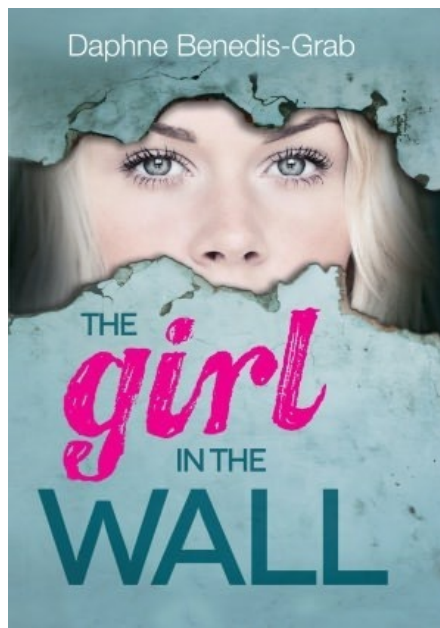




The Girl in the Wall

Daphne Benedis-Grab

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Ariel's birthday weekend looks to be the event of the season, with a private concert by rock star Hudson Winters on the grounds of her family's east coast estate, and all of Ariel's elite prep school friends in attendance. The only person who's dreading the party is Sera, Ariel's former best friend, whose father is forcing her to go. Sera has been the school pariah since she betrayed Ariel, and she now avoids Ariel and their former friends. Thrown together, Ariel and Sera can agree on one thing: this could be one very long night.

They have no idea just how right they are.

Only moments after the concert begins and the lights go down, thugs open fire on parents and schoolmates alike, in a plot against Ariel's father that quickly spins out of control. As the entire party is taken hostage, the girls are forced apart. Ariel escapes into the hidden tunnels in the family mansion, where she and Sera played as children. Only Sera, who forges an unlikely alliance with Hudson Winters, knows where her friend could be. As the industrial terrorist plot unravels and the death toll climbs, Ariel and Sera must recall the sisterhood that once sustained them as they try to save themselves and each other on the longest night of their lives.

The Girl in the Wall Details

Date : Published December 18th 2012 by Merit Press (first published November 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9781440552700

Author : Daphne Benedis-Grab

Format : Hardcover 256 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Contemporary, Thriller, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Girl in the Wall for online ebook

Dajana J. says

I never expected this book to be *this* good. *The Girl in the Wall* is an action-packed novel that will make your heartbeats go crazy while craving to read more and more. I started this book on a meh day, to be honest and all I needed was an easy book to read and take my head of things. But this novel wasn't just that. I was so captivated by this story that I spent hours completely lost in it trying to bring myself to stop (because I had to study for an exam) but well, I couldn't. There were so many things that got me engaged into this story and I'm going to start telling them right now.

First, *the characters*. The characters in this book are all so interesting, each one of them with a story of their own that will make you root for them as the pages go on. One thing I absolutely loved about Sera and Ariel (the main characters) is the progress they showed through all the novel. In each chapter we discover new things about them, new aspects of their life and they grow from page to page (since the story is told in two voices, Sera's and Ariel's).

I can't choose a favorite between **Sera** and **Ariel**. I feel like they are both parts of a whole. They complete each other in the best way possible. Sera with her sensitive, shy personality and then Ariel, hotblooded, intense with a fire burning in her core. But when they're together there's no differences. And I loved that. I loved the way the author has built their friendship. And I believe this is what the book is mostly about. Sticking together, looking past the problems and always, always being there for each other.

All I feel is this emptiness, like wind is blowing through a cavern in my center.

If I were to be honest, I'd say another reason I loved this book so much is because of the 'lack' of romance. We shouldn't forget we're talking about two teenagers and of course you know there's going to be a little bit of feelings, and stomach butterflies, and goosebumps here and there but the writer knew exactly where to show all of these and not turning this into a 'cheesy romance'. In the crazy hostage situation, where people fought for their lives, it was nice to read how Hudson made Sera's heart skip a bit or how Ariel wondered why she always let her guard down with Nico. They were really just too cute and sweet and not all over the place so you could miss the point of the story. It was just perfect.

"Why did you come over to me ?" I ask. "I mean out of everyone here, why me ?"
The corner of his mouth pulls up half grin. "Because you were the one who laughed at my joke."

