Previous books in the Don't Doubt the Rainbow series have won the following awards:

Derbyshire Schools' Book Award 2023
National Bank of Indiana Author Award 2023
MadeForMums Toy Award 2023 (bronze award)

And have been shortlisted for:

Lancashire Book of the Year 2023
CrimeFest Best Crime Fiction Novel for Children 2023
The Wishing Shelf Book Awards 2022 (finalist)
Hampshire Book Awards 2022
The People's Book Prize 2022
The Dudley Children's Book Award 2021

Praise for *The Five Clues*

A tense murder mystery. The story is a thrilling 'David versus Goliath' battle, threatening to engulf Edie and her family.
Simon Barrett, *Armadillo Magazine*

The Five Clues is a timely and welcome addition to school and public library YA Mystery/Suspense collections, highly recommended.
Midwest Book Review

Dotted with North London landmarks, this page-turning thriller incorporates puzzles that enlist the reader as co-detective. To stretch the brain further, Kessel offers an extra psychological/spiritual dimension.
Angela Kiverstein, *The Jewish Chronicle*

The story is fast-paced and dramatic, with constant twists and turns as Edie attempts to solve each clue and complete the investigation her mother started, drawing the reader in and capturing their attention for all seventeen chapters.
Eve Foley, Children's Books Ireland

It's not often that a book well and truly stops me in my tracks – in a good way – and then I end up thinking about it at night, in the morning and when I'm supposed to be cooking dinner. Mesmerising from start to finish and a pacey page-turner.
Helen Heaton, reviewer for Mendip Children's Book Group

Well, what a dark, delightful treat! I love the London setting and the troubled, yet upbeat main character. *The Five Clues* is perfectly pitched for readers who enjoy puzzles but are also curious about the world and life. A page-turning mystery with a positive, uplifting message that's relevant to readers young and old. I'm a firm fan of Edie Marble!

Janice Hallett, bestselling author of *The Appeal* and *The Twyford Code*

This is my new favourite book, and I will be recommending it to all my friends. It is an exciting read and kept me gripped throughout, trying to work out the clues as I went along. I can't wait for the next one.

GirlsRule, age 13, via toppsta.com

A compelling and captivating thriller of a story about sadness, loss, acceptance, endurance and empathy.

S. Kaur, via lovereading4kids.co.uk

Praise for *Outside Chance*

I really loved this second instalment in the Don't Doubt the Rainbow series as I can guarantee that, 1) you won't put it down until you finish it and 2) you'll get sucked straight into a world of mysteries (that are believable and so well thought-out). This brings a mystery story to the next level – and, with the promise of two more books to follow in the near future, you can bet anything that I will be recommending this book to everyone!

Compassionate, compulsive and complex –
a cracking read for those aged 11+.

Mendip Children's Book Group

I read this book very quickly and I loved it! The plot was fast-paced, and Eddie was a very inspiring character who I really liked.

A great storyline, I loved the way it was written.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is into crime and mystery books.

I liked how Edie was a detective in our modern day and was our age, it made her a lot more relatable than main characters in other detective fiction.

Student judges, Lancashire Book of the Year Award 2023

The author weaves detective strategy and psychological theories into the story and the school-based course for well-being and resilience sounded so good I wish it was available for all students. I will definitely recommend this book to all my secondary students and eagerly await the next one in the series.

Ruth Cornish, school librarian, via ReadingZone

I found this series really different, very offbeat and, although it tackles grief, anxiety and other mental health issues, it's still so much fun to read and the plot kept me turning the pages. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this to kids aged 11–13 who want to read more YA. Edie is a gutsy, brave character with a will of iron and a stubborn streak that gets her into a whole lot of trouble – I could really relate to her.

Andreina Cordani, author of *Dead Lucky*

Another compelling adventure for Edie Marble and her community! It was really lovely to spend time with Edie and her gutsy, curious and resourceful ways again. She's a protagonist who I feel sure will give readers a sense that they can affect change in a difficult world.

The often-bumpy rites of passage of teenage years are underpinned in Outside Chance by strong foundation stones of belonging, identity, curiosity and the power of friendship, family and community to help navigate the journey.

