



2018

Breakout

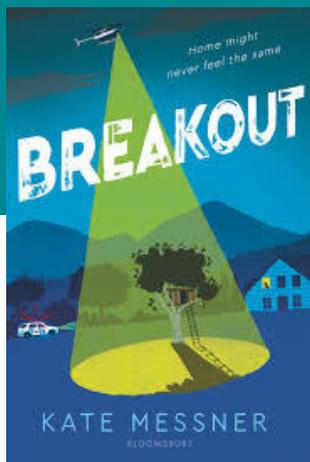
Meagan Andrus

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Book Review

Breakout

Author

Kate Messner

Illustrator

Reviewer

Meagan Andrus

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

441

Year

2018

Publisher

Bloomsbury

ISBN

9781681195360

Seventh grader Nora Tucker is looking forward to a summer full of cookouts, hikes, and swimming. Her plans for the year go awry when the high-security prison near her home has a breakout. Now two killers are on the loose somewhere near Nora's sleepy town in upstate New York, and the residents are becoming more fearful and distrusting. Inspired by her English teacher, Nora and her friend Lizzie set out to document the events of the breakout through letters, text messages, voice recordings, and more. Along the way they get to know Elidee, a new girl who has just moved to the town to be closer to her brother, an inmate in the prison. Elidee, Nora, and Lizzie all experience the breakout differently, but they all come a little closer to their families, their community, and each other during the harrowing trial that defines the end of their seventh grade year.

This is a wonderful book. Its storytelling is fresh and original since it is told through documents written and compiled by Nora, Lizzie, and Elidee. The story itself seems simple at first glance, but this book is about much more than a prison outbreak. The girls deal with issues like realizing parents are not perfect, struggling to fit in, and discovering family secrets. Each girl has uncomfortable growing moments during the two weeks of the breakout, but they also have wonderful, shining moments in which they discover a bit more about themselves. The storytelling is beautiful, the stories themselves are important, and the messages the author portrays are important for younger audiences to be exposed to. The author does a wonderful job of handling difficult topics for a young audience, but older readers will also enjoy this heartwarming and invigorating story.

*Contains mild violence.