

Amy Witting's 1 for Isobel follows the tumultuous journey of Isobel's struggles in overcoming her past and finding self-acceptance. In order to cope with the difficulties faced on her tempestuous journey Isobel often escapes to her rich imaginative world. Witting conveys that a rich imaginary world can be helpful to cope with difficult situations, which is an aspect of survival however it is not vital in order to survive and can even pose further difficulties due to its only temporary relief and avoidance of reality. Ultimately Witting presents that breaking away from escapism and facing reality ~~is about~~ ^{through} confrontation with the truth is what is vital to step away from the notion of simply surviving but living. Through Isobel's reading and fanatical idols Witting depicts how a rich imagination can be helpful in coping with difficult circumstances ~~through the~~ ^{through both Isobel} contrast and her mother, Witting demonstrates the consequences on reality an imagination can have and through contrast between Isobel and Margaret, as well as Diana's imagination it is depicted that without an imagination it can be easier to survive. However it is through Isobel's catharsis that Witting conveys that confrontation with the truth of reality can release a person from their need to cope leading them to finding fulfillment.

comparing

malevolence?

Through Isobel's methods of escapism Witting shows that a rich imaginary world can help individuals to cope with difficulties. Through reading and escaping in to a fanatical world that ~~withdrew~~ ^{withdrew} her from reality, Isobel was able to escape the tyranny of her abusive mother. It allowed her to escape from any "injustices" in her life filling her mind with the mysteries of Sherlock Holmes and made up characters allowing her mother's abuse to simply "vanish." This helps Isobel to cope with the difficulties experienced as her utopian world allowed her to focus on fictional stories ~~rather than~~ ^{rather than} the heroic characters rather than her mother's ~~malevolence~~ ^{malevolence}. Her emersion into a ~~fantastical~~ ^{fantastical?} world also allowed her to create scenarios and people she hoped for, such as Angela and Robert, and as she was so drawn into her fantasy she was able to still have will to continue in her journey in hope that she will find people who are like "her people" and that are "so lovely."

confusing sentence

so kind and happy and dear." These characteristics Isobel uses to describe her "false idols" starkly contrast with the vindictive, miserable and wistful nature of her mother that Witting presents depicting the strength in an imagination to suffice for harsh realities and enable one to cope. The use of books to cope with her problems is so central to Isobel that even in her youth she still uses books to escape from uncomfortable situations. At the boarding house she uses books to escape from those she feels uncomfortable around. Witting demonstrates this symbolically as in order to survive one needs to be protected and for Isobel her form of protection are books which is where her imagination stems directly from. Her ability to escape from a harsh reality by immersing herself in her imagination is presented as her using "book[s] as a shield". Witting repeats this idea of protection from difficult situations from books as even towards the end of the novel Isobel still seeks "for the book" to "walk on protected" metaphorically depicting how withdrawing from reality and escaping into the enigma of a rich imagination can aid in surviving difficult situations.

However, escapism into a rich imagination is conveyed by Witting to only be temporary which can be a barrier in overcoming difficulties ^{and} creating greater difficulties. Although Isobel read and marveled in her fantasy, her problems with her mother still existed when she was called back from her imagination. Only during the time Isobel was able to escape into her fictional "kingdom" did her problems "disappear" but these moments of escapism were always interrupted by the real "noise of cups and saucers" that gave a loud, unpleasant awakening to her fantasy. Isobel even comes to admit that despite her escapism she "couldn't make [herself] safe" and she was still confronted by her abusive mother. The temporary relief from escapism and it's overall unsuccessfulness in helping Isobel to overcome her troubles is enforced through Isobel's characterisation in her youth. Despite her mother's death and her physical absence, Isobel still faces the deleterious impacts of her past and is unable to cope with them. Her self condemnation constantly "looking for insults where there aren't any" and

