

A Shining Affliction: A Story of Harm and Healing in Psychotherapy Study Guide

A Shining Affliction: A Story of Harm and Healing in Psychotherapy by Annie G. Rogers

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Plot Summary

The novel "A Shining Affliction: A Story of Harm and Healing in Psychotherapy" details the parallel healing of an emotionally troubled young boy and his intern therapist. In this book Annie Rogers told her experience as her work with Ben first brought about her own mental breakdown and then the freedom of self-healing. This book pointed out the ability of psychotherapy to both hurt and to heal.

As the book opened, Annie had just started a doctoral internship at Glenwood, a residential and day treatment center for emotionally disturbed children. Ben, one of the children with whom she has been assigned to work, has a background of abuse as well as abandonment by his birth mother. Annie and Ben got along well during their sessions. Annie was able to easily interpret the boy's actions and emotions and properly react to his leads. Even as Annie was attempting to help heal Ben, Annie began to experience mental issues of her own. These issues became so bad that Annie had to be hospitalized.

After she recovered enough to leave the hospital, Annie began to work with Dr. Blumenfeld, a new psychoanalyst. As they worked together, they uncovered a background of abuse hidden in Annie's own life. Both her father and mother had been abusive to Annie, leaving her confused about love and attachment. Once Annie was able to come to terms with these memories, the voices she had heard all of her life were finally silenced and Annie felt alive. Blumenfeld also helped Annie to overcome a disastrous relationship with Annie's former therapist.

Even while she was still overcoming her own mental issues, Annie used her experience in healing to help Ben, her patient at Glenwood. During her internship, Annie was not only able to make a strong emotional connection with Ben, but also to leave the boy at the end of her year-long internship without destroying him. Through their relationship, both Annie and Ben are able to use their own abusive backgrounds to help heal each other.



Part 1, Chapters 1-5

Part 1, Chapters 1-5 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 1, Annie wrote about being in a library. She dropped a stone into her pocket and then began to look through her references. As she walked down one of the aisles of the university library, she encountered a child. The girl, thought to be about five or six, gestured toward a book written in Latin that was on a shelf too high above her head to reach. As Annie attempted to speak to the child, the child disappeared into a circling cloud of dust motes in the light. Although Annie searched the library and grounds for the child, she was nowhere to be found. Annie wrote about this experience that she believed this child was an angel, unable to stay too long in the light she created on the earth.

This first chapter was written almost with the quality of a dream. It was unsure whether the child really existed or not. Annie believed her to be an angel or a messenger. It could be that Annie was creating a memory of herself as child or that she was having an encounter with one of her alter personalities. Notice that in this first chapter there are the beginnings of two themes that would thread through the remainder of the novel. One of these themes was the theme of angels. The other was the theme of words or speech. For instance, Annie longed to speak to the girl but could not find the words.

In Chapter 2, Annie briefly described Glenwood, the institution where she was completing an internship for her doctorate program. Her patient was named Ben. This five-year-old boy was at first silent, then ran around the room collecting toys with which to play. As he put together train tracks, he told Annie there would be a fire and explosion. He pulled out Tinkertoys telling Annie they would protect him. He then pretended the Tinkertoys were shots that Annie must give him. As he ran around the room a second time, Ben turned out the light, then turned it back on. As his actions became more erratic, Annie noticed his lack of focus. She admitted to herself that she had no idea how to respond to Ben. Ben did not stay to clean up the playroom, he preferred to rejoin his class.

As Annie tried to interpret Ben's actions, she noticed foremost that he was afraid. She felt his haphazard actions indicated he was running from bad memories, looking for someone to keep him safe. Perhaps the most important aspect to note in this chapter is the idea that Annie wrote that she did not know how to work in the dark. This phrase referred not only to the physical darkness that came when Ben turned off the light, but also the intellectual darkness of being completely unaware of what Ben has experienced as a child.

After her first visit with Ben, Annie looked at his file. Although information in this file informed her he was very intelligent, it also indicated he has been diagnosed as suffering with oppositional personality disorder. Ben's birth mother abandoned him when he was six weeks old. He lived with two foster families before being adopted by Kate



and Charles Brinker. Next, Annie met with Mary Louise Sweeny, the lady who was her on-site supervisor.

In Chapter 3, Annie prepared to meet with her second supervisor, Dr. Rachael Sachs. As she entered the building where Rachael's office was located, Annie's attention was drawn to a girl being drug by her father into the building. Annie was "enchanted" by the girl's attempt to keep from entering the psychoanalytic institute. As Annie sat in the waiting area, she remembered her own discovery of psychoanalysis. She remembered Saturday mornings spent at the library pouring over books and exploring this field. It was at this moment that Annie recognized her fear of working with patients of her own.

Once inside Rachael's office, the elderly lady offered Annie a piece of hard candy. She then put on a pair of bedroom slippers. She requested Annie read her notes about her time with the children out loud. As Annie finished her reading Rachael commented that she had much to learn from Annie. Rachael encouraged Annie to trust herself. Although Annie recognized her ideas about psychoanalysis were different from Rachael's, she sensed the older lady had respect for her differing ideas. Rachael told Annie she wanted no monetary payment for her supervisory services, only the opportunity to learn from Annie.

At the end of this section Annie included a chapter that gave the reader some idea about the direction the book was about to take. Annie wrote that until the details of the cases she was covering came too close to her own life, She was careful to write about her meetings with the children in detail. This nugget of information gave the reader some idea that Annie was carrying some painful emotional baggage of her own.

In Chapter 4, Ben accepted Annie's key and opened the door of the playroom for her. He threw toys around as in their first meeting before picking up the game of Sorry. Ben played this game with Annie, but played by his own rules and cheated so that he won. When Annie commented that Ben cheated, Ben began throwing toys. As Annie wondered what to do, her thoughts are interrupted by an upset child running into the door of the playroom. Ben appeared upset by the distraction and began to paint. He painted a bird with its tail on fire, and then blacked the bird out. He asked Annie not to distract him. Ben then began to act like a dog and Annie interpreted his feelings. Finally, Ben gave Annie a gift of six marbles transferred to her hand from his mouth.

After Annie described her session with Ben, she then shared with her reader her impressions of their session. Annie interpreted that Ben tried to control the adults around him by being out of control. Annie believed it was during this session that she made her first emotional contact with Ben, first by guessing his emotions while he was playing puppy dog, then by allowing him to be himself. Annie explained that her technique while observing Ben's play was to listen with a third ear. She noticed Ben's word choice, his tone, gestures and movements. Annie explained in the book that she must not allow herself to bring any preconceived ideas about Ben to the sessions. By doing this, she would not allow Ben to tell her what was really wrong with him.



In Chapter 5, Annie painted alone in her apartment and thought over her session with Ben. She mimicked his painting of the bird. The same bird, she wrote, gave her a blow similar to that one suffered by Ben. She went to the window and watched as a crying bird flew out of the bushes away from her home.



Part 1, Chapters 6-10

Part 1, Chapters 6-10 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 6, Ben and Annie played outside during their next session. Ben suggested they play bear cub. He told Annie he was a baby bear whose mother was killed. Ben ran between two bushes and Annie heard him whimpering. When she went to find him Annie discovered Ben had cut his lip. Annie picked Ben up and laid him on the grass. She sewed up a "wound" over his heart. As she cared for him, Ben asked Annie not to leave him. As their session ended Ben asked Annie if they could play bear cub again.

For the next three weeks however, Ben refused to see Annie. Annie believed this was because during his play as the bear cub Ben let her into his own painful drama. Through the story of the mama and baby bear, Ben acted out his abandonment by his birth mother. Annie thought it was because Ben had come so close to telling Annie his real story that he had not returned to his sessions.

In Chapter 7, Annie tried to encourage Ben to come for his next session. Although he would not come, Annie promised to save his time for him. Annie noticed Ben watching her when he saw her on the school grounds. However, he did not speak to her nor did he respond to her in any way. Annie worried that she was not making the right decision by not forcing Ben to see her. In her gut though, Annie felt her decision to respect Ben's emotions and give him the distance he needed was the right decision.

Annie decided to use the time while Ben would not see her to learn all that she can about his past. Ben's mother, Kate Brinker, met with Annie during this time. Kate admitted to Annie that she and her husband felt overwhelmed by Ben's aggressive behavior. At night Ben must be confined to his bed in order to keep from hurting himself or destroying the house. Kate told Annie Ben was eighteen months old when they first met Ben. Ben did not like to be held or cuddled. At the age of four, Ben was misdiagnosed as being autistic. Kate told Annie that she does not sound like the other therapists that she and Ben have seen. At Annie's request, Kate told Annie about Ben's various hospital stays. One time she remembered he returned from the hospital with worse behavior than he had when he was admitted. Kate told Annie she believed Annie would be able to help Ben.

Annie also met with Ben's psychiatrist. This psychiatrist believed play therapy would not help Ben. Annie did not find what she learned about Ben, either from his teachers or others who are in close contact with him, very encouraging. He had a short attention span and often tried to hurt himself and others. During this time Annie came to the conclusion that Ben was attempting not only to ward off human contact but also attachment to others. Finally, one day Ben approached Annie and asked when she would see him again.



In Chapter 8, Ben attended his next session with Annie. Ben first asked about the puppet Tea Bags, and then made a paper airplane. He tried to take half Annie's tablet of paper but Annie negotiated with him to take only one sheet. Ben asked to paint on magic paper, which was colored construction paper. He commented on how the colors of the paint and the paper mix. Ben got angry when he got paint on his hand. He asked Annie to wash the paint off then declared Annie was magic when she did so. Ben next played baby and asked Annie to cover him up with a blanket. Finally, Ben made a barbell out of Tinkertoys and pretended first not to be able to lift it, then showed that he could lift it. Annie interpreted Ben's play as telling her that sometimes he believed he was strong and sometimes weak.

It was in this section that the theme of magic first appeared. For instance, Ben referred to the construction paper magic paper. He told Annie she was a magic lady because she was able to wash the paint off his hands with a sponge. Annie included in her impressions of her time with Ben that he also indicated that he was magical. He believed that if the magic left the playroom, he could bring it back by waving his wand. Ben also wanted to be dressed up as or turned into magical characters.

In Chapter 9, Annie wrote that she continued to dream of a black bird. Her dreams also include a barn, breaking ice and a face under the ice. She also dreamed of angels. Although Annie has begun to notice that she has the feeling that the world was too alive, she does not mention the trouble she has been experiencing to any of her friends.

