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Clarion Review

Young Adult Fiction

Daynight
Megan Thomason
CreateSpace
978-1-4802-2655-5
Four Stars (out of Five)

How far would a seventeen-year-old go for a free ride to college? Kira Donovan goes out of this world, to a place called Thera. She subjects herself to a battery of physical and mental tests in order to be one of the select few Earthlings sent to this distant realm.

Megan Thomason's debut novel, *daynight*, skillfully blends the genres of dystopian science fiction and teenage romance with intriguing results. The author deftly appeals to both romance-loving teens as well as those intrigued by young adults fighting the establishment.

On Thera, everything is the opposite of what it is on Earth. Where Earth has water, Thera has land, and vice versa. Therans are nocturnal, because the sun burns too hot during the day. And people who die on Earth can resurrect on Thera, with no memory of their earthly existence, thanks to a Theran corporation called the Second Chance Institute (SCI).

Blake Sundry, Kira's classmate and fellow Earthling, is also chosen to go to Thera, but he knows more about this planet than he lets on. Twenty-year-old Theran Ethan Darcton has been ruled by his parents all of his life, and he's sick of it. When Blake and Ethan meet Kira, a love triangle develops as the three adjust to reality on Thera while struggling to maintain their independence and dignity in a strictly controlled, secretive society.

Thomason's description of Thera's totalitarianism will make fans of *Brave New World* shiver. The author is adept at creating situations in which the bravest thing the protagonists can do is acquiesce to preserve their sanity. Such situations paint courage in a new light by showing that going along with the enemy may be the most courageous thing one can do. Although Kira quickly tires of the Therans who escort her everywhere, she nonetheless remains polite, knowing that getting these people to like her may guarantee her safety.

Because Thomason makes the science of bringing people back to life believable, SCI, her fantasy corporation, has disturbing parallels to actual companies and regimes that claim to

do good while harming people.

Kira, Blake, and Ethan narrate alternating chapters in the first person, introducing readers to Thera from multiple perspectives. Their attitudes and emotions are too often reported by the characters instead of shown through actions or dialogue. And unfortunately, actual dialogue is often used for exchanges that would be better summarized. All this telling threatens to dull an exciting story by putting distance between the readers and the characters. On a more minor note, the euphemisms used for cursing—“What the fetch!” “What the flip!” and “Crud!”—sound ridiculously naive.

Ultimately, though, the novel’s stellar attributes will have the audience hankering day and night for the sequel.

Jill Allen