

THE MOONLIT PAGE

The Blue Squares in the Window



Lena repaired lamps in a shop with one very tall front window. Each morning a robin landed in the plane tree outside and pecked at the glass. Its reflection seemed to be another bird, just out of reach.

After the third morning, Lena decided the window needed changing. She did not want the robin flying against it. Her neighbour Graham, who repaired book bindings, offered a handful of leftover translucent paper.

“Blue or cream?” he asked.

“Blue. It will look less like a notice.”

They cut three broad squares and fastened them edge to edge across the outside of the glass, covering the pane and hiding the reflection. Graham held the ladder while Lena checked the view from the pavement.

The next morning the robin came to the plane tree. It hopped along a branch, tilted its head towards the blue squares, and then flew down the street without touching the window.

For the first time in days, the front of the shop was quiet.

Graham brought his coffee over at opening time. “Your customer hasn't returned,” he said.

“Good,” Lena answered, switching on the little desk lamp she had been repairing.

Sunlight fell through the paper. A soft blue wash spread across the workbench, settling around the handles of the screwdrivers.

To remember

1. Robin repeatedly pecks at its reflection in Lena's shop window
2. Graham supplies translucent paper
3. They cover the outside of the pane with three blue squares
4. The robin flies safely away; a soft blue wash falls across Lena's workbench.