



Where Bluebirds Fly

Brynn Chapman, Victoria Lea (Editor)

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Verity Montague is a servant in 1692 Salem. Her flaming red hair and mismatched eyes make her a prime target for accusation of witchcraft. Orphaned during the Indian raids, she and her brother with Asperger's Syndrome come to live with the key historical figures of the trials-The Putnams. They keep their synesthesia secret- that days, months and years appear as color in Verity's mind, and for John, that symphonies play in a Fantasia-style performance of colors and geometric patterns.

Truman Johnstone 's ability to discern people's expressions, and decipher if they were lying- made him an outspoken child. Being different kept him from being adopted till he was fourteen. He now runs an orphanage for problem youths, and is a feeding therapist in his desire to help children deal with their peculiarities. To give them the childhood he never had.

The harvest festival corn maze Truman creates every year has an unwelcome visitor. Children hear disembodied voices skipping through the corn maze amid the backdrop of eerie orchestral music. In every year of the calendar, intermittent doors of time swing open and closed, so long as the cornfield stands.

In societies set on sameness-all are outsiders.

They learn the traits that make us outcasts, may be the very ones that make us great, and that true love may heal all, and even transcend time.

Where Bluebirds Fly Details

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From Reader Review Where Bluebirds Fly for online ebook

Evette Marie says

I received an ARC directly from the author.

What I like about this book is first, the cover - it's beautiful and intriguing at the same time. Next is the unique plot of romance, and the combination of history and science in one story. I also loved the way how the protagonists traveled from one place/decade to another. Then, not only that this book is entertaining, but as well as educational. It raises awareness to the readers about the different problems/disorders some people have which other people consider not normal or peculiar. On the other hand, personally, during the first few chapters, I had a little trouble following the flow of the story, I sometimes get lost with the sequence of events because of the sudden transition of the focus of the story, and lastly, I don't like those "old English" kind of sentence construction (maybe because it was set during the 1600s) on the first few chapters as well, it confuses me, but in general the book is good.

This book is recommended to those historical stories-lovers and stories with witch trials and synesthesia.

D.B. says

Verity Montague and her brother John have secrets. They're different from their fellows in 17th Century Salem, and in this time of paranoia and suspicion, difference is a death sentence. When they can no longer hide their strange way of perceiving the world, not to mention the injustice of the persecution that surrounds them, they are condemned as witches. Their only chance to escape is a mysterious portal through time.

Truman Johnstone has dedicated his life to helping children with autism, giving them the love and support he never had during his own troubled childhood. When he hears a desperate cry for help one dark night, he answers without question. But saving a beautiful girl from the past puts his sanity in question and his orphanage for troubled youths in jeopardy. Can the unusual traits they share save them?

Now I'm not normally a fan of YA, but Verity Montague is such a unique and compelling heroine that I was captivated from the get-go. Forget typical teen angst (mean girl peers, boyfriend woes, my-parents-don't-understand-me), Verity is a young woman forced to grow up fast during a time when survival was a struggle and neighbors could turn enemy without warning. She has to conform and protect her brother, her only remaining family and a young man for whom conformity is an even greater struggle. Her fight to protect him leads her through time and to an equally compelling hero, one who shares her unique gifts.

Throw in the fascinating phenomenon of synesthesia, time travel/light paranormal, and a hero with a Scottish burr, and I'm hooked!

Christa Lane says

SO... I read the introduction to this book and thought it would be about a girl and a boy within the same timeline. I really did start reading this and took me a while to find out what was going on. I mean not to

mention the structure of the book wasn't the best either. Half of the time I couldn't tell who was speaking until the book gave some sort of hint. I mean I read it and I was just like

Eventually the book kind of got easier to read though and in a nutshell it is about a girl named Verity with a brother named John who lived in the 1600's. They both live in a town named Salem where many people are superstitious and accuse even the simplest of people as witches. Then there is Truman who lives in the 21st century and runs an orphanage. All three of them have special abilities that range from color association with words to seeing other peoples emotions. Both Truman and Verity need saving and the cornfield where time flows is the only thing that can help them both.

