



## Digging in the Stars

*Katherine Blakeney*

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A lost ancient civilization and the tomb of a legendary king lie buried beneath centuries of ash on the volcanic planet Thror, but that's not the only reason sixteen-year-old Carter has tricked her Archaeology of Outer Space class into coming here. Her best friend Conrad has just disappeared on a trip to Thror, leaving behind little more than a broken vintage camera. The strange and disturbing photographs she manages to extract make her suspect Conrad's disappearance is somehow connected to the hidden tomb of the last king of Thror.

Unfortunately, the ludicrously over-friendly 'Furry Giants' who have taken over the planet's barren surface would rather offer her cheap souvenirs than answers, and the local officials insist they have no record of Conrad's existence. Inspired by fear for Conrad's life and the chance to make the greatest archaeological discovery of the century, Carter and her friends follow Conrad's footsteps deep into the mountains of Thror's forbidden Black Zone and launch an illicit excavation.

Coded messages, stunning ancient ruins, and clues left by Conrad himself begin to surface as the young archaeologists fall victim to an alarming series of accidents staged by the increasingly hostile Furry Giants. Piecing together a history of dictatorship, terrorism and disguise, Carter glimpses the horrors beyond Thror's flamboyant façade and startling revelations about the friend she thought she knew. The masks of Thror hide devastating secrets, and the golden tomb buried deep in the frozen core may claim the lives of everyone she loves.

## Digging in the Stars Details

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Author : Katherine Blakeney

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## From Reader Review Digging in the Stars for online ebook

### **rapunzellovebooks says**

I really enjoyed reading this book in. readalong that was arranged by stefanos and blaze publishing.!

Archaeology in outer space.! Amazing concept.! I thoroughly enjoyed this book and the whole plot was beautifully written and the way suspence was freaking amazing.

Professor p and Carter is my fav character i loved their bonding and ofcourse throrians were funny.!

I don't want to spoil anything so inshort do read this book if you are fond of reading sci-fi historical..!

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### **Kari says**

Oh My Goodness. This book.

This story follows Carter and her archaeology group to a different planet for an apprenticeship program. That alone drew me in. Archaeology in space? YES PLEASE. Not only does that sound amazing, but it is refreshingly different from so many other YA novels. This book included family, friendship, sci-fi, and mystery all into one. The plot was seriously never lacking in action.

I really enjoyed the writing style of it. It included real historical facts about archaeology, and added in fictional discoveries that mirrored some that actually took place in the early 1900s, and I thought that was fantastic. Blakeney's writing made it so easy to just fly through this book. She had mysterious moments, then made them funny with side characters, then right back to fun science fiction. I loved that we got so many answers in the end, and a lot of it, I was not expecting at all.

I went in not knowing too much about the plot itself, and I really enjoyed that way. I HIGHLY recommend this book. It was so unique and fun, and really a great read. Please do yourself a favor and pick it up!

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### **Aldii - perfectioninbooks says**

This reminded me of those books I liked to read when I was younger.

#### **The Writing:**

Some times this book was difficult to follow but I think that was because of the world and sometimes I was a bit confused about it. Other than that I found this to be easy to read. I read it in 9 days, with a read-along and I might have read it in less time but for me this is not a book you can read in one sitting. There is one POV through the book, Carter's and she is the MC.

#### **The Story:**

I found this story to be very creative and different from others. It had things I had never read before and again, as my first line says, it reminds me of books I read when I was younger.

We follow Carter, a 16-year-old teenager that is really smart and is studying her dream: archeology. She has a friend, Conrad, who is dying but one day after a fight he suddenly travels to Thror, another planet. Then Carter receives this photos of Thror and an unfinished letter, all from Conrad, but photos from Thror doesn't

exist. Carter wants to know what happened to Conrad and discover something really big so instead of booking their apprenticeship to a known and safe planet she takes her professor and classmates to Thror, a planet that no group of archeology came back.

Once there weird things start happening and the story goes from there.

I hadn't ever read a book with archeology and I loved that it was pretty cool. There is this story and discoveries they make through the book that were really fun to read.

