

# THE THERAPIST

by Nial Giacomelli

- Who is the therapist and what does she represent?
- Throughout the novella, the author uses different techniques to foreshadow the ending. Can you give any examples?
- The novella is imbued with mystery, slowly leading up to a surprising ending. What effect did this gradual revelation have on you as a reader? At what point did you start to suspect what was really going on?
- What role does the illness have? What about 'the disappeared'? What do their symptoms represent?
- Water seems to be a recurring theme in the novella. What does it symbolise and what is its function?
- "I dreamt we were at sea," she says. 'What roles do dreams play? Are they a way of escaping reality or are they really nightmares?
- How many characters are there actually in the novella?
- The story is told in the first person and in present tense, giving the narrative a sense of urgency and immediacy. How would your reading experience change if it was written in the third person or the past tense?
- The author leaves the ending open and up to the reader to interpret. What do you make of the ending? Would you say the narrative ends in an uplifting way?