Sita Brahmachari, author of *Kite Spirit* and *When Shadows Fall*

Outside Chance follows Edie's newly blossoming career as a supersleuth and her reluctant rise to fame. A contemporary detective novel with a twist of real emotional intelligence, I couldn't put it down – it's a pacey read!

I love Edie's determination and increasing resilience. Her struggle to balance gritty detective work with friendships, school and preparing for her bat mitzvah feels very real. I'd recommend it to competent readers who enjoy a real page-turner.

Tamsin Mori, award-winning author of *The Weather Weaver*

Edie is a very headstrong character and deals with intense situations so calmly. She never gives up.

Ac20, aged 12, via toppsta.com

Some YA readers might not read MGLIT [middle-grade literature] because they think it'll be viewed as too easy or not intelligent. *Outside Chance* is one of those rare books that MGLIT people can read, feel super smart whilst doing so, enjoy the process, and genuinely be left guessing as to the book's ending. It benefits from the fact that Edie is not some superspy that's been bred in the basement of MI6. She's a normal thirteen-year-old kid who needs help from time to time, which does show up in a way that's natural, without robbing the story of her wits or its charm. This is a fun book to read for ages 11 and up.

Daddy Mojo, via daddymojo.net

A brilliant book! I loved Edie and the adventures she gets into – fantastically described by Anthony Kessel. The plot is really engaging and exciting with lots of twists and turns as well as being understandable.

Ellen, via lovereading4kids.co.uk

ANTHONY
KESSEL

DON'T DOUBT THE RAINBOW



Crown House Publishing Limited
www.crownhouse.co.uk

First published by
Crown House Publishing Limited
Crown Buildings, Bancyfelin, Carmarthen, Wales, SA33 5ND, UK
www.crownhouse.co.uk

and

Crown House Publishing Company LLC
PO Box 2223, Williston, VT 05495, USA
www.crownhousepublishing.com

© Anthony S. Kessel, 2025.

The right of Anthony S. Kessel to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Cover illustration © Nina Tara, 2025.

The right of Nina Tara to be identified as the illustrator of this work has been asserted by her in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2025.

Envelope text break image © designfgb – stock.adobe.com.

All rights reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted, recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the copyright owners. Enquiries should be addressed to Crown House Publishing.

Crown House Publishing has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

EU GPSR Authorised Representative
Appointed EU Representative: **Easy Access System Europe Oü**, 16879218
Address: Mustamäe tee 50, 10621, Tallinn, Estonia
Contact Details: gpsr.requests@easproject.com, +358 40 500 3575

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue entry for this book is available from the British Library.

Print ISBN 978-178583728-9
Mobi ISBN 978-178583730-2
ePub ISBN 978-178583731-9
ePDF ISBN 978-178583732-6

LCCN 2024941502

Printed in the UK by
Clays Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk

To Leone
Le one and only
The inspiration behind Edie

CONTENTS

Prologue: Whirlpool 1

Chapter 1: A Secret 5
Chapter 2: Top of the World 29
Chapter 3: Helping Hand 51
Chapter 4: Taking Flight 71
Chapter 5: DC 97
Chapter 6: Breaking and Entering 115
Chapter 7: Kill Devil Hills 139
Chapter 8: Wicca 159
Chapter 9: Letting Go 181
Chapter 10: Best Laid Plans 193
Chapter 11: Dartmoor: The Good 217
Chapter 12: Dartmoor: The Bad 233
Chapter 13: Dartmoor: The Ugly 253
Chapter 14: The Face of Evil 275
Chapter 15: Crazywell Pool 291
Chapter 16: Outplayed 309
Chapter 17: All Together Now 323

Acknowledgements *345*

PROLOGUE: WHIRLPOOL

Edie was alone in the canoe, paddling leisurely down a river.

The serenity of the water mirrored the feeling inside her, a feeling of the calm after a storm. With the sun blazing overhead in a cloudless azure sky, Edie was warm in her sleeveless life jacket despite being splashed by water.

Right arm after left, Edie arced each end of the double paddle into the water, the blade cutting easily, followed by a backward pull to propel the canoe slowly forwards. The appearance of the river reminded her of Colorado, and the family white-water rafting adventure of a few years back. Edie and Mum had loved the adrenaline rush, as had Dad and her younger brother, Eli, to a lesser degree – Eli's fun tempered by struggling to hang on to the grips and stay in the raft whilst Dad-the-medic worried about injuries.