Then we also have the mystery part of this book, you don't know what is really happening until the end and you are always guessing. There is no real clue about who is good and not, and when strange messages start showing up everything gets a bit more dangerous.

There is no evident romance through the story but you might guess that there are feelings.

There isn't any physical fights or action in that way but it is a book that makes you still feel its bit of danger and mystery.

I think this is a YA book but it could be a middle grade too. There is this big adventure, mystery, just a bit of danger to remind you that not everything is safe, archeology, past and sci-fi.

#### The Characters:

Carter: She was so reckless, it frustrated me. It was insane to make that booking from the start but she also makes all these decisions that were so selfish. She didn't think of the others, only of her goals and her mission of making the big 'finding'. She was brave and very smart but that had me frustrated with her.

Professor P: I liked her. She felt like a mama bear. Even though her first goal was the archeology she protected all her students and add to the story a great humour.

Lizzie: Her attitude was other I didn't like. She was so sarcastic and ironic all the time. A bit is good but then it was tiring.

Bryanne: Even though she meant well most of the time she was very naive, and that made me I don't know how to describe it but the real things is, I didn't like her that much and sometimes her character frustrated me.

Gioconda: She wasn't into the story that much but her things for auras and all spiritual stuff even if it was good there was a point you wanted to make her shut up.

Allison: Other character that wasn't that important but was more involved into the story than the previous character. She added the bit of romance. I liked her.

Furry Giants: At first I was so confused about these characters and through the story I didn't know if they were trust-worthy or not but some of them added a bit of humour. Then, the ending was an absolute surprise.

Conrad: He was and wasn't in the story at the same time. He was very important but at the same time not a MC. He surprised me as well as made me angry.

This is a fun story about adventures and archeology in a sci-fi world. There is no romance or physical action but you are always wanting to know more. It's a good read when you want a bit of mystery and a good old adventure!

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#### Ashley Nestler says

I do not come across young adult science fiction novels very often that are as advanced and well thought out as *Digging in the Stars* is. Katherine Blakeney writes with a knowledgeable hand when explaining the world that she has created, and I became trapped within her detailed world as I read along. *Digging in the Stars* is a novel that takes hold of you and won't let go until you cross the last page, and even then it stays with you long after. This is the perfect young adult novel to introduce readers to the science fiction genre, while also giving seasoned science fiction readers the ride of a lifetime.

The heroine of this novel, Carter, is one of the best characters that I have read about in this genre. She is feisty, rebellious, and strong, and she was relatable on so many levels. Everything she did was for the greater good, and her love of books was infectious. I felt as though Carter was a personal friend of mine by the end of the novel, and few authors can make characters as vibrant as Blakeney does. It was clear to me that Blakeney has had this story and these characters inside of her for quite some time, and they were just yearning to be released. I could feel their energy vibrating off of the pages, and threatening to break through. Some novels read as though they are forced, but *Digging in the Stars* was effortless. It allowed me to travel the galaxy within my own home, and very few novels have done that for me.

Blakeney is an expert at world building, and her carefully created realm inspired me to dream beyond this earth and our own society. It was clear to me that her world was inspired from different mythologies, and I loved how she incorporated science into the mix. Her characters were inviting and I cared deeply for each of them by the time the novel was over. I look forward to what Blakeney writes next, and I highly recommend this novel for anyone who loves space travel, adventure, and rebellious heroines who know no bounds.

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### **Marina says**

I loved this book so much! I'm not usually someone who reads Sci-fi/ archeology novels but this has made me want to continue with them. The plot twists made sure there were no dull moments and it was one of the few books that kept me interested throughout the whole thing! I also didn't find the main female character annoying (like I usually do haha). 5/5!

