



2016

# Rules for Stealing Stars

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### BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Smith, Carlie (2016) "Rules for Stealing Stars," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 37 : Iss. 8 , Article 27.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol37/iss8/27>

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# Book Review

**Title:** Rules for Stealing Stars  
**Author:** Corey Ann Haydu  
**Reviewer:** Carlie Smith  
**Publisher:** Katherine Tegen Books  
**Publication Year:** 2015  
**ISBN:** 9780062352712  
**Number of Pages:** 323  
**Interest Level:** Intermediate  
**Rating:** Excellent



## Review

A dreary summer in New Hampshire becomes exciting for Silly and her three sisters when they discover magical closets inside their bedrooms. The closets transform into elaborate new worlds according to the girls' needs and imagination. The girls spend an increasing amount of time in the closets to escape the sadness and stress of their mother's alcoholism. Silly is especially happy about the closets because the magic helps her to feel both united with her sisters and like she has a special gift. However, the temptation to remain in the closets grows as Mom's condition worsens. Marla is especially susceptible because she searches the closets for things to cure her mother. Silly finds her place in the family as she leads her sisters in efforts to rescue Marla and persuade her to rejoin the real world. Together the girls discover that magic and beauty surround them. Small things like pancakes on Sunday mornings, sunsets, and stargazing are enough to bring happiness to help them overcome, but not cure, the sadness of life.

Corey Ann Haydu successfully weaves elements of fairy tales and magic into a story that is truly focused on growing up and dealing with family problems. Younger readers will appreciate the realistic and lovable heroines who gently learn that true happiness doesn't mean being free from problems, but learning to face them with bravery, compassion, and hope. Older readers will appreciate the parallel between the sisters' longing for escape through their closets and their mother's alcoholism. The story of discovering truth through the magic of the closets is more deftly told than the story of Silly's growth. At times, her narration is too all-knowing and perceptive for an eleven-year-old. Nevertheless, readers will still enjoy the spunkiness of the characters, the tender and tough relationships with family, and the celebration of imagination.

\* Contains alcoholism, minimal language, sexual content, and violence.