



# Fractured

*Amber Lynn Natusch*

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## **Fractured** Amber Lynn Natusch

I thought about watching from afar, hidden by the nearby trees or headstones, so I could avoid the onslaught of grief I was sure to be bombarded with. It was cowardly, but I was certain that when faced with the totality of my own grief, I would crumble under the weight of any extra. He was always so strong both physically and emotionally – I selfishly wished for his strength in that moment. If I couldn't be strong, then I would at least be honorable and bear my pain publicly, for all who loved him to see.

It was by my actions that he was about to be put six feet under, and I owed it to him to be there.

## **Fractured Details**

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# From Reader Review Fractured for online ebook

## Mary Davenport says

The women are starting to become Bellas, caught up in weak and whiny self-absorption. Disappointing.

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## Megan Gillis says

This series becomes more intriguing and complicated with every book. The author has put a ton of time into the story telling, plot, back story and building of each and every character it's impressive. I absolutely have to read the next one. I'm completely dragged into this world and I couldn't be happier to be in it!.

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## Kathy says

While I love this series, I do think this is my least favorite book in it so far. I feel like most of the book I was waiting to hear answers to questions that never ended up being addressed in this book. The big omg moment of the book was also a little anticlimactic and short lived considering how long the book is. I still love Ruby and the gang though <3

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## Cristina says

"Ruby..." she sang. "Open your eyes Ruby." Without hesitation I did."

I'm not sure what to say about this book except I think it's the best one in the series! Trying to get a handle on all my thoughts and feelings to describe how much I love this book is proving to be a challenge because I'm not sure where to start. How do I describe everything I love about it without it coming across as one big run-on sentence? There are so many details to this book that I had to go back and re-read it because I didn't miss a single thing. I took notes, I highlighted certain passages and I even tried to read this book slowly (clearly that didn't happen) but most importantly, I lived in Ruby's world.

"My fear and my ego drove me to believe that you chose to leave me. I could not find you...my failure was more than I could bear, but my heart never believed you would abandon me. You are mine..."

First, let's start with the prologue...what is it about Amber Lynn Natusch and her prologues? Talk about pulling you in immediately! I had absolutely no idea where this prologue would take me and let's just say, I enjoyed going into this knowing very little. If I loved all the books in the series before, I'm now seriously obsessed with Fractured, all the characters in this story and Amber. And no, I am not a stalker but a professional fan-girl thank you very much.

"He was my balancing force and I was his. The more we gave into it, the stronger it pulled. Something greater than the two of us was at play, placing us in each other's lives. It was a destiny – divine intervention. Troubles would always plague us, but nothing could separate us. Not anymore."

Fractured is wrapped-up tightly in mystery that's Scarlet related. That mystery gave me heartburn and it only generated more questions that needed answers. And as much as I love Scarlet and her sassy ways, she sometimes causes too much trouble which gives me an anxiety attack! Enough about her...

"I had lived in a state of black suspension from that moment on. No sense of time or place or existence, lost in a perpetual tunnel of night. There was no escape. Scarlet had warned me several times that she wasn't to be trifled with, that her retribution would be epic. A liar she was not."

Ruby is still Ruby but in this book she evolves and finally learns to trust. She's still the same compassionate, witty and sarcastic heroine but her need for trust and love are much greater. She's more open to the risk of being vulnerable and she's no longer running. It was refreshing to see her talk about things that plagued her mind no matter how overwhelming it felt to talk-it-out. Can I get an amen?

Say hello to Anger Management 101! We get to see the angry side of Cooper and Sean. Oh my word, I was not expecting that at all. Not only was I okay with Coop being angry but his level of hotness when up quite a few notches. Like Ruby we see Coop evolve and after all the drama he's been through, it was nice to see him finally come into his own. I love Sean for the mercurial angel he is, but there's a reason he becomes so fiercely angry with Ruby (let's call it misplaced anger) and it was absolutely EPIC! I'm being vague on purpose and trust me when I say, you'll love it!

