

STORY ONE *Not Meant to Know*

In *The Tempest*, we learn that the sorcerer Prospero was the Duke of Milan until his brother usurped his position. Prospero was able to escape with his daughter, Miranda, and the books that are the source of his magical power. They arrived on a largely uninhabited island where they have been for twelve years when the play opens. *Not Meant to Know* begins with the death of “Crazy” Haggerty, an eccentric magician in a small community, and the subsequent discovery that he’d kept his teenaged daughter hidden in his house, along with a child of unknown parentage.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

If you’re into Shakespeare

1. In what ways are all three girls in *Not Meant to Know* “marooned” as Miranda and Prospero were marooned in *The Tempest*?
2. How do the play and story share undercurrents of incestuous desire?

If you’re not

1. *Not Meant to Know* is ultimately about Linda’s loss of innocence and acceptance of a new reality. How does her discovery of Crazy Haggerty’s daughter and her friendship with Tereza influence this change?
2. What details place us in the 1950s? How does that era support the story’s theme?
3. Through Crazy Haggerty’s obituary, we learn that his daughter has been motherless for twelve years. To what extent are Linda’s and Tereza’s mothers emotionally available to them?
4. What are the power relationships between wives and husbands in the story? Between daughters and fathers?
5. What do punks, or cattails, represent to Linda?
6. What does the story have to say about responsibility for others?
7. Why does Linda’s relationship with Tereza deteriorate? What does Linda think Tereza has cost her in the end?