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Caleb's Cab by Sally & Sylvain Chomet

Publisher: Walker Books

RRP \$27.99

An intriguing tale of a world where it seems some folk exist in different time dimensions and people, even parents, are not always reliable.

When Caleb's father vanishes, leaving behind his beloved taxi cab, Caleb and his mother struggle to survive. Another puzzle is the local children who are going missing at an alarming rate. Parents who are in debt to the Money Mongers are trapped in the C.A.S.H. scheme - Children Acquired to Settle Home Loans. As his mother's debts mount, Caleb is in danger of being signed over to C.A.S.H.

Caleb must find his father to sort out all the odd things happening in his home town. He's a resourceful young boy determined to restore his family to normality. When he meets Madame Zis, a strange old lady with a weird accent, he realises there's a connection between her peculiar behaviour and his father's disappearance.

Full-colour illustrations and graphic design features have the distinctive style of animation film director Sylvain Chomet. Exaggerated caricatures accentuate the unusual, hapless appearance of many characters. Old-fashioned clothing, aged buildings, and shadowy settings augment the atmosphere of an earlier era.

Published in hardback, this is an absorbing chapter book for eight-year-olds and older readers. It's an entertaining mystery that draws the reader on in the hope of a satisfying conclusion. There is a resolution, of sorts, although it's followed by the teaser:

To be continued...

Reviewed by Jean Bennett