In Chapter 10, Ben asked Annie to paint with him during his next session. They painted a barn with a horse and hay. Ben told Annie she was not all grown up yet. She is surprised when Ben teased her as they wash paint brushes at the sink. As they continued their sessions, Annie noticed that although he has been labeled as hyperactive and oppositional, he was able to behave in a focused manner in her meetings with him. Annie was troubled that Ben's behavior with her was so different from his behavior in other settings.



Part 1, Chapters 11-16

Part 1, Chapters 11-16 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 11, Annie joined her classmates in presenting their cases to the class. Darrell, an extremely bright student, was presenting his case study this particular day. Although Darrell used the right words and has diagnosed his patients, Annie wrote that she did not think he was having much success with this particular case. As she listened to the professor and students talk about Mrs. A's case, she got the feeling that if Mrs. A were listening to the discussion she would not recognize herself by the terms they are using. As Annie drove home after the session, she noted that she felt "out of sync" with the clinical discussion to which she had just listened.

In Chapter 12, Ben brought an angel costume to his next session with him. Instead of showing it off right away, however, he first shouted that he did not want any Thanksgiving turkey. After this announcement, he showed Annie the brightly colored angel wings. When he tried to put his wings on for Annie, Ben put his arm through the wing and tore it. When Annie tried to comfort him, he lashed out, banging his head against the wall and trying to run away. As Annie tried to hold the fearful boy he bit her and banged his head against the floor. One bite broke the skin. When Annie cried out in pain, Ben apologized for biting her but continued to struggle. As Ben began to calm down, Annie reassured him that she still liked him and that they would continue to meet. After she took Ben back to class, Annie sat in her office and cried, feeling Ben's pain.

When Annie reviewed the session, she realized Ben was already upset when he entered the playroom. This coupled with his anger when he tore the wing on his angel costume was too much for him to cope with. She also realized that if Ben had not been trying to hurt himself, she would not have held him tightly. This act of holding the boy seemed to Annie that it finally allowed the true extent of his pain to break through to the surface.

In Chapter 13, Annie wrote of being sick in bed when one of the bites from Ben became infected. Although she did not have the energy to paint, she had two portraits painted in her mind. One was of the shoe and sock of a girl made to sit in a hard wooden chair as a punishment. The other is the archangel Michael fighting with girl Annie saw in the parking lot of the psychiatric institute. When Annie finally slept, she dreamed of running down a dark hall with a tight band on her arm, then of her hands when she was a child.

In Chapter 14, Annie has set out a plate of animal crackers to greet Ben during their next meeting. Despite the treat, Ben seemed uncomfortable in the office. After Annie explained the "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door and ate an animal cracker, Ben decided he wanted to make a skeleton costume. As she reviewed her session with Ben, Annie came to the realization that Ben was able to both give and receive help during their play together. She reported that during the remainder of her time with Ben there was never



another episode like the one with the angel wings. Improvement was even seen in his self-abusive behavior both at home and at school.

In Chapter 15, Annie awoke from a bad dream and walked into her study. In this room she encountered the smell of blooming paper-whites. Annie described the smell of the flowers as a burning smell. Annie wonders where Ben was when it was decided his first foster home was abusive. When she woke up the next morning, Annie could not remember her question about Ben. As she cleaned off the windshield of her car the quote "what you fear most has already happened" came to Annie and she remembered her question.

For two weeks Annie repeatedly called the Division of Children and Family Services until finally she was given the information she needed. For nearly the first eighteen months of his life Ben lived alone, locked in a small room without windows. There was a fire in the house and Ben was not found until after the fire was put out.

In Chapter 16, Ben used a red stick to put magic back in the room during his next meeting with Annie. Ben and Annie then made a clown costume together. As Annie watched Ben make Christmas ornaments, she got a vision of the baby Ben trapped in a smoky room. Annie fought to hold back tears as Ben asked her which ornament she wants to keep. Annie thought to herself that Ben probably did not remember his experience with the fire. Annie wondered, though, why Ben would often tell her that he never got hurt. It was at this point that Annie shared with her reader that Ben often put himself in dangerous situations, as if he really believed he could not be hurt. Annie wrote that in this session Ben had tried to come to terms with the idea of being hurt in two ways. First, he associated becoming a clown as being a magic way to remove his hurt and suffering. Second, when Ben asked if putting on the clown costume would hurt, it was his way of telling Annie that he realized he could be hurt. When Annie got home that night, she threw away the paper-whites. Their burning smell apparently brought to mind the memory of Ben too clearly for her to stand any longer.



Part 1, Chapters 17-21

Part 1, Chapters 17-21 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 17, Annie was surprised when Mary Louise announced early one morning that she had a letter for her. When Annie saw the return address listed the name of Dr. Michael Connelly and Associates, she panicked. Annie was surprised when Mary Louise told her the doctors in that groups enjoyed her test reports. She had been performing psychiatric tests on children at Glenwood as well as seeing some children in therapy. Annie wrote that she took care in writing up the test results because she knew these results could affect the remainder of the child's life. Although Annie wrote that she did make suggestions in her reports, she also tried to give alternate explanations for a child's test scores. For instance, if the child appeared stressed or unfocused during testing, she would note this in her report. Annie had also developed the practice of meeting with these children and talking to them about their test results.

In this section, Annie shared an important fact about herself. She had been a patient of Dr. Connelly. The fact that Annie had undergone psychiatric treatment in the past was alluded to in her interest of the girl being forced to enter the psychiatric institute. It has also been foreshadowed in Annie's relationship with and special connection to Ben. In fact, she wrote at one point that the same black bird that had touched Ben's life had also touched hers. Now with this brave statement, Annie allowed her reader to know for sure that she also had suffered with psychiatric troubles. Note, however, that those with whom Annie worked apparently did not know about her past since the letter at first caused her fear.

In Chapter 18, Ben and Annie had a confrontation over a spring Ben finds in the playroom. While they are playing a game together, Ben stuck the end of his finger with the spring. Ben told Annie he wanted to keep the spring. Annie replied he couldn't because it might hurt him. Although Ben continued to try to persuade Annie into letting him keep the spring, Annie was firm in her insistence that it could hurt him. Annie wrote later in her notes that she believed that had she let Ben keep the spring, it would have betrayed his trust in her.

Later, as Annie thought about her rewarding day, she tried to ignore the feeling that her life was not whole. She wrote that she felt that her actual past will one day catch up with her. Along with the reader's new knowledge that Annie had psychiatric treatment in the past, this final paragraph gave the reader the feeling that Annie had a past of which she was either ashamed or not fully aware. Annie wrote that she has worried that her divided life would eventually catch up with her. In many ways, these feelings speak to the stigma that surrounds psychiatric treatment. Although there should be no shame associated with getting help with a problem, unfortunately this was not the case when it came to psychiatric problems.



In Chapter 19, Annie wrote about her visit with her own therapist, Melanie. Melanie and Annie were talking about Annie's inability to be intimate with people. Although Annie knew she did have the ability to be intimate, she did not mention this to Melanie. When Annie did try to be honest with her therapist, she got the feeling Melanie was not happy with her honesty. Melanie accused Annie of never being in contact with her. When Annie made up a memory of her mother, Melanie leaned forward in interest. As Annie lied to Melanie in order to hold her interest, she realized how separated the different components of her life were becoming. However, she didn't think to mention these disconnections to her therapist.

In Chapter 20, Annie described her last visit with Ben before the Christmas break. Before their visit Ben had picked a fight with an older boy. Annie had brought him a cupcake as a Christmas treat. They then made him a Santa costume. Ben next pretended to be Santa bringing gifts to Annie. Although Annie pretended to be delighted with the gifts Santa brought her, Ben lost interest in that game and walked around the playroom looking for a toy that Annie would let him take home. When Annie asked Ben what he wants from her, he requested that she make something for him. When Annie realized Ben was looking for confirmation that he will be coming back to her, she showed him the calendar and pointed out when they would see each other again.

On this same day, Annie has her last meeting with Rachael. Rachael fixed tea and served cookies to Annie. Annie wrote that it felt as if she was with her grandmother. Annie and Rachael talked about Annie's last session with Ben, his desire to take a toy from the playroom home with him, in specific. Although Annie was unable to put into words why using the calendar was an excellent way to demonstrate the idea that their relationship would continue, Rachael explained to her why the concept worked so well. When Rachael told Annie that she was good at being a child therapist, Annie wanted to cry. Rachael told Annie she believed good things would come out of Annie's work with Ben. Although Annie does not realize it at the time, Rachael's prediction is accurate for both Ben and Annie as well.

In Chapter 21, although Annie complained of being tired, she rode with her sister after Midnight Mass to look at Christmas lights. Shortly after Christmas, Annie attended a research workshop at Harvard University. On one of the days of the workshop, Annie wrote a poem to Ben. Afterward, she walked along the streets of Cambridge looking at the women and getting a strange sense that she had just walked into her own life. Annie had taken her Walkman with her to listen to music but realized as she stood on the bridge over the river and listened to the music that she was not wearing the headphones.



Part 1, Chapters 22-26

Part 1, Chapters 22-26 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 22, Annie saw Ben for the first time since the Christmas break. He asked to do something new, and then rolled a train car on the desk. As Ben continued to play with the train, he rolled it on the floor, claiming that it almost ran over Annie's foot although it didn't. Next, Ben hid a key he intended Annie to find. He accidentally referred to the key as "her" letting Annie know that Ben's play was symbolic of Ben's time away from Annie and the fear that Ben would never "find" Annie again. Ben then played baby for a short while. Although their time was up, Ben was hesitant about leaving and tried to find ways to encourage Annie to lengthen their session. Annie wrote that coming back to Glenwood after being at Harvard seemed to be like leaving her new life for an old one. She felt this time already vanishing, an idea that brought her sadness.

In Chapter 23, Annie's friends celebrated her 28th birthday with a surprise party. Patricia was the one who took Annie to Sarah's house, pretending to run errands. The friends danced, ate, and talked together until early in the morning. Annie remembered as her sister Mary drove her car away from the apartment feeling as if this time in her life was already finished.

