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Exile

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Book Review

Title: Exile

Author: Kevin Emerson

Reviewer: Amanda Shrum

Publisher: Katherine Tegen Books

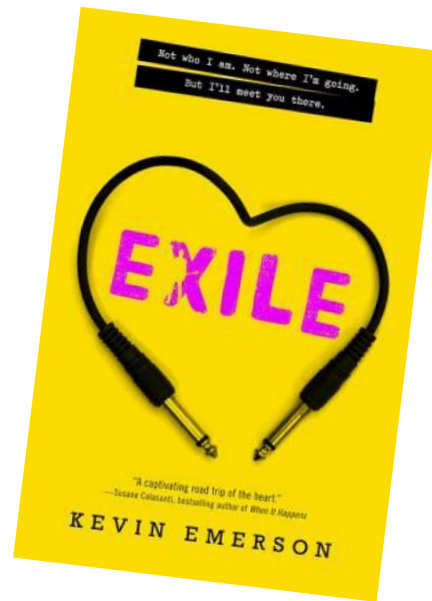
Publication Year: 2014

ISBN: 9780062133953

Number of Pages: 304

Interest Level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable



Review

Torn between trying to please her conventional parents and following her dreams of becoming a rock band manager, Catherine Summer Carlson struggles to juggle school, music, and her love life while attending Mount Hope High's PopArts Academy. After falling for fellow student, the dreamy Caleb Daniels, the two begin developing a new band, Dangerheart. But there is more to Caleb than meets the eye. He happens to be the son of Eli White, the lead singer of the legendary band Allegiance to the North before his drug habit led to his death at 22. Summer and Caleb end up on a quest Eli set for his son in order to find his last, unreleased songs. Along the way, Summer is tempted by glamorous internships and becomes jealous of Val, a girl who has a special connection with Caleb. By the time the first song is found, Val is revealed to be Eli White's daughter and the three main characters find themselves bound together by their love of music.

What *Exile* does well is pull back the curtain and reveal the cold business and hard choices that go into making music. For anyone in love with bands and interested in going into the music business, it is a must read. The beating heart of the book is Summer's struggle to retain the raw, honest aspect of sharing music with the world and trying to navigate the less savory business side to promote her band. Emerson does an excellent job at describing the teenager's actions, even using Twitter and social media, but at times the character is annoying and unlikable. Unfortunately the love story falls flat and even gets in the way of the more interesting ideas in the novel. The emotional angst Caleb feels about his deceased father also feels neglected in favor of a love triangle. While *Exile* could have been a moving look into the highs and lows of the music industry, it instead becomes a run of the mill teenage love story.

*Contains moderate language, mild sexual content, and mentions of drug use.