Below are the complete reviews, written by the Lovereading4kids members.

Talia Jacobs, age 15

A powerful novel about corruption, secrets, and questioning everything you’ve ever known. Beautiful and unique, it will stay with you long after you turn the final page.

‘After the Fire’ is one of the most unique, interesting, and brilliant books I’ve ever read. This breath-taking novel is about a girl. A teenage girl who has just been rescued from a cult deep in a desert in Texas. But it is about more than that; it is about the hardships she had to face and the secrets she was keeping and that were being kept from her, about being told that the monsters were locked outside but questioning whether they were really on the inside. It is about the reliving the past while trying to move into the future, it is about community, it is about laws, corruption, indoctrinating, lies, fires, smoke.

The layout of this book was like a breath of fresh air; very unique, with the past being told in flashbacks and the present being told as it happened.

There are characters that are loveable for all the right reasons and characters that will make you fill with hatred and disgust for all the right reasons.

The description was beautiful and the story moved at just the right pace.

I loved the setting, the writing, the chapter layout, the characters, the themes, the twists, the turns. I loved this book. It constantly kept me on the edge of my seat and I turned the pages so fast I almost ripped them. It is inspired by the Waco Siege (and the cult from the siege) of 1993. It is unlike anything I’ve ever read before, hopeful and heart-wrenching, about power, secrets, and lies.
Grace Spear, age 14

‘After The Fire’ is an incredible book with emotions overflowing from every page, making the reader really feel everything that happens to the main character. It tells the story of Moonbeam before the fire living in a religious compound where she is protected from what’s going on in the outside world. The story is told from Moonbeams perspective after the fire, where her beliefs are being tested and she doesn’t know who to trust. After being put through the horrors of the ‘final battle’ and now in a secure unit, will she be able to tell her story to Doctor Hernandez and Agent Carlyle, on top of that will she ever know what happened to her Mum.

I felt as though I’d been sucked into this book. When I first started reading it I didn’t know what to make of it because it’s not the type of story I’d normally read. The way it is written is captivating because it goes back and fourth from Moonbeams recollection of what happened before the fire and her life after in the secure unit. I love the caring relationship moonbeam has with her friend Honey and him much they look out for each other. I really like Agent Carlyles character because I had a really good picture of what he was like in my mind. I think this is a great book and it was really interesting to read.

Euan Lorimer, age 13 from West Buckland School

Incredibly interesting and gripping, the kind of book you won’t be able to put down. The way in which Will Hill writes this is incredible. Amazing read all round. Very interesting, gripping read which just shows how completely innocent people can be completely manipulated by someone. That they can take all of their fears and hopes and use it to control them. And how Moonbeam the character deals with this the complete brainwashing and having to adjust to the real world. I really enjoyed this book as this could easily fooled me as a non-fiction book as the way that Will Hill describes it is really interesting and realistic. I also really enjoyed Dr Hernandez and Agent Carlyle as they help Moonbeam adjust from her life to the real world, and consequently become friends with her.

Izzy Read, age 16

This tale of grief and trauma has resonated with me, leaving me crying and looking for more cult-inspired books. I have discovered lately, I love books about cults. First with Emma Clines ‘The Girls’ and now with ‘After
the Fire’ there is something deeply fascinating with the dynamics of cult and its downfall. Perhaps it is the charismatic leaders and how the convince others to follow blindly, seemingly against their best interests. **Will Hill captures a cult seamlessly- the dedication, religion and isolation all involved.** Moonbeam has lived the majority of her life in the base and the book follows her as she recovers flicking backwards and forwards in time.

This tale of grief and trauma has resonated with me, leaving me crying and looking for more cult-inspired books.

www.fromcovertocoverr.tumblr.com

**Laura Solomon, age 14**

**Original, a story from a never seen before perspective, ‘After The Fire’ is Young Adult writing at its finest.**

When you have been a certain set of beliefs your whole life, what happens when someone tells you they’re not true. As Moonbeam’s world is ripped to shreds and we discover a life inside of a cult, an inspiring group of people attempt to salvage the childhood of a damaged community of children. Psychologically mutilated and mentally traumatised, these children each have a story worth hearing.

**Edel Waugh**

The story begins in a security facility after a serious incident has occurred. The main character is called Moonbeam and she appears to be at the centre of what happened but we soon learn there was a huge number of people involved because Moonbeam was part of a dangerous cult. The story was disturbing on many levels, the control over these people, the brainwashing and restrictions and flat out abuse, it was all deeply ingrained and horrifying . Father John was a despicable character and his behaviour was very unsettling so he made an excellent bad guy!