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### **stefansbooks says**

Digging In The Stars 4.75/5??s

1. The beginning is a bit slow and confusing.
2. Thror is so funny? The Furry Giants are ridiculously funny! I love them so much?
3. Professor P is so cool! Her attitude is on point.
4. Carter is a nice person to have as your main protagonist. She's not whining all the time about finding her best friend and she's not repetitive at all. Like no same thoughts over and over again.
5. The book has so much mystery and secrets, which I love! The message on the boulder was so cool!
6. There are no cliffhangers before the 70th page and I think that that's the reason why it's a bit slow, nevertheless the pace picks up after that!
7. It's so hard to put this book down!
8. Have you ever read a book and felt like losing yourself and forgetting about reading and feeling as if you were watching a movie? Well, I felt like this when Carter and the rest of the group discovered that chamber thing on chapter 16 or something.
9. Blakeney has done a great job in describing without over-describing! Like her descriptions are short and precise and can make the reader imagine everything perfectly without making him feel as if he were reading the same thing over and over.
10. All the plot twists, the cliffhangers, the action, the mysteries and all the secrets were soooo amazing!
11. Blakeney's world-building was perfect! I'm so in love with planet Thror \*hoping for a trip there soon\*.
12. The ending and the revelations were amazing! This book was soooo unpredictable! I just can't. It was perfect!
13. I just can't recommend this amazing sci-fi book enough!?

14. Also, the characters were all so real and genuine you could have easily found yourself in one of them, get attached and you know, enjoy their amazing journey with them!
15. Definitely one of the best sci-fi books I've ever read!
16. Final Rating: 4.75/5??s.

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### **Samantha Beard says**

This book earns a very solid 4.5 from me, but I round up. I enjoyed it for so many reasons. There's a big emphasis on science and archaeological exploration that I found engaging and thoughtful. There are tons of references for both history & science geeks alike. I loved the world of Thror. This book never takes itself too seriously, so it's a refreshing twist on a lot of modern sci-fi that can be too dark or aloof. This is a human science fiction tale with human characters using their adventure to all deal with their own unique struggles.

Though I loved the experience of reading this book, I often felt that it was slightly verbose which led me to put it down after a single chapter each day. After getting more engaged in the story and the characters I didn't have this problem.

One of my favorite things about the book was the development of the Furry Giants and the Stratinites. These are two races that inhabit the planet Thror, and I thought they were wonderfully brought to life throughout the book. Katherine Blakeney even used some abnormal human brain function to create the normal functioning of her alien races which I found fascinating. I love seeing stories work in elements of real science into fantasy stories in a small way.

Ultimatley, I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has even a passing interest in archaeology, or who ever enjoyed watching documentaries on Tutankhamun or The Mummy. Carter makes a great main character with a lot of ambition. All the girls bring something great to the table, including humor, intrigue, and great one liners from the Professor. I really enjoyed digging into this story.

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### **Christina says**

I really loved this book it was unlike anything I had ever read before. I mean planetary archeology?? Futuristic archeology?? Fascinating. Some of the one-liners that were in this book and the mysterious aspects of it all was really awesome :) i know there are so much that I can say about this book but it may be better for a person to go into this book blind no expectations because that's what keeps the story more interesting at least in my opinion.

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### **Carla says**

**First of all, thanks to BlazePublishing for the ARC (first one ever) !!!**

I had a lot of fun reading this unique book!

*Carter's friend Conrad is missing and so she goes looking for him. With her Archaeology of Outer Space*

*class and their Professor P.*

I don't want to spoil anything so that the shortest summary ever but I think that's enough to imagine the situation. It's a really cool Science Fiction/Young Adult adventure and I really liked the writing style because it was really fast to read! I loved the connection of Archaeology and Science Fiction, I never read something like this before!

I loved loved loved Professor P! And Lizzy was one of my favs, too!

I could really imagine this being a series, but I don't know if something like that is planned.

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## **Paige Green says**

Rating: 5/5

Genre: YA Sci-Fi

Recommended Age: 13+

Favorite Quote: "#ThrorLives"

I received a copy of this book from the publishing company (Blaze Publishing Company) from netgalley in exchange for a review and I received another copy of this book when I became a publishing rep for the company. This did not influence me in anyway.