I felt so much by the ending of this novel. I didn't feel the pages passing, I was so into the story, fighting with the characters who had now become my friends and all I know is that by the end my heart was all over the place. I hadn't noticed I had even gotten a little teary. I'm not even kidding you. The ending was a real surprise. When the novel starts Ariel appears as the 'Queen B', the evil, in-your-face kind of high school girl, but through the story and especially by the end, she will jump right in your heart and you will literally wish to give her hug. Behind her cold, sarcastic words, or the tough, unbreakable looking girl, you'll find an insecure teenage girl who has lost so much in her life that all she wants is a new start.

The reason why one star is missing is that sometimes the story seemed quite surreal (view spoiler) and it needs quite a bit of editing, too.

But if you manage to look past that, and get yourself in the story, this book is going to be one of the fastest

novels you'll ever read and **I highly recommend it.** You should absolutely get it as soon as it comes out. It's a great read and with a cup of tea you just can't fail to enjoy this one!

Thanks to Merit Press and Daphne Benedis-Grab for the ARC!

Review can also be found [here](#).

♥ Sarah says

I have mixed feelings about this book...

On one hand, I really liked the dual narratives. Both Sera and Ariel had distinctive voices, and I really liked their back-story. Their friendship was also a prominent factor embedded in the overall plot, which I found refreshing. I love stories about solid, life-long, sisterly, forever kind of friendships.

Further, the story was in a nutshell: suspenseful, engaging, and dramatic. I also liked the small bit of romance thrown in. It felt refreshing, to read about something OTHER than your typical YA "romance" novel.

HOWEVER:

I felt like Sera and Ariel's reconciliation was a bit anticlimactic. Similarly, some of the action scenes - when the group decides to escape - were kind of hard to follow. I just couldn't clearly imagine the scenes playing out.

Not to mention, the deaths and general reaction of the group of friends seemed too unrealistic for me to truly appreciate.

Also, I think the story could have been more interesting if the group of teens interacted with each other on a deeper level. It's hard for me to believe that these teens, as privileged and rich as they may have been, staying calm throughout the whole ordeal. Well, they weren't necessarily CALM, but they weren't *freaking out*, either.

I think there was a whole lot of potential that was wasted. The story should have been longer. There should have also been more SHOWING, rather than TELLING; more dialogue, too.

Finally, I think the reason behind the whole "hostage" situation was a bit silly. THAT aspect seemed a bit cliché, and underplayed. It would have been and more hard-hitting, if there was more ... background context between Ariel and the villain's relationship.

In sum, this book isn't without flaws. I wanted more details, descriptions, dialogue, and character development (especially between the two main MC's). The "danger" element was a bit cheesy, and would have been more believable if there wasn't so many deaths. I don't know. The whole thing seemed quite unbelievable - BUT, despite it all, I did enjoy reading this. **Easy, quick, and entertaining!*

Emma says

Sometimes it is refreshing to read a book that turns out to be completely different to what you were

expecting. I was expecting this to be a fluffy easy-read book, but I found it to be an engaging thriller that made my eyes well up at points.

So to set the scene we have Sera, who is a fairly recent social outcast, and Ariel who is the one that exiled Sera from having any social standing at school or within the powerful group of friends. Sera has been made to go to Ariel's fabulous birthday party by her parents since they used to be best friends. The party is going to be fabulous, her whole class is going to be there, and there is will be a musical performance by Hudson Winters, rock star extraordinaire. Suddenly the party is taken over by men at gunpoint in an attempt to kidnap Ariel's Father. Ariel manages to hide in the secret passages in the walls of her house which angers the kidnappers. As the hostages begin to die, Ariel has to decide if she stays where she is or gives herself up, and Sera has to decide if she tells the kidnappers where Ariel is or stays quiet.

The story in this book only covers a few hours, but it is a gripping read. The chapters switch between Ariel and Sera being the narrator. At the beginning when the two girls have really different personalities which made it easy to know who you were reading. Ariel is incredibly strong and closed off emotionally at the beginning of the book. She quickly decides that she will have to sort this problem out herself and takes charge of the situation the best she can. As Ariel's character evolves and we find out why there is a rift between her and Sera she begins to soften a little and become a rich character.

