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Massive



Synopsis

"I'm fat," I hear myself saying. I look in the mirror. My face has gone hot and red; I feel like I'm going to explode. "I'm fat." It sizzles under my skin, puffing me up, pushing me out, making me massive. Weight has always been a big issue in Carmen's life. How could it not? Her mom is obsessed with the idea that thin equals beautiful, thin equals successful, thin equals the way to get what you want. Carmen knows that as far as her mom is concerned, there is only one option: be thin. When her mother sweeps her off to live in the city, Carmen finds that her old world is disappearing. As her life spirals out of control Carmen begins to take charge of the only thing she can -- what she eats. If she were thin, very thin, could it all be different?

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 660 (What's this?)

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (January 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1416902074

ISBN-13: 978-1416902072

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.7 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 42 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #901,042 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in [Books > Children's](#)

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[Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Being a Teen](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr. 8-11. Carmen, 14, is distressed when her mother, Maria, insists that they leave Yorkshire (and Carmen's stepfather) and move to Birmingham, where Maria's family lives. But Maria is wildly erratic because of her eating disorder, and as she starts her new life, she insists that Carmen ("Piggy") join her on endless diets and incessant exercise--until Carmen succumbs. In a casual nonreflective voice, Carmen tells her story, which, for the reader, will seem a bit like watching a car chase. The narrative is repetitive and nothing really happens, yet you're holding your breath the whole time, and

can't turn away. Bell does a masterful job of describing what anorexia looks like from the outside: irrational, bewildering, compulsive. She lures readers into thinking that the illness will be observed from a distance, until Carmen almost mindlessly becomes bulimic. Some adult characters try to help--mostly ineffectually--but at book's conclusion there are still questions about how things will end for the mother and daughter. This has some nonexplicit sex and a little rough language, much of which is British slang. Ilene CooperCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

"Grim, gritty, real. Massive is an important, cautionary tale of the dangerous pairing of food and self-esteem. Thought provoking." -- Deb Caletti, National Book Award finalist
"For every girl who's fat or thin or in between, Massive is terrific. Julia Bell's Carmen knows how it feels to want to scream but to grit your teeth instead." -- Gail Giles, author of Shattering Glass and Dead Girls Don't Write Letters.

I'm a sucker for books that takes place in England and for teen mental health stories, so I had high hopes for this book. Bell does an excellent job of creating depth to the characters of Carmen and her mother. Mom is thoroughly despicable from the beginning and it is heartbreaking to watch Carmen wrestle with the demons that want her to resist and become her at the same time. The other characters weren't as engaging and I got bored in the middle a bit, when I could predict where things were going, so the tension wasn't there for me. It was just fine, overall.

I enjoyed reading this book. Seeing the characters struggle with eating and food hits home for me. I recommend this book.

MEHH

Pretty good book. It's something you can get into.

It was alright

I don't know if I missed something or skipped a chapter, but Massive seemed like an odd, disjointed, unsatisfying and unresolved mess of a novel. I couldn't relate to the main character at all - she was too naive (yet oddly cruel), too stupid, and too irritating. The book just ended. It was like the author

wanted to write about eating disorders, so she included ALL of them in the book (weird) and then she ran out of ideas so she just stopped. Frustrating.

great

It is sad how this mother with an eating disorder starts passing on her rabbits to her daughter because of her

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