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### Trouble Under Oz

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Smith, Sherwood. *Trouble Under Oz*. Illustrated by William Stout. HarperCollins, 2006. ISBN 0060296097. \$16.99. 239 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Sisters--Juvenile fiction; Family problems--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Dori and her sister Em are back in the second installment of Smith's Oz stories. The first book, *The Emerald Wand of Oz*, introduced readers to the two sisters, rumored descendents of Dorothy Gale. This time when Ozma calls for help their mother is gone at the hospital caring for their grandmother and their father is trying to get through a snow storm to care for them. The girls decide to split their duties--one sister stays in Kansas to hold down the fort and the other goes to answer Ozma's summons about Prince Rikiki of the Nome kingdom. Em struggles to keep her parents and their neighbor Mrs. Gupta from worrying (and from finding out that Dori isn't there), while Dori travels through the dangers of the underground kingdoms of Oz.

Smith's writing isn't overly-complex, but younger readers--and long-time Oz fans--will love her imaginative story. While it helps to be familiar with the original series by Baum, as Smith's book uses characters and situations from it, these new Oz stories can be enjoyed by newcomers as well. They may even serve as a starting place for new Oz enthusiasts. Young girls especially will enjoy Dori's spunkiness and Em's practical problem-solving.