

Wake
by Lisa McMann

A SIMON PULSE GUIDE FOR READING GROUPS

About the Book

When Janie is eight years old, it happens for the first time: While traveling with her mother, she suddenly blacks out and is plunged into a strange office setting where a balding man is in his ratty underwear, being ridiculed by his coworkers. Janie has somehow been catapulted into the dream of the sleeping man in the seat in front of her. Unable to control her entry into his dream, Janie also has no idea how to speak or help once inside. This scary scene repeats itself over the years. Janie learns to avoid sleepovers, as she finds herself inside the dreams of the other girls, learning things about them that she may have preferred not to know. Then, when she's in high school, the worst situation presents itself: study hall in the library right after lunch. Janie is sucked into the dreams of her classmates—some simple and innocent, some frightening, and one featuring herself and the dreamer engaged in a kiss! Janie's gift (or curse) is usually a burden, but now it's more confusing than ever as she gets closer to Cabel, whose dreams include a scary past along with passionate kisses.

About the Author

Lisa McMann has published many short stories, one of which won a Templeton Award. Lisa was born in Michigan and now lives with her family in the Phoenix area. Read more about Lisa at lisamcman.com, or be her friend at www.myspace.com/lisamcman.

Discussion Topics

Would you want to have Janie's gift of entering other people's dreams if you could control it? Why or why not?

Did you guess what Cabel's double life was before it was revealed in the book? Would you be brave enough to take on a job like his?

Did you think that Cabel was really with Shay? Did you think he'd be with Janie in the end or not? How did your feelings for Cabel change as you read the book?

Which of these characters' dreams would you want to have access to: Shay, the Captain, Janie's mom, Stu? Which of your friends' or family members' dreams would you want to enter? Which would you NOT want to enter?

Do you think Carrie was a good friend to Janie? Was Janie a good friend to Carrie? What examples from the book make you say yes or no?

How would the book be different if Janie and Cabel had parents who were loving and present?

If you were telling a friend about WAKE, how would you describe it? Is it fantasy or reality? Do you think people like Janie really exist?

Research and Activities

Make a dream journal. Using a blank book and scraps of fabric, markers, stickers, and/or other materials, decorate your dream journal to reflect your personality.

Use your dream journal to write down everything you can remember from your dreams, then, using a dream analysis book, try to figure out what your dreams meant. (This can be done in pairs or in a group and the meanings can be shared at the end.)

Name all of the ways in which Janie's gift could be helpful to the police.

What comes next? At the end of WAKE, you were treated to a sneak peek of FADE, the sequel. Using that excerpt, write the next chapter or the next few pages of FADE, as you think the story should continue. Share your ideas with your reading group.

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