Sera starts off as a quiet character who tries to keep her head down and not get involved with what is going on. She is a little bitter about why she has been socially exiled. As her character develops and she begins to understand Ariel's issues a little more she starts to get stronger and less willing to roll over and accept the situation. I felt that towards the end Ariel and Sera had become extremely similar as characters and I would forget who I was reading.

This story and the characters gripped me and made this an amazing read. I love a good thriller and a bit of a mystery, and with the addition of it being YA and having some solid characters, made this book really enjoyable and something I will be recommending to others in the future.

Posted on Lost In A YA Book.

Rose says

Initial reaction: Whoa, this turned out to be quite the engaging read, and I'm surprised how quick it transpired in both the narrative flow and for events. This is probably one of the better stories of its kind in YA that I've picked up in a while, though it does have some stumbles in the mix. I hope I can expand upon the work more in my full review, but overall, I really appreciated the read.

Full review:

"The Girl in the Wall" pleasantly surprised me in its collective narrative. I did not expect to be fully swept up in the twists and turns this story had to offer as a mystery/suspense/thriller in the YA genre. While usually those kinds of stories are right up my alley, I think there was something about Benedis-Grab's narrative that kept this fast, fluid, and hitting hard where it counted. That's not to say that it was without a few bumps in the road, but it proved well worth the journey.

One brief diversion - I actually liked the ARC cover (purple, larger text) of this book far, FAR more than the final cover, which depicts a blonde girl looking through something of a stony wall. The latter's more accurate to the story presentation, but it really didn't appeal to me, unfortunately.

The story's told between two respective narratives - two girls that have had a subsequent falling out as far as their social relationships are concerned. Sera is a social outcast who is invited to her former best friend's (Ariel) party. It's clear that there's been a degree of politics and social ostracizing on behalf of Ariel's part (for a reason unnamed until later in the story), though Ariel's father took the liberty of inviting Sera to what's noted as the biggest party of the year for his daughter. Add to that the appearance of teen superstar Hudson Winters performing at the party, and Sera knows she really wants to go despite her qualms.

Everything at the party goes very wrong in quick succession. Armed gunmen take over the venue and not only shoot several significant victims, but also takes the entire place hostage until their demands are met. Sera has to make an unlikely alliance with both Hunter and Ariel in secret to figure out who's behind it all. All the while being reminded that not everyone they meet or care about will make it through the night alive.

For me the narrative did start off a bit on the typical side of petty rivalries, but it became interesting very quickly when the conflict hit the ground running. And when it does, it hits rather hard. The narrative trades between Ariel and Sera's perspectives, each giving an eye to their respective reactions to events and to their own perception of their rivalry. It actually went much deeper than I thought it would and I understood and connected with each girl's respective experiences, though it was a bit of a rough transition to see through their filters in certain places. I did appreciate the fluidity of the narrative, and I came to connect with even the side character - Hunter and the security guard who helps the girls included. At first I thought Hunter would turn out to be the typical cocky rockstar, but the story develops him very well and quite different than appearances - I actually did like his chemistry with Sera and how the narrative portrayed his role. The story keeps one guessing as to what will happen next with both the possible suspects and the action of how the teens fight back against their captors. I was surprised by how compulsively engaging and resonant the story, particularly of this type, turned out to be.

I think those who like fluid racing against the clock YA thrillers/mysteries will like "The Girl in the Wall". It's easy to take in, kept me on my toes to see what would happen next, and provided an investment in the characters that I didn't think I would have going into it.

Overall score: 3.5/5

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley from the publisher Merit Press.

Wisteriouswoman says

I don't know why I bothered to finish this book.

It could have been a great story considering the premise. I was totally confused by which girl was which every time I switched chapters. Ariel is basically a rich bitch and doesn't deserve much empathy.

The two romances don't make a bit of sense. Everyone must be just totally smelly and gross after being taken hostage and when people are stressed and have their life threaten they often pee in their pants.

And people die. It is horrible but I didn't feel that the two main characters really processed that very well. The gunman didn't seem realistic either. You don't feel a sense of evil nor do you really understand the motivation of the bad guys. Some of the gunman were supposedly 'good guys' roped into joining the 'bad guys'. If that was true than they should have had a plot of their own to over-throw the evil plot.

