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# The Secret Life of Sparrow Delaney

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Harper, Suzanne. *The Secret Life of Sparrow Delaney*. Greenwillow, 2007. ISBN 9870061131585. \$17.89. 364p.

Reviewer: Kate Reynolds

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Occult fiction;

Subject: Psychics--Juvenile fiction; Family life--Juvenile fiction; Lily Dale (N.Y.)--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Fifteen year old Sparrow Delaney has been seeing, hearing, and even smelling ghosts since she was five years old (a fact which she has hidden from her family--all of whom manifest some sort of mediumistic ability), but all she wants is to live a normal life. She seizes the opportunity to attend a different high school than her six older sisters and attempts to fit in, ignoring the advice of her three spirit guides and doing her best to not notice the ghostly teenage boy she sees on her first day. The boy however is most persistent, and Sparrow will have to accept the talent that she has in order to help a new friend.

Harper's debut novel is a coming-of-age story with a skillfully woven supernatural element. The ghosts and the special talents of the psychics in the book are not ostentatiously displayed but treated as a fact of life, lending an air of believability. However, the storyline and Sparrow's character development are both rather predictable. Harper wraps this story up nicely but leaves enough unanswered--the truth behind Sparrow's father's disappearance and the question of what she will do now that she has exposed her abilities in a very public manner--to possibly write a sequel. A sweet, if somewhat insubstantial, teen read.

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