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Lori and Max

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Lori is an orphan and lives with her trendy gran who has a marvellous line in eccentric hats. She dreams of being a real-life detective following in the footsteps of her favourite gumshoes Jim and Sylvie Clandestino. But the only detecting she seems to do is to find her gran's spectacles on a regular basis. At school there is nothing much to discover either but when a new girl Max arrives Lori is charged with showing her the ropes and interesting things start to happen. Max claims she has been expelled from every school she has attended but Lori soon realises that this is a front and that her devil may care attitude belies a different story. The girls strike up a tentative friendship as neither quite fits in.

One day Lori notices that the money in the charity box in her classroom has gone missing and everyone assumes Max has stolen it as she has also mysteriously disappeared. But Lori is convinced that Max would not have taken the money and that something has happened to her. The police do not believe Lori either and she realises she will have to solve the mystery herself.

Told in alternating chapters between the two girls, this is a beautifully written story and a tender and sensitive portrayal of a blossoming friendship between the girls despite their differences and difficulties. The challenges faced by Max in her dysfunctional family are so delicately handled and startling well-observed. There is real heart-stopping peril at the end too as the story reaches a dramatic conclusion. This is a witty, sharp and intelligent detective story - an absolute gem.

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