

# The Ghost Locket

AUTHOR

**ALLISON RUSHBY**

SCIS: 5398491

ISBN: 9781760654139



## SYNOPSIS

Eleven-year-old Lolli must return to London and break a promise she made to herself—to never again enter the house in Spitalfields, an historic building managed by her family.

There, Lolli must face up to what she saw in the house several years ago and make things right for two ghosts, one friendly and one decidedly not, and open her heart to people in both the living and twilight worlds.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allison Rushby, the daughter of an author, was raised on a wholesome and steady diet of classic English literature. Some of her favourite books, re-read countless dog-eared times include Rumer Godden's *The Dolls' House*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle* and Noel Streatfeild's 'Shoes' series. She has long been a fan of cities with long, winding histories, wild, overgrown cemeteries, red brick Victorian museums, foxes and ivy. She prefers to write with a cup of Darjeeling tea by her side and a Devon Rex cat curled up in her lap. Her work includes *When This Bell Rings*, which was a Notable in the CBCA Awards, *The Mulberry Tree*, which was shortlisted in the West Australia Young Readers' Book Award, *The Turnkey*, which was shortlisted in the Speech Pathology Awards and *The Seven Keys*, which was longlisted in the Davitt Awards.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 'I know not to call it a museum, because it isn't. It's an art installation. I don't really understand what that means, but when Freya explains it, she says the house isn't about artefacts, red ropes and reading labels. Apparently it's about emotions and drama,' (p 4). How is the House in Spitalfields similar or different to a museum, and why do you think it had such a mixture of positive and negative reviews? Have you ever visited anywhere like the House in Spitalfields? Would you like to? Why/why not?
- Read the author's note about the Dennis Severs house. Does knowing the House in Spitalfields is inspired by a real place change your opinion? Why or why not? Look up some pictures from the house (good place to start is <https://dennissevershouse.co.uk/gallery>). Is it similar or different to what you imagined from reading *The Ghost Locket*?
- How does the author create an eerie atmosphere in *The Ghost Locket*? You could consider elements like how she uses plot, the London setting, descriptions and dialogue.
- "Lolli, it's not good for you to be this way. You can't go through your life being so . . . disconnected . . . We're all

connected, Lolli. To each other. To the past. To the present and future. It can't be just you. On your own. It's not healthy. It's not how things are meant to work," (pp 29-30). Do you agree with this quote? Why or why not? How does Lolli learn to connect with others, and how does it change her as a person?

- How is Lolli truthful or untruthful within the novel, especially with expressing how she's feeling? Find a moment in the book where Lolli feels she has to, for whatever reason, distort the truth. Why does she do this? Do you agree or disagree with her decision? How does Lolli feel when others think she's lying when she's telling the truth?
- "She made her own family, really. Cobbled it together." "You're a cobble. I'm a cobble." Elsie laughs. "And very happy cobbles we are together too," (p 114). Family is an important theme in the novel. What different perspectives of what it means to be a family are we shown in the novel? How does the family that Freya 'cobbled' together affect who Lolli is as a person? How would you define your own 'family'? Does it go beyond just your close blood relations?
- Consider the events of the novel from Freya's perspective. How might she see or be affected by things differently to Lolli?
- 'I want to cover my ears with my hands. I don't want to talk about it. If I don't talk about it, it's not real,' (p 171). How does Lolli process Elsie's death? Do you think there is a right or wrong way to handle grief?
- How do you think Suzie's work at Tiny Pieces is making a difference, both to individuals and to the community? Can you think of any places like Tiny Pieces in your own area?
- "So, when we offer to help, like you did with Britt, you have to be okay with the fact that sometimes people will accept that help and sometimes they won't. Sometimes it will take a couple tries before they're ready to accept help," (p 161). Why do you think Lolli giving Britt the business card hurt her feelings? Have you ever tried to help someone and found someone wasn't ready or willing to accept that help? Is there a right or wrong way to resolve the situation?
- 'I think, sometimes, when you're not feeling so good inside yourself, you can start to believe that the rest of the world feels the same way,' (p 206). Do you agree with this quote? Why or why not? How does it relate to Lolli's feelings and actions in the novel?
- Lolli has different coping strategies for the pressures and anxieties she experiences in the novel including breathing, visualisation and mind mapping her ideas. How do these methods help her process what she's going through? How could you use similar strategies if you were feeling like Lolli?
- If they were to make a movie adaptation of *The Ghost Locket*, who would you cast in the lead roles and why?