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Planet Pregnancy



Synopsis

For sixteen-year-old Sahara, "life and death and everything in between" depends on the color of a little stick. She waits three long minutes, praying to Jesus, Mary, and all the saints that the stick will turn blue, meaning she isn't pregnant. Instead, the stick turns pink and Sahara's life is changed in a heart beat. Only last week, she was voted the Dixie Queen at school, and wore a sequined gown and a tiara. She was saving money to buy a car, and dreamed of driving to Hollywood or Dollywood. Suddenly, Sahara's life before the stick turned pink seems to belong to another girl. She feels as if she no longer lives on earth, but on another planet. Sahara faces her crisis alone, afraid to tell her mother, afraid to tell her sister, and afraid to tell her friends. After all, what would people in her small Texas town think of her? As her sister once told her, "Good girls keep their legs together." One thing's for sure. She won't tell Dustin, her total loser of an ex-boyfriend. She wants him out of her life for good. And so Sahara keeps her pregnancy a secret, as she struggles with three choices: "keep, give away, or lose." With heartfelt honesty and a touch of sardonic humor, Linda Oatman High's novel in free verse takes readers inside the mind of a young woman struggling to survive an alien world that she calls Planet Pregnancy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up
•This short book in poetry format follows the pregnancy of 16-year-old Sahara as she goes from feeling depressed and alone to feeling depressed and having no choice but to share her burden with her unsupportive family. Don't think Juno (from the hit 2007 film) or Bobby

(from Angela Johnson's *The First Part Last* [S & S, 2003]); Sahara is an uninspiring teen with a bemoaning attitude, a deep-grained refusal to take on responsibility, a lack of foresight, and a dearth of empathy. Perhaps due to the poetry not being very poetic—rather, prose snippets that occasionally hit a rhythm or poetic truth—none of the characters are particularly well developed and some sections drag on and on after the emotion has already been thoroughly explored. However, this realistic cautionary tale does address many difficult issues without overt judgment: Sahara's sexual activity, the challenge to her pro-life upbringing, the meaning of motherhood, and the teen father's role.

—Rhona Campbell, Washington, DC Public Library

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If you're a mom / can you still / go to the prom? Pregnant at 16, Sahara, a former Dixie Queen pageant winner, considers her choices in her small Texas town: adoption, abortion, or keeping the child. No way will she marry the baby's father: He's a bum. / He doesn't work. / He's a jerk. / He'd be / a bad dad, just like the dad / I never had. She lies to her mom and says her pregnancy resulted from date rape, but Mom is not supportive, at least at first, and Sahara worries that her religious best friend will reject her as a knocked-up sleaze. There is too little about what it is like to go to school after a pregnancy begins to show. But true to the teen's voice, the gripping narrative, written in very short lines of free verse with occasional rhyme, makes for a roller-coaster read. Even teens who do not agree with Sahara's final choice will be caught up in the rising tension as she copes with her guilt, regret, despair, and hope. Grades 7-12. --Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is great, it has poetic flow, I recommend it to children who are feeling interested in being a relationship with someone, because the decisions you make might affect you for the rest of your life. I recommend this book to any teen having sex. It's easy to read and there is a powerful message to youth in it.

Sahara discovers that she's pregnant at sixteen. She's devastated and not sure who to tell. She doesn't want her mother to find out, even though she thinks her mom did just fine as a single mom raising two children. She doesn't tell anyone and just lets the knowledge fester inside her until she wants to burst out the news. Meanwhile, she's eating everything in sight, withdrawing from the

world, and trying desperately to figure out her options. My Thoughts: Planet Pregnancy is a novel in verse, which is honest view that sucks in readers. It's a fast but meaty read. It's set-up in three parts, for the three trimesters. I liked the book, but grew irritated over time with rhyming of the poems. While, it gave the book a rhythm, I felt that it also took away from the book where better words could have been chosen. Still an interesting read.

Sahara, a teenage beauty queen, discovers she's pregnant and documents everything from peeing on the stick to her ultimate decision in free verse poetry. The idea is a good one that will probably resonate with many teens. The poems have short lines, meaning the pages have lots of white space making this a very quick read. The author allows the main character's voice to shine through as a panicked teenager; it actually reads as if a preoccupied teen wrote it. Sometimes the words accurately deliver the idea, but are a bit painful to read. I was disappointed that Sahara wasn't more reflective, but not all girls in this situation dig very deep in handling it. She's scared and just trying to get through it. There's nothing overly ambitious or high-brow here. It is what it is. Some teen girls will appreciate it, but it probably isn't for a more advanced or mature teen reader. Finally, given the topic and the audience it may draw, I'd like to see an epilogue or appendix giving some basic information and hot line numbers for teens dealing with pregnancy. Safe-haven laws and prenatal care are touched on in the poems, but it seems an opportunity was missed here to pass along information, if not wisdom, to kids who could really use it.

I love novels in verse, especially ones that deal with social issues. Pregnancy Planet was a good book. The writing was okay. This was the first novel in verse that I had ever read that purposely rhymed, which got annoying at times. There were also quite a few grammar mistakes, which took away from the story.

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