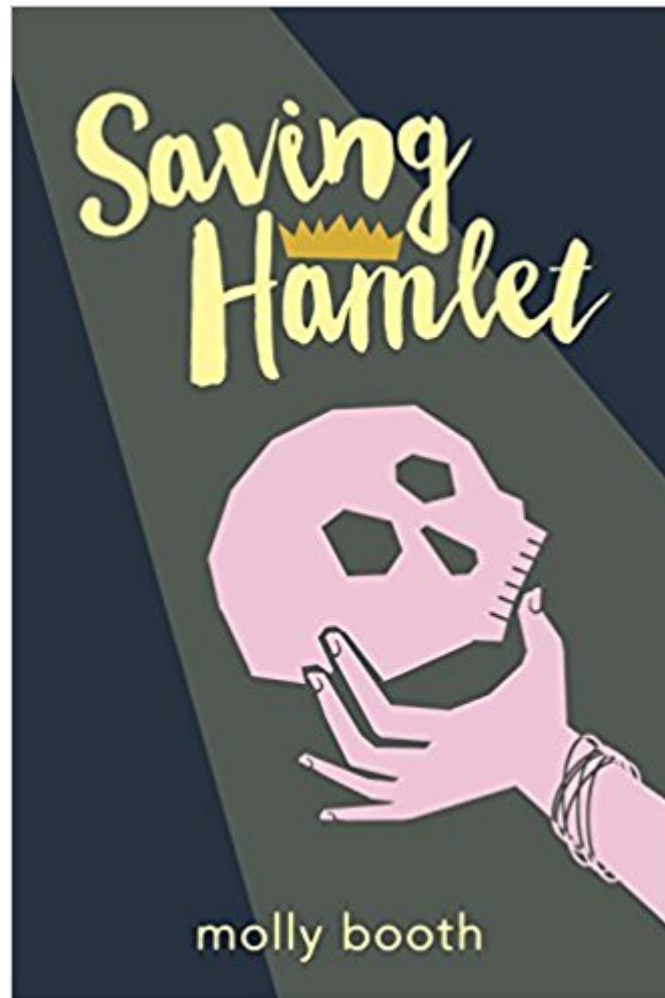




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Saving Hamlet



Synopsis

Emma Allen couldn't be more excited to start her sophomore year. Not only is she the assistant stage manager for the drama club's production of *Hamlet*, but her crush Brandon is directing, and she's rocking a new haircut that's sure to get his attention. But soon after school starts, everything goes haywire. Emma's promoted to stage manager with zero experience, her best friend Lulu stops talking to her, and Josh--the adorable soccer boy who's cast as the lead--turns out to be a disaster. It's up to Emma to fix it all, but she has no clue where to start. One night after rehearsal, Emma stays behind to think through her life's latest crises and distractedly falls through the stage's trap door . . . landing in the basement of the Globe Theater. It's London, 1601, and with her awesome new pixie cut, everyone thinks Emma's a boy--even Will Shakespeare himself. With no clue how to get home, Emma gamely plays her role as backstage assistant to the original production of *Hamlet*, learning a thing or two about the theater, and meeting an incredibly hot actor named Alex who finds Emma as intriguing as she finds him. But once Emma starts traveling back and forth through time, things get really confusing. Which boy is the one for her? In which reality does she belong? Will Lulu ever forgive her? And can she possibly save two disastrous productions of *Hamlet* before time runs out? Praise for *Saving Hamlet*: "I love, love, love *Saving Hamlet*. I love its characters--smart, sassy, irreverent--and its gender-bending both in the 21st and 17th centuries. I love its intelligent take on high school theater geeks."-- Jane Yolen, author of *The Devil's Arithmetic*, *Sword of the Rightful King*, and *Owl Moon*

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up—With her short new haircut and black clothes, Emma is ready to put her soccer days behind her and join the ranks of theater geeks as stage manager for her high school's student-directed production of Hamlet. However, when her best friend Lulu loses the lead to inexperienced soccer star Josh, problems begin. Already feeling vulnerable after her parents ground her for kissing a girl, Lulu snaps when Emma starts coaching Josh and then breaks off their friendship. Even worse, Emma discovers that Brandon, her crush, is gay, so her romantic prospects seem doomed. Perspective comes when Emma falls through an onstage trapdoor, traveling back in time to Elizabethan England, where she becomes assistant bookkeeper to Master Wick during a Globe Theatre performance of Hamlet. Seeing Shakespeare himself in action, she learns much about stagecraft and the true meaning of the play, knowledge that helps her salvage her school's and the Globe's productions and clarifies her romantic feelings. The well-paced narrative should have wide appeal for teen thespians. Although the initial premise seems a bit far-fetched, the major characters are well drawn and believable. The added time travel layer allows Booth to provide historical and interpretive information about the play, thereby making Shakespeare's poetry comprehensible. Less savory parts of Elizabethan life are included to help Emma realize that, despite her travails, she belongs in modern times. VERDICT This nicely plotted story with a strong female protagonist deserves a place in most YA collections.—Nancy Menaldi-Scanlan, formerly at LaSalle Academy, Providence

* "Fans of the Bard will relish this evocative and witty time-travel tale. . . . As enlightening as it is enjoyable, this whimsical novel deserves applause of its own."—Publishers Weekly, starred review"Emma is an easy-to-root-for heroine whose struggles will resonate with teens, drama geeks or otherwise. . . . A fun, imaginative debut."—Booklist

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