

# CHANGE PLACES WITH ME

LOIS METZGER



## ABOUT THE BOOK

Rose has changed. She still lives in the same neighborhood with her stepmother and goes to the same high school with the same group of kids, but when she woke up today, something was just a little different than it was before. The dogs who live upstairs are no longer a terror. Her hair and her clothes all feel brand-new. She wants to throw a party—this from a girl who hardly ever spoke to her classmates before. There is no more sadness in her life; she is bursting with happiness.

But something still feels wrong to Rose. Because until very recently, Rose was an entirely different person—a person who is still there inside her, just beneath the thinnest layer of skin.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think it bothers Rose that people around her keep bringing up how she used to be?
2. The world of *Change Places with Me* is full of new procedures to change yourself—internally and externally. What do you think makes these procedures so enticing? Why doesn't Evelyn trust them?
3. What differences and similarities do you notice between the world we live in today and the world portrayed in the book?
4. What are some of the various "skins" Rose hides behind throughout the book? Why do you think she tries to hide her true self? What makes her uncomfortable in her own skin?
5. Look up the lyrics and listen to the song "Changes" by David Bowie. Why do you think the author chose to integrate this particular song into the story? How are the themes of the song portrayed in the book?
6. Rose asks a lot of personal questions of those around her, yet she doesn't truly listen to their answers. Why do you think that is?
7. Why do you think Clara changed her ID picture on her phone to the photo of herself in the old woman stage makeup? Why do you think she kept it as her ID picture even when she was Rose?
8. How are the adults in the book there for Clara? In what ways are they not? What could they have done differently to help her?
9. Why do you think Clara so desperately wants to be the girl in the jean jacket? Do you think that girl's life is as perfect as Clara imagines it? Why or why not?
10. According to Clara, "a name was—well, important. It gave you a place on earth that was yours alone" (p. 129). Knowing this, why do you think the main character calls herself Clara, Rose, "the girl," and Cora? What do each of these names mean for her?
11. Think of the characters that Clara/Rose considers friends. Which of her friendships are true friendships? How can you tell?
12. After her breakthrough, the girl wonders, "Of all the teachers she'd ever had, how come horrible Mr. Slocum had been the only one to notice something off about her?" (p. 189). Why do you think he noticed?
13. Why do you think the girl changes her mind about keeping the painting Mrs. Moore gave her?
14. What does Clara lose by becoming Rose? What does she gain? Do you think Cora is better for having gone through Memory Enhancement and breakthrough? Why or why not?

