality. She shows concern and bravery by not hesitating to try and help the people involved in the car accident at the beginning of the first section. However, she was also knowingly breaking the law by using the carpool lane when she was driving solo, showing that she is not afraid to 'bend the rules' a bit. It also becomes evident by her internal comments and thoughts during the Forever Families meeting that Winnie is sarcastic, naturally skeptical, and not afraid to judge people on sight. "Winnie treaded the oily waters with a blank expression, preparing caustic observations to serve John Comestor tomorrow when she goes there." (p. 13). She is clearly guarded, as demonstrated in the way she treats the people in the Forever Families group, perhaps suggesting she's been hurt in the past.

Winnie's appreciation for literature is also evident. She is not only a writer herself, but she seems to always be mentally summing up her current situation and individuals she meets, as though writing a story about them. She also frequently refers to works of poetry and writing by other authors, relating quoted passages to her current situation.

Subtle suggestions throughout the chapter suggest that Winnie is a bit lonely; for instance, she compares herself multiple times to Ebenezer Scrooge from "A Christmas Carol," who is ultimately crabby and mean to people because he is really just quite lonely. Winnie also has an incident in her house where the alarm goes off, but no one comes to check on her - not the security company or the police - and she regretfully thinks about how she could be murdered in her own home and no one would care. Later that same night when Winnie discovers her alarm clock has gone out and now will only read the time 00:00 (which she interprets as a spooky "Ooooo!") she acknowledges, "She had no neighbors with whom she was chummy enough to ask for help, no friends left to call." (p. 25).

The weather is used by the author to create a spooky and haunting setting. Most of the first chapter takes place in the evening or very early morning, when it is still dark, and it is consistently raining or partially snowing and blowing wind as a hurricane is approaching. The weather is also foreshadowing trouble approaching.

Winnie's stepcousin, John Comestor, is mentioned in this chapter enough to alert readers that he will likely become a main character in the near future; however, the chapter leaves off just before readers get to actually meet him. All that is known about John at this point is that he is the only person that Winnie appears to consider a friend.



Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk

Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk Summary

Winnie arrives at an empty Ridge House. She is bewildered as to where her step-cousin John could be and why he wouldn't have at least left her a note. Winnie lets herself in and pokes around, observing a portrait in John's bedroom. The painting says it is of "Scrooge", but Winnie knows it clarifies on the back that it is actually her relative, Ozias Rudge. The portrait is described in great detail until Winnie decides it is giving her the creeps and leaves the room.

When Winnie calls and checks her messages at home in Boston, she is unnerved to learn she has five hang-ups. She feels this is a message in itself since most people who don't want to leave a message hang up as soon as they hear a recording pick up. Winnie also receives a message from Adrian Moscou, from the Forever Families meeting, inviting her out to eat and offering to tell her about the rest of the meeting she had been asked to leave. He is sorry he got her kicked out of the group by exposing her as a writer. Surprisingly, Winnie calls him back and leaves a message saying she is away in England, but he should keep in touch.

Winnie eventually falls into a dream-filled sleep despite a constant clanging downstairs that she thinks may be old pipes. The following morning, she believes John has finally arrived home, but it is just two construction workers, Jenkins and Mac, who John had recently hired. The workers have not seen John for four days, since Monday. After seeing the plans John gave them to do, Winnie inquires why their progress has been so slow. The workers explain that a mysterious rapping noise from behind the wall they are supposed to tear down has had something to do with it. They do not fully explain and Winnie dismisses them as foolish, assuming the sounds are coming from a loose pipe or a tenant downstairs having work done on their apartment.

Winnie goes downstairs and speaks with the neighbor, Mrs. Maddingly, who does indeed seem 'mad.' She lives only with her cats, speaks as though she is quite confused or disoriented most of the time, and is constantly worried about forgetting things, so she has post-it notes all over her apartment. She frets constantly about taking her pills. Winnie does not take Mrs. Maddingly very seriously and actually day dreams about a book idea while Mrs. Maddingly is talking to her. Winnie imagines a novel about Jack the Ripper following a woman home to the Rudge House back in the 1800s and getting murdered and stuffed into the walls behind bricks where the ghost would then make the same type of clanging noises Winnie had heard the night before.

When Winnie returns upstairs Mac and Jenkins are spooked by the pounding coming from the wall, which gets faster and more urgent sounding whenever Jenkins moves the hammer closer to the wall. The sound is now also accompanied by a strong stench. Winnie, refusing to be spooked or show any weakness, comes up with the idea that the sound is probably coming from the apartment on the other side of the wall. She knows



that apartment belongs to Allegra Lower, John's girlfriend whom Winnie clearly does not like.

Although reluctant, Winnie does go over to Allegra's to see if she might know what's causing the noise or where John is. Allegra claims to know nothing about either question. Winnie also meets with Allegra's upstairs neighbor, Raja, but the noise does not appear to be coming from Raja's place either. Raja is initially rather rude to Winnie, but ends up spilling her emotions about her husband who had died a few months earlier. Winnie is as comforting as she can pretend to be, but is clearly uncomfortable and still primarily focused on figuring out what is causing the knocking sound in the wall. As Winnie is leaving, Raja makes the observation, "You Know something of what it's like to miss your man, I can tell." Winnie does not appreciate this and leaves rather abruptly.

After a lunch alone where she does some writing, Winnie returns to the apartment to discover Mac and Jenkins have not gotten much further on their work. They inform Winnie that she received a message on the answering machine while she was out. The message is from Adrian Moscou asking her to call him when she returns to the States to get together. He repeats that he and his students are big fans of her books, and he would like to talk to her more about the adoption group. Winnie appreciates that Adrian feels bad enough about getting her kicked out of the group that he keeps calling.

Winnie is growing tired of dealing with Mac and Jenkins, so she takes the construction into her own hands and uses the crowbar to start prying nails out of the wall. Mac and Jenkins note that the pounding does not occur when Winnie is working on the wall, but it starts up again when Mac approaches it. When the three of them stand back, they witness the nails retracting themselves back into the wall! All three now thoroughly frightened, Winnie demands that Mac and Jenkins tell her everything that's happened from the moment they started this job. The men relate the week to her; how they haven't seen John since he hired them, and how they climbed on the roof to look down into the chimney to find what was causing the knocking sounds, and instead heard what sounded like "sound pushed through a throat, that's all, but what throat, or whose, or when, we could not tell." (p. 90). Jenkins admitted it scared him and he cried; he said it reminded him of 'his grief', which he wouldn't specify. Jenkins fell off the roof in fright resulting in a seizure. Mac reveals that Jenkins had a dream while he was out during his seizure that his daughter, who is a prostitute, disappeared and had been clawed up. This is reminiscent of what Jack the Ripper did to his prey, who were also always prostitutes.

Winnie decides it is time to go to the police, as she is thoroughly worried about John now. Winnie realizes the story she has for the police - the truth - sounds ludicrous, so she decides to try calling John's work instead. The receptionist said John was not in and couldn't give Winnie any further information as to where he might be. Winnie suspected the receptionist may have been coached to not provide any information about John to Winnie, even though Winnie is not sure why.

Winnie then concocts a plan to pretend to be interested in buying real estate, and makes an appointment to see the flat for sale directly below John's flat (and above Mrs.



Maddingly's flat). She meets real estate agent Kendall Waugh and provides a fake name for herself, Wendy Pritzke (her book character's name). Winnie is trying to find a logical explanation for the noises heard in John's place. She gets nowhere in this inspection and decides to return to John's apartment and have Jenkins try calling John at work, in case the secretary is kinder to a male voice. Jenkins calls but receives the same answer Winnie had.

When Winnie and Jenkins return to the kitchen, Mac is completely terrified. He says he took a silver cross from John's study and approached the kitchen wall holding the cross and praying, but the whole wall began shaking. When the three of them looked at the wall next, moisture was seeping from it, blistering the paint and at first looking like a rash, then a bruise. "There was a gash forming, like the place a knife would drive if it were slicing the heart out of a body." (p.102). The gash seems to be bleeding into a shape, which Mac identifies as a crucifix with an X through it.

Jenkins wants to leave the flat at this point because it's now Friday night. Mac explains that every Friday and Saturday night he walks down the Strand interviewing people to see if they've seen his daughter. However, as soon as Jenkins steps outside, the chimney pot falls from the roof and strikes the back of his head. Neighbors called the ambulance and Jenkins is taken away with Mac also in the ambulance, crying.

Winnie returns to the empty apartment to calm down with some tea and classical music. She takes a moment to inspect John's office, where she'd heard a clatter just prior to the chimney pot falling. She discovered that the painting of Strooge/Rudge had fallen. She decided to put the painting under the bed and work on writing her story a bit. Winnie's writing is interrupted by Allegra ringing her doorbell and asking to come up. Winnie reluctantly lets her in. Both women are curious if the other has heard from John. Neither has. Allegra makes herself at home and makes some tea while Winnie changes the subject to her book and Jack The Ripper. When Winnie goes to shut her computer off, she thinks for a moment that the screen saver is mimicking the image that had shown up on the kitchen wall earlier. It is gone before she can tell though.