There were so many beautiful (emotional) details in this book that touched me in a way I never anticipated. The scene with Peyta broke my heart because it tackles a dark subject matter that hits a little too close to home but while it's not a huge focal point of the story, it's handled with grace and dignity. So not only does Amber tackle Peyta's issue, she also tackles the issue of death with closure and that's something anyone can relate to. And Ruby needs this closure but Sean comes through and shows her support and tenderness that will move you to tears. I had a lump in my throat and I was overwhelmed by the sadness that Ruby felt.

"He soothed me to sleep, muttering in a language I couldn't understand and didn't need to. His love was apparent regardless. With me clutched in his arms I eventually fell asleep, and for once, the nightmares stayed away."

To say that there are different layers to the story is a complete understatement but it's not distracting in the least bit. These layers give Fractured a certain level of profoundness that will stay with you. I was emotionally invested in all the characters, probably more so than before and the new characters that were introduced (Alice, Jan and Becky) made their way into my heart as well. I wanted to talk to anyone who would listen about the emotional rollercoaster I experienced only a few days ago and it's not all heartbreak...I found happiness too.

My final two cents: Fractured is by far the best book in the series. This is a story that's written exceptionally well, rich in characters filled with depth and it's a book you'll not soon forget.

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## **Samantha says**

\*\*\*I had this super long and in-depth review written, but then I lost it. I cried. Ok, so I didn't cry, but I did dramatically drop to my knees, raise my arms to the heavens and let loose a long "NO". Here is a less

awesome and hastily written version instead.\*\*\*

Also, SPOILERS... BEWARE.

I want to preface this review by stating that I absolutely loved the first four books in the caged series, and Amber Lynn Natusch quickly became one of my favorite authors. I was nearly counting the minutes until Fractured came out since the cliff-hanger in Scarred basically wrecked me. I even went as far as to read the entire series again in about three days to prepare for the release of this fifth book. I was expecting to fall head over heels for Fractured like I did the previous books, so imagine my surprise when I didn't.

Now let me explain before you flame me. I felt like Fractured just couldn't hold up to the awesomeness that was the previous four books in the Caged series. Thing is, there was so much potential for it to, but I felt this book just fell flat of my expectations, and here is why:

1.) **Chapter 32/33 and the dreaded 'Deus ex Machina':** Perhaps the biggest thing that bothered me about Fractured was the contents of chapters 32 and 33. When chapter 32 began, I was so confused, I had to actually back track and figure out if I accidentally skipped some pages of pivotal information. I didn't. It just seemingly came out of nowhere. When Cooper lead her into that trap, my first instinct was that I skipped something, my second that Ruby must be having a dream. There was no smooth transition to this climax, and the whole situation just left me feeling confused. The whole mind-control thing came out of left field, and I was not a fan of the storyline even after the initial shock of it.

Then there is the whole 'Ruby kills herself to save everyone, but then Sean's mother sends her back all hunky-dory' fiasco. I've never really been a fan of divine intervention or 'Deus ex Machina'. To me, it feels like a cop-out. I prefer characters to fix their own problems so they are able to learn and grow. For those of you unfamiliar with 'Deus ex Machina' as a literary device, it originated in Greek plays when a God/Goddess was lowered to the stage with a crane-like machine to fix a conflict. Today, it's more broadly referred to when there is a sudden or unexpected solution to a hopeless or unsolvable problem. Hence, Sean's angel mother bringing Ruby back to life and fixing Scarlet. Which leads me to my next issue...

2.) **The absence of Scarlet, and the unanswered questions it brings:** Let me just be frank here... Scarlet kicks ass. Ruby without Scarlet can be weak, unexciting, and dull. It's annoying to me that we *still* don't know what happened during those missing three weeks. It should have been addressed, because now it's just a frustrating loose end, and we have no idea if or when it will be resolved. Not to mention, we also don't know the reasoning behind Scarlet's disappearance in Ruby. Sure, it was fixed deus-ex-machina style, but there was never an explanation as to WHY, or HOW it happened in the first place. If it was drastic enough to cause Ruby to start going blind again, then I feel like that's pertinent information we need. There are just too many blanks that haven't been filled in. When there are gaping holes in a story, I tend to get a little annoyed.