Of course it was easy to see that Verity and Truman would be love interests because they were like the only two who were around the same age and experienced similar traumas and it was so cute and adorable the way Truman clung to her and was possessive. The way he wanted to hurt those who hurt Verity and the way he wanted to know all about her just made me smile.

The ending was positively weird but when the time came for Truman and Verity to be together in peace I just couldn't help myself but sigh with pleasure.

Great book, 3.5 stars from me, it didn't get five stars because of the confusion and also because of the structure of the book. It had a great storyline though and was interesting.

Kendra says

This is a jumping story! Jumps back and forth from Salem during the witch trials, to an orphanage for needing children in current day Pennsylvania.

Verity is different, red hair, different colored eyes, and she sees colors with words.

Verity's brother John is also different, probably on the autism spectrum, and doesn't really understand people. Verity is a servant, working for the Putnam's, during the witch trials. She tries to keep an eye on her brother, but taking care of her own chores makes it difficult to keep an eye on him all the time. People are *afflicted*, ill, and so accusations of witchery automatically go flying around. Once accused, even if innocent, even without proof, your time is limited, your death guaranteed.

Truman is different as well, always has been, dealing with several types of synesthesia, associating colors and smells to words and people. He and his friend run the orphanage. One night, Truman sees something in the corn field and takes off after it, her. He comes across Verity, after she had also run to the cornfield.

Though they're in different times, different places, they can see and hear each other. Communicating through his journal, they get to know each other, and each others' struggles and fears.

Any more would have to give spoilers, so I'll stop, but it's a very good book, a great bit of additional history about what went on during the trials.

Review by Kendra @ www.FaeBooks.co.uk

Jennifer Kirkwood (Levac) says

This book was originally reviewed on AudioBook Reviewer

This is my very first time listening to an audio book, well okay I know I listened to some when I was a child. This is the first adult book. I was super excited to get a chance to review Where Bluebirds Fly for a couple reasons. First I love reading about the Salem witch trials and witchcraft type stories. Second I work with people with Autism and my son has some Asperger's type habits or traits. I was interested to see how well the author would portray these subjects.

After I was half way through this book I checked out the authors website and realized she has a background in pediatric therapy and has hands on experience with individuals with Asperger's syndrome. The author also did a great job of researching the times in Salem during the witch trials.

Chapman did a wonderful job of moving back and forth between characters and time making the story flow together nicely even when switching within the same chapter. I did find this book to be a bit more scientific or I guess you one could say medical/technical. I didn't have a hard time following it through as I already have a good understanding on Asperger's. I did learn more about Synesthesia, which the author explained through the characters. Truman and Verity both were strong characters and I really enjoyed them. It was like a match made in heaven but between different times. I found both to be very technical in personality which reminds me of my own son. I am not sure how one without a knowledge of Autism would do understanding this story, it may be a bit too much for some.

For this being the first audio book I have listened to, I found the narrator to be good at changing her voice for each character. At first I was lost with the accents for Truman and his co-worker, Rom at the orphanage but once I kept listening it became very easy to know who was who. I found myself at the beginning needing to pay close attention to the narrator to learn each characters accent and which place the story was talking about but it did become easier as the story went on. My attention was held well with the narrator, she has a soothing voice. The storyline hooked me right from the beginning so I wanted to know more and find out how this story would end. One of my favorite parts is when Verity and Truman communicate through Truman's journal. I was very happy that this book wasn't left with a huge cliffhanger. I look forward to book 2 and see what is in store for Verity and Truman within the cornfield portal.

