



2018

All The Little Lights

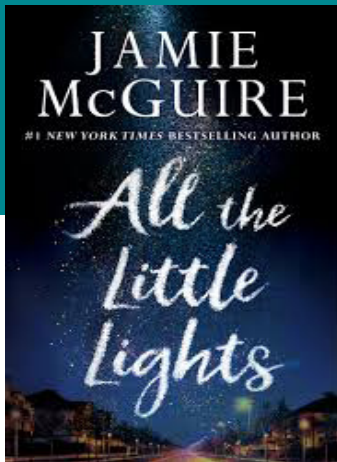
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Book Review

All The Little Lights

Author

Jamie McGuire

Illustrator

Reviewer

Karen Abbott

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

446

Year

2018

Publisher

Montlake Romance

ISBN

9781503902787

Two troubled teens find love amid mental illness, death, and abuse. Catherine and Elliott meet at the age of fifteen and find common ground in the constant fighting of dysfunctional parents. As their almost perfect summer draws to a close, Catherine's father dies just as Elliott's mother tears him away from the drama. Elliott promises Catherine that he will return, but it isn't until their senior year that he is able to keep his promise. Catherine hates him, and now has a secret that requires her to keep him out of her life and out of her heart. Elliott has taken out his anger issues in the gym, and when he returns he soars to the top of the high school food chain as the quarterback of the football team. But when Catherine's top tormentor goes missing, suspicion turns to Elliott.

Catherine's secret, the missing girl, and Elliott's scholarship eligibility turn their lives upside down, their families inside out, and put their love to the test. The story is well written, and the suspense of Catherine's secret adds an element of mystery and suspicious mayhem throughout. The plot is solid, but there are no well-developed, important themes to give weight to the story. Catherine and Elliott are both likable characters and their relationship is believable and enviable. One weakness of the story, however, is Elliott seeming perfection. He's strong, popular, and goal centered. And completely, irrationally in love with and protective of Catherine, in spite of her rebuffs and distancing. It's almost believable given the history of his early and continued fascination with her—but it's awfully close to the creepy side and not the romantic side. The romance is deftly handled, but unrealistic.

*Contains mild language, mild sexual content, and moderate violence.