

This Isn't Everything You Are

Reader's Guide

1. How does the winter season and weather affect each of Justin and Lizzie's trauma responses?
2. Justin at one point considers that he's been experiencing near meltdowns and actual meltdowns more frequently than usual. What is happening to trigger them? Do you think Justin suspects why it's happening? Or is he in denial? For someone who is "almost always completely honest," why might he not be facing this honesty about himself?
3. If Lizzie had chosen to move in with her moms instead of Justin, how might Lizzie's path have been different? How would it have affected her relationship with Justin?
4. There are references throughout the story to Hugh, Lizzie and Justin's cousin and Justin's best friend. How has his death affected each of them?
5. During Lizzie and Justin's drive in the winter storm, Lizzie accuses Justin of playing the victim and hiding behind his autism. Why does she feel he's doing this? Do you agree with her?
6. While Lizzie is definitely "lost" throughout the story and figuring out who she is and what she wants, Justin also concludes she is sad. What does he see and recognize to come to this conclusion?
7. Justin struggles with routine disruptions and unpredictable behaviors from others. What kinds of things on a regular basis cause you to struggle? How does your build-up of struggles differ from Justin's? How do his reactions and yours (or others like you) differ?
8. Is Lizzie to blame for Skylar's accident? Why or why not?
9. How do you live with uncertain truths or fuzzy memories? How have Lizzie and Justin dealt with their unknown past? How might they work through it, moving forward?