

Extract from The Mystery of the Colour Thief by Ewa Jozefkiewicz

He came out of nowhere, a man in the smoke. He was nothing more than a shadow at first, just a smudge of black in the grey, but as he loomed closer, he seemed to grow bigger and become more solid. My heart was a drum. He was shouting at me, but the sound bounced off my ears. His long arms reached out. He was so close that I could smell him- a mix of sweat and burning rubber. He leaned in ...

3.05 am

The luminous numbers stared back at me in the dark. The glow of a street lamp seeped through my blinds. 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'd been leaping around, chasing a tiny vole that he had found. I managed to get him indoors eventually and I waited for my best friend Lou while I got some breakfast. Dad had already gone to work, leaving me a note on the kitchen table:

*Diz – see you after school. Have a good day. Dad x*

Lou usually arrived at 8.45 am 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. My ears ached from the sharp nip in the early autumn air. I ran and I ran until I reached the school gates. The bell had gone. Even the usual crowd of sixth formers hanging around were not there. I walked into the empty entrance hall.

1. What time of year was it?
2. What was a 'smudge of black in the grey'?
3. What time did the narrator wake up?
4. Where was the narrator going?
5. Why was the narrator late getting ready?
6. Who was the narrator's best friend?