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Sophia Rizzo is a good writer on the school newspaper, she's nice, and Elizabeth likes her. But all the other kids at Sweet Valley Middle School--including Elizabeth's twin sister, Jessica--make fun of Sophia because her family is poor and her brother is always in trouble. Even Elizabeth's parents tell her to stay away from Sophia.

To show Sophia that she's her friend no matter what anybody says, Elizabeth decides to go against strict orders from her parents and throw a secret birthday party for Sophia. But is Elizabeth willing to pay the price if she's caught?

Against the Rules Details

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From Reader Review Against the Rules for online ebook

Kristine Hansen says

There's a lot of detailed reviews of this book so I'll keep this short.

Elizabeth befriends the girl from the wrong side of the tracks. Her surprisingly progressive and understanding family goes nuts apparently because they all have decided that she should have nothing to do with Sophia because of her home situation (single mom, brother in trouble, poor as dirt) so Liz does the Jessica thing - she starts lying. And even goes so far as to plan a party for Sophia when the Wakefield family is out of town for the weekend. Whoa, Liz!

(In today's terms, who would leave a 12-year-old on her own like that for an entire day anymore?)

As a side note: Liz's idea of a party is pretty tame, but then she IS Liz.

Overall, not the best book in the series. Everyone is acting pretty unreasonably. I really liked the character of Sophia but I'm worried that she disappears into the Sweet Valley vortex after this book. Which is too bad, she's one of the more interesting people that we've met thus far.

TRACE says

In this one, the majority of Sweet Valley exposes their classism (that they miraculously overcome in a couple weeks, daaaamn), Elizabeth Wakefield remains the sanest human in this town, and we learn Jessica Wakefield's dumbassery was a result of genetics (How Mr. and Mrs. Wakefield survive darwinism??)

Merryn says

Yep, Jess is still a bitch. lol

Jessica says

I thought this book really shows how sweet Elizabeth's disposition is. Even though no one liked the new girl, Elizabeth was willing to risk her reputation at school and her closeness with her family to help the new girl feel better about herself and so that she could have a good friend.

Alex says

Once again, Ned and Alice prove they are the worst parents ever.

And seriously, who extends an invitation to their friend's twin daughters for a weekend trip but then suddenly says that only one twin can go?

Heather says

From "Books I have read this summer" list that I found at home in NJ.

Justine says

I really love this book! I recommend this book to everyone!

Tara Calaby says

This one is basically a SVT mash-up of the prejudice against Trisha Martin in the first SVH books and Jessica's trip away in SVH: Too Good to be True. The main story is that everyone thinks that Sophia Rizzo is bad news because her brother is a violent thief. Except, of course, for Elizabeth, who is always willing to find the good in absolutely everyone. The side plot is that one of Ned's clients has invited one twin to join their family for a trip to Los Angeles. Liz wins the number game to decide which twin will go, but it's Jess who is desperate to do so because she's in love with the musical *Shout* and the lucky twin will get a backstage tour. Oh, and there's also a school play, because why keep things simple?

This is one of the many books in which Ned and Alice are terrible parents. Sophia's brother Tony gives Steven a black eye, so they decide that Liz isn't allowed to see Sophia at all out of school. It would be one thing if they just didn't want her to go to Sophia's house out of the fear that Tony might do the same to her. But that would be too sensible. Instead, they ban *any* contact, because there's no better way of judging a person than by other people's actions, amiright?

For once of only a few times in her life, Liz is a rebel, and continues to spend most of her time at Sophia's house. (view spoiler)

This isn't one of the most interesting Twins books, largely because the ghost writer tries to fit too much into such a short novel. I think it would've been better if the LA plot was cut, irrelevant and glossed-over like it is.

