



## Star Scouts

*Mike Lawrence*

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Avani is the new kid in town, and she's not happy about it. Everyone in school thinks she's weird, especially the girls in her Flower Scouts troop. Is it so weird to think scouting should be about fun and adventure, not about makeovers and boys, boys, boys?

But everything changes when Avani is "accidentally" abducted by a spunky alien named Mabel. Mabel is a scout too—a Star Scout. Collecting alien specimens (like Avani) goes with the territory, along with teleportation and jetpack racing. Avani might be weird, but in the Star Scouts she fits right in. If she can just survive Camp Andromeda, and keep her dad from discovering that she's left planet Earth, she's in for the adventure of a lifetime.

## Star Scouts Details

Date : Published March 21st 2017 by First Second

ISBN :

Author : Mike Lawrence

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Science Fiction, Childrens, Middle Grade, Comics, Adventure, Fantasy

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## From Reader Review Star Scouts for online ebook

### Alison says

I liked this graphic novel and hope it becomes a series. I took off a star because I felt the characters were a bit too bully-ish without apology. I also liked the diversity inclusion without making a big deal about it - characters of color, single dad, gay space parents.

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### First Second Books says

Being the 'new kid' is tough. Especially when you are a girl like Avani who'd rather go on an adventure instead of doing makeovers and talking about boys. But all is well when Avani gets abducted by aliens and finally finds the one place in the universe where she fits in: in an intergalactic scouting troop. An exciting story about teamwork and finding your own groove!

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### Siina says

Star Scouts is a cute scouts themed comic and you can never have enough of those! Avani is a new kid in town and she has hard time finding her place and fitting in. Her dad makes her join the girl scouts, but the girls are more about girly things and boys than adventures and whatnot. An alien girl named Mabel accidentally teleports Avani to alien scouts group that's way more interesting. The group needs to find the power of cooperation and friendship and what better way than to go on an adventure together and take part in competition to prove that they are good together. I'm always hyped when I find great comics for kids and especially one with a POC main character. Avani is awesome and grows as a person on her way and is interesting and funny - basically a perfect role model for girls. The journey is nice, though I must say that the plot isn't perfectly balanced. The beginning is quite slow and the ending is there too soon compared to that and thus the growing up and understanding comes too abruptly.

The colors are superb and very space-like. The art looks cute and round, which makes this soft and easy to follow. The panel structure is easy to follow and the line work is steady. For younger readers all these mean a wonderful read, really. For older readers this may seem a bit childish, which is the case with the dialogue too, but it's not a bad thing necessarily. The facial expressions are great and I do like that all the characters and different species have their own looks and they vary a lot. There's this special feeling to the comic and the scouts theme is just great - I am a former scout too!

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### Sharon Tyler says

Star Scouts is a children's graphic novel by Mike Lawrence, and is currently scheduled for release on March 21 2017. Avani is the new kid in town, and she's not happy about it. Everyone in school thinks she's weird, especially the girls in her Flower Scouts troop. Is it so weird to think scouting should be about fun and adventure, not about makeovers and boys, boys, boys? But everything changes when Avani is "accidentally" abducted by a spunky alien named Mabel. Mabel is a scout too, a Star Scout. Collecting alien specimens (like Avani) goes with the territory, along with teleportation and jetpack racing. Avani might be weird, but in the Star Scouts she fits right in. If she can just survive Camp Andromeda, and keep her dad from discovering

that she's left planet Earth, she's in for the adventure of a lifetime.

Star Scouts is a wonderful graphic novel about a young girl named Avani. She is not into boys and the popular music, she is different and stuck in the rut of wallowing in her unhappiness, so much so that she does not notice other people's unhappiness. Then she meets Mabel and her group of Star Scouts she finds a great group of friends, and a fellow outsider in Mabel. They face challenges, including the classic battle with a bully in a fresh form, and find out a lot about themselves and friendship on the way. I think readers of all ages can empathize with Avani and Mabel, with the way they feel left out or not good enough. Even adults still face these feelings, and seeing others going through it in books and movies helps us all feel a little less odd. I also enjoyed the artwork very much. I think readers that will identify with the characters, and even those that feel more confident and comfortable in their own skin, can get a lot out of that part of the story. Oh, the adventure and danger portions of the story was awesome to, but I just identified so much with the emotional aspect that it is what stayed with me the longest. It was bright and colorful, and very detailed.

Star Scouts is a well drawn comic about adventure, finding yourself, and friendship. I really enjoyed the book and think that it will hit the sweet spot with many readers.

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### **Kazia says**

This was really lovely! Unfortunately, I'm taking points off for the wedgie jokes. I get how they joke is \*supposed\* to land, but it manifests itself in kids getting their butts pinched/being touched without consent, and I'm just not here for that.