3.) **In which Cooper is becoming Sean:** Seriously. Cooper, what are you doing? Cooper, STAH! The reason we love you, is because of who you are. You do you. Besides, Sean has the quota for hot-headed-brooding-male all locked up.

4.) **Gavin is becoming a hypocritical douche:** Actually, I think this one kind of explains itself.

What I liked:

1.) I'm glad Cooper is the Alpha and not actually in love with Ruby. I would have hated for her to have to choose and break his heart. Plus, it opens up an interesting story line, like...

2.) The introduction of the British werewolves into the pack. Not going to lie, I enjoy those Brits and I'm interested to see what they add to the group. Even if I was less than impressed with the circumstances in which they came into the lives of Ruby and crew, I'm glad they are sticking around.

3.) Matty got to be not-evil again. Also, Ruby got some closure, so yay for that. I liked Matty's character before he went all ruthless-killing-machine.

I know it probably seems like I couldn't possibly have enjoyed *Fractured* after I ripped into it like this. Although it didn't meet my expectations, and I feel it maybe didn't do justice to the series, it WAS entertaining for the most part. I still love this series and the author. This book just... I don't know, it didn't do it for me like the others did. I'll just have to wait and see what the last two books in the series bring!

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## **RuthAnn says**

I need some time to think about this review.

OK, I thought about it. I really hate what I'm about to write for a couple of reasons. One, because I think ALN is a cool chick and two, because this series has been such a joy to read over the past year or so.

If I'm just rating this book by itself, it's 2 stars, but because I have such a healthy respect for this series, I'm giving it 3. There is nothing wrong with the structure of the story or the author's writing. It's really hard in reviews like this to pick on the story because it's not MY story. It's ALN's story. It's Ruby's story. It's not for me to say what should or shouldn't be told or how it's done. But I feel like this series took me on an amazing high and then just dropped me like I was nothing.

At the end of *Scarred*, I was friggin breathless. That book was nonstop action from start to finish and the ending! The ending left me in such knots, I couldn't speak for about an hour after. In fact, I was so blown away, I couldn't write a thoughtful review. I absolutely couldn't wait for *Scarlet* to take over as narrator. It seemed logical that we'd get to feel her grief, watch her deal with it in her own, crazy, messed up way and hopefully come to terms with it and her shared existence with Ruby.

It didn't happen.

I didn't get *Scarlet*, I got Ruby waking up three weeks later with no memory of what happened during the period when *Scarlet* took over. And I was just as disappointed and completely lost as Ruby was when she realized it.

If I'm honest, I had to struggle to get through this because after that amazing build up in *Scarred*, it was just...nothing. It felt like filler before we could get to the next book, which is presumably the lead up to the dramatic conclusion of the series.

Yeah, yeah, I found out some key things in *Fractured*--Cooper is an alpha, Cooper and Ruby pick up some pack members and ultimately defeat Tobias, but honestly? It wasn't enough to frame an entire book around and because of that, the drama was totally forced. The bottom line is I just didn't believe it. There was never a point during the story when I felt like Ruby, or even Cooper, was in any type of danger and I was never afraid that they wouldn't succeed in defeating whatever enemy was out to get them this time. It's like I could have read the first chapter and the last chapter and been no better or worse off for it.

There were little details that felt forced as well. Jay leaving Peyta? Peyta cutting herself? In the end, none of it amounted to anything. I never thought for a moment that Jay was leaving Peyta for good or didn't want her anymore, so it rang false, especially because the whole ordeal was prefaced by Sean talking about how much Jay loves Peyta. Moreover, it seemed very out of character for Jay to leave without a word. Certainly a being as old as Jay would not handle a situation with such immaturity. To top it off, it wasn't even explained at the end. The reader is simply supposed to accept that they made up and everything is fine now. Peyta and Jay will live happily ever after--once Sean finds a way to make that happen. But I'm not even remotely concerned that he won't be able to do it.

Heh.

