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Heroine

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Book Review

Heroine

Author

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Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

418

Year

2019

ISBN

9780062847195

Publisher

Katherine Tegen Books

Mickey Catalan is many things to many people, but with her senior softball season on the horizon, a teammate is all she wants to be. So when she gets in a car accident and injures her leg, all of Mickey's plans are affected. After hip surgery, Mickey's doctors tell her that she might not be healed enough by the time softball conditioning starts to participate in the season. For Mickey, this possibility is devastating, so she resolves to do whatever is necessary to beat the clock. Mickey manages the pain with her prescribed medication. But, when her medication runs out, she's still a long way from recovered. Eventually, she meets Edith, a older woman who sells Mickey more pills. Since she was prescribed the medication by a doctor, Mickey feels justified in buying a little more. After all, she only needs enough to help her get to the softball season, then she plans to stop. But, as Mickey finds she needs more of the medication to hold it together, a life without the pills begins to seem impossible.

This is an intense but powerful read. So many books about the slippery slope of addiction describe the peer pressure and the teenage party scene as the key elements that contribute to drug use. While there are certainly some young adults that abuse drugs in social settings, it isn't the only scenario. Mickey Catalan's story is an important one, especially as opioid addiction and prescription drug use becomes more rampant. Ultimately, Mickey begins the story by only following a doctor's prescription. Mickey avoids the usual pitfalls of peer pressure but still becomes ensnared in addiction. From Mickey's story, readers learn that even responsible and talented individuals can find themselves stuck, and that the predisposition toward addiction has nothing to do with the strength of the sufferer. Heroine also depicts a complex family situation. Mickey struggles to know her place after her parents' divorce and father's remarriage. When Mickey eventually needs support, she must turn to her family, as imperfect as it seems. This is necessary reading for those who feel comfortable with more mature content.

*Contains severe language, severe substance abuse, and mild sexual content.