Jess the Audiobookworm says

5★ Audiobook? I've thought long and hard about this and can find no reason not to award this book five stars. The reason I had to think long and hard about it was because it wasn't one of those stories that absolutely blew my mind in an obvious sort of way. Instead, it left me with a subtle awe-like stillness. Truthfully, it haunted me a little and I am semi-ashamed to admit that I slept with my television on last night because of it. The part of this story set during the Salem witch trials oozed eeriness, but Chapman balanced it out nicely with alternating chapters set in the 21st-century. Everyone might not find this story as disturbing as I did (in a good sense, though), so I certainly wouldn't classify it as a horror/thriller, just the best kind of creepy.

The number one thing that made me decide to give this the full five stars was the amount of research that clearly went into writing it. Believe me, readers can tell when an author does their homework and it is always

appreciated. As someone learning to counsel those with disabilities, I particularly appreciate the extent to which Brynn Chapman went to not only put a spotlight on children with various types of disabilities, but the empathy and tactfulness she exhibited when doing so. That aspect of the story should be especially appealing to psychology students and enthusiasts.

I feel like this story will stick out in my mind for a very long time for the reason mentioned above and because of the unique way it approached time travel. In my experience, all of the time travel stories I have read involved the main character living in the present and traveling forwards or backwards in time. *Where Bluebirds Fly* decided to take the opposite approach by sending someone from the 17th century to the 21st. The method used to facilitate the time travel was not the product of scientific invention, as is more typically seen, but the product of a temporal phenomenon (a naturally occurring time portal). As I write this, I'm just now realizing how well of a job the writing did in persuading me to suspend my disbelief. In a brief synopsis or review, such as this, that type of story line seems a bit on the preposterous side, but it never occurred to me while reading the book. That is certainly the mark of excellent storytelling.

There were several elements of this story (the Salem witch trials, time travel, psychological aspects, the idea of synesthesia, romance, etc.) that seemed rather unrelated and foreign to each other at first, but they were woven together brilliantly in the overall design of Chapman's work.

Narration review: Let me tell you, Karen Krause truly had her work cut out for her in narrating this audiobook. In the beginning, I started counting the number of different accents she performed, but I must have lost count somewhere along the way. Suffice it to say, there were a ton. I swear, her Scottish accent is still stuck in my head. If it were up to me, I would give the woman an Audie Award for just being able to pronounce *synesthesia* correctly so many times. Hats off for a great performance! I hope she sticks around to narrate any following installments. ♣?

→ This audiobook was graciously gifted to me by its narrator, Karen Krouse, in exchange for a review containing my honest thoughts and opinions. Thanks, Karen!

Mary Braden says

I hate this book. Like, more than I've ever hated anything before. I was so excited to get this book, because it would talk about people with Synesthesia, which I have, and since my older brother has Asperger's Syndrome, I was excited for that too. I had never met, or had the chance to talk to anyone with the same ability's as me, and so I was immediately drawn to this book. Now before you say "you shouldn't hate a book just because it got details about a rare mental condition wrong" let me tell you that this isn't the case. This book gets all the physiological conditions of the characters down, perfectly. Where the book falls flat is everywhere else. There is only one redeemable character, who stayed a great character throughout the whole book and that was John. The main characters started out interesting, then they did nothing but kiss and wallow in misery at their sad lives for a huge duration of the book. The book switches points of view at random, sometimes telling us who is narrating and sometimes just not. I'm fine with books that change points of views, except they either tell you, or let you figure out who is speaking, instead of doing whatever they feel like. The story also goes all over the place, starting out as a good historical fiction, then becoming a syfi, then becoming a romance, then a fantasy, then back to a syfi! Now, individually, all these different plot lines would have made excellent independent novels. The author attempted to mash up a bunch of good ideas, but that ruined each and every one of them.

In short, this book failed with basic story telling necessities, and while there were good things here and there,

it wasn't enough to save it. This is where Bluebirds fall.

Angela Blount says

3 1/2 stars

I've decided to call this one a time-travel YA urban fantasy. We begin the hero and heroine living life in starkly different eras, more than 300 years apart. Truman (True) and Verity (which, yes, also means 'truth' *applause*) share a bonding commonality of Synesthesia--a neurological phenomenon in which stimulation of one sensory or cognitive pathway leads to automatic, involuntary experiences in a second sensory or cognitive pathway. (Which is about as awesome and horrible as it sounds, depending on the case.)

