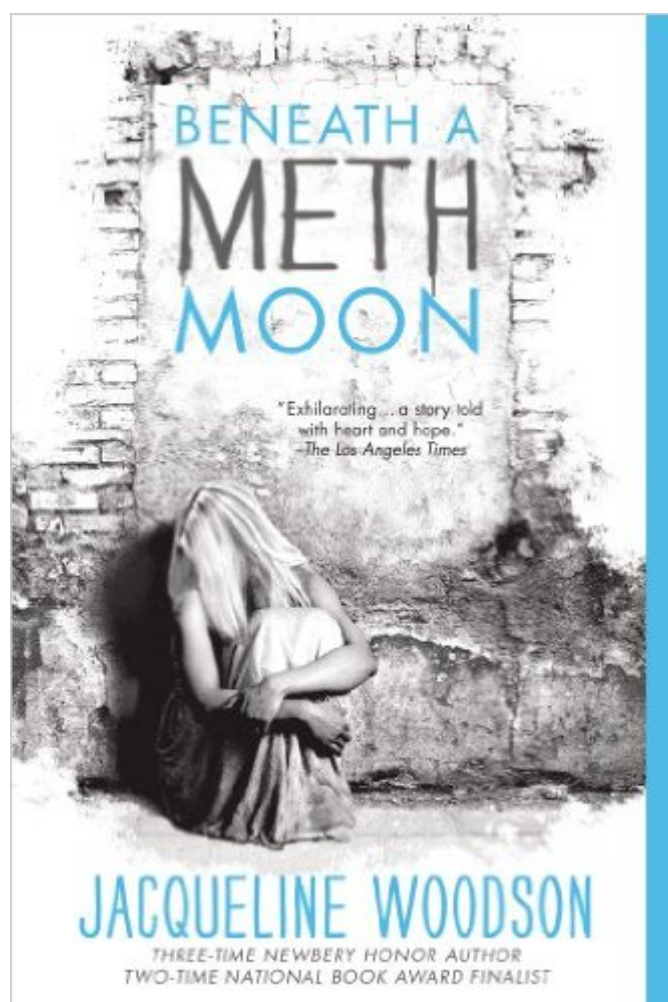


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Beneath A Meth Moon



Synopsis

Hurricane Katrina took her mother and grandmother. And even though Laurel Daneau has moves on to a new life--one that includes a new best friend, a spot on the cheerleading squad, and dating the co-captain of the football team--she can't get past the pain of that loss. Then her new boyfriend introduces her to meth, and Laurel is instantly seduced by its spell, the way it erases, even if only temporarily, her memories. Soon Laurel is completely hooked, a shell of her former self, desperate to be whole again, but lacking the strength to break free. But with the help of a new friend--and the loyalty of an old one--she is able to rewrite her own story and move on with her own life. Dreamlike in quality and weaving flashbacks to the hurricane in with Laurel's present-day struggles, this is a stunning novel that readers won't want to miss.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (37 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #295,500 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Runaways #53 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs #64 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Runaways

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

I liked this book. It was a quick read, and I loved how the writing style reflects Laurel's state of mind. Laurel's story is told in brief, halting flashes, jumping from past to present. I really felt like it was written in moments between her highs -- small moments of lucidity when she wasn't feeling the effects of meth. And then, there was a dreamy, almost ethereal quality to the language, which made the narrative seem like Laurel was in-between states. Not quite high, not quite grounded in reality. I

thought it was perfect for a journal of a girl who is trying to break her addiction and start a new life. The story Laurel tells is heart-breaking, and I love how Woodson is able to bring together recent events to tell a story that some teenagers can really relate to. *Beneath a Meth Moon* tackles the after-effects of Hurricane Katrina and paints a small picture of the suffering and devastation that followed the event. It also goes into the widespread use of meth among teenagers, and how their lives are ruined by their addiction. And despite these horrific and depressing events, she turns it into a hopeful message. Life goes on. We are able to go on with it by just putting one foot in front of the other and getting through bad times step by step. However, while I appreciated the link between the style and Laurel's frame of mind, I would have liked there to have been more development. In the flashes we get of Laurel's life in a new town, I don't feel as if she has moved on. I don't feel like she has a best friend, or even get the sense of a boyfriend from T-Boom. The way she started meth confused me. T-Boom held out a meth-covered finger to her and told her to sniff. Why did she? Why didn't she just leave the guy? What was going on in her mind while she did this? We don't know.

Before the moon Laurel was a normal girl. A girl who had dreams and aspirations of one day becoming a writer. A girl who had friends and family. But that was before. Before Hurricane Katrina. Before her, her daddy, and younger brother Jessie left to go stay with her aunt. Before the water washed away her home. Before the water washed away her mamma and grandmamma. Before life as she knew it ended. But when new boyfriend T-Boom turns Laurel onto Moon a new life opens up to her. A life she never knew was possible. Feeling higher than life, the moon allows her to move forward and to forget the past. Her new life means forgetting. Forgetting the past, the people she loves and who love her, forgetting herself. Is Laurel strong enough to shake her habit, or will she die before she has the chance to? Written by acclaimed author Jacqueline Woodson, *Beneath a Meth Moon* is a gut-wrenchingly painful, yet beautiful examination of addiction. Just under two hundred pages Woodson's has brought the life and struggles of a meth addict to light. These struggles aren't pretty, they are gritty and often ugly. These struggles aren't easy, they're ruthless and full of frightful emotions. These struggles, as Woodson presents them, are startlingly realistic. Woodson's writing is sharp and purposeful. Beyond that there is a poetic quality to her writing. And even though as hopeless as Laurel's story is, there is a hopeful tone to the overall book. As the story bounces from one point in time to a completely different, unrelated point, readers won't only understand Laurel's life as a meth addict, but will come to appreciate the brutal honesty in which her story is told.

Crystal meth has become a scourge upon our young people. But do you really understand why? I

can't say I do, but in Jacqueline Woodson's heartbreaking tale, *Beneath a Meth Moon*, I feel like I witnessed the devastation first-hand. Laurel's mama packed her and her baby brother up to go with their father north, away from the hurricane, away from the water. She said it would only be a few days and that she couldn't leave Laurel's grandmother M'Lady behind, but she lied. It was forever. As they turned and drove away, they never thought that would be the last time she would see or speak to her mother. But the water came. And the water couldn't be stopped. And the water took everything away. At first they lived with Laurel's aunt, but in search of more work, they headed to a new town with new people and new opportunities. Laurel meets Kaylee and starts cheering. Everything finally seems like it might be a life worth living again. Until Laurel meets T-Boom, the co-captain of the team. It is T-Boom who introduces Laurel to the moon. And once she starts the moon, it isn't so easy to stop. Especially when it takes away all the memories, all the pain, and all the emotions. This is a short, quick story, but it is devastating, both in the poetic beauty with which it is written, and the haunting devastation of the content. You see this innocent 15 year old girl who lost her mother and her grandmother, and even having a loving father and a little brother who needs her can't make her stop using. She knows it is killing her, she sees herself in the store windows, but when the itch starts, all she can think about is the moon (meth).

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