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Rx



Synopsis

From the talented author that brought you the *Nine Lives of Chloe King* series comes a timely and thought-provoking novel inspired by the epidemic of prescription drug abuse among teens. Thyme Gilcrest is an honors student. Thyme Gilcrest is popular. Thyme Gilcrest is on student council. Thyme Gilcrest is a drug dealer. Thyme Gilcrest is doing everything she can to stay afloat in her over-achieving high school. She's broken into the academic elite. The Twenty—but barely. So when her best friend Will refuses to take his newly-prescribed Ritalin, Thyme steals it. With SATs quickly approaching, she must keep her self-diagnosed ADHD in check. One prescription is not enough, though. And soon Thyme is trading with classmates to get the meds she "needs." It's addictive—not the pills, but the feeling of power that comes with the trade. Her friends come to her for advice. For "prescriptions." And Thyme can't help but oblige them all... A fascinating look at a class superstar who is dealing with the stress by dealing prescription pills.

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Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up Thyme, 17, is stressed. She is trying to keep her grades up and maintain her status in The Twenty, a nickname for a group of overachieving, good-school-bound juniors. She steals a bottle of Ritalin from her friend Will, thinking it will improve her study habits. An A on a history exam confirms it. Soon, she becomes adept at stealing pills from purses and medicine cabinets, and begins to deal with other students. She even keeps a spreadsheet of classmates problems and pill preferences and who has merchandise she can buy or trade. At the same time,

she begins a relationship with Will, continues in the National Honor Society, studies for her SATs, and applies to college. Following the overdose/suicide of a fellow honor student, Thyme finally decides to quit. Her recovery is a little too easy, but the descriptions of addiction and the stresses that cause it are accurate. Thyme observes the emptiness and materialism of the adults lives around her and their abuse of prescription medication, including her father. Given the situations and characters, the abundant use of graphic language is realistic. This quick read may warn some teens of the dangers of drugs.

—Debbie Stewart Hoskins, Grand Rapids Public Library, MI

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Gr. 9-12. In the tradition of *Go Ask Alice* (1971) and Melvin Burgess' *Smack* (1998), Lynn (the pen name of author Elizabeth Braswell) offers a cautionary tale of high-school drug abuse. Thyme is barely hanging on to her top-20 academic and social status at elite Ashbury High School. Unable to convince her distant parents that she has ADHD, she swipes a bottle of Ritalin from a friend and, after taking the first pill, realizes a control and focus she has never known. Desperate to retain her newfound abilities, she begins to buy and then sell or trade a laundry list of well-known prescriptions. Gradually, she becomes not just a user but also a popular, life-of-the-party dealer. This is a grim, didactic, recognizable story of high-school pressures, drug abuse, and teen angst, accentuated with not-so-veiled suggestions of a drug-dependent adult population too zoned out to notice its own missing meds and desperate children. Its somewhat strident drug message and only marginally hopeful ending may deter some teen readers. Adults can only hope the book will make a difference.

Frances Bradburn

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This is an excellent, fast page read. From one page to the next, one cannot wait to read more and more; finish a chapter; okay two; okay three; okay more! I am NOT even in high school anymore (oh, the misery of it all) but it is completely interesting to see how life has changed, yet at the same time is similar to when I was in high school. While usually it was only the boys on such drugs for ADD, and they definitely were not selling it, whether or not they were taking it--and is it honestly true people/ kids now adays sell anti-depressants? I found that intriguing...Anyway, a book, about a girl--striving to be the best; not perfect. Just "up there" enough (academically speaking) to be in "the twenty" (the "in crowd") and make it through the horrors of Senior year, with all of its AP courses, tests, exams, studying, applications to be filled out for getting into colleges, worries of getting into

the best Ivy League school around, not to mention all of the "extra curric's." Of course a girl would be under pressure to turn to something like a "study drug." But, perhaps it is more than that. Perhaps after awhile life just seems so routine, so monotonous... so... BORING... a pill traded here or there won't hurt anyone. Technically the girl is NOT a drug DEALER; I mean, really? Come on, she doesn't do it for the money, she does it to keep her own supply steady. Just getting and giving prescriptions to/for those who truly need them, but have hypocritical parents who won't allow "their kid" to see a "shrink"--OH NO. Boredom... Drugs... Love... Torn between the latter as she aims at her goal of getting into a good school as she defines it; "Thyme Gilcrest is an honors student." "Thyme Gilcrest is popular." "Thyme Gilcrest is on student council." "Thyme Gilcrest is a drug dealer..." A must read for the 'bored' and those addicts who have risen up to overcome their addiction (kudos to YOU!!!) and are sick of reading whiny memoirs. This is a quicky for a weekend. A 'bump.' =)

I personally think this book is amazing but that's because I am interested in these kinds of themes. 1. It was not just about drugs or addiction, or that teenagers or adults use for fun or because they are bored. Usually we really have deeper reasons- this book showed some of them! 2. You don't need cocaine or ecstasy to get high...there are cheaper ways and more possible ways. Why should I buy stuff I don't know where to get if I can take some from my mom's bag? 3. It has its warnings. That this all is not fun and games... You have decision, a choice you can always choose. 4. In the end it gave me even a hope that things can work out... Why I give just 4 stars if this book was so fantastic? Well, I don't have answer to this. Even thou I loved this book...there was something missing.

