

THE NIGHTMARE THIEF

DISCUSSION GUIDE



ABOUT *THE NIGHTMARE THIEF*

Fans of Natalie Lloyd will be swept away by this whimsical middle-grade debut about a girl, her family's dream shop, and a nightmare thief determined to change the course of her life as she knows it.

Twelve-year-old Maren loves working in her family's dream shop where she can hand-craft any dream imaginable. The shop has only one rule. Dreams cannot be given to a person without their consent. Maren has no problem with this—until her sister has an accident that leaves her in a coma. Maren's certain she can cure Hallie with a few well-chosen dreams. Figuring nobody will find out, she slips Hallie a flying dream.

When her sister smiles and laughs for a few seconds, Maren is sure her cure is working. But a strange new customer from the shop has been following Maren. And she's laid the perfect trap to blackmail Maren into creating custom dreams for her...but they aren't just dreams, they are nightmares. As things get more dangerous for Maren, she has to make a choice: protect her family or protect the unknown dreamers out there from her family's magic.

PRAISE FOR *THE NIGHTMARE THIEF*

"Lesperance has crafted a wonderfully original world... The delightfully descriptive text sets a cozy scene, but there is also real danger and a deliciously disconcerting villain. There is magic and mayhem, horror and hope, and the thread of family and friendship weaving it all together." —*Booklist*, **STARRED Review** ★

"A hair-raising, nontraditional horror novel with fantastical elements. Will have universal appeal for children who don't mind a scare." —*School Library Journal*

"A spine-tingling adventure." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[An] absorbing tale...Maren is a memorably flawed and earnest protagonist."

—*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NICOLE LESPERANCE lives near Boston with her husband and two small children. Nicole copyedits and writes middle grade and YA, and she is the proud owner of two cats. This is her first book. Visit her online at nicolelesperance.com.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is your favorite character, and why?
2. What is your favorite scene, and why?
3. If you were making a dream, what would it be about? What ingredients would you use?
4. If you were to create a nightmare, what would it be about? What ingredients would you use?
5. If you could have some kind of small magic like the people of Rockpool Bay, what would it be? How would your type of magic help the people in your community?
6. If you were Maren, how would you have reacted to Obscura Gray forcing you to make nightmares? Would you have made them for her, or refused and confessed that you had broken the dream shop rules to Lishta?
7. What are some ways that Maren and Obscura are alike? What makes them different?
8. Do you think Amos was right to keep being friends with Curtis? Why or why not?
9. If you were Maren's family, would you keep selling nightmares after everything that happened? If you did, would you create any new rules that people buying nightmares would have to follow, or ban certain kinds of nightmares?
10. If you could change the ending of the story, what would you change? Why?
11. If you could read this book from another character's point of view, which character would you pick? What new things would you learn from the character you chose?
12. What is one question you wish you could ask the author?