

The Wishing Shelf Book Awards

30th May 2024

TITLE: THE BUCCANEERS OF ST. FREDERICK ISLAND - SIBBY'S SECRET

AUTHOR: Linda Maria Frank

Star Rating: 5

CATCHY QUOTE

'A fast paced, thrill-a-page mystery with fun to root for characters. Highly recommended!' The Wishing Shelf

REVIEW

A big call out to all fans of Enid Blyton's *Island of Adventure*! If that's your sort of book then I suspect you'll enjoy *Sibby's Secret*, the second story in this set of fast-paced, fun-filled, mystery novels. The author, Linda Maria Frank, is a talented writer who seems to know her readership (9 - 13 year olds) well, offering them relatable, fun to root for, children characters and a clever plot filled with suspense.

So, what's it about? Well, in a nutshell, it's the story of two children, Lilly (code name Sprocket) and Frank (code name Wing Nut) who simply LOVE investigating a good mystery. In this case, it's a mystery involving a missing fisherman (Sibby from the book's title), kidnapping and the rightful ownership of a cave on an island. What follows is a suspense-filled adventure with plenty of twists to keep even the most reluctant middle grader engrossed.

There were a number of elements I particularly enjoyed in this book. Firstly, there's A LOT of dialogue; but that works well as kids love 'chatty' characters

over long descriptive prose any day of the week. In fact, it's this element which will probably keep reluctant readers turning the page. Secondly, I loved the 'classic' feel to it. But, then, I'm a big Enid Blyton fan; basically The Famous Five got me through a lot of boring summers! And, thirdly, the vocabulary (for this readership age) is spot on – and, so, for that matter, is the simplicity of the sentence structure. Simply put, the story flows well and 99% of young chapter book readers will understand what's happening a 100% of the time.

So, if you happen to be on the hunt for a 'safe', classic-feeling mystery/adventure for, say, a 10 year old, I'd check this book out. It's very much a standalone novel, but why not check out the first book first? *The Buccaneers of St. Frederick Island*. If it's as good as *Sibby's Secret*, it's bound to be a wonderful read.

'Wishing Shelf' Book Review

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