Tiffany Spencer says

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PLOT: Elizabeth friends a girl named Sophia Rizzo, only Jess doesn't approve because she's from a low-class neighborhood, wears old shabby clothes, and has a delinquent brother. But Elizabeth likes her anyway because she's a talented writer. The Unicorns shun her of course and act like total bitches to her. Liz and Sophia are among the students picked to write the school play. Everyone wants something different. After reading some of Sophia's stories Elizabeth is captivated and convinces the students to use one of her stories, which causes conflict. Meanwhile, Elizabeth discovers Sophia's birthday is coming up and she's never had a real party. But after a fight between Sophia's older brother Tony and her brother Steven, Ned and Alice forbid Elizabeth to be Sophia's friend. There's a musical out of Town called Shout and even though it's Jessica's favorite Elizabeth is picked to go. So the twins decide to pull a switch. That way Jess gets to see Shout and Elizabeth gets to throw her friend the party.

My Thoughts.

*I really liked the message here and that was not to judge a book by its cover. So adequate because Sophia is a writer. Sophia probably has more talent in her little finger than all the Unicorns put together. Sophia will probably go on to be a novelist and what will the Unicorns be doing after SVH. Oh, that's right no one knows. Except for Lila whose a rich heiress and marries Ken.

*Alice and Ned are HORRID! They're PARENTS! You think they'd take the higher road. They're just as judgmental as the Unicorns. I'm sure my mother didn't approve of a lot of the people I spent time with but she let me decide on my own about who people were. Then in another parent of the year worthy moment, Elizabeth doesn't care about missing SHOUT. Jessica wants to see SHOUT. So who gets chosen? You guessed it. Elizabeth. That just doesn't make any kind of sense. In a fake show to be fair, I think they draw a number. JUST TAKE JESSICA. Clearly only one twin matters in this family. If I was Jessica I'd be upset too about that.

*COME ON Steven! One minute you're with a group of guys dogging Tony out (doing the same), then you've got his back and are hoping to his defense. How hypocritical is that? You can't talk smack about someone behind their back and be nice in their face. And you wonder why he hit you.

*Not to excuse Tony because his needs some SERIOUS anger management therapy

*I really liked the sense with the picnic. I remember the (sandwiches, potato salad, and fruit punch) on the school lawn sounds really nice. Something again that I never heard of tho. A picnic on the school ground definitely isn't a thing here.

RATING: I probably give it a 7. Ned gets Tony help. Alice gets Miss Rizzo a job. And because the plays a success they all accept Sophia for more than just her outward appearance. Then she has a great birthday to boot. So all is well in the world of Sweet Valley. If only it would be this easy sometimes for people to accept someone that's from a lower background or basically anyone not just for what they have but who they are inside. But sadly we don't all live in the perfect sunny world of SV where things don't get resolved by the end of the book.

Jodie says

Such a great way to spend my childhood in books...I loved these girls and I loved their stories. I never wanted them to end.

Sally says

Aw, Elizabeth was just so *good*. Such a little crusader. But in this case, I'm on her side. It's unfair of everyone to tar and feather Sophia - a 12-year-old girl for heaven's sake - for how the older members of her family behave! So maybe you don't let your kid go to her house, okay, but there's nothing wrong with inviting her over and/or associating with her at school.

Sheila Read says

I remember the cover just not the story.

Jillian says

Against the Rules was one of my favorite books in the whole Sweet Valley Twins series.

M.M. Strawberry Reviews says

Don't judge people by their appearances (or wealth) How often have we heard that? That's what this story is about, and it's a sweet one.

Brylee Ure says

Elizabeth is always in a great place in school but know that she is being friends with Sophia even after her parents warning. Will she get bulled like Sophia? But no instead Sophia is a star! And Elizabeth was already a star! She proved everybody wrong they thought that she was a terrible kid like her brother, even though he gets into trouble a lot he perfect to Sophia before her dad left. Sophia was a good kid and she was smart! These books are so good because they teach you a lesson, never judge people that might have happen because something had gone on in the past, but now look at them you can't judge somebody for their surroundings!
