

Teen Idol Study Guide

Teen Idol by Meg Cabot

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Plot Summary

Jenny Greenley might just be the nicest girl in school. She runs the school's advice column, Ask Annie, where she gives much needed advice to members of the student body. Jenny is asked to escort a famous movie star around the school for two weeks. Luke Striker is visiting Clayton High School to research a movie role. He and Jenny become friends as she helps him learn the ropes around school. Luke is shocked that most of the school's students lack empathy. He even compares the school to a prison. Luke expects Jenny to stand up for others and to get involved in making the school a better place. Jenny feels however that she does a lot for others. She is always there to clean up messes and to soothe people's feelings. However, she comes to realize that what she does isn't enough. Instead of letting bad things happen and picking up the pieces, she should be preventing people from getting hurt by others. Her popularity, coupled with her friendship with Luke, allows her to make changes to herself and her school. Jenny comes to realize who she is and who her true friends are. She also starts a relationship with a boy whom she has loved for a long time, Scott Bennett, a fellow junior and member of the school paper.



Ask Annie 1-3, Chapters 1-3.

Ask Annie 1-3, Chapters 1-3. Summary

In Ask Annie 1, the advice column, Ask Annie, is published in the Clayton High School "Register." The first letter is from a student calling themselves "Going to Hell." The student asks what to do about their step-mother. The step-mother tells them everything they like is evil. Ask Annie tells the writer they are already in hell, and it is called high school.

In Chapter One, Jen is sitting in Mrs. Mulveney's Latin class when she, and about 23 others, witness Kurt Schraeder kidnapping Betty Ann. Betty Ann is Mrs. M's much loved Cabbage Patch Doll whom she dresses in seasonal costumes. Jen can't get the picture of Betty Ann being zipped into Kurt's backpack out of her mind. She is so bothered by it, that she talks about the issue with her best friend, Catrina "Trina," later that day. Trina thinks Jen is being silly, that it is only a prank, but Jen knows how much Mrs. M loves the doll and thinks it has to do with the fact that Mrs. M doesn't have children of her own. Jen works for the Clayton High School newspaper the Sentinel. During their editorial meeting, Jen brings up the idea that they should do an investigative piece on the kidnapping of Betty Ann. Scott Bennett, editor in chief and new kid to school agrees. His girlfriend, Geri Lynn Packard, does not. Scott assigns the piece to a boy on the staff and Geri Lynn argues that Jen should write the piece because it was her idea.

In Ask Annie 2, Annie answers a letter written by a fan of Luke Striker. The fan is obsessed with him and wants to fly to wherever he is. Annie tells the writer to stop obsessing and start thinking about finishing high school and going to college. She also mentions that Luke is still upset over his breakup with actress Angelique Tremaine. She ends her response with, "so get over it."

In Chapter Two, Jen tries to convince Kurt to ransom Betty Ann back to Mrs. M. She is worried he has no plans to return the doll and plans to destroy it. A ransom never occurred to Kurt, who thinks it is a huge senior prank just to hide the doll from his Latin teacher. Jen enjoys her job as Ask Annie and admits that people have always come to her with their problems. One year she had to skip Trina's birthday party and all heck broke loose. Trina told Jen that she was the "mayonnaise" that kept a party good. Jen tries to answer all of the letters sent to her, but she doesn't always publish the answers. She often gets letters from people she recognizes and some of the letters are personal and disturbing. One girl in particular, Clara "Cow" Schlosburg, writes Ask Annie every day. Jen worries about Clara, whom the other kids call Clara Cow. Jen works closely with the school counselor, Mrs. Kellogg, when she answers the letters. Jen is called into Mrs. Kellogg's office. She worries she is in trouble. When she arrives she finds the principal and vice principle waiting for her. Also a Mr. Mitchell is there. They tell her Luke Striker will be undercover at Clayton HS researching a role. He will be wearing glasses as a disguise and they want Jen to show him around for a few days. She agrees.



In Ask Annie 3, Annie receives a letter from a person worried because they confide in their best friend but their friend doesn't confide in them. Annie tells the writer that some people just don't have anything to share and don't want to bore others. The writer should stop boring people too.

In Chapter Three, Mr. Mitchell, the principal, wants Jen to tell her parents about Luke Striker. She decides to tell them that night after her brothers, Cal and Rick, go to bed. Cal wants to be on the SWAT team some day and Rick plans to be famous like Luke Striker. Jen's parents take the whole thing in stride. Her father is relieved the actor won't be staying at their house, and her mother warns Jen not to let Trina develop a crush on him. Jen explains that Luke will be in disguise. Jen goes to her room to email with Trina. Trina lives next door, but the girls use the computer more than the phone. Jen lives in a small town and there isn't much for the girls to do together outside of school. Trina tells Jen she missed seeing the dresses they have to wear for show choir. They are black with a red lightening bolt down the front. The girls are horrified. To top it off, the dresses cost \$180. Trina signed them up to do a car wash to help make up the money. Trina reveals that a boy named Steve McKnight asked her to the Spring Fling. Jen describes Steve as Trina's boy toy. Trina doesn't love him, but loves to take advantage of going out with him. Trina tells Jen she could be going to the dance too if she wasn't so nice to everyone. She tells Jen she could have even had Scott Bennett. Trina is under the impression that Jen has a small crush on Scott. Scott and Jen spent a lot of time together while at camp during the summer. Jen thinks that Trina is being ridiculous. Trina tells Jen she is saving herself for Luke Striker and it occurs to Jen that Trina would sleep with Luke if she found out he was at the school. The girls are emailing when Jen gets an instant message from Scott, screen name Otempora. He wants to know if she is upset he assigned her story to someone else. She tells him she isn't mad. Scott admits Geri has been harassing him about it, but he didn't think Jen was the type of girl to get mad over something like the paper. She agrees with him and returns to her homework.

Ask Annie 1-3, Chapters 1-3. Analysis

In Ask Annie #1, Ask Annie shows the main character's humor right off the bat. Her tongue and cheek response to the writer is very funny. The paper states that all letters, and their writers, are anonymous. Ask Annie is written by Jenny Greenley, a junior.

In Chapter One, Jen spends most of the chapter talking about the people she socializes with at school. She is a bubbly character who tends to ramble excitedly. She often circles in her narration; however, her voice is entertaining. Jen reveals that she is in show choir with her best friend. She is also on the newspaper where she has a secret job as an advice columnist. She talks about Mrs. Mulveney and Kurt Schraeder. Kurt is a popular jock who doesn't think about how his actions may hurt Mrs. M's feelings. Jen thinks highly of Scott, who she attended school with until his parents divorced and he moved away. She describes him as very attractive, smart, and nice. Jen isn't too sure what to think about Geri Lynn. She describes the other girl as ambitious and having an explosive temper. The Sentinel staff and their sponsor, Mr. Shea, attended a summer camp together. Geri Lynn was away at a different camp and Scott returned and joined



the paper. It was at camp where Scott was made editor in chief, not Geri Lynn, and where Mr. Shea asked Jen to write the column. Only Jen, Mr. Shea, and Scott know she is Ask Annie.

