

The Upside of Iris

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The voice of a sage, mature, comforting narrator, guides us through a highly visual yarn that is part fairy-tale and part whimsical, off-beat love story.

We open with a young girl, maybe seven or so. Her name is Iris. Iris has an unusual affliction (to say the least) whereby she sees the world... Upside down. Despite her affliction, or maybe because of it, she has found a partner in crime, a young boy named Charlie.

Charlie (kind and always dressed as a super-hero) is also beset by an anatomical abnormality. His is a birthmark in the shape of an upside down heart on his stomach. Iris sees this birthmark while playing, as children do, hanging upside down from the jungle-gym. When Charlie's shirt falls over his head and Iris sees this heart-shaped birthmark, it has an almost magical affect on her. She sees her name, pulsing within its borders...

Even at this early age, Iris knows she can never love another. This connection, coupled with the fact that Charlie is utterly silent, unable (or choosing) to communicate solely through actions not words; make these two souls, who are just a little out-of-step with the rest of the world, an ideal match.

Theirs is a perfect, innocent love that only children can have- The type of love where endless hours are spent releasing balloons to float unencumbered into the summer sky, holding hands and, of course, hanging upside down from jungle-gyms. You remember that don't you?...

When Iris is given special glasses by her doctor to correct her "upside down-itis," she is so excited to share them with Charlie, but... Forces beyond their control intercede and the two are pulled apart, apparently to never see each other again. Iris is devastated. And with no one to share the perspective changing glasses with, she throws them in the back of an old music box and tries to forget about them. She moves on with her life, but she knows she'll never forget Charlie.

Fast Forward: Iris is now an adult. She owns an art gallery, filled with painting of (what else?) **heart-shaped** images. Unfortunately, for Iris, paintings of hearts only sell around Valentine's Day, so she's not exactly a huge success.

Although a touch distant from the people who inhabit her everyday life, Iris has a deep compassion for them, and wishes there was something she could do to help them with their daily struggles.

Then, one day, there is an incident with of all things, a mime. Yes, a mime- Remember, Charlie was silent. This incident, and its resulting epiphany, shakes up Iris' world...

She immediately runs to her gallery and turns all of her heart-shaped paintings **upside** down. Overnight, Iris becomes a sensation, and the talk-of-the-town!

She also realizes that her old glasses, the “upside down-itis” correcting glasses, they won’t just help her see right side-up, they will also help other people see things the right way- The way they should see them. The old, grouchy couple in the coffee shop who fight all the time? The glasses will help them see each other the way they used to- The way they saw each other back when they were young, and in love.

Iris shares this “**gift of perspective**” with her friends around her. She lets them peer through the specs and the results are- Nothing short of astonishing! They **change** people.

And then, through an incredible twist of fate, Iris starts finding clues, and these clues start leading her to only one conclusion- Charlie is **here**. And just as it appears that Iris will actually find her one true love again, after all these years... Those same evil forces from their childhood, once more, pull them apart.

This leaves Iris reeling. In desperation, she sells her gallery- Including her entire collection of upside down hearts. But, as all seems lost, she musters the strength for one last good deed. She finds her old eye doctor and purchases all of the “upside down-itis” correcting glasses he has left. Then she gives them to everyone that has meant so much to her, because she knows that even though she’ll never be happy again, she wants other people to have that chance.

But in doing this simple, self-less act, she unwittingly sets in motion an incredible chain of events... That ultimately brings Iris and Charlie together, for the happily-ever-after ending that she has always sought.

And as we say, Iris shows us that “upside down,” can be the “right side-up,” and that a change in perspective, can make all the difference in the world.