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Awake

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Book Review

Title: Awake

Author: Natasha Preston

Reviewer: Lisa Packard

Publisher: Sourcebooks Fire

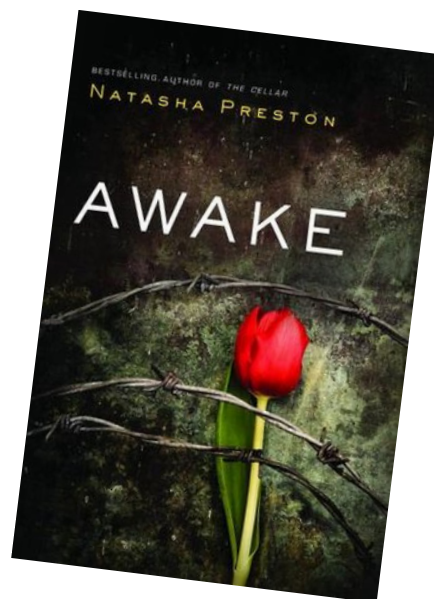
Publication Year: 2015

ISBN: 9781492618522

Number of Pages: 314

Interest Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent



Review

Scarlett Garner remembers nothing before the age of four. As she tries to move on from what her family tells her is PTSD from a fire, she meets a new boy in school. Noah is everything she ever wanted; he's so sweet and kind. She trusts him with everything and he'll do anything for her. Noah is conflicted because of the task he is ordered to do. He must make Scarlett fall in love with him so that he can bring her back to her birth parents and the cult, Eternal Light. As Scarlett is traveling home from a trip, she gets into a car wreck with her family and she starts to remember her past. Her parents and brother don't want to talk about it and when they do, Scarlett knows they are lying. The only relief she gets from them and her memories is when she is with Noah. Eventually Scarlett's parents tell her they took her away from a cult that was going to sacrifice her. She doesn't understand it all and is so confused. Noah convinces her to go on a trip with him to forget about it for a while. Little does Scarlett know that Noah is leading her to her death. Scarlett becomes trapped in Eternal Light and is trying to find a way to escape. Noah feels guilty for tricking her and starts to doubt his beliefs. Noah comes to realize that he loves Scarlett more than following his beliefs and runs away with her to keep her safe. They find their way back to a city and report Eternal Light to the police, where they capture all the followers and Scarlett becomes safe again.

Natasha Preston has created a story that is so full of twists and turns, you are always on the edge of your seat. She leaves you with just a taste of what's coming and then will move onto something completely different. She represents the story in dual narrative. Scarlett tells some of the story and Noah tells the other. It's great to see the feelings, emotions, thoughts, and conflict in the main characters. She sends an underlying message of the importance of human life over a belief, but also how love conquers all. Through Natasha's writing style you can feel the fear and conflict for yourself. You start to wonder what you would do in that situation. How would you respond? Would you change everything you believe in over one object or person, or would you remain indifferent? Natasha develops the characters very well so that you may understand their feelings better. This book is similar to *The Village*, a movie created by M. Night Shyamalan, as it features a group of people brought together by similar beliefs, wanting a better world.

*Contains moderate language, sexual content, and violence.