Winnie and Allegra both hear pounding and discover Mac nailing the front door shut from the outside. Mac explained he is trying to keep 'it' inside and then he's going to call a priest. Mac said 'it' has a voice now and it's the voice of Jenkins's daughter. Once the door is nailed, he simply turns and leaves, throwing his hammer in the bushes. Winnie and Allegra try calling for help out the window, but their voices are lost in the windstorm.

Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk Analysis

Winnie's preference to be alienated from people is touched on again at the beginning of this chapter, when it is explained that although John has many friends in London, he knows that Winnie does not like to spend time with any of them, so he does not make any social engagements whenever Winnie visits. Winnie shows how much she really does care about John by going out of her comfort zone to speak with some of his friend



to inquire where he might be and if he is okay, when he is not home upon her arrival. She is clearly concerned about his wellbeing. Due to Winnie's anti-social nature, it may be surprising when she actually returns Adrian's phone message. This suggests Adrian will certainly play a role later in the book, as Winnie is clearly not one to make new friends or invite people into her life. "The shallow good wishes of an Adrian Moscou were probably the more welcome, since John Comestor seemed to have abandoned her without a moment's thought." (p. 46).

The painting in John's room, labelled "Scrooge," is filled with symbolism. First, it continues the comparison of Winnie - or her family at least - to Charles Dickens's Scrooge, pointing out that 'Scrooge' and 'Rudge' even rhyme. The colors in the painting are described as "icy blues" from a fire creating a "dramatic blue backlight," pale browns, and a slight scrape of color on the right of the painting "the color of bone." These descriptions were surely chosen intentionally by the author to create an aura of fear or foreboding around the painting.

Readers are introduced to Mrs. Maddingly in this chapter, who is quite appropriately named. She speaks nearly nonsensical, seeming to be a character from a children's book herself, specifically, Alice and Wonderland. Her name and speech patterns are similar to Wonderland character 'The Mad Hatter,' and her smile is even compared to the Cheshire Cat in Alice in Wonderland. Mrs. Maddingly also mentions that she can hear her cats trying to speak, although they don't have a word for ghost. This particular mention foreshadows that the sounds Winnie is hearing may be caused by a ghost.

The initial conversation between Winnie and Allegra reveals the tension and mutual dislike between these two women. They exchange passive-aggressive jabs at one another. It becomes apparent that there is also some jealousy between them, as they each hold a very special position in John's life (Winnie is one of his closest friends, while Allegra is his lover) and each feel slighted that he seems to have disappeared and is not contacting them first to say he is okay and where he is; "The notion that John might talk to Allegra before attempting to reach her. The very notion of it." (p. 110).

Winnie's story about Wendy Pritzke is woven throughout the chapter. It is set apart by a different font type, but the content is clearly influenced by Winnie's actual experiences in London. Wendy is similar in character to Winnie, but seems to possess the additional qualities that Winnie wishes she had. The similarities in Winnie's life and Wendy's story may lead the reader to wonder which story is foreshadowing the other.

The weather continues to be a raging storm, picking up in the evening and adding to the spooky feeling of the house and environment. The weather is described more when the noises in the wall, or other spooky behavior, is happening. The author also uses a lot of anthropomorphizing descriptions for the house and the weather. For example: "The skin of the world pulling in phlemy puddles..." (p. 99) and "the wind bullied the windows..." (p. 100); "The wind whistled almost with the sound of a pig's squeal, or a baby's..."(p. 104).



Overall, this chapter is clearly the rising action of the story, where the main problems have been introduced (John's whereabouts and the cause of the spooky sounds in the house) and the tension is rapidly building.



Save Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney

Save Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney Summary

Winnie and Allegra are now trapped inside John's flat. They cannot call for help because the phone became disconnected from the wall in the previous chapter and the power is out. They can not reach the skylights to climb out of, there are no drainpipes or anything to climb down on the side windows, and no one can hear their cries for help over the wind storm. Knowing there is no way out for the time being, the women make tea and sit together in the front room.

Allegra mentions that John told her once their family descends from Ebenezer Scrooge. Winnie is annoyed by this comment, but unable to think about John and the possibility that he may be dead, she explains the connection to Allegra. Winnie's great-great-great-grandfather, Ozias Rudge, was involved in tin mines in Cornwall back as an expert in timber supports, but after a mine collapsed, he decided to move to Hampstead where he built the Rudge House. Legend says, while Ozias was out of town for business once a business associate had a tryst with the woman Ozias was seeing. Upon returning, Ozias dueled and killed that man. Ozias then withdrew to himself and his home, becoming the curmudgeon whom the Scrooge character mirrors. Some people in the town thought Ozias was haunted by ghosts, perhaps of the man he killed or the miners who died in the collapsed shaft. Winnie explains that Charles Dickens stayed in Hampstead when he was 12-years-old and met Ozias, whom likely shared his stories about being haunted by people from his past. Winnie is a bit annoyed when Allegra is not fully convinced that Winnie and John's ancestor truly was the inspiration for Scrooge.

Winnie is growing tired for the whole situation - particularly being stuck with Allegra - and decides to simply exhume the ghost. She resolutely began removing nails from the kitchen wall with a crowbar and Allegra eventually helps. The knocking sounds seem to have disappeared completely as the women begin removing boards from the kitchen wall. They discover that the wood is all different types and sizes, and the brick behind it are uneven shapes and haphazardly slapped together. This all suggests the wall was put up quite hastily. Winnie determines that the house has a fake chimney stack on top, meaning none of the fireplaces really work. Now, so close to finding out what - if anything - is hidden in the bricks behind the wall, Winnie determines that she will not remove the bricks to see what lays behind.

Mac, drunk and singing, returns to the front door at that time drunk and in a violent mood and begins removing the nails he's pounded in earlier. The women are scared and prepared to hurt, or perhaps kill Mac, if he gets inside and tries to hurt them. They decide to knock down the bricks and let out whatever may be behind. However, once



they have most of the wall down and Winnie reaches in all she finds is an old blanket. Mac gets inside and Allegra hits him over the head with a piece of pottery. It doesn't bring Mac down, but he soon vomits and passes out drunk atop the painting of Scrooge/Rudge. The electricity has come back during all this as well.

With one crisis averted, Winnie is not sure how to move forward in the next few days. She sorts John's mail and continues working on her Wendy Pritzke story. Winnie meets again with Allegra's upstairs neighbor, Rasia, to see if she knows anything about the blanket Winnie found behind the bricks in the kitchen. Rasia suggests they take the blanket to a clairvoyant she knows, named Ritzi.

The women visit Ritzi, whom Winnie is immediately quite skeptical of. She doesn't believe his accent and feels everything in his apartment is just staged to create a certain mood for customers. Ritzi serves them tea and asks they drink it in silence, as he will read Winnie's tea leaves when she's done. Winnie's leaves fall in a crescent shape, and Ritzi determines she is "a woman in need." He also determines that she paints people on paper, and asks if her name is Wendy. Uncomfortable with his accuracy, Winnie hands Ritzi the blanket and says that is really why she's here. Ritzi says the blanket covered a woman just before she died. A man barges into the apartment at that time, interrupting the reading, asking about books he wants to buy from Ritzi. When the man will not go away, Ritzi loses his patience and kicks everyone out. He refuses to accept money from Winnie for the reading and said he does not want her to ever bring the cloth back, saying 'whatever is involved with it is too much for him.'

The man who interrupted the meeting follows Winnie on the street and talks her into going to coffee with him. Winnie reluctantly agrees. The man is American and says his name is Irv Hausserman. Winnie introduces herself as 'Opal Marley.' Irv is a professor of Western Medievalism at the University of Pittsburg; his expertise is in 'aspects of the supernatural in medieval thought'. Winnie continues lying to Irv about who she is, stating she is just coming out of a broken marriage. "She had no reason to mistrust him. So why had she started out with an alibi? Instinct? Neurosis? And it wasn't an alibi, it was a lie: call it what it was. A habit that was getting more and more entrenched." (pp. 157) They get on the subject of the occult and Winnie asks Irv he's ever seen a ghost. He has not. When he repeats the question back to her, she abruptly gets up to leave.

When Winnie returns to John's building, Mrs. Maddingly begs her to come in and look for her missing cat, Chutney. Winnie reluctantly agreed to help look a bit, and notices that Mrs. Maddingly seems even crazier, insisting that if she goes to the hospital, "they" will cut her hair. Winnie lifts a few garments while looking for Chutney and finds three long-dead cats matted in blood on their heads. One live cat, presumably Chutney, is below them, and rams his head into one of them before running off and hiding again. Winnie believes Chutney may have killed the other cats.

The next day Winnie tries to visit Jenkins in the hospital, but is informed he checked out a few days prior by a family member. She next tries visiting some famed Jack The Ripper tourist spots in hopes of being inspired for her Wendy Pritzke story again, but nothing was coming to Winnie. The story seems to be completely stalled.



