



Lost & found

By Brooke Davis

First published 2015

Genre & subject

Family saga

Australian Fiction

ABIA General Fiction Book of the Year (2015)

Matt Richell Award for New Writer (2015)

Short-listed for Debut Fiction Indie Book Awards (2015)

Synopsis

At seven years old, Millie Bird realises that everything is dying around her. She wasn't to know that after she had recorded twenty-seven assorted creatures in her Book Of Dead Things, her dad would be a Dead Thing, too.

Agatha Pantha is eighty-two and has not left her house since her husband died. She sits behind her front window, hidden by curtains and ivy, and shouts at passers-by, roaring her anger at complete strangers. Until the day Agatha spies a young girl across the street.

Karl the touch typist is eighty-seven when his son kisses him on the cheek before leaving him in the nursing home. As he watches his son leave, Karl has a moment of clarity. He escapes the home and takes off in search of something different.

Author biography

Brooke Davis grew up in Bellbrae, Victoria and currently resides in Perth, WA. She has worked as a travel writer, editor, and bookseller. Davis graduated with an Honours degree from the University of Canberra, winning the Allen & Unwin Prize for Prose Fiction, the Verandah Prose Prize, and the University Medal.

Davis completed her PhD. at Curtin University of Technology and during her time there, Davis received the 2009 Bobbie Cullen Memorial Award for Women Writers, the 2009 AAWP Prize for Best Postgraduate Paper, and the 2011 Postgraduate Queensland Writing Prize. Davis' thesis investigated how the process of grieving is represented in ways that deconstruct and resist the unspoken social mores that govern it. The creative component of Davis' PhD was *Lost & Found*.

Discussion starters

- How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored?
- Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities. Why do characters do what they do? Are their actions justified? Describe the dynamics between characters (in a marriage, family, or friendship). How has the past shaped their lives? Do you admire or disapprove of them?
- Discuss the plot: Is it engaging—do you find the story interesting? Were you surprised by complications, twists & turns? Did you find the plot predictable, even formulaic?
- Talk about the book's structure. Does the time-line move forward chronologically? Is there a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints? Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way she did?
- What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
- What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
- Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?
- If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
- Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

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