



# Awake

*Melanie Surani*

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## **Awake** Melanie Surani

In author Melanie Surani's edgy thriller novel, opera singer Joshua Gray wakes in an eerie art museum exhibit. He comes to believe he's been kidnapped and abandoned. And he isn't the only one...

As Josh and four others struggle to piece together their new reality, they discover the museum's main building has been razed and the place is boarded with no obvious exit. Who left them in the museum and why? How can they escape? The only link that binds them together is a mysterious woman named Blair, who they each encountered before blacking out. Josh unexpectedly finds himself drawn to one of the other captives, a long-time fan named Sophia. Their attraction plunges the group into a dark pool of suspicion. When allegiances shift and pieces connect, the strangers are forced to reassess their situation. Is the real danger inside or outside of the museum?

Suspenseful, romantic and filled with drama, *Awake* will keep you up all night.

## **Awake** Details

Date : Published April 30th 2015 by Booktrope Publishing

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Author : Melanie Surani

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Mystery, Thriller

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## From Reader Review Awake for online ebook

### **Kimberly Vanderbloom says**

This story is about a creepy situation. What an insane ride! I really enjoyed the storyline. I couldn't imagine waking up in a museum not having any idea of how you got there. My favorite character was Josh. I liked how relatable he was and how vulnerable he is. It wasn't necessarily a whodunit more of a how it was done. The characters were engaging and you felt like the sixth person in there. I liked how complete the storyline was and you got to experience the aftermath of everything. This is the first book I have read from the author and it definitely won't be the last. If you are interested in reading a book that will give you chills then this is the book for you.

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### **Autumn says**

<http://fallenoverbookreviews.blogspot...>

So I won this book and by the title and cover I thought it would be really good. Now for me it started off pretty good but then I slowly lost interest. A group of people wake up in a museum with no knowledge on how they got there but with one connection someone named Blair. Who is this person and what does she want with them exactly? I never really understood the understanding of why these people were in a museum along with really not understanding the time line of the people missing.

It seems that everyone is connected in some way and there are secrets that no one wants out what will be the end game for all those involved?

Honestly the book was just really not for me like I thought it would be. There was just something missing that I can't put my finger on exactly. Now it is filled with mystery and drama give it a try and see what you think.

#PBwkendread

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### **Jenny says**

This is one of the best new works of fiction I have read in a long time. I usually stick to the classics, but interest Melanie's work led me to this title, and I wasn't disappointed. As with the first edition of The Silent Treatment (of which I plan to read the new edition as well), I found her characters absorbing and was invested in her story right away. I believe Melanie Surani to be one of the most interesting new voices in contemporary fiction out there.

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### **Peggy says**

Right from the beginning of starting this book I knew there were going to be some sleepless nights.... And there were several. Yes, this book is one of those that once you start there is no stopping. All the times you will find yourself lying to yourself each and every time when you say one more page... just one more page...

there's no one more page, you just can not put this book down!

The thrill of this book will have you on edge. Highly a recommendable book!

\*Received for an honest review\*

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### **Julia Damatto says**

What the Author says in the end of the book's blurb is absolutely true, Awake kept me up all night!!!

Wow, this book is fast paced, with a gripping plot and full of twists and turns. The story is extremely original, with scary situations, great characters and an amazing ending.

Making a review for Awake is hard, because I don't want to give away any possible spoiler, so just grab a copy and enjoy the ride!!

Highly Recommended

\*I received a Free copy in exchange for an Honest Review\*

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### **katph00d says**

I enjoyed the premise of this book - tantalizing and mysterious, I couldn't wait to read what happened next. Somehow, halfway through the book, the rhythm to the story quickened... then went flat. Normally, I love when a plot moves briskly, but if it goes too fast, then a lot of atmosphere gets lost. I also felt like there were too many details left out of the story, and any explanations offered were too shallow to be entirely convincing.

Disclaimer: I received this book as part of the publisher's promotion through goodreads.

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### **Debbie says**

Was excited to receive an advance copy of this ebook. I loved the premise of this book, and the first section delivered suspense, interesting characters and a sense of terror. However, in the other two sections the romance/sex was sophomoric and unbelievable, and there were so many characters and twists that it made no sense.

