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Trick of the Eye

Sandra L. Tidwell

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Haseley, Dennis. *Trick of the Eye*. Dial Books, 2004. ISBN 0803728565. \$16.99. 199 pp.

Reviewer: Sandra L. Tidwell

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Science fiction; Occult fiction;

Subject: Emotional problems--Juvenile fiction; Memory--Juvenile fiction; Painters--Juvenile fiction; Art--Juvenile fiction; Book--Reviews;

Richard is a twelve-year-old boy who can talk with people in paintings and can enter the paintings to interact with the people in their “world.” In this science fiction environment, human and animal characters within a work of art can look out into the regular world from the locations they are displayed. This is indeed a strange set of affairs. Richard, from whose perspective these curious events unfold, discovers that the characters within a particular painting in his home have previously viewed a disturbing event. What causes them to be so frightened? Where did the picture hang when they witnessed it? How long ago did it happen? Richard slowly unravels the mystery, which involves the altering of paintings, and uncovers part of his own forgotten childhood.

This book is not for young children. Besides being very complex, the plot culminates in a gruesome domestic abuse case. It is no wonder the reader questions the mental state of the youngster from the beginning of the work. Italicized text, which indicates Richard's thoughts and conversations between him and characters in the paintings, is confusing, but is a unique way to set these elements off from normal quoted conversations. The plot is compelling, and after concluding the book, you will want to go back and reread for earlier clues to the outcome. This book also makes you curious about seeing the paintings referred to in the story. In the book's end papers, the author includes a listing of these paintings and where they are found today.