Viviane Crystal says

Sera made a difficult choice to save a life by telling the truth. Now she's paying for it day after day after day. Her peers at school are treating her like "pariah of the year." Now her family is insisting she attend the birthday party of her ex-friend, Ariel. It's all very uncomfortable until rock star Hudson Winters (real name Hunter Winters) begins to croon a song Sera loves. The mesmerizing effect of his singing is cut short by the burst of gunfire and then the hell begins!

Two people are died and a group of killers is holding the rest of the party attendees temporarily until they realize the person they really wanted to kill, Ariel, is missing. So begins an awful night of threats, murders, fire, and more while Ariel is hidden in the walls of her home. It's a place where Sera and she hung out and played when they were much younger. But now Sera has to make a choice to betray Ariel again or prove her loyalty. The cost of either is huge!

As the night progresses, the remaining youths know there will be no help until well into the next day. They, therefore, begin to plan on how to attack the killers and at the same time gradually discover who is behind this insane, cold-blooded attack and why. It's NOT a pretty picture, no matter how one sees the choices and possible outcomes.

During this night Sera discovers that Hudson (Hunter) is a regular guy with his own sad story. It's his strength and ideas that help Sera tolerate the intense pressure and plan for a different alternative to the end they all expect. At the same time, Ariel has the time while in hiding to think about who are her true friends and make a decision that might just save her own life.

The Girl in the Wall punches the reader with its very real brutality and poignancy. The author knows well how to increase the tension but also make it something compassionate and moving, not just another made for TV drama. Superbly done, Daphne Benedis-Grab! YA readers will love this novel, for sure!

Abbie says

I felt sorry for the characters in this, as what they were going through was really scary, but I didn't love them.

This was an okay read, but I did feel bored at times, as some parts of the story was dragged out a bit too much.

A Book Vacation says

I loved this book! It has just the right amount of mystery, intrigue, romance, and action... it's right up my alley and I'd love to see it turned into a movie! Sera's predicament is painful—her ex-best friend, Ariel, has skewered Sera's reputation and yet Sera must still attend Ariel's birthday party, a fate worse than death, or so it seems. I can't imagine being in Sera's shoes, especially when the reader learns the trivial reason that Ariel defriended Sera in the first place. Teens can be so cruel, but even so, this is a true story of redemption. I was glued to the pages from the very beginning; I laughed, and I certainly cried, and it was all well worth it.

Sera is a truly good character. I kept waiting for the shoe to drop, to learn a deep dark secret about her past that would paint her in a different light, but it didn't come. She is epically good. While some readers may find her esteemed character to be hard to believe, I actually found her refreshing and very lifelike. It's true I haven't met very many truly good people, and I mean exceptionally good people who only want the best for others, always, but they do exist, and I have met a few, and, therefore, I can't help but love Sera.

Hudson is very dreamy and down to earth, and I love that he's not afraid to mix with everyone, even though he's "popular." He has a good soul, just like Sera, and I really enjoyed getting to know him, especially as he divulged his own secrets and stuck up for Sera and the others throughout the terrible hostage situation. I'd like to meet a guy like him...

Overall, this is a phenomenal novel and I highly suggest lovers of suspense and romance should read this awesome novel.

Dayla says

Article first published as Book Review: *The Girl in the Wall* by Daphne Benedis-Grab on Blogcritics.

Review also appeared on my blog: Book Addict 24-7

I received an advanced copy for review

Unforgiving and raw, *The Girl in the Wall* by Daphne Benedis-Grab offers readers an uncensored view into what a hostage situation might look like from a young adult's point of view. This suspenseful young adult novel uses the importance of friendship as the anchor to the story, and successfully captures a terrifying and heartbreaking nightmare within the pages of the book.

The story is morbidly addicting. Death follows the characters in this novel like a stalker and the reader is the sole witness to the deadly situation. Though s/he hopes for a safe outcome, s/he can't help but wonder who will die next.

Ariel and Sera, the two protagonists, ex-best-friends, and interchanging narrators of the novel, successfully grow as characters. The reader is given both points of view so that s/he can decide which character is more reliable. Whereas the story suggests that Sera is the stronger of the two, thanks to her past decisions leading to her social pariah status, the reader might find that it is, in fact, Ariel and her story of redemption and loss that makes her the tougher protagonist.

Quickly paced and without a dull moment, Benedis-Grab manages to write a disturbing, yet entertaining novel that will entrance future readers. Budding young romance adds an extra touch to the already thriving story line, and the will to survive makes this an inspiring read.

