

by

Kevin Clark

Reviewed by Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopes, publisher of "Time with Tannia"
[\(http://timewithtannia.tripod.com/\)](http://timewithtannia.tripod.com/)

In his book, "Numbers Up", first time author Kevin Clark brings to the teens/young adult audience a crime story full of mathematical and science concepts weaved into the storyline.

The story begins with the discovery of the renowned mathematician Dr. Michael Townsend's dead body in his office at the Institute for Applied Mathematics. A call is placed to the Metropolitan Police Department and detective Paul Ondracek is chosen to lead the investigation.

In the course of the investigation, detective Ondracek uncovers some suspicious activities involving former Dr. Townsend with some well known and established banks, and his financial support of some terrorist groups in Palestine. Detective Ondracek must use his experience, good judgement, and analytical skills to solve this case before it's too late.

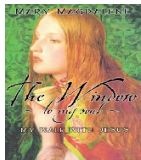
Meanwhile, the Feds and the NSA (National Security Agency) are monitoring some suspicious activities in the Chechen Republic with the help of one of their undercover agents and his informer. When a fax transmission giving details about the selling of a Joe-2, an old Russian nuclear bomb, to a terrorist group in Palestine is interrupted, then the White House finds itself in a big dilemma: how to prevent the sell of the bomb without causing an international crisis and deteriorating any further their relationship with Moscow.

The book moves back and forth between detective Ondracek's criminal investigation and

the terrorist group in Palestine pursuing ways to find economical means to purchase the Joe-2 from a former Russian Red Army General. At the end, when all pieces of the case start to fall in place, the murderer escapes from an NSA secured location. This gives the author an opportunity to write a sequel in which he could develop detective Ondracek's character to his full potential. He could be promoted or transferred to another government agency giving him the opportunity to amend his mistakes, capture the murderer and close the case successfully. I like detective Ondracek character very much. He is clever, naïve, fresh, and with a personality that makes the reader able to identify with him and his predicaments.

On the other hand, this book could have greatly benefited from the services of an editor to help the author polish the dialogs and correct the flaws in the storyline. In some instances, it appears that the author is discussing prime numbers and DNA sequences concepts with high school students. The redundance of these topics in several conversations throughout the book makes it very hard at times to follow the story and it also undermines the capabilities of the main character, Detective Ondracek. I encourage the author to continue cultivating and improving his writing skills so the sequel to this book is enjoyable to a wider audience.

I recommend this book for teens/young adults looking for a crime story. This book is not suitable for readers under 16 yrs old since they will not be able to understand it and follow the story. In general, I found the storyline to be original and interesting, considering it was written by an amateur author.



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés author of *The Window To My Soul, My Walk With Jesus* (2004 Tate Publishing ISBN 0975393359.) Visit the author at:
<http://timewithtannia.tripod.com/>, www.myspace.com/tanniaortizlopes, and
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