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### **Lola says**

I decided to read this book because scouts are not popular characters in fiction. You barely hear about them in real life either. And yet, I'm really curious about them.

Also, when I was eleven, I went to three scout meetings but I never joined because I hadn't been with them since the beginning of the year and I felt like I was crashing a party at times since I didn't know anything and knew none of the songs and traditions.

But now I sort of regret not sticking with it and actually learning stuff that I would have found probably useful today. Luckily, I was able to experience becoming a scout vicariously through Avani who gets abducted by an alien by mistake.

Not just any alien—but a star scout. Except, instead of discussing boys and makeup and cheesy songs, these scouts earn exciting badges and go on lots of adventures. (Sidenote: I want to mention that not all scout girls are obsessed with boys and such. Actually, the ones I did hang out with cared more about each other than boys.)

I'm not going to lie. It's ridiculous at times. Mabel, the alien who accidentally abducts Avani, is a bit nuts. She's like a child in a candy shop about her badges, but she thinks only after she acts. She is then prone to getting into trouble more often than not.

But the world-building is detailed. Mike Lawrence's imagination clearly knows no limits. Sometimes the visuals \*can\* be distracting to the dialog, but they're too gorgeous and original not to acknowledge and

admire.

I had fun reading this and meeting all these crazy characters. I know that whenever I am feeling regretful I never joined the scouts, I can turn to these books and feel better immediately.

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### **Carla Johnson-Hicks says**

I definitely agree with Avani, I would rather be a Star Scout than a Flower Scout. This is a great book for young girls. When Avani's father enrolls her in Flower Scouts to meet new friends, it does the opposite. Most of the girls think Avani is a hick because she is not interested in boys, makeup and music from the newest boy idol. When she accidentally gets transported by Mabel to her planet, she joins Star Scouts. Mabel transports her each week for meetings. When she gets the opportunity to go to Camp Andromeda for a week she meets another Star Scout and they do not get along. Can Avani learn to work with others that she may not like the best? Will she realize that her attitude may have something to do with the way others perceive her? Will her time with the Star Scouts help her to see that there are people at her school who want to be her friends?

This is a cute adventure graphic novel for young girls. It will help them to look at their attitude and how it affects others as well as the idea that you need to be a friend to make friends. A good book to have in school and public libraries.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Mehsi says**

A girl gets teleported to space and is initiated in the best scout club ever: Star Scouts!

I have been meaning to read this book for some months now, never had the chance, until yesterday! I am quite delighted I had the chance to read this one, as it was just so much fun. I wish my scoutdays were as fun as Avani's. Robots? Space suits? Building fun and exciting projects?

It all starts when Mabel, our alien, accidentally targets on Avani and teleports her to her space home. Yup, but thankfully both of them become quick friends (real quick even), they even have something in coming. Being scouts. Well, their scout stuff is vastly different but you get the idea.

I didn't understand why Avani had to stay with the flower scouts. It was just such a boring group of scouts. Just doing frilly things, which is fun if you want to do them, but if you are like Avani (and someone else in her group, and me) you would be bored out of your skull. I could also relate to Avani just not connecting to her group. When I was that age I also didn't have the biggest interest in all that stuff, that came much later.

The star scouts were just too much fun, all the things they did were things I would have loved to be doing at that age. Plus, come on, it is space! Aliens! Floating! Gravity is less (or more)! Jetpacks! And I also loved the group of scout who all quickly became friends with Avani and accepted her as one of her own.

The camp? I had a laugh how Avani managed to get her dad's autograph for it, and then the camp really started. Avani with a ton of stuff (and I had a bigger laugh when she just poofed from that toilet, that poor

girl), I loved the way gravity worked there, plus it was fun to see other scouts as well. Not to mention that there are two kinds, the ones who breathe in farts (sorry, not sorry) and those that breath oxygen. Then there were the various activities that had me smiling with a big grin, and wishing that I could participate.

The whole deal with Pam? Uggghh, that is definitely one of the biggest reasons why I rated this book less than I had planned to do. She was just annoying. Yes, she was offended by what Avani said, but hey, Avani is still new to this space stuff. And Pam was just a mean girl. I just wanted to throw her into space and leave her there.

There was some drama during the challenges that had me rolling my eyes.

One question. How come no one knew that our MC was missing the scout stuff? Unless she concocted a pretty good excuse.. but then again, I can't imagine the flower scouts woman didn't contact the MC's dad as our MC missed week after week of scout meeting. Unless, I missed something and she cancelled, but I would say that she would need her dad's permission for that. And so we come back to how come no one noticed.

I hope that Avani can be honest one day about what activities she does. Because I can't imagine that she can keep lying about things for that long.

I liked the ending, and I am glad to see Avani has a new, human, friend.

The art was pretty OK. I liked the designs of the characters.