In Chapter 24, Ben asked to be allowed to go outside during his session with Annie to go on a treasure hunt. Annie agreed and Ben instructed her to bring Tea Bags as well. Once they were outside, Ben told Annie there was a dangerous monster in a tree. He cautioned her to stay back and let him handle it. He pretended to "kill" a bear, then cut it up, and cooked it. Ben pretended to find a lost baby bear for whom they must care. Next, Ben found another lost baby bear in a drainpipe. He told Annie he had to go and find the mama bear who had abandoned these babies. In his efforts to "kill" the bad mama bear, Ben accidentally hit Annie in the arm. When he realized what he had done, Ben turned white and apologized. Even though Annie told him the hit did not hurt, Ben was still upset. When Annie drew his attention back to the dead bear, Ben seemed shocked that he was responsible for killing her.

In her interpretation of this session, Annie wrote that Ben was once again trying to come to an understanding of his abandonment and this time from the viewpoint of the one saving the baby bears. Annie wondered what it was that had helped to Ben become ready to try to face his issue of abandonment. He had also developed a strong enough bond with Annie that he was able to demonstrate affection for the puppet. Annie tried to imagine herself talking to Rachael about the session and tried to guess what the older lady might say about the day's experiences with Ben. Annie believed that when Ben hit her with the stick, he transferred his ability to kill the bear with his ability to kill Annie, an idea that was too much for Ben to handle. Annie had to gently convince him that the bad mama bear deserved her fate.



In Chapter 25, Annie realized the playroom was dark and it was after 5 p.m. Annie walked to her car and tried to decide who Rachael represented to her. Possibilities include the old Melanie, her sister and her friend Sarah. Annie lost more time in her thoughts about her relationship with Rachael. When she finally arrived home at 10 p.m, she realized she could not account for 8 hours of her day. Chapter 26 was a brief chapter describing the way the snow seemed to remove both time and memory with its silence.



Part 2, Chapters 27-39

Part 2, Chapters 27-39 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 27, Annie began the second part of her book. This part was entitled "Silence," referring possibly to her inability to speak during her time at the mental hospital. In this part, the reader will notice a distinct change in Annie's writing style and mental status as she moved from her routine at Glenwood further and further into her own personal breakdown. Annie's writing became less structured and coherent and her memories blur together. This form of writing followed the course of what was happening to Annie's own brain and mental capabilities. For instance, Chapter 27 consisted of only one brief sentence. It informed the reader that Annie had stopped meeting with Ben.

In Chapter 28, Annie wrote of her inability to stop crying. She found it difficult to talk at all. As a result, Sarah, Patricia and Mary drove Annie to the hospital. In the examining room, a small girl asked why Annie was crying. Annie felt wary of the doctor because she felt he wanted to try to fit her disorder into some diagnostic criteria. Annie felt as if the answers to the doctor's questions were floating out of her head with no effort from her. Annie next remembered wearing a hospital gown with a nurse rubbing her back. A second nurse gave Annie a shot which brought to Annie a period of what she described as white silence.

In Chapter 29, Annie wrote of a blue eye crying, and an angel going out to look for her in the desert among rabbit bones. Annie next saw this angel, who was her guardian angel, Telesporus, asking for lemonade in the hospital. Telesporus cried because Annie was so broken. Annie was glad Telesporus had returned to her. In Chapter 30, Annie came to herself briefly as she stood in the shower. The water seemed to cool the burning that Annie felt under her skin.

In Chapter 31, Annie wrote of the way a dead leaf from the rubber tree looked burned. This idea of burning brought back a memory of someone running into a creek to stop the burning. Although the leaf was burned, it still sang, and sound that made Annie want to cry. In Chapter 32, Annie realized her sister was trying to save Annie's music tapes and Walkman from the trash can. Mary gave the tapes as well as Annie's art supplies to a nurse to keep them safe.

In Chapter 33, Annie began to be visited by the other identities within her. One was a girl with dark-brown hair and bangs, while the other a blond woman with two small girls. In her mind Annie was pushed into a small room then chased around a basement. She remembered none of the people in this dream-like memory. In Chapter 34, Annie wrote that she remembered only brief times of being secure in her own body and mind. She remembered making collages of women and girls. She had cut the heads off these females and pasted them on other bodies.



In Chapter 35, a voice broke through Annie's stupor asking if she could move or talk. Annie heard her own voice as if it was being broadcast over a public address system. In Chapter 36, Dr. Michael Connelly was talking to Mary about Annie's medications. He suggested Stelazine and electroshock therapy. Annie came to herself long enough to tell the doctor she didn't want these treatments. In Chapter 37, Annie began to have feelings as if someone had died and she was the one who had murdered them.

In Chapter 38, Annie ate mashed potatoes with the rest of the patients. The potatoes have such a glue-like consistency Annie was unable to talk. The words of her final sentences of this short chapter are gibberish, a visible demonstration of the effect of the sticky potatoes. In Chapter 39, Annie has a vision of a sea and a guilty feeling of being responsible for something. The girl in the vision went into a house, locking all doors. Then she was falling, landing in the snow and making a snow angel.



Part 2, Chapters 40-47

Part 2, Chapters 40-47 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 40, Annie continued to record her disjointed memories while in the hospital. In Chapter 41, Annie wrote that she saw Dr. Michael Connelly as a boy in a wheelchair. He was one of the patients just as she was. As Annie watched, a young girl of thirteen met Michael. The two played chess together. When Michael told the girl his name, she immediately associated the name with the name of an archangel, Michael, from the Christian Bible. In Chapter 42, Annie remembered hearing her doctor discussing Annie's progress with her sister. Although the doctor believed Annie was getting worse and wanted to send her to the state hospital, Mary refused to go along with this suggestion. Annie forced herself into her body to agree with her sister that she does not want to go to the state hospital. In Chapter 43, Annie wrote that she was having nightmares, and actually remembering the content. Notice that in many of these chapters that deal with Annie's time in the hospital, Annie was writing about herself from the third person. This third person point of view demonstrates how separated Annie feels from herself.

In Chapter 44, Annie recorded a clear memory of sitting with Dr. Connelly in the day room of the hospital. It was on this day that Dr. Connelly told her he was planning to release her. Annie had no idea how much time she had spent in the hospital. She had been there more than a month. Annie suddenly realized that Melanie was gone and believed that she killed her. Dr. Connelly reassured Annie that she did not kill Melanie but that the therapist had refused to see her any longer. Although Annie wanted to go home, Dr. Connelly told her she was not yet ready and would be staying with friends. He warned Annie to stay away from psychotherapy. Sarah and Mary drove Annie to the house in which she will be staying. The concluding sentence in this chapter reported that although Annie still had trouble grasping the essence of time, the winter was over. This statement seemed to indicate the worse of Annie's fight against her own mental issues has come to a close. The healing of a spring in Annie's own life was now on its way.

In Chapter 45, Annie had gone to see a new psychotherapist despite Dr. Connelly's warning. Annie wrote that she broke her promise because the need to understand what exactly was happening to her was too strong to ignore. The new doctor was Sam Blumenfeld. Annie first told Blumenfeld that she had threatened to kill her former therapist. She also shared with him the idea that she sometimes couldn't hear people in whole sentences. In addition, Annie told Blumenfeld the people in the hospital could not understand her when she spoke.

Annie began to cry and as she cried, she tried to tell Blumenfeld the story of her therapist again. Blumenfeld suggested Annie was suffering with feelings of abandonment. Annie, however, claimed that Melanie loved her. Annie was relieved when Blumenfeld affirmed Annie could not possibly understand what was real or even



what love was. Blumenfeld recognized that Annie was broken into small pieces. Annie asked to be allowed to come back and see Blumenfeld again the next day.

Sarah drove Annie to the house where Annie was staying. Annie went to her room and slept. It was the first restful sleep she has had in days. When Annie woke, the family dog wanted to go out for a walk. Although Annie was fearful she would become lost, she went with the dog. Annie told herself she did not want to see Blumenfeld again and that she wanted to see Melanie. She realized however that she was more relaxed and confident. Annie wrote that she didn't realize that her relationship with Blumenfeld would help her to discover her own past, a past that she had kept hidden from herself. Annie wrote that this story within herself was one that didn't even have words to describe. The words were gibberish, needing translation to be understood. Even as this past began to reveal itself to Annie, she found herself unable to put it into words. Annie appeared to fear that the story that she had relived during her days at the hospital and that she had written down as gibberish, might be lost to her once again as she reconnected with the English language and her ability to communicate with others.

In Chapter 48, Annie wrote about her early sessions with Blumenfeld. During these sessions she sat in his office listening to the rhythm of his breathing. She experienced two kinds of silences with Blumenfeld. The first was heavy and foreboding while the second was open and welcoming. This silence with Blumenfeld reminded Annie of her childhood. It was during this time that Galle, a part of Annie from Annie's childhood, came back to her. Galle inhabited the ceilings. She shared with Annie her middle name. Although Annie does not tell Blumenfeld about Galle, he sensed her presence and called her "little Annie."

Annie wrote that after her sessions with Blumenfeld, she would make notes of what transpired during their time together. Annie wanted to tell Blumenfeld the story of herself and Melanie, but found herself drawing back. Annie was still not sure of her ability to tell the story with enough clarity that Blumenfeld would understand.

In Chapter 47, Annie wrote that she suddenly began to tell her story to Blumenfeld with the clarity that she needed. When Annie first started seeing Melanie, Melanie was still a student, she told Blumenfeld. Annie remembered wearing a baseball cap to this first session so she would not have to make eye contact with Melanie. Annie told Blumenfeld that at first Melanie wanted to learn from Annie, but as time went by, she stopped wanting to learn from her. Annie added that at first, she deeply loved Melanie even though she had tried to convince the therapist not to work with her. Annie told Blumenfeld the two had called this belief that Melanie would leave Annie "transference." Blumenfeld, however, told Annie that he believed the use of that word was only a way to cover up a weakness that Annie sensed in her new therapist.

At the idea of her therapist having a vulnerability, Annie became confused again about her story. She noticed Blumenfeld is staring off in space and asked what he is thinking about. He replied he was remembering the last clinical conference he attended. Since the big words the others were using made no sense to him, he left the conference and had never attended another one. Annie expressed her desire not to be in a clinical



conference with him. Blumenfeld told her he has just found in her someone with whom he can talk. It seems that in this scene Blumenfeld and Annie made their first genuine connection. Annie did not like clinical terminology. She did not like to be classified and boxed in. In the same way, Blumenfeld also did not like the confusing language of psychotherapy. He seemed to believe it was just a fancy way to cover up what really needed to be said.

