

Pointe

Brandy Colbert

Book Reviewed: Rachel Johnson, 41

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Theodora Cartwright is seventeen years old. Everyone calls her Theo for short. She has a passion for ballet and dream of becoming a professional dancer. She also has an eating disorder, but her parents are aware and supportive. One day she finds out through a news report that her best friend Donovan Pratt who was abducted four years before had been returned home and the accused abductor has been arrested. The news report shows a picture of the abductor, and says his name is Chris Fenner, age 30. Theo realizes it is the guy she knew as Trent who had said he was 18. The same guy, she and Donovan met at the convenience store. The same guy she had been in a secret relationship with and Donovan had been friends with. She has not realized the guy was an abuser and had taken advantage of them.

Donovan is not communicating, not even with Theo. She calls multiple times and no answer. She shows up at his house but he will not come to the door. Theo has been asked to testify in the case because she saw Donovan the morning he went missing and they were close. She is worried about testifying because she is not sure if Donovan left intentionally or was taken against his will. She is afraid to reveal the truth because she thinks it will ruin her chances of getting into the summer dance program and it would get someone, she cannot imagine would hurt anyone into trouble. She feels she must talk to Donovan before the trial.

In the weeks leading up to the trial she has many flashbacks from four years before when she would have sex with Chris (Trent) in the back of his car. Him telling her to keep the relationship secret because no one would understand. How much she loved him and the feelings she had. When she reveals the secret to a friend, the friend points out she had been raped. Before the trial she sees Donovan as he is walking into court. There are no words but just looking in his eyes she knows he did not leave on his own and she makes the decision to tell her story on the stand.

I love this story because it deals with so many realistic issues. Brandy Colbert does an excellent job showing growth. Theo makes many bad decisions. She has issues with herself and secrets she lives with, but in the end, we can see she comes a long way in recognizing self-worth. The story has many moving parts, its uplifting and sad. Colbert touches on eating disorders, self-harm, drug use, sex, sexual exploitation, smoking, and drinking. She shows how important friendships are throughout the book. One thing that I really enjoy is how supportive the adults are in the story, this includes parents, teachers, dance instructor's, and counselors. A recommend this book to young adults, 15+ because of subject matter. It is a True Gem and worth the read.

Recommended Titles

Eleanor and Park, by Rainbow Rowell

Find Layla, by Meg Elison

A Heart in a Body in the World, by Deb Caletti