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# Mine

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Editor's Choice:

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BfK Rating:

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Barrington Stoke publishes what they describe as accessible and enjoyable books for those who are dyslexic, struggling to read, or simply reluctant to sit down with a book. **Mine** is a new title in a series of books about 'difficult, teenage subjects'. On the publisher's website it is described as aimed at 14+ with a reading age of 7.

It comes with plenty of full-page black and white illustrations which are rather in the style of magazines from my own far off teenage years. In a book this short there is no space for character development or subtlety, but it does pack quite a punch.

It's told in the first person from the point of view of a teenage boy, Matt. He is mad about Shelly, a pretty, popular girl in his class and is sure from her looks and smiles that she likes him too. He is deeply shocked when she starts going out with his best friend and in his inexperienced, clumsy way he gets too close one evening and tells her he believes they are soul mates.

She breaks off with her boyfriend and later, at a party, she gets very drunk. He can see that she is not in control, but persuaded by his own desires, her clothes (as we see from the pictures) and behaviour, he is sure that she wants him too and he leads her upstairs. They kiss and he begins to undress her and she seems to know what she is doing. But when she begs him to stop, he thinks only of his own pleasure and takes no notice.

Later, all things unravel. Shelly is distraught and becomes withdrawn and distressed at school. Her friends are furious with Matt and call him a rapist. He can't understand any of this, believing that 'there was only a few minutes to go' and that, like him, she thought this was the best evening of their lives.

The author has said that she hopes that readers will see there are two sides to every story and this is a powerful tale on a highly sensitive issue. There's a lot to think about here, for boys as well as girls.

Running Order:

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