



2018

My Life with the Liars

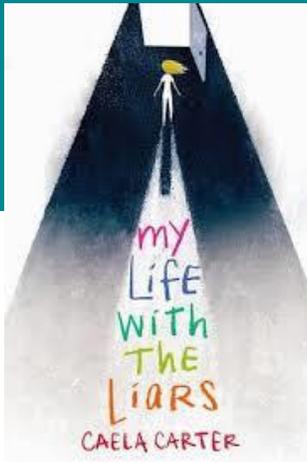
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Book Review

My Life with the Liars

Author

Caela Carter

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

288

Year

2016

Publisher

HarperCollins

ISBN

9780062385710

It is Zyllynn's first time in the Darkness. That is, it is her first time outside of the religious compound where she was born and raised. She knows that the Darkness is full of liars, so even though the people around her say they want the best for her, she knows that they would do anything to trick her, because that's what Father Prophet said. At first, Zyllynn tries anything she can to remain untainted by the Darkness so she can be pure upon her return. But the longer Zyllynn spends out in the world with the people who call themselves her family, deciding what is true and what is not becomes more difficult. If the Darkness is so evil, then why is it so much more comfortable than her years in the compound? Zyllynn begins to question if it is okay to enjoy the experiences she has outside of the compound, or if it is just an indication that she is falling into the Darkness' traps.

My Life With the Liars is a book that covers some very mature themes, but there is no explicitly inappropriate content. So while there is no sexual content, language, or violence, there are undercurrents of a lot of childhood trauma stemming from child abuse and religious fanaticism. For example, the leaders of Zyllynn's compound force the children to go hungry, all in the name of spirituality. Though the writing style and difficulty level of the language in the book are not out of reach for an intermediate reader, the intensity of the narrative could make it confusing and upsetting to a younger reader, and young adult-aged readers may be more prepared for Zyllynn's story. It is important to note that the book is in no way anti-religious. Author Caela Carter instead describes a very obviously extreme religious group that is far outside the range of normal and shows how the abusive practices of this group have very little to do with actual belief and spirituality.