

## The Mystery of the Colour Thief

By Ewa Jozefkowicz

He came out of nowhere, a man in the smoke. He was nothing more than a shadow at first, a smudge of

black in the grey. But as he loomed closer, he grew bigger, became more solid. My heart was a drum. 3:05am. The luminous figure stared back at me in the dark. The glow of a street lamp seeped through the wooden slats in my blinds. It was quiet. The man had gone. A nightmare. Though somewhere in the depths of my mind I knew that it was more than a nightmare. That morning I was late getting ready because Milo wouldn't come in from the garden. He's been leaping around like a maniac, chasing a tiny vole that he'd found. Eventually I managed to get him indoors and I waited for my best friend, Lou, while grabbing scraps of breakfast. Dad had gone to work already, leaving me a note on the kitchen table:

'Diz, see you after school. Have a good day x'.

Lou usually arrived at 8:45am on the dot, so we didn't have to rush, but it was almost 8:50am, and she wasn't here. She must have been running late herself and decided to go in on her own. I couldn't wait any longer. I

broke into a run as soon as I was outside. My feet hit the pavement in sync with the beating of my heart. The houses on either side of Gulliver Avenue shifted and swayed, and my ears ached inside from the sharp nip in the early autumn air. Clusters of people huddled at the bus stop passed me in a burst of charcoal greys, the white and black of offices and banks and traffic merged into a single, moving stream. I ran and ran until I reached the finish line of the school gates, my arms propped against the railings, my chest ready to burst. The bell had gone. Even the usual crowds of sixth formers with their slouchy rucksacks and rolled-up blazer sleeves had disappeared inside. I walked into the empty entrance hall.

1. Who was Milo? Support your answer with evidence from the text. (Inference question.)
2. What time of year was it? Support your answer with a quote from the text. (Retrieval question.)
3. Which word in the text means 'radiating light'? (Vocabulary question.)
4. Which word in the text means to 'gather in a close group'? (Vocabulary question.)
5. 'It was quiet. The man had gone. A nightmare.' The author has used short sentences. What effect does this have on the reader? (Explaining question.)