For Verity, 1600's Salem, Massachusetts is the worst place in the world for an orphaned Synesthetes and her autistic savant little brother. Especially once the hangings begin. Trueman, meanwhile, is off in present-day Pennsylvania helping his best friend run a home/clinic for neuro-atypical children...attempting to give them the understanding and kindness his childhood lacked. In what feels somewhat like a blending of concepts from 'Field of Dreams' and 'Outlander', fate (or some undetermined para-natural force masquerading as fate) engineers a way for these tormented soulmates to traverse time and space.

In all honesty, my feelings about this story did a bit of yo-yoing.

This book as a LOT going on. A modern hero with a Scottish accent, Colonial English accents, variable forms of Synesthesia, Asperger Syndrome, time travel, traumatic childhoods, a home/clinic full of kids with varying neurological issues, hive-minded (mystical?) birds...oh, and a thoroughly researched depiction of the Salem witch trials. While all of these elements were interesting in their own right, I'm afraid in combination it sometimes made the plot feel a bit overloaded.

Points of note:

*The prose is strongly voiced and engaging—the author has a definite talent for characterization and storytelling. However, the editing on my particular copy was a bit coarse. (I don't detract ratings for editing or formatting issues, but I was a bit disappointed they were noticeable enough to pull me out of the story.) The back-to-back metaphors also felt somewhat overdone at times.

*The thread-through of the song “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” was brilliantly handled, adding a comforting—and sometimes creepy—cohesion.

*This reader could actually buy the immediate, insta-love-like connection between the hero and heroine. (A rare accomplishment, as my tolerance for such things is quite low.) The sensory explanations and mysterious fate thing were enough for me to suspend that disbelief and continue to enjoy. But I had a hard time with the time-travel aspect. I have no trouble with fantasy elements in general, as long as the worldbuilding supports them. But for the life of me, I couldn't figure out the “rules” for this element. Did it have to do with the moon? The day of the week? Alignment of the corn crop? The time door didn't seem to behave in any consistent or predictable manner, and while there is some suggestion that there is an intelligence guiding it, readers aren't really introduced to said intelligence's identity or motives.

To make peace with my confusion here, I had to come up with my own explanation:

Aliens.

I reject your suppositions and substitute my own! >.>

Where was I? Oh, yeah...

*I also began to realize partway through that the viewpoints weren't entirely working for me. Verity's POV is set in first-person present tense (which I found a bit ironic, given she's the one from the past.) Truman's POV is told in third-person limited and in past-tense. While I was able to at least connect with Verity's thoughts and felt okay with being a little more distant from True, I think I would have preferred the perspectives all be in the same tense to eliminate dissonance. (Preferably past-tense, but that's just my opinion. >.> I know present-tense is all the rage with YA lately.)

Why did I round up to 4 stars?

Because when I started reading, the story captured me. I greatly appreciated the ambitious tackling of Synesthesia and what I'm guessing to be some form of high-functioning autism. The author also brings the hysteria and mob-mentality of the Salem witch trials to life in a way this reader had never before experienced. I could sense some terrific vision behind this book, and potential value in an underlying air of empathy, hope, and healing. (Things I personally think are vitally important in YA-targeted lit.)

I truly hope the book might see a bit of additional editing and refinement in future additions. I believe this is an author to keep an eye on.

Gabby (What's Beyond Forks?) says

Full Review at: [What's Beyond Forks?](#)

I thought the author captured the hysteria of Salem quite well. This is a sad time in history that has always fascinated me as it has many others, and this book gave us a pretty good glimpse of the mind set of the time. It showed many sides to human nature, both good and bad.

The attraction between True and Verity was pretty instantaneous. They fell in love fast. They had much in common though, and the cultural gap between them didn't hold them back. They learned from each other and adapted.

