



EKHO: Evil Kid Hunting Organization

Marie D. Jones

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Ten-year-old Elvis Jones is tired of being picked on, taunted, and teased by the bullies at his elementary school, so he does what any smart, technologically brilliant kid his age would do: he creates EKHO, the *Evil Kid Hunting Organization*, a sophisticated network of kid spies and secret agents that utilize a variety of cool gadgets to stay one step ahead of the enemy – the bullies. They hire kids, make them swear allegiance to the organization, and train them as Commandos, Privates, and Elite Spies. As kids rise through the ranks, the missions, posted on an encrypted EKHO website, require more smarts and skill, especially when the bullies form their own counterspy group called DEKE (Destroy EKHO Kids Everywhere).

It's all in good fun, until the kids of EKHO must put their pretend skills to use for far more serious, and dangerous, missions. As field agents come across evidence of more sinister forces, they now have to deal with the strange, weird, and the unknown as they look for the truth about the bizarre and creepy threats to their school, their families, and their own lives. They experience betrayal, intrigue, infiltration and counter-espionage as well as teachers and adults who act more mysterious with each passing day, which leaves Elvis and his EKHO team wondering: *who can you trust when the person standing next to you might not be entirely human?*

EKHO: Evil Kid Hunting Organization Details

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Author : Marie D. Jones

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From Reader Review EKHO: Evil Kid Hunting Organization for online ebook

Patricia says

This is one of the most intriguing books about bullying and how kids that are bullied stand up to those creating the problem!

The thought of a fourth grade genius being able to develop, plan and carry-out this type of surveillance is an astronomical feat! The bullied banding together to stand up to and prevent bullying is brilliant! The technology involved is totally beyond what I, as an adult, could even consider creating.

Then something happens, a countermeasure by the bullies! A plot to exact revenge on the school's field day is uncovered and EKHO must figure a way to record the proof of the plot and keep the kids safe from the bullies.

Strange messages from a teacher, a creepy janitor . . . what is really going on? "The enemy of your enemy is your friend". What does it really mean?

A truce in the end as they combine forces to figure out the truth! I can't wait for another installment to see where this will go!

Definitely a book I recommend!

~Patricia, Room With Books~ © Feb 13, 2014

Sofia Li says

I was given this book for a blog tour which does not in the slightest affect my honest review of this book

My opinion of this book was a bit unusual. My feelings weren't mixed, but they did occupy both sides of the spectrum. There was a lot that I loved about EKHO, but at the same time I had some issues with it. I would also like to point out that this is my first Middle Grade-esque book I've read since Everlost by Neal Shusterman. Which while that doesn't affect my rating, it still changes the way I rate the book as I am looking at different literary elements.

What I loved about EKHO was the humor, and how much the author made sure we knew it was a modern book. When I say that, I mean that there were references to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Reddit. There was also mentions of Gangnam style, Calls of Duty, and HTML coding. While some people may think that will date the book which means it will never become a classic, I think that because of who the book revolved around, and the voice that told the story, that referring to modern culture was a perfect decision.

Another issue some might have with EKHO is that it is an extremely unrealistic story. Not many people could pull off being the head of an anti-bullying organization, run a professional website, and tweak toys into being high-tech superhero-like gadgets, least of all an ten year-old that isn't even five feet tall yet.

While I did read an ARC of this book, and understand some of it was taken out, there was way to much swearing, including uses of the F-bomb a number of times. When I was in fourth grade I didn't even know what the F-word was, let alone how to use it in common discourse.

The last issue I had with EKHO was that there seemed to be a lot of hype in the blurb about these "more sinister forces", "bizarre and creepy threats", and experiencing "betrayal, intrigue, infiltration and counter-espionage as well as teachers and adults who act more mysterious with each passing day" There was some of this going on in the book on top of the bullying, and yes it did definitely seem mysterious and creepy, but at the same time I feel that the author(s) set us up for such a big, and (in MG terms) cool discovery Elvis and his friends could make. Besides a few things being slightly off with some teachers, and the new girl Santana, there wasn't much that would suggest something even bigger was going on, especially something 'not human'. At the very end however (at the excerpt above), there was a huge turn of events that was the final climax that tells me to go and read the sequel, and I'm praying there is one.

I was in love with both the cover and the title for EKHO (although autocorrect wasn't) because it fit the mood and tone of the story perfectly, making the book feel very futuristic and cool, like there was this big foreboding evil force that these kids had to overcome, which in a sense, there was.

