“*Sometimes when you lose your way, you find YOURSELF*.”- Mandy Hale. Tragedy can bring out the worst in our lives, but it can also bring about the most necessary changes. In the short stories “Shoofly Pie” and “The Interlopers”, the characters face real life events, pushing them to find their true identity.

In the story "Shoofly Pie", the characters Mattie, Riyad, and Johnny all lose a loved one and deal with their grief in different ways, but all three of them find a way to move on together and use food to overcome their grief. For example, Mattie comes up with the idea to share Johnny's grandfather's favorite foods with all of their customers to help Johnny move on from his grandfather's death, “The menu was so popular, they kept it up for three whole days. As customers were paying, they said ‘Johnny, tell your grandpa we loved his food.’ No one told them he was dead" (Nye 175). After sharing his grandfather's recipe and seeing how happy it made everyone, he was able to move on from his grief and open up to Mattie. . Riyad is also able to deal with his grief over the loss of his father in a similar way. For instance, "Riyad seemed deeply emotional about it. He placed his father's dashing young photograph on the register. He gave Johnny and Mattie raises" (Nye 178). After dealing with his grief, he gives Mattie and Johnny raises to show how thankful he is to them. Mattie, by becoming the mother of this grieving family, helped the two men in ways they could not have done on their own. In conclusion, Mattie was able to help Riyad and Johnny overcome their grief the same way she was able to overcome her grief- sharing their loved one's food with everyone to honor their memory.