



2008

North of Beautiful

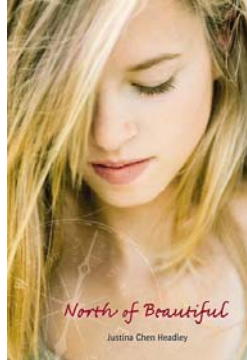
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Headley, Justina Chen. *North of Beautiful*. Little, Brown and Company, 2009. ISBN 9780316025058. \$16.99. 373 p.

Reviewer: Anna Swenson

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Fiction;

Subject: Beauty, Personal--Juvenile fiction; Birthmarks--Juvenile fiction; Book--Reviews;

Terra Cooper is a young beautiful girl with a port-wine stain on her cheek. She feels she has to hide her flaw in order to be beautiful. She secretly plans to move far away from her town, but her father does everything to keep her under his control. When she almost crashes into Jacob, a handsome Goth boy, he challenges her beliefs on what beautiful really means. Terra's brother sends plane tickets to China for Terra and her mother and they travel with Jacob and his mother Norah. While visiting the orphanage where Jacob was born, Terra sees a little girl hiding in a corner, ashamed of her port-wine stain. This experience causes Terra to realize that she doesn't need makeup to be beautiful. When they get back home, Terra feels confident enough to show her face without makeup on at school. She feels that she no longer has to be what her father wants her to be.

This book allows the readers to relate to the characters' problems and triumphs. The unique story of a marked girl struggling for independence never failed to grab one's interest. The story of romance and definition of true beauty will appeal to young adults. Overall, *North of Beautiful* is appealing because the characters give an interesting sense of perspective.

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