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Cut

Then I placed the blade next
to the skin on my palm. A
tingle arced across my scalp.
~~cut~~
The floor tipped up at me
and my body spiralled away.
Patricia McCormick
Then I was on the ceiling
looking down, waiting to see
what would happen next. . . .

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Synopsis

From National Book Award finalist Patricia McCormick, a new look for her debut novel, which THE BOSTON GLOBE called "Riveting and hopeful, sweet, heartbreaking." A tingle arced across my scalp. The floor tipped up at me and my body spiraled away. Then I was on the ceiling looking down, waiting to see what would happen next. Callie cuts herself. Never too deep, never enough to die. But enough to feel the pain. Enough to feel the scream inside. Now she's at Sea Pines, a "residential treatment facility" filled with girls struggling with problems of their own. Callie doesn't want to have anything to do with them. She doesn't want to have anything to do with anyone. She won't even speak. But Callie can only stay silent for so long....

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Burdened with the pressure of believing she is responsible for her brother's illness, 15-year-old Callie begins a course of self-destruction that leads to her being admitted to Sea Pines, a psychiatric hospital the "guests" refer to as Sick Minds. Although initially she refuses to speak, her individual and group therapy sessions trigger memories and insights. Slowly, she begins emerging from her miserable silence, ultimately understanding the role her dysfunctional family played in her brother's health crisis. Patricia McCormick's first novel is authentic and deeply moving. Callie suffers from a less familiar teen problem--she cuts herself to relieve her inner frustrations and guilt. The

hope and hard-won progress that comes at the conclusion of the novel is believable and heartening for any teen reader who feels alone in her (or his) angst. Along with Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* and E.L. Konigsburg's *Silent to the Bone*, McCormick's *Cut* expertly tackles an unusual response to harrowing adolescent trouble. (Ages 14 and older) --Emilie Coulter --This text refers to the School & Library Binding edition.

This first novel combines pathos with insight as it describes adolescent girls being hospitalized for a variety of psychiatric disorders: "The place is called a residential treatment facility. It is not called a loony bin," states Callie, the narrator, with characteristic grit. Callie does not speak aloud for most of the story, but directs her silent commentary chiefly to her therapist. Through this internalized dialogue, readers become aware of Callie's practice of cutting herself and, more gradually, how her cutting is a response to the dynamics of her damaged family. Similarly, the other girls' problems--anorexia, overeating, substance abuse--come to seem (both to themselves and to readers) like attempts to fight off parental or societal obliviousness to their needs: "It's like we're invisible," says a girl during a climactic scene. While running the risk of simplifying the healing process, this novel, like Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*, sympathetically and authentically renders the difficulties of giving voice to a very real sense of harm and powerlessness. Refusing to sensationalize her subject matter, McCormick steers past the confines of the problem-novel genre with her persuasive view of the teenage experience. Ages 12-up. (Oct.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the School & Library Binding edition.

I recently went through a bad spat of depression and cut some so when I found this book, I was "over-joyed" and thought that it might help in some way. What it turned out to be though was basically the "memoirs" of a teenage girl in a psychiatric hospital. It offered to help at all and I found myself quickly getting bored with it. Since it failed for the primary reason I got it, I decided to treat it as another book. The characters have very little back story to them and the scenes in the book feel, off, somehow. When I finished reading the book, I felt like I had only read a normal book's chapter. It felt over way to quick and left the story kind of just hanging. Overall, this book failed to help me and fell short of expectations for a recreational book also.

I feel like it really had a great concept and the first half was really intriguing. However, it was just not deep enough. Cutting is a very complex idea and I feel like this was a watered down version of the concept (Good for high school or 8th grade readers). Really stunk that it ended the way it did,

although hopeful, it didn't carry out the page turner effect through the whole book. I was really disappointed i spent so much of the day hoping it would get better.

Grade: B Callie doesn't speak. Not to her roommate. Not to the other girls in the treatment center. Not to her doctor. Not even to her beloved little brother. She doesn't know why she can't talk any more and she doesn't know why she cuts herself. But if she's going to start feeling better, she'll have to start trusting those who can help her figure out how. Written for tweens and young teens, CUT is a good introduction to the problems and treatment for the mental health issues many teen girls face. The girls on Callie's ward deal with substance abuse, eating disorders and self injury, engage in therapy to various degrees. While this short novel is somewhat dated in terms of technology and length on inpatient treatment, young readers may be able to recognize themselves in the characters and seek appropriate help from parents or other adults. Themes: self injury, eating disorders, substance abuse, inpatient treatment, family CUT is an appropriate book for advanced readers as young as grade school to early high school students.

I've read this numerous times, mostly in school. Shockingly, it helped my mental state on more than one occasion and I appreciate that. Thank you for writing this Patricia McCormick. You have a way with words.

Ordered This for my Son for his Girlfriend. He said it was a good read in Highschool and thought she would enjoy it as well. Came in good shape for a used book.

Cut was an extremely easy read. It didn't really inform me much about cutting I hadn't already learned about. I also felt frustrated with a lot of the book because there are so many unanswered questions. Extremely unfulfilling.

I think the question most people ask when they are thinking of getting a book is, "Will this be worth the 4 plus hours/\$10 bucks I'm going to put into it?" And if that's what you happen to be wondering while reading this review then to you I say happily, yes, "Cut" is an interesting and endearing novel well worth the time and money. The characters, while not introduced very well (you'll be wondering who is who likely for the entire novel - save the important ones) still create a memorable impression and all come with their own unique traits and difficulties. Being that many of the characters are also in a psychiatric ward, most are dealing with other issues one would see among other women of

modern society and this creates the feeling that there is a lot more going on in this story than just the tragic story of Callie. The next question you may be asking (or for some the first) is likely, "Is this a good book about cutting?" To which I say that this is probably not a perfect imitation of the trials that one goes through when engaging in self-injury. Many of the problems and issues that go along with the condition feel as though they happened before the start of the novel such as: the pressure to hide the scars, the first cut, reactions from other peers (although it is touched on briefly), or even the parents finding out. However, that doesn't mean that we, as the reader aren't given a look into the mind of a girl clearly battling with an addiction she herself doesn't understand. Callie will rip your heart out at times, but she will also fill you with hope and inspiration as you take the journey with her to defeat her demons and find out what it is that makes her feel like the worst person ever. "Cut" is definitely a great read. It's short, and as such it doesn't really delve into the issue of self-injury, but what it does do is deliver a rich and endearing tale on why it's good to sometimes seek help, and that finding our voice is the only way to silence the things we never want to say. Self-injury aside, if you're looking for something new and interesting, give "Cut" a look.

I bought it for my daughter and she loves the book she read it all in one day and read it to me more times after that

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