I have to admit, by the end of the book (or page four), I was in love with Elvis Jones. He seemed like such an awesome person that is not only technology-savvy and academically smart, but on top of that he had a 'heart of gold' (how cliché of me). Elvis was valiant, courageous, compassionate, empathetic, humorous, and basically everything you would want in a boyfriend, except for the fact that he is only ten (which is a bummer because then I would have called him my new book boyfriend).

EKHO had one of the cutest romances I have read in a long time. Elvis has been crushing on Kayley since the second grade, and he experienced everything that a ten year old boy running an anti-bullying organization should. He stressed out over whether Kayley was a distraction to his goal, and his friends teased him about how he was giving her special treatment. The Middle Grade feels of this romance were amazing, except for the fact the Kayley kissed a boy on the cheek who was not Elvis.

EKHO's ending was very good, if not a little expected, but the conversation between Billy Bradshaw and Elvis gave us, as the readers, a good thread to hold onto for a possible sequel. I honestly can't wait to read the sequel (I'm praying there is one).

Conclusion: I loved the book EKHO because of its humor, originality, modern references, and how the amount of suspense kept my interest the entire time I was reading it.

Daniel says

This review originally published in Looking For a Good Book. Rated 3.5

Bullying in schools is a hot-button topic these days so it is not surprising that we will see a number of books targeting the bullying topic. *EKHO: Evil Kid Hunting Organization*, is one of the latest, using a spy genre style to entice the younger readers.

The story is relatively simple...a group of fourth graders, at the start of the school year think that perhaps they'll have an easier time as most of the bullies have moved on to the middle school. Unfortunately, there are still two bullies in the school who do a masterful job of picking on the nerds and geeks and smaller kids in school. Elvis is a smart young man, and with his close friends, Levi, Jackson, and Jordy, they form EKHO ... Evil Kid Hunting Organization ... a group dedicated to protecting the picked-upon and to find ways to stop the bullying. They throw themselves completely into this organization, setting up a website, issuing missions, and declaring levels of membership. It doesn't take long for most of the school to want to become members. A new girl moves in to the school but allies herself with the bullies; a new teacher in the school is acting strange; the bullies fight back by hacking EKHO's website and planning a major event. EKHO needs to infiltrate the bullies and their only hope is a girl whom Elvis has a crush on. Will she betray Elvis and EKHO?

We adults tell our children to stand up to bullying, but we forget what it's like to look at someone who is bigger, stronger, and angry, because as adults that doesn't happen to us too often. To our children, it tends to happen every day. EKHO works on the premise that there is strength in numbers, or at least that there is moral support behind the individual who stands up to the bullying. Our hero Elvis comes across as a young man who most likely would have stood up against the bullies even without the support of his friends and his club, which makes him the perfect leader for the group.

I don't know any youngster who doesn't imagine themselves as a spy at some time, and for this reason, the idea that these elementary students become spies, complete with secret missions, in order to put a stop to bullying, or at least stand up for one another, is a sure-fire winner. What fifth grader wouldn't want to be a member of an EKHO-like organization? The fact that this story is based on true events (thanks, Max!) is certainly something to be proud of and to hopefully emulate.

My ARC of this book was an early edition which included a fair amount of cursing or language that seemed ill-suited for the reading level. For any of us with children in school, we know that the language isn't unrealistic, but as so much of the book promotes behavior that is something to live up to or emulate, the foul language was a deterrent. I've contacted the publisher (and the author) and was told that the publisher had concerns about the language as well and that it has been removed in the final published version. I did follow-up with a specific list of questionable words (not everything I objected to is a 'curse' word) but the list specifically was not addressed. It is *possible* that words such as 'douche' and 'dick' are still there as adjectives to describe other characters, though I hope, for the sake of book sales, that other terms have been found.

The story has a positive slant, addresses important issues to our youth, and promotes creativity and the concern of helping others. How can you not like or appreciate any of that?

Looking for a good book? *EKHO* is a wonderful book for middle grade readers looking for support and to be empowered to do something about school bullying.

Diana says

*Received for an honest review

The Evil Kid Hunting Organization (EKHO) was a really fun and creative read. I especially loved that the author made this a book that young people can identify with. As a teacher, I think that many students would benefit from reading EKHO. There are many topics that are dealt with in this story. Bullying is one of the

main and most important topic. I especially loved that each kid had a special talent and they used this talent for a purpose. There are many great elements of Science-Fiction and I couldn't help think of young boys. Obviously, young girls would also benefit from this book as well. I loved that Elvis and his friends banded together against the bullies. I also loved that Elvis and his friends all had a distinguishing trait-unfortunately these traits made them easy targets. As an educator and a mom, I know that young people would benefit from this story and find it inspiring.

