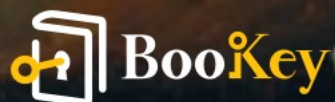


LISA  
WINGATE

#1 New York Times bestselling author of  
*Before We Were Yours*

*THE BOOK  
OF LOST  
FRIENDS*

*A Novel*



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# Summary of "The Book of Lost Friends" by Lisa Wingate

Uncovering Family Ties  
Through a Shared History and  
Lost Stories

Written by Bookey

[Check more about The Book of Lost Friends Summary](#)

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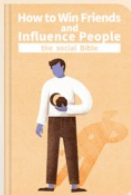
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Dale Carnegie

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Criticizing others only provokes resistance and hurts their self-esteem, arousing resentment instead of solving problems. Remember that any fool can criticize, but it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving.

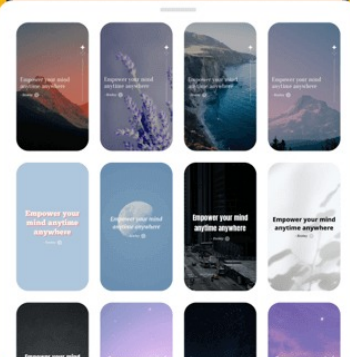
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How to Win Friends and Influence People >

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**You must use your mind to get things off your mind.**  
- Getting Things Done



# About the book

[Check more about The Book of Lost Friends Summary](#)

In "The Book of Lost Friends," Lisa Wingate masterfully intertwines the poignant narratives of past and present to uncover the enduring legacy of loss, hope, and the unyielding human spirit. Stepping into the turbulent post-Civil War South, we follow Hannie Gossett, a freed slave girl on a quest to find her lost family, and contrast her journey with that of Benedetta Silva, a determined young teacher in 1987 Louisiana, grappling with the remnants of history that still echo in her classroom. Through a powerful tapestry of real-life "Lost Friends" advertisements, Wingate crafts a riveting tale that not only illuminates the profound bonds tethered by time and conflict but also invites readers to reflect on the continuous search for identity and belonging in our own lives. This novel is not just a story—it's a testament to the resilience of the human heart, and a stirring call to remember and honor those who came before us.

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# About the author

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Lisa Wingate is a prolific American author whose works have captivated readers with their emotional depth and historical richness. Born and raised in the South, Wingate often draws inspiration from her Southern roots, weaving intricate narratives that explore themes of family, faith, and resilience. She has penned over thirty novels, spanning genres from historical fiction to contemporary drama, and has received numerous accolades including the Carol Award and the Christy Award. Wingate's storytelling prowess was further acknowledged with the immense success of her novel "Before We Were Yours," which became a New York Times bestseller and highlighted her ability to transform little-known historical events into compelling, character-driven stories. Through her meticulous research and heartfelt prose, Wingate continues to shine a light on forgotten histories and endear herself to a broad audience of readers.

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# Chapter 1: The Quest Begins – Hannie's Journey in 1875 Louisiana

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In 1875 Louisiana, the life of Hannie Gossett, a freed slave, is marked by a relentless search for her lost family. Separated from her loved ones during the harrowing days of slavery, Hannie clings to the hope of reunification, fueled by the "Lost Friends" advertisements published in newspapers. These ads, placed by former slaves in hopes of finding family members from whom they were torn apart, serve as both a lament for the past and a beacon of hope for the future.

Hannie embarks on a perilous journey through the tumultuous post-Civil War South, accompanied by two other women, Missy and Juneau Jane. Missy, a determined and resilient woman, and Juneau Jane, who carries her own complex history as the biracial daughter of a plantation owner, each have their personal battles and aspirations. Despite their differing

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backgrounds, the women form an unlikely trio, united by shared struggles and a common mission.

Their journey is fraught with danger, from the physical threats of traveling through a land still rife with racial tension and violence, to the emotional toll of relentless uncertainty. Each step they take is burdened with the weight of their pasts and the daunting hope for a future that promises freedom and reunion. As they traverse the fractured landscape of a nation struggling to reconstruct itself, Hannie, Missy, and Juneau Jane confront their own fears and prejudices, forging an unbreakable bond.