Another thing that didn't ring true for me is this relationship(?) with Gavin. For the life of me, I can't understand how Ruby is comfortable telling Tobias to get fracked or committing suicide via knife to the throat but can't tell Gavin to go to hell. Why? Because he has answers? Guess who else has answers? SCARLET. And though Scarlet has been absent for weeks, she is certainly more forthcoming with information than Gavin. Furthermore Ruby's own subconscious, as we saw through one of her repressed memories, already possesses all the knowledge she really needs. At this point, I find it far more likely that she'll find answers within herself than from Gavin. And so as the reader, it's very easy to dismiss this whole character as a mere annoyance, distracting from the meat of the story. I can't fathom why Ruby doesn't feel the same way. She's a smart lady. And as for Gavin's warnings about Sean--how can they possibly place a seed of doubt in her mind? Especially since Sean's been nothing but trustworthy? This may have been believable in the first or second book, but not now. Not after what Ruby and Sean have shared.

The only part of the story that was satisfying for me was the closure with Matty. I'm glad ALN put that in there and I wish there could've been more.

So I'm going to wind this down by saying that I'm disappointed but hopeful. I know ALN can write action. I know she can make me feel heartbreak and then turn around and console me with warmth and love. I have no doubt that she's going to take me back to those things in Strayed.

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## **Tracey Milito says**

### **Amazing**

This series just keeps getting better. You never know what Ruby is going to have to face and how she'll handle it. Definitely a must read.

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## **Kristy says**

This is a book that needs to be read as part of the series. It would be very difficult to follow if you tried to start with this one, so if you haven't read the first four books of the Caged Series, do that first.

We were left heart broken and gutted at the end of Scarred and the prologue to Fractured didn't help mend those wounds a whole lot. I was finally able to take a deep breath during the first chapter. This book is built around the chasm that has opened up between Ruby and Scarlet and how Ruby is forced to live with the

consequences of their actions, while facing yet another threat to their very existence.

There are some wonderful new characters who add humor and potential danger to Ruby's already tenuous existence. The development of Sean and Ruby's characters in this book is fantastic! I love the direction their relationship takes and the maturity and growth that Ruby exhibits. I've always been a little harsh regarding Ruby's immaturity and overall daftness, but in *Fractured* she demonstrates that she has learned from past mistakes and shows consideration and empathy for others.

There is all the snarkiness, action and intrigue that you expect from a *Caged* novel, as well as a few tender moments as well. I think this is my favorite book of the series so far (and yes, I say that every time a new book is released, because they just keep getting better)!

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## **Jena Gregoire says**

Oh, where do I even begin?

Ah yes! Amber Lynn Natusch is an evil bitch. Plain and simple.

Now, before all of you out there in the *Caged* fandom come at me, let me also state that I told her this to her FACE. Ok, that's a lie. But I did tell her in an instant message with tears streaming down my cheeks.

*Scarred* was a painful book to read. There is an event at the end of that book that will rip your heart out, stomp on it with football cleats and doesn't even have the decency to put it back for you. It is PAINFUL. I think part of me even held a little resentment toward ALN for making me go through that awful experience with characters I love.

Ugh!! And then what happens AFTER the horrible event!!! That's just as bad.

Well, once *Scarred* was behind me, I thought I was past the pain and could move on with my life...err, the story! Move on with the STORY. \*shifty eyes\*

Not. So. Much.

Yeah, remember that heart left stomped on the pavement??? ALN is back and in *Fractured*, she pulls it BACK OUT and pours salt on your wounds.

The horrible event I speak of gets brought back up in a very RAW way. The story line proceeds from when Ruby returns and everything is going along, smooth like butta'! Then BAM!!! Sadface.

You know what happens after people die?? That's right. You have a funeral to attend.

Oh my GAWD I cried like a big bitch! And I was too heartbroken to be ashamed. And that resulted in an instant message to the author stating "you're an evil bitch". Except at the time, I was upset and I didn't use the word 'evil'. Instead, it was an F-bomb. And she laughed and laughed.

*Fractured* is all about consequences and Ruby has a boatload to face when she gets back. Although, I found myself reminding the characters (out loud, mind you!) that it was SCARLET in the driver's seat when the



event in Scarred went down. I am happy to report that it becomes clear pretty quick that they understand that but it also shows how hard it can sometimes be to remember that although Scarlet and Ruby share a body, they are two very different personalities. They may inhabit the same building but they are definitely two different souls. To the people on the outside (or in the warpath, as the case may be), it's just one face so they have to remember to keep that distinction fresh in their mind.