The scenery beside the river now didn't resemble the vertical cliffs of Colorado, however, which were covered with birds nesting in cracks reachable only by wing. Instead, spreading into the distance from the riverbanks lay the arid, desert-like expanse of Utah, scattered with gigantic, red-rock boulders. Both landscapes, though, were from the same magical holiday, road-tripping in a huge eSUV around the Four Corners states of the south-west USA listening to Mum's long-worked-on 'Musical Education' playlist.

Edie lifted the paddle out of the water, allowing the canoe to drift gently on the residual current whilst rotating

ever-so-slowly anticlockwise. Through the 360-degree turn, Edie realised there were several other small tributaries – as well as the main one she had come from – all feeding into the central pool at which she had arrived. It was as if everything had been leading here – waterways coalescing, paths meeting – and this was exactly where she was supposed to be, at this very point in time.

Yet something didn't feel right. Something was missing.

The sensation of peacefulness was being replaced by a sense of inevitability. An opposing force to the tranquillity. Maybe the calm was actually *before* a storm? Then Edie noticed that the tributaries were no longer gentle rivulets; the flow of water to the central pool was increasing steadily, the result of which was a speeding up of the anticlockwise rotation of her canoe.

The sky darkened menacingly. A storm was indeed gathering.

Using her paddle, Edie first tried to resist the spinning of her canoe, pushing back forcibly against the current of water. But her effort was fruitless, the strength of the flow too much for her slim arms.

Looking around, Edie established that she was now at the centre of a sort of whirlpool, the tributaries combining like cogs to turn her around and around, as if stuck in a vortex. Nauseated, she shouted for help, but there wasn't a person in sight. Deep down, Edie knew no assistance would be forthcoming. That was part of the inevitability – she was alone again against the forces of the universe.

Fear escalated as Edie felt water lapping against her

thighs. The canoe was starting to sink, swallowed by the vortex. Her tummy was underwater and then it was up to her waist. Twisting and tumbling, the canoe was submerging further by the second, the swell of water soon at Edie's chest. Now her neck. In the grip of terror, Edie saw the surrounding landscape had changed, the parched red plains replaced by those very Colorado cliffs, swallows circling overhead as if wanting to help but not knowing quite how.

Drowning was the worst way to go, Edie had long imagined, the horrid powerlessness of suffocating as water is inhaled into the lungs. Out of nowhere a new thought came to her: maybe our worst fears reflect how we died in a previous existence, a former life. Such fear made sense, as a warning against remaking past mistakes.

Just as quickly the thought dissolved, and Edie was filled with fresh determination. This had to be a dream, she told herself, and if it was, she needed to get out of it. 'Wake up,' Edie urged herself firmly. Nothing. The chill water was now at her lips and then her nostrils. 'Wake up! This is just a dream!' she insisted with all the power she could muster.

Still no change.

She took a deep breath, maybe her last, and reluctantly closed her eyes. Everything was worse in the dark, and she wished she had her diving mask.

Suddenly, Edie jolted upright, twisted her neck and gasped for air. She reached up with a hand to find her face was cold and clammy with sweat. As she opened her eyes, a loud voice boomed that they'd be landing in thirty minutes. Passengers should fasten their seat belts.

Everything was okay, Edie told herself, as her breathing began to calm down. She was safe on an Air Canada plane, the elderly woman on her right engrossed in a movie, headphones on and oblivious to Edie's plight.

Edie sighed, with both relief and excitement.

Hope I remembered to pack my swimming costume, she thought. And goggles.



CHAPTER 1

A SECRET

From the bedroom doorway, Edie did a final check of her room. The cupboard doors were closed, curtains drawn, chair tucked under the desk, duvet wrinkle-free, and the whole space looked generally neat and tidy. Good, she didn't like the idea of coming back home to a mess. She'd miss her room – her personal space where she found solace – but the thrill of what lay ahead made the absence more than worthwhile.

Edie closed the door firmly, and then lugged her suitcase by the pull-up handle down the stairs, clunk by juddering clunk. Dad had advised her repeatedly not to over-pack, but she'd failed miserably and now the bag was too heavy to lift – but still half a kilo under the airline's weight allowance according to the bathroom scales. Dad had threatened a deduction from her allowance to cover any extra cost if the bag was too heavy at check-in. He always said stuff like that but was far too soft to follow through. Most of the time.

