



2009

The Mark

Anna Swenson

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Nadol, Jen. *The Mark*. Bloomsbury, 2010. ISBN 9781599904313. \$16.99. 228 p.

Reviewer: Anna Swenson

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary Realistic Fiction; Occult Fiction;

Subject: Psychic ability--Juvenile Fiction; Death--Juvenile Fiction; Philosophers--Juvenile Fiction; Books--reviews;

Cassie Renfield has the ability to see the mark, an aura surrounding someone indicating their impending death. When Cassie sees it around her grandmother, she is haunted by the fact that she cannot do anything to save her. After her relocation to Kansas to live with her estranged aunt, Cassie begins to search for answers with the help of her new college boyfriend Lucas. She struggles to answer this great philosophical question: if you know today is someone's last, should you tell them?

Nadol's *The Mark* is a compelling, thought-provoking novel filled with grief, heartache, and isolation. It's unique and the author does an excellent job of showcasing the ambiguity surrounding fate. Cassie is an immediately likable character, although the secondary characters were somewhat lacking in depth. Some parts of the story, however, fall a little flat. The relationship between Lucas and Cassie is not particularly intriguing, or interesting to read about, and the ending is somewhat anti-climatic. Overall, *The Mark* is a great read and should appeal to young adults with an interest in psychic phenomena.

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