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Phantom Limbs



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Synopsis

A hearbreaking YA debut about love and loss, perfect for fans of Jandy Nelson.In this YA contemporary romance, a sixteen-year-old boy must learn to swim against an undercurrent of grief - or be swept away by it.Otis and Meg were inseparable until her family abruptly moved away after the terrible accident that left Otis's little brother dead and both of their families changed for ever. Since then, it's been three years of radio silence, during which time Otis has become the unlikely protege of eighteen-year-old Dara - part drill sergeant, part friend - who's hell-bent on transforming Otis into the Olympic swimmer she can no longer be. But when Otis learns that Meg is coming back to town, he must face some difficult truths about the girl he's never forgotten and the brother he's never stopped grieving. As it becomes achingly clear that he and Meg are not the same people they were, Otis must decide what to hold on to and what to leave behind. Quietly affecting, this compulsively readable debut novel captures all the confusion, heartbreak, and fragile hope of three teens struggling to accept profound absences in their lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This debut novel is a story of loss, love, and friendship, about a teenager coming to terms with the past and dealing with repressed memories that are resurfacing...Readers will find Otis relatable and endearing in his first-person perspective of first love and heartbreak, as well as his unwavering loyalty to his friends. Meg and Dara round out a cast of well-developed characters who have extensive troubles of their own. Most teenagers will find a little bit of themselves in this well-executed work; a must-have for most YA collections. * School Library Journal (starred reviews)

* The inability to let go of the past pushes all three white teens beyond their comfort zones into uncharted territory, Garner slowly and steadily guiding readers through these journeys. A heavy read weighted by intense emotions and grief, the novel sifts through tough memories, searching for the silver lining. * Kirkus Reviews * Otis' journey-as a competitive swimmer and as a grieving brother-is a poignant one...It's tough-talking, reckless Dara who will intrigue readers. Her struggles with her father, her sexuality, and the dreams deferred because of her accident complement Otis' story, elevating this to a narrative as much about human connection as it is about sports. * Booklist * Garner's debut sensitively portrays Meg and Otis's bruised emotions, both recovering from deep loss. Though the description of Mason's accident is a gut-punch in its realism, much of the plot unfolds predictably. The novel's strongest moments go to Dara, whose no-holds-barred personality-"she was the human equivalent of a Venus flytrap"-livens and complicates the novel. * Publishers Weekly * The nuanced way that Garner deals with loss is not only beautifully done, but it's thoughtful and insightful. Phantom Limbs is a quietly affecting, well-written gem of a book that will resonate with readers, long after the last page has been reached. A definite YA standout for 2016. * Romantic Times * Acquisition noted * Publishers Lunch * Cover reveal feature * YA Books Central (blog) * Featured/recommended as part of librarian preview * School Library Journal * Paula Garner mentioned in feature on Candlewick's BEA party * PW ShelfTalker * Featured/recommended in cover reveal * YA Books Central * Featured/recommended in list of "22 of Our Most Anticipated Contemporary YAs of the Second Half of 2016" * B&N Teen Blog * Featured/recommended * Fiction Fare (blog) * Dazzling. Brimming with truth and beauty. * Jeff Zentner, author of The Serpent King * "Otis is an immensely likeable narrator, dealing with both love and loss but still capable of noting cringeworthy adolescent moments [...]" * Irish Times Weekend *

Paula Garner lives in Chicago with her family and their psychotic cat. Phantom Limbs is her first novel. Visit her on Twitter: @paulajgarner

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