

An Ember in the Ashes

Sabaa Tahir

Reviewed by: Anagha Kondury, 14

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The scholars have been oppressed by the Empire for years. Laia is a scholar who has faced much in her 17 years. But when the Empire sends soldiers who kill her grandparents and take her brother, her only remaining family, she will do anything she must to rescue him even if it is doing the riskiest job in return for the help of the scholars' resistance: spying on the commandant of the Blackcliff academy. Blackcliff is a school for masks, deadly soldiers for the Empire who kill without hesitation, the same soldiers who killed Laia's family. Elias is about to graduate to become a Mask but he has other plans rather than killing. But those plans are ruined when he is chosen to take the trials. The four chosen aspirants will compete in four deadly trials and the victor will be named Emperor. Laia and Elias both want freedom from their current lives and what better than getting help from someone who has a similar cause.

An Ember in the Ashes is the first of four books in the series. It is a well written, action-packed book set in a dystopian society filled with hope, loss, fear, and betrayal. I enjoyed reading this book and could not put it down once I started. The author constantly put me on edge wanting to read and find out what happens next. I like the plot of the story, it was captivating and kept me entertained throughout the book. I do think that some of the characters require more development because otherwise, it seems as if they are a minor character when in fact they are important to keep the story moving forward.

I recommend this An Ember in the Ashes for 9-12 graders or ages 13 and up. This book does contain mild profanity and violence. Some of the violence may be graphic and make the reader feel uncomfortable. This is a book I would buy. It is a strong, complex story that I would read again so I can go back to Laia and Elias' world.

If you enjoyed An Ember in the Ashes:

A Torch Against the Night

A Reaper at the Gates

The Young Elites

Legend