Annie went on to tell Blumenfeld that she realized Melanie recognized Annie's need for a mother's love as well as her confusion about love. Annie told Blumenfeld that the first time Melanie touched her, she felt hope that she had finally found someone who could fulfill her need for the love of a mother. Annie shared her destroyed trust in Melanie with Blumenfeld, then confided in him that she didn't know if she would be able to trust him.

Annie asked her reader to imagine what it was like for her to be in her situation and discover a person in whose presence she was able to find words to express her most painful experiences. It was in this section of the book that the idea of the importance of words was really solidified..Up until this point Annie had been unable to put her experiences into words, it was as if they haven't really happened. In much the same way, it was very important for Annie to have an opportunity to write out her experiences with the children that she was counseling as well as the details of her sessions with Blumenfeld in words. This need to put things into words seemed to be a key that would help to unlock Annie's past.



Part 2, Chapters 48-51

Part 2, Chapters 48-51 Summary and Analysis

In her next session, Annie continued her story about her experience with Melanie. Annie noted that sometimes Melanie would react to Annie in different ways. These differences reinforced Annie's fear that Melanie would abandon her one day. Annie admitted that she would sometimes test the relationship with Melanie to see how far she could push things. Annie tells Blumenfeld of a time when she suffered with what she described as a coldness that came from within herself. Annie said that Melanie had found her and taken care of her that night, even putting her to bed. Annie saw these actions as clear proof of Melanie's affection. Annie wondered aloud how things could have ended as they did with Melanie.

Blumenfeld asked how little Annie felt about the relationship with Melanie. Annie told him it was little Annie who tried to break Melanie's window and almost caused her to stop seeing them initially. She told Blumenfeld that little Annie wanted honesty from Melanie, a thing she felt Melanie never gave her. For instance, Melanie had invited Annie to dinner with them and had even suggested Annie come live with Melanie and her daughter. Later, Melanie told Annie she was not comfortable with Annie in the house and accused her of seducing her into the invitation. Annie insisted to Blumenfeld that Melanie was lying about the seduction. This accusation made little Annie mad. In response, she tried to break the window but Melanie stopped her and slapped her face. Blumenfeld interpreted this experience as being about Annie's desire to have a mother then her realization that Melanie was all wrong as a mother figure. Annie was then trapped in the situation by being accused as the one responsible for the relationship going sour. Blumenfeld was slightly amused by the situation and compared it to a situation he found himself in with his granddaughter. He suggested to Annie that even though she tried to be what Melanie wanted her to be, little Annie knew what was going on all the time.

In Chapter 49, Annie reported feeling as if her life were finally beginning to return to normalcy. She talked to Blumenfeld during her next session about her work with children. She first suggested to Blumenfeld that perhaps she shouldn't have been working with children at all because of her own psychiatric problems. Instead of giving Annie a hard answer to the question of whether she should or shouldn't be working with children, Blumenfeld told Annie part of her gift of her ability to work with children came from her own psychiatric troubles. He assured Annie that he was sure she was very good with the children.

It was at this point that Annie felt comfortable telling Blumenfeld about Ben. She explained how working with Ben brought to the surface her own suffering. Annie also shared with Blumenfeld her own experiences in Cambridge with Dr. Carol Gilligan. She explained feeling as if she were coming home to a place in the future. When Annie returned to her own therapist, Melanie told Annie she was being disloyal to her advisor.



During this session Melanie also told Annie that she knew that one of Annie's fantasies was to have Melanie at her mercy. Annie told Blumenfeld that she had tried to explain to Melanie that these were not her thoughts or desires, that Melanie was trying to impose her own ideas onto Annie. Although Blumenfeld suggested there was fear in Melanie that Annie would leave her, Annie does not recognize the validity of this suggestion. Annie admitted to Blumenfeld that she heard a voice telling her she had to kill Melanie. Although Annie told Melanie about his desire, she was not completely honest about the desire.

Annie remembered asking Melanie what would happen if she did try to kill her. Melanie did not answer, Annie had asked her not to. When Blumenfeld questioned Annie if she saw this lack of an answer as an invitation, Annie had a flashback to her childhood. She was in French class, unable to answer the teacher's question. This happened so often, she was finally no longer expected to answer any longer. Annie pulled herself back to reality with Blumenfeld. She described the burning under her skin and her call to Melanie. Melanie made a time to see Annie the next day. Her time was up with Blumenfeld and Annie felt the need to finish her story later. She went out to meet Sarah, who was waiting to drive her home.

In Chapter 50, Annie wrote that she had another flashback from her childhood when she entered her own kitchen. Emily was unhappy that Annie's story was interrupted. Even though, she had decided to stay quiet realizing that her silence made the others uncomfortable. Emily was afraid of finding real meaning and real anger in herself. She was afraid of hurting Melanie. Suddenly, Emily disappeared. As Annie ate her lunch, she thought about Blumenfeld. Annie wondered how Blumenfeld knew the things that he knew. She believed he was genuine and that with his guidance she could move into the deepest parts of her being and return intact.

In Chapter 51, Annie finished her story of Melanie in her next session with Blumenfeld. Annie first asked permission to finish her story without interruption. She then told Blumenfeld that she bought a toy gun and took a kitchen knife from her own home to her appointment with Melanie. Annie told Melanie she wanted to kill her and her daughter. Annie left out her desire to kill herself. Annie told Melanie to sit back in her chair. She told Blumenfeld that at this point she felt hate for Melanie and detachment. Melanie asked what she had done that had made Annie want to kill her. Annie assumed that Melanie already knew the answer to this question. Annie told Melanie that Melanie had offered her love, then retracted it. Then she had poked at the evil nature in Annie as if that was all there was to Annie. Annie felt as if she had finally brought all of the hate and evil in her to her appointment with Melanie and was now showing it in its fullness. Although Annie insisted that Melanie hated her, Melanie claimed that she loved her. When Annie told Blumenfeld this, he gasped. Annie wrote that Melanie told Annie that she had never really listened to her.

As Annie became more and more violent with Melanie, Melanie attempted to placate Annie with a desire to hold and comfort her. Melanie told Annie she was wrong to take her affection away and that she would not do that again. Even as Melanie held Annie, Annie was afraid that she had forced Melanie to make a false show of affection. Ten



days later, Annie met with Melanie the final time. It was during this appointment that Melanie told Annie she would no longer see her as a patient. In this session Melanie told Annie she had violated her and betrayed her. Melanie added that it was Annie that was responsible for ruining the relationship. Although Blumenfeld suggests that Annie was trying to heal Melanie. Annie told Blumenfeld that it was at this point that she entered what felt like a waking nightmare. As she left the office that day, Annie realized that Blumenfeld saw her with his heart.



Part 2, Chapters 52-60

Part 2, Chapters 52-60 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 52, Annie returned to the house where she was staying after her appointment with Blumenfeld. She sat in the porch swing as it rained and she cried. While buying ingredients for a cake that night with her sister, Annie realized she had a freedom to play with words with her sister again. In Chapter 53, Annie asked Blumenfeld about the reason why he always locked the door to the therapy room. Blumenfeld later interpreted that Annie did not want the door locked because it locked out the possibility of Melanie entering the room.

Annie had brought her journals with her to this session. She handed them to Blumenfeld, then explored the office for the first time. After she finished her tour, she told Blumenfeld that if he were a woman, she would have been looking for a place to hide. Since he was a man, however, she does not feel the need to hide. Annie then asked Blumenfeld how she was to pay him. Blumenfeld replied that the fee would settle itself. Annie told Blumenfeld that she had a fantasy of Melanie seeing Blumenfeld as a therapist. Blumenfeld admitted that he had the same fantasy. He realized the little pieces of Annie are still searching for solidity in Melanie. Blumenfeld suggested that Melanie had broken Annie's blue lenses, the lenses that allowed her to see what was true about people.

Blumenfeld agreed to see Melanie but insisted that Annie call Melanie and set up the appointment. Although Annie tells Blumenfeld she was afraid to call Melanie he told her that the little pieces inside of her will know when to make the call. Blumenfeld gave Annie his home phone number and told her to call him anytime she needed him.

In Chapter 54, Annie received a call from Blumenfeld telling her that Melanie had agreed to see him. After she received this news, Annie began to have strange dreams and to get lost again during her walks. She tried to adjust her medication, but the medications made her feel worse. She finally stopped taking the medications completely. Annie also mentioned her relationship with Noah, a boy who reminded her of Ben.

In Chapter 55, Annie brought Pimmy with her to her appointment with Blumenfeld for the first time. Annie saw her journal on Blumenfeld's desk. He told her he was now sure of the fact that Annie was afraid that Melanie would abandon her eventually. Annie was surprised that although Blumenfeld was not a female, he was capable of understanding her thoughts. Blumenfeld also told Annie he has determined a fee. His fee per session would be sixty dollars each. Annie was to pay whatever she could upfront, then the rest when she became rich. Blumenfeld believed that one day Annie would publish a book. If not, he said, the therapy would have been a failure and she would owe him nothing.

Pimmy was the fourth in a line of stuffed bunnies owned by Annie. The original Pimmy was given to her by her father. Pimmy represented Annie's smallest self. She wrote that



she found Blumenfeld trustworthy both because he played and also because he understood her need to see Melanie again. Annie compared her relationship to Blumenfeld with that between the frog and the princess in the story "The Frog Prince." In the same way that the frog would not get the princess' ball from the well without something in return, so would Blumenfeld not help Annie without something in return. She believed Blumenfeld was not so much interested in payment from Annie as he was interested in learning how to become a mother-person.

In Chapter 56, Annie wrote that she was finally able to drive again and to move back to her own apartment. Shortly after she moved back to her apartment, someone left a box of things Annie found terrifying next to her front door. She knew immediately she was supposed to take this box of things to Blumenfeld.

In Chapter 57, Annie arrived at Blumenfeld's office to discover some of the items from the box were missing. As she settled into her usual chair in the office, she had a memory of being at home in the kitchen with her mother, Telesporus was there. Annie told Blumenfeld she wants to put the box in his closet, they would look at it later. She spoke now of the packet of paintings. She told Blumenfeld she didn't remember drawing them. Annie also told him the images on the pages scared her. For the first time, Blumenfeld suggested the use of the couch and hypnosis. Annie was afraid but agreed. Although Annie was afraid she would drift away and not be able to find Blumenfeld, Blumenfeld "anchored" the couch with one shoe. This action gave Annie a visible knowledge that Blumenfeld would not let her drift away from him. When Annie left her session that day, she had the impression the Blumenfeld was crying. She saw the angel Telesporus standing over him.