There was so much going on within this plot, it could be a bit overwhelming at times, and I'm not sure I fully grasped everything that was going on behind the scenes. The story ends in a way that leaves it open for a sequel, and I hope there is one because I was left with so many unanswered questions.

Where Bluebirds Fly by Brynn Chapman was kindly provided to me by the author for review. The opinions are my own.

Erryn Barratt says

Synesthesia and an exciting time travel romance (an audio review)

I loved this book!

Normally I start my review with comments about the book, but I wanted to start this one with discussing the narrator. Karen Krause deserves kudos as she was perfect with Verity's British, Truman's Scots, and Rom's Indian accents. She never fell into stereotypes, instead infusing each character with a unique and strong voice. She did a great job.

Now, to the story. I have great admiration for authors who tackle either historical or paranormal books. Brynn does both and does it well.

Verity Montague is trying to survive living in Salem, Massachusetts circa 1692. With her mismatched eyes and odd brother (whose Asperger's was considered to be the devil's work). The book opens with a high tension scene that sets up Verity and the direness of her situation. With her scenes being written in the first person, there is an immediacy to her story.

When the story flips to Truman in the present day, told through the third person point-of-view, it lets the listener know things are changing. The pacing slows as we learn about this man whose chosen vocation is working with children with Asperger's. This important job gives this former orphan a sense of purpose.

The final POV is John's, Verity's brother. His mind is clear, even if he isn't able to communicate clearly, and his scenes are just as terrifying as he faces an uncertain fate during the witch trials.

Truman and Verity's synesthesia differentiate them from those around them. For Truman, in addition to having the ability to see the colored auras surrounding people, words have tastes to him, and he has a built-in lie detector. These abilities, I believe, make him more open to accepting the impossible. Like communicating with a woman from another century.

Verity is Truman's impossibility. A young woman desperate to save her brother. Her love for John is strong as she feels protective of them because they are orphans, dependent on the kindness of strangers. Truman is the answer to her prayer, even if his world is beyond her comprehension or understanding. For Truman, Verity's name tastes like snow – pure and refreshing. He never hesitates to do everything he can to rescue this ethereal figure.

I only know Salem by reputation and Arthur Miller's "The Crucible." Brynn's evident research brings that time period to life for me. That Verity can see through time and space intrigues me. I loved learning more about synesthesia, a condition has always fascinated me, and her understanding of Asperger's and other disorders was well-done.

This book pulled me in from the beginning, held me intrigued through the time travel, and kept me breathlessly hoping for a happy ending. Definitely an enjoyable book for lovers of history, the paranormal, time travel, and – above all else – love.

Kwoomac says

This book just didn't work for me. There were two main characters who meet up when some sort of portal opens up in a corn field. The woman Verity Montague is from Salem MA living in the 1600's at the height of the witch trials. Truman Johnstone lives in current times. Both have synesthesia which manifests itself in different ways. Of course, Verity is accused of being a witch because of this, combined with her red hair and two different colored eyes. Truman grew up in foster care, bouncing from home to home, due to his "difference". So of course they fall into insta-love.

The book really frustrated me. What the heck was the portal all about? Is it always there in the cornfield or do Verity and Truman have some special power? The whys of the phenomenon are never explored. Also both Verity and Truman's point of view are told in the first person. I often didn't know which person was thinking what.

Truman also worked at an orphanage (which no longer exist in this country but whatever) helping kids with sensory disorders. This part could have been really interesting but it was skimmed over. It was never clear exactly what he did with them. Rubbed some lotion on some kids' hands.

The story gets two stars rather than one because it felt like the author really did her research. The Salem witch trials were the clearest and most interesting part of the book.

The title of the kindle version I read calls this the synesthesia-shift series so I assume there are more to come. Not for me.

AudioBookReviewer says

ABR's full Where Bluebirds Fly audiobook review can be found at Audiobook Reviewer.