In Ask Annie #2, Annie's answer is full of humor. Luke Striker's character is introduced for the first time. It is also made clear that Jen follows his life in the tabloids.

In Chapter Two, Jen feels a certain amount of responsibility to the people who write to Ask Annie. She is a natural at keeping secrets and seems to be someone everyone confides in. She tries to write good responses to people and worries when people are not doing well. Sometimes she tells Mrs. Kellogg what she knows about students and sometimes she doesn't. It just depends on the situation. Jen thinks the administrators are underestimating the student body if they think someone who looks like Luke Striker can just put on glasses and be unrecognizable. However, Jen is reliable and she agrees to help them out.

In Ask Annie #3, it is clear Jen has no sympathy for the writer of this letter. She seems to almost take their letter personally.

In Chapter Three, Jen is worried about telling her parents about Luke, but they are surprisingly fine with the situation. She feels slightly bad not telling Trina about Luke, but knows her friend is never mad at her for long. Jen thinks a little about how crazy Trina would go over Luke. She is slightly surprised to hear from Scott, but doesn't read too much into it. Despite Jen's denials, it seems that she really may have feelings toward Scott. However, she writes those feelings off because of his relationship with Geri. She feels if Scott liked her he wouldn't have started hooking up with Geri. Geri told Jen she and Scott make out often. She showed Jen a calendar where she circled the dates they hook up with hearts, there are a lot of hearts. Jen thinks that Geri is picking fights with Scott because she is a senior and will be leaving Indiana for college in California. She relates this to the way Tricia behaves when toward their friendship when Tricia goes with her family to the lake.



Ask Annie 4-6, Chapters 4-6.

Ask Annie 4-6, Chapters 4-6. Summary

In Ask Annie 4, a student writes that she likes to flirt with guys until they dump their girlfriends. Then she doesn't want them anymore. Annie tells her that knowing she has a problem with this means she is halfway to solving it. She tells the writer to stop this behavior or she will be friendless.

In Chapter Four, Jenny is pulled out of class by Mrs. Kellogg and introduced to Luke Striker. She isn't prepared to meet him and blushes. Luke looks like every other kid at school, but Jenny is unexpectedly attracted to him. She leads him into Mrs. Mulvaney's Latin class and they spend the day together. Luke, known as Lucas, can't believe that students are at school so early and stay so long. Lucas is very quiet and Jenny isn't sure if it is his personality or if she has upset him somehow. It takes him until fourth period to wake up and that is only after he downs a Coke. Lucas asks about getting an espresso and is horrified there isn't a coffee shop on campus. They go to the Troubadours class together and Lucas meets Trina. Jenny worries that Trina is going to discover that Lucas is really Luke, but she doesn't. The three of them head to the cafeteria for lunch and Lucas is shocked.

In Ask Annie 5, the student writing in is embarrassed that her boyfriend chews with his mouth open. Annie tells her to sit away from him and he will stop when he realizes he is alone.

In Chapter Five, Lucas is horrified at the scene in the cafeteria, called the "caf." The place is a mad house. Everyone has their own place. Students have to walk the length of the caf to get their food and be seated. Jenny describes it as a place to see and be seen. They walk to the food and Jenny watches Lucas try to navigate the line. He is too shocked to even pick food or pay, so Jenny does both for him. They sit at the table with others from the Register to eat. Lucas has Salisbury steak on his plate. He tells Jenny he is a vegetarian. He has yet to look up from his plate. Geri is enamored by him and says "Hi," but he ignores her as he is still really confused. Jenny looks at Scott and notices he has leftovers as usual. Scott brings to school whatever he cooked for himself and his dad the night before. Scott offers to share his ziti with Lucas and Lucas eats it quickly. The caf erupts in "moos" when Cara walks in. Cara screams at everyone to stop, but that just makes them do it more, which makes her scream more. Jenny doesn't understand why Cara doesn't try to make herself less obvious. She notices that Cara dresses and looks like the popular kids, but it just makes her look worse. Kids start to throw food at her, as usual, and Jenny gets ready to go and comfort her. Lucas/ Luke is angry at the way Cara is treated. He is more upset when Geri tells him it is normal and that Jenny will fix Cara. Jenny goes to find Cara in the bathroom and notices Lucas has followed her. Before Jenny can go into the bathroom, Luke grabs her and demands to know why she didn't try to stop everyone from treating Cara so poorly. Jenny gets angry and snaps at him, then goes into the bathroom to deal with Cara. Cara doesn't



understand why the popular kids don't like her. Jenny tries to tell her to be herself, but Cara doesn't want to hear it. The bell rings and Jenny leaves. Cara doesn't thank her for the comfort, she never does, and Jenny thinks one of the reasons Cara has no friends is that she doesn't know how to treat others. Jenny faces Luke, who acts as if they didn't fight, and they resume their day.

In Ask Annie 6, the writer doesn't want his girlfriend giving him hickeys all the time. Annie tells him his girlfriend is doing this so that everyone will know he is taken. That the girlfriend is insecure.

In Chapter Six, Jenny realizes that everyone at school has fallen in love with Lucas. He is nice and tall and looks like Luke Striker, so how could they not? She thinks about how Scott usually gives her a ride home, but that lately the rides have become awkward because Geri has been moody. Trina and Steve pull up in Steve's car and ask if Jenny and Lucas need a ride. Jenny gets in, but Lucas says he is meeting someone. As they leave, Jenny sees him get into a limo and hi-five someone inside. Trina is full of questions about Lucas and has an obvious crush on him. Jenny is obsessed with what he said to her about Cara and is a little offended by his attitude. Jenny is surprised when Luke returns to school the next day, fully intending to stay for two weeks. He looks better and more relaxed, coffee in hand. Jenny tells him she didn't think he would come back seeing as how he hates the school and her. Luke is surprised she thinks he hates her. He tells her he is curious about the Cara thing and wants to see how it all turns out. She is about to ask him what he means when the bell rings. Luke doesn't seem to enjoy being judged by the popular crowd, Jenny thinks it is a weird thing to be upset over especially because the popular crowd approves of him. Luke asks Jenny why she is taking Latin and she tells him she heard Mrs. Mulveney was a good teacher so she wanted to try her out. He relates to this because it is the same way when working with a director or producer. He tells Jen that Mrs. Mulveney seems off and she tells him about Betty Ann and how the doll is a substitute child. Luke is really upset that Jenny knows who has the doll and didn't demand it be returned. She tells him she doesn't have that kind of influence and he tells her she does. Lucas and Geri argue so much over the role of journalists in Hollywood that Scott assigns them a pro/con column to hash out their views. Trina asks for Lucas's number in front of Steve and calls him, getting his voice mail eleven times. Geri stares at Lucas all the time, which is upsetting to Jenny. Why would Geri want Lucas when she has an awesome guy like Scott?

