



# Scars Like Wings

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Ava Lee is aged sixteen, American. She is a junior at Crossroads High School. A year before the story begins her family house was burned down. Both her parents and her cousin Sara died in the fire. Ava suffered sixty percent burns and permanent disfigurement. After the fire Ava goes to live with the parents of her late cousin, Aunt Cora and Uncle Glenn.

Stewart sets out to tell the story of Ava's recovery and self-acceptance, fraught though that story may prove to be. There is a narrative running parallel to that of Ava. Her friend Piper also bears the marks of fire, as a result of a car crash. Piper is now a wheelchair user with spinal injury and quadriplegia.

This book is an unusual example of its genre. Most books which tackle the difficult subject of life-changing impairments fail to allow the characters to witness the full gamut of feelings experienced by those who in real life face such situations. Such books often avoid mentioning the darkest moments that such a destiny involves, or if they mention them they do so fleetingly. Such books also often gloss over the endless and debilitating medical treatments that come in the wake of serious injuries. Stewart's book neglects neither of these themes. The author explores both in detail and she describes how people confronted with such experiences may swing from an optimistic few days to the depths of despair and the darkest of thoughts. Occasionally even Stewart fails to meet a realistic standard. At one point Piper, despite her spinal injuries and quadriplegia, manages to move herself unaided on to Ava's bed.

Nevertheless this is an outstanding book, the most informed account of its subject since the publication of Lois Keith's [A Different Life](#) [4] in 1997.

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