



I Have Lost My Way Gayle Forman

Book Talk by Amanda Bollinger

Author Biography and Information

<https://www.gayleforman.com/>

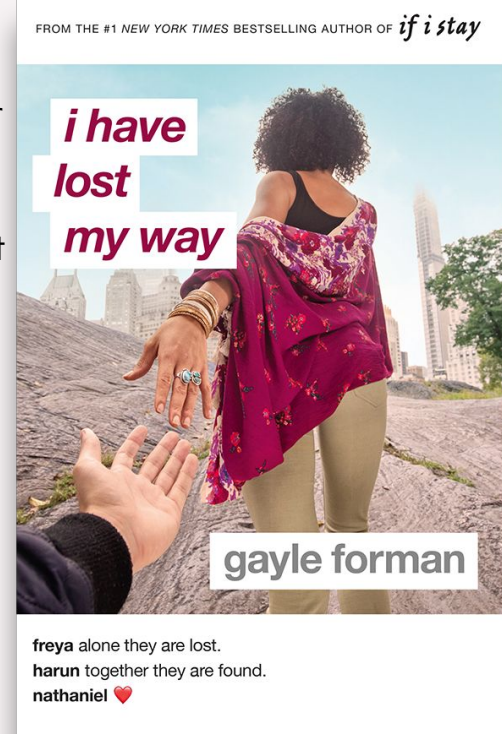


<https://www.gayleforman.com/about>

- American young adult fiction author and journalist
- Began to professionally write as a journalist after college; wrote for *Seventeen* magazine
- Freelance journalist for *Details*, *Jane*, *Glamour*, *The Nation*, *Elle Magazine*, and *Cosmopolitan*
- Forman began writing novels at the age of 34 and her first novel *Sisters in Sanity* helped her realize her passion in writing YA fiction.
- Awards:
 - 2009 Good Reads Choice Award Nominee for Young Adult Fiction
 - 2009 NAIBA Book of the Year Awards
 - British Fantasy Award in 2010
 - 2010 Indie Choice Honor Award winner for the #1 New York Times bestseller *If I Stay*

Summary

I Have Lost My Way follows three young adults struggling on their own before their paths finally cross on this fateful day. The story has multiple narrators and often switches between their points of view within chapters. It takes place over the course of one day, but is broken up with flashbacks that paint in the backgrounds of the three characters. Freya is an up and coming singer who loses her voice and has an unstable and complex relationship with her family. Harun is a Pakistani American Muslim who struggles to come out to his parents and is dealing with heartbreak. Nathaniel arrives to New York by himself under unknown circumstances after an incident. Each of these characters is suffering from a great loss, but they help give each other courage to overcome these tragedies as they bond throughout the day. Together, they fight through the pain to feel alive again.




<https://www.gayleforman.com/books/i-have-lost-my-way>



Quote 1

“I knew Jasmine was meant to be pretty and her manner of dress sexy, and I knew she was an object of desire by the way my brother was talking. But I didn’t care about Jasmine. It was Aladdin I couldn’t take my eyes off of. His face was pretty, delicate, kind of like Amir’s. And the scenes with Aladdin bare-chested made that tickling in my belly stronger than ever” (36).

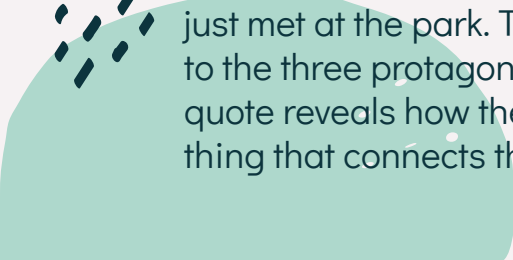
This flashback reveals Harun’s thoughts and reaction when he first feels attracted to a male character, comparing his beauty to his own cousin. He notes how their features are more desirable than the character Jasmine but perceives something to be wrong with him for not aligning with his brother’s reaction. This experience contributes to Harun’s fear of coming out to his family since he is terrified of them viewing him as disgusting and broken.



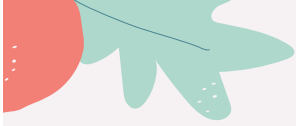


Quote 2

“They may be complete strangers, with different lives and different problems, but there in that examination room they are measuring sadness the same way. They are measuring it in loss” (69).



Freya and Harun accompany Nathaniel to the urgent care clinic despite having just met at the park. The doctor asks Nathaniel to rate his sadness which leads to the three protagonists to ponder whether sadness can truly be rated. This quote reveals how they each feel alone in their own way yet that is the very thing that connects them all to this very day.



Quote 3

“To be the holder of other people’s loss is to be the keeper of their love. To share your loss with people is another way of giving your love” (235).

Freya, Harun, and Nathaniel builds a close connection with each other throughout the day and opens up about their respective losses. Although they started out feeling lost about their own paths, they learn to face the reality that they have to come into terms with their loss and deal with the consequences.

Dale-Chall Readability Score

Raw score 3.2085

Adjusted Score: $(3.6365 + 3.2085)$


Final Score: 6.8

Grades 7 - 8

Lexile Complexity Score

810L

Upper Level Indicators are provided for text with Lexile measures of 660L or above and are based on two factors: word frequency and sentence length. These factors have been shown to be reliable predictors of how difficult a text is to comprehend. (Lexile)



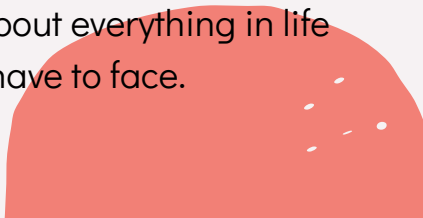
Categories from *Adolescents in the Search for Meaning*

Chapter 4: Books about Real-Life Experiences

There are some aspects of the characters' life that may not be as relatable, like Freya's status as a singer. However, the book touched upon an array of issues including mental health, broken families, the fickle nature of fame and the sacrifices required to achieve it, homosexuality, and the challenges associated with being a Muslim American. These young people only met by chance but in the space of one eventful day they supported each other in unexpected ways.

Chapter 5: Books about Facing Death and Loss

The highlight of the book are the characters, Freya, Nathaniel and Harun, each of them facing various problems that any individual could relate as their own, enough to empathize with the characters. Whether it is losing something that you thought had defined your life and its future, or losing your past self by coming into terms with your reality or losing just about everything in life – loss is something we all have to face.



Teaching Strategies



- This book can be incorporated into the curriculum (may be best to teach in grade 9-10) which focuses on the central theme of loss. How can loss be interpreted and defined through these characters? This may be a good example of a novel to analyze and dissect in terms of the YA genre.
- This could also be an opportunity to discuss how healthy ways to cope with loss and provide a safe space.
- Since there are multiple narrators, their diverse backgrounds could serve as a discussion for whether these characters were relatable and easy to empathize with.
- Possibly have an activity for students to create a character (whether it be a mirror of themselves or traits that they would like to see more in characters) to join the group on their day together.