Returning to the Rudge house, Winnie is growing increasingly lonely and worried about John. She calls two of his friends, Britt Chalmers and Malcom Rice, inquiring if they'd seen or heard from John yet. Neither had, and Malcom seemed particularly annoyed. Winnie called Rasia's flat again, speaking with her son about whether he'd seen a cat in his apartment. Winnie is worried Mrs. Maddingly's cat may burrow through the walls and harm someone, as she is convinced he killed the other cats. Rasia does not take Winnie's fear seriously and finally hangs up on her after asking her not to call for awhile.

Wendy decides to return to Ritzi alone to have him look at the cloth from the chimney again. Irv Hausserman is already there purchasing another book from Ritzi. Irv leaves and Ritzi agrees to look at Winnie's cloth. He repeats that it is a woman's shroud, and discovers a pattern matching the symbol Winnie saw on her computer screen just before it went out - a cross with a zig zag through it. Ritzi says whoever the cloth belonged to 'wants to get back, but has lost her way.' Ritzi compares the lost ghost to Winnie.

On her way back home, Winnie runs into Irv, who waited for her to leave Ritzi's. Having no one else to talk to Winnie confides in Irv and tells him much of what is going on. She admits how worried she really is about John's disappearance and how she feels the whole thing is a conspiracy against her, although she can't figure out why. Winnie worries that Irv may not believe her, so she has him call John's office. The chapter ends with Irv saying the office is putting him through.

Save Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney Analysis

There is a marked change in Winnie's attitude in this chapter. First, she is no longer trying to make logical excuses for what may be causing the sounds, and she openly refers to a ghost. She stops waiting for John to come back and make things better; she just takes matters completely into her own hands. She decides to exhume the ghost in the walls, which appears to work, as the sounds stop after the wall is torn down. Winnie is surprised to find only a cloth behind the bricks, but also makes a real effort to find out what the cloth could be or belong to.

Although Winnie is standing up for herself and making things happen, she does also begin to admit to others that she has a real fear of what may have happened to John at this point. Previously, she would ask about John, but make a concerted effort not to appear overly concerned. She openly admits her concern to multiple people in this chapter, no longer worried about how she appears to others. She is genuinely concerned for her step-cousin's well-being.

Winnie even agrees to see a clairvoyant with Rasia, which is clearly not something Winnie would do on a regular basis. Readers are privy to a strong irony when Ritzi Ostertag - whom Winnie immediately writes off as a phony - not only provides Winnie with a quiet accurate reading, but pinpoints Winnie loneliness she tries so hard to conceal with a phony act herself; "I can tell that making fun of people is your



professional strength and your living grave," (pp. 185) says Ritzi, meaning that Winnie's attitude and defensiveness are what cause her extreme loneliness.

Winnie's story about Wendy begins interjecting the main story more frequently in this chapter, and the stories are becoming more and more alike. Winnie and Wendy are even saying the same lines, The narrator comments about Winnie, "When she learned to take her own pulse she found she was registering Wendy Pritzke's instead." (pp.135). Wendy also has a step-cousin in the story named John who is traveling with her. There is an underlying sexual tension between Wendy and John, suggesting they may be (or have been) the same between Winnie and John in real life. The longer John is missing in real life, the more the character John appears in Winnie's story.

There is a great deal of Foreshadowing in this chapter. For instance, the painting of Ozias Rudge seems to change appearance - or meaning - to Winnie, depending on the situation. When she goes to move it from the wall, "he looked, with his hand against the shadowy doorframe, as if he were blocking the way, keeping them from the shrieky diaphanous thing painted in the shadowy background behind him. Winnie removed the painting anyway." (p. 123). Also, the weather seems to be directing the plot; whenever the weather get worse, so does Winnie's situation. For example, as soon as Winnie determines she doesn't want to remove the bricks in the wall to see what is hidden behind them, "The thunder fell in flat-footed paces on the Heath a half mile off. Lightning in London was not all that common, in Winnie's experience, and the flashes glazed the room with sudden blue. Slowly the thunder, rolling a few feet this way and that, shifted its timbre, and delivered itself of a second, hollower sound, which proved to be feet on the stairs."(p. 131). After the ghost appears to be gone, however, and Winnie and Allegra are able to get out of the house, the weather is sunny for the first time in the book.

Mrs. Maddingly's character also seems to be deteriorating in this section, become crazier than before. The references to Alice and Wonderland continue when Winnie helps Mrs. Maddingly look for her missing cat, Chutney; as Winnie is looking around the apartment, she believes she just a flick of a tail and a smile - like the Cheshire Cat - in Mrs. Maddingly's mirror, which is referred to as a looking glass. It is still not clear what role Mrs. Maddingly will have in the story, but it is apparent that the author has a plan for Mrs. Maddingly's strange encounters with Winnie.



Steve Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio

Steve Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio Summary

The chapter opens with Winnie hearing John's voice in a corner pub before she actually sees and calls out to him. They have a beer together and John acts rather nonchalant, while Winnie spouts off questions trying to contain her anger; "'Cheers,' she said, as if daring him to feel cheerful in the presence of her wee-regulate fury." (pp. 192). John explains he was called to Denmark for business at the last minute and left Winnie a note under the door knocker. He insists Winnie 'knows what's going on' and that he made himself absent to help her; he'd hoped she'd continue on without him. Upon his return from business, he stayed at Allegra's, meaning Allegra lied to Winnie. Winnie is confused and refuses to let him off the hook, demanding to know why he's been hiding from her. John suggests perhaps Winnie did see a note from him and conveniently forgot; "You are entirely capable of lying to yourself. As you no doubt know. Your professional training if nothing else. Are you sure you didn't see a note from me, and conveniently forget it?" (p. 196).

John allows Winnie to tell her story of the ghost in his house, while he listens partly comforting her and partly patronizing her. He finally agrees to go home and see the ghost Winnie is talking about 'if she can show it to him.' They return to the Ruge House, and John is annoyed at the mess left from the work in his kitchen. Winnie absent-mindedly draws the cross with the slash through it in the dust on the counter, while John assesses the mess. He finds the letter he left for Winnie, hidden under a hedgehog under the fallen painting. Angrily, John says he doesn't want to be around when Winnie reads the letter, but he won't ask her to leave. They head downstairs together and notice Mrs. Maddingly's door slightly ajar. They let themselves into the apartment and find Chutney the cat dead and baking inside the oven, while Mrs. Maddingly is laying on her bed wearing only dirty lilac gloves and a coat; she is naked beneath and has soiled herself. When the ambulance arrives, they agree John will go with Mrs. Maddingly to the hospital, while Winnie disposes of Chutney's body.

Winnie returns to John's flat to wait and receives a call from Irv. She never gave him her number, and he somehow knows her real name now. Irv insists he is just concerned about her because she left their last meeting in such a rush and seemed upset. Winnie once again confides everything to Irv, saying she isn't sure why her one true friend, John, is avoiding her. Irv asks Winnie if she'll meet him at the Hampstead Tube station, so he can give her back the shroud. Winnie agrees to do so.

Winnie and Irv go to a pub to speak further and Irv explains that he got her real name and phone number through a series of phone tags with Ritzi and Rasia. He also looked her up on the internet and learned about her writing. He seems quite interested in knowing if she is currently working on writing a book. Irv also explains that he connected with a local expert, Dr. Annelise Berchstein, on fabrics to provide some analysis on the shroud. Dr. Berchstein believes the fabric is 600-700 years old, but stayed in tact



because it was not exposed to air and light. This dates the cloth much older than the 200-year-old Rudge House. As they walk and talk, Irv leads them to a bookstore and purchases one of Winnie's books, and they end up going to dinner together. It is clearly turning into a date, and there appears to be mutual attraction between the two. They talk about ghosts over dinner, and Irv explains, "Ghosts, it seems to me, are evidence of human panic." (p. 218). Winnie says she believes ghosts are people with unfinished business, but Irv points out that people very rarely die with all their loose ends tied up, so the world should be overpopulated with ghosts then.

Winnie asks Irv what his intentions with her are, making it clear she is not prepared for a romance. He says he is just living in the moment and enjoying the meal. He reveals that he is a widower, and Winnie admits she was once married too. Winnie ends up telling Irv how she is related to the man who inspired Dickens's Scrooge character; Irv listens intently, but does not appear to believe there is enough evidence to prove Rudge is really Scrooge, or that he was visited by ghosts. They continue drinking throughout the dinner and are drunk by the end of it. As they head toward the Tube, they run into Rasia. Rasia is also a little drunk, having been out on the town with girlfriends celebrating an upcoming wedding. Her hands are decorated with henna symbols and Winnie notices Rasia has the zig zag cross symbol on her arm. When Winnie asks about it, Rasia hides her hands and gets visibly annoyed and departs quickly. Irv sees Winnie home, but is not invited in.

