

LORGNETTE

Quarterly Review of Children's and Young Adults' Books

Author

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Illustrator

Reviewer

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9 and up

Book Review: AND DON'T LOOK BACK

After her mother's death, Harlow Ford is left with cash, a stack of fake IDs, and a deed to her grandmother's house. Wanting to find the answers to questions her mother would never answer, Harlow goes back to the place where the running started in the first place.

The story has an intense start as Harlow survives a car crash but her mom doesn't. As the story progresses, answers seem to come to Harlow instead of her chasing down the answers. The clues fall into place for her, making everything a bit too perfect in how it all comes together. Finding out what happened to Harlow's grandmother was fascinating! Harlow's grandmother went missing a few years before Harlow's mom left town and apparently, she was beloved by the town. However, when Harlow meets one of her aunts, she finds out that that isn't the whole story. The grandmother was extremely abusive, physically beating them, emotionally torturing them, and keeping them isolated in the house. It is such a great concept to look at mother-daughter relationships and generational trauma and how these things affect what people will do for the rest of their lives.

The reason Harlow's mom left her hometown was a bit underwhelming. Spoiler alert (but it's not that difficult to figure out): her mom left town because she owed someone money. With the summary and how the book progresses, I felt like there was going to be a bigger twist to the mystery than there was. For the most part, however, this book was definitely enjoyable and intriguing enough that I kept reading.