Carter, a sixteen year-old girl living in the year 2222, longs to live up to her namesake, Howard Carter the English archaeologist and Egyptologist who discovered the intact tomb of King Tut aka King Tutankhamun in 1922. This is why she chose to major in Archaeology of Outer Space, which is normally a class where students who couldn't get into their first chose major go. Carter is an excellent student. She's a TA for her teacher, Professor P, and she's in charge of making the reservations for their expedition to Magnus. The class is supposed to journey to Magnus for an archaeology apprenticeship. However, Carter is too distracted by the recent disappearance of her best friend Conrad. He left without telling her and she recently received his possessions from a planet called Thror. Fearing the worst, Carter tricks her class into detouring from their expedition to Magnus to journeying to Thror. When photographs from Conrad's found camera reveal what could be the tomb of the last king of Thror and the overly-friendly natives seem to be hiding something, Carter and her classmates follow Conrad's footsteps into the mountains and launch an illegal excavation in a forbidden zone. Following the clues and coded messages strange things are revealed about Thror, but is the truth stranger than the facade?

Normally I don't like science fiction novels because I feel that so much about the technology and the time period goes unexplained and the technology can be outlandish; however, I loved this novel. The characters were very well written and the writing flowed beautifully. The characters were so well written and each had their own developed personalities that I could read something one of them said and hear the same character speak it in my head. The characters really do come to life in the novel and you come to love them, despite some of the characters having annoying traits at times (I'm looking at you Bryanne). A lot about the technology and the time period was explained and wasn't out of the realm of impossibility. The story had a nice ebb and flow, for every section about the archaeology of Thror there was a section with action in it and for every serious scene there was a few funny moments. The author also did a good job describing scenes and creating mystery and tension.

The only issue I had with this book is that I felt the ending was a bit rushed. I wanted more in the end and I wanted to have some of the ending explained better. I felt a tad overwhelmed by the amount of action and description going on at the ending of the book. Despite that, this book joins the league of my 2017 five star reads! I just want to reread this book right now! I'm excited to see other books this author can come up with.

Also, while I have your attention: Blaze Publishing Company is hosting a giveaway with this book in which you could win a \$25 Amazon giftcard! Go check out their Instagram page or mine for further details. This book releases March 28th, so get your paperback copy now!

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### **Anniek says**

Archaeology in outer space! That's such a fun concept for a novel, and it makes for a really original sort of combination of sci-fi, historical fiction and detective.

Reading this, I loved it at times, but disliked it at other times. The main plot was certainly interesting and surprising, and the Throrians were a funny but also scary sort of aliens. Also, there were some great characters, especially Professor P. She was bad-ass and independent, but also never short of sassy comments. That way, she sent a really strong feminist message. So did Carter, the main character, for being bold and turning around the damsel in distress sort of storyline, trying to find and rescue her friend Conrad. But the book was hard to get into and kept being difficult to follow, because a lot of the time the details were all over the place and there were a lot of sidetracks that were distracting from the plotline. Also, most of the characters were quite flat, making it hard to really identify with them. They were quirky and loveable, but there wasn't much visible character growth.

All in all, this is a really fun read if you're looking for something that's mainly focussed on an adventurous plot and sassy remarks.

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### **A.Bibliophiles.Book.Blog says**

Ok wow. First I just want to say that the writing was fast paced and so smooth, Excellent writing. The story was Intense and mysterious and gripped your attention, I've only read a few books that have involved space travel and different planets and alien species and I love the absolute anything can happen freedom of it! Basically anything seemed possible in this book and that made reading it feel so fun, I Couldn't put it down. I may or may not have read it in two days! There were quite a few creative twists, and you can't help but wonder what happened to her friend Conrad. when you thought you had it figured out, the plot would change. I had no idea how it was going to end...You also can't help but love the main character she's so spunky yet fiercely loyal and with the addition of the other classmates it gave the book a funny banter and lightened it up quite a bit. The ending was intense! I didn't see any of that coming. I would HIGHLY suggest this book to any Fantasy book lovers!

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### **Atlas says**

**The old belief that Thror was a black hole instead of a planet was not unfounded. A black hole sucking**

## in all who ventured too far

\*\* .5

2.5 / 5

Digging in the Stars had a lot of potential (it's about archaeology IN OUTER SPACE, I mean talk about *awesome*) but unfortunately the characters were a bit too flat and the narrative too confused to pull it off. There was still a good chunk of mystery and a totally whacky ending to make this book fun, but it wasn't exactly a page turner.

