



Boys, Brothers and Jelly Belly Dancing

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So there I was, thinking that the last week of school would be mega-fun. OK, well, more fun than usual. Could I have been more wrong? Urm, no. I mean, next-door's barbecue degenerates into a sausage fight, I nearly have to call the RSPCA on Kyra, the Fun Run is more of a No-fun Limp and, oh yes, how could I forget that disastrous game of Spin the Bottle?

Boys, Brothers and Jelly Belly Dancing Details

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From Reader Review Boys, Brothers and Jelly Belly Dancing for online ebook

Kyra (Blog of a Bookaholic) says

SERIES REVIEW

I have finally finished the series. All fourteen books, in a space of ten days. I read the first four books in the series when I was ten or eleven, and I adored them. This January, I really felt like revisiting them, as well as continuing with the rest of the books in the series that were still in the garage. I was scared that I wouldn't like them anymore in case I felt that they were too young for me...but I think I loved them even more this time round. IT WAS JUST...SO... PERFECT! *sobs* And I am now officially emotionally attached to this series.

The whole Ally's World series centers around thirteen year old Ally who lives in Crouch End in London, in her ramshackle house with her quirky family. Throughout the series we are introduced to her sweet, but dippy dad; her seventeen year old sister Linn, who is neat freak and is quite grouchy with the fact that she has to live in such a chaotic house; Rowan, who is fifteen years old and is away with the fairies, her room is completely overtaken by fairy-lights and her own misshapen art projects; last but not least is her seven year old brother Tor, who is an animal fanatic, with a bedroom that doubles as the equivalent of London zoo. The only person missing in this equation is there mom who left them four years ago, battling bad post-natal depression after having Tor, to go travel the world that she has always wanted to see.

I absolutely ADORE Ally's family. They are all so loveable and quirky and I just adore them! Linn is the super-sensible, neat-freak and the oldest one out of the siblings. She also thinks that she has actually been adopted and belongs to a royal family somewhere out there. I felt sorry for Linn, at times I wished she wouldn't be so grouchy, but I could understand the frustration that she felt. I completely adored Rowan, she was utterly adorable and so sweet! I loved how she wasn't afraid to be different and dress quirkily, as it really just made her such a fantastic character that was strong in her own way. Tor was utterly adorable, he is such a cute character, and I loved reading about all his endless pets. I also loved Ivy, who was such a sweet little thing, she is only introduced way later in the series though, so I won't say much else!

I love that Karen McCombie has shown us all these little things that the characters do and how different their personality traits are. She wrote the family aspect amazingly - capturing the chaotic, yet wonderful, every day life of being in a big family. The characters had their ups and downs, where they lent on each other for support when there were times as trouble and I could clearly see the strong bond they all had with each other. It was truly wonderful the way Karen McCombie wrote the life of the Love family.

Throughout Ally's World, we also become acquainted with Sandie, Ally's best friend who can win the award for being The Shyest Person in the Universe; Kyra (my name!), who, at first sights, is seen as rude and obnoxious...but there is more than meets the eye; Billy, Ally's boy best mate and her four other friends who we also begin to know, but not quite as well as the others, who are made up of Chloe, Jen, Salma and Kellie.

The characters in this series are fantastic!

Ally is such a phenomenal character! She is sarcastic, funny, kind and she tells her stories with such an authentic voice. Throughout the series it honestly feels like we have become best friends. I love the way she tells the stories of her everyday life and how she deals with certain situations. She is also a character that I

can relate to, as we are both professional worriers.

Then there are Ally's three best friends: Sandie, who is such a sweet character that I immediately liked, although she did disappoint me later on in the story as she did something that she really shouldn't have done, but I suppose it did all workout in the end. Billy, I adored Billy! He is, as Ally calls him, such a berk. He's absolutely hilarious and I often found myself laughing at the ridiculous antics that he could get up to. Then there is Kyra...at first I was disappointed to share my name with her, as she was quite rude and obnoxious without a singular tactful bone in her body.

However, I soon learned about Kyra's troubled home life in book four and I felt sorry for her. Kyra, as a character, definitely improves throughout the series. She is still loud and obnoxious...but she is funny and sarcastic too, which is a good thing. I think.

This is a truly phenomenal series. I would love to say more, especially about books 10 to 14 in the series. Some truly shocking things happened and there were times where I wanted to cry, scream, hug the books and fling them across the room.

Whenever I started reading the next book in the series, I felt like I was being welcomed into my second home. It felt like I was literally living in the story, and partaking in the hustle of the Love household's every day life. I felt like part of the family. I know the characters' histories, I know their fears, their wants and I know each of them as they were my own sibling.

