



2019

Strange the Dreamer #2: Muse of Nightmares

Braxton Church

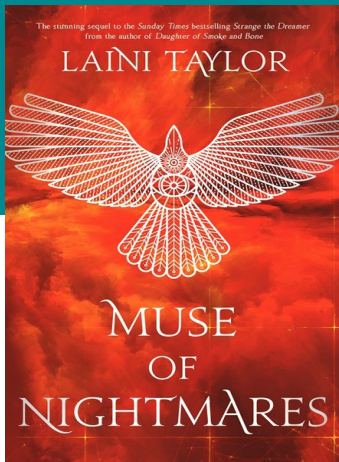
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Church, Braxton (2019) "Strange the Dreamer #2: Muse of Nightmares," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 40 : Iss. 1 , Article 64.

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Book Review

Strange the Dreamer #2: Muse of Nightmares

Author

Laini Taylor

Illustrator

Reviewer

Braxton Church

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Young Adult

Pages

514

Year

2018

Publisher

Little Brown Books for Young Readers

ISBN

9780316341714

After Sarai's death in the first book, Minya captures Sarai's ghost in the citadel in the sky. Unless Lazlo agrees to help her kill the humans who are responsible for the death of the gods and the other godspawn, Minya will let Sarai fade away. In desperation, the others drug Minya, buying time to search for a solution. But the godspawn need to answer one question: what happened to the thousands of godspawn that came before them? In the middle of their floating citadel, they discover a tear between realities. Through it comes Nova, the sister of one of the slaughtered goddesses. In her grief, Nova kidnaps Lazlo and takes the entire citadel. But only Sarai, who has the power to enter dreams, can heal Nova's ache for her lost sister. She is able to give Nova the peace she's sought for centuries and allow Nova to let go of her grief.

The book continues the themes of anger and forgiveness found in the previous novel. Minya held onto the souls of the humans as tight as she held onto her anger. The lightness she feels when the ghosts are taken from her shows how letting go of hate can free people from a heavy burden. At the end of the book, Minya ages for the first time in fifteen years, showing how forgiveness can heal. Additionally, when Sarai reunites Nova with the astral spirit of her sister Kora, Kora begs her sister to stop fighting, to stop hurting people as too many have already suffered. Kora's words show how one cannot heal from pain by lashing out. Like Minya, Nova remained trapped in her anger and pain because she attacked those who stood in her way, rather than trying to find healing through forgiveness. Only when someone lets go of anger and of the desire to hurt others can they truly move forward.

*Contains moderate violence.