Mutual support becomes their shield against the adversities they face. Whether it's from the looming threat of hostile encounters or the biting pangs of hunger and fatigue, the women learn to rely on each other, blending their strengths to survive. Through their shared experiences, they find solace in their collective resilience, drawing

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from each other's fortitude to press on.

As they delve deeper into their quest, the trio comes across numerous "Lost Friends" ads, each a poignant reminder of the countless families shattered by the institution of slavery. These ads are not just cries of anguish; they are testaments to the enduring human spirit striving for connection and belonging. For Hannie, each ad is a spark of hope that her own loved ones might also be searching for her, compelling her to continue the arduous journey.

Through the lens of Hannie's unwavering determination, "The Book of Lost Friends" paints a vivid picture of a transformative period in American history. It's a story of hope and perseverance, set against the backdrop of a nation grappling with the remnants of its past and the pangs of its rebirth. Hannie's journey is both a personal odyssey and a representation of the broader struggle faced by so many during this time, encapsulating the universal longing for

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family, identity, and home.

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# Chapter 2: Three Women, One Mission – Connecting Through Shared Struggles

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Hannie's journey in 1875 Louisiana begins with profound desperation and hope. A freed slave, Hannie Gossett, is battling the odds in the turbulent Reconstruction Era, seeking any lead that might help her find her scattered family. The narrative highlights the importance of the "Lost Friends" advertisements, which were published in newspapers by formerly enslaved people attempting to reconnect with lost family members. These ads become a beacon of hope for many, including Hannie herself, as they represent the slim possibility of reunification amidst overwhelming circumstances.

Hannie's journey intertwines with those of two other women who each bring their unique struggles and strengths to the mission. Missy, who is resourceful but cautiously guarded, and Juneau Jane, a woman of mixed race grappling with her

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identity and societal rejection, join Hannie on a treacherous expedition through the American South. The backdrop of post-Civil War Louisiana is marked by racial tensions and social disequilibrium, further complicating their quest.

As they travel together, the trio navigates through their distinct backgrounds and challenges.

Hannie is driven by the piercing hope of finding her kin, holding onto the few memories she has of them. Missy, on the other hand, is seeking stability and security, desperate to carve out a place for herself in a society that views her with suspicion. Juneau Jane's struggle is deeply personal; she is caught in the liminal space between two worlds, never fully belonging to either. This exploration of their backgrounds reveals the multifaceted nature of their struggles, encompassing both external societal pressures and internal emotional battles.

Despite the vast differences in their pasts and the initial mistrust, the women build a burgeoning,

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fragile bond. They learn to lean on each other, their individual strengths compensating for the others' weaknesses. This growing camaraderie is pivotal as it showcases the power of solidarity in the face of adversity. Hannie's resilience, Missy's resourcefulness, and Juneau Jane's determination become the pillars of their teamwork, enabling them to confront the perils of the road and the hostility of post-war society.

Their collective journey through Louisiana is more than a physical expedition; it is a profound emotional voyage amid the ruins of the old South and the birth pains of a new, uncertain future. Each town they pass through, every challenge they overcome, adds layers to their intertwined stories. The landscape of Reconstruction America serves as both setting and character, reflecting the racial and societal upheaval that underscores their mission.

It is within these shared struggles and adventures that the women find common ground, leading to

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mutual respect and support. This unlikely sisterhood exemplifies the human capacity for empathy and reinforces the overarching belief that united, they might stand a better chance at reclaiming what they've lost.

As they make their way through the chaos and trials of the South, their bond is tested repeatedly by both external threats and internal conflicts. Yet through it all, they develop a deep understanding and appreciation for each other's journeys. This shared mission of hope and resilience, framed by the backdrop of a nation struggling to redefine itself, sets the stage for a transformative experience for Hannie, Missy, and Juneau Jane. Their perseverance and growing camaraderie not only highlight their individual growth but also illustrate the broader theme of unity and support in the relentless pursuit of lost and, hopefully, reclaimable connections.

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