



# The Danger Box

*By Blue Balliett*

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## The Danger Box By Blue Balliett

An all-new mystery from the bestselling author of Chasing Vermeer and The Calder Game!

A boy in a small town who has a different way of seeing.

A curious girl who doesn't belong.

A mysterious notebook.

A missing father.

A fire.

A stranger.

A death.

These are some of the things you'll find within The Danger Box, the new mystery from bestselling author Blue Balliett.

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## The Danger Box By Blue Balliett Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8—Balliett's latest mystery explores the intricacies of scientific discovery. Wealthy Mr. Zip has arranged for a priceless treasure, stolen years ago, to be delivered to him. He will indulge his dream of savoring this object, and then will return it to society, a magnanimous gesture that will ensure that he is remembered as a hero. Sadly, before the treasure reaches him, Mr. Zip dies of a heart attack. When a mysterious man in possession of the box learns about this, he senses opportunity for personal gain, but before he can learn what he's transporting, his truck is stolen. Switch to our narrator, Zoomy, an engaging 12-year-old who, with pathological myopia, sees the world differently than those around him. Raised by his grandparents, he is pulled into the intrigue when his absent and alcoholic father makes a brief reappearance in his life with the box. Inside, Zoomy and his grandparents find only an old notebook wrapped in a blanket. An inveterate list-maker and notebook-keeper himself, Zoomy immediately falls in love with the journal, sensing a kindred spirit in the creator. He attempts to learn more about its history as the man schemes to reclaim that which does not belong to him, and as issues of *The Gas Gazette* provide clues but no answers about a "mysterious soul." Balliett demonstrates how danger boxes are all around us—not just as containers of physical objects for which people will hazard a great deal, but as vehicles that expose us to risky ideas and dreams. This highly satisfying story will enlighten readers even as it inspires them to think about their own danger boxes. *Kim Dare, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA*

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From [Booklist](#)

Left by his father on his grandparents' doorstep as a baby, Zoomy has grown up happily with them in a small Michigan town, despite the extreme nearsightedness that leaves him legally blind and the fact that he has no friends. He has never known his cruel, troubled, alcoholic father, who shows up early in the novel and leaves behind a mysterious box, probably stolen, for safekeeping. The box's contents set in motion a chain of challenging experiences, including an intellectually exciting puzzle, a devastating crime, a perplexing mystery, and a rewarding friendship. Chapters of the story are interspersed with issues of a child-produced newspaper featuring writings from an individual whose identity its readers are invited to guess. With enough story elements to explore in three books, the novel ultimately seems less than the sum of its many parts. Still, Zoomy makes an appealing, original character, and the insightful first-person narration will definitely keep readers involved in his story, right down to the final secret-code letter and the author's note. Grades 5-7. -- Carolyn Phelan

## Review

Praise for Blue Balliett:

The Danger Box

\* "Balliett demonstrates how danger boxes are all around us—not just as containers of physical objects for which people will hazard a great deal, but as vehicles that expose us to risky ideas and dreams. This highly satisfying story will enlighten readers even as it inspires them to think about their own danger boxes." - School Library Journal, starred review

"Blue Balliett's fourth mystery, *The Danger Box*, spins a web of science and history into a spine-tingling yet

uplifting tale. Kids are in for an adventure that leaves no reader untouched." - Chicago Sun Times

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Sherry Stevens:**

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#### **David Saenz:**

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