Carter is our main character, a student at college studying Archaeology of Outer Space which is apparently rather unpopular, given her small class size of about six. Carter is Professor P's teaching assistant and so books the archaeology apprenticeship trip to Magnus. Except, well, she doesn't. Her friend Conrad went missing on the desert-like, low technological planet Thror, famed for the lost tomb of the last King of Thror. So Carter books a flight to Thror, which they somehow all board without anyone noticing that they are not, in fact, going to Magnus (**how does this happen?** What responsible adult trusts a sixteen year old to book an interstellar flight and accommodation and then pay so little attention in an airport so as not to notice?).

*"You are not Howard Carter! You are my sixteen-year-old student, and you have done more than enough damage already, risking our budget, my career, and perhaps all our lives on a whim"*

On Thror, not all is as it seems. The natives, the "Furry Giants", are suspiciously unhelpful as Carter searches for traces of her missing friend. Then comes some treasure-searching, a bit of mystery, some archaeology and a whole lot of weirdness. Back to Carter: she's a bit flat. What do I know about Carter? Her parents are big archaeological folks, she loves archaeology and loves her namesake (Howard Carter), and she has a bit of a superiority complex. That's about it. She dips in and out of concern for her friend, Conrad. Given that he's supposedly dead, you'd think that he'd be a bit more on her mind, rather than traipsing around looking at markets and making necklaces.

Then there's the rest of her archaeology class who get unwittingly transported to Thror. The only two with a glimmer of real personality are Gioconda, who is a total hippy and ends up joining some kind of Throrian cult, and Lizzie who spends the whole book alternating between sarky and sulky. Allison and Bryanne are pretty interchangeable. None of the four are that into archaeology. Professor P, the class teacher, is actually rather interesting - **she's a gem of a character**. She's pretty sensible, being in charge of a bunch of emotional sixteen year olds and all, witty, and a little bit daring.

Unfortunately, I found the writing to be quite confused. Sections were either long and drawn out and I wasn't quite sure why they were happening or there's too much happening all at once. The mythology and history of Thror is pretty poorly explained, all the natives seem to be creepy and lecherous, and there's lots of little sideplots (Lizzie's family, for example) that are hinted at and never explored. Conrad is also very annoying and a manipulative irritant, when I think he's supposed mysterious and handsome.

*"Now that we have established that this is an excavation and not an opera, we can proceed with our work"*

That's all rather negative. So what do I like? **I absolutely loved all the archaeology based bits** - that's why I picked the book up initially, after all! I loved archaeology as child and was incredibly into Ancient Egypt, which seemed to sort of inspire Thror. Unfortunately, there was only a couple of scenes that really got into the details of what doing excavation is all about - everyone seemed a bit too gung-ho in going around a cutting locks and bashing doors in on ancient tombs. I also thought the opening pages of Digging in the Stars

were pretty good - I was grabbed from the get-go.

Digging in the Stars is built off of an awesome idea, but the cast is too dull and the writing a bit confused to pull it off. I recommend it if you like reading about weird aliens or archaeology. Bonus points for incorporating a couple of my favourite lines of poetry ever:

*Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield*

*My thanks to Netgalley, the author, and the publisher for an ARC of Digging In The Stars.*

**Read this review and more on my blog: <https://atlasrisingbooks.wordpress.co...>**

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### **H.L. says**

So I started reading this book about a month ago, today I finally finished this book and it was okay. It had a promising plot but it just couldn't keep my attention. I do want to say the authors writing style was out of this world and was the only reason I kept reading until the end.

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### **Heather Nicole says**

Ok so when you read this book have your mindset in like young young adult. (My opinion it will make this book enjoyable.)

It's a very cute, descriptive, fantasy/sci fi novel.

The main character, Carter, is an Earth girl studying archeology at school. When her class and Professor P plan an educational dig at another planet entirely.

Hence, adventure ensues.

Mystic magic alien creatures greet them once they arrive.

Then the truth of Carters real plan is exposed.

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