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### **Stephanie says**

Five strangers wake up in an eerie, boarded up museum. Some are minor celebrities, some normal people. Josh is an opera star, Ajay is a Bollywood actor, Sophia is a fan of Josh, Demetri is a Bollywood fan and Don, the ex-boyfriend of the common link between the five strangers, an eccentric artist named Blair. The last thing that all five remember is a run in with a woman named Blair. Now, apparently drugged and what

they assume is a few days later, they have woken up inside her boarded up museum. As the group tries to figure out exactly what has happened to them and try to figure a way out of the strange museum, tensions rise as some members of the group come to believe that others are responsible for them being trapped. This was an incredibly unique concept, live people unknowingly trapped as museum exhibits. The beginning really grasped me; written from Blair's point of view as she is trying to figure out how to kidnap Sophia, we have insight into the villain and artist who will create the creepy displays. From there though, we are thrown to the victim's perspective after they wake up. This is where I have just as many questions as Sophia, Josh and the others: where are they? How did they get there? What did Blair do to them? And why are they locked in? Things quickly intensify as more people are found locked in the museum. The points of view switch between the captives. Sophia seems to be the only one who can keep it together through everything while the men swiftly jump to conclusions, become violent and go stir crazy. Things sort of fell apart for me a little bit near the end as the different parties start working against one another instead of just turning in Blair. Anyway, I think incorporating Blair's point of view throughout the novel instead of just beginning and end would have helped to tie things together. Also, I kept on reading so I could figure out how the heck Blair pulled off keeping people as living statues for 10 years, it is eventually revealed, but I was a little unenthused by her means. I did, however, love how the group got back at Blair by the end. Overall, an interesting thriller with a unique concept, and a lot of character drama.

This book was received for free in return for an honest review.

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### **Nicole says**

I received this e-book through LibraryThing in exchange for an honest review.

I really wanted to enjoy *Awake* more than I did. It is a story about a group of people who wake up in a strange museum, with seemingly no way out and no idea how they came to be there. Slowly they figure out their connection, work together to discover a way out, and determined what happened since they were kidnapped.

I enjoyed the book until I got to the last third of the book. From there it got a little confusing and I struggled to follow the storyline as easy as I followed the rest of the book. Overall, the premise was good, I just feel it didn't deliver as strongly as it could have.

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### **Sheri says**

I am not sure what I just read. I do know it sucked me in. I only stopped reading it when my kids needed me. A one sitting read, that's what it was.

Now to the story, I have no idea how to explain it without giving away the reveal. Let me just say; it's wicked. Mystery and romance with a tiny bit of mad science thrown in for giggles. I was worried I wouldn't like the ending, but it was very SATISFYING.

Well done, author, well done.

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## Jade says

4.5 stars

This title was a suspenseful, thrilling novel about a group of people who learn to live with each other when they find themselves dumped in a museum, as well as learning the connection between them and trying to figure out why on earth they are there in the first place.

The first half of the book is set in an abandoned museum you later find out to be situated underground, and the second half is in the fearful unknown world of the outside. Everything that happens in the book, whilst in third person, is mainly told from the viewpoint of one of 5 characters: Josh, Sophia, Ajay, Don and Demetri, although occasionally seen from other character's perspective's. With the character's cluelessness as to why they have been stranded where they are, comes the readers curiosity to read on and find out. The writing style has made this quite strong and willed me to keep reading onwards to find out everything I needed to know. The whole story was completely unpredictable, and I always feel like that is the most important element any good thriller book should have. The ending was very climactic, and left with more questions than I started with, and I was still thinking about it days after I had finished reading! As fore mentioned, the plot was very fast paced due to the suspense and curiosity sparked within me, but also, Surani made sure all of the threads that were untied to begin with were tied up by the end with no loose threads, which is how a good thriller should end.

I liked how there was quite a wide selection of characters with a variety of personalities so there were different things you could like and hate about them. On the whole, I thought Josh was such a lovely character, and he wasn't like a usual hero, and had his strengths and weaknesses. I like that in a character because it shows that they are more realistic; therefore easier to connect with. Josh's phobia of blood, and his adoration and passion for music was what made him really stand out as the most realistic character out of the whole 'museum bunch'. Out of the other characters, Sophia probably had the most depth to her, whereas the others were kind of side characters who could have had a more developed personality in my opinion. Also, although Josh and Sophia were key characters for me, I thought that the attempt at a love story in the museum was slightly drab, and could have been built up a bit more. It seemed very rushed at the beginning, which was the more unrealistic side of the characters.

Once the 'museum gang' made it outside, the whole story just went BANG and everything started happening at once. At times, it was a little bit hard to follow, but everything really started to unfold and develop with additional personalities involved in the story. With this, the book kept me guessing more than it did at the beginning! The massive climax at the end when the mastermind behind the whole plan and the museum gang confront each other was amazing. It was so so tense and finally unravels everything that has previously been questioned. Scenes like these, such as the smaller confrontations throughout the book, were particularly well written which is what made it so tense. Every time a question arose, the book got so much more tense and thrilling it made me wasn't to read way past my (non-existent) bedtime!!

