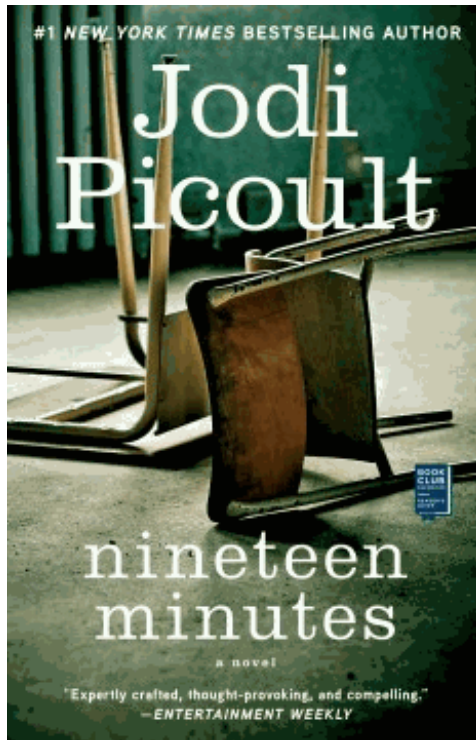


NINETEEN MINUTES



Book Summary:

The events leading up and the aftermath of a school shooting are uncovered.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory terms; violence; controversial social and political commentary; controversial religious commentary; alternate sexualities; hate; abortion; and suicide commentary.

Adult

By Jodi Picoult

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4 / 5

Not For Minors
BookLooks Review Rating

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4	<p>By the time you read this, I hope to be dead. You can't undo something that's happened; you can't take back a word that's already been said out loud. You'll think about me and wish that you had been able to talk me out of this. You'll try to figure out what would have been the one right thing to say, to do. I guess I should tell you, Don't blame yourself; this isn't your fault, but that would be a lie.</p>
9	<p>Before leaving her room, though, she hesitated. She sank down onto her bed and rummaged underneath the nightstand for the Ziploc sandwich bag that she'd tacked to the wooden frame. Inside was a stash of Ambien—pirated one pill at a time from her mother's prescription for insomnia, so she'd never notice. It had taken Josie nearly six months to gather only fifteen pills, but she figured if she washed them down with a fifth of vodka, it would do the trick. It wasn't like she had a strategy, really, to kill herself next Tuesday, or when the snow melted, or anything concrete like that.</p> <p>..She tacked the pills back beneath her nightstand and headed downstairs. As she walked into the kitchen to load up her backpack, she found her chemistry textbook still wide open—and a long-stemmed red rose marking her place.</p>
16	<p>At other times, it haunted Josie: like right now, when she was standing in the cafeteria line behind Natalie Zlenko, a dyke of the first order who, way back in second grade, had invited Josie over to play and had convinced her to pee on the front lawn like a boy.</p> <p>...Near the condiment bar were the skanks, who drank black coffee and waited for the bus that would take them to the technical high school three towns over for their afternoon classes; and the druggies, already strung out by nine o'clock in the morning.</p>
17	<p>"The one whose boobs are two different sizes?"</p> <p>..."The one who always carries a box of tissues for her allergies?" Josie said, sliding into a seat.</p> <p>"Or not," Haley said. "Guess who got sent to rehab for snorting coke."</p> <p>"Get out."</p> <p>"That's not even the whole scandal," Emma added. "Her dealer was the head of the Bible study group that meets after school."</p>
20	<p>Patrick sat at a red light in his unmarked police car, waiting to turn onto the highway. Beside him, on the passenger seat, was a paper bag with a vial of cocaine inside it. The dealer they'd busted at the high school had admitted it was cocaine, and yet Patrick had to waste half his day taking it to the state lab so that someone in a white coat could tell him what he already knew.</p>
26	<p>Apparently, Loomis had escalated his criminal résumé last night when he and two friends decided to go after a drug dealer who didn't bring them enough pot. They got high, hog-tied the guy, and threw him in the trunk. Loomis whacked the dealer over the head with a baseball bat, cracking his skull and sending him into convulsions.</p>
27	<p>Regular sex, for example, was equivalent (happinesswise) to getting a \$ 50,000 raise.</p>

