



[Home](#) > Kite Spirit

Kite Spirit

Books Reviewed:

[Kite Spirit](#) [1]

Issue:

[201](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Geoff Fox](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Kite's best friend Dawn takes her own life on the morning of their GCSE Geography paper. Not because she was anxious about the exam ? she was an A* student. Things are more complicated than that. Kite and Dawn had been best friends since they met in the playground of their London nursery school. Kite is the daughter of singer-songwriter Seth from Sheffield and flamboyant choreographer Ruby, whose family still lives in St Kitts. Her parents let Kite ?choose her own name? when, as a baby, she had ?kicked my legs cos I saw a kite flying?. She has lived up to her name ever since, as a runner, a gymnast training with Circus Space, a flyer in every way. Dawn's parents are more conventional and she had been more tentative, less self-assured; she found her way of flying through playing her oboe ? and here she had seemed to have a brilliant future.

Kite's journey from that morning of Dawn's suicide is both spiritual and psychological, made possible through a literal journey she takes with Seth to the Lake District. He's there to write music, but also to search for his own roots, since his mother was adopted in that area after the war and never knew her parents. As Seth discovers strands of his identity, Kite sees more clearly the security and open warmth of her own extended Caribbean family. Kite meets several people in the Lakes; each one in some way helps her understand the emotional numbness into which she has fallen. Finally Garth, a boy of her own age, enables her to release the dam which has prevented her grieving, to find a way of letting Dawn go without losing her. His care for her is intuitive and gentle ? through actions rather than words.

There are other, more mystical strands, anticipated in lines from **The Prelude** which precede the narrative. Owls intervene in the story almost as messengers, their presence releasing moments of insight. The landscape and even one luxurious modern cantilevered house (planning permission, in a National Park?) also work upon Kite's mind which, as the weeks pass, becomes in Wordsworth's words, ?nourished and invisibly repaired?.

The final page of **Kite Spirit** lists the contact details for **Mind**, **The Samaritans**, **Childline** and **Young Minds**; that's consistent with the author's caring, compassionate impulse evident in the plot but also the manner of its telling. Very little is left unexplained. A reader's response will depend upon what s/he is ready for. Brahmachari leaves no end untied, and for many of her readers (the book's cover suggests a reading age of 11+, though Kite is several years older) this will be a satisfying read, opening new and serious understandings. An older reader might wonder whether such tragedies are so completely resolved. As though acknowledging this, the author begins her book with a letter to the

Reader which concludes, 'Things can't always stay the same or have 'happily ever after' endings, but no matter how hard the fall there is always someone who can help' if you have the courage to speak.'

Source URL (retrieved on Dec '19): <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/201/childrens-books/reviews/kite-spirit>

Links:

[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/kite-spirit>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/201>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/geoff-fox>