Ask Annie 4-6, Chapters 4-6. Analysis

In Ask Annie, Annie delivers some sound advice, and also provides encouragement.

In Chapter Four, Lucas is pretty hard to read. He doesn't speak much and seems to be effortlessly cool and charming. Jenny finds herself attracted to him against her better judgment. The music teacher is a temperamental man and treats Lucas as an annoyance until the new student calls him "sir." Then things are fine. Jenny doesn't like show choir and is only in the program because Trina convinced her to do it. Jenny is embarrassed by the requirements of choir and isn't very performance oriented. Most of



the choir kids eat lunch in the choir room because they are scared to eat in the cafeteria with guys like Kurt. Trina would rather eat in the choir room because she is afraid she will lose her solo to someone else who eats with the teacher. However, Jenny puts her foot down on this so they eat in the cafeteria.

In Ask Annie, Annie again offers sound advice. This time however, she is not sarcastic about it.

In Chapter Five, a new side of Jenny and a new side of Lucas/Luke is shown in this chapter. Until the caf, Lucas has been quiet and into himself. He hasn't talked much to Jenny. Luke is horrified by the scene with Cara in the caf and is angry that people would treat her so poorly. He is also upset that Jenny just stood by and let it happen. Jenny doesn't know where Luke gets off not talking to her all day and then holding her responsible for Cara. She is really upset when Luke compares the high school to a prison. She doesn't understand what he means. This is a normal part of Jenny's world. She tells Luke she has better things to do than babysit a Hollywood prima donna, then she walks into the bathroom to comfort Cara. Cara desperately wants to be popular, but she just comes off as a desperate poser. She doesn't want to be herself, she wants to be whatever she can be in order to be liked by the popular kids. Jenny thinks Cara would be pretty if she didn't spend so much time trying to look like the popular girls. Cara tells her she sounds like Ask Annie. Jenny deals with Cara, but it is obvious she feels Cara is partially responsible for the way people treat her. Jenny is worried she will be in trouble after yelling at Lucas/Luke and is surprised to find he is still waiting for her and not angry when she leaves the bathroom.

In Ask Annie, Annie shows she has a good understanding of teen behavior and the motivations behind their actions.

In Chapter Six, Jenny's insecurities over Luke are starting to show. It is also telling that he calls her "Jen" instead of "Jenny." Jenny seems to want him to be a stuck up guy who acts like Kurt and Courtney, the popular kids, but he seems to be more like Jen and her friends. There are certain "rules" of high school which Jenny takes completely for granted, but these same "rules" seem upsetting to Luke. She thinks it is fine when Courtney gives Luke the once over, but Luke frowns when she does this. He also thinks it is funny when Mr. Hall berates Jenny in show choir, something Jenny doesn't find funny at all. The romantic tension between the two seems to be building. Jenny is fighting conflicting feelings about Luke. She realizes he is smart and a very caring person. At the same time she really likes Scott. They read the same books, have interesting conversations and she loves just about everything about him.



Ask Annie 7-9, Chapters 7-9.

Ask Annie 7-9, Chapters 7-9. Summary

In Ask Annie 7, Annie gets a letter from a girl who thinks her boyfriend is cheating. Annie gives the reader a list of ways to tell if someone is a cheat. Then tells her to trust her feelings, unless she is insecure and always thinks he is cheating. In that case she tells the girl to get a grip!

In Chapter Seven, Jenny, Trina, and Steve head to the Chi Chi's Mexican restaurant parking lot at the mall to help out with the Troubadour car wash. Scott and Geri stop by on their way to pick out a computer for Geri to take to college. Scott helps wash cars and Geri is clearly annoyed. Scott and Jenny talk about books and then get into a water fight. Geri is angry and Jenny realizes she is insecure about graduating when Scott has another year left of school. The two begin to fight in the parking lot and Trina tells Jenny she can date Scott finally if he and Geri break up. Luke shows up out of nowhere and helps with the carwash. Jenny didn't invite him, didn't think he would want to come, but he seems to be enjoying himself. Geri is heard screaming that she is breaking up with Scott, then she runs into the mall crying. Jenny is about to go after her when Luke takes off his shirt.

In Ask Annie 8, a reader asks Annie what to do about being in love with their friend's girlfriend. Annie warns that nothing can be done until they break up, and even then it is not a good idea to date a friend's ex.

In Chapter Eight, the minute that Lucas takes his shirt off, Trina knows he is Luke Striker. She identifies him by the tattoo he has of the name Angelique. Jenny quickly slaps her hand over Trina's mouth and drags her into the bathroom at Chi Chi's. Geri is in the bathroom and overhears them talking about Luke. Jenny swears them both to secrecy and the girls fight over who is going to ask Luke to the Spring Fling. Trina is already going with Steve, but Geri confirms that her relationship with Scott is over and she leaves the bathroom to ask Luke to the dance. The girls get outside and find Luke standing on the roof of a car trying to fend off every girl and boy in sight. The word is out that he is Luke Striker and now everyone wants a piece of him. Trina and Geri join the frenzy and Jenny moves over to where Scott is standing in the distance. She wants to help Luke somehow, but Scott has already called the police to assist. The police pull up and escort Luke to his limo, which pulled up at the same time, he gets in and stops in front of Jenny. Luke climbs out of the sunroof and asks her to get in the car with him. Jenny is in shock, but Trina pushes her to the car and the police escort her inside.

In Ask Annie 9, Annie answers a letter from a girl who seems to be stalking the boy she likes. Annie suggests giving the boy a chance to contact her.

In Chapter Nine, Jenny gets into the limo and takes in the new experience. She has never been in a limo before and thinks it is pretty cool. Luke instructs the driver to take



them to his condo and Jenny wonders if he likes her. Then she realizes he would never like a girl like her when he could have a girl like Angelique Tremaine. She tells him he shouldn't have taken his shirt off and then mentions Angelique. Luke isn't paying much attention, but tells her he doesn't really want to talk about Angelique. Jenny apologizes for the behavior of her friends. Luke shrugs it off and tells her some people just are like that, they want to see if the star is human, but she is different. Jenny wonders if that is the truth or if people just want to be able to tell their friends they touched Luke Striker. At the condo they sit on the porch while Luke has a beer and Jenny drinks a soda. Luke tells her the people at the high school are horrible. He never went to high school and can't believe so many people lack empathy. He learned about empathy from a pastor on the set of the show he worked on as a child. Luke tells Jenny she has an obligation to do something. Jenny is upset. She tells him she doesn't have the power to change things. She feels like he is on a celebrity crusade to bring empathy to the school. She tells him how she is the mayonnaise, someone who is only there to smooth things over. Luke tells her he doesn't agree that she is mayonnaise. He thinks that she is special sauce.

