

Physik

Angie Sage

Reviewed by: Sophia Cheng, Age 15

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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While finding a harmless place to safely keep his set of counter-feet, Silas Heap accidentally releases the malevolent ghost of Queen Etheldredda and her pet, the Aiee-Aiee, from a sealed room. By doing so, he unleashes a terrible sickness on the inhabitants of the castle, and triggers events set into motion five hundred years ago. Rightfully dubbed Queen Etheldredda the Awful, Queen Etheldredda is conceited, perpetually displeased with everything and everyone, and has quite a few nasty habits, such as eavesdropping on conversations and threatening others to do her bidding. Continuing her nefarious works in Septimus's time, Queen Etheldredda concocts a plan to permanently take back the throne from Princess Jenna.

Not long after her appearance, Septimus is mysteriously whisked into the past, into the reign of Queen Etheldredda herself. There, Septimus is no longer the ExtraOrdinary Wizard Apprentice, but an Alchemie Apprentice under the greatly esteemed Marcellus Pye. Jenna, Nicko, and Snorri, determined to bring Septimus back, follow suit and find themselves in the palace of five hundred years past, a time of knights and grandeur. However, while the children are absent from their own time, Queen Etheldredda is busy putting the finishing touches on her plan. Even if the children return to their own time, danger awaits them in the form of a spectral queen.

As the third installment of the Septimus Heap series, *Physik* by Angie Sage, continues to entertain and delight its readers, with the only possible complaint being about the tricky topic of time and time traveling. The five hundred years' gap is like a deep chasm between two time periods; the transitions are slightly confusing and sudden. To her credit, Sage cleverly dances around the paradoxes and complications that accompany stories involving time travel, diverting the readers' attention to the main plot, where the action is. On the other hand, the plot goes beyond what is established in the previous books, reaching past the borders of the castle and extending into a completely different time period, preventing the series from becoming redundant or easily predictable. Furthermore, the new, additional main characters are welcome in that they lend a refreshing new perspective to the all-too-familiar castle setting. Overall, *Physik* is another thrilling adventure that blurs the line between science and magic.

Recommended Titles:

I highly recommend *Physik* to anyone interested in a fantasy book that is both action-packed and prone to make you laugh. The reading level of this book is probably around a middle school level. The author provides rich details that allow readers to capture the whole image, and the language is easily understandable, even the parts that are similar to old English of the medieval times. If you enjoyed reading *Physik*, other books to consider include the *Children of the Lamp* series by P.B. Kerr, *The Golden Compass* by Phillip Pullman, *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini, *Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle* by Betty MacDonald, *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke, and *Fairest* by Gail Carson Levine.

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