



Summary

Emma-Jean Lazarus is the smartest and strangest girl at William Gladstone Middle School. Her classmates don't understand her, but that's okay because Emma-Jean doesn't quite get them either. All that changes one afternoon when she sees Colleen Pomerantz crying in the girl's room. It is through Colleen that Emma-Jean gets a glimpse into what it is really like to be a seventh grader. And what she finds will send her tumbling out of a tree and questioning why she ever got involved in the first place. Emma-Jean loves to study things around her. She studies the local flora and fauna as well as her peers. She finds her classmates interesting but a bit illogical at times. In the past, she has refused to become involved in interactions with them, but a recent development with Colleen has shown Emma-Jean just how much her assistance is needed. Emma-Jean must draw on previous studies of her peers, love from her family and a little help from Jules Henri Poincare to solve the problem. Her creative solutions work wonders and she begins to reach out to help others. Everything runs smoothly until the school bully gets involved. Things quickly spiral out of control for both Colleen and Emma-Jean. The resulting aftermath changes things forever. This often humorous tale has some twists and turns that will surprise some readers. This gem of a book lends itself to a discussion of bullying (especially girl bullying), loss, friendship, character change, learning differences and problem solving. (*Amazon.com*)