Let's take a look at the characters.

#### RUBY

Oh Ruby, you poor, poor thing. I just want to give her a hug. And sometimes, I want to give her a pat on the head....with a hammer. The Ruby we are presented with in Fractured is a MUCH different girl than we met 4 books ago in Caged. She's been through a lot so far and the shit storms just keep coming. My only wish is that she'd lose the naïve streak she has sometimes. By this point, I feel like she should have a thicker skin and a harder frame of mind. HOWEVER.... At the same time, we as readers need to remember that not a lot of time has passed in Ruby's world since Caged first began and Ruby has barely had any time to breathe between each crisis she faces. I don't know how she doesn't have a rockin' case of PTSD by now.

#### SEAN

Mmmmm, Sean. Sean has become one of my favorites and I have a little case of Stockholm Syndrome with him. He can act like a complete and total dick and in my head, I'm all "he just needs love. I can change him!" And then, yet again, I have to remind myself that he is a FICTIONAL CHARACTER. Sigh.... I feel like Sean's mean streak cleans up a bit in Fractured. Now that there is a clear, defined relationship between him and Ruby, he still has a slightly infuriating Man of Mystery thing going on. He wouldn't be a good urban fantasy alpha male type if he didn't though.

#### COOPER

I started getting a little snippy with Coop over the last couple of books because the dynamic between him and Ruby was so weird. It felt like a constant "will they or won't they" struggle. Fractured brought some real definition to what they mean to each other. I think it clears up any confusion and gets rid of the love triangle feel that the books were starting to have a touch of. He still doesn't really like Sean but at least they now have something in common rather than competition – Ruby.

#### PEYTA

Ugh.... Peyta. Sigh. What the hell are we going to do with you? There's a BIG secret revealed about Peyta in Fractured and to be honest, I didn't really like it. The storyline is good but felt a little too real-worldy for the Caged series. I voiced this opinion to ALN via instant message while I was in the middle of reading the book and she assured me that the Peyta thing leads to a bigger conversation that needed to be had later on in the book. Fear not, reader! ALN was right. Although the Peyta secret doesn't feel organic for the book at first, it DOES open up a can of worms later on in a great dialog session. In regards to the secret, I am not even going to hint at what it is. I am just going to say you'll know it when you see it. There is no missing that shit!

Fractured also brings the arrival of some newcomers to the storyline and I really like them! They're a good addition. A little sketchy, but good.

Oh!!! And I want to punch Gavin right in his suck hole. He's a douche and he pisses me off. He may be there to "help" Rubes but I still want to make him feel pain. Every conversation they have causes me to go into a blind rage. He's the king of dancing around answers and it just pisses me off to no end. I was seriously ready to blow a gasket over him by the end of Fractured.

I am giving Fractured 5 solid gold stars. After the events of Scarred, I didn't see how this storyline could possibly get any better but I loved Fractured! While reading, someone asked me which was my favorite out of the series and I can honestly say that I can't pick now. I love each one for much different reasons. Fractured was an awesome addition to the line up!

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### **Shan says**

What can I say. Let the love fest begin!!! Love the story, loved the relationships. Loved the unexpected revelations.

Cooper - an alpha and ruby's of all people. Loved it

Ruby - being honest to her enter circle and less scatty. Her enter strength and loyalty tested. Loved it.

Scarlett - gone, will to live gone, leaving ruby to be vulnerable. (I was ok until rubes vision going.

Michelle/book buddy on the other hand was not happy about Scarlett's hiatus. She's a fan.) her return. Loved it.

Look forward to her/Ruby connecting making them a force to be reckoned with. When provoked of course. Smile

SHUN -possessive and strong with one weakness RUBY (sight, batting my eyes). Gotta love him, oops Loved it.

Can't wait to learn more about my man and to see how deep is his love. (shout out to next book from his p.o.v.)

As for Alice,Jane & Becky (SMH, LOL) the new pack members. Coop's terms of endearment (read the book for real names) loved the plot, the mystery that's surrounded them and the "what tha" moment that had me about to cry OK OK OK. I cried happy now.