Audiothing says

Where Bluebirds Fly: Synesthesia Shift Series, Volume 1

Written by: Brynn Chapman

Narrated by: Karen Krause

Length: 6 hrs and 36 mins

Series: Synesthesia Shift, Book 1

Unabridged Audiobook

Publishers Summary

Verity Montague is a servant in 1692 Salem. Her flaming red hair and mismatched eyes make her a prime target for accusation of witchcraft. Orphaned during the Indian raids, she and her brother with Asperger's Syndrome come to live with the key historical figures of the trials - The Putnams. They keep their synesthesia secret - that days, months and years appear as color in Verity's mind, and for John, that symphonies play in a Fantasia-style performance of colors and geometric patterns. Truman Johnstone's

ability to discern people's expressions, and decipher if they were lying - made him an outspoken child. Being different kept him from being adopted till he was fourteen. He now runs an orphanage for problem youths, and is a feeding therapist in his desire to help children deal with their peculiarities. To give them the childhood he never had. The harvest festival corn maze Truman creates every year has an unwelcome visitor. Children hear disembodied voices skipping through the corn maze amid the backdrop of eerie orchestral music. In every year of the calendar, intermittent doors of time swing open and closed, so long as the cornfield stands. In societies set on sameness - all are outsiders. They learn the traits that make us outcasts, may be the very ones that make us great, and that true love may heal all, and even transcend time.

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My Review

A well written tale by an author who is obviously very knowledgeable about Asperger's and its manifestations. However, for me, it was not an easy listen, the different tenses and time periods caused me to lose the thread a little too easily, and I never did quite understand the secrets of the corn maze. For me, the story did not lend itself well to audio. This is simply a personal thing, obviously my mind doesn't cope easily with shifting time! However, because I felt the story to be compelling, I do have the book on order from my library.

This book must have been an awesome task to narrate, but Karen Krause did the job and did it well. Her navy blue and silver voice mastered the differences of time, gender, age and accent, worth listening to if just for that.

Lilmissmolly says

Where Bluebirds Fly is a unique and educational story about sensory disorders written by Brynn Chapman. It kind of threw me for a loop because I was expecting a supernatural story set during the Salem witch trials. What I got was an explanation for why some people see things differently than others and which probably caused mass hysteria back in 1692.

The story centers on Verity who was orphaned with her brother John, both of whom become servants for a prominent family in Salem - the Putnam's. John is described like someone with Asperger's Syndrome (think Sheldon from the Big Bang Theory), and Verity sees auras (colors and geometric patterns). Our hero Truman also suffers from a condition that gives him the ability to tell if someone is lying. Truman lives in present-day Pennsylvania helping his best friend run an orphanage for special children with "gifts" similar to what Verity and John experience.

Truman and Verity meet with the assistance of a magical corn maze. Apparently, the maze is on a type of wormhole that periodically opens a time portal to Salem. The basic theme in the story is that true love heals all wounds - and may even transcend time.

Karen Krause did an excellent job narrating the story. She gives each character their own distinct voice and seamlessly switches between genders and characters with ease.

Tanya says

I sit and think what to say....

This is such a thought provoking story. It stays with you , the story is unique , intelligent, with so many themes running thru it.

Truth, Face Your Fears, Being Different is good, Redemption, Fate, Destiny, Soul Mates.

This story is poetic and lyrical , there is more than meets the eye with it, your heart sees as much as your eyes read.

Verity and John are different. Different is not good, especially in the 1600's in Salem Mass. The Salem's Witch Trials , mass hysteria about witchcraft. Being different gets you hanged.

Truman lives in the present day, he runs a home for children with sensory and eating disorders. Alas, Truman is also different and has never felt whole.

Verity and Truman meet through a journey , through a portal, deemed fated to meet and correct wrongs

This story gives so much period detail as well as the life and troubles of a sensory disorder , while creating a build up of love, completion

PLease read,,, amazing

I really hope there will be another story , I so liked the author's flowing words and thoughts