The Girl in the Wall can be devoured in less than a day, but the ending may leave the reader wondering if perhaps a better conclusion exists. Though symbolic and sentimental, I found that perhaps after such a heart-stopping story, the ending should have more power behind it.

I recommend *The Girl in the Wall* to readers addicted to fast-paced storytelling and action, and to those not undeterred by violent descriptions. Benedis-Grab's novel is a must-read for anyone who is seeking a story that veers from the usual safe and predictable teen read.

Paula Ratcliffe says

I loved this book we first meet Sera who's having a hard time when here ex-bestfriend Ariel is having a

birthday party and her father is forcing her to go. The relationship between Ariel and Sera was damaged about a year ago when something traumatic happened to Ariel in Mexico and Sera being a best friend did what she thought was right out of love for Ariel. Unfortunately Ariel doesn't see it that way and has turned Sera into an outcast at their school.

As the birthday party and concert are getting underway men with guns have kidnapped the kids having killed Ariel's father and new best friend who could easily be a twin to Ariel. Ariel scared escaped into the walls of the house where tunnels are hidden away. Ariel manages to get a few 'agents' to assist her Nico the gardener for Ariel's father is assisting her and getting Sera to assist along with rockstar Hudson Winters who assists with coming up with a plan to survive the night.

This book was amazing and I felt myself getting dragged in quickly and quite the page turner. What a great book glad I was able to review it!

Michelle says

I didn't care for this book. Although the title and premise seemed really promising, I was disappointed in how the book played out.

The book consisted mainly of each person's thoughts and not alot of dialog.

The writing was good, it's just I was completely bored with the book.

I received a free copy of this book via Netgalley in exchange for my honest review.

Jenny - Book Sojourner says

I didn't know what to expect from this book. I was just looking forward to something a bit different from what I'd been reading. What The Girl in the Wall turned out to be was a book that far exceeded my expectations. This book gripped me from the beginning and I finished it in a day.

The Girl in the Wall alternates between Sera's and Ariel's POV. I really liked this approach because we know from the beginning that Sera and Ariel used to be best friends until a little over 9 months ago when something happened, causing Ariel to call Sera a back-stabber and turn her into a pariah at school. Through these alternating POVs we are gradually able to find out what happened to their friendship, and if there is any hope of reconciliation. This is also how we know that Sera is the only one who knows where Ariel is, testing her loyalty to Ariel once again.

This broken friendship is only part of the story. The main problem is that Ariel's birthday party has been taken hostage for reasons that Ariel is not aware of initially. This part of the storyline is scary and suspenseful - a group of high school students, plus one rock star, taken hostage by a huge group of gun-toting agents who show no mercy. There are meaningless deaths, physical wounds, and emotional scars to last a lifetime. But this is a hostage situation gone wrong, so that's where even more suspense occurs, because we don't know what the next move of the bad guys will be, and we don't know if the choices that Sera and Ariel make are good or will be more costly in the end.

Then there is the minor storyline of the budding potential romances. I liked how the author handled this. In a

situation like this, of course emotions would be high, but these kids are also getting to know each other in a intense kind of way, all their fears exposed, their emotions bare, and honesty their only course. So for some of them to form special bonds makes sense. But I also like how this did not overtake the storyline. With Sera and Hudson in particular, they were able to work together as a team as well as get to know each other on a personal level, yet always kept their heads in the game. You could see their connection, yet the author did not overly-romanticize anything. This also holds true for the other potential relationship, though it was not explored as much.

I will say that I had a few discrepancies with a few plot points and situation handlings in the book, but I was able to overlook them enough to continue enjoying the storyline. Though perhaps some of these details detracted from my overall rating.

To keep this spoiler-free, I will not reveal any deaths or outcomes in detail, but as you can imagine, this type of situation takes its toll and not everyone survives. I found myself teary-eyed at the end, which I did not expect to feel. One character in particular touched a chord with me, but I could understand why the author chose the outcome she did. Because the reality is that this is not a happily-ever-after story. It is an ugly situation caused by hateful, selfish people. The author touches on how some of the characters react after the trauma, some in more detail than others. You'd need a whole other book to deal with all the PTSD. But not all is lost, and there is some hope and happiness left after all the tragedy.