Ask Annie 7-9, Chapters 7-9. Analysis

In Ask Annie 7-9, Jenny is beginning to use the knowledge from her experiences outside of the paper to answer the questions of those who write to her. She sometimes allows her feelings to show through. Other times she gives sound advice meant to encourage the writer.

In Chapter Seven, Jenny needs a break from the stresses of Lucas and school. She isn't really excited about helping with the car wash, but cheers up when she sees Scott. Jenny isn't a flirty girl, but she steps out of character to flirt with Scott. Their silliness helps to contribute to Scott and Gerri's fight. Jen feels guilty that they are fighting and feels guilty she didn't invite Luke to help the car wash.

In Chapter Eight, Jenny feels horrible that Luke's cover is blown. She is amazed at the frenzy his identity has created at the car wash. She wants to help him, but doesn't know how. This seems to be a theme with Jenny. She isn't afraid to help people once they have gotten into trouble, but she has a hard time getting involved when it comes to stopping others from being hurt. Jenny is surprised to find out that Scott and Geri have been losing interest in each other and she can't believe her friends are all over Luke. It is obvious that Luke was caught up in the fun and normalcy of the car wash, as it didn't occur to him that his tattoo would unveil him as a famous actor. He seems used to the frenzy going on around him and seems to try to want to interact with fans, if they would only give him a little breathing room. When Luke asks Jenny to get into the limo it becomes apparent that he feels something toward her.

In Chapter Nine, Jenny wonders if Luke wants to have sex with her, but then realizes the only reason he brought her to his condo was to convince her to change things at her school. She is convinced she doesn't like him in a romantic way and he doesn't like her in that way either. She tells him that she is tired of always having to fix problems and



Luke tells her she needs to prevent problems instead of fixing them. Jenny doesn't want to hear this from Luke and is fairly defensive about it, but Luke feels that Jenny could be more than she is being. When she yelled at him outside of the bathroom, he realized that she was more than just a nice girl who was everyone's friend. She could also be passionate about things.



Ask Annie 10-12, Chapters 10-12:

Ask Annie 10-12, Chapters 10-12: Summary

In Ask Annie 10, Annie is asked how to handle a situation where there will be drinking at a party. The writer doesn't drink and doesn't like to be around drunks. Annie tells him to not go and to stop caring so much what his friends think.

In Chapter Ten, Jenny surprises everyone by pulling up at home in Luke's limo. She tells her mom and brothers what happened and, after some excitement, they go on about their day. Trina pulls Jenny onto the porch and they sit on the swing while Trina grills Jenny about her day. Jenny doesn't tell Trina, but Luke spent the day lecturing her on standing up to others and effecting social change. Jenny decides to start with Trina when her friend tells her she is going to dump Steve after they go to the movies. She doesn't want to do it before the movie because he is paying and she really wants to see the show. Jenny tells her she is just using Steve and to break it off if she doesn't love him the way he loves her. Trina accuses Jenny of being jealous that she has a date to the Spring Fling. Jenny admits that Luke asked her to the Spring Fling. Luke wants to experience a high school dance. He has never had a normal American teen experience. Jenny agrees to go with him and the two agree they are friends. Luke told Jenny he would have to leave town now that the reporters knew where he was, but that he would return the next weekend to go to Spring Fling. Trina is devastated by what Jenny says to her, not that she wants her to be honest with Steve, but that she is going to the dance with Luke.

In Ask Annie 11, the writer asks Annie how to deal with a competitive friend. Annie tells her to stop allowing the person to compete.

In Chapter Eleven, the town is crawling with media after Luke is exposed and everyone finds out Jenny is going to the Spring Fling with him. People are being interviewed about Luke, but Jenny doesn't want to talk with the media. She doesn't think you should give interviews about your friends. After being hounded by the media for a few days, Jenny is over all of the attention. Trina still isn't talking to Jenny and is upset because Steve decided to break up with her. Trina eats in the choir room now and Steve eats at their table. Scott and Geri are still broken up, but Geri is upset that Scott isn't upset over the break up. Jenny's mother tells her Cara is considering going to military school. Jenny decides it is time to do something to help Cara. She makes Cara over and befriends her. The two walk through the caf together and everyone is stunned that Cara has gone from wannabe to being herself. Kurt moos at her, but is stopped by Jenny and - surprisingly - popular girl Courtney Decker. Cara keeps it together during lunch and does herself proud.

In Ask Annie 12, Annie receives a letter from girl who is playing sports for her father, but hates it and wants to go to ballet. Her father isn't interested in her dance and only seems to participate when she is in sports. The girl's father told her she will let the team



down if she quits. Annie tells her she will let the team down if she doesn't play up to her potential, which she will never do if she hates it. Annie tells her to quit and just prepare for her father to be disappointed. He will get over it.

In Chapter Twelve, Trina still isn't speaking to Jenny as they prepare for the choir to attend the Bishop Lures Show Choir Invitational. Jenny misses her friend, but is upset that Trina keeps missing the hat Jenny throws at her during the performance of "All That Jazz." Jenny hates show choir and finds it impossible to perform the steps required of her for the numbers. She also is getting tired of Mr. Hall criticizing her efforts. Jenny throws the hat again and Trina intentionally misses it. When the hat lands in a tuba, Mr. Hall freaks out on Jenny. He tells her she can choose to be a part of the team or to leave the class. Jenny decides to leave. Mr. Hall tells her she can't leave because show choir is a class. Jenny tells him to watch her and she exits the room. She takes off her choir dress and throws it in the trash, bitterly realizing that no one came to see if she was ok.

Ask Annie 10-12, Chapters 10-12: Analysis

In Ask Annie 10, Annie tells another to stop caring so much what others think. This could be advice Jenny could use herself.

In Chapter Ten, Jenny decides to finally take her own advice, and that of Luke, and begin standing up for people and speaking her mind. She is no longer willing to just let things happen and then clean up the mess. She decides to start with Trina. Trina could care less about Steve and Jenny tells her she is tired of cleaning up the mess Trina makes when she treats Steve badly. Trina doesn't is upset over Jenny's worries about Steve, but she is more upset that her friend is going to take Luke to the dance knowing she has a crush on him. Luke and Jenny truly like each other as friends. Jenny realizes that Luke has very few people in his life whom he can trust with friendship. She agrees to go to the Spring Fling with him because it means so much to him.

In Ask Annie 11, Annie delivers practical advice to the writer. If the writer stops feeding into the friend's competitiveness, then the competition will stop.

