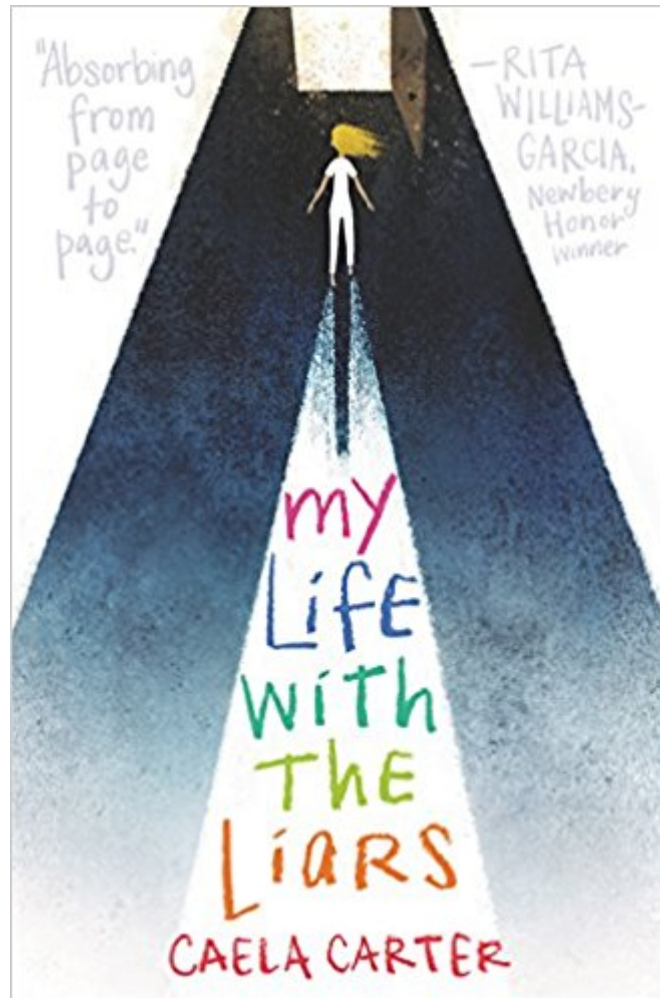




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My Life With The Liars



Synopsis

Perfect for fans of Kathryn Erskine's *Mockingbird* and Holly Goldberg Sloan's *Counting by 7s*, this is a stunningly unique and poignant story of one girl's strength and courage as she decides who she is and what she will believe in. Behind the white-washed walls of the Arizona compound, life was simple. Follow the rules, "live in the light," and all would be well. Zyllynn was excited to turn thirteen and begin the work of bringing others into the light, to save them from the liars and the darkness of the outside world. But when she is taken away by a man who claims to be her father, Zyllynn is confused, and desperate to return to her home. Zyllynn resists her new life until she finds small comforts, like shampoo, the color pink, and strawberries. But as her thirteenth birthday approaches, Zyllynn must make a difficult decision to stay here with the enemy, or find her way back to the light. And neither may be what they seem.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 590 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins (March 8, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062385712

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Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #253,219 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships #92 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Abuse #1352 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Girls & Women

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

"Absorbing from page to page." (Rita Williams-Garcia, Newbery Honor author)
"A searing story with a hopeful resolution." (Kirkus)
"Readers will be transfixed. Zyllynn is well portrayed as a devout but confused young girl. Carter takes readers on a

journey with Zylynn to uncover her past and reconcile it with her future in this thought-provoking and highly discussible novel. (School Library Journal) “Carefully paced. Readers will feel keenly the simultaneous wish to make Zylynn see how awful her life was while also allowing her to experience the grief of losing all she knew. (Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books)

I’m continuously impressed with the worlds created by Ms. Carter’s books. The author takes the reader into a world with which they are presumably unfamiliar, and then makes them eventually feel as if it was all they ever knew. Ms. Carter’s ability to focus on a different perspective and positively coerce the reader to empathize with the main character is a true gift. By the end of the book, Ms. Carter has not only tricked you into being entertained and transfixed with an existence of which you were previously unaware, but has also taught you something. For those two reasons, entertainment and perspective, this book is a great read for young readers.

