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Amity

Lisa Packard

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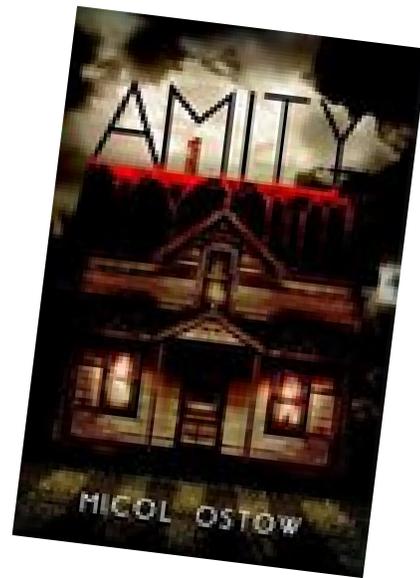
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Book Review

Title: Amity
Author: Micol Ostow
Reviewer: Lisa Packard
Publisher: Egmont
Publication Year: 2014
ISBN: 9781606841563
Number of Pages: 358
Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Conner has just moved to a new house with his family. The first night, he wakes up at exactly 3:14 AM and sees a dead girl in the window, but then she disappears. Eventually the house, Amity, makes him have strange dreams that tell him what to do. One night he dreams about a binder that is full of newspaper clippings from the future that says that a family was killed at Amity and Conner was the murderer. Now driven mad, Conner sets out to kill his dad, but his twin sister follows him and Conner kills her by accident, leading to the deaths of all his family. Ten years later, Gwen and her family move into Amity, but Gwen can tell there's something wrong with the house. She starts to have dreams as well about what the house used to be: an insane asylum, a hiding place for witches during the Salem witch trials, a burial ground. Something is happening to her older brother Luke, and he's becoming angrier and angrier. Gwen, worried for her brother and her family, burns the house down. Gwen is taken to an asylum where Conner is as well, and he's writing letters to his dead sister telling her the history of the happenings of Amity.

Ostow wrote a wonderful book of suspense and mystery that you can't help but keep reading. She does a wonderful job of giving you just enough and building the suspense up before moving on to a different part of the story. The book is set up where the story alternates between Conner and Gwen's story, adding an interesting perspective of time on the storyline. Ostow will often build up to something creepy and scary with one of them, then suddenly move on to the other person, just leaving you hanging and not knowing what has happened. Ostow doesn't just give you a terrifying ghost story, but provides a realistic history and depth behind it. Ostow brings a nice conclusion to the story where the reader finds out that Conner is not only alive but in the same place as Gwen. It brings some peace at the end that there can be two people to relate to each other and try to sort through the horrors and unknown they had to live through. In Conner's case, killing is never the route to go when dealing with abusive parents, but this would be a good way to show that bad things do happen and that you don't have to be what you were raised in. Although it's an underlying factor in Amity, asking for help is important, even if something sounds crazy or you could get hurt by doing so. This is a wonderful book of mystery and terror that teaches you the importance of trying your best, even in difficult situations.

*Contains severe language and violence