It's quite a big book and **I flew through it, the plot was exceptionally good and I could not put it down once I started it** and as the plot pace really picked up speed as we went I had to stay up late to find out what had happened leading up to the climax of the story. **It was awesome!** If you are a fan of this author you won’t be disappointed if you are new to his writing you are in for a treat!
http://edelwaugh.blogspot.co.uk/

Megan Abbott, age 18

Fascinatingly gripping!

I don't think I have ever read a book that fast as I could not put it down. Deep in the Texas desert, Moonbeam lives in a cult with her Brothers and Sisters. They're safe, protected by the Fence and Father John. Because Father John knows what's right and what's wrong. But then Nate arrives from Outside, stirring doubt and suddenly Moonbeam’s world is on fire. I found this story really fascinating as I am currently studying sociology which has a unit about different religious organisations, so from just learning about them to actually reading about a characters experiences in that situation was so thought provoking. To the extent of wondering what I would do in a situation like that and how with the rise of technology and diversity, these religious groups still exist. Some of the themes can be quite upsetting so I would recommend this book to anyone who can cope with the subject, but without this there would the loss of realistic aspect of the novel that Hill crafted so beautifully. I absolutely loved it!

Jess Anderson, age 14

I thought that there were really clever plot twists in this book that I didn’t expect.

Overall, I really enjoyed this book and would definitely recommend it.

After the fire was an amazing book that I enjoyed through out. I really liked the way how the novel was written in retrospect, and that the author withheld information. I was hooked on this book. I would like there to be a second book as I want to know what happens to her now that she has found her mother.

I thought that there were also really clever plot twists in this book that I didn’t expect. I characters had good depth to them and that they were really strong.

The setting of the book was also really well done, and I found it very believable. I liked the way how the author didn’t go to far into the religion, and let the reader understand it in their own way.

At some points I found it frustrating that I didn’t know what had happened, but I think that that was what the author wanted me to feel. I also felt that some areas were not written as well as others.
Overall, I really enjoyed this book and would definitely recommend it.

Adam Goodman, age 14

Based on its unusual format, the tension in the book builds up increasingly as you read on. The further you find yourself in the story, more of the truth is revealed so in the end it is unputdownable!

‘After The Fire’ is about a girl named Moonbeam, who lives in an ultra religious compound known as “The Lord’s Legion.” They are taught false information, believe there will be “The End,” and are completely isolated from the outside world. As it becomes more and more corrupt, due to the power-hungry leader, John Parson, she believes it was her fault that it was all set alight by government agents. However, the more she reveals to others after its destruction about her experience, the more they reveal to her. And soon, she figures out what really happened...

‘After The Fire’ was an amazing read and unlike any other book I have read before. This is because of the way it builds up tension and because of the unique but extremely interesting theme. A girl, Moonbeam, tells her story but the more you know the more exciting the story becomes. This is because there are many parts of the story she is unwilling to tell the interviewers whom she meets every morning but is eventually baited into opening up to them. From here the story became unbelievably gripping, and it makes you so desperate to know what will happen next. I found the best part was by the end. More and more is revealed, and the end is carefully crafted with an unexpected twist. All in all, this was one of the most gripping books I have ever read; I couldn’t believe it was based off real life events, too!

Megan Chambers, age 16

This book was so amazing, words can’t describe it! I would definitely recommend this book to a friend, and although it took me a while to get into it, I’m so glad I persevered.

I really enjoyed this book, however it didn’t get me gripped from the beginning, so it took me a while to read it. In the end I’m glad that I continued with it, as the plot and characters developed really nicely. I was also very confused at the beginning as to what was going on, however this was later resolved as I went through the book. Overall, I would definitely recommend it to a friend.
Rebekah Marsh, age 14

I felt as if I was with Moonbeam every step of the way, the amazing description of Father John’s horrendous doings along side the kindness of Dr Hernandez made me fall in love with each character.

This emotional roller coaster of a novel follows the path of Moodbeam rediscovering herself after the traumatic series of events she goes through. I felt as if I had been under the wrath of Father John much like Moonbeam and he brothers and sisters.

Saskia in Year 9 - Great Torrington School

This novel is a tense, thought-provoking book. I couldn’t put it down. It was sad at times, gripping and fascinating throughout.