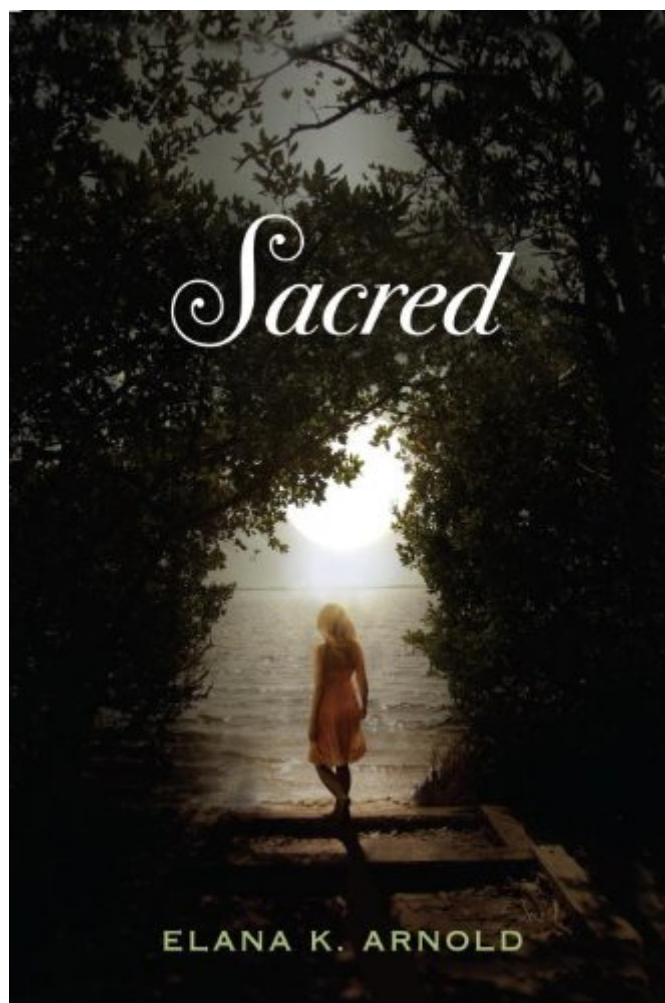


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# Sacred



## Synopsis

A grieving girl meets a boy with mystical powers in this passionate love story. Growing up on Catalina Island, off the California coast, Scarlett Wenderoth has led a fairly isolated life. After her brother dies, her isolation deepens as she withdraws into herself, shutting out her friends and boyfriend. Her parents, shattered by their own sorrow, fail to notice Scarlett's pain and sudden alarming thinness. Scarlett finds pleasure only on her horse, escaping to the heart of the island on long, solitary rides. One day, as she races around a bend, Scarlett is startled by a boy who raises his hand in warning and says one word: "Stop." The boy is intense, beautiful is Will Cohen, a newcomer to the island. For reasons he can't or won't explain, he's drawn to Scarlett and feels compelled to keep her safe. To keep her from wasting away. His meddling irritates Scarlett, though she can't deny her attraction to him. As their relationship blossoms into love, Scarlett's body slowly awakens at Will's touch. But just when her grief begins to ebb, she makes a startling discovery about Will, a discovery he's been grappling with himself. A discovery that threatens to force them apart. And if it does, Scarlett fears she will unravel all over again. "Will appeal to many teens, especially fans of the Twilight series."--Booklist "Filled with tension and angst. . . . Readers will be looking for the next installment."--School Library Journal "A poignant novel of loss and grief, but also of hope."--VOYA From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I ordered this book as a Christmas present for my granddaughter. When it arrived, my wife suggested I preview it before wrapping, just in case it wasn't suitable for a 13 year old. My intention was to quickly skim through the book, looking for the usual landmines (too much sex, too much violence, etc.). I hate to admit this, particularly considering my age, gender and normal reading preferences (Jo Nesbo, Patrick O'Brian, Ian Rankin, Charles Todd), but I was immediately hooked by the story, and instead of skimming, I read it from cover to cover. Maybe I'm a YA at heart. I found Scarlett's story compelling (it's no accident that her nickname is Scar), and Ms. Arnold's writing thoroughly enjoyable. Since I'm a novice to the genre, I didn't know what to expect, but what I found was a story that is satisfying on multiple levels. Certainly the elements are there for a teenage girl: horses (don't all teenage girls want a horse?), romance (Andy vs. Will), trouble at home (parents who are almost completely dysfunctional--or more accurately, nonfunctional), a BFF who is rich, charming, loyal, and a great dresser, and, for good measure, there's a touch of the paranormal. Mix this together with the usual angst of life as a high school student (something we can all relate to), and you've got a story that will appeal to most teenagers. The surprise for me, the definitely non-YA reader, were the aspects of the story that address more mature themes: how does a family cope with the untimely death of a loved one; how does a parent or concerned adult counsel a child who is obviously on the verge of self-destruction; what responsibility do we have when we suspect our child might be the victim of a sexual assault; how do we discuss religion, theology, and cultural