I think that's the truly amazing thing that Karen McCombie accomplished when she wrote the stories, is how she makes you feel like you're living in their world. She makes the characters seem so unbelievably real.

When you open another Ally's World book, you'll feel as if you are walking into your second home.

These books are absolutely perfect. The characters are loveable, the dialogue is fantastic and Karen McCombie has a way with words that will have you devouring every word on the page and constantly in hunger for more.

The last book was highly emotional, as I saw how far the characters had come, compared to where they were at in the first book. Laughs will be had, tears will be shed, hearts will be broken, unexpected love lurks around the corner, families will fall and families will be completed. The last book was stunning and I was a highly emotional person after the final page had been read. A series that I will cherish. After reading this whole series, I can safely say Karen McCombie is now one of my favourite authors.

If you are to read these books, I'd recommend that you make sure you have all the books in the series at your fingertips, as you'll want to keep reading and drinking in the words and completely losing yourself in Ally's World.

I give it: 5/5 CUPCAKES!

Kimberley says

In this book we continue to follow Ally and her family, this time Ally tried belly dancing as a new way to

lose weight. What she doesn't plan on is her loud, annoying friend coming with!

Once again I found this to be a short, fast read. The whole book is only around 250 pages and the story progresses so quickly you can easily read it in one sitting.

What I also like about this series is that it shows teens that not all families are perfect. It's ok to have a dysfunctional family. Also Ally tries something different in this story, she goes out of her comfort zone and finds that she actually enjoys herself - something that is rarely seen in books nowadays. I think it shows people that it's ok to try something different and you may even find it fun!

This book also touches on weight/ self image issues which I think is something a lot of young girls have issues with nowadays therefore it's interesting to see the take on this.

Once again I continue to enjoy this series, there are some difficult topics which it deals with, I think it handles it quite well. The book is short but packs so much into each story that you continue to enjoy them even if there are 14(!) in the series. I look forward to picking the next one up

Pauline says

3.5 stars.

Rose Dawson says

Série: Alice aTuto sérii jsem naprosto milovala.Alice je velmi vtipná a blázen.Oblíbila jsem si celou rodinu a mimo to i Alfieho a Billyho.Rozhodn? doporu?uji sice je Alice 13 let,ale myslím,že knížku si m?žou p?e?íst i starší. ;)

Erin says

Not much to say, except that I really laughed at the belly-dancing parts. :) Really funny!! And at the end the Billy/Ally was pretty intense. I liked this book a lot.

A.R. Collins says

'Kyra was my hero.' I wish you'd remember that, Ally/Karen McCombie!

Ridiculous to start a story with the thirteen-year-old protagonist lamenting her small breasts, for a number of reasons, but after that this instalment really picks up. I'm afraid I wasn't that interested in the belly dancing, but I was most definitely interested in what was going on with Tor. Someone seriously needs to have a word with his teacher (like the kind of person who runs those courses for teachers who suddenly show themselves to be woefully inadequate), and it would have been good to see this acknowledged in the narrative; that's a real oversight. Still, his sad little story here is told with truth and sensitivity, and it brings out the best in all

his sisters, and even in Billy - the surprise hero of the tale - while Tor proves once again that he's far, far more on the ball than his patronising family gives him credit for.

I've always found Billy's get-together very memorable and believable; Ally's descriptions of the boys' absurd and inexplicable behaviour are pretty funny because they ring true. The boy/girl comparisons throughout the book may seem stereotypical, but it strikes me that they're pretty accurate in the majority of cases. Maybe I'm not supposed to say that these days - on which note, it was interesting (and even a little uncomfortable) to look back on how much casual homophobia was unthinkingly included in boys' messing around and trying to impress each other. Ally reacts in the right way, but I think nowadays she'd react a lot more *if* the comment were made in the first place, which it may not have been even by Richie/Ricardo, and it *definitely* would not have originated in Billy the lovable goofball.

Katie says

****GENERAL REVIEW FOR THE ENTIRE SERIES****

Aww, man....

I started reading these books when I was about nine years old. I don't think I even read them in order at first, just got whichever ones I could find out of my schools library. I loved them. *LOVED*.

Eventually I figured out the order and filled in the gaps. And then proceeded to read the entire series about five times over. Those were the times.

Ally was my spirit animal in those days. She was a little awkward, wasn't quite sure where she fit into her family, had a nice group of friends but only a special few that she considered best friends. She was unlucky in love, to say the least. That's not even mentioning all of the unbelievably embarrassing moments.

Coupled with a few other series, these books pretty much sum up my childhood reading. I think my heart sank a little when I realised I was reading the last one.
