

national bestseller

the curious incident
of the dog
in the night-time



a novel by

mark haddon

"Gloriously eccentric and wonderfully intelligent."

—*The Boston Globe*

2 . It was 7 minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the lawn in front of Mrs. Shears's house. Its eyes were closed. It looked as if it was running on its side, the way dogs run when they think they are chasing a cat in a dream. But the dog was not running or asleep. The dog was dead. There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog. The points of the fork must have gone all the way through the dog and into the ground because the fork had not fallen over. I decided that the dog was probably killed with the fork because I could not see any other wounds in the dog and I do not think you would stick a garden fork into a dog after it had died for some other reason, like cancer, for example, or a road accident. But I could not be certain about this.

I went through Mrs. Shears's gate, closing it behind me. I walked onto her lawn and knelt beside the dog. I put my hand on the muzzle of the dog. It was still warm.

The dog was called Wellington. It belonged to Mrs. Shears,

who was our friend. She lived on the opposite side of the road, two houses to the left.

Wellington was a poodle. Not one of the small poodles that have hairstyles but a big poodle. It had curly black fur, but when you got close you could see that the skin underneath the fur was a very pale yellow, like chicken.

I stroked Wellington and wondered who had killed him, and why.

3. My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and their capital cities and every prime number up to 7,057.

Eight years ago, when I first met Siobhan, she showed me this picture



and I knew that it meant “sad,” which is what I felt when I found the dead dog.

Then she showed me this picture



and I knew that it meant “happy,” like when I’m reading about the Apollo space missions, or when I am still awake at 3 a.m. or 4 a.m. in the morning and I can walk up and down the street and pretend that I am the only person in the whole world.

Then she drew some other pictures



but I was unable to say what these meant.

I got Siobhan to draw lots of these faces and then write down next to them exactly what they meant. I kept the piece of paper in my pocket and took it out when I didn't understand what someone was saying. But it was very difficult to decide which of the diagrams was most like the face they were making because people's faces move very quickly.

When I told Siobhan that I was doing this, she got out a pencil and another piece of paper and said it probably made people feel very



and then she laughed. So I tore the original piece of paper up and threw it away. And Siobhan apologized. And now if I don't know what someone is saying, I ask them what they mean or I walk away.

5. I pulled the fork out of the dog and lifted him into my arms and hugged him. He was leaking blood from the fork holes.

I like dogs. You always know what a dog is thinking. It has

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Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color **yellow**.

This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

"A **superb** achievement. He is a wise and bleakly funny writer with rare gifts of empathy."
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