In Chapter Eleven, Jenny is on a mission. She is no longer willing to "go along to get along." She wants people to treat Cara with respect. She also wants Cara to respect herself. Jenny realizes she is helping Cara because she likes her, not because Luke wants her to. Jenny is finding the courage within herself to make the changes she has always wanted to make. She isn't changing for Luke Striker, she is changing for herself.

In Ask Annie 12, Annie offers comfort to her reader and tells them to follow their heart and to stand up for what they want. To live for herself and not for others, this is the same thing Jenny is learning to do.

In Chapter Twelve, Jenny is becoming more confident in her abilities to change things around her school. She feels her ability to create change is a combination of her own personality and the fact that she is friends with Luke. Jenny is on a roll. She is tired of

Trina's behavior, tired of Mr. Hall's tantrums and tired of show choir. She decides she isn't going to stay around and get yelled at for something she isn't responsible for and calls Mr. Hall's bluff by walking out of class.



Ask Annie 13-16, Chapters 13-16:

Ask Annie 13-16, Chapters 13-16: Summary

In Ask Annie 13, Annie is asked how to deal with parents who are overprotective. Annie tells the writer to explain to her parents that they are not allowing her to have normal teen experiences. The writer is feeling isolated.

In Chapter Thirteen, the staff of the Register helps Jenny see humor in the choir situation. She appreciates how they have supported her. They joke about the custodian wearing her dress under his overalls and Jenny laughs hysterically. Scott can't seem to wrap his mind around the fact that she threw the dress away. Geri and Kwang go to dig the dress out to see if chemicals will make it explode, but the dress has already gone out to the garbage. Scott offers Jenny a ride home and she realizes they are alone for the first time. She is usually in the back seat and Geri is in the front. Now she is in the front and notices they have similar CDs in their music collection. Jenny is silent as she thinks of Trina telling her she and Scott are perfect for each other. She also thinks of all of the hearts in Geri's planner book. Scott is about to ask Jenny a questions when she is bombarded by reporters outside of her house. He waits until she is inside then pulls away. Jenny would love to talk to Trina about Scott, but they are still not talking. Karen Sue calls and asks if Jenny is ok, Jenny realizes she is only worried about the Troubadours and hangs up on her. The phone rings late at night and it is Luke. He tells her he has heard about what she did for Cara and what she did in choir that day and that her attempts to make changes at school are working. Jenny asks how he knows these things and he tells her he has his sources. He tells her that he still wants her to get Betty Ann back and that he knew she could do it. Jen thanks him and hangs up.

In Ask Annie 14, the writer asks about her guy friend who always asks out everyone but her. She has a crush on him, but doesn't think he likes her back. Annie tells her to just ask him. Either he will say he isn't interested or say he is.

In Chapter Fourteen, Kurt and his friends have taken Jenny's unintentional advice and decided to ransom Betty Ann. They are demanding Mrs. Mulveney give every senior an A or they will destroy the doll. When she should be in show choir, Jenny goes to see Mrs. Templeton, Ms. Kellogg's assistant. She gets Kurt's locker combination but Betty Ann isn't inside the locker. Jenny confronts him at lunch and he tells her the doll is somewhere in his room. Jenny is eating when Karen Sue and others from the choir approach her. Karen Sue snottily tells her thank you for ruining show choir. Jenny is about to say something when Cara comes to her defense. Karen calls Cara a cow and the entire lunchroom goes silent. Scott tells the girls to get lost and Kwang supports Jenny and Cara too. Jenny is touched that her real friends came to her defense. She begins to cry and Geri gives her a tissue. Jenny rides home with Scott and has him stop at Kurt's house, knowing he won't be home. Jenny uses her clout as Luke Striker's friend to have Kurt's little sister get Betty Ann from under his bed. Jenny tells the little girl that someone is about to tell the principal about Kurt stealing the doll. If he gets in



trouble he won't be able to graduate. The girl gives them the doll and Scott tells her to let Kurt know what they did and that Scott came to get the doll. Jenny looks at him funny and tells the girl to let Kurt know it was both of them. Scott tells Jenny he would rather Kurt beat him up when he finds out what they have done. Jenny begins to cry and he leans over her to give her some napkins. When he moves toward her she imagines he might kiss her, but he doesn't.

In Ask Annie 15, the writer asks Annie to print a letter in the paper letting their parents know they should get to take the summer off instead of getting a job to pay for college. The writer thinks it is the parents' job to pay for college. Annie tells the writer to take two weeks off and then get a job. Their parents work and don't get three months off and neither should the writer.

In Chapter Fifteen, Jenny and her mother do their best to clean Betty Ann and Jenny places the doll back on Mrs. Mulveney's desk. The Latin teacher is thrilled to have the doll back and is back to being a fun, energetic teacher. Kurt's sister told him he wouldn't graduate if he was reported to the principal, so he doesn't make a scene in class. He doesn't go after Jenny and Scott either. Jenny skips choir for the third day and is preparing herself for getting in trouble for skipping. The choir is at Invitational and Jenny spends 4th period in the library. Trina joins her and tells her she also quit the choir. She apologizes to Jenny for her behavior and tells her that she really misses Steve. She also admits that Jenny was right about how badly she treated him. She admits she is jealous of Jenny's friendship with Luke and that Jenny is a truly nice person. They are leaving when the librarian asks for their passes. She feels bad, but has to report them for skipping. Trina gets a ride home with Jenny and Scott after school. Jenny is relieved and disappointed at the same time. As they are getting ready to leave, the Troubadours come back in defeat. Trina calls Steve's name, but he is angry at her and proceeds to go off on her in front of everyone. He tells her he is quitting the plays and music he has done just for her and joining the baseball team. She tells him she loves him and they begin to kiss. Scott and Jen walk to his car alone and he asks if she is really just friends with Luke. She tells him they are just friends, but Scott seems angry. She doesn't have a chance to talk to him because there are reporters at home when they arrive. He pulls away and Jen is upset. Trina calls and asks Jenny about the identity of the mystery girl Geri is convinced Scott likes. Jenny's stomach hurts thinking about it.

Ask Annie 13-16, Chapters 13-16: Analysis

In Ask Annie 13, Annie offers the reader honest advice about how to deal with her parents. She also tells the reader to turn to an adult for further help.

In Chapter Thirteen, Jen secretly hopes that Scott will ask her to the Spring Fling and really wants Luke's call to be his attempt to back out of going to the dance. He has been in hiding since leaving Clayton, but has been keeping tabs on Jen from afar. Jen is glad that he is proud of her progress, but isn't confident she can get Betty Ann back by the Spring Fling. She is also upset that everyone seems to be upset with her. Luke tells her it is a good thing, it means that what she is doing is working. Jen is upset when she



realizes the Troubadours aren't calling her house to make sure she is ok, but to convince her to return so they have a good performance. Jen is hurt by the fact that no one from choir cares about her feelings. She is very hurt that she hasn't heard from Trina and that Trina considers her date with Luke such a betrayal.