Bottomline: This is a fast-paced story dealing with a brutal situation that I did not want to put down. The action was intense but well-paced, the characters were realistic and meaningful, the consequences were honest. If you're looking for a different YA book, try this one.

Sarah says

2.5 stars

This was an okay story, but it dragged so bad! I'm not sure if this was just me, because the story didn't interest me or what, but it felt a heck of a lot longer than 256 pages!

I did feel quite sorry for Ariel, because she'd already been through a lot, so having assassins out to kill her really was the icing on the cake, but I also felt sorry for her friend Sera because she'd had to make a hard decision out of love for her friend, and it had left her very unpopular.

The storyline in this really dragged though, and even when things were revealed, I wasn't surprised, and I was just desperate to get to the end of this.

There was some romance, but I found it all very predictable, and I wasn't impressed.
5 out of 10

Kellie Maddox-Ward says

Did you ever see the awesomely epic early 90's movie "Toy Soldiers?" With Sean Astin and Louis Gossett Jr.?

You know where a group of black ops/mercenaries come into a boarding school and hold them all hostages? But the boys fight back and use all their trouble making ways to escape? Well as soon as I saw the synopsis for this book that's immediately what I thought of!

I was fist pumping thinking it was going to be amazeballs... YA, black ops, some of my favourite things to read about in one book?!

Now that I have read it, I am still first pumping but it's more like energetically moving my arms up and down in a sloth like move.

I saw great potential in this book. It just fell flat in the middle.

STORY

It did start with a BANG....

Sera and Ariel fathers have been best friends since College.

Sera and Ariel have been best friends all their lives, well until 9 months ago that is. After the "incident" in Mexico, Ariel can't trust Sera anymore as she turned into a "backstabbing" bitch and decided to make Sera the social outcast at school.

Luckily for everyone, Sera was forced to go to the party by her Father.

Hudson Winters is the new IT guy in Music. – He has been bought to perform at Ariel's birthday.

The minute the concert starts the lights go off and shots are fired.

When the lights go back on Sera's father is dead and bleeding on the floor and Ariel is lying on the floor bleeding from her head.

Mercenaries with machine guns are everywhere and take everyone's cell phones. They explain that they are allowed to be in the room they are in, the toilet and the kitchen but no where else. They are to keep calm, not cause trouble, co-operate and they will be allowed to go tomorrow.

Easy enough to do, right?

Problem though...

Sera seems to be the only one to notice that the blonde girl that is bleeding all over the floor is not Ariel. It is Ariel's BFF.

Sera knows Ariel enough to know what she is in the tunnels in the wall. They are the only 2 people who know about that place.

Sera can't tell anyone. Look at what happened last time she told someone something....

How is she going to convince everyone Ariel is still alive and they need to make a plan to get out, when she

is the pariah? The social outcast? The only person that is talking to her is Hudson but that's because he doesn't know who she is...

"The Executioner" has figured out Ariel is missing... and will keep killing people until she is found.

How will they get out alive?

There are no weapons in any of the rooms.

What do the mercenaries want?

Who hired them?

Does it have to do with Mexico?

They are just a bunch of kids, how are they supposed to do anything?

Have to read to find out!!

OPINION

Ok so I got this of netgalley AGGGGGEEEESSS ago so my copy wasn't all that good, I hope that now it has been published that the spelling corrections, paragraphs and everything has been fixed. At times it was hard to even figure out what they were saying.

Like the TH button wasn't working.

e book ends.

ank you

ey're on eir way.

Stuff like that...

There was a lack of romance for all you romance lovers out there. Yeah there were crushes and kisses and butterflies, the main focus however was on the friendship between Sera and Ariel and each of them growing up a lot in 16 hours, and all the action of the hostages/mercenaries.

As stated earlier story wise, potential to be awesome, but just didn't hit the mark for me.

Start = BANG. LIGHTS OUT. PEOPLE DEAD. ARIEL GONE. TUNNELS. PEOPLE DEAD. UNCLE BROUGHT IN.

Kinda plateau's for a while...

¾'s = BANG!

SHIT.HITS.THE.ROOF

END = Kinda HEA. Sera got hers and Ariel did as well (view spoiler)

And then just ends.

As a epilogue lover I would of loved one.

Sarah Brockman says

This book was ok in the beginning great in the middle but trash in the end. I felt the Author could have had them escape some other way then they did.over all a good read.
