



## **Twitch**

### **Rosa Hesmondhalgh**

*Kai is on their way to a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) reserve with their Mum and Weird Wendy. They can't think of anything worse. But when Kai catches sight of a rare type of owl, their feelings change.*

**KAI:** I'm in the car to an RSPB reserve in the furthest corner of absolute nowhere, on a Saturday, with my mum and her friend Weird Wendy, to go and look at birds. When I should be at my best friend Sammy's water park party. My Mum's insistence on making me have a bad day is borderline criminal. I don't care about birds, I care about water slides.

What?

I'm not talking to anyone, Mum. I'm talking to... the universe. About how unfair this is. I'm telling the cars and the trees and the big sign just there that says 'RSPB: GIVING NATURE A HOME'- we're here are we? Great.

Big forest. Big pond- no waterslides- some pigeons. *Great.*

If I wanted to see some pigeons, I'd open my window at home and see that massive scary one that looks like an eagle and leaves its poo everywhere and coos so loudly it wakes me up before my alarm. Cooooooo. Like that. I hate pigeons.

So Mum, you've dragged me away from my best friend's party to my mortal enemy's dwelling place. What 's first? Walk around the pond? Look through some binoculars? Fight a pigeon? An owl? There's a special, rare type of owl. It's apparently hiding in a tree, no one has ever seen it: you're hoping to see it today.

Let me say that again.

*No one has ever seen it.*

*You're hoping to see it.*

I don't mean to rain on your RSPB reserve, but, the odds of- where are you going? You and Weird Wendy can go to the cafe, I'll wait here. If they have cake, could you- Mum? Hello?

If I was at Jo's birthday party. I'd be having cake, post-waterslide. Jo's Mum is literally a professional baker.

That pigeon's watching me. I bet it's been sent to spy on me by the one on my windowsill. It's massive, and I can see it's one gross eye, yellow. Yellow? Pigeons' eyes aren't yellow are they? Hang on. It just hooted. Not a weird coo- a hoot! I want a better look/ It looks straight out of a David Attenborough documentary. Oh it's- *OH!*

MUM. Put that decaf Americano down and C'MERE. I've seen THE OWL!! And *bring your binoculars*.

See?

All the RSPB volunteers are running to have a look. They're patting me on the back, congratulating me for spotting it. They've brought me cake. This isn't so bad. Maybe they could put some waterslides in the lake- I might come back next week.