It can be seen that Isobel's failure to confront her mother, and choosing instead to escape in her imagination, has left her incapable of escaping her mother's ongoing influence... (3)

her inability to form connections with others seen in her abandonment from the "cave" crowd although "they had not shut her out" stem directly from her mother's abuse. Escaping from her mother's manipulation of her being a character of "covardice... dishonesty... and greed" rather than facing her mother's disapproval, Isobel's mother's words stick with her throughout her youth and her lack of self-confidence can not be escaped. Being so used to the notion of escaping from difficult relationships and filling the absence with a fictional euphonia, Isobel continues to find it difficult to form connections, and leaves groups and forms false connections to avoid being hurt. The repercussions from constant escapism follow Isobel despite the main figure she had to protect herself from being absent. Isobel almost mirrors her mother who also becomes immersed in her aspirations of affluence that she can not face the reality of her social position. Putting up a facade ~~with~~ using "a conscious elegance" Mrs Callaghan attempts to escape from the reality of her lower class position. However this fantasy proves to only cause misery in her and jealousy of other family members in a better financial position.

clarify

Margaret is Isobel's foil → look up this literary term :)

Through contrast in characters who do and do not have a rich imagination, Witting conveys that it is not necessary to have a rich imagination to survive and it may even be easier to do so without one. Witting uses Margaret's contrasting character to emphasise Isobel's. While ~~Margaret~~ Isobel escapes the reality of her mother's maneuverance Margaret uses the tactic of coming to terms observes the nature of her mother's actions and ~~uses~~ this as a works with it as a tactic to avoid being victimised by her mother. Rather than escaping the reality of their mother to cope, Margaret sides with her mother to victimise Isobel placing her in a better position to survive their mother's abuse, entitling her with the title of the "favoured child." This can be seen in the contrasting treatment Isobel receives from her mother to the treatment Margaret receives. In a different light, Witting also depicts how being in touch with reality is more helpful than living in a fantasy through Diana's

magic love for Nick. Following after Nick despite his clear disinterest is another form of a rich imagination. While all other characters could see it was hopeless they could only hope they "could make her see it's no use" herself and help her see the truth. Yet while she lived in her ^{imagined} imagined love she herself was unhappy, unable to belong being mocked by the cafe crowd demonstrating the difficulty attached to a rich imagination. However after Nick's death Witting depicts how much easier it is to ~~live~~ survive when living out of an imagination than it is to be encompassed in it. Nick's death instilled reality in her and allowed her to let go to the burdensome withdrawal from life that was a "thorn in her side." Witting portrays that being in sync with reality and seeing its truths is more helpful than living in an unneeded fantasy. ✓ **Excellent!**

Ultimately Witting conveys that it is through releasing oneself from imagination and confronting the truth can one overcome the notion of coping to survive but rather start living. If ~~back~~ Isobel had to revisit her past and come to accept the truth of her mother's abusive relationship in order to reach her catharsis. Coming to accept that her parents were "tormenting" and that that was the root cause for her struggles helped her to see that she was "a writer", something that she denied several times throughout the novel. Her ~~never~~ returning to her home town is symbolic of her revisiting the past to find the root cause behind her coping strategies. She realised that she had not been living in the present but rather living in the past with her mother who "wouldn't want a writer about the house." ✓

Accepting that her mother was the central problem to her need to find methods of coping with reality Isobel was finally able to overcome it instead of hiding from it. This in turn allowed her to find her inner desire of becoming a writer and for the first time in the novel, Witting demonstrates Isobel feeling genuine joy and to smile "so happily." ✓ Her character at the end of the novel, finally accepting herself and finding fulfilment contrasts with the character she is throughout the majority of the novel calling herself

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a "born-liar." Not only was this idea that she was a "born-liar" forced upon her by her mother but by overcoming her past she can finally know the "difference between truth and lies" and identify her desires as ~~lies~~ "truth" and her mother's coerced condemnation as "lies". Finding the truth and accepting it allows Isobel to let go of her past and stop finding ways to cope with reality but rather face it and begin to live a fulfilling life.

Amy Witting's L for Isobel portrays the tensions between escaping reality to survive and facing reality to ~~survive~~ live with reality. Through the polarising characters in the novel, Witting demonstrates the different results affects from such tactics however conveys that overall the journey is not about trying to survive but coming to acceptance with the truth to find fulfillment.