



2018

# Sparrow

Emma Patton

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## Book Review

### Sparrow

#### Author

Sarah Moon

#### Illustrator

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#### Reviewer

Emma Patton

#### Rating

Dependable

#### Level

Intermediate, Young  
Adult

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#### Pages

272

#### Year

2017

#### Publisher

Arthur A. Levine Books

#### ISBN

9781338032581

Sparrow does not just have the name of a bird. She has a secret: sometimes, when birds are flying above her, they take her with them. When she was standing on the roof at school, just flying with the birds like usual, everyone thought that she was up there to kill herself. This experience propels her into a new journey—therapy. Once Sparrow returns from the psych ward, she struggles to speak the truth to her mom, and she continues to have trouble making friends. When she tells her therapist about her flights, the birds stop letting her fly with them. She even stops doing her schoolwork, which is what she excels in. Life looks bleak for Sparrow, and she realizes that as she was escaping with the birds, she was distancing herself from every other aspect of life. Eventually, though, by speaking her truth to people who care and discovering her passion for music, Sparrow finds the strength to live real life again, even though it still isn't easy.

Sparrow depicts the torture of social anxiety and depression, especially in adolescence. This book makes strides toward normalizing therapy; though Sparrow is uncomfortable with the prospect at first, she ultimately develops a strong and trusting relationship with her counselor, which allows her to confront life rather than escaping it. This is an important concept, especially for struggling teens who may attend therapy themselves. A key theme is the importance of speaking personal truth as a means to find relief from internal struggles. The book deals with the struggles of growing up as a multiracial person, and does discuss jumping off a building to commit suicide, which the main character once considers doing. The book is a very heavy read at first. Sparrow's hopelessness about being able to make friends or have a normal life in the future is contagious, and the reader may be emotionally affected by how stuck Sparrow feels. However, the last part of the book shows Sparrow confronting some of her greatest fears and finding hope at last.

\*Contains mild language.