In Ask Annie 14, the nature of Annie's advice is changing as Jen changes. She no longer tells the writers to come up with a snappy response. She is now encouraging her readers to be honest in their approach with others and to accept the answers they get and move on.

In Chapter Fourteen, Jenny is beginning to understand who her true friends are. They are the people who allow her to change and grow and still support her anyway. When her friends stand up for her at lunch she is amazed. She realizes she really cares about Scott when they ride home and she thinks about their friendship. Jenny was ok that Luke only liked her as a friend, but the idea that Scott only likes her as a friend makes her sad. She is nervous when they go to rescue Betty Ann, but she knows it is the right thing to do.

In Ask Annie 15, Annie tells it straight forward and like it is. She tries to find a compromise to make the letter writer and their parents happy.

In Chapter Fifteen, Trina's apology goes a long way in making Jenny feel better. She is glad to have her best friend back and glad to have someone to talk to. Trina has realized that she is in love with Steve and he is happy to take her back now that he has been able to gain some control over their relationship. Scott's strange behavior is bothering Jenny and she can't handle the thought that he is in love with some unknown girl. Trina teases that it may be Jenny, but Jenny is convinced Scott wouldn't be upset with her if he liked her. Jenny is nervous about her date with Luke the next night. She doesn't really feel comfortable going to the dance. She would rather go to Kwang's anti-Spring Fling rally with Scott and her other friends.



Ask Annie 16-19, Tabloids, Chapters 16-18.

Ask Annie 16-19, Tabloids, Chapters 16-18. Summary

In Ask Annie 16, Annie receives a letter from a reader accusing her of giving bad advice, espousing free love and worshipping Satan. Annie tells the person they don't know her and so can't assume she worships Satan. She also tells the reader she agrees with some of their views on sex, drugs and alcohol.

In Chapter Sixteen, Jenny gets her hair done and gets ready for the Spring Fling. She meets up with Trina in the yard and the girls take pictures. Jenny's dress is blue chiffon; Trina's dress is from the Goth store. Luke's limo pulls up, but it is Steve who gets out. He tells the girl that Luke gave him the limo because he didn't need it. Everyone assumes Luke is going to stand Jenny up, until he pulls up on a motorcycle and takes her to prom. They have a good time and have more fun watching everyone else. Jen and Luke are slow dancing when she notices Geri had come to the dance. She begins to panic. Luke laughs and tells her to relax, Geri came alone and not with Scott. Jenny tries to deny she is looking for Scott when Luke tells her he has her all figured out. And that he knows she is Ask Annie from the school paper. Luke teases her that she isn't very neutral and tells her he knows about Betty Ann. Luke asks Jenny for her advice. He wants to know how long a guy should wait, after being broken up with, before he can ask another girl out without being accused of it being a rebound. Jenny assumes he is asking about Scott and Geri's break up and how long Scott should wait before asking someone else out. Geri is making a beeline toward her and Luke, so Jenny thinks fast. She tells him the guy should wait a really, really long time. That he should wait until he was sure. Luke tells her he thought she would say that, then turns around and kisses Geri Lynn on the lips. They are still kissing when it is announced that Luke and Jenny are Spring Fling king and queen.

In Ask Annie 17, the writer asks Annie what to do about a boy she is in love with, but doesn't know she is alive. Annie tells her to let her know when she figures it out because she wants to know too.

In Chapter Seventeen, as they have their coronation dance, Luke explains that he and Geri started talking on the phone after the day at his lake condo. He wanted Geri to watch over Jenny, but then they began talking of other things. Jenny thinks they will be a good couple. He is only a year older than Geri and she will move to LA in the fall for college. Luke likes that Geri challenges his thinking. He also likes her outspoken attitude. Luke swears he will keep her secret about Ask Annie from Geri, he also promises not to tell her Jenny is in love with Scott. Jenny denies it and Luke encourages her to tell Scott how she feels. He tells her the limo is outside and will take her anywhere she wants to go. Geri thanks her for helping the two of them get together. Geri and Luke dance and make out on the dance floor. Jen and her friends decide to



take the limo to Kwang's anti-Fling party. They arrive to find Kwang and Cara having just shared a kiss. No one mentions it for fear of hearing about it. Jenny entertains everyone with her tale of the coronation and she sees Scott by the campfire. Scott tells her he knew about Geri and Luke, had tried to tell her in the car, but thought she might be upset by it. Trina interrupts them to ask Scott if Cara and Kwang were making out. Scott says he doesn't know and asks Jen if she wants to go on a walk. Jen says yes.

In Ask Annie 18, the letter writer asks if she should make the first move. Annie says she doesn't know. She is also trying to figure this out for herself.

In Chapter Eighteen, Jenny and Scott walk a short distance away. Jenny stops him from killing a flower and he begins kissing her. Jen pulls away when she gets stabbed by her corsage pin. Scott misinterprets her actions and tells her he had to kiss her because he probably will never get another chance to do it. Scott tells her he knows she likes Luke. Jen is pretty confused and doesn't understand why he is talking about Luke, but Scott keeps talking. Scott admits he liked her when he saw her at camp, but wasn't sure if she liked him or was just nice to him. Then Geri told him Jenny didn't date, so he began seeing Geri. Jenny decides Geri is going to be a dead woman. Jenny realizes Scott thinks she is in love with Luke. She tells Scott she wasn't in love with Luke that she is in love with him. She tells him she never dated anyone because she had loved him since the 5th grade. Scott tells her he loves her too and they return to the campfire and their friends. Scott, Luke and Geri agree that Jenny should run for student body president the following year. She agrees. Trina and Cara agree to be her campaign managers.

In Tabloids, Luke and Geri are seen around LA together. Luke has a bandage on his arm where he is having his Angelique tattoo removed. His new movie, US 30, about a high school boy saving the world from terrorists is out in theaters and has good reviews.

In Ask Annie 19, one of Annie's readers writes her a follow up letter. She told the boy that she liked him and wants to know what will happen now. Annie tells her to live happily ever after.

Ask Annie 16-19, Tabloids, Chapters 16-18. Analysis

In Ask Annie 16, Annie's response confronts a reader who has some interesting preconceived notions about her.

Chapter sixteen is full of surprises. Luke has yet to reveal who his source at the school is. He asks Jenny about the rules of a rebound relationship. Jenny assumes he is asking for Scott; the reader assumes Luke is asking because he likes Jenny. The reveal is that he is asking for himself because he loves Geri. He calls her Babe, leading the reader to assume they have had a relationship for some time. This chapter is the climax of the book's plotline.

In Ask Annie17, Annie's answer reflects Jenny's mixed emotions about Scott.



