



Shabbat Sabotage

Emma Carlson Berne

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Emma Carlson Berne's clever mystery novel *Shabbat Sabotage* is about friendship, community, and facing one's fears.

Maya doesn't want to go to summer camp. She's not athletic, she doesn't enjoy the outdoors, and she has difficulties making friends. But when she arrives at Camp Shalom and meets her counselor, Tamar, and fellow cabin members of Team Akko—Dani, Gracie, Marisa, and Yael—she immediately fits in. At the camp opening ceremony, she is swept up in the feeling of community; now, there is nowhere she'd rather be. To top it all off, Team Akko are chosen to lead Camp Shalom's first Shabbat service.

But then the valuable objects used for Shabbat are stolen. Team Akko bands together to solve the crime so that they can lead the Shabbat service as planned; they set out to find the thief hiding in the campers' midst. They confront unforeseen challenges where the clues point to one of Team Akko's own members, though.

The mystery centers the intelligence and friendship of the girls. Maya is the heart of the crime-solving crew, while Sherlock Holmes-obsessed Dani is its mastermind. Gracie and Marisa are the foot soldiers, and Yael is more elusive. These relatable characters overcome personal fears connected to the activities at the camp; these also tie in with the mystery they are working to solve. They move with speed toward a satisfying resolution to their sleuthing, with important lessons learned by all.

Shabbat Sabotage is an engaging mystery about the achievements of girls through friendship, teamwork, and support.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (March / April 2022)

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