**KIRKUS REVIEWS – July 1, 2016**

**THE FORGETTING Author: Sharon Cameron**

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**Category:** Fiction

Every 12 years, the people of Canaan lose their memories and must reconstitute identity and relationships from books recording their personal history—but with her memory secretly intact, Nadia dreads the chaos and violence the imminent Forgetting will bring.Last time, Nadia saw her father replace his family's books with fakes, leaving her mother to raise three daughters alone. Their residual unease has led her mother and older sister to reject Nadia, now 18; only little Genivee accepts her as family. Isolated by what she knows and can't tell, Nadia's become a silent—but observant—loner. She's witnessed floggings and the plight of the Lost: those who've awakened without books, nameless, forced into servitude, penned into fenced quarters at night. She's alarmed at Jonathan's growing power within the governing Council. When handsome, sociable Gray, the glassblower's son, discovers she forages outside city walls, he blackmails her into taking him along. Smarter and tougher than she'd thought, he becomes an ally and friend— but Gray has secrets too. Effective worldbuilding and strong characterization (even minor

players have emotional depth) add substance to the fast-paced plot. A cosmetic resemblance to blockbuster teen dystopias allows Cameron to toy slyly with readers' expectations, but this is no retread. The Forgetting ensures racial categories have no meaning, but characters do display differences in skin and hair color (Nadia is blonde with light eyes). A well-crafted fable for our time: as we focus on filling the plate in front of us, we risk forgetting where it came from, what it cost, and what that means. (Science fiction.12-16)

**PUBLISHERS WEEKLY –JUNE 15, 2016**

The Forgetting

*Sharon Cameron. Scholastic Press, $18.99 (416p) ISBN 978-0-545-94521-9*

The Forgetting, a consequence-free night of lawlessness and bloodshed accompanied by a total loss of memory, comes to the walled city of Canaan every 12 years, and its citizens rely on their books to remember who they are afterward, unless they decide to start new lives. Teenage Nadia isn’t like the others: she remembers everything, and has been scaling the city’s walls for some time. When the charming Gray catches her and demands that she take him over the wall, she can’t refuse for fear of being reported to the Council. The setting is kept vague until the second half of the novel, when it truly finds its legs and a world-shattering twist is revealed. The sweet romance between Nadia and Gray is hard-earned and realistic, and Cameron (*Rook*) mines Nadia’s relationships with her family (including her heartbreak over her father’s abandonment) while steadily building tension as the Forgetting draws closer. Memory—and how it shapes identities and futures—is at the heart of this absorbing adventure, and the satisfying conclusion leaves an opening for further novels. Ages 12–up. *Agent: Kelly Sonnack, Andrea Brown Literary. (Sept.)*

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**SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL – JUNE 2016**

CAMERON, Sharon. The Forgetting. 416p. ebook available. Scholastic. Sept. 2016. Tr $18.99. ISBN 9780545945219.

**Gr 8 Up**–Every 12 years, the orderly city of Canaan undergoes the chaotic, bloody time known as the Forgetting. During these brief hours, people’s memories are erased. If it were not for the books in which inhabitants are required by law to record the events of their lives, they would have no way of knowing what happened before the Forgetting, or even of knowing their names or who their families are. Nadia is different. She remembers. The next Forgetting is a few weeks away. The teen is determined to keep her family together and away from the ensuing anarchy, but how? As Nadia works to this end, she comes up with more questions than answers. Why is the supposedly benevolent head of the Council, Janis, having some people’s houses ransacked? What happens when people write lies in their books, or their books are stolen? The glassblower’s handsome son, Gray, says he wants to help Nadia, but can she trust him? When Nadia searches for the truth, it is more shocking than anything she could have imagined. This fantasy is a marvelous achievement. Cameron creates a world filled with chilling dystopian constructs while maintaining a sense that it is as solid and convincing as our own. Each scene plays out in cinematic clarity—from the pristine walls that encircle the city to the rising of the three moons, from the perpetually anguished face of Nadia’s mother, who remembers pain but no facts, to the labyrinthine underground lair where Nadia discovers the truth. VERDICT This excellent work belongs in every collection.–Jennifer Prince, Buncombe County Public Libraries, NC