In Chapter Seventeen, Jen is happy about Luke and Geri, but she is worried that Scott will be heartbroken. Jen wants nothing more than to be with Scott. When she sees him at the campfire she knows she is in love with him, that she has been in love with him since they were young. She still doesn't know how he feels about her. Scott is similarly worried. He makes it obvious he thinks Jenny has a crush on Luke.

In Ask Annie 18, Annie's answer reflects Jenny's mixed emotions about Scott.

Chapter Eighteen is the romantic climax and the books resolution. Jenny and Scott have found each other. Trina and Jenny are friends, Cara is made whole and all of the other sub plots are tied up nicely. The book ends on a happy and encouraging note.

The tabloids provide closure to Luke Striker's story.

In Ask Annie 19, Annie tells the reader to live happily ever after. It is what Jenny plans to do now that she is with Scott.



Characters

Jenny Greenley.

Jenny Greenley is a high school junior at Clayton High School in Clayton, Indiana. She is known as a nice person and seems to be a friend to everyone. Jenny's best friend refers to her as the "mayonnaise" that keeps people happy and situations calm. Jenny writes Ask Annie, an advice column, for the Clayton High School Register. The Register is the high school paper. Jenny's column is anonymous. She uses her own opinions to help those who write in to the column. Jenny spends a lot of time comforting people who have been emotionally injured at school, but she must learn to help them by stopping them from getting hurt in the first place. Jenny is asked to escort an actor around school.

Luke Striker.

Luke Striker is a famous 19 year old movie star. Luke was a child actor and is currently a teen heart throb. He is attending Clayton High School in disguise in order to research a movie role. Luke is known as Lucas Smith around school. He follows Jenny through her day until he is outed as a famous star during a car wash. Luke is horrified that no one at school seems to have any compassion. He encourages Jenny to effect social change at her school. He considers Jenny a friend and eventually dates Geri Lynn.

Catrina

Catrina is Jenny's best friend. Trina wants to be a performer some day. She is in the show choir and has convinced Jenny to be a part of the choir also. Trina is in love with Luke Striker and is one of the first people to realize that Lucas is really Luke in disguise. Trina is dating Steve who is also in show choir. She doesn't really like Steve, but continues to date him so he will pay for her to go places. Trina finally realizes she is in love with Steve after he breaks up with her.

Scott Bennett.

Scott Bennett is a junior transfer student at Clayton. He lived in town when he was younger, but moved away after his parents divorced. Scott is now the editor of the Register. He is the only person who knows Jenny is actually Ask Annie. Scott and Jenny enjoy discussing books and listen to the same music. Scott is secretly in love with Jenny, but dates Geri Lynn through most of the book.



Cara

Cara is a wannabe. She copies everything the cool girls wear and do, but is still not respected. Cara would prefer to be rejected than to dare to be herself. When Cara enters the caf the other students make mooing sounds. Cara puts herself on display and doesn't appreciate Jenny when she tries to help. Eventually Cara has a makeover and becomes more comfortable with her true self.

Kurt Schraeder.

Kurt Schraeder is a popular, football-playing senior at Clayton. Kurt and his friends enjoy making fun of Cara. Kurt upsets Mrs. Mulveney when he steals her beloved doll, Betty Ann. Kurt doesn't seem to care that the teacher is upset. He thinks that his joke is hysterical.

Mrs. Mulvaney.

Mrs. Mulvaney is the Latin teacher and owner of the Cabbage Patch doll, Betty Ann. Mrs. Mulvaney is known as a good teacher. She enjoys working with her students until Betty Ann is stolen and then she is clearly heart broken at losing her doll.

Geri Lynn Packard.

Geri Lynn is a beautiful senior who is part of the Register staff. She plans to attend college in LA and dates Scott. Geri gives Luke her phone number and the two of them begin dating in secret. Geri becomes a friend to Jenny as the year passes.

Steve McKnight.

Steve is Trina's boyfriend. Steve is a nerdy guy who is willing to do anything Trina wants him to do. Steve is in choir, instead of baseball, because Trina talked him into it. Steve allows Trina to use him and treat him badly until he can no longer take it. Steve breaks up with Trina, but takes her back when she realizes that she loves him.

Mrs. Kellogg.

Mrs. Kellogg is the school guidance counselor. She works closely with Jenny to help answer the Ask Annie advice column. Mrs. Kellogg trusts Jenny and is the reason that Jenny is chosen as the person to escort Luke around school.



Objects/Places

Email/ Instant Messenger.

Jenny and Trina live next door to each other, but prefer to send emails and instant message each other in the evenings. They use email and IM to gossip about the day and do homework together. Scott contacts Jenny via instant message to make sure she isn't upset that he gave the Betty Ann story to another student.

Clayton High School.

Clayton High School is in the small town of Clayton, Indiana. The school is where the main setting of the story takes place. The high school has a cafeteria which is the center of student social life.

Ask Annie.

Ask Annie is the anonymous advice column in the Clayton HS Register. Jenny is the writer of the Ask Annie column. The only people who know Jenny writes the column are Scott and Mr. Shea, the sponsor. Ask Annie answers letters from students.

Clayton High School Register.

The Register is the school's newspaper. Geri, Scott, Kwang, Jenny and Luke are all a part of the Register. Scott is the editor even though he is a junior. Geri thought she would be editor, but lost out because she didn't attend the paper's summer camp.

Betty Ann.

Betty Ann is Mrs. Mulvaney's Cabbage Patch doll. It was given to the teacher years earlier and is like her substitute child. The kidnapping of Betty Ann is one of the book's subplots. Jenny and Scott rescue Betty Ann once Jenny decides to begin fixing problems at the school.

The Troubadours.

The Troubadours is the show choir group run by the temperamental Mr. Hall. Trina is in show choir and loves it. Jenny is in show choir and hates it. After Mr. Hall yells at Jenny for not knowing her routine, Jenny walks out of class.



The Caf.

The Caf is the place to see and be seen in the school. Students enter the caf and have to walk through the entire student body to get lunch and sit down. Cara and others are harassed in the caf. it is the place where Jenny begins to stand up for others.

The Car Wash.

The Car Wash is held by the Troubadours. Each member of the show choir is required to purchase an expensive costume for the Invitational. The car wash is held to help students raise the money for costumes. Lucas comes to help Jenny with the car wash and be a part of the fun, but when he takes off his shirt he is exposed as Luke Striker.

Spring Fling.

The Spring Fling is the school's big dance. Luke begs Jen to go with him, as friends, so he can have the quintessential high school experience. She agrees to go with him and they are crowned king and queen of the dance.

Bishop Luers Show Choir Invitational.

The Bishop Luers Show Choir Invitational is the big show choir event of the year. The choir spends the year practicing for the spring event. The choir goes to the Invitational without Trina and Jenny.



Themes

Learning to Stand Up for Others.

