FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Young Adult Fiction

Breaking Glass
Lisa Amowitz
Spencer Hill Press
Softcover $9.95 (2013pp)
978-1-937053-38-3

Every character has a secret in this intricately plotted YA paranormal mystery that delivers a wild and rewarding ride for teen readers.

Seventeen-year-old track star Jeremy Glass has secrets. He's in love with his best friend's girlfriend and has been a closet drinker since he was twelve. When a car accident leaves him with a shattered leg and a broken heart, Jeremy must piece together clues from the past, present, and even beyond the world of the living, in order to figure out what has happened to his secret crush, Susannah, who disappeared the same night. Every character has a secret in this intricately plotted YA paranormal mystery that delivers a wild and rewarding ride for teen readers who stick with the twists and turns of the story.

Prior to the night he is hit by a car, Jeremy has been the faithful buddy to his popular best friend, Ryan: "In all our years as the Lone Ranger and Tonto, I've never violated the sidekick rules. Even when I had to bite my tongue so hard it bled." Waking up in the hospital after the accident, Jeremy is immediately launched on two distinct but intertwining journeys that challenge his image of himself. First, what seem to be messages from beyond this life compel him to uncover the circumstances surrounding Susannah's disappearance and cope with the mounting evidence that she is not just missing but dead, and Ryan may be involved. He is also faced with an injury that has ended his track career as he knows it. The damage to his leg worsens, necessitating amputation, and Jeremy's journey to adjust mentally and physically is honestly and unflinchingly detailed.

First time author Lisa Amowitz is a graphic artist with experience in book cover design, including the eerie and appealing cover art for this novel. Her writing skill matches her considerable design skills, evidenced by this tightly written, suspenseful page-turner narrated from Jeremy's point of view. Likable despite his serious flaws, Jeremy shares his story in

language that will ring true for teen readers, with the accessories of contemporary life like YouTube and texting playing key roles in the plot. Amowitz keeps the reader dancing on the line between accepting that Jeremy is having paranormal experiences and wondering if he is going crazy, like his alcoholic mother who killed herself when he was nine.

Passages of flashbacks—simply labeled “then”—are skillfully incorporated into the narrative structure, giving readers insight into the back story and motives behind the numerous major and minor characters who are potentially related to Jeremy’s issues and Susannah’s disappearance, including their own parents. As the story progresses, plot twists accelerate with one surprising reveal after another about characters both major and minor. With little or no foreshadowing, some of the relationships between what seemed like minor characters feel contrived. However, the main plot line, Jeremy’s story, is solid with a satisfying resolution and a measured happy ending.

Fans of paranormal romance and teen thrillers will find this fresh take on both genres a satisfying read. Jeremy is a well-developed, dynamic character, and this story told from a male point of view stands out in a genre that is populated with female main characters.

Carolyn Bailey