



KATHERINE RUNDELL

The Good Thieves

Chapter 8 (page 84)

Vita waited until the sun had fully set before she scattered the birdseed on the inside window sill. The day birds had all gone to roost, and on pigeons came to peck at it.

She sat next to it and waited; and waited. She was almost asleep when there was a flurry of wings and of bright eyes, and a crow landed on her window sill and began to devour the seed.

The bird had a tiny roll of paper tied to its foot.

Taking a letter off a bird's foot is infinitely harder, Vita discovered, than it is made to sound in books. The bird flapped round and round her room with Vita in gently urgent pursuit, and it was not until she thought to offer it the ginger snap she had been saving that it stayed still long enough for her to unwind the three wraps of string that held it in place.

The note read: 'Come to the entrance of Carnegie Hall at 11.20 p.m. Don't be even a minute late. Eat this note.'

Vita looked at the note, which had suffered somewhat from its proximity to the bird's rear end, and decided not to eat it. She flushed it down the lavatory instead.