In Chapter 58, Annie realized the knowledge she had received that her mother loved her and the she felt comfort from this love gave her a feeling of safety. Annie woke up one morning and realized that she could not hear the voices in her head. Although the silence was refreshing, Annie wrote it was also scary. At the same time, Annie was aware that Blumenfeld was seeing Melanie. Annie wanted to return to her work in her internship, the work with the children. Her friends and family warned her to go slowly.

In this chapter Annie reported the details of some of the dreams she has been having. She also wrote that her mother had a burn scar from her knees to her neck. Apparently her nightgown caught on fire from a stove when she was a small child. As a result, her mother was afraid of fire.

In Chapter 59 Annie asked Blumenfeld if he believed that she would ever be cured. He responded that only hams could be cured. He told her that even if she could be cured, she would lose her blue lenses. Annie felt Blumenfeld was being obtuse and tried to explain to him. She said she wanted to stop losing time, to stop having to go to the hospital and recover. Annie then told Blumenfeld of her desire to go back and work with Ben as well as her fear that she wouldn't be able to do so. Blumenfeld asked her why that was even a question in her mind. Annie told him that she wanted to understand the connections between her own childhood and Ben's childhood before she goes back to him. However, Blumenfeld told Annie these connections could not be made until she

started working with Ben again. In Chapter 60 Annie arranged to go back to her internship.



Part 3, Chapters 61-64

Part 3, Chapters 61-64 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 61 began Part 3 of Annie's book. It was at this point that Annie left her period of sickness and silence and returned to her work with Ben and the other children. In this chapter Annie felt as if her writing was in preparation to see Ben again. In Chapter 62, Annie began to send Ben gifts. Annie learned in a meeting with Mary Louise that Ben had reverted to his behavior prior to his time with Annie. There are plans being made to place Ben in residential treatment at Glenwood.

As Annie went to meet Ben in Mary Louise's office the first time, she worried about his reaction to her. To her surprise, he ran to her and allowed himself to be picked up and held. In the playroom he told Annie how much he had missed her. He also made a snake that he pretended would bite Annie. Although his fear was that Annie would be sick and not be able to come back, Annie assured him that she was back to stay. Ben finally pretended to be a baby horse that had to be fed and burped. Annie wrote that she was surprised how quickly Ben took to her after she returned. She was also surprised that the two of them were able to heal one another.

In Chapter 63, Annie wrote that when she started seeing Ben again, she wanted to see Melanie again also. Blumenfeld suggested that Melanie was looking only for a way to say goodbye to Annie. When he also suggested that it was hard for someone who doesn't see a person, in the way that Melanie doesn't see Annie, to say goodbye to someone, Annie kicked Blumenfeld in the shins.

In Chapter 64, Annie reviewed her anger with Blumenfeld. She suddenly realized the man she saw walking away from her during her session was her father. Her father had committed suicide when Annie was only five. He had jumped from a window in a psychiatric hospital. Annie was not told exactly what happened until she was fourteen. Annie had a memory in which she was relieved her knowledge that her father was no longer coming home.

While Annie slept, she had a nightmare in which she tried to call Blumenfeld but could not find the phone. When she woke, she tried to call Blumenfeld's answering service and discovered she could not speak. When Annie slept again she had dreams and visions of a man sexually molesting her. She woke with the desire to "kill" her stuffed rabbit. At this point she called Blumenfeld. He explained to her that the wrongness she may have felt came from the idea that it was easier for a child to manage a heavy guilt than a helpless terror. He told her she was caught in the middle of deciding if her father were a good man who would hold her up and let her throw pennies into a fountain, or a bad man who would molest her. She was unable to come to terms with the idea that both of these men were the same man.



Part 3, Chapters 65-69

Part 3, Chapters 65-69 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 65, Annie wrote that she realizes that as Blumenfeld pushed her toward a question or feeling that she didn't have words for, she would respond in a non-verbal physical assault. This assault would generally be followed by a space in time of which she would have no memory. This lack of memory seemed to be the act of Annie drawing into herself and retreating into a safe place or safe personality.

It was during this same time that Annie began to make connections between her own abandonment by her father and Ben's abandonment by his first foster mother. As Annie tried to unravel her own feelings about her father, she wondered if memories of early childhood, and perhaps her earliest abuse, are forgotten because they are not put into words. Annie reported in her book that she spent much time reading works by writer Virginia Woolf. She connected with this writer because Woolf had also been molested as a young girl.

In Chapter 66, Annie wrote that she was busy with her schedule. Even with her busy schedule however, she experienced loneliness because the voices she was so accustomed to hearing were no longer present at all times. She was also able to recall the events of a day vividly with no lost time or gaps. In this chapter, Annie also has the experience of dreaming the dream of a little girl. She felt as if she was a mother figure to this girl even though she was not aware who the child was. After the dream was over, Annie realized it was the same girl who was in the examining room with her the night she was admitted to the hospital. Annie also dreamed of an old lady who sewed Annie and Ben's shadows together.

In Chapter 67, during their next session Ben told Annie simply that the mama bear from their play went away. He then requested that Annie help him make a fishing pole and asked her to fish for him. In Chapter 68, Annie resumed her appointments with Rachel. She caught Rachel up on her progress with Ben. Rachael appeared to have missed this time with Annie. Rachel explained to Annie that in her attempt to tell Ben that sometimes mama bears do come back, she was helping him to change his internalized image of a mother as one who goes away and doesn't come back. It was Annie's suggestion that sometimes mothers do come back that would help Ben to change his impression of the mother figure. Rachael reminded Annie that she will have to leave Ben at the end of the summer and that she must remember that she was not really Ben's mother.

In Chapter 69, Annie wrote that Ben had developed the habit of sneaking away from class and exploring the school grounds. On one of these trips Ben broke a window when his teacher didn't come after him. The next school day Ben brought his piggy bank to pay for the window. In her following session with Ben, Annie noticed Ben alternating between wanting to be the boss and wanting Annie to protect him from dangers and set limits for him. Annie found it interesting that Ben, who had been labeled as oppositional,

had been able to successfully take directions and orders from her and even asked that limits be set.



Part 3, Chapters 70-74

Part 3, Chapters 70-74 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 70 Annie wrote of examining photographs of herself with both her mother and father. In the picture with her father, her hand was on his arm. Annie was alert in this photo, with her eyes open. In the photo with her mother, however, Annie's face appeared tight and closed. As Annie looked at the photograph, she recognized her own feeling there. Annie also recognized a connection between this feeling and the items in the box at Blumenfeld's office. She does not want to talk or think about the things in the box. After being in the hospital to have a kidney stone removed, however, Annie found that she had to talk about the things in the box.

In Chapter 71 Annie moved to the couch in Blumenfeld's office. After a few false starts, Annie described to Blumenfeld that she was constipated from the pain medicine the doctors gave her. She told Blumenfeld the nurses had to give her an enema. However, she wasn't able to make herself say the word "enema," Blumenfeld had to fill it in for her. She then talked about the things in the box. Annie remembered eating graham crackers and grape juice in nursery school. She told Blumenfeld she knew that if she did not eat, she would get tied down. She told Blumenfeld that her mother often accused her of making up things that never happened.

Annie had a vision of Galle on her kitchen table at the house of her childhood. Galle struggled and cried to be set free but her mother gave her an enema. Annie remembered the enema being hot water and soap. Annie also remembered a baby bottle being put in her mouth at the same time. She told Blumenfeld this was some type of daily torture given to her by her mother. Annie admitted to Blumenfeld that as a child she used to also drink soapy water because she thought it was better than what her mother did to her. Even as Annie told Blumenfeld about these experiences, she denied that they happened, insisting that her mother loved her and would not do such things to her.

Annie admitted that she wanted her mother's attention so much that even when she was old enough to fight against her and make her stop, she didn't. Annie remembered one night Mary Margaret, another of her personalities, had a bad dream. In her memory Mary Margaret ran to her mother for comfort. Annie asked Blumenfeld to hold her rabbit, in essence holding her and the pieces of her childhood. When Annie told Blumenfeld that she wanted to be held the way he was now holding her rabbit, he handed her the rabbit, then held them both.

In Chapter 72, Annie wrote that she understood Virginia's Woolf's feelings about the love of a mother figure. She, like Woolf, wanted this motherly affection, but never received it. Annie realized it was Margaret Mary, a part of Annie but not Annie herself, who experienced most of her mother's affection. On the other hand, it was Galle, who



experienced the majority of her mother's torture. Annie wondered if it was her ability to dissociate herself that in the end wound up saving her.

In Chapter 73, Blumenfeld helped Annie to realize how terrible her experiences with her mother actually were. Annie came to realize that her mother was in no way trying to show Annie love by torturing her. As Annie began to come to terms with her past, she realized that the problems she had struggled with for years were slowly going away. Despite the fact that Blumenfeld had helped Annie to make such a drastic change in her life, she wrote that she found him quite ordinary. He did not hold the magical aura for her that Melanie did. For the first time Annie also realized she had no fear of Blumenfeld abandoning her.

In Chapter 74, Annie realized that during the time when she was reliving the terror of her mother with Blumenfeld, Ben restrained from playing any mama games with her. Annie sensed it was almost as if the boy knew she needed a break from that line of play. Annie dreamed that she and Ben visited a firehouse together. Ben took an axe and disappeared. Annie cannot find him. The firehouse turned into a regular house and Annie heard glass breaking. When Annie found Ben, he told her that he was breaking out. At the conclusion of her dream, Ben asked Annie to carry him.



Part 3, Chapters 75-79

Part 3, Chapters 75-79 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 75, Ben learned the hard lesson of waiting when he had to complete his schoolwork and to wait for Annie to be finished with another patient before their time together. Once their session started and Ben was outside, he told Annie there would be a house fire and he would put the fire out. His play was eerie considering Annie's dream of being with Ben at the fire station. Although Ben removed the pretend children from the burning house, he left his mommy there, claiming that she would get him. When Annie suggested that Ben's mommy was get him for wishing she'd burn in the fire, Ben was silent, scared. Annie comforted him, reminding him it was pretend and only a wish.

Annie explained in her book that when a child such as Ben, has been affected by an event that he cannot remember, he will continue to play out this event either in his play, his fantasies, or his dreams. As he plays or dreams, the child will begin to experience the wishes, fears, or other emotions that accompany this event. When Annie joined in Ben's play and helped to direct his feelings and actions, they together created a new story. It was in this new story that the healing would begin.