I am a 40 yr old master's in school counseling student. I am very naive about drug use with teens. This book is eye opening about what is occurring with our youth being addicted to prescription meds. Parents, keep your prescription meds out of the reach of your kids. Frightening.

Awesome book with a great look at what goes on in high schools around the world.

I love this book! I loved it so much that I bought a new one after a friend borrowed it and never returned it.

I wish more had happened in this book. The idea if an honors student girl becoming a drug dealer was exciting, but left me wanting more action after reading.

I started reading Tracy Lynn's young adult novel, *Rx* because I wanted to gain a deeper understanding into the world of drug addiction. I wanted to see more of how people become addicted to drugs and why they start taking drugs to begin with. Needless to say, I was not disappointed in this novel. *Rx* is a young adult novel told in first-person by a high-school senior, Thyme. At first glance the only thing that seemed unusual about Thyme was her name which she explained herself in the novel. Thyme was just your typical high-school senior fighting for a high GPA, participating in various extra-curricular activities to boost her transcript, and fretting about college applications. One of Thyme's biggest problems in life was her inability to focus. She worried about her GPA and the fact that although she is one of the "twenties" (a name she uses to refer to the top 20 students in her graduating class), she was only in the bottom percentage of that 20. She studied endlessly taking Kaplan prep courses, working on SAT study guides, and preparing for her AP class tests. However, she believed that if she could only focus more she would be able to study harder and therefore improve her GPA and increase her chances of getting into a good school. One day, while eating breakfast with her family, Thyme announced her desire to see a doctor • a special kind of doctor. She believed that she had ADD and would like to be treated for it through the use of prescription medication • namely Ritalin. However, her parents dismissed her and told her that she did not have any mental, emotional, or behavior treatments. Thyme was then left to solve her problems on her own. While Thyme may not have been at the top of the list for the Twenties • she was no dummy. Thyme was actually quite intelligent especially when it comes to the world of prescription medication. This proved to be both a positive and a negative thing. She knew that Ritalin was exactly what she needed to treat her ADD and to make her more focused. Obtaining Ritalin proved to be much easier than Thyme ever anticipated. She was able to get it relatively easy from a friend whom was prescribed it but refused to take it. She quickly snatched the bottle and began taking it regularly. She was impressed by how well it seemed to treat her ADD. Studying was no longer a problem. Her grades improved. She had more energy. Sounds great, right? WRONG. Thyme grew more and more dependant on it. She HAD to have it. And when she didn't have it, she went through severe withdrawal. Reading about Thyme's withdrawal from Ritalin was like reading of a heroin addict's withdrawal from well, heroin. People always assume that prescription medication is safe because it is FDA approved. But there is definitely such thing as too much of a good thing, especially when you are your own doctor. Since Thyme was never actually prescribed Ritalin and was not going to a doctor to actually be treated for her condition, she had to take matters

into her own hands when it came to obtaining Ritalin. The stolen bottle of pills only lasted for a limited time, and as she seen through her terrible withdrawal, she needed more. Desperately. Her body was now completely dependant on it. Thyme had to take some risks and sometimes drastic measures to get more Ritalin. This resulted in stealing it from those she knew had or may have had it, and eventually, becoming an all-out drug dealer with lists of who could get her Ritalin, how much it would cost, and if there was any medications she could trade for it. Turns out Thyme wasn't the only one without a doctor and in need of prescription medication. There were many people in her town of Ashbury that were in the same boat as Thyme: self-diagnosing and in need of a prescription pill to provide a quick-fix for their problems. Thyme never had any problems finding people to trade with or sell to. In fact, sometimes she even began diagnosing and suggesting pills to people herself. She was becoming a well-known and professional dealer in Ashbury and it was ruining her life. When one of Thyme's clients committed suicide, it changed her. She felt guilty for providing her with pills which may have encouraged her to commit suicide. She vowed to stop dealing altogether. While she may have followed through on the dealing end of things, she never quite kicked her addiction to Ritalin. The novel concludes with Thyme away at college with just two Ritalin pills with her "just in case". She tried to flush them down the toilet, but quickly tries to get them out of the water before it is too late. This just goes to show how easy it is to become addicted to prescription medication and how difficult it can be to quit. What I liked the most about Rx was how real and raw it was. Thyme is very easy to relate to. The author does not try to paint her as being a bad person and you never want to call her a "druggie" and even "dealer" seems harsh. You sympathize with her and at times almost find yourself supporting and agreeing with her use of Ritalin. She does not even seem like a bad person for dealing drugs • she sounds more like someone that is trying to help her peers and herself at the same time. Lynn created a very real story with Rx that allows the reader to open their eyes a bit to see how serious prescription medication drug addiction is. The reader gains a sense of awareness of how easy it is to begin taking prescription medication and how difficult it is to quit. It makes you realize that drugs are a very deep problem with today's youth and that goes for way more than just the stereotypical use of weed. We as a society should be on the lookout for prescription drug use in schools, and we should realize that it's not just a problem with "stoners" but even with the well-rounded college-bound kids like Thyme.

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