

## I WAS ALIVE HERE ONCE: GHOST STORIES

1. What kinds of ghosts (for example: mul gwishin, msukule, katxudo-momo) were you introduced to in *I Was Alive Here Once*? How do these ghosts challenge or expand representations of ghosts in English-language literature?
2. In “A Swamp’s Love,” the character Forest comments, “Seeing how I can’t leave, I must’ve died in this forest. I was alive here once” (pg. 28). What is the “here” of each story? How is each ghost and their story informed by a specific place?
3. Women play a prominent role in the collection, whether as ghosts themselves or witnesses to ghosts. How does each story use the figure of the ghost to reflect on women’s experiences?
4. In “Jupiter,” Maruko reflects that “a life out of joint was like a misbuttoned shirt—the only way to fix it was to go back and undo the original mistake” (pg. 98). How does each ghost in this collection relate to, or move through, time?
5. Nature, especially water and trees, plays a strong role in *I Was Alive Here Once*. What perspective do ghosts, or ghost stories, offer on human relationships to the natural world?
6. What perspective does each story have on death? Is death final, a continuum, an illusion, an impossibility? For each ghost, what is the relationship between life and death?
7. How do stories like “One Step Ahead of You” and “The Skerry” use the figure of the ghost to reflect on human psychological experience?
8. What different genres are featured in *I Was Alive Here Once*? How do various stories mix or combine genres, and to what effect?



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