

The Cookie Culprit (Meet the Maliks: Twin Detectives #1)

AUTHOR

ZANIB MIAN

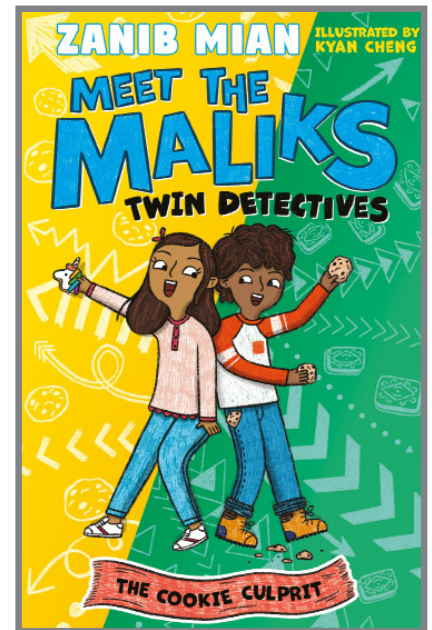
ILLUSTRATOR

KYAN CHENG

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

Meet Maysa and Musa Malik. They might be twins but they are total opposites. And together they make an unstoppable team, especially when trying to solve a mystery!

Maysa Malik just can't seem to be good like her twin, Musa. So, when she isn't allowed to go on a school trip, Maysa tries to change her parents' minds by taking part in a cookie competition at the mosque.

But when the cookies are all destroyed, it's up to Maysa, Musa and their neighbour, Norman, to solve the mystery. They'll have to put their detective hats on to catch the culprit—and help save Maysa's reputation

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zanib Mian's books have featured on BBC's CBeebies Bedtime Stories and *The Guardian* for their contribution to diversity in children's literature. She was a World Book Day author in 2021, and her work has been translated into multiple languages. Zanib studied Molecular Cell Biology at University College London and went on to teach Science in secondary schools before she made the decision to give up the career to create change within children's publishing. She felt that diverse characters from all minorities and backgrounds weren't being fully represented in books for young children. She launched Sweet Apple Publishers with a clear commitment to publishing inclusive books, many of which she has authored herself.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Kyan Cheng is currently residing in Bristol with her husband and furbaby pup. One of her favourite things to do growing up was drawing characters from books and tv shows. She now has fun creating her own characters and continues to explore her favourite themes which include nature, food and all creatures great and small.

STUDY NOTES

- People think Maysa and Musa are 'total opposites'. Do you agree or disagree? Can you think of some things the twins have in common?
- The illustrator, Kyan Cheng, has drawn plenty of illustrations all throughout *The Cookie Culprit*. Did you like seeing the characters and moments from the book come to life in the pictures? How would the story be different if there were no illustrations?
- Some of the words or sentences in the book are set out differently than others—like being bigger, bolded, or in all

capital letters. Why do you think this might be? Did you pay more attention to these sections? How did it change your experience of reading the book?

- Has your class ever been on a trip together? Where did you go, and what did you do?
 - Imagine your class could go anywhere on a trip—make a list of everything you might like to see, do, eat and explore. The sky's the limit!
- *The Cookie Culprit* is from Maysa's perspective. Do you think the story would change if it was from Musa's perspective? How might Musa see or understand things differently to his sister?
- After their parents declare Maysa is banned from the trip, Musa knows to give her space. Maysa says 'most people would usually try to cuddle or make me talk about my feelings right away. But Musa always knows exactly what I need. I need to understand my feelings first before I can talk,' (p 20). Do you feel like Maysa sometimes? What are some ways you could support a friend who might need some space before talking about their feelings?
- Maysa, Musa and their family are Muslim. As a class, talk about some of the new things you might have learnt about Muslim beliefs and culture from the book, like fasting for Ramadan, celebrating Eid or learning at madrassah. If there are any students in your class who are Muslim, ask if they'd like to share their own experiences.
- Draw a picture and write a few lines about a cookie you might make for the cookie auction! Make sure you include what flavour of cookie it would be, the shape, and how you would decorate it.
- When Maysa's friends find out she can't go on the trip, she tells them a lie. Why did she do this, and what are the consequences? Do you think it is ever okay to lie? How would you feel if you found out a friend had lied to you?
- What clues were there to the cookie culprit? Did you solve the mystery before Maysa and Musa?
- As a class, brainstorm some famous young detectives. How are Maysa and Musa similar or different to the detectives on your list? You could even make a display of detective books, and find something new to read next.
- *Meet the Maliks Twin Detectives: The Cookie Culprit* is the first book in a series! What sort of mystery do you think Maysa and Musa might solve next time?