Melanie says

The kids that generally get bullied at Royal Elementary are tired of it so they decide to fight back by forming EKHO, Evil Kid Hunting Organization. They put up a website, buy cool gadgets and taste success! Elvis is the leader of this group and the other elites are Levi, Jackson and Jordy. Then Elvis allows his crush, Kayley, to become an elite but there is soon trouble. The bullies decide to fight back with DEKE, Destroy EKHO Kids Everywhere. They hack into EKHO's website and create havoc. Elvis knows someone from the inside had to give them info and Kayley appears to be the leak. Would she really betray them or is she trustworthy after all?

I like that the little guys were willing to stand against the bullies and thought their approach was quite creative. I like Elvis. He was born with a condition similar to cerebral palsy and has had a lot of surgeries and therapies through the years and walks with a limp, which makes him a prime target to be bullied. He has a lot stacked against him but does the best he can and wants all the kids to feel safe in school. He is smart and flexible and willing to deal with harsh realities. He has a good relationship with his mother.

I also like his mother, Daphne. His parents are divorced but they have a good relationship and are able to be civil to each other. Daphne sticks up for Elvis but also teaches him the importance of respecting those in authority. She's a hard worker and, even though she doesn't make much money, they have everything they need and are happy with it.

What I don't like about this book is the swearing. I don't usually give a content warning on middle-grade reads. She doesn't technically use the "f" word, but does use dashes once. Other swear words are used and some of the boys' language was rough. I thought they used the word "pedo" way too often.

There is a cliffhanger at the end but overall the book didn't draw me in enough to make me want to continue reading the series.

Mel's Shelves

John Mimms says

I had the privilege of reading this book a couple of months before it was released and I have been dying for it to come out so I could voice my opinion. **THIS BOOK IS GREAT!!!!** It is one of those rare books that appeal to all ages. It takes a suspenseful, exciting and humorous look at a very real problem that our kids face on a daily basis -bullying. The book tells the story of a group of kids that are fed up with the bullies and the original and exciting ways they deal with them. I won't give away too much, that's not what reviews are for, I'll leave it for you the reader to discover the wonderful treasures that this book holds. The authenticity of a

kid's point of view really makes this book special because the co-author, Max Jones, is the same age as most of the characters. Get it now because I hear tell that Marie D. Jones and Max Jones are going to be back with another brilliant installment soon!

Stormi (BMReviewsohmy) says

EKHO is an interesting take on school bullying.

Elvis is tired of being bullied all the time. He doesn't want to spend his time in middle school being bullied, so he invents EKHO (Evil Kid Hunting Organization) and brings in his three best friends. They go all out with a fancy website, a mirror website to full the bullies, spy gear, the works. The idea is to stay one step ahead of the bullies and try and help those who are being bullied. As word spreads more and more kids want to join.

Elvis has been watching the bullies and something is a little off with them this year. They are just acting really weird and the new girl Santana doesn't even exist in the school records. Then all of a sudden they are compromised with a 'traitor' and the bullies fight back with DEKE (Destroy EKHO Kids Everywhere). Who can they trust? One of their teachers act a little strange and keeps telling Elvis, "The friend of my enemy is my friend." Which confuses the heck out of poor Elvis.

The ending leaves with a little bit of a cliffhanger as you don't get to know exactly what is going on with the bullies but you know something strange is going on.

All the main kids in EKHO are great and very inventive. Elvis is the main character out of the other and he is very smart and brave. I loved how he stood up to bullying towards the end. I think this is a great book for young readers to read and interesting way to deal with the realities of bullying in schools. If you have young readers at home I would recommend you get a copy and I can't wait to see what happens in the second book!

Dennis Waller says

An Entertaining and Awe-Inspiring Read with a Real Message

This is an incredible "middle age" book for kids that will appeal to all age groups. EKHO is an excellent story with a poignant message written in an entertaining manner while enlightening the reader to the world of school age children dealing with bullies. I was extremity impressed by the perspective that Max Jones brought to the book with Marie balancing it out with the wisdom of being an adult and mother. I love the sense of confidence and determination shown by the main character, Elvis, as he comes to terms with dealing with this social problem that is all too real to him and his friends. The guidance and support offered by his mother, Daphne added a warm and realistic touch and the extended family added to the overall feeling of unity within.