All in all, I will be continuing this series as I want to see what other adventures and fun things Avani and her friends will have/do.

Review first posted at <https://twirlingbookprincess.com/>

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### **Jessica Haider says**

Star Scouts is a middle grade sci-fi graphic novel about Avani, an Indian-American girl who has just moved to a new town with her dad and is having trouble fitting in at school and in her flower scout troop. When she is accidentally teleported aboard an alien space craft she discovers a place she fits in: the Star Scout troop.

This was cute. My 8 year old enjoyed it and for the most part it was age appropriate. There was some butt/fart/wedgie humor so maybe that's part of the reason. :) He asked if there was a follow-up book and lucky him, it looks like there is!

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### **Cecelia says**

Middle grade science fiction graphic novel. Those six words = auto-read in my world. I love middle grade books, I love science fiction and fantasy, and when you put them together, in a graphic novel format? I am here for it. Add in a diverse girl as the main character, and Mike Lawrence's solo graphic novel debut Star Scouts became a #1 priority in my to-be-read (TBR) pile.

Avani is struggling to fit in at her Flower Scouts troupe and new school when she's accidentally teleported to alien Mabel's spaceship as part of a Star Scouts (the intergalactic version of scouting!) homework

assignment. Soon, Avani has made new friends, each with different strengths and talents, including flying and robotics. When Avani makes it to Camp Andromeda (real space camp) with her new Star Scouts troupe, the adventures get even more intense. Will she prove that humans belong at space camp? It'll take teamwork, friendship, and a little inventiveness to stay with her new friends and win the day.

Star Scouts is sci-fi fun from page one. For most readers, it'll remain just that. I think there are things to love about this book, but there are also areas for improvement. Let's dive in.

First, things I liked: it's a book featuring a diverse main character – Avani is a rodeo-loving, Hindi-speaking adventure-seeker. Avani can be abrasive and impatient at times, but her sense of wonder and fairness balance that. And it's just plain awesome to see a person of color as the honorary human at space camp! Following on that... space camp! Lawrence sets the scene with lots of futuristic bells and whistles (and a sci-fi take on typical camp activities). I also appreciated that the camp challenges relied not only on intelligence and training, but teamwork. Another bright spot is Avani's new alien best friend Mabel. Mabel is a bit of a klutz and not so great at the badge challenges, but her heart and loyalty are portrayed as important as talent, and that's a great message for readers.

And I haven't even covered the fun and inventive art yet! Yikes! Illustration is where Lawrence really shines. The colorful page spreads are full to the brim, and yet the sense of action and movement is palpable. I might not understand the rules of physics at Camp Andromeda, but I believed them!

On to the things that struck me as problematic: first, there's an implication within the first few pages that a group of Earth girls together would only be interested in makeup and boys, and that these interests mean that girls are vapid/stupid/not worthy of friendship. Granted, this is Avani's view and she ignores the one person reaching out to her, but her perspective/judgment is not challenged in the course of the story. Secondly, once at Camp Andromeda, most of the action focuses on a girl vs. (alien) girl grudge match. Seeing both of those scenarios in the same story gave the book an anti-girl feel that wasn't completely mitigated by awesome alien bff Mabel or the new Earth friend Avani made at the very end.

There's also a running fart joke (ah, middle grade lit!) at Camp Andromeda that is essentially identity-based name-calling. I get that it is included for humor's sake, but the taunts are not addressed by those in authority or significantly challenged in the course of the story. So... yeahhhhh.

Finally, an editing preference: there were many characters/creatures/robots included in the story – too many to focus on with any depth. These, combined with constant action and new challenges, resulted in a confusing smorgasbord. Star Scouts is a visually appealing read, but a crowded one.

In all, Star Scouts is a beautifully illustrated space romp featuring a diverse main character. There's some room for improvement in the empowering (all kinds of) girls department, but it should appeal to anyone who daydreams about adventure while stuck in the everyday.

Recommended for: fans of Ben Hatke's Zita the Spacegirl series, and anyone who likes middle grade lit, science fiction, and graphic novels (especially in combination).

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### **Krista Regester says**

I'm not exactly sure why it took me so long to finish this.. at some points it seemed that there was too much repetition when it came to the text. I liked the first 30 or so pages a lot and then it just dragged on. Jokes seemed to lack actual humor but maybe that's just me!

## OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/st...>

Star Scouts

By Mike Lawrence

ISBN 978-1-62672-280-4

Brought to you by OBS Reviewer Scott

Review:

Star Scouts by Mike Lawrence is a heart-warming tale of an intergalactic misfit scouting group at the Star Scout Andromeda Camp, where competition and humanism play out. A universe in which the badges you can get are in teleportation, lasers, robotics and more (of course, `xenoscatology is a badge!) and the graphic novel captures the feel of a 'scouts group' to a tee. I was instantly reminded of scouting Jamborees and badge earning from my youth.

