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Beneath #2: Above

Tessa McMillan

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Book Review

Title: Beneath #2: Above

Author: Roland Smith

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Publisher: Scholastic Press

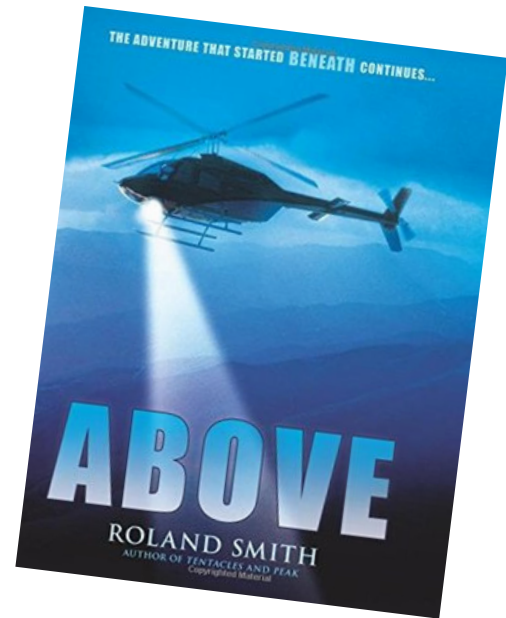
Publication Year: 2016

ISBN: 9780545564892

Number of Pages: 336

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding



Review

On the run since their escape from the Deep; Pat, Coop, and Kate plan to reunite in Oregon. However, their reunion is postponed when Alex Dane—Lod’s brother who helped the teens escape—shows up and tasks Kate to shadow Lod’s members that are gathering in the area. Alex, Pat, and Coop follow Kate’s trail so they can understand Lod’s next move and then notify the authorities. Kate lets herself get captured by Lod’s minions, but she tries to earn their trust so she can hide her involvement with Alex, Pat, and Coop. Eventually she is found out and Pat, Coop, and Alex are captured. Lod takes all his followers and new hostages to an underground bunker known as the Deep 2.0. During their trip to the new Deep, Pat secretly calls the FBI on a satellite phone to alert them of their location. The plan works, but the FBI’s presence only fuels Lod’s vanity in showing off his terrorist acts of shutting down the power grid. But a device Alex has created disables all of Lod’s software and aids the group in escaping from the Deep 2.0.

This sequel to *Beneath* is yet another rapid-fire read full of suspense, mystery, and deception. Told from Pat and Kate’s perspectives, readers follow the break-neck pace of these teens as they chase down Lod and his demented disciples. Because there is access to Kate’s mind, readers learn more details about her upbringing in the Deep and understand how losing her parents by Lod’s hand caused Kate to turn against him. Compared to *Beneath*, Pat is not continually confronting his claustrophobia. However, he encounters his patterned, panic-stricken thoughts again as he is forced to enter yet another Deep. A theme Smith carries through his series is that there is no such thing as a coincidence. Smith shows that the events and decisions of a person’s past ideally places them in situations where they can conquer present dilemmas. Both *Beneath* and *Above* clearly show that Smith is an expert at crafting quality, contemporary adventures for young adults.