Jenny is known as a person whom everyone likes. She is a friend to everyone and she is the nice girl. Trina even refers to Jenny as the "mayonnaise," meaning she is the person who keeps things from falling apart and smooths things over. However, being a nice person all the time and picking up the pieces of people's bad behavior is exhausting for Jenny. Jenny feels that she is doing everything in her power to help others, but Luke disagrees. Luke feels that the students in school lack empathy for others. He is horrified by the way people treat each other and he expects Jenny to do something about it. Luke points out that Jenny does nothing to try and prevent people from getting hurt. He also points out that she is a very influential person and needs to effect social change at the school.

Jenny decides to stop being nice and allowing bad things to happen to good people. She works with Cara to help the girl become accepted by her peers. When Kurt says something to Cara, Jenny stands up for her. Once she does, others also stand up for Cara.

Jenny tells Trina that she is hurting Steve and either needs to love him or cut him loose. Trina doesn't want to hear what Cara says, and becomes angry over it, but eventually understands Jenny is telling the truth.

Jenny and Scott go to Kurt's house and rescue Betty Ann. Jenny returns her to Mrs. Mulvaney and stands guard over her until the teacher comes in.

Effecting Change.

Until Luke comes along, Jenny doesn't realize how important she is in the school's hierarchy. Jenny decides that she will try to make the changes that Luke encourages her to make. Change is something Jenny welcomes with arms wide. She is tired of being everyone's friend. She is also tired of cleaning up other people's messes. Jenny agrees with Luke that the school needs empathy, but she doesn't fully understand what he means until she is the one who needs help. Jenny is humiliated in show choir after Trina turns on her and Mr. Hall yells at her. She leaves the choir and is called by members of the choir. However, the callers don't care about Jenny. They care about winning Invitational. This treatment reinforces to Jenny that Luke is right. People at Clayton need to learn empathy for others. Jenny does so well effecting change that she is encouraged to run for student body president the following year.



Empathy.

Luke refers to Clayton high school as a place worse than prison. He is horrified to see how people treat each other. No one cares that Cara is crying in the bathroom. No one stands up for Cara when she is being mugged. Students think it is funny to see Mrs. Mulvaney so hurt by Betty Ann's disappearance. He wonders how so many people could be so cruel to each other. High school is nothing like he expected it to be. Jenny has sympathy for others, but has yet to learn empathy. She wants to comfort people when they are hurt, but she isn't willing to stand up for them to prevent their emotional trauma. Jenny considers the student body's lack of empathy to be normal in high school. It isn't until Luke shows her how he sees things that she begins to understand empathy.



Style

Point of View

Teen Idol is recounted in the first-person point of view. It is recounted from Jenny's perspective in the present tense. Before each chapter is a question to Ask Annie followed by Ask Annie's response. These short snippets are recounted in the first person by both the questioner and Ask Annie. All other characters in the book express their feelings through dialogue and action. Jenny is the only person whose thoughts the reader has access to.

Setting

Teen Idol takes place in the small town of Clayton, Indiana. Jenny describes the town as being too small to appear on most maps. Most of the book's action takes place at Clayton High School during Jenny's normal high school day. Often, Jenny and others interact in the school parking lot or in the car on the way home. The climax of the story comes at the school's Spring Fling dance. The resolution takes place at Kwang's home during the anti-Fling rally.

Language and Meaning

The characters in Teen Idol speak like regular teenagers. They express their emotions through popular slang. However, many of the pop culture references in the book seem to date it. The author tends to write of things which may not be understood by many contemporary teens. Such as her allusion to Andy Warhol in the opening of one of the chapters. The harassing and lack of empathy seen in the story is described in a believable way.

Structure

There are eighteen chapters in Teen Idol, nineteen Ask Annie segments and two tabloid snippets. The book begins and ends with Ask Annie. A new Ask Annie is included before each chapter.

Quotes

"And even though it was a little bit like Scott's head had been transplanted onto the body of one of Mrs. Mulvaney's Greek god statues or something, because he was like three feet taller and had turned totally buff since he was, you know, ten, I could tell he was still the same Scott" (Chapter 1, p. 11).

"Another reason for the anonymity of Annie is that she is privy to a lot of people's deepest, darkest secrets" (Chapter 2, p. 22).

"Trina is fairly morally bankrupt, but I can't help liking her anyway" (Chapter 3, p. 42).

"His posture and gait were indiscernible from those of Kurt Schraeder and his friends, when they came strolling in a few seconds later, just before the third and final bell" (Chapter 4, p. 56).

"It was kind of weird to think about - you know, your life from somebody else's perspective" (Chapter 6, p. 87).

"Why would he have asked ME to come home with him, if sex was what he was after" (Chapter 9, p. 138).

"Not a lot of people there seem capable of having empathy for the feelings of others...They mercilessly torture the weak and idolize the bullies" (Chapter 9, p. 139).

"Or maybe I'd just decided to grow a backbone for a change" (Chapter 10, p. 151).

"Cara wasn't the only one undergoing a transformation" (Chapter 11, p. 175).

"Because the only person at Clayton high who'd ever cared enough to run after anyone to make sure she was okay was me" (Chapter 12, p. 194).

"You used to . . . I don't know. Be much more interested in smoothing things over than in stirring things up" (Chapter 14, p. 227).

"And I knew. Just like that" (Chapter 17, p. 277).

Topics for Discussion

Cara is not a very sympathetic character in the book. Why might the author have written her this way? Do you like Cara? Why or why not? How does Jenny feel about Cara? Does her opinion about Cara change? How? Why? How does Cara change from the beginning to the end of the book? What causes her to change?

Mrs. Mulvaney loves her doll Betty Ann. Rumor has it that the doll was a gift from her students.

- 1) Why does Jenny think Betty Ann is so important to Mrs. Mulvaney?
- 2) Why did Kurt take her?
- 3) How does Jenny deal with her guilt about Betty Ann's disappearance?
- 4) Does Jenny understand she is wrong to keep Kurt's secret?
- 5) Why does Luke become so upset about Betty Ann's kidnapping?
- 6) How and why does Jenny solve the problem?

Why is Jenny a member of the Troubadours? How did she get talked into joining? How does she feel about show choir? What does she eventually do about show choir?

Scott and Jenny have known each other for a long time. Explain how their relationship and friendship has grown over the years. What do they have in common? Why do they enjoy each other's company?

What does Trina mean when she tells Jenny that Jenny is the "mayonnaise?" How is Luke in agreement with Trina's assessment?

Explain the unlikely friendship between Jenny and Luke.

- 1) How did they meet?
- 2) What does Luke find interesting about Jenny?
- 3) How does Jenny feel about Luke?
- 4) What happens to cement their friendship?
- 5) Do you think their friendship is a lasting one? Why or why not?

Jenny helps Cara go from wannabe to just being herself. How has Cara been acting like a "wannabe?" Who does she want to be like? Why does she want that for herself? What advice does Jenny give Cara? Does the advice help? Why or why not?