When John comes by the next day, Winnie is packing in preparation to leave. John seems immensely frustrated and keeps saying Winnie is 'not getting it' despite him vacating the premises and people throwing her life lines left and right. They are interrupted by a knock on the door; it is Jenkins and his daughter. He has come to say he cannot finish the job. He does not say anything about a ghost or the strange happenings, just that he wasn't himself leading up to his accident, and he can't finish now due to his health. Jenkins's daughter, Kat, is a bit brash and hurries him along to collect his tools so they can leave. She tells Winnie on her way out not to believe anything Mac may have said.

John shares a meager update on Mrs. Maddingly simply saying she is alive and in and out of consciousness. He then confronts Winnie saying she is coming up with her whole theory of the ghost, the cloth, and Chutney because she doesn't want to face the facts. He points out that Winnie has still not opened and read his letter. He asks, "Is it to keep from admitting that the real story is done, Winnie?" (p. 237). John demands that Winnie read the letter aloud in front of him right then so he can know that she's heard the words. She refuses, so John reads it aloud instead. It reveals that they had travelled to Romania together in the past and slept together, but John severely regrets it. He says he misses her as a friend, but not as a lover. Winnie finally storms out with her things, telling John to handle his ghost as he will. He asks her to grapple with her ghost as well.

Winnie calls Adrian Moscou back in Boston the next day and asks him to go to her house, use the hidden spare key and code, and find/send her photocopies pages of Edward Rudge's letters.



When Winnie meets up with Irv again, he admits he visited Mrs. Maddingly at the hospital after Winnie told him about her at their dinner. They end up visiting Mrs. Maddingly together, and Irv has brought a tape recorder. Mrs. Maddingly is making guttural noises that Winnie initially thinks is choking, but Irv says he believes she is speaking medieval French. Irv guesses that Mrs. Maddingly is speaking to herself in English, and answering herself in Medieval French, perhaps as a schizophrenic episode. He said she seems to address herself by a name sounding like "Jersey." Irv plans to have some language experts listen to the tape recording. Winnie thinks Irv may be teasing her and trying to get her to believe that Mrs. Maddingly is possessed. Winnie stalks off, and while alone begins to think that the name "Jersey" could be related to the note on Mrs. Maddingly's mantel. Perhaps the note was a name similar to Jersey, like Gervasa.

Winnie heads to John's flat, after assuring he is not there, to pack her things in preparation to leave for good. Allegra shows up with two tiles; one has the crossed out cross that Winnie has been seeing everywhere, and the other has a large set of handprints imprinted on it. Allegra asks Winnie if she's broken into Allegra's apartments to create these tiles, and demands that Winnie put her hands in the prints to see if they fit. Winnie refuses and throws the tile into the wall, shattering it. Allegra accuses her of being mad. The two women eventually settle down, and Allegra even helps Winnie take her suitcases downstairs. They apologize to one another. Allegra admits she is not even seeing John anymore, and the two women end up going to jazz bar together to talk. Winnie tries to pump Allegra for information, she wants to know what John has said about her in the past, and if he told Allegra about Romania. Allegra refuses to say much and instead shares that her new boyfriend of a few months is Malcolm Rice, John's investment advisor.

As Winnie and Allegra are preparing to part ways after their drinks, Allegra spots a picture of a baby in Winnie's wallet and comments that it is cute. The story immediately transitions into Winnie's story of Wendy Pritzke to explain that Wendy (who readers now know is actually just a reflection of Winnie) and John were in Romania for Winnie to adopt a child. However, after being delayed by a horrible storm, they finally arrived at the house to pick up the child and were informed that the baby - along with seven others - died recently from exposure when their nanny died and let the fire go out.

Wendy ran out of the restaurant from Allegra and wandered the streets before deciding to visit Mrs. Maddingly at the hospital. Mrs. Maddingly looked frightened with Winnie arrived, and Winnie sat next to her and addressed - in a very low voice - the spirit, Gervasa, she thought may be possessing Mrs. Maddingly. Winnie told the spirit to leave Mrs. Maddingly alone and invited it to invade her own body. Winnie blacks out.

As Winnie is coming in and out consciousness, readers catch pieces of conversation around Winnie, revealing only bits of information at a time, but no faces to go with the voices. The information revealed through these overheard conversations is that Winnie's actual whole name is Winifred Wendy Rudge, and her married name had been Pritske. As Winnie drifts in and out of consciousness, she feels she is two people - herself and Gervasa. Some of Winnie's memories replay, revealing that little baby boy



she had gone to Romania to adopt was named Vasile. When Winnie finally wakes up, John is at her bedside. Winnie has a hard time talking, which she realizes is because the ghost, Gervasa, is inside of her and also able to control her body and voice. She asks for Irv, and the next time she awakens, Irv is there. He has his tape recorder and understands that Winnie is now sometimes talking in the old language Mrs. Maddingly had been speaking in previously. He takes Winnie's odd behavior (which is actually Gervasa interrupting Winnie's behavior) in stride, as he explains that Mrs. Maddingly had been speaking in first person as two people - herself and the archaic language - and constantly interrupting herself. He calls the 'person' speaking in the archaic language 'Gervasa' and explains that she mentioned a baby and says she was burned alive.

The package Winnie requested from Adrian Moscou arrives at the hospital, and Winnie asks Irv to read the copies of old letters. They are correspondence between her relatives discussing the relation between Ozias Rudge and Ebenezer Scrooge. When Irv is finished reading, Gervasa starts acting up within Winnie and the nurses make Irv and Allegra leave. Winnie wonders if Ozias Rudge had also been haunted/invaded by Gervasa, and if she is actually the shadowy figure depicted behind Ozias in the picture of him at John's flat.

When Winnie wakes next, Irv and Ritzi Ostertag are there. Irv explains that he'd had the tape recording of Winnie/Gervasa speaking analyzed and it was concluded that, just like Mrs. Maddingly, Winnie was speaking in first person as two people - herself, and someone from several hundred years ago. Irv's experts have deciphered that the second voice is a Catholic peasant accused of a crime against the church and who was burned at the stake. She was pregnant at the time and begged that her baby be taken from her belly and saved. She died before knowing if the baby survived, which is why she is still haunting people and telling her story. This makes Gervasa cry, using Winnie's eyes, and the nurse asks Irv and Ritzi to leave because they are upsetting Winnie.

When Winnie is alone again, she listens to the tape Irv recorded of her previously. He had accidentally recorded over some of it, recording his conversation with a linguist. It makes Winnie mad that he talked about her behind her back, so she decides to take the tape - along with her few belongings in the hospital room, and sneaks out of the hospital. She heads back to John's empty flat and up to the roof. Winnie and Gervasa seem to be communicating better, as Gervasa occasionally uses some English words. Winnie wants to know what Gervasa did to deserve being burned at the stake. She believes Gervasa must have killed someone, since she killed other cats when she was Chutney, and killed Chutney when she was Mrs. Maddingly. Winnie wants to know if Gervasa plans to kill someone while she is in Winnie's body. Determined to protect everyone she knows, Winnie runs to Rasia's apartment to warn her to get herself and children out and away from Winnie. Rasia thinks Winnie is crazy and hits Winnie with a skillet. Rasia's oldest daughter appears with a gun pointed toward Winnie. Winnie leaves and heads directly to the train headed to Paris.



Steve Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio Analysis

Readers are finally introduced to the character John in person, but he is much different from the picture Winnie has been painting of him thus far. Winnie has only reflected on him fondly, as her step-cousin and friend, someone she enjoys visiting with and gets along with when she can get along with so few others. However, John does not likely fall into favor with readers when he readily admits he's been avoiding Winnie and seems annoyed at her presence. He repeatedly accuses her of refusing to see reality and ignoring the facts. He insists she knows why he has avoided her, despite Winnie insisting that she does not know why. This causes readers to share in the confusion along with Winnie and perhaps begin second guessing Winnie's reliability as a character for the first time.

Some pieces start falling into place throughout the chapter, as Winnie becomes more and more exposed to the readers. Through John's letter, readers learn that the sexual tension between Winnie and her step cousin John is real, as they had slept together before in the past. Winnie had been married at the time, and John was traveling with her to Romania to pick up a child Winnie was adopting. On their way, they were trapped in a hotel for several days due to a severe storm and ended up drinking one night and sleeping together. John regretted it soon after, but Winnie appears to have had much stronger feelings for him and has been hanging on to those feelings for years, long after her marriage dissolved. John believes Winnie missed his note on purpose and invented the whole ghost theory just for an excuse to stay in London and see him. He admits he has been avoiding her purposely and would like to put the whole Romania incident behind them once and for all. He is clearly fed up with Winnie and feels he needs to be harsh to get through to her.