Interestingly enough, the concept of bullying doesn't end with school; anyone working today in a company

of any size can tell you that. Maybe that is why this book is so well received. An amazing job done by two amazing people, Max and Marie, in bringing an issue like this to the forefront in a way that addresses the concerns in a most excellent book that is entertaining. There is something here for everyone and a lesson to be learned. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it and anxious to get the next installment. This is one series I'll be recommending to my friends for sure. I do believe our Max Jones has a future as a writer and welcome him with 5 stars!

Thomas says

I will start this review off by saying: parents, get this book for your kid. The only things to be wary of are a small bit of swearing, a reference to murder, and a kind of strange obsession with 'pedos' (I'm honestly kind of weirded out by how many times that word was used. Never paedophile, always pedo)

The story starts out with the first day of a new grade and ends on the last. Given that I'm not American I don't really know what they're talking about school-wise, but I can't imagine it's very important. They're young, that's what matters.

The main character is named Elvis, a fact that is acknowledged very early on. Elvis has been bullied for years - mostly due to his disability - along with his close group of friends. Obviously they need to take a stand, and decide the best way to go about it is to start up a spy group.

The concept strikes me as similar to Codename: Kids Next Door, but the execution couldn't be more different. The kids of EKHO (Evil Kid Hunting Organisation) buy gadgets, make websites and are only a school-wide thing (as of yet).

The main conflict is a group of bullies who, uh, want to continue bullying kids. Elvis wonders why they're bullying kids and he falls back on the old idea of 'maybe they don't have this sort of love at home'.

There's a mystery introduced halfway through - why does the new girl become violent upon reading the numbers 89320? - but it remains unresolved. It has been a long time since I've read a series, but unless this is a huge over-arching plot point I wish it had been wrapped up in the one book. No point if we're not teased with it for a while, is what I'm saying.

The story is littered with references to pop-culture. While I really like it I worry that it may mean the story gets dated very quickly; kids born 10 years from now will probably not know what Instagram is, let alone what The Big Bang Theory is. (Frankly I'm not sure I want them to know what The Big Bang Theory is)

While the main characters each have a trait that makes them instantly recognisable (Elvis is the protagonist, Levi's an asshole, Jackson has a lisp, Jordy's dad is a conspiracy theorist, and Kayley's a girl) which works very well in a kids book. Kids are not looking for anything complex, though I do wish Kayley's thing was more than her gender.

Speaking of which, eight year olds also don't want to know every facet of Elvis' home life. It's cool to know that his parents aren't together any more, but I really do need to know about the barbecues they host unless it's actually happening. The book ignores the 'show, don't tell' rule far too often so it can be dry in places.

There was a moment where I couldn't stop laughing, though I know it was unintentional. Elvis posted a message on the EKHO website warning people to be on the look out and adding "REMEMBER, JESUS WAS BETRAYED BY A KISS FROM A FRIEND." which, to me (someone who wasn't brought up in a

religious country or in a religious family) was hilariously out of place.

That aside, this book is really fun to read. I really enjoyed it, because it wasn't challenging and it had short sentences. It works great as a kids book, and I really hope it achieves some status amongst its intended audience.

SARIT says

The full review - <http://sarityahalomi.blogspot.com/201...>

This book is aimed at middle school and younger but is fun, full of action and positive that anyone could enjoy it. The writing is great papped with humor, and the message is even better. The pacing is good and keeps your attention. In the spirit of this age there were references to Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Redditt (There was also mentions of Gangnam style, Calls of Duty, and HTML coding)... in short - all the "staff" that draw kids. I was amazed to learn that the book is based on the real life experiences of the author's son. Well done to both of you. I can't wait for the sequel.

This book takes the subject of bullying and deals with it in very creative and inventive ways. The setting is California grade school. The school may have a policy against bullying, but the kids don't feel anyone would help them.

Elvis and his three friends, Levi, Jordy and Jackson, are 4th graders now, and have been bullied by the same bullies for several years. These kids are smart, fun, and want to be normal and not bullied, but all of them have characteristics that make them the targets of bullies, Elvis having muscular problems, being wheelchair bound in the past, and still with a limp.

So... this year Elvis decides to do something about it, and enlists his friends to form EKHO, the Evil Kid Hunting Organization, to stop the bullies of their school. Organization is kind of spy club and that keep tabs on the bullies.

