

HEADLONG cast of characters

Nick Young

Once-renowned journalist, ex-husband of a moderately successful movie actress, now reluctant caretaker to his estranged, dying father. Amateur investigator. And our narrator. "My industrious age-peers were well into their days, having impacted the world in new and no-doubt profound ways. I was on my way to the Council on Aging with a bag full of medical bills. It seemed like something an adult would do."

Bo Wylie

Brookline High School Senior. Nick's closest friend. Track star. Music fiend. Activist. May be implicated in a murder. "You're so full of shit. Your whole generation. You wake up one day, think, *Wow, we're destroying the planet*. Let's study the causes, hold a candlelight vigil then turn the whole mess over to our kids. *Here. Sorry.*"

Marcela Pruett

Ex-girlfriend of Bo, recent high school graduate, "it" girl. Blogs on true cost economics and radical citizenship. She's gone missing, or maybe just doesn't want to be bothered. "A gaggle of boys followed her silently and at a distance. They moved in the shadow of her force field, though they didn't recognize it, and she didn't care."

Thomas Young

Nick's estranged, dying father. Machine shop laborer, occasional husband, vulnerable oldster now failing to recover from a stroke. Ensclosed in a rehab facility he can't afford, accumulating medical bills and only occasionally lucid. "You think you're better than everybody. It's one reason people don't like you."

Lin Wylie

ER doctor, Bo's mother, and Nick's oldest friend. Bailed him out more than once in high school, and continues to believe in him despite his best efforts. "I couldn't do a thing. It was like watching Bo die."

AJ Hearne

Executive editor of *BusinessForward* magazine, high school friend of Nick. Credits Nick with his journalism career, though he has long since outshone him. "My dog has developed a taste for sugar cookies. Should I blame you?"

Larry Sparks

Retired police chief. Grandfather to Marcela. Inscrutable keeper of secrets. "I'm old. Hearing's bad. Thought I just heard you ask me how to get an angle on a cop."

Archie

Cairn terrier, companion to AJ, and occasionally to Nick. Enthusiast for chicken vindaloo, to his detriment. "Not good, dog." Archie cocked his head. "They're making irresponsible connections." Like Natalie, the mayor, and certain Boston Police officials, Archie didn't seem to understand.