Winnie is also experiencing a possible romance blossoming with Irv. Irv is quite open about enjoying her company, wanting to see her again, and is open to the idea of a romance. Winnie repeatedly says she is not open to romance with Irv, and finds herself comparing him to John while they are out to dinner. Still, Winnie continues to meet up with Irv and is abnormally open and honest with him. This is quite telling, considering Winnie's prior displays of self protection by shutting people out and pushing them away. For example, she tells Adrien in this chapter, "You have no business liking me, you don't even know me. No one who knows me likes me anymore." (p. 242). There is something about Irv Winnie clearly likes and trusts, or at least wants to explore. Irv seems to genuinely care about Winnie. He goes out of his way to find out more about her, and be is there for her when it seems no one else is. As people stop supporting Winnie's theory of a ghost in the Rudge House one by one, she is eventually the only believer. Although Irv does not believe in ghosts, he stands by her and does not mock her for believing what she does. Irv tries to be open minded and find support from experts as to what is going on with the Rudge House, the family history, the cloth Winnie found behind the wall, and the strange voice coming from Mrs. Haddilngly and later from Winnie.

Readers have also likely come to realize that Winnie and her character Wendy seem to have a lot in common. Late in the chapter, it is revealed that Wendy is actually Winnie's



middle name, and Pritzke had been her married name. This confirms that the 'character' of Wendy Pritzke really is just a reflection of Winnie, a life Winnie has more control over and can make turn out the way she wants it to.

Winnie's character is split again when the spirit of Gervasa enters her body. Now, even Winnie doesn't always know which thoughts and words are her own, and which belong to someone else. She becomes frightened that Gervasa, disguised in Winnie's body, may hurt someone Winnie knows. Winnie shows her true colors when she risks her own life in an attempt to warn Rasia and her family that she may accidentally hurt them.



Stave Five: For the Time Being

Stave Five: For the Time Being Summary

While on the train, Winnie makes the other passengers uncomfortable by appearing to be talking to herself, but she is actually conversing with Gervasa. Gervasa is speaking more English now, and they can understand one another better. Gervasa explains she is caught between life and death and wants Winnie to exchange places with her.

Gervasa accuses Winnie of not wanting her own life anyway, as she was not really living it. Winnie argues that she just let herself go, or fall apart, after the Romania trip and loosing the baby. Her husband finally divorced her because after returning from Romania and the baby's death, she just went through the motions of life without really living it.

Gervasa does not relent and continually pressures Winnie to trade spots with her. Winnie believes she may have a better idea, but does not reveal it. After days of traveling into the countryside, Winnie and Gervasa finally arrive at their destination, Mont-Saint-Michel, an ancient holy ground. It is now very early morning in mid-December. A priest overhears Winnie speaking to herself inside of the chapel and recognizes the old French. He invites her to sit with him and knows that she is 'the woman with the spirit in her.' The priest touches her wrist and he soon as he lets go, Winnie starts to run to jump through a window, but a security guard tackles her to the ground. When she is allowed back up, Gervasa begins spouting off in her language. The priest tells Winnie he has called her 'family', who will be there in an hour.

The priest leads Winnie through the chapel toward a place they can speak and wait in private - away from the gawking tourists beginning to show up. Winnie notices some doors and asks if they could go through them and down the hallway. The priest explains that the doors lead to a crypt. Once inside the crypt, Winnie sees crosses etched into the walls all over. Gervasa finds a cross on the floor that had been crossed out, just like the symbol Winnie saw many times earlier in the book. The priest explains that the other graves in the crypt bear the sign of a mother and child who had both died - probably in childbirth. The one that Winnie/Gervasa pointed out however, is not the bad sign they think it is. It is a cross with a holly sprig on it; meaning the mother died, but the child survived. Winnie hopes this good news that Gervasa's child survived will free Gervasa and allow her to finally die, but she doesn't get the expected happy feeling from Gervasa. In fact, she feels almost nothing.

The priest leads Winnie back upstairs where John is waiting for her. John takes her back to London and to Mrs. Maddingly's hospital room, where Ritzi is waiting to help move Gervasa back into Mrs. Maddingly, so they can die together.

The book cuts ahead to a time in the future when Winnie is flying to Cambodia with a woman named Mary Lenahan Fogarty, who is adopting a Cambodian child. Although it is not spelled out directly in the ending, it is suggested that Winnie has found herself



again and is fully living her life, perhaps even considering adopting a child herself in the near future.

Stave Five: For the Time Being Analysis

This final section of the book contains the climax and resolution. The action is climaxing while Winnie and Gervasa travel across the countryside to Mont-Saint-Michel. Readers are held in high suspense, waiting to see what Winnie has planned for her and Gervasa. Will Winnie willingly trade places with Gervasa's spirit? Does Winnie plan to jump to her death at the holy ground? Does Winnie have a plan readers haven't foreseen yet? The narrator's description of Winnie climbing up the steep decent to Mont-Saint-Michel is symbolic of the plot also climbing to its highest point, the climax.

Once the priest has revealed to Winnie/Gervasa what the symbol of the crossed out cross actually means, Gervasa has found the answer to the question that has been haunting her, and John brings Winnie back to a place where she can be freed of Gervasa's spirit. This is the book's resolution. Readers are left on an open-ended note, where they can draw their own conclusions about what ultimately will happen to Winne, although the mood is much lighter and suggestive of a happy ending for Winnie.



Characters

Winifred Rudge

Winifred "Winnie" Rudge is the main character in *Lost*. She is an author of young adult books and travels to London to stay with her friend and step-cousin John Cormestor while working on a novel about a woman who is haunted by the ghost of Jack of Ripper.

Throughout *Lost*, Winnie frequently gets swept away in her imagination, and the narration is interrupted by Winnie's mental narration of the Wendy Pritzke book she is writing. As the novel wears on, it becomes clearer that the character of Wendy is just an extension of Winnie; their stories are increasingly similar until it is finally revealed to readers that Wendy is Winnie's middle name, and Pritzke had been Winnie's married name. Essentially, Winnie's current book project is her own autobiographical story.

Winnie was once married and about to adopt a child from Romania, but due to her illness, her husband couldn't accompany her. John accompanied her instead and they ended up sleeping together before arriving to pick up Winnie's adopted son a few days late due to a storm. She was informed upon arrival that the baby had recently died. Winnie also 'died' a sort of death on that trip, admitting that she returned to the States and continued with the motions of her life, but had no meaning behind it anymore. Her husband eventually divorced her over the 'emptiness' she exuded, and John also forced Winnie to recognize and admit it once he came back into the picture in *Lost*. Winnie comes across as a curmudgeon who holds everyone at arms length, despite obviously being lonely. She is repeatedly compared to the character Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickenson's 'A Christmas Carol.'

Winnie tries many methods of escape from her current reality. She tries to rewrite the story of her life with the Wendy Pritske novel; she tries to push people away; and she even considers trading places with a spirit to escape the mess that she's made of her life. Ultimately, Winnie faces her past and finds the strength and desire to fight her way back from death's door to live her life fully once again.

John Comestor

John Comestor is the stepcousin and old friend of Winnie Rudge. He lives in London at the Ridge House, works in shipping insurance, and is allegedly dating his neighbor Allegra Lowe. Although John is a main character in this book, he doesn't make a physical appearance until more than half way through. Once he is introduced in the flesh, readers may be surprised to see he and Winnie do not quite have the relationship Winnie portrayed. John admits to avoiding Winnie for weeks when she arrived in London and had hoped she would go on without him. When it becomes clear that she won't, John confronts Winnie and demands she face the facts and acknowledge the past for what it was. John reveals to readers that he and Winnie became intimate a few



years back when he had accompanied her to Romania to adopt her son. The romantic tryst left Winnie more in love with John than ever, but left John feeling quite ashamed and regretful. John recognized that Winnie could no longer see him as just a friend or a cousin, so he decided to use the tough love approach and make himself completely unavailable to her so she would get over him.

Although John is harsh with Winnie, it does not appear that he is being so just to be mean, but that he legitimately cares about her well-being. John is the first person at the hospital by Winnie's side when she blacks out after exhuming the spirit Gervasa from Mrs. Maddingly's body, and it is John who drives all the way into the country to claim Winnie at the Mont-Saint-Michel when she is about to lose the battle with Gervasa. By the end of the novel, it is clear that Winnie was not wrong to count John as one of her best friends.

Allegra Lowe

Allegra Lowe lives next to John Comestor and is considered his girlfriend for much of the novel. Winnie knows about Allegra and John's relationship, although they do not flaunt it. Winnie and Allegra have a very strong distaste for one another, due to competing for John's affection, and only try to hide it in shallow attempts of civility. Winnie repeatedly approaches Allegra for information on where John could and why he may be avoiding her. Allegra claims ignorance to everything related to John, although John later states he stayed at her place a few night upon returning to London from a business trip, while still trying to avoid Winnie.

Allegra makes impressions of children's hands in clay for a living. At one point, she finds two clay tiles that support Winnie's ghost theory, and Allegra accuses Winnie of breaking into her apartment to create the tiles. The argument that ensues ends up being the final blow up between the two women, and they finally apologize and go out for drinks together. Although Allegra will never be considered friends with Winnie, she does serve as an important catalyst for Winnie's journey toward growth and personal realizations throughout the novel.

