

All the Rage

Courtney Summers

Reviewed by: Amberley Heins

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

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*This book may be a trigger as there is content involving rape and assault.

All the Rage follows the story of Romy, a high school student with a disreputable family history that most of her town looks down on. The novel takes place about a year after the town's high school hero and son to the town sheriff raped Romy at a high school party. Now after a year of being ostracized by the community, abandoned and disbelieved by her friends, and incapable of being defended by her family, Romy has created both the mental armor and a controlled physical appearance she needs in order to make it through the rest of high school. She even has a haven to escape to in the form of a dining job outside town where no one knows her history.

Despite all these efforts to move forward, everything Romy has built threatens to come crashing down when she wakes up in a compromised position on a road outside town. This time when Romy wakes up however, she can't remember anything about her previous night and another girl has also gone missing. Told in chapters that alternate between the present tense and the weeks leading up to the night Romy is found, the reader learns the sequence of events along with the characters. Romy must use all the tools she has gained in the last year as well as her natural fortitude in order to confront all the ugliness unfolding around her.

Review:

Courtney Summers executed a gripping and powerful novel about a very difficult topic. *All the Rage* examines rape culture in a way that is both searing and subtle. While Summer does describe the attacks Romy experiences, what is more gut-wrenching for the reader is the psychological impact of the entire event. The way that Romy grasps on to specific daily routines in order to maintain her emotional stability is moving in a very unexpected way. The tenacity that she shows after her second attack is amazing. She has to live in a town that would rather have had her switch places with the other missing girl because she is seen as more expendable. Perhaps what was most chilling about this novel was the treatment Romy experienced at the hands of her peers. Children and teens take cues from adults to know how to act in these situations. The larger community's dismissal of Romy's accusation based on judgement and socio-economic standing, cleared the way for the later treatment she experienced in the halls of her school. This is a book that is not easy or enjoyable to read, but it is important.

I purchased this book from a local bookstore. I would recommend this book for readers 15 and up.

Other Suggestions:

Vanishing Girls – Lauren Oliver

The Sky is Everywhere – Jandy Nelson

The Hate List – Jennifer Brown