Don't think I revealed everything and everyone in the book I did not. I don't like to tell people about the book I want you to read it for yourself. Look out for Gavin he is up to something and I think he is related to ruby.

Come on amber you can tell me. Am i right Lol.

Anyway, read the book, read the series and wait on baited breathe like the rest of us as we brace ourselves for another book release.

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### **Caitlin Kerry says**

the Caged series by Amber Lynn Natusch is a rare gem in a sea of books. I find myself totally attached to these characters and find them popping up in my mind at random times, like I am trying to remember how an old friend is doing.

"Light eventually falls on even the darkest of corners"

Fractured is the 5th book in the Caged series and Natusch weaves a complex story which asks more questions than answers, but also deals with some of the other issues in this book. Now I have always had a soft spot for Cooper and in the last book I was wanting for him to find his Happily Ever After. I felt in this book some of those things start to fall into place, we get to see more of the overall purpose of Cooper and I loved the direction it was taken.

Then of course there is the combo of Sean and Cooper. In general, I really do not like overprotective male characters. But Sean and Cooper are perfect in their protective nature, and it makes sense why they each have their own reasons for their actions. Plus it is pretty funny, the pissing matches they get into. I mean Ruby has the uncanny ability to find trouble, or well trouble finds her.

"...Ruby I was gone for half an hour. How much shit did you manage to stir up in thirty minutes? I gave him a sheepish look that told him everything he needed to know. Knowing my gifts, he scowled in return. "Worst case scenario?" he asked, leading the way down to the car"

Ruby and Sean, it seems, to be somewhat on the same page and even looks like things might work out. Well of course with some advice from a character I have no trust in, it is really hard to say but I have a feeling that the next book some pretty big secrets are going to be unveiled and things are going to get messy. It makes sense with the setting up of trust and strength between Ruby and Sean and that this newly appointed trust will be greatly tested.

"Every pass drew the lightest hint of sorrow from him, his foreign words coming more frequently- a confession, a purging of remorse for a loss he couldn't quite understand"

I could go on and on with this book, which I hope to do in the comments, but the final say is that if you haven't heard or read the Caged series, take a chance on this gem of a series. You want the characters to be your best friends, you feel for Ruby and the heartache that follows her. You find yourself in awe of the complex story that is woven, the situations that arise, and what is hiding around the corner.....

Check out the review and more at my blog  
<http://caitontheroad.blogspot.com>

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## **Sara says**

I just finished *Fractured* and I have to say, Amber did NOT disappoint! I absolutely LOVE this series, and this was ALMOST a five star book for me. There were only a few minor issues that prevented me from clicking 5 stars. I won't give away any spoilers, but if you haven't read the Caged series, you definitely need to go back to the beginning and read books 1-4 before you even think about *Fractured*. Even I had to go back and reread the ending of *Scarred* in order to fully follow what was going on in this text.

Let me start off with the good: Amber Lynn Natusch is, hands down, one of the BEST authors at giving her characters "voice" that I have ever read. I can hear the characters speaking, and I believe their personalities, quirks, and hang-ups. *Fractured* is no exception to this talent. One of my author pet peeves is when a writer tries to throw too many characters into the mix and doesn't fully develop them. Amber does not have this problem--she expertly develops not only her heroine, but also the supporting characters that surround our leading lady. The Brit boys that show up in this title had me literally laughing out loud...my husband elbowed me at least 3 times as I kept laughing when he was trying to fall asleep! Bravo to Amber for successfully bringing us three new characters to enjoy (and the great surprises they bring! eek!)

Another element of this book that is both surprising and welcome are the steamy scenes that unfold. Without giving too much away, Amber proves that she can not only give us action-packed drama, snarky sarcasm, frastastic boy's nights, and everything in between, but she can also rock it between the sheets in a way that is totally classy, in character, and not even an ounce of sleaze. Given many of the books that have gained

popularity of late (not that I would EVER read those smut-filled abominations, \*cough cough\* \*wink wink\*) it is refreshing to see an author that can handle some steam without making the reader feel like they are doing something “forbidden” by reading the text. Amber definitely stepped up to the plate and knocked it out of the park with this one. (I apologize for the baseball metaphor, but opening day is fast approaching, so I had to go there...)