Mrs. Maddingly

Mrs. Maddingly lives downstairs from John Comstor in the Rudge House and appears to be half crazy. She lives with multiple cats, which she is always talking about, and keeps post it notes all over her apartment to help her remember things. Mrs. Maddingly speaks almost lyrically, although nonsensical, and seems consumed with only a few trains of thought: remembering to take her pills, drinking, finding her cats, and assuring her husband will recognize her when she dies and joins him in the afterlife.

After appearing to have gone completely insane and cooking one of her cats in the oven, Mrs. Maddingly ends up being a host for the spirit of Gervasa, the ghost haunting the Ruge House. What appears initially to be Mrs. Maddingly babbling incoherently to herself is actually Mrs. Maddingly's personality constantly interrupting the spirit of



Gervasa, which is speaking another language through Mrs. Maddingly's mouth. In the end, it is Mrs. Maddingly who volunteers to take the spirit of Gervasa back from Winnie's body and bring it with her to the afterworld as Mrs. Maddingly is dying.

Wendy Pritzke

Wendy Pritzke is the main character of the novel that Winnie is working on within *Lost*. In her story, Wendy is in London and being haunted by the ghost of Jack the Ripper. It becomes apparent throughout *Lost* that Wendy's story is not as fictional as Winnie claims; it is actually a retelling of Winnie's own past. Wendy's story is used to reveal important pieces of Winnie's past to readers, such as her romantic tryst with John, her divorce from her husband, and the death of a baby she was set to adopt. Wendy is also discovered to be Winnie's middle name, while Pritzke was Winnie's married name.

Colum Jenkins

Colum Jenkins is the older of the two workers hired to work in John's kitchen. He is also Irish and learned his trade from his father. Jenkins does not talk much, but his work partner, Mac, gladly shares details of Jenkins' life with Winnie, much to Jenkins's chagrin. Mac shares that Jenkins's daughter is a prostitute and Jenkins does not know where to locate her. Jenkins searches for her on certain days each week.

Jenkins is spooked by the haunted sounds and events occurring in John's flat. He has a strong work ethic, which is the only reason he agrees to continue with the contract, despite wanting out of it. At one point, he crawled onto the roof of the Rudge House to look down the chimney pipe and see if he could discover what is making the noises, but he instead hears a voice in the chimney that startles him enough to fall off the roof and have he falls off the roof and have a seizure. While unconscious after the seizure, he dreams about his daughter - a prostitute - disappearing and being clawed up. Jenkins is brought to the hospital and does not appear in person again in the book.

Mac

Mac is the younger of the two workers John hired to work on his house, tearing out much of the kitchen. He is far more vocal about being spooked by the pounding noises coming from the wall, and would like out of the contract job. Mac takes a religious approach to explaining the odd things happening in John's flat, despite his partner, Jenkins, insisting Mac is not actually a religious person.

Adrian Spencer-Moscou

Adrian Spencer-Moscou and his partner, Geoff, attend the same Forever Families meeting as Winnie at the beginning of the novel. Adrian is the one who exposes Winnie for attending the group as a writer researching for her novel, rather than as someone



sincerely looking to adopt a child. Adrian calls Winnie several times throughout the rest of the book to apologize. He is a teacher and insists that his students read her books in class; he'd even like for her to come in as a guest speaker. Adrian also wants to meet Winnie for dinner, along with his partner Geoff. Toward the end of the novel, Adrian shows his loyalty to Winnie by mailing her the letters she requested from her home.

Rasia Kamadaly

Rasia Kamadaly is the upstairs neighbor to Allega. Rasia's husband has passed away, and she is raising their three children on her own now. Winnie visits Rasia one day to see if the thumping noise heard in John's kitchen could be coming from Rasia's closet, on the other side of the building wall. Winnie ends up staying for tea for an hour and unintentionally making Rasia feel comfortable enough with her to allow her to help clean out Rasia's husband's clothes from his closet to give to charity.

Rasia appears later in the story at the Tube station, where she runs into Winnie and Irv, but the meeting goes sour when Winnie sees the crossed out cross symbol in the henna decorating Rasia's hands and inquires about it. Rasia seems disturbed and annoyed by this and hastily continues on her way.

Toward the end of the novel, after Winnie's body has been invaded by the spirit of Gervasa, Winnie rushes into Rasia's apartment to warn her to take her children and leave so Winnie (really Gervasa) couldn't hurt them. Rasia seems to believe Winnie is crazy and kicks her out.

Ritzi Osertag

Ritzi Osertag is a clairvoyant whom Rasia visits to help her deal with her husband's death. Rasia takes Winnie to see Ritzi, in hopes that Ritzi can shed some light on what has been happening at John's flat. Ritzi initially speaks with a German accent, but it falls away as he begins reading Winnie's tea leaves. The accuracy of his reading unsettles Winnie; he points out that she is lonely. When Winnie asks Ritzi about the cloth found in the chimney at John's flat, Ritzi says it was the shroud of a woman who died, but he doesn't want Winnie to bring it over again, as it's 'too much' for him.

Ritzi is later brought to Mrs. Maddingly's hospital room to aid in the transformation of Gervasa's spirit from Winnie's body back to Mrs. Maddingly, so Gervasa can die with Mrs. Maddingly.

Irv Hausserman

Irv Hausserman is an American associate professor at the University of Pittsburgh, teaching Western medievalism, who is just visiting London. He first meets Winnie when at Ritzi's house, when Irv has come to buy some rare books from Ritzi. Irv ends up waiting on the corner outside Ritzi's house just to ask Winnie to coffee with him. Irv goes



to great lengths to learn more about Winnie and try to win her over, as he is attracted to her and would like to get to know her better. Despite her protesting, Winnie does seem to trust Irv quickly and open up to him a way she does not confide in any other characters. It is through her conversations with Irv that readers get to see a more vulnerable side of Winnie.

Irv also goes out of his way more than once to help Winnie solve her mystery of the Rudge House haunting. He gets in contact with fabric experts to analyze the shroud Winnie finds in the chimney, and he recruits language experts to help him decipher what has happened to Mrs. Maddingly and then Winnie when Gervasa's spirit was inside them and babbling in an ancient French language. If it were not for Irv, Winnie most certainly would have been written off as crazy, or perhaps even died.

Ozias Rudge

Ozias Rudge is Winnie's great-great-great-grandfather. He designed mine shafts, including one that collapsed and killed some miners. After that incident, Ozias moved to London and built the Rudge House, where he secluded himself for the rest of his life. Ozias was known for being a curmudgeon and claiming to be haunted by ghosts. The Charles Dickens character, Ebenezer Scrooge is believed (by the Rudge family) to be based off of Ozias Rudge.

Gervasa de Normandy

Gervasa de Normandy is the ghost who possessed first Chutney, then Mrs. Maddingly, then Winnie. Gervasa was a peasant from hundreds of years ago, accused of a crime against the church and burned at the stake. She was pregnant at the time and begged that her baby be taken from her belly and saved. She died before knowing if the baby survived, which is why she is still haunting people. She has been sequestered in the chimney stack at Rudge House, until Winnie lets her out. Winnie invites Gervasa into her body and helps Gervasa rest in peace after discovering that her child had survived.

Ebenezer Scrooge

Ebenezer Scrooge is an infamous curmudgeon from Charles Dickens's tale, "A Christmas Carol." Winnie's great-great-grandfather, Ozias Rudge, is believed (within her family at least) to have been Dickens's inspiration for Scrooge's character.

Jack the Ripper

Jack the Ripper is a serial killer from the late 1800s who disappeared without a trace, leaving one of the most famous unsolved murder mysteries of all time. Winnie is quite fascinated with Jack the Ripper, and is in London to visit Jack the Ripper tourist spots in



research for her latest book where Winnie's main character is haunted by the ghost of Jack the Ripper.

Chutney

Chutney is Mrs. Maddingly's cat that goes missing and Winnie helps Mrs. Maddingly look for. Winnie finds Chutney under a pile of dead cats and clothing. Chutney appears to attack one of the dead cats before running off and hiding. It is later revealed that Chutney had been possessed by the spirit of Gervasa when he attacked the other cat and Mrs. Maddingly eventually cooks Chutney in the oven in an attempt to get rid of the spirit Gervasa.

Mabel Quackenbush

Mabel Quackenbush is the Forever Families coordinator of the group Winnie Rudge attends. When she finds out Winnie is attending the meeting at the beginning of the book as research for her novel, instead for personal reasons, she asks Winnie to leave.

Ophelia Marley

Ophelia Marley is the pen name Winnie used for her novel "Dark Side of the Zodiac." It is also the name that she gives Irv Hausserman upon meeting him for the first time.

Dr. Annelise Berchestein

Dr. Annelise Berchestein is an expert in fabrics, specifically hemp, linen, or anything of leaf fiber. Irv Hausserman takes the shroud Winnie found in the chimney at John's flat to be analyzed. Dr. Berchestein estimates the shroud is 600-700 years old, preserved by the dry, airless, and lightless place that it was stored.

