

# SONGBIRD

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jamila has recently come to Australia from Iraq with her Mama and baby brother Amir</li><li>• She is having trouble fitting in at her new school and is anxious about having to talk in front of her class</li><li>• She worries about her Baba and best friend Mina, who are still in Iraq</li><li>• We learn that she loves to sing and make up songs</li></ul>
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We meet some of Jamila's classmates: Winnie and Alice, Finn and Marco, Lan, Georgia, and Beza</li><li>• Jamila gives a talk about life in Iraq, but worries that she has further alienated herself</li><li>• She is trying hard to improve her English but finds it exhausting</li><li>• She is lonely; she tries to talk to Georgia but cannot find the right words to express herself</li><li>• We learn that Baba, a journalist, has previously been arrested for his reporting</li><li>• Jamila wishes she could feel good about her schoolwork again</li></ul>
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mama collects Jamila from school early to help her go shopping and attend an English class</li><li>• We learn that Mama used to volunteer at a bird sanctuary in Iraq</li><li>• Jamila is homesick and wishes that Mama could be like her old self</li><li>• Jamila writes her thoughts and feelings in her notebook</li><li>• At the English class, Mama befriends an Iraqi woman called Zainab</li></ul>
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jamila arrives at school and sees a flyer promoting the Grade 5/6 choir</li><li>• Beza tells her that Muslim girls should not sing</li><li>• Jamila joins the choir and begins to feel better about coming to school</li><li>• Ms Carrington announces that there will be auditions for the solo parts in the end-of-term concert</li><li>• At the audition, Jamila meets Eva, a new student from Sydney</li><li>• The audition is short and Jamila is disappointed that she didn't get to sing</li></ul>
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finn rudely questions Jamila about her hijab</li><li>• Jamila and Eva start spending more time together</li><li>• Mama collects Jamila early again; a man from Immigration called about Baba, but Mama couldn't understand him</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila is frustrated that Mama didn't get the man's phone number and is still reliant on her to translate</li> <li>• She overhears Mama tell Zainab that she doesn't know where Baba is</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mama is still in bed when Jamila leaves for school</li> <li>• Jamila and Eva learn that they got the solo parts in the end-of-term concert</li> <li>• Jamila wishes she could share her happiness with Mina and Baba</li> <li>• That night she writes an original song called 'My Faraway'</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alice and Winnie claim that Ms Carrington only gave Jamila a solo part out of pity</li> <li>• Jamila and Eva carve out a secret corner of the schoolyard for themselves</li> <li>• Beza tells Miss Melanie that the girls are excluding her</li> <li>• Jamila apologises, even though she feels that Beza does not deserve it</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The choir comes together to sing 'A Voice I Know'</li> <li>• Georgia starts to warm up to Jamila</li> <li>• Eva reveals that she lives with her father and Aunt Marisa, who looks after her when her father is piloting planes; her mother has already passed away</li> <li>• Jamila reflects on their shared sadness over losing loved ones</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In art class, Beza makes a rude comment about Eva's birthmark, and Jamila defends her</li> <li>• She decides to address Beza's behaviour, but is surprised to find her crying in the library</li> <li>• Beza confesses that she misses her brother, who is protesting against the government in Ethiopia</li> <li>• Jamila empathises with this side of Beza, and suggests she finds something she loves doing to ease her sadness</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mama calls Jamila home again, forcing her to miss a third choir session</li> <li>• She accompanies Mama to an appointment at the Family Support Office</li> <li>• Mama pleads for more money, but the Office cannot help her</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mama is in bed again, so a frustrated Jamila stays home from school three days in a row</li> <li>• She helps Mama at the supermarket and reflects on how much her life has changed since coming to Australia</li> <li>• Amir says his first word, 'moon'</li> <li>• A letter arrives from Aziza, Mina's mother; she says that Baba is safe and has applied for a visa to come to Australia</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila returns to school and tells Eva that Baba will be in Australia soon</li> <li>• As the weeks pass her hope begins to wane</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aziza finally writes to let them know that Baba’s visa has been approved</li> <li>• Jamila, Mama, and Amir spend two days waiting at the airport, but Baba does not arrive</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mama receives a letter inviting her to a parent information session at school</li> <li>• Jamila worries that Mama will struggle in this setting, and forges her signature to decline the invitation</li> <li>• She confesses the forgery to Eva, who reciprocates with a story of her own</li> <li>• Jamila posts the letter at the school office</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 14</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila has second thoughts about the letter</li> <li>• She does extra work around the house so that Mama won’t call her away from school</li> <li>• Both Miss Dana and Ms Carrington notices express their concern</li> <li>• After hearing Jamila sing ‘My Faraway’, Ms Carrington asks if she would like to perform it at the concert</li> <li>• Miss Dana leads a guided meditation that helps Jamila let go of some of her worries</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leyla, an Iraqi woman from Refugee Support, calls to offer Mama help</li> <li>• Jamila spends the weekend preparing for Leyla’s visit</li> <li>• During the visit, Jamila tells Leyla that she often has to miss school</li> <li>• Leyla leaves her card so Mama can get more support, but Mama goes to bed as soon as Leyla leaves</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 16</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila is summoned to the principal’s office, where Mrs Ward produces the parent information letter</li> <li>• Jamila confesses to signing it but struggles to explain herself</li> <li>• Mama is called to school; Jamila fears she has added to Mama’s problems</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 17</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila writes in her notebook and has a bad dream about the concert</li> <li>• Mama talks to Jamila about the letter and acknowledges that something has to change</li> <li>• Jamila finds Leyla’s card and comes up with a plan to get Mama to Refugee Support</li> <li>• Mama realises what is happening, but her anger quickly turns to tears</li> <li>• Mama finally agrees to meet with Leyla, who introduces Alina, another Iraqi woman who offers her assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 18</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila tells Miss Dana about the women from Refugee Support and asks for another meeting with Mrs Ward</li> <li>• Eva, who accompanies Jamila for moral support, tells her that she is brave</li> <li>• At the meeting, Jamila explains why she has been missing school and why she forged Mama’s signature</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs Ward commends Jamila for her honesty and offers to arrange an interpreter for the parent information session so that Mama can participate in the school community</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 19</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila and Eva meet up on the weekend</li> <li>• When Jamila starts to sing 'My Faraway', Eva joins in</li> <li>• The girls spend the day singing together</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mama tells Jamila that her Uncle Elias is flying in from Iraq on the morning of the concert</li> <li>• Jamila protests missing the concert to go to the airport, but Mama insists</li> <li>• The next morning, Jamila decides to take herself to school instead of going to the airport to greet Uncle Elias</li> <li>• Mama concedes and continues her journey</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 21</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila makes it to school just in time, and she answers all her classmates' questions truthfully</li> <li>• She asks Ms Carrington if she and Eva can sing a duet</li> <li>• The choir opens the concert with a performance of 'A Voice I Know'</li> <li>• Jamila spots Mama in the crowd and realises that Baba is with her!</li> <li>• She reunites with Baba and Uncle Elias</li> <li>• Baba delivers a gift from Mina, a purse with the word 'songbird' (<i>mutraba</i>) stitched on the front</li> <li>• Jamila and Eva perform 'My Faraway' to thunderous applause</li> <li>• She introduces Eva to her family and they all return home to celebrate</li> </ul>
<b>Three Weeks Later</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamila goes to Preston Market with her family and Eva</li> <li>• Baba informs them that Mina's family has applied for visas</li> <li>• Mama announces that Leyla and Alina are coming for dinner, and Baba is impressed with her English</li> <li>• Jamila announces that she and Eva are going to cook a feast to celebrate</li> </ul>