The main Character - Elvis Jones - a sensitive good guy, technology-savvy and academically smart. His main traits - valiant, courageous, compassionate, empathetic, humorous, and basically everything are all you want in a friend. On top of that even his young age - ten years old he was running an anti-bullying organization. I also loved how Elvis talks about his mom and his extended family with love and pride. and how his mom loves him, and stands up for him.

Romance - EKHO had one of the cutest romances I have read in a long time. Elvis had a crush on Kayley since the second grade. In a cute way, he was stressed out over whether Kayley was a distraction to his goal and even his friends took notice and teased him about how he was giving her special treatment.

Overall I liked it and gladly recommend it to my son and his friends (5th graders) Same time I really would read another book about EKHO and find out what else is going on in their school.

Trisha Perry says

This is a awesome book about a diverse group of friends that are tired of being bullied and tired of seeing

others in their school being bullied, so they decide to use their talents to make a stand. But when DEKE (Destroy EKHO Kids Everywhere) shows up, things change for EKHO. But who will come out on top after the big field day clash between the two factions.

This is a really great book that not only shows great diversity among the children and adults, but also in the way it handles the problem of bullying. Yes, the school has a no bullying policy, and yes, the school had a anti-bullying assemble, but when the EKHO kids first brought the problem to the principal it was kind of swept under the carpet probably like a lot of schools still do. That is why Elvis and his friends decided to take a stand and formed EKHO, a peaceful way to deal with the bullies, through sound and video recordings (to use as proof), and sheer number members to show up at the scene of the bullying to defuse the immediate situations.

I found the whole concept of this book just so cool I wanted to know where EKHO was when I was being teased in elementary school, I would have joined right up! I really can't wait to see what 5th grade brings for Elvis and his friends, and of course EKHO.

Lindsey Lewis says

I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley and Edelweiss. I was not compensated in any other fashion for the review and the opinions reflected below are entirely my own. Special thanks to the publisher and author for providing the copy.

Elvis Jones and his friends are tired of facing bullies every day at school. So they come up with a plan - a spy agency called EKHO (Evil Kid Hunting Organization), where they will perform surveillance on known bullies and band together to stop their terroristic reign of the fourth grade. However, as EKHO gains momentum, the bullies form DEKE (Destroy EKHO Kids Everywhere), Elvis begins to notice that certain kids and teachers are acting weird - like, *weird* weird.

The concept of this book is a really intriguing one and one that most kids who are bullied (including myself) wish they had thought of. For the most part, it was realistic and believable - the bullies don't just "steal lunch money," they behave in a menacing and threatening manner that real kids can (sadly) relate to. Parents and teachers either fail to care or make the situation worse by intervening. Most of the technology is very realistic, aside from Elvis's genius tech prowess - he seems like one of those kids who would be in college already anyway.

There is a bit of a supernatural element which is slow-paced and more of a sub-plot (I assume from the ending that this will become a series and the supernatural element will be touched upon in depth).

Despite my love for the idea of this book, and the fact that it targets an audience who is especially vulnerable and needs to be reached, I cannot recommend it as there are too many problematic features.

First and foremost, I'm not into censorship, I find cursing to emphasize certain parts of a story, but the amount of cursing and inappropriate talk in this book is unbelievable. The target audience is 9 or 10 years old. While I do believe by that age most children are well aware of curse words and do use them, there is absolutely no way I can push a book that uses words like "shit," "asshole," "douchebag," "fuck," and so on over and over and OVER again. It's not just the bullies who use these words, either, and the main character uses them TWICE toward adults (although he does apologize after). The children often make sexualized

jokes or refer to their teachers as "pedos," which is just plain inappropriate. There are plenty of good kids' books out there which DO use curse words, but the pages aren't littered with them, and they usually provide a special point or emphasis, but this is an ELEMENTARY school book and there is no need for their to be a curse word every few pages.

Another issue is that the main group of children seem to be bullies themselves, toward their own friends (and it isn't all good-natured ribbing). While most of this could be used to show children how being bullied affects their behavior, it is accepted repeatedly and never brought up. Jordy is the small friend of the group, and seems not to defend himself often. Jackson is also bullied a bit for his lisp, and I have my theories that he may be the counterspy from all of the teasing he faces. With friends like that, who needs enemies? They also act like bullies toward their teachers, as I mentioned by calling them "pedos," referring to Mr. Barleycorn (who is very helpful toward EKHO) as "Barleybrain" and saying that "he has his period."

On top of this, the group makes references to violence several times. At one point, a character actually suggests they will "blow [the bully's] brains out with an AK-47," and the only mention made of it is that he shouldn't say things like that or they will get suspended.

