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A Little Taste of Poison

Tessa McMillan

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Book Review

Title: A Little Taste of Poison
Author: R.J. Anderson
Reviewer: Tessa McMillan
Publisher: Aurthur A. Levine Books
Publication Year: 2016
ISBN: 9781481437745
Number of Pages: 362
Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult
Rating: Excellent



Review

After failing to expose Eryx of murder, Isaveth and Esmond (aka Quiz) are living an uneasy existence away from each another. However, the owner of Glow-Mor changes everything when he gives Isaveth a scholarship to attend the socially elite Tarreton College. Soon after starting, Isaveth reunites with Esmond and they renew their search for clues against Eryx. Their leads show that Eryx is keeping any incriminating documents inside his magically protected car. Under the cover of a masquerade ball at Eryx's home, Isaveth and Esmond try to get to the evidence. Their efforts are cut short when Esmond's father, the Sagelord, becomes dangerously ill. He dies a few days later, and Eryx is in line to become the new Sagelord. While Esmond grieves, Isaveth is expelled from Tarreton on false charges. She is later kidnapped by the competitors of Glo-Mor. Esmond rescues her and they barely escape with their lives. Gathering the proper authorities together, Isaveth and Esmond finally expose Eryx as the mastermind behind all the murders, including poisoning his father.

This sequel to *A Pocket Full of Murder* is another satisfying read full of suspense, sorcery, and scandal. But aside from the fiction, there are several real-life issues Anderson addresses: bullying, religious persecution, and economic class. Even though Isaveth can attend Tarreton College, something no person of her class or religion has ever done before, it doesn't mean anyone there will automatically accept her. Once she arrives, Isaveth's rich classmates immediately resent her intelligence and mock her religion and social status. In many cases, she is alone in facing this persecution because Esmond isn't always around to protect her. However, a new friend, Eulalie, comes to Isaveth's aid. Knowing she has loyal friends to support her, Isaveth courageously takes on all the bullies in her life, including Eryx.