In Chapter 76, Annie realized in real life, Ben did not cry for her to pick him up. She picked him up of her own free will. Annie also realized that Ben's room as a baby had no windows; he was held in the dark. As Annie thought about Ben's tormentors and the way he was left in the past, she tried to determine a proper way to draw their own relationship to a close.

In Chapter 77, Annie showed Ben the calendar, pointing out when their last session together would be. Although she saw changes in Ben, she was afraid of the ways they could hurt each other in the coming days as they prepared to say goodbye to each other. Annie wrote that Ben was also preparing in these days to become part of the residential program at Glenwood. By asking something be washed, Ben managed to get Mary Louise to take him into one of the residential cottages. During this impromptu visit Mary Louise told Ben about the daily routine of the children who live in these cottages.

In Chapter 78, Annie dreamed that she and Melanie walked together on a frozen lake. They had to be careful not to walk too close to one another or they would break the ice and drown. In Chapter 79, Annie described her last meeting with Melanie in Blumenfeld's office. Melanie told Annie in this meeting that she would not be willing to see her again. For a moment Annie sought escape through Emily, one of her alter egos. It was during this meeting that Annie realized that as Melanie had gotten more experience and training she had already decided how to interpret Annie. If what Annie did or said didn't match this picture Melanie had drawn of her, these things that did not fit were blamed on denial on Annie's part. Following the advice of Emily and Telesporus, Annie allowed Melanie to leave the room without telling her how badly she had hurt

Annie. After Melanie has left the room Blumenfeld told Annie that Melanie had never really ever seen her, just as Annie's father had never really ever seen her.



Part 3, Chapters 80-86

Part 3, Chapters 80-86 Summary and Analysis

In Chapter 80 as Annie realized Melanie was gone from her life, she wrote out her will and made plans to die. She realized however, she could not hurt Ben by leaving without saying goodbye. In Chapter 81 in her next appointment with Blumenfeld, he tried to convince Annie that the Melanie she met in her last appointment was the same woman that she had known all along. As she talked with Blumenfeld, Annie had a vision of herself in an incubator. She remembered her mother telling her Annie was in the hospital for a month. Her parents were unable to see her. Annie's mind moved across all of the people for whom she had cared but had left her. Blumenfeld encouraged Annie to listen to little Annie and stop her act of waiting for the mother who comforted her, the father who played with her.

In Chapter 82, Annie found herself crying for the voices in her that she could no longer hear. In Chapter 83, Annie suggested that she and Ben have their picture taken together. Ben recognized this photo as a visible reminder of their relationship. In Chapter 84, Annie met with Rachael for the last time. They met in a different place, which was a break with tradition that disturbed Annie. Although Annie had planned to tell the children she would visit them in the coming year, Rachel discouraged this plan. Rachel believed this promise would make them cling to the relationship instead of drawing the relationship to a close as they needed to do.

In Chapter 85, Annie and Ben had their last session together. In this session, Annie painted Ben's face and then they played together in the sandbox. Ben admitted to not wanting to be mad at Annie because she was leaving but he was still mad. Ben found items to make a fishing pole and asked Annie to fish for him. Annie finally "caught" Ben. Ben suddenly decided to show her something and they went together to a hideout of fallen branches. As they walked back to Ben's classroom, Annie told Ben how much she would miss him. Later that day, Ben sat in Annie's lap and cried. After he finished his cry, Ben stood up, waved goodbye to Annie, and then ran to play ball with the other children.

Although Annie wrote that her departure was painful to Ben, she indicated she did not believe it was traumatic. Although both she and Ben had been hurt deeply during their lives, Annie wrote that together they learned that loss does not always have to be traumatic. They discovered in each other a love that could survive loss. In Chapter 86 Annie wrote a collection of childhood memories. The mention of the circle of light particles above the two sleeping sisters tied the ending of the book back to the beginning.

Part 4

Part 4 Summary and Analysis

This final part of Annie's book took place six years after she stopped seeing Ben and three years after she stopped working with Blumenfeld. She had finished her doctoral work and lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She had taken a job as an assistant professor at Harvard. Annie had a play therapy practice where she worked with three girls. Annie had stayed in touch with Mary Louise who had told her that Ben was attending public school and living with his adoptive parents. Annie wrote that she believed he still remembered her.

Also in this brief epilogue, Annie wrote that she still struggled with her relationship with Melanie. She and Carol Gilligan together had thought about the peculiar difficulties that women face in their desire to work as psychotherapists. Since she had recently talked to Alice about a female patient who had a similar experience as Annie with another therapist, Annie laid on her bed and cried for Melanie. The relationship with Blumenfeld may remain professional or may develop into a more personal friendship, Annie wrote.

Finally, Annie concluded that she no longer heard from the characters that once made up the little pieces of herself. She had to relearn the parts of herself that once came so naturally through these characters. One example of this relearning had come through Annie's artwork. Where the skills had previously come without effort, she now had to relearn certain abilities.

Characters

Annie G. Rogers

Annie Rogers was the main character, narrator and writer of this book. Annie was a doctoral student pursuing an internship at Glenwood. One of the students she was assigned to work with was named Ben. Although it was not known to Annie at first, she and Ben had similar pasts and suffer with similar issues.

Ever since she was a child, Annie had suffered with emotional disturbances. She had been hospitalized at least once a year for several years. Over the years Annie had been diagnosed as having a variety of psychiatric conditions including schizophrenia and manic-depressive disorder. Annie told Blumenfeld during one of their sessions that she believed she has multiple personality disorder. Annie heard voices. These voices often told her to do things such as taking a gun to her session with Melanie and killing her. However, it appeared these voices are pieces of Annie's personality that have branched off as a result of abuse. When Annie began to heal and feel alive, she no longer heard these voices.

Annie suffered not only incest at the hands of her father, but also abuse at the hands of her mother. Both of these parents left Annie through traumatic circumstances. Annie's father killed himself. Annie and her sister were apparently taken from their mother by social services workers. It was unsure under what circumstances they were taken. Annie currently had wrapped her life up in the acceptance of Melanie, a female counselor whom Annie desperately wanted to receive love from in much the same way as a mother might give love. Annie's new psychologist, Blumenfeld, not only helped Annie come to terms with the abuse by her parents, but also the tragic ending of Annie's relationship with Melanie. Annie was able to use her own healing and the process of healing to help Ben heal from his own past of abuse and abandonment.

Benjamin

Ben was one of the children that Annie worked with during her internship at Glenwood. Ben had trouble developing relationships with others. He was abusive to others and himself. Although he had recently been adopted, Ben's parents admitted they had no idea how best to deal with Ben. They were forced to make him sleep in a bubble bed at night so that he would not hurt himself or destroy the house. Ben had been hospitalized many times during his life. He had been incorrectly diagnosed as begin autistic. The treatment doctors gave him seemed to make the boy worse. His adoptive mother told Annie that as a baby Ben did not want to be picked up or held. When he was held, he would cry until he was put down.

As Annie delved into Ben's past, she learned that he was abandoned by his birth mother six weeks after he was born. Shortly after this, he was removed from his first foster



home because of abuse. Annie later learned the boy spent most of his time in a crib, locked in a room with no windows. There was a fire in the house and Ben was discovered only after the fire was extinguished.

Dr. Sam Blumenfeld

Dr. Blumenfeld, who Annie simply called Blumenfeld, was the psychotherapist who helped Annie come to terms with her past. Blumenfeld also worked with both Annie and her former therapist, Melanie, to help them try to heal their relationship. Although this relationship was not healed, Blumenfeld does help Annie to realize that she was not totally at fault in the break-up of the relationship. Blumenfeld also tried to help Annie realize she could not base her own worth on the acceptance or rejection of another person.

Blumenfeld worked with Annie using a combination of talk therapy and hypnosis. Although Annie was never aware that she made any mention to him of Galle, one of her alter personalities, Blumenfeld knew that Galle existed. He referred to her as "little Annie." At one point Blumenfeld told Annie that little Annie was tired or Annie being on the treadmill of her emotions. Blumenfeld was able to help Annie heal and reincorporate all of Annie's personalities back into her main person. Blumenfeld was almost a father figure or guardian to Annie as he led her through the traumatic events of her childhood. Although he was not a female and had no breasts, he gave Annie the love and understanding that she needs to heal. Blumenfeld learns from Annie the ability to love as a mother-figure.

Melanie Sherman

Melanie Sherman was the psychoanalyst whom Annie threatened to kill. Although it may appear Annie did not like Melanie, she loved her desperately and wanted her affection. Annie hoped that she would be able to receive the mother's love that she so desperately wanted from Melanie. Although Annie does not see the truth about Melanie, Blumenfeld, and little Annie, she does see Melanie's true personality from the beginning. Melanie never knew or "saw" Annie. She simply made a diagnosis and then tried to fit Annie to this diagnosis. Annie felt that Melanie made promises to her and then reneged on her promise. It might have been Annie's frustration with Melanie's broken promises that finally caused her to take the toy gun and knife to Melanie's office. It was likely however, that Annie never intended to hurt Melanie. In fact, Annie was so distraught when Melanie did finally say goodbye to her that she made plans to end her life.

Galle aka Little Annie

Galle was one of Annie's alter personalities. Galle was recognized by Blumenfeld but he calls this part of Annie's personality "little Annie." Little Annie reminded Blumenfeld of his young granddaughter. Galle was present with Annie in her fourth-grade French classroom. Galle was the personality who received the enemas from Annie's mother.



Since Galle was the one who experienced Annie's mother's torture, it was in the personality of Galle that Annie stored her hate and fear for her mother.

Telesporus

Telesporus was a seven-foot tall Viking guardian angel. He was one who has looked over Galle for most of her life. Telesporus appeared to Annie while she was in the hospital. He was asking for lemonade in the winter so that Annie would be sure to recognize him. Annie also shares her guardian angel with others. For instance, Telesporus was also pictured as standing over Blumenfeld as if to embrace him after one of his sessions with Annie. Additionally, Annie had a dream in which she, Ben, and Telesporus played together.

Mary Louise Sweeney

Mary Louise was one of Annie's main advisors at Glenwood. Mary Louise also worked with Ben personally. It was she who gave Ben the tour of the residential cottages at Glenwood in preparation for him to live full-time at the school. Mary Louise was both surprised and pleased with Annie's progress with Ben.