There is also quite a bit of sexist language, from teasing Santana for being "man-like," to one sentence which literally suggests that the girls at lunch are all gossiping, texting, and gushing over One Direction. The only featured female student is Kayley, who mostly gets her time as Elvis's love interest and kisses him a lot (like, every single time she sees him). To be fair, the representation of females does improve near the end, as Elvis begins to suggest they incorporate more females, pointing out the instances of girl-on-girl bullying.

Overall, I really wish I could have liked this book, but it just had too many issues.

Rhonda says

4 STARS

EKHO is a entertaining book dealing with a serious problem of bullying by kids to other kids. One kid decides to take action and talked to his friends who got on board. Soon others wanted to join. They worked together with cool gadgets to record what was going on.

The characters seem like real people and believable situations some kids face every day. Their is also a element of science fiction. These kids are smart, fun, and want to be normal and not bullied. The kids are mostly 4th graders and younger.

The setting is California grade school. The pacing is good and keeps your attention. The gadgets look like fun and I would love to have them to play with too. Of course I would have to get my kids show me how to work them.

I would read another book about EKHO and find out what else is going on in their school.

This book is aimed at middle school and younger but is fun, full of action and positive that anyone could enjoy it.

I was given this ebook to read and in exchange of a honest review and to be part of its blog tour by Netgalley.

Tanya says

My rating: 3.5 stars

Elvis and his three friends, Levi, Jordy and Jackson, are 4th graders now, and have been bullied by the same bullies for several years. This year Elvis decides to do something about it, and enlists his friends to form EKHO, the Evil Kid Hunting Organization, to stop the bullies of their school. All four main boys have characteristics that make them the targets of bullies, Elvis having muscular problems, being wheelchair bound in the past, and still with a limp.

The good about this book: Strong boys who are bullied but not beaten down, good friends, who want to help all the bullied kids in school. Elvis talks about his mom and his extended family with love and pride. His mom loves him, and stands up for him. Elvis and his friends are true to themselves and proud of it. Mentioned are adaptive PE, IEPs and all kinds of other things typical public schooled kids would encounter and possibly make fun of.

The author also covers a lot of important topics as privacy when the EKHO agents start "spying" on kids. Elvis' mother points this out clearly so no reader could mistake it:

"EKHO has my blessing, but within certain boundaries. [She had described no video taping in bathrooms, teachers picking their noses, etc.] Those boundaries are breached and the only echo you'll be hearing is an empty bedroom with no computer, gaming gadgets, and the rest."

The spy gear, internet/tech stuff, gaming references, social media references, etc., etc., are all things to draw kids into the book. And those are presented in really a pretty positive way in this book. There is humor appealing to kids of the age group.

And there is a good mystery going on for the kids here ... with a bit of a cliffhanger ending to keep kids coming back for that next book.

My dislikes: Too much cussing of the kids, especially in the first chapter or two, almost as if the author is trying to get the kids engaged in the book in that way? The kids are 4th graders here. I know kids do that, but they don't need to read about it too. Minor bits I can easily overlook, even in this age group, but this was excessive (and I'm pretty liberal on that in books). Nothing extreme (F bomb was written like that and not spelled out ...), but it was the frequency.

UPDATED 1/22/14: I was given a final copy prior to publication, and much of the cussing in the early chapters has been removed. Yeah! I think that is a great improvement, and of course does not change at all the things I like about the book.

Too much of a focus on liking girls, at times. Again, these are 4th grade boys.

Lastly, too much specific name dropping - iphone, Halo, on and on. That might be specific to rope in reluctant readers, but it takes a book outdated so fast.

Overall impression though is a good start to a series, and I might appeal to many kids. The wider the selection the better for kids ... keep them reading and enjoying. I feel the good messages in this book, explicit and implicit, far outweigh my dislikes above, but I do note those for parents and teachers. As for the mystery, I too want to know more about "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

I received an ARC of this book via Netgalley in order to provide an honest review.

Katarina says

This is a great book. It takes the subject of bullying and deals with it in very creative and inventive ways

A few friends are sick of getting bullied and not being able to do anything about it. The school may have a policy against bullying, but the kids don't feel anyone would help them.

So they decide to create a spy club and keep tabs on the bullies, in a keep your friends close but your enemies closer kind of way.

The writing is great, and the message of the book is even better.

I was amazed to learn that the book is based on the real life experiences of the author's son. Well done to both of you. I can't wait for the sequel
