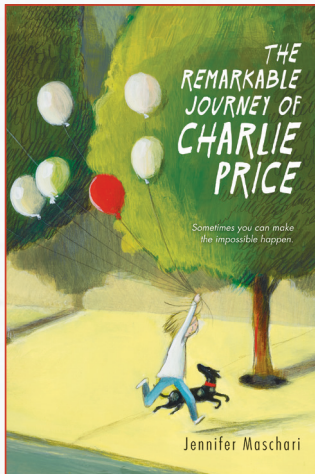


THE REMARKABLE JOURNEY OF CHARLIE PRICE

DISCUSSION GUIDE

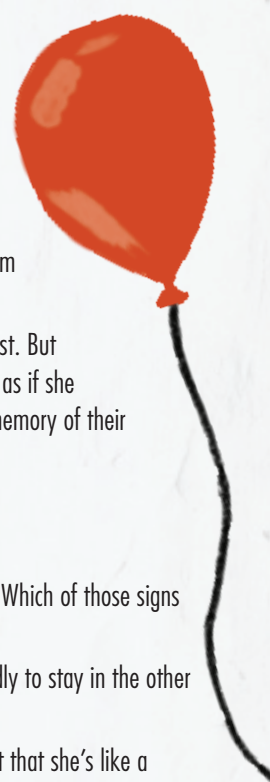


ABOUT THE BOOK

Ever since twelve-year-old Charlie Price's mom died, he feels like his world has been split into two parts. *Before* included stargazing and Mathletes and Saturday scavenger hunts with his family. *After* means a dad who's completely checked out, comically bad dinners, and grief group that's anything but helpful. It seems like losing Mom meant losing everything else he loved, too. Just when Charlie thinks things can't get any worse, his sister, Imogen, starts acting erratically—missing school and making up lies about their mother.

But everything changes when one day he follows her down a secret passageway in the middle of her bedroom and sees for himself. Imogen has found a parallel world where Mom is alive!

There are board games, scavenger hunts, Mom's famous spaghetti again, and everything is perfect . . . at first. But something doesn't feel right. And Imogen wants to spend more and more time on the other side. It's almost as if she wants to leave the real world for good. If Charlie doesn't uncover the truth, he could lose himself, the true memory of their mother, and Imogen . . . forever.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the first chapter we're told, "There were three things that Charlie should have noticed that day. But he didn't" (p. 3). What are those things? How might the events of the story have changed if Charlie had noticed these things sooner?
2. Why does Charlie give up Mathletes? In what ways does Charlie's love of math help him save Imogen and Frank?
3. Charlie remembers some pamphlets his mom gave him "about how grief took time and how it was different for everyone" (p. 19). Take a look at all the characters in this story: Charlie, Imogen, Dad, Frank, Elliott, and Edna. How do each of them approach grief?
4. Go back to the story of Draco the dragon constellation (pp. 43–44). Why do you think it is Charlie's favorite story? How is the story of Draco similar to Charlie's story? How is it different?
5. Edna tells Charlie that Ruby "goes where she's needed" (p. 62). Why do you think Ruby follows Charlie? What is it that Charlie needs?
6. Why is it easier for Charlie to talk to Ruby about his problems instead of talking to anyone else? How does Ruby try to help Charlie in return?
7. What does Charlie's dad mean when he uses the phrase "there's no such thing as a free lunch" (p. 117)? How does this phrase apply to Charlie's story?
8. What signs did Charlie notice before Frank disappeared? Which of those signs does Charlie see in Imogen?
9. Why do you think the characters in the book want so badly to stay in the other world instead of the real world?
10. What does Edna mean when she tells Charlie and Elliott that she's like a lighthouse (pp. 194–195)?
11. Charlie has to find a way to convince Imogen "to choose him, her life in the real world, and what *could be* instead of Not-Mom and what *had been*" (p. 224). Why do you think people often dwell on the past instead of focusing on the future?
12. What does Dr. Miller mean by "You are not Swiss cheese" (p. 241)?
13. Charlie and Imogen's dad isn't around very much throughout the story. How does their dad's grief impact Charlie and Imogen after their mom dies?
14. Why do you think it is easier for Charlie to recognize that Not-Mom isn't the same as his real mom? Why is it harder for Imogen to realize this?
15. If the characters had known that by going down the hatch to the other world they'd be losing their true memories of the ones they'd lost, do you think they still would have gone down there? Why or why not?



Photo by Molly Saugandah

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jennifer Maschari is a former middle school teacher who writes books about kids who are brave. She lives in Ohio with her husband and her stinky (but noble) English bulldogs, Oliver and Hank. This is her debut novel. You can find her online at www.jenmaschari.com.