Dr. Rachael Sachs

Dr. Rachael Sachs was the advisor whom Annie requested to be assigned for additional psychoanalytic supervision. Rachael and Annie soon developed a close relationship. Although the two sometimes had differing points of view, they have respect for each other and their ideas. Rachael told Annie that she believed that she had much to learn from Annie. She seemed eager to read Annie's notes from each therapy session with the children. Rachel was highly complementary of Annie's work and her instincts. Even when Annie could not put into words why she had handled a situation in a particular way, Rachael helped her to understand why her choice of behavior had worked so well. Rachael became an icon to Annie. She saw Rachael at different times as both an elderly grandmother and a protective motherly bird.

Mary

Mary was Annie's sister. Annie remembered her sister crying as a child because she missed their father. Now it was Mary who helps to take care of Annie. She took Annie to the hospital when she had her break down. Mary also was the one with whom the doctors discussed Annie's prognosis and her treatment. Mary admitted that she felt overwhelmed and unsure about making these decisions about her sister's health. Generally, Annie realized when the doctor was speaking with Mary about serious matters and was able to come to herself enough to let her own wishes for her treatment to be known. For instance, when Dr. Connelly suggested sending Annie to the State Hospital, Annie told them simply, "no." Mary and her sister seem to have a close



relationship as they bake cakes, attend church services, and look at Christmas lights together.

Sarah

Sarah was one of Annie's closest friends. It was Sarah who helped to arrange Annie's surprise birthday party shortly before Annie had her break down. Sarah helped Annie's sister, Mary, take Annie to the hospital. It was also Sarah, along with Mary, who picked Annie up from the hospital and took her to the house where she will be staying. Later, it was Sarah who drove Annie to and from her appointments with Blumenfeld. Sarah initiated the tradition of bringing coffee and donuts for the two to enjoy on their way to Annie's appointments. Annie told Blumenfeld during their sessions that it was Sarah who held her so that she could go to sleep during her most stressful times with Melanie. Sarah also accompanied Annie to her final appointment with Melanie.

Dr. Michael Connelly

Dr. Michael Connelly was a doctor at the hospital to which Annie's friends took her when she suffered with her break down. Dr. Connelly had treated Annie as an adolescent and had prior knowledge of her mental condition. It was Dr. Connelly's knowledge of Annie's mental condition that caused her to be so fearful when Mary Louise, her main supervisor at Glenwood, received a letter from this doctor. Instead of condemning Annie's work with children, however, Dr. Connelly was instead complementary of Annie's work. Although Annie does not keep her promise to the doctor, it was Dr. Connelly who tried to get Annie to stop seeking psychiatric analysis and just take her medications as directed.

Kate Brinker

Kate Brinker was Ben's adoptive mother. She was married to Charles Brinker. Early in Annie's experience with Ben, she met with Kate and learned details of Ben's young life. Ben had lived with the Brinkers since he was eighteen months of age. Kate described to Annie the different doctors, hospitals and treatment centers that he had visited in his short life. Kate told Annie that so far no one has been able to help Ben. Some of the treatments have even made him worse. Kate believed however that Annie would be able to help Ben.

Virginia Woolf

Annie felt a special relationship with the female writer because Woolf herself was molested as a young child. Woolf also described her life as being full of non-being, a sensation with which Annie was very familiar. Like Annie, Woolf also spent most of her life searching for the love of a mother and was unable to find anyone who could give her the type of love that she desired.



Pepper

Pepper was the dog that belongs to the family with whom Annie stayed after she left the hospital. It was the result of Pepper's insistence upon a walk that Annie realized she could walk around the neighborhood without getting lost.

Noah

Noah was the son of the people with whom Annie lived after her stay in the hospital. The two developed a friendship. Noah reminded Annie of Ben.



Objects/Places

Glenwood

Glenwood was a treatment center for emotionally disturbed children. Glenwood was the center where Annie works as an intern therapist and where Ben attended school.

Oppositional Personality Disorder

Ben, one of Annie's patients, was diagnosed with Oppositional Personality Disorder.

Strategically Placed Water Bowls

These bowls, placed around the Glenwood campus, helped to diminish the institutional feel of Glenwood.

Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute

It was at this institute that Annie met with Dr. Rachel Sachs to discuss Annie's patients.

Piece of Hard Candy

Dr. Rachel Sachs offered Annie a piece of this candy at each of their meetings.

Bedroom Slippers

During her meetings with Annie, Dr. Rachel Sachs wore these slippers, giving their meetings a more relaxed feeling.

Six Wet Marbles

While pretending to be dog during a therapy session, Ben 'gave' Annie these marbles by dropping them out of his mouth into her hand.

The Third Ear

It was with this third ear that Annie listened to what a child was really saying during their play therapy sessions.



Red Batakas

Ben often used these play bats as pillows while he was playing baby with Annie.

Baby Bear

In Ben's play he pretended to be a baby bear. This theme emerged so often in Ben's play that Annie began to call him by the nickname 'bear.'

Mama Bear

The mama bear was a changing personality in Ben's play. Sometimes he assigned Annie the role of mama bear, indicating that he wanted her to act as his mother. Sometimes this mama bear was a bad mother that would get hurt or killed and sometimes it was a good mother that came back to help her children.

Bubble Bed

Ben had to sleep in this encased bed so that he will not hurt himself during the night.

Harrisburg Center for Autistic Children

Ben's adoptive parents took him to this center for help with his behavior. Instead of getting better however, Ben's behavior seemed to worsen.

Play Therapy

Play therapy was a type of therapy where therapists attempted to determine what issues a child struggled with through the way they play.

Tea Bags

Tea Bags was a yellow puppet with a blue nose. Annie used this puppet often during her sessions with Ben. Although Annie does not allow the request, Ben asked to be allowed to take Tea Bags home with him during the Christmas break.

Paper-Whites

Annie threw these flowers out because the smell of them reminded her of fire and burning.



Electroshock Therapy

It was at the suggestion of this type of therapy that Annie managed to bring herself to her senses and tell those around her that she did not want this type of treatment.

Leinoch

In Annie's own language, the word "leinoch" symbolized fear-hope.

Little Green Volkswagen Bug

The Volkswagen Bug was the car that Annie rode in to and from her therapy sessions. When asked her what brought her to the hospital, Annie responded that it was a green car, which was a direct reference to her friend's bug.

Cambridge

Although Annie usually got lost in strange places, she discovered that she felt at home in Cambridge and on the Harvard campus.

Toy Gun and Kitchen Knife

Annie took this gun and knife to the office of Melanie Sherman, her former therapist, in a claimed attempt to kill her.

Blue Lenses

Blumenfeld told Annie that she saw through these blue lenses. These blue lenses allowed Annie to see the true essence of people.

Pimmy

Pimmy was the stuffed rabbit that Annie took with her to her therapy sessions with Blumenfeld. Pimmy was the fourth rabbit belonging to Annie. The first of these rabbits was given to Annie by her father.

Cardboard Box

This box was left by Annie's front door. It contained soap, grape juice, a baby bottle, graham crackers, an enema, rope, a toy gun, and a kitchen knife.



Themes

Stigma Associated with Psychiatric Problems

One of the more evident themes in Annie's book is the stigma that is associated with psychiatric problems. This theme is introduced early in the book as Annie watches the girl being drugged across the parking lot of the Psychological Institute. Annie is on her way to see Rachael when she notices this couple, whom she assumes to be a father and daughter. The girl does not want to go into the building, assumedly to see a doctor there but her father is forcing her. Annie feels this same sense of dread when she realizes how close her therapist's office is to the campus of Glenwood. She is afraid someone might see her coming or going from the building.

Similarly, Annie tells her reader that she has lost scholarships and grants because she has been honest about her mental difficulties. As a result, she has learned that it is best to cover up her psychiatric troubles. In fact, she does not tell anyone associated with Glenwood that she has had a breakdown or has been in a mental hospital. It scares Annie when she realizes that her supervisor has received a letter from Dr. Michael Connelly, a doctor who formerly saw her as a patient.

Nature of Healing

The nature of healing is another theme that is central to Annie's story. It is Blumenfeld who first suggests to Annie that healing is a two-sided proposition. He tells her that she cannot make all of the connections between her own pain and Ben's pain before she sees the boy again. Their healing must take place simultaneously. Perhaps this is the reason why Annie has not found any other therapist who is able to help her heal. Not only does working with Ben help bring Annie's personal pain to the surface but it also helps her to find a level on which she can relate her pain to another person. She is more capable of helping Ben because she understands his need for a mother. She needs a mother herself. By acting as a surrogate mother to Ben, she helps him to understand that not all mothers abandon their children. Through her work with Blumenfeld, Annie comes to realize how her own tortured relationship with her mother has caused her so many problems in her life.

Words

Words and the use of words is another important theme in Annie's book. First, understand that Annie is an English major and a writer. Her course of learning has dealt with words. Now as she studies to be a therapist, she focuses on writing about the children with whom she is working. This action of writing is so important to her that she chooses the location of her internship based on the amount of writing time that she will get.



Annie realizes the importance of being able to put things into words. This is why she insists on having adequate writing time. As she progresses in her work with the children, this idea of putting things into words becomes even more important to Annie. She believes that her inability to remember some things that happened to her as a small child may be as a result of her lack of speech at that time. She believes memory is tied up in the ability to put things into words.

Blumenfeld also believes it is important for Annie to learn to put her emotions and memories into words. For instance, during the session where Annie kicks Blumenfeld in the shins, he repeatedly requests that she use words. He is trying to get Annie to describe her anger and its causes in words instead of just reacting physically.

Angels

Angels are characters that appear often in Annie's story. Although angels are often seen only as characters from the Christian Bible, they are actually much more than that. In its simplest definition, an angel is a messenger. In many ways, Annie believes there are angels carrying information between herself, Ben, and Blumenfeld. Annie believes these messages are delivered at just the right times in their relationships in order to encourage healing.

Notice also that one of Annie's "little pieces" that make up her personality is a seven-foot-tall Viking angel named Telesporus. Not only does Telesporus act as guardian angel over Annie and her various personalities, he also watches over those whom Annie's life touches. For instance, one day as Annie turns and looks back into Blumenfeld's office, she believes that it looks as if he is crying. As she watches, she notices that Telesporus is standing next to Blumenfeld, bending over as if to comfort him.

Telesporus also comes to Annie when she is in the mental hospital. Annie recognizes Telesporus because he is asking for lemonade in the wintertime. Dr. Michael Connelly also becomes associated with angels. Much of this association comes from his name, which is Michael. Michael is also the name of an archangel from the Bible.