There are many other accolades I could give this book—the same that I would give Amber for the entire series. The plot line is never dull. The characters feel real. The relationships are flawed and perfect at the same time. Overall, Amber really just makes her audience feel like we want to be friends with her characters. Even in the midst of life threatening situations, Ruby can still laugh at the absurdity of situations, Cooper can still crack jokes about his irresistible good looks, and beer chugging contests, even IF they are paired with watching soccer (ugh...soccer!?) do not seem in the least bit out of place.

With all of this being said, there begs the questions “Why 4 stars and not 5?” Had I never read any of Amber’s books before, I would have probably given this 5 stars without hesitation, but because I’ve read the whole series (and most of the books twice!) I was left with a slightly empty feeling that the other books did not warrant. I felt like this book served more as a bridge between Scarred and the upcoming Strayed. Ruby wasn’t nearly as in on the action as she had been in the other books, and since we’re dealing with first person narration, that means we were also left out of much of it. The issues with Scarlet also left me feeling like I was missing a major part of our heroine. The curveball that is thrown to us toward the end seemed a little bit out of left field (ahh baseball again!!!) and I didn’t feel like I was given enough time to prepare for or reflect on that, so I’m finding it hard to put too much stock in it. I’m sure that our author will develop it much more in the next book, but it just seemed a little too sudden for where we are right now, thus losing some of the intrigue for me.

While the other books have all left me a little frustrated because I want to read the next one NOW, this book seemed to have been wrapped in a bow that was just a little bit too pretty. Not to say that I won’t download the next book as soon as it is published (when will that be Amber!?) but I was able to sleep just fine last night after finishing Fractured. Usually, I’m left envisioning the characters, building what I think might happen next, and dreaming of a way I could join in the story world. The best and worst part of finishing a great book is when I feel a little sad because the characters I’ve been friends with for the last hours or days are no longer moving forward (I do have real life friend too, I promise...), but I just didn’t quite get that with Fractured. There are plenty of loose ends still to be tied, but the urgency to tie them just isn’t quite there. But, to Amber’s credit, even with some of the elements that seemed to be missing, her ability to build characters, relationships, and to make her audience actually care about what happens to ALL of the characters, not just the protagonist, prove her talent in spades. If you haven’t already, read the entire series, and anxiously await the release of the next book with the rest of us!

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## **Tracy Carroll says**

### **What a thrilling ride!**

This series just keeps getting better and better with each book. So many different things at play all going on at the same time. The danger and action is non stop and some questions are answered, but you definitely don't expect the answers or anything that happens. This was a great read and I'm off to read the next one!

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## **Dawn says**

### **Another excellent read!**

Amber Lynn Natusch has made another amazing read with this one. I had just as hard a Time putting this one down as I did the last four. And I can't wait to read the next one.

I have read a lot of books and a lot of authors but Natusch is the absolute best at keeping me guessing. You never know what's going to happen next. Her characters have such depth and their actions are very realistically based. The events that take place in her books are interesting and something that you would never guess every time. I love that it's not the same old story told with different names.

The books in the series can stand alone but they're so much better if you read them all in order. And I can't wait to start the next one already, in fact I'm going to go do that now!...

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## **Pure Textuality says**

Oh, where do I even begin?

Ah yes! Amber Lynn Natusch is an evil bitch. Plain and simple.

Now, before all of you out there in the Caged fandom come at me, let me also state that I told her this to her FACE. Ok, that's a lie. But I did tell her in an instant message with tears streaming down my cheeks.

Scarred was a painful book to read. There is an event at the end of that book that will rip your heart out, stomp on it with football cleats and doesn't even have the decency to put it back for you. It is PAINFUL. I think part of me even held a little resentment toward ALN for making me go through that awful experience with characters I love.

Ugh!! And then what happens AFTER the horrible event!!! That's just as bad.

Well, once Scarred was behind me, I thought I was past the pain and could move on with my life...err, the story! Move on with the STORY. \*shifty eyes\*

Not. So. Much.

