**The beginning of chapter 1 of Kenneth Opel’s** ‘***The Nest’***

There was something wrong with the baby, but no one knew that. Not us, not the doctors. After a week in the hospital, Mom and dad were allowed to bring the baby home, but almost every day they had to go back for more tests. Whenever Mom and dad returned, there were new bits of information, new theories.

It wasn’t like a virus, something the baby would just recover from. It wasn’t that kind of sickness. It might be a sickness that never got better. He might not talk. He might not walk. He might not be able to feed himself.

When the baby was first born, dad came home to tell me about his condition. There was something wrong with his hearing and his eyes and his brain and that he’d need surgery. There were a lot of things wrong with the baby.

And there was probably stuff mum and dad weren’t telling me-and they definitely weren’t telling Nicole at all. She thought the baby was getting all its shots at once and this was just normal-for a newborn to be visiting the hospital every day and often staying overnight.

At night I sometimes overheard my parents talking, words and little bits of sentences.

“....very rare….”

“...degenerative….”

“...no one knows for sure…”

“...congenital…”

“...we were too old, shouldn’t have tried…”

“...nothing to do with that…”

“...the doctor couldn’t say…”

During the day Mom and dad kept looking things up in books and on the computer, reading, reading. Sometimes this seemed to make them happy, other times sadder. I wanted to learn what they were reading and learning, but they didn’t talk about it much.

I had my angels in my head, but I kept it to myself. I knew the dream was stupid, but it made me feel better.

**Extracts from Michael Rosen’s** ‘***Sad Book’***

Sometimes sad is very big. It’s everywhere. All over me.

What makes me sad most is when I think about my son Eddie. He died. I loved him very, very much but he died anyway.

Sometimes this makes me really angry. I say to myself, “How dare he go and die like that? How dare he make me sad?”

He doesn’t say anything , because he’s not there anymore.”

Sometimes I want to talk about all this to someone. Like my mum. But she’s not here anymore either. So I can’t. I find someone else. And I tell them all about it. Sometimes I don’t want to talk about it. Not to anyone. No one. No one at all. I just want to think about it on my own. Because it’s mine. And no one else’s.

Sometimes because I’m sad I do crazy things-like shouting in the shower….banging a spoon on the table….or making my cheeks go whoooph, boooph, whoooph