



The Lost Father

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ANYWHERE BUT HERE (1987) introduced readers not only to a talented new writer but also to an unforgettable set of characters. In THE LOST FATHER, the unpredictable Adele August returns, now even less able than before to deal with her daughter Ann Stevenson, or Mayan Stevenson, or Mayan Atassi, depending on what name the protagonist has chosen to use. Although Mayan's grandmother, Lillian August, is now dead, she is still very much alive to Mayan. Unfortunately, while she provided Mayan with the only real home she ever had, Lillian was also responsible for imbued her, like Adele, with the belief that a woman could have no identity independent of a man. During her childhood, Mayan saw Adele yearning for the husband who had deserted her; as an adult, Mayan becomes convinced that until she finds her father, she cannot go on with her life.

Leaving medical school, Mayan becomes a detective, pursuing leads from Wisconsin to Montana, from New York to Egypt, and finally, in California, succeeding in her quest. However, Mayan discovers that although her father is delighted to see her, he is no longer necessary to her. What is far more important than finding her father is the fact that during her explorations of her own memories and her own beliefs, she has found herself. THE LOST FATHER should be especially meaningful to a generation full of children who have lost contact with a parent, but who are here shown that they need not be emotionally crippled as a result.

Sources for Further Study

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