

Curious incident of the dog in the night time



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Speech You try to find your way in a crowd in a foreign country with only jumbled signposts to follow and directions, which you can only partially understand. For a person with Asperger syndrome ordinary situations can feel just like this. The young narrator of this odd novel is an autistic child compelled to solve the mystery of the killing of a neighbour's dog.

The book itself is his account of his attempt to do this. But this is more than a simple mystery story. Indeed, the murder is solved early and easily.

Instead, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is a surprisingly effective journey through the world of a 15-year-old suffering from Asperger's syndrome who has never gone further than his school on his own. Here is a boy who turns to mathematics for comfort, who cannot eat foods if they are touching on his plate, and who judges the potential success of his day by the number of similarly coloured cars that pass him on the way to school. He lives in a small English town with his father, who still grieves over the death of his wife, though Christopher can only acknowledge, rather than feel, this loss. People with Asperger's syndrome try hard to be sociable and dislike human contact. However they still find it difficult to understand social etiquette and non-verbal signals, including facial expressions.

At fifteen, Christopher's carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbour's dog, Wellington, impaled on a garden fork, and he is initially blamed for the killing. Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer and turns to his favourite fictional character, the impeccably logical Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face to face with the dissolution of his parents' marriage. As he tries to deal with the crisis

within his own family, we are drawn into the workings of Christopher??™s mind. The writing is simple and plain, but the language of details promotes it from the ordinary.

The placing of mathematical puzzles and drawings add to the readers understanding of how Christophers mind works. The real skill is an understatement that allows the reader to comprehend what is going on even if Christopher cannot. Although Christopher cannot grasp detail and tone, the reader can, and thats where the true force of this exceptional novel lies. The book is littered with swears, the effect of this language is to communicate such things like diaster, anxiety and anger usually the use if swear words in crude and unnecessary. The swearing was effective at highlighting Christopher??™s anger but really a more creative rather than logical description. For an autistic child who cannot be touched and who fears speaking with strangers, the need to door-knock in his own street and to search for answers is a task of huge proportions. And when the mystery begins to turn closer to home, what begins as a light-hearted search quickly becomes a moving family saga.

We learn, through a series of coincidences, that his parents struggled to deal with the demanding child, and that the mother, unable to cope, eventually left. Christophers discovery of this lie shakes the faith he has in his father, and in the boys world of absolutes, he flees his home and makes the journey to London in search of his mother, believing he can never trust his father again. There are dangers with using self-satisfaction such as this one. To have a child without affect narrating any kind of story, particularly one in which every detail must be systematically recorded is to risk a flat, heavy <https://assignbuster.com/curious-incident-of-the-dog-in-the-night-time-2/>

pace. And at times the narrative does slow under the weight of the detail, so that Chris can observe that a teacher has told him not “ to describe everything that happens”, just “ the things that were interesting”, in order to move the story along. Christopher discovers that his mother is still alive and his father had been lying to him for years. And had killed Wellington to get revenge at Mrs Shears who had been spending with Ed and Christopher, but spent more valuable and longer amounts of time with her dog Wellington.

Christopher??™s mother is shocked when she sees Christopher and surprised to find out he had thought her dead all this time. Judy decides to leave roger shears and return with Christopher to Swindon