Yeah, remember that heart left stomped on the pavement??? ALN is back and in Fractured, she pulls it BACK OUT and pours salt on your wounds.

The horrible event I speak of gets brought back up in a very RAW way. The story line proceeds from when Ruby returns and everything is going along, smooth like butta'! Then BAM!!! Sadface.

You know what happens after people die?? That's right. You have a funeral to attend.

Oh my GAWD I cried like a big bitch! And I was too heartbroken to be ashamed. And that resulted in an instant message to the author stating "you're an evil bitch". Except at the time, I was upset and I didn't use

the word 'evil'. Instead, it was an F-bomb. And she laughed and laughed.

Fractured is all about consequences and Ruby has a boatload to face when she gets back. Although, I found myself reminding the characters (out loud, mind you!) that it was SCARLET in the driver's seat when the event in Scarred went down. I am happy to report that it becomes clear pretty quick that they understand that but it also shows how hard it can sometimes be to remember that although Scarlet and Ruby share a body, they are two very different personalities. They may inhabit the same building but they are definitely two different souls. To the people on the outside (or in the warpath, as the case may be), it's just one face so they have to remember to keep that distinction fresh in their mind.

Let's take a look at the characters.

#### RUBY

Oh Ruby, you poor, poor thing. I just want to give her a hug. And sometimes, I want to give her a pat on the head....with a hammer. The Ruby we are presented with in Fractured is a MUCH different girl than we met 4 books ago in Caged. She's been through a lot so far and the shit storms just keep coming. My only wish is that she'd lose the naïve streak she has sometimes. By this point, I feel like she should have a thicker skin and a harder frame of mind. HOWEVER.... At the same time, we as readers need to remember that not a lot of time has passed in Ruby's world since Caged first began and Ruby has barely had any time to breathe between each crisis she faces. I don't know how she doesn't have a rockin' case of PTSD by now.

#### SEAN

Mmmmm, Sean. Sean has become one of my favorites and I have a little case of Stockholm Syndrome with him. He can act like a complete and total dick and in my head, I'm all "he just needs love. I can change him!" And then, yet again, I have to remind myself that he is a FICTIONAL CHARACTER. Sigh.... I feel like Sean's mean streak cleans up a bit in Fractured. Now that there is a clear, defined relationship between him and Ruby, he still has a slightly infuriating Man of Mystery thing going on. He wouldn't be a good urban fantasy alpha male type if he didn't though.

#### COOPER

I started getting a little snippy with Coop over the last couple of books because the dynamic between him and Ruby was so weird. It felt like a constant "will they or won't they" struggle. Fractured brought some real definition to what they mean to each other. I think it clears up any confusion and gets rid of the love triangle feel that the books were starting to have a touch of. He still doesn't really like Sean but at least they now have something in common rather than competition – Ruby.

#### PEYTA

Ugh.... Peyta. Sigh. What the hell are we going to do with you? There's a BIG secret revealed about Peyta in Fractured and to be honest, I didn't really like it. The storyline is good but felt a little too real-worldy for the Caged series. I voiced this opinion to ALN via instant message while I was in the middle of reading the book and she assured me that the Peyta thing leads to a bigger conversation that needed to be had later on in the book. Fear not, reader! ALN was right. Although the Peyta secret doesn't feel organic for the book at first, it DOES open up a can of worms later on in a great dialog session. In regards to the secret, I am not even going to hint at what it is. I am just going to say you'll know it when you see it. There is no missing that shit!

Fractured also brings the arrival of some newcomers to the storyline and I really like them! They're a good addition. A little sketchy, but good.

Oh!!! And I want to punch Gavin right in his suck hole. He's a douche and he pisses me off. He may be there

to “help” Rubes but I still want to make him feel pain. Every conversation they have causes me to go into a blind rage. He’s the king of dancing around answers and it just pisses me off to no end. I was seriously ready to blow a gasket over him by the end of Fractured.

I am giving Fractured 5 solid gold stars. After the events of Scarred, I didn’t see how this storyline could possibly get any better but I loved Fractured! While reading, someone asked me which was my favorite out of the series and I can honestly say that I can’t pick now. I love each one for much different reasons. Fractured was an awesome addition to the line up!

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