I would definitely recommend this book to lovers of thrillers and mystery, and definitely those who have plenty of time on their hands because once you pick up 'Awake', you will not put it down!

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## **MaryAnn says**

From the very beginning of *Awake*, I just didn't know what end was up, if you know what I mean. I imagine I felt a lot like the characters did. From the time we meet Blair at the opera trying to abduct Sophia, the suspense, questions and crazy scary ride never ends. I don't mean scary as in horror scary, but frightening because the setting was just so odd and not what anyone would imagine.

I'm not sure where Melanie Surani got her idea for this, but it's a WOW read for sure. I kept being drawn back to the book, even when I had other things to do because I just had to know what was going to happen. The fast pace of the story, the constant questions planted in my mind by the setting and oddity of what had happened to the characters acted as a drug, forcing me to continue picking up the book even as the baskets of clean, unfolded clothes piled up around me.

*Awake* is unlike any other suspense/mystery story I've read and I'd definitely recommend it for anyone looking for a suspenseful ride!

I was lucky enough to be given a promotional copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Mpho3 says**

I received this e-book through LibraryThing in exchange for an honest review. I'll start by saying this isn't a genre that I tend towards, but the premise sounded intriguing. The book starts out with a bang though early on I couldn't decide if Surani is a talented writer, or as her bio suggests, a blogger/hairstylist capable of stringing together a few sentences. That's not very nice of me, but I had a hard time getting past that. What I conclude is that she has one hell of an imagination, and she's crafted a tale of which I suspect Shonda Rhimes would probably approve. In some ways, as the story developed, Surani's writing got stronger. But, as the writing got better, the story got more convoluted.

Between some very choppy transitions and a few twists too many, I lost the thread altogether, and at that point I was back to questioning the writing. The story also suffers from a few too many implausibilities or plot points that aren't developed enough to be believable. For example, one major character gets injured and the crap beaten out of him so many times, it's a wonder he makes it as far in the telling as he does. And that's another problem I had: I didn't like any of the characters. But, I will say this: for about the first two thirds, I could not put it down. I was exceedingly curious to see where things were going. Unfortunately, the last third got a little too out there for me. Again, this reminds me of Shonda Rhimes. The first couple seasons of *Scandal*, I was drawn along by all the rapid twists and turns, but by season 3 I'd lost interest, knowing there's never a satisfying end, just more of the same. It's fair to say that I skimmed the last portions of *Awake* because I simply wanted to know what happens, but the journey no longer interested me. That said, it'd make a great movie.

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## **Paula says**

This review was written for LibraryThing Early Reviewers in exchange for a free e-copy of *Awake*. I was really intrigued with the premise of waking up in an abandoned museum with no knowledge of how you got there or even where you were and I thought that the addition of police reports and blog entries was a nice

touch. Although I didn't really care for any of the characters, I found the plot very suspenseful. It was hard to tear myself away from the book in many parts. At other times, I found it either too confusing or unbelievable. I can't help but think it would make a great movie though.

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## **Unfazeable Reader says**

*Blair didn't go to the theater for a night of opera, but to kidnap Sophia Stewart.*

With an opening line like this, you know you're in for a wild ride!

From the very first page, we know that this mysterious Blair has something unsavory planned. We know what she's after: kidnapping Sophia. What we don't know is why, how, or whatever for. Things begin to go awry for Blair when Sophia's huge celebrity crush and the night's soloist Joshua Gray joins the afterparty, distracting Sophia and inadvertently wrecking the means of kidnapping. But Blair recovers splendidly, and in place of one person kidnapped, she winds up with two.

Some unspecified time later, Josh and Sophia wake up in a creepy museum. They find three more people locked inside the building, and together all five of them try to piece together what could have happened. Tensions grow as each one of them begins to suspect the other of being the kidnapper or at least having a hand in it.

These tensions culminate in a massive ax-wielding batter, which helps the five to finally locate the exit out of this strange place. But once outside and liberated at last, things only start to get weirder . . .

### **Pros:**

- unique concept: it starts off as a whodunit mystery, but shortly thereafter it turns into a creepy why- and howdunit affair
- interesting way of titling chapters; multiple cast of POVs
- the first 2/3 of the book is AWESOME. Great tension buildup, the mystery of it all is both astounding and crushing, but . . .

### **Cons:**

- . . . then it starts to get weird, and not in a good way. The last 10% of the story just doesn't make sense
- unbelievability or ambiguity of some plot developments with a rather blunt transition between the scenes
- the writing tends to get a bit repetitive, e.g. a lot of characters love to pinch the bridge of their noses when nervous or contemplating. When one character does it, it's a unique trait. But when two, three, or more—then it's a redundancy

### **Bottom Line**

A suspenseful read with a highly unique premise but only a passable execution.

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