

• "Beautifully written, this is filled with evocative language that is rich with imagery and emotion and speaks to the connections that bind us all."  
—Kirkus Reviews, Starred



# What the Moon Saw

a novel by  
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# Prologue

The moonlight touches them both tonight, despite the thousands of miles between them.

In a village deep in southern Mexico, wind slips in and out of a house pieced together from wood, reed, and tin. Just outside the door stands a woman who has seen nearly a thousand full moons in her lifetime, yet she still feels a thrill at each new one. Most nights, she simply stands there, soaking up the calm expanse of stars, listening to mountains whisper secrets, watching leaves gesture silent messages. But tonight she is restless, uneasily rubbing the ribbon in her braids. She's had another dream of the young girl whose eyes are nearly the same as her own.

# Response

What do you know?	What do you wonder?

# Prologue

A faint rustle comes from the corn plants. A large white bird she's never seen before emerges from the shadows of the stalks. The bird stands on tall legs, close enough that she can see it watching her, telling her something. Yes. It's time, she decides.

What do you know?	What do you wonder?

# Prologue

With bare feet she walks past the bird, through the cornfield, over three hills, to a shack even smaller than her own. The sleepy-eyed boy who answers the door listens closely to her whispers.

What do you know?	What do you wonder?

# Prologue

The moonlight is bright enough for him to sit on the doorstep, pencil in hand, and lean over his notebook as the woman dictates a brief letter to him. She looks over the five lines of circles and curves and folds up the paper carefully. Tomorrow she will walk half a day to the nearest post office and drop it off. The letter will take six weeks making the journey to the Baltimore suburbs, to the neighborhood of Walnut Hill.

What do you know?	What do you wonder?



# Prologue

The moonlight pierces the girl's open window and shines on her eyelids, keeping her awake. Other people in Walnut Hill close their blinds, shut their windows tight, and seal themselves in their air-conditioned worlds. But this girl wants the night to come into her room. She wants the expanse of sky to fill her.

What do you know?	What do you wonder?



# Prologue

She tiptoes downstairs, slips out the sliding glass door, and walks to the edge of the yard, surveying the stretch of identical houses as far as she can see. They look like flat cardboard cutouts, scenery for a play—the fake shutters that won't close, the carefully landscaped yard with perfectly rectangular bushes.

Was it real? she wonders. There is something more real than this, something deeper. When she holds very still she feels it in the wind—a whisper, a song, a low drumbeat. Sometimes she wants to scream, to dance wildly, to run and run until she gets to the edge and takes a leap into what is real.

# lunatic (n.)

person who is insane

The woman who pushed the man in front of the subway train is a lunatic.

## Example or Non-example:

- Toddler throws a tantrum because mother takes toy away.
- Toddler bangs head on floor until he loses consciousness because mother takes toy away.

# replica (n.)

an exact copy or model

Hot Wheels toy cars are replicas of life-size cars.

Where do you see replicas of people?

- The Bodies Exhibit
- Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum
- Clothing stores - mannekins
- TV ads - crash test dummies
- Toys R Us - Barbies, dolls

# remote (adj.)

far away, not easy to get to

Firefighters sometimes travel to remote locations to fight wildfires.

What are some examples and non-examples of remote locations?

# quiver (v.)

tremble or shake lightly

Do your hands quiver when you are afraid or nervous?

Describe an image in which something is quivering. Be sure to explain why it is quivering.

# drenched (adj.)

soaked or completely wet

The rain drenched my shoes.

The word drenched can be used in a figurative way to describe something that is overwhelming. For example:

I grew up drenched in affection from my parents.

Use the word drenched in a figurative way.

# coincidence (n.)

an occurrence of events that happen at the same time by accident but seem to be connected

By coincidence, my best friend and I have the same schedule.

Share an example of a coincidence you have experienced with your group.

# haphazardly (adv.)

done in a random or careless manner

My sister was about to miss the bus, so she haphazardly threw her books into her backpack and flew out the door.

What would a haphazardly made sandwich look like?

What about a haphazardly made bed?



# outskirts (n.)

the outer edge of a town or city

The SCUBA school is on the outskirts of town, near Lake Mead.

What do the outskirts of Las Vegas look like? What will you see if you go there?



machete (n.)

a sharp, broad, heavy knife

We used a sharp machete to cut a path through the bamboo forest.

# filthy (adj.)

extremely dirty

My toilet is always filthy because my brother pees on the seat.

How can you tell when something is filthy?

# bamboo (n.)

a woody grass that grows in tropical climates

Bamboo grows in Mexico and Central America.

# rafter (n.)

wooden beams that support a roof

In most buildings, you cannot see the rafters because the ceiling covers them up.

# translucent (adj.)

allowing light but not detailed images to pass through

Ice is translucent. You can see objects through it, but you can't see them clearly.

Example or Non-example?

- Glass
- Bubbles
- Plastic wrap
- Jeans
- Dirty water
- Wax paper

# spiraled (v.)

moving as if in a circle

The screw spiraled down into wood.

Use the words "smoke" and "spiral" in a sentence together.

# hovered (v.)

hung suspended; floated

The bee hovered over the flower before drinking the nectar.

List 3-5 objects that hover.



# outhouse (n.)

a toilet located in a small shed

Homes that do not have running water need an outhouse.