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# The Leaving



## Synopsis

Eleven years ago, six kindergartners went missing without a trace. After all that time, the people left behind moved on, or tried to. Until today. Today five of those kids return. They're sixteen, and they are . . . fine. Scarlett comes home and finds a mom she barely recognizes, and doesn't really recognize the person she's supposed to be, either. But she thinks she remembers Lucas. Lucas remembers Scarlett, too, except they're entirely unable to recall where they've been or what happened to them. Neither of them remember the sixth victim, Max--the only one who hasn't come back. Which leaves Max's sister, Avery, wanting answers. She wants to find her brother--dead or alive--and isn't buying this whole memory-loss story. But as details of the disappearance begin to unfold, no one is prepared for the truth. This unforgettable novel--with its rich characters, high stakes, and plot twists--will leave readers breathless.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 432 pages

Publisher: Bloomsbury USA Childrens (June 7, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1619638037

ISBN-13: 978-1619638037

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 1.4 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #28,078 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in [Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Thrillers & Suspense](#) #49 in [Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Romantic](#) #129 in [Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Mystery & Detective](#)

## Customer Reviews

With a hook like that, how can you not want to read this book? I had to know what happened to these kids whether it be alien abduction, black hole, spontaneous combustion - I needed to know. The Leaving alternates between three POVs - two of the returned kids and the sister of the one who didn't. The bits and pieces that remain of the kids' memories are revealed along the way, but no matter what kind of theories I created, I couldn't have predicted the ending. This book points out how fascinating the mind is, how memories can be altered, retained, lost, etc., and how even though the conscious mind may not remember something, the memory might still be lurking in the subconscious. Despite being completely engrossed in the storyline, I had a little trouble buying into

one of the relationships in this book - I won't say between which two characters - because I find it difficult to believe anyone could form such a strong bond at a very young age. It just didn't ring true for me. The Leaving is a gripping, dare-someone-to-pry-it-from-your-fingers, YA novel that would also appeal to adults. Highly recommended. I received a digital ARC from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

\*Book Received in Exchange for Honest Opinion/Review\* Overall, I enjoyed this story; however, there was one glaring issue I had with this book and her name was Avery. I think the author wanted me to sympathize with her but let me have a real moment here, I HATED her. I almost DNF-ed the book because reading chapters from her perspective put me in a sour mood. She was whiny, b\*tchy, rude, self-absorbed, and honestly I wanted to punch her in her pity-party-for-one face. I just didn't like Avery at all, which made me hate the end of the story because I was hoping that Avery would just be off-ed or die...spoiler alert, she doesn't die. Unfortunate, really she was just such an annoying character. I loved the cover and concept of the story. I just wished it would have been developed more, I wanted more! I really thought that the book would build up to this epic, mind-blowing ending and in reality I felt cheated because it fell so flat. I wish that Tara would have went there with the story instead of playing it safe. I enjoyed how each kid had defining characteristics, things they knew how to do but had no recollection of learning. The diversity of all the characters in the book made for a colorful cast with different opinions. I especially loved Scarlett and Lucas (to a point) because both of these characters were determined. Their determination was admirable but honestly my hatred for Avery and lack of epic ending left this book falling short for me. Finally, it took me several weeks to finish this book which if you know me at all I read a book in one sitting if I am head over heels for it. So interpret that how you will.

I liked this book for what it was - six children disappeared and five later returned. I enjoyed the mystery along with the characters. Their memories seems to be wiped clean. Some were sure they wanted to know where they had been and a couple thought maybe it was best they didn't know. I'd want to know. I'd want to know who to kick in the nads for stealing so much of my childhood from me. The characters were well rounded and you could easily follow their evolution from naive teenagers to adults facing their past, one thing most of us find extremely hard to do. I think I liked Avery the most. She was not one of the taken who was brought back. She was one that lived her life with this hanging over her head. Her brother was taken, but was not brought back like the others. She wanted so badly to know where her brother was and what the truth was. Was it aliens? Was is

a psycho kidnapper? Maybe mad scientists who conduct experiments on children to make super human teenagers? You could go on and on with all of the possibilities, but Avery wasn't buying the memory-story and wanted to get down to the facts. Where was her brother? Why did this horrible incident rear its ugly face again, eleven years later? You've got to admire a teen who not only faces reality, but does it with the sort of determination that should make any parent proud. The only thing that kept this book from getting a higher rating is the ending. It honestly was a good book and I'm glad to have gotten the chance to read it. I think that my love of the sci-fi and horror genres have started to run YA books for me. I expect more outrageous or unconventional endings these days, and this book was too realistic for my taste of late. If you're looking for a thrilling YA novel full of mystery, I'd suggest you pick this one up. You won't be disappointed.

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