FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Clarion Review ★★☆☆☆ SCIENCE FICTION

The Flight Boys: Fugitives on a Time Limit

Angela Brooks
Lulu (Oct 22, 2018)
Softcover $12.99 (124pp)
978-1-4834-9071-7

In the wild science fiction adventure The Flight Boys*, four teenagers take off on a blundering trip to Pluto.*

Angela Brooks's funny young adult novel *The Flight Boys* puts an entertaining spin on an interstellar space adventures, imagining a judicial system on Pluto.

For months, Harry has been listening in on his father's phone calls, knowing that his father is close to completing a top secret aircraft at the military base. When it is finally ready, Harry gathers his three best friends—Max, Jack, and Robbie—to sneak into the base with him and take a look at the special aircraft.

Once inside, the boys discover that the craft is, in fact, a spaceship. They are all but hijacked by the ship's AI system, Candy, and are swept away to Pluto. Candy is ceaseless in "messing with [the boys'] minds," repeating jokes until their delivery is flat. Her loneliness and sense of mischief are conveyed well.

Once the boys are on Pluto, blue-skinned, humanoid aliens capture them, and the four boys go to trial, as the aliens believe them to be interstellar spies. They try to joke and trick their way out of the extraterrestrial justice system with humorous results.

Almost half of the book concentrates on the boys discussing their true reasons for visiting Pluto with the planet's judges. This long section, while it is loaded with charming dialogue and lively action, is repetitive and slow. The rest of the book moves at a faster pace.

While the planet's justice system is explained, little else regarding Pluto's culture is. The aliens are short on personality, and the setting is glossed over so much that Pluto's landscape is hard to picture.

Max and Jack are distinctive leads, but Harry and Robbie are less dynamic. Robbie is often forgotten. Max is responsible for most of what the boys say. Humorous conversations and jovial jibes bounce between characters, clarifying their relationships as the boys tease and support each other in equal measure. At first, they act younger than their ages, but they become more recognizable as teenagers as the book progresses.

Following the story often requires the suspension of disbelief. It remains unknown how the boys are able to sneak into the spaceship without getting caught. Given the parameters of the story, how they are able to return also strains credulity. Harry's father is high up in the military yet isn't as angry at the boys as Harry expected, and the fumbling behavior that Candy and the boys exhibit, while it adds to the book's sense of humor, makes it less believable. Many questions regarding how the boys succeed in their mission, and what goes on outside of their adventure, are unanswered.

In *The Flight Boys*, four teenagers take off on a blundering trip to Pluto.

Source: https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/the-flight-boys/

AIMEE JODOIN (July 29, 2019)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.

Source: https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/the-flight-boys/