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Trouble Is A Friend of Mine

Aylea Stephens

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Title: Trouble Is A Friend of Mine
Author: Stephanie Tromly
Reviewer: Aylea Stephens
Publisher: Kathy Dawson Books
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9780525428404
Number of Pages: 336
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Dependable

Review

Zoe’s life changes when brilliant, annoying Digby shows up at her door and expects her to come along in his schemes. A local girl has been kidnapped, and Digby is determined to get to the bottom of it and the kidnapping of his little sister eight years ago. Digby, Zoe, and a few other friends try to get to the bottom of the mystery, from breaking into a skeevy gynecologist’s office, making friends with a few police officers and getting them to help with their detective work, and investigating the strange cult in Zoe’s neighborhood. Their adventures lead to almost getting shot and being in an explosion, but the answers they find and the friendship they gain might make it all worth it anyway.

Some of the characterization could have been more rounded. For example, Zoe is mostly characterized as sarcastic, friends with Digby, and has issues with her father. Digby is like Sherlock Holmes mixed with manic pixie dream boy. He has a lot of issues, like showing up in Zoe’s room uninvited, that everyone writes off as being “just Digby” instead of talking about how serious that is. He also has mental health issues, but it’s not completely addressed and shows him ignoring his medication instead of treating it in a respectful way. Even though none of the characters are that deep, the interactions between them are hilarious. The banter between the characters makes the story hilarious, even when the action going on is somber. There are some disturbing, creepy events in the book, but the kids manage to solve the mysteries anyway, making it seem like an episode of Scooby Doo or a young Sherlock Holmes story. Sometimes it tries a little too hard to be quirky and the characters could have been more rounded, but readers who want a mystery or crime book with hilarious dialogue and kids solving the mystery will enjoy this book. In spite of its weaknesses, it is always entertaining.

*Contains drugs, some mentions of sexual content, and moderate language.