'I want you to be responsible for your own passport,' Dad insisted when Edie reached the hallway. 'So you're familiar with looking out for yourself during the rest of the trip – when I'm not around.' Edie accepted the travel document, although she felt that her reputation as a successful young detective was well established and meant that she'd shown

she was more than capable of looking after herself. 'Thanks, Dad, I'll be careful,' she replied with a smile.

'Eli,' Dad screamed up the stairs. 'The cab will be here in ten! Come down, please.'

'Coming!' Eli shrieked back.

Edie had a flashback to a previous time they'd all taken a cab together for Mum's stone-setting ceremony at the cemetery six months earlier. It seemed longer ago as so much had happened since. She let go of the memory immediately, though. Now was not the time to be morose. It was August, school summer holidays, and she was excited about the trip.

'Are you completely ready, luv?' Dad returned his attention to his daughter.

'Yes, but I need to check on Günther. One last time.'

'Go on then. Quickly.'

After grabbing an extra piece of broccoli from the fridge, Edie unlocked the playroom back door and found her beloved guinea pig waiting eagerly by the bars of his deluxe garden hutch. She remembered anxiously his close shave with a fox three months earlier. A horrible moment. Extra locks had precluded a repeat episode: she quickly removed them and cradled Günther lovingly to her chest.

Edie was sure that Günther was one of those animals who could sense when something is amiss. He could pick up on her emotions and ignored the broccoli in favour of being stroked. After a couple of minutes, Edie gave him a soft kiss on the top of his head and placed him back in his hutch.

'See you soon, my little friend.'

As Edie carefully locked the back door and hid the key,

she noticed the note on the playroom table that she'd left for Grace. Titled 'Instructions for Günther', the two-page document contained all the information that Grace – the housekeeper when they were away – would need to look after the guinea pig's food and water needs, hutch cleaning and disinfection, and safe run-around spaces in the house. Kind-mannered Grace was a safe pair of hands, Edie knew.

Back in the hallway, Edie watched as Eli stumbled awkwardly down the stairs with his own suitcase, Dad eventually intervening to avoid an accident. She then helped Dad to move all the suitcases onto the path outside the front door.

'Right,' said Dad, taking his house keys from the jade bowl on the console table in the hallway. 'All ready?'

Both children nodded.

'Got everything?'

They nodded again.

'Anybody need the loo? Last chance.'

Edie and Eli shook their heads.

'What are we waiting for then? Let's go!'



In the cab to Heathrow, Edie leant against the window until walloping her temple when the car stopped abruptly at traffic lights on the North Circular Road, and just as abruptly Dad ended a call on his mobile. Eli sniggered; Edie scowled back. She'd been thinking about Mama and Papa, her mum's parents, triggered by seeing Brent Cross from the flyover,

and how she'd really miss them both.

Mama and Papa had been amazing since Edie had averted a national catastrophe a few months earlier. Just like they'd been after Edie had solved Mum's murder. Both proud and astonished. She felt so close to them, in contrast to her connection with Grandfather David, whom she didn't know well and had last seen in the flesh several years ago. Yet, here they all were, on their way overseas to see Grandpa, as he preferred to be called, possibly for the final time.

'Everything alright?' Edie asked Dad, who looked forlorn after taking a call from his partner, the Highgate Hill teacher Miss Watson.

'Is everything okay, Dad?' Edie repeated a few seconds later.

'Sorry, luv.' Dad shook himself from his stupor. 'Yes, fine, nothing to worry …'

'You know you can tell me, Dad, if things aren't okay. If something's wrong. I don't mind. Maybe I can even help.'

Edie was unsure whether Dad's dazed look was due to her sympathetic maturity or because he wanted his daughter to mind her own business. 'That's very sweet of you to ask, luv,' he eventually responded. 'I appreciate that. There's actually not much to tell, to be honest. It's Emmeline … she's just not been herself recently. I'm not sure what's going on exactly, but it's been a bit difficult.'

'What do you mean by "not herself"?'

Dad took a moment, as if unsure whether to elaborate. Headphones on, Eli was completely oblivious to the conversation.