Avani, a young Indian girl who has trouble making friends at her new school, and has reluctantly joined the 'Flower Scouts,' accidentally gets teleported onto a Star Scout Alien ship. Using the Star Trek 'Universal Translator' trope, she forms a bond with the young alien scouts and proceeds to join them as Earth's first representative in the Star Scouts. With a few instances of mishaps, They are off to the Camp, where methane breathers and O2's (Oxygen breathers) have a bit of a rivalry. When Avani accidentally calls one a "toot breather," completely by accident, it quickly escalates, first into rather humorous practical jokes, then almost into a fight that is interrupted by the heads of the camp: their solution, whoever gets the best of seven badges gets to stay a Scout and the other must leave. Avani's stakes are a little higher as she represents whether Earth becomes a recruitment grounds for new scouts. Her rival, faces humiliation – wild antics occur, and Earth's future hangs in the balance.

The story is linear but entertaining. Aimed at 'Scout ages' that youngster to "tweenie" demographic, the story and its humor are apt. Never wavering (or missing the opportunity to make a joke) Lawrence gracefully pulls the reader through the tale, giving multi-culturalism, mythology, science and moral ethics a good covering (alienation is a de facto standard in multi-species sci-fi). The word choice is apt and a little of the Hindi language is thrown in for good measure (and added realism). The story plays out in a manner in which adults see the future, whilst the young sees the present. In all of the badge events, I could pull myself away as an adult and foresee the endings, however, in the back of my mind (and often on the forefront) there was this inner child that wanted to keep turning the pages.

The artwork in Star Scouts is commendable and well executed. The various aliens and Avani are drawn in a tight, yet loose style. Let me explain: the lines are crisp and clear, perspective is maintained, a uniform style is established and nothing looks out of place – in this sense the drawing is tight; it is loose in the sense that everything is constantly in a state of motion, pushing the reader from panel to panel in an inconspicuous manner – in this sense it's loose. All in all the artwork was cartoonish, but sustained the sense of disbelief until you finished the story. Mike Lawrence did a phenomenal job in the artwork for this zany piece.

Inevitably, I would recommend this book to Scouts (of any type, even 'Flower Scouts),' and young readers who are finding a transitional displacement hard. Star Scouts is about inspiration to aspire and overcome

cultural and species differences, and gives hope in cooperation and compassion. The ending is not forced, it flows naturally from the story, and this graphic novel deserved a space on any young person's shelf.

\*OBS would like to thank the publisher for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review\*

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### **Kristin says**

The STAR SCOUTS adventures begin thanks to a happy accident, and from then on there's no stopping Avani Patel. Mike Lawrence's STAR SCOUTS, a new graphic novel from First Second, recommended for ages 7-12, has everything kids love about middle grade stories. A diverse host of alien beings, lots of attitude from the heroes, fart jokes, and a parent who seems oblivious to strange goings-on and doesn't question odd wording on permission slips for a week of sleep-away camp. See? Everything!

The action is fast-paced, silly, and entertaining. Mike Lawrence's illustrations are bold, creative, colorful, and emotive. Avani, the hero of Space Scouts, is Indian-American, which adds a welcome infusion of diversity. Her favorite past-time is rodeo riding, and she speaks Hindi (translations included!) in several scenes. Avani's personality has depth that includes strength, grumpiness, curiosity, rebelliousness, courage, and vulnerability. Readers will recognize many aspects of themselves, and some will even question her choices when they are not particularly kind.

My one complaint is the stereotypical "girl drama" and the lack of pushback when characters pick-on each other's personal aspects. On the other hand, the camaraderie between the friends, and their ability to overcome disputes and differences helped soften my disappointment.

Our whole family is looking forward to the next installment!

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### **Ames Public Library Youth Services says**

5 stars. This was so much fun! Avani is the new kid in town, and while unsuccessfully trying to make new friends, gets abducted by aliens. And those aliens are a lot more like her than the humans in her new town!

There are some stereotypical characters in this book, but there is also a lot of heart and humor, with forgiveness winning the day. Great fun for upper elementary and here's hoping for a sequel! JP

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### **Mary says**

This was such a fun read! Avani is having trouble fitting in with her scout group, finding that she doesn't have much in common with the other members (so she thinks). One day she is accidentally teleported to another scout group - in space! Mabel and her troop of aliens are members of the Star Scouts and welcome Avani to their ranks. Now, every week when her father thinks she is at Flower Scouts she's actually trying to

earn badges in robotics, jetpacks, and moon rocks. There are great lessons here about teamwork, sportsmanship, and saving judgements. By the end, Avani's experiences with the star scouts help her to make an Earth friend. Funny and smart!

Title: A

Cover: A

Grades: 3-6

Other notes: Avani is of Indian descent.

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