

The Walls Around Us

Nova Ren Suma

Reviewed by Adnan Mustafa, 17

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Orianna's life is changed forever after she and her best friend Violet are involved in an incident in which two girls were murdered. Both were closely acquainted due to their shared interest in dancing; however, their friendship loses its permanence as Orianna is sentenced for murder. Over at Aurora Hills juvenile detention center—the location at which Orianna was to be put behind bars—the cellmates experience something unusual. The locks to their cells were no longer locked. There weren't any correctional officers in sight, and for once, the cellmates were free. Some attempted to escape, some stayed put, and some went into a frenzy before correctional officers finally arrived to re-establish order. As the cellmates at the detention center settled down, an individual by the name of Amber discovered that her cellmate was to be replaced by a new arrival. A murderer, as described by other cellmates. Amber learns more about her new cellmate, Orianna, and begins to doubt the fact that she was guilty of the crime that she was charged for. As Orianna fills her in on the truth, Amber learns that she was not a murderer after all. Orianna was falsely accused of murder.

Reading *The Walls Around Us* put me in a mood that I very much enjoy. Like the horror stories that I listen to at night, this book did a great job at putting me in a relaxed state. The story built up slowly, and as I began to make sense of information from earlier in the book, I became more and more engaged in the story. I would love to see a movie based on this book.

Readers who enjoy suspenseful, supernatural books, movies, etc. will most definitely enjoy *The Walls Around Us*. While reading *The Walls Around Us* you will encounter some profanity as well as read about drug use & sexual situations. Out of the 319 pages, there are probably only 10 pages at max in which you will encounter these things, but it is still important to note. This is a supernatural fiction book about two best friends: one behind bars for murder and the other pursuing their dream of dancing as if nothing ever happened. I would recommend this book to those ages 14 and up.

An educational theme develops from the very beginning to the end of the book. The most important lesson that I took from this story is that the truth will always prevail. You should develop patience and understand that those who are guilty will eventually face consequence. Also, as you near the end of the book, you begin to understand the disadvantages present for lower income individuals. A character in *The Walls Around Us* who was not guilty for the crime they were charged for had to spend a night in jail and defend their case without a capable attorney. Meanwhile, the individual who was truly guilty for the crime was able to go home within minutes and eat dinner with their family. This shows how money comes into play in certain situations and provides people with advantages that they shouldn't be provided with.

I would recommend borrowing this book in all cases. However, if you enjoy *The Walls Around Us* enough to re-read or add to your collection, purchase!

Recommended Titles:

- 17 & Gone, Nova Ren Suma
- A Fierce and Subtle Prison, Samantha Mabry
- Bleeding Earth, Kaitlin Ward
- Sawkill Girls, Claire Legrand