

APPENDIX II

Synopsis

Jasper Wishart is 13 and lives with his father, a former Royal Marine, who died of cancer. Jasper adored his mom, not least because she shared a most unique talent with him. Jasper sees vivid colors where a normal person hears sounds, crazy combinations that wouldn't look out of place on the palette of an artist. He's also face-blind so he doesn't notice people, not even his aunt, unless they speak to him and he recognizes their voices' color. Synesthesia with Jasper is both a blessing and a responsibility. This isolates him from his schoolmates but also helps him create exotic, stunning, original works of art in which he paints the sounds he hears. Perhaps it's birdsong, an debate or loud music and murder.

Jasper remembers the cobalt blue tones of his mother, and adores the countless sounds of the parakeets that came to nest in the garden next door. Through his binoculars, he also watches them, noticing the colors they create and taking an interest in the comings and goings of the quiet suburban street in London. And when an anonymous lady moves next door, the detail is properly added to his diary. He knows nothing that Bee Larkham is about to forever change his life.

Strangely quite, it is real Jasper sees a lot of things but both of his experiences are naively innocent and remarkably centered. He is a complete contrast to the wildly demonstrative, rebellious Bee, who loves dancing alone late at night to what Jasper refers to as 'Martian music' and whose off-the-wall antics have influenced the entire Vincent Gardens. Jasper welcomes her as a friend, and an ally to look after the parakeets. She seems refreshing to him, but we adults maybe see Bee a little differently, and Jasper 's dad seems especially interested in the new arrival.

Bee, her noisy music and parakeets in the quiet suburbia trigger all sorts of ructions. She starts teaching music and the extra 'tuition' that she gives to a teenage pupil is about to get her into all sorts of trouble. She 's dead when the book ends, and Jasper and his dad are with the police. We have something to hide, but if only Jasper would obey to the script that his father gave him we can get away with it. Thus begins a very individual murder mystery seen through the eyes of Jasper.