Kat Jenkins

Kat Jenkins is Colum Jenkins's daughter, whom is believed to be a prostitute the whole first half of the book. Jenkins searches for her, but cannot seem to find her. However, after Jenkins's accident at the Ruge House, Kat is at his side in the hospital. It appears she has kept an eye on her dad all along. She seems protective of her father when they return to the Rudge House together to tell John that Jenkins will not be finishing his contract and collects his tools.

Vasile Pritzke

Vasile Pritzke was the baby Winnie went to Romania to adopt, but he died before she arrived. Winnie was going to change his name to Basil Priske once she adopted him.



Objects/Places

Forever Families

Forever Families is a group of people who have experienced a loss of some kind and are now looking to adopt a child. Forever Families groups operate in nine states and the District of Columbia. The group Winnie attends at the beginning of the book is lead by Mabel Quackenbush and Winnie is only there as research for her latest novel.

Huxtable Street

Winnie, the main character, lives on Huxtable Street in Boston.

Boston

The novel begins in Boston where Winnie's house is located.

Ruge House

The Rudge House is in a quiet cul-de-sac on Holly Bush Hill in Hampstead. The Rudge House was built in the early nineteenth century by Winnie's great-great-great grandfather Ozias Rudge, then partitioned in the 1930s, so only the top floor flat remains in the family. The house is haunted throughout much of the story by the spirit of Gervasa.

London

Winnie travels to London to do further research on famous Jack the Ripper locations and plans to stay with her step-cousin, John Comestor, in the family Rudge House. Winnie has visited London on several previous occasions and sees it as a treasure trove for children's stories, as so many of her favorites took place in or around London.

Hurricane Gretle

The looming threat of Hurricane Gretle creates the dreary and spooky weather in Stave One of the story. It causes the power to go out on Winnie's house, and makes her flight to London longer and more treacherous than usual.



Shroud

Winnie is unsure what the cloth found in the chimney is or where it might have come from. She takes it to Ritzi Ostertag, who determines it was the shroud of a young lady; the last thing covering her body when she died. The shroud has a symbol on it, a cross with a zig zag through it, which Winnie has seen several other places in the Rudge House. Dr. Berchestein, an expert in cloths, estimates that the shroud is 600-700 years old, preserved by the dry, airless, and lightless place where it was stored.

Mont-Saint-Michel

Mont-Saint-Michael is an ancient holy ground consisting of a hill with a chapel on top. Mont-Saint-Michel was originally called Mont-Tombe, meaning both 'mound' and 'tomb'. In modern day it is still a chapel, but visited by many tourists daily. Winnie goes here after the spirit of Gervasa has entered her body and they discover that Gervasa's child did survive and life after Gervasa's death.

Dark Side of the Zodiac

Dark Side of the Zodiac is the most successful book Winnie has published, and has been her 'cash cow' she lived off of the next few years. Her royalties from this book are beginning to dwindle, making it necessary for Winnie to write another successful book.

A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickinson's classic tale, A Christmas Carol, stars a character named Ebenezer Scrooge, whom the Rudge family believes is based off of their relative Ozias Rudge.



Themes

Loneliness

The theme of Loneliness permeates the story in many places, particularly in regard to Winnie. Throughout the first section of the book, Winnie's character appears to be withdrawn and scornful toward others in order to keep them at arms length. She does not have any close friends, and despite putting up a brave front and claiming she does not need them, it quickly becomes apparent to readers that she is a lonely person. She compares herself to Ebenezer Scrooge on more than one occasion, and the comparison seems fitting, as he was also grumpy toward people because, ultimately, he was very lonely.

As the story progresses, readers learn just how lonely Winnie really is. She was once a successful writer, married, and planning to adopt a child. However, after the child she was to adopt died before she arrived, Winnie fell apart and became a hollow shell of herself acting out her daily duties with no emotion behind them. Her pulling back and inward ultimately destroyed her relationship with her husband, who claimed she had lost herself and he finally divorced her. Winnie also believes this is also why her step-cousin John pulls away from her in present time.

Winnie's loneliness is also seen in her willingness to spill her guts to Irv each time they go out, even though she barely knows him. Irv is the first person in the book to show genuine concern for Winnie's feelings, and despite her best efforts to shun him, she ends up embracing his kind attitude toward her.

Other characters exhibit loneliness as well. For instance, Rasia is initially rather rude to Winnie but soon ends up spilling her emotions about her husband who had died a few months earlier. Winnie is as comforting as she can pretend to be, but is clearly uncomfortable and still primarily focused on figuring out what is causing the knocking sound in the wall. As Winnie is leaving, Rasia makes the observation, "You know something of what it's like to miss your man, I can tell." Winnie does not appreciate this and leaves rather abruptly.

Mrs. Maddingly is also a prime example of loneliness. She clearly misses her husband dearly still, despite him expiring long ago. She talk about him constantly, reminds herself in notes to remember him, and worries about him being able to recognize her when she dies and joins in him heaven. Mrs. Maddingly lives with several cats, perhaps to quell her loneliness and longing for a bond with another living being. Winnie feels compelled to help Mrs. Maddingly, or at least visit her and humor her by listening to her ramblings.

Escape From Reality

Winnie uses a few different methods to regularly escape from reality. Sometimes she hides behind a false identity, such as Opal Marley or Wendy Pritzke, but most often she



simply loses herself in literature. Winnie's broad knowledge of literature provides her with ample amounts of other people's words, which she can pluck from and apply to almost any situation she finds herself in, rather than having to face her own feelings and thoughts. Although Winnie seems to prefer poetry for describing her feelings in certain situations, she also frequently refers to classic tales from children's literature, like *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*. Her opinion of these tales, however, is clearly jaded. In *Stave Two*, Winnie reflects on how wonderful *Alice in Wonderland* was when it first came out in the 1860s because children living in the extremely strict environment of the Victorian Era thrived on the nonsense of the story. However, children today do not enjoy the story because they already live in a world of nonsense with things like acid rain, cancer and other diseases, parents who lie, children who murder, "And faces of missing children staring out from milk cartons - imagine all those poor Lost Boys and Lost Girls, not in Neverland but lost here, lost now. No wonder *Wonderland* isn't funny to read anymore: We live there full-time. We need a break from it." (p.58).

Ritzi Ostertag, John, and Irv all ask Winnie to 'stay with them' instead of getting lost in her mind. Each time Winnie is lost in her mind, she is writing the story of Wendy Pritzke. Readers are taken from the current reality to Wendy's story with little warning - just a change in font. It may take a few trips between the current action and Winnie's mind where Wendy's story is being written before readers clearly understand what is happening. Whenever there is a new discovery in Winnie's life, she reverts to the story of Wendy and adds another plot twist. She even uses the Wendy story as an excuse to visit John in London again, but then she is too busy working on the story to hear and accept John's true feelings about her. Gradually, it becomes clear how similar the two stories really are; Winnie is using the story of Wendy to help face her own past and subsequent feelings.

Mrs. Haddingly is another character escaping from reality, although she chooses different methods from Winnie. Mrs. Haddingly is lonely and misses her dead husband terribly. To cope with this loneliness, Mrs. Haddingly drinks all day long, takes multiple medications, and obsesses over her cats. Later in the story, it is hard for the other characters to understand or recognize when the spirit of Gervasa has taken over Mrs. Haddingly's body, and then Winnie's, because both women were already so prone to escaping reality that other characters thought their current odd behavior may be just another way to do so.

Things Are Not As They Seem

The theme of *Things Are Not As They Seem* is found around every turn in the later half of the novel. First, the main character is not at all who she is originally depicted as. Throughout the first few sections of the book, Winnie is portrayed as a hopeless curmudgeon, determined to keep to herself and find something to complain about with regards to anything or anyone. Readers are left to wonder why she is so embittered. Gradually, Winnie's personal history is revealed; she was once married and set to adopt a child, but her husband was unable to accompany her across seas on the adoption trip, and the baby died before she arrived. She ended up sleeping with her stop cousin



on this trip, and her husband divorced her after Winnie could not get over the heartbreak of losing the adopted child. This strongly suggests Winnie did not always prefer being alone, and had even hoped to expand her family and care for a child, but the unfortunate outcome of this trip provides good explanations for her callous attitude when readers meet her.

The relationship between Winnie and John is also not as it initially seems. Winnie presents John to readers as not only her step-cousin, but her one true friend. Someone she is comfortable bouncing ideas off of and just being herself around. However, when Winnie arrives in London to stay with John, but he is nowhere to be found the reader's curiosity may be peaked. Where is this wonderful friend? How could he miss Winnie's arrival? After weeks of worrying about John's well-being, Winnie finally locates him in a local bar and learns he certainly was avoiding her intentionally. At this point, readers know there is more to this relationship than originally presented. A letter from John to Winnie - which he insists on reading aloud to her to assure she acknowledges its words - explains that they had had a romantic tryst during a storm when he had accompanied her to Romania to adopt her son. Winnie had clearly enjoyed the romance and continues to have romantic feelings for John, while John deeply regrets it and feels it was inappropriate. He knows Winnie's true feelings toward him and therefore feels they need to end their friendship too since she cannot be 'just friends.'

