



2018

Strange the Dreamer

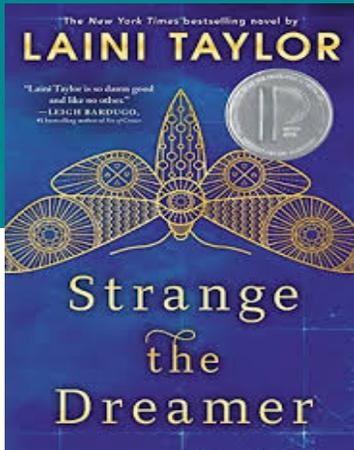
Braxton Church

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Book Review

Strange the Dreamer

Author

Laini Taylor

Illustrator

Reviewer

Braxton Young Church

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Young Adult

Pages

544

Year

2017

Publisher

Little, Brown Books for

ISBN

9780316341684

At age twenty, orphaned Lazlo Strange is the expert on the lost city of Weep—a gift which lets him join the first group of warriors who've ventured from the city in over two-hundred years. Evil gods have enslaved the city for the past two centuries, and fifteen years earlier the hero Eril killed the gods and their children, leaving behind a floating citadel shadowing Weep. But five of the god's children remain, and Sarai, Eril's own daughter, has the power to enter people's dreams. When she enters Lazlo's dreams, the two of them fall in love and search for a way for humans and the godspawn to live in peace. But the people of Weep can't forgive their enslavement, and the godspawn can't forgive the slaughter. Before Lazlo and Sarai can find this peace, they learn of Lazlo's true nature, and both a gift and an accident shift the power to the godspawn and their revenge.

As a protagonist, Lazlo pulls readers into the story through his relatable nature. Lazlo loves reading, a trait people willing to read a five-hundred page novel share. For much of the novel, Lazlo feels like he can't do anything to help the city of Weep. Lazlo, like many young adults, has the desire to do something amazing, but feels unsure of himself. But when Lazlo discovers his own gifts, he realizes that he's the only one who can help the city and the people that he loves. By making Lazlo both relatable and capable, the author helps readers realize their own inner strength. Another important character is Minya, the oldest godspawn and the one with the most hatred for humans, and as such has not aged a day in fifteen years. Minya becomes a symbol of holding onto hatred, how it holds people back and keeps them from moving forward. The contrast between Minya and Sarai, the latter who falls in love with a human, shows how the ability to forgive allows people to heal and move forward.

*Contains moderate violence and mild language.