This book put a lot of things into perspective for me. My eyes are open as to why students may act the way they do and what it really must be like being in a cult. Very very eye opening.

Interesting look inside of cult culture. Really liked it.

Caela Carter is one of my favorite authors, and she has written another winner. I’m drawn into the world she creates. Zylynn’s life is unlike anything I have ever experienced, but Carter hones in on the universal themes of family, growth, adolescence, and belonging. I thoroughly enjoyed this book myself, and I would certainly recommend it to any of my nieces or nephews (as well as their parents)!

My Life with the Liars is a wonderful middle grade novel. I don’t usually review middle grade books on this blog (reserving those for my other blog, Mom’s Radius), but since I read this book out of my own interest and not as a mom, I thought I’d share it here. I loved this book! Zylynn was raised in a cult. Right before her 13th birthday her father breaks her out, but Zylynn doesn’t know he’s her father. She doesn’t know much of anything about the normal world. She’s desperate to get back to the Children Inside the Light before she turns 13 and is cast out to the darkness forever. This first-person narrated book is so well written.

It's amazing to think about all of the things that Zylynn would not know being raised in a cult. I couldn't put this book down. It was just so fascinating. I love books dealing with extreme religion, but this book is by far the best that I have read. I was a little frustrated with her father and his wife because I didn't feel like they did a good job explaining anything to Zylynn. I can see why that was done. It would have made the book resolve too quickly if they had explained things, but as a mother it was hard to read about their poor parenting. Other than that one issue, this book was flawless. Middle grade fiction doesn't always appeal to me, but this book wasn't at all "dumbed down." It's very intelligent and insightful. It would spark great conversation with children and adults alike. I highly recommend it. Blog: Opinionated Book Lover

Zylynn was born into a cult. All she knows is Father Prophet, his teachings about Mother God, and the strict rules of her compounds. She endures periods of starvation and "pinging" (standing against a fence while the other kids throw rocks at her backs and legs) for the glorious day she turns 13. A week from her 13th birthday, Zylynn is taken away from the cult by a man who calls himself her father. She moves in with his wife and three kids, and is overwhelmed by the soft bed, the colorful clothes, and the refrigerator brimming with food. No one here is going to throw rocks at her for eating, or for asking questions. But will she be able to overcome what she's experienced? This is a middle grade book, and a brave one at that. Caela Carter writes about Zylynn and her cult with gentleness and honesty. It would be easy to turn Zylynn into a caricature, but she's nuanced and three-dimensional. And her new family is so refreshingly solid. Her stepmother is a rock immediately, and while it takes a while for her to warm up to her father, he's also a good, albeit flawed man. Even if you're not a fan of MG books, I recommend you read this book.

First and foremost this story, the way it is written, will not hold the interest of a Middle Grade reader. There was too much extraneous matter and redundancy of thoughts in the MC's head that just wanted to make you scream, OKAY I GOT THAT ALREADY! Plus there were inconsistencies like the baby being almost two years old and two days later it says he is almost four years old. The MC uses the names of items she would not know like flip-flops and sequins. She has vivid memories of adult conversations she heard when she was two years old? Understanding adult vocabulary and situations? Also the bouncing back and forth between the current time and environment to the past, which at times I don't think was chronological, was confusing for me, even as an adult reader. At

about the 60% mark the situations needed to bring the story to conclusion became ridiculous. I was approved for an eARC, via Edelweiss, in return for an honest review.

Imagine being born and living your whole life within a small commune. Then suddenly, right before your 13th birthday, you are forced out into the real world. The world you were made to believe was dark, dangerous, and full of liars. The world that makes you think you have a choice in life. But, it is a trick right? The outside world is a dark and dangerous world. All you want is to go back home. But this outside world is tempting. What do you do? Author, Caela Carter, writes a novel taking the reader into a whole other life. What if our world was not the norm? How would you handle the freedoms you take for granted? If you are ready to live a completely different life through a character, then this book is for you.

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