The haunting of the Rudge House is perhaps the most obvious example of things not being what they seem. At first, Winnie tries to explain away the strange sounds and occurrences in the house by using logic. However, after witnessing unexplainable events, such as the nails drawing themselves back into the wall or the painting of Ozias/Scrooge seeming to change, Winnie gives up on logic and accepts that the house has a spirit. As Winnie's history slowly leaks out, however, readers are less likely to depend on her to not exaggerate a story for the sake of literature, and may even question her sanity. Winnie wins out in the end, and readers are jerked back into a world where the paranormal does exist, when an actual spirit joins the cast of characters, bringing the plot to its climax.

Style

Point of View

Lost is written in the third-person point of view, which is a common and flexible narrative mode. The third-person narrative means characters are referred to as 'he', 'she', 'they', etc., but never as 'I' and 'we' (first person) or 'you' (second person). The narrator of Lost is never named and is not a character within the story, so a non-biased and clear account of the story is presented. Readers do not have to wonder if the narrator is trying to trick or mislead them with a red herring, nor would the narrator have a personal agenda of any sort.

Narration in Lost is subjective and limited, as Winnie is the character followed most closely and the only character whose thoughts are shared with readers. In other words, readers do not know things that Winnie has not yet learned. This type of narration greatly attributes to the suspense in Lost. By readers having to find out the facts along with Winnie, they are encouraged to do some detective work along with her.

Setting

Lost begins in Winnie's hometown, Boston, Massachusetts. A feeling of unrest is created with the opening scene of a car accident and a storm preludeing a hurricane. Winnie then attends a depressing Forever Families meeting of people suffering various losses in a dank basement with old coffee. After being asked to leave, she heads home in the storm to an empty house without electricity and a clock stuck on the time "00:00," which Winnie believes looks like the noise, "Oooooo!" These opening scenes foreshadow a depressing, lonely, and spooky experience.

The bulk of the novel takes place in London, described both as a happy memory for Winnie because of its association with so many of her favorite childhood stories like Peter Pan, but also as a dark place where real-life villains, like Jack the Ripper conducted his dirty work of murdering young women. A great deal of the rising action takes place in or around the Rudge House, located in a quiet cul-de-sac on Holly Bush Hill in Hampstead. When Winnie arrives, the house is missing it's main tenant, partially torn apart by workers, and the furniture is covered in sheets for protection from the construction. The storm following the hurricane continues for much of the book, adding to the eerie feeling created by the mysterious noises heard within the house and the eventual unexplainable events. The setting accurately reflects the feelings of loneliness and uneasiness felt by the main character, Winnie.

Language and Meaning

The language in Lost has a broad range. The author, Gregory Maguire, has a Ph.D. in English and American Literature, as evidenced by the extremely large vocabulary of



words bound to be new to high schoolers reading this book. Maguire uses a bounty of descriptive words to provide fresh descriptions to otherwise familiar stories, places, or objects. Maguire also uses his knowledge of American literature to make Winnie's character, as a writer and well-read individual, believable. Winnie eloquently quotes a variety of poets and famous American writers throughout the novel.

Maguire is also the co-founder and co-director of Children's Literature New England, as well as a board member of the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance. His experience with and knowledge of children's literature is also put to use in *Lost*, as Winnie's professional is an author of children and young adult books. Winnie and the narrator frequently make references to children's stories, like *Peter Pan* and *Alice and Wonderland*, through metaphor and comparison.

Despite the heavy influences of educated language, the characters are realistic in their speech; when they are mad or upset, they yell and swear. Even the more educated characters do not hesitate to use vulgarity when addressing a subject they are passionate about.

Structure

Lost is divided into five staves, which means a verse or stanza of a poem or song. This is an appropriate heading for the book sections, instead of chapters or parts because both the author and main character are writers and extremely educated on literature and poetry; it seems fitting that a poetic title should be applied to how the book is sectioned. The title of each staff is simply the first few words in the first sentence of each staff, but those words always make a complete phrase. Unlike some chapter titles, reading the staff titles before the book does not give away anything that will happen in the plot.

The staves vary in length: Staff One is 36 pages, Staff Two is 70 pages, Staff Three is 74 pages, Staff Four is 112 pages, and Staff Five is 34 pages. Staff One introduces the main character, Winnie, sets up the setting as spooky and headed to London, where most of the plot will take place. Staff Two introduces the main problem, or mystery: what has happened to Winnie's step-cousin John, and is the Rudge House haunted? The plot continues rising in Staff Three, introducing more key characters and beginning to solve one mystery - John is alive. Staff Four reveals the most information; readers find out why John's been avoiding Winnie, as well as a great deal of Winnie's past, which helps understanding of her character. With one mystery resolved, the mystery of the haunted house remains. Staff Five is the climax and resolution of the plot.



Quotes

"She harvested the details; that was what she was good at. That was all she was good at." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 5).

"Don't diagnose reason, greed, or pain, she corrected herself: simply observe the symptoms." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 8).

"'I'm a humbug, if that's what you mean,' she went on, trying to be honest, thought it wasn't her strong suit." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 12).

"So who would you choose to be haunted by, in your wildest fantasies?" (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 17).

"Like many who make their living exploiting the public's appetite for magic, she was a stone-hearted rationalist." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 20).

"She couldn't get it out of her mind that something was there in her house with her, though each room seemed to be filled only with her empty life." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 23).

"The only Dickens that had ever really appealed to Winnie Rudge was "A Christmas Carol." Partly the family legend, to be sure, but also it was the Dickens story most like a children's book." (Stave One: Somebody Else in the Vehicle, p. 30).

"The chronic fun of writing, the distraction of it, was not knowing." (Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk, p. 41).

"Beware your childhood reading, Winnie said to herself: There is no Narnia in the wardrobe, there is no monkey's paw with a third and damning wish to grant. You live in a world with staving Eritrean refugees and escaping smallpox viruses and third-world trade imbalances and the escalating of urban violence into an art form. You don't need the magic world to be really real; that would be a distraction." (Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk, p. 57).

"It was true, the pounding was gone, but the silence itself was eerie, like the running down of a clock timing something urgent." (Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk, p. 86).

"One only needed a mission, that was all, and Jenkins had this mission. It was how he got through: committing himself to something impossible."
Stave Two: At the Flat in Weatherall Walk, pp. 104

"Come back here, " said Ritzi Ostertag sternly. Winnie jumped. "Don't go hiding in someone else's mind, " he said." (Stave Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney, p. 152).



"Nothing is Connected. Nothing makes sense. I am not getting through anywhere."
(Stave Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney, p. 184).

"I can tell that making fun of people is your professional strength and your living grave."
(Stave Three: From the Chimney Inside the Chimney, p. 185).

"And what you have done to me is a betrayal. Pure and simple. Save me from myself? Who are you to save me from anyone? You are my cousin and my friend. You've behaved like neither." (Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio, p. 195).

"I saw nothing but ghostly presence and human absence." (Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio, p. 196).

"That's the definition of not being haunted, by the way: being able to live in the moment without having either to oust for the future or to dread it."
(Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio, p. 221).

"A house gives up its ghosts every time some window is punched out, some molding is removed, some faded wallpaper is stripped or painted over."
(Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio, p. 255).

"Winnie was beginning to think of Gervasa as her inner ghoul, half tomcat, half tomboy."
(Stave Four: As Dante in the Purgatorio, p. 283).

"I have no further death possible without you. And you are not living your life. You know it. You don't want your life. You've turned your back on it."
(Stave Five: For the Time Being, p. 307).



Topics for Discussion

A major theme in *Lost* is Loneliness. Compare and contrast at three different characters and how they exhibit loneliness differently. What is the root cause of their loneliness? How do they react to their loneliness? Are they aware that they are lonely or do they project it onto some other emotion or belief?

Winnie and Allegra make no bones about the fact that they do not care for one another. The only thing they seem to have in common is John. Compare and contrast these two female characters. Why don't they like one another? Would they get along if John was not in the picture? How are they similar? How are they different?

Research the author's, Gregory Maquire, education, and involvement in literature. What theme do you notice a theme in his genre of books? How does *Lost* comply to that theme? How does the author's educational and professional background influence the characters, plot, and writing style of *Lost*?

John is a main character in *Lost*, although he does not appear in person until more than half way through the novel. What do you think of this writing technique? Was John what you expected when he finally appeared? Where did you think John was prior to Winnie finally finding him?

Throughout the book, the men in Winnie's past and present are revealed to the reader. Compare and contract what you know about her relationship with her ex-husband, her step-cousin John, and Irv Hausserman. What sort of relationship does Winnie have with each man? Do the men have anything in common? What does each man offer Winnie? What might Winnie offer each man?

Winnie uses a few different alter-egos throughout the novel. What false names does she provide to people? Is there anything significant about each of those names? Why do you suppose Winnie is so adverse to giving out her real name when she meets new people?

Compare and contrast Winnie with Ebenezer Scrooge. What do these two characters have in common? How do they differ? Does Winnie think she is similar to Scrooge in any way?