Style

Perspective

This story of brokenness and healing is written from Annie's own point of view. Annie's own story of abuse and neglect is paralleled in the life of a young boy that she is treating. While it is the closeness of this boy's hurt that makes Annie relapse into her own personal breakdown, it is also working with this boy that helps Annie heal. In many ways her ability to learn from the child not only leads to her healing but also to his.

Since Annie suffers with the trials of a psychiatric disorder, she tells her story from this viewpoint. She does not tell those who supervise her at Glenwood that she has her own mental issues. She is concerned they will not believe she is suitable to work with disturbed children. There are many times that Annie questions herself about her ability to work with these troubled kids. It is Blumenfeld that helps Annie to realize that it is her own struggles that allow her to be so gifted in her field. It is through her own search for healing that will help her to learn how to heal others.

This story is particularly powerful because it is Annie's own story and is told through her own voice. She shares with her reader the feelings of being out of touch with herself, of losing time and being unable to account for portions of her day, and of feeling unable to communicate with those around her. Annie also demonstrates the stigma felt by psychiatric patients even as they try to get help for themselves. Annie is not ashamed of her condition or her desire for help as much as the opinions of the people who do not understand her condition.

Tone

The tone of Annie's story is very thoughtful and retrospective. Overall the story is positive. Annie tells her story with no prejudices or biases because she has suffered with mental problems. She shows compassion and empathy toward her characters. Along with Annie's hope of healing and desire to help Ben, she also shows her own weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Many of Annie's dreams and visions are disturbing especially as she begins to remember the things that happened to her as a child. However, the book takes on a more hopeful tone as Annie begins to realize she is becoming more connected and is no longer losing time from her days.

Structure

Annie's book is divided into four separate parts. Each of these parts is assigned a number as well as a title. These parts also include several quotations that are related to the material that Annie writes about in that particular part of her novel. Each of these parts, with the exception of the fourth part, is divided into chapters. The fourth part is only a brief epilogue and therefore is not long enough to require chapter divisions. The



parts of Annie's book also each cover a specific period in her life. For instance, Part 1 covers the time when Annie first begins to work with Ben and learns the cruelty with which he was treated as a baby. It is during this part of the book that Annie's own mental stability begins to unravel. Part 2 begins with Annie's announcement she has stopped seeing Ben. The remainder of Part 2 details the time that Annie spends in the mental hospital and the beginning of her relationship with Blumenfeld. In Part 3 Annie writes about the remainder of her relationship with Ben and their process of healing one another.

Since the majority of Annie's book deals with therapy sessions, either with Ben or with herself, many of her chapters follow a pattern. In most of these chapters Annie writes about what actually physically happens during a therapy session. After each session is finished, Annie interprets what happened in the session both for herself and for her reader.



Quotes

"When a child does not know and cannot describe, in words or in play, what has happened to him, it dominates his life" (Part 1, Chapter 2, pg. 8.)

"I have made a good choice to come to Glenwood; I feel a renewal of the certainty I felt on my first visit" (Part 1, Chapter 2, pg. 10.)

"Words are angels, messengers - but suddenly, in this airless room, I have no words, no message, nothing to bring here" (Part 1, Chapter 3, pg. 12.)

"The terror of what I am doing suddenly takes my breath away, empties my mind of all words, while the angel in the magazine stares back at me, implacable" (Part 1, Chapter 3, pg. 13.)

"And, for a long time, I do write exactly what I think about my own work. Until it begins to touch my own life too closely" (Part 1, Chapter 3, pg. 15.)

"Is he trying to provoke me? Showing me his anger for my comment? Trying to find rules and limits? I don't know, but I feel it is important for me not to enter into a power struggle" (Part 1, Chapter 4, pg. 17.)

"It seems for all the world as if Ben has put big parentheses around our relationship, or rather, that we play together inside big parentheses" (Part 1, Chapter 10, pg. 40.)

"Ben has shown me, very clearly, how he learned to comfort himself when overwhelmed by his feelings: he tunes out human voices and rocks himself, but this comfort is really inadequate" (Part 1, Chapter 12, pg. 47.)

"As I sweep off the car windshield, a line comes to me, whole, like a finished painting - 'What you fear most has already happened'" (Part 1, Chapter 15, pg. 55.)

"And then I sit down to write, knowing that this report is about a living child, knowing too that others will use these results to make decisions about this child's life" (Part 1, Chapter 17, pg. 60.)

"But what Mary Louise does not know, and what I cannot say in this context, is that Dr. Connelly knows me already. He treated me as an adolescent. I was his patient and now he is reading my test reports" (Part 1, Chapter 17, pg. 60.)

"I push aside the subtle but ominous feeling that my life is not whole, the increasing sense that the pieces simply don't fit together" (Part 1, Chapter 18, pg. 65.)

"But I am afraid of my capacity to make things up, of my own treachery. And keeping up with my own deceptions is not easy" (Part 1, Chapter 19, pg. 69.)



"It doesn't even cross my mind to tell Melanie that the past is becoming increasingly discontinuous, as if someone keeps showing me slides in a carousel that contains frames I recognize, as well as blanks and frames I don't recognize" (Part 1, Chapter 19, pg. 69.)

"I feel suddenly wary. Everything within me is about to be named, boxed, contained and controlled" (Part 2, Chapter 28, pg. 99.)

"Listen, Annie, I want you to stay away from psychotherapy. It could even be dangerous for you" (Part 2, Chapter 44, pg. 121.)

"What's wrong with you can be changed only with medication and time. By the time you're in your mid-thirties, you'll be out of the woods" (Part 2, Chapter 44, pg. 121.)

"I did not know, after this first meeting, that I had already launched myself into a three-year relationship that would give me new ground to walk upon and the knowledge of a story that had hidden itself from me all my life" (Part 2, Chapter 45, pg. 125.)

"I was so afraid, because when I first met Melanie, I felt that way about her. She saw my hunger for a mother, my longing and need for a real relationship, and she saw my confusion about love" (Part 2, Chapter 47, pg. 134>)

"Imagine what it was like for me, coming out of the hospital, unsure of my footing in the world of "reality," to begin to speak to this man, this analyst who had stopped going to clinical conferences because he could not speak to anyone there. In his presence I found words, or rather, words found me" (Part 2, Chapter 47, pg. 135.)

"You have a kind of giftedness, Annie, that probably has always been inseparable from your suffering, and we don't know very much about that. I am sure that you were very, very good with those children" (Part 2, Chapter 49, pg. 142.)

"I found that to be with Ben, to play with him and be alive in what we were playing, I had to feel, I had to be with, things inside myself that were, they were ... well, they were finally unbearable" (Part 2, Chapter 49, pg. 142.)

"Healing is always two-sided, isn't it?" (Part 2, Chapter 50, pg. 143.)

"You were trying bring her a truth - you were trying to show her that all these promises she made to you and withdrew from you were killing you. You brought her the core of yourself, Annie, so that you could heal her and continue your relationship and be free to love again," Blumenfeld says slowly" (Part 2, Chapter 51, pg. 157.)

"Standing framed in the doorway, he nods to me, a little nod from this ordinary middle-aged man who must be real after all, because he sees with his heart" (Part 2, Chapter 51, pg. 157.)

"I can play with words, not only with Blumenfeld in his office, but with my sister again" (Part 2, Chapter 52, pg. 159.)



"But, Annie, if you do not publish, then you owe me nothing more. This therapy will have been a complete failure" (Part 2, Chapter 55, pg. 170.)

"He is softly weeping, and I can see Telesporus, the great guardian angel of my childhood, bending over him, as if to embrace him" (Part 2, Chapter , pg. 177.)

"For the first time, it is clear that it would be impossible for me not to go back to Ben, and to the other children I was seeing" (Part 2, Chapter 59, pg. 183.)

"It remains a mystery to me - how Ben's attachment to me endured that long two-and-a-half-month separation, and how we then proceeded to heal one another in the few months left to us" (Part 3, Chapter 62, pg. 196.)

"As I am a psychologist and a therapist, the way my own mind shapes an unbearable trauma interests me enormously" (Part 3, Chapter 65, pg. 210.)

"In the midst of this process of remembering and writing and reading in earnest, I have Blumenfeld nearby, a man who wakes up fully in the middle of the night, to help me bring into words what has been unknowable because it was unspeakable" (Part 3, Chapter 65, pg. 213.)

"Ben, child of my childhood - he could have been my own son" (Part 3, Chapter 67, pg. 217.)

"'No,' he says. 'That is wrong, Annie, and my words are very important here. The enema was rape, over and over again'" (Part 3, Chapter 71, pg. 238.)

"What has been wounded in a relationship must be, after all, healed in a relationship" (Part 3, Chapter 75, pg. 256.)

"I see suddenly, very clearly, that her trust in me changed as she acquired more and more clinical and experience, until I felt, in the last year we met, that what I said to her hardly mattered. She had her interpretations all ready, and my words were fitted to them. Anything that did not fit could be attributed to my 'denial' or 'resistance'" (Part 3, Chapter 79, pg. 271.)

"I try to notice what should be obvious, but what I have to struggle to grasp in this year of my most intensive clinical training is that this story about Ben in all his suffering is also a story about my suffering; it contains all the ways I have worked to heal both myself and Ben, to heal myself and Melanie, and myself and Blumenfeld too" (Part 3, Chapter 83, pg. 295.)

"But when an abandonment, a disastrous ending, imprints so much pain that life itself becomes a torment, as it had been for Ben, even as a baby, then the manner and meaning of leaving becomes vital" (Part 3, Chapter 85, pg. 305.)

"My relationship with Melanie deeply affects my understanding of myself and my questions about clinical relationships, particularly among women" (Part 4, Epilogue, pg. 312>)



Topics for Discussion

In what ways were Annie and Ben's pasts similar? How were they different?

How do Annie's past torments help her to be a better therapist? Explain your answer and give specific examples.

Compare and contrast Annie's experiences with Melanie and her experiences with Blumenfeld.

Consider the idea of play therapy. Do you believe it is effective? Why or why not?

Consider the idea that healing is two-sided. How does this book prove that this saying is correct? Give specific examples.

Why does working with Ben cause Annie to have a breakdown?

Why do you believe that Dr. Connelly tells Annie she should not return to psychotherapy? Why does he suggest that this type of therapy might be harmful to her?

Explain the purpose of Annie's internal friends such as Telesporus, Emily, and Erin. How did they help Annie to cope with her trauma as a child?