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Paper Butterflies

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Book Review

Paper Butterflies

June has a secret, but she doesn't know if anyone would believe her. After the death of June's mom, her dad marries Katherine, and Katherine and her daughter, Megan, join June's family. But Katherine will not be the mother figure that June so desperately needs. Instead, she is June's near-constant abuser. June tries to tell her dad and other adults, but she can never find the words. The hopelessness of being an outcast at home and school leaves June with very little light in her life. But then she meets Blister, a boy from a poor but loving family. With Blister, she feels safe for the first time since her mom died. She knows that he would believe her secret, but their time together is so precious that she doesn't want it to be ruined by the truth. All she has to do is survive until she can start a new life, free from her abusers.

Paper Butterflies is a truly heartbreaking read. While it does not contain much explicit violence, it could be very upsetting to any readers who have experienced any kind of psychological abuse. Author Lisa Heathfield is a master at writing with intensity and depth, but without gratuitous profanity or violence. So even though there is little inappropriate content, the intensity of the book and the nature of the abuse would make it more suitable for mature readers. The author also does an excellent job of writing a believable and compelling romance between two characters without those characters ever having a sexual relationship. The book has a very strong start with excellent pacing. Though the book is by no means action-packed, the slower pace is appropriate for the chronological nature of the story. However, a dramatic turn at the end of the book seems a bit forced, and the falling action feels rushed. As a result, the ending of the book just doesn't have the same power as the beginning.

*Contains mild violence.

Author

Lisa Heathfield

Illustrator

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

265

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2017

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Carolrhoda Lab

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