differences with our children? There are other adult topics I've left out, but this gives you an idea of what I'm talking about. I suspect that many YA readers will also zero in on these themes, and that's a good thing. Regarding the writing itself: I found numerous passages that were on the par of what we expect from so-called mainstream fiction. I guess what I'm trying to say is, I began "Sacred" expecting it to be dumbed down for the YA reader; instead, it reads as confidently and lyrically as any novel I've read in the past year. Thank you Ms. Arnold! Finally, regarding my original mission: sex and violence. There's some awkward teenage groping that never gets beyond the fumbling stage, and there are a couple of fights between some of the male characters. But these few scenes are brief and barely PG. To summarize: I enjoyed "Sacred," despite my initial misgivings. And though

I'm slightly embarrassed to admit it, I'll probably read Ms. Arnold's next book. But don't tell my friends. By the way: my grand daughter just texted me that she has already finished reading the book, and she loved it.

Finished in two days, this is a great read. I'm waiting for the sequel and curious what might be coming in the storyline. I love the characters, and the feel of the book. Perhaps it's because the story is about people who live on an island, (Catalina Island, off the shores of California), there is a breezy feeling to the storytelling. It starts with very sad circumstances and the main character is deeply troubled. In spite of the heavy (adult) topics and emotions that unfold in this book, the story moves with grace and a sweetness that reminds me this is definitely a young teenager dealing with her life, not a jaded adult. That sweetness carries through the book making it very hopeful, though I'm not sure if my hopes will be shattered in the next book. If the next book is as good as the first, I think both adults and teens will enjoy this story.

As an adult fan of YA lit I so appreciate books that not only appeal to their target audience, but speak to the hearts and minds of us grownups, too. Sacred is a smart, satisfying read with a mystical thread running through its pages rather than spilling over with vampires and zombies. Sacred's heroine Scarlett is broken when we meet her on page one, yet manages to navigate the stormy waters of her life WITHOUT a rescue from Mister Right. To say more would risk spoiling Sacred's secrets for you, but no review of this book would be complete without a mention of how refreshing it is to read the story of a girl with a backbone. Kudos to Ms. Arnold for creating characters that will remain with you long after you finish this beautiful story.

I was lucky enough to read an advanced copy of Sacred and loved it! Scarlett and Will's relationship is full of mystery, tension, and longing and Scarlett's personal and family struggles are heartbreakingly real. Sacred has everything you remember from your own high school romances and everything you want in a coming-of-age novel. I highly recommend it to young and adult readers!

i got this book because it sounded really interesting. I love to read so i took a chance and bought it. I couldn't even get through the first chapter i was so bored with it. The story just dragged on for me and i wasn't even able to finish reading it.

excellent book - well written - a good read

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