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29	<p>It was not her place to judge a mother for the decision to give up a child. “We can talk about different options, then,” Lacy said. At eleven weeks, Alex could still terminate the pregnancy if she wished.</p> <p>“I was going to have an abortion,” Alex said, as if she’d read Lacy’s mind. “But I missed my appointment.” She glanced up. “Twice.”</p> <p>Logan had told her to get rid of it. She’d scheduled an abortion, only to forget to write the date and time on her calendar. She rescheduled, but realized too late that her appointment conflicted with a final exam. After that, she’d gone to Logan. It’s a sign, she’d said.</p> <p>Maybe, he told her, but it doesn’t mean what you’re thinking. Be reasonable, Logan had said. A single mother will never make it as a trial attorney. She’d have to choose between her career and this baby.</p> <p>What he really meant was that she’d have to choose between having the baby and having him.</p>
54	<p>Patrick looked at the part in the boy’s hair. Had he brushed it that morning, thinking, Today’s the day I’m going to kill ten students?</p>
55	<p>Every now and then Patrick and Guenther would grab a few beers together, consuming enough alcohol for the former bodybuilder to tell him stories of women offering to oil him up before a competition or good anecdotes about Arnold, before he became political.</p>
61	<p>He had represented a few students who’d been busted with pot in their glove compartments or who got caught drinking underage at the college in town.</p>
77	<p>“Stop being anti-kindergarten.”</p> <p>“I’m not. In fact, I think everything you need to know about the law you learn in kindergarten. You know: Don’t hit. Don’t take what’s not yours. Don’t kill people. Don’t rape them.”</p>
101	<p>Thanks to the sedatives, so much of this seemed unreal—as if she were walking on the spongy floor of a dream—but the moment she thought of Matt, it became authentic and raw.</p> <p>She would never kiss Matt again.</p> <p>She would never hear him laugh.</p> <p>She would never feel the print of his hand on her waist, or read a note he’d slipped through the furrows of her locker, or feel her heart beat into his hand when he unbuttoned her shirt.</p>
110	<p>“We live in a country where American kids are dying because we’re sending them overseas to kill people for oil. But when one sad, distraught child who doesn’t see the beauty in life goes and wrongly acts on his rage by shooting up a school, people start pointing a finger at heavy metal music. The problem isn’t with rock lyrics, it’s with the fabric of this society itself.”</p>
114	<p>Death wasn’t something you could control. In fact, it would always have the upper hand.</p> <p>She ripped the plastic bag open into her palm and stuffed five of the pills into her mouth. She walked into the bathroom and ran the tap, stuck her head close to the faucet until the pills were swimming in the fishbowl of her bulging cheeks.</p> <p>Swallow, she told herself.</p>

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	<p>But instead, Josie fell in front of the toilet and spit the pills out. She emptied the rest of the pills, still clutched in her fist. She flushed before she could think twice.</p>
121	<p>Carnivore scoffed. "Because they say I raped some waitress, and then stabbed her."</p>
131	<p>The office of the Geek Squad, as Patrick affectionately referred to the tech guys who hacked into hard drives to find proof of pornography and downloads from The Anarchist Cookbook, was filled with computers.</p>
132	<p>Two quoted lyrics from the band Death Wish. "This is my personal favorite," Orestes said, and he scrolled down. From: DeathWish To: Hades1991 This town blows. This weekend there is a craft festival where old bags come to show off the tacky tacky shit they made. They should call it a CRAP festival. I'm gonna hide in the bushes outside the church. Target practice as they cross the street—ten points each! Yee ha!</p>
147	<p>Then, in a corner section, Peter would strip without having to listen to anyone make fun of the way his chest sort of caved in at the bottom, or having the elastic of his boxers twisted to give him a wedgie. They called him Peter Homo, instead of Peter Houghton, and even when he was the only one in the locker room he could still hear the slap of their high-fives and the laughter that rolled toward him like an oil slick. ...Peter turned his back to the other locker sections and skimmed off his uniform, then covered himself quickly with a towel. His heart was pounding. He could already imagine what everyone else saw when they looked at him, because he saw it, too, in the mirror: skin white as the belly of a fish; knobs sticking out of his spine and collarbones. Arms without a single rope of muscle. The last thing Peter did was take off his glasses and put them on the shelf of his open locker. It made everything blissfully fuzzy. He ducked his head and walked into the shower, pulling off his towel at the last possible minute. Matt and Drew were already soaping themselves up. Peter let the spray hit him in the forehead. He imagined being an adventurer on some wild white river, being pummeled by a waterfall as he was sucked into a vortex. When he wiped his eyes and turned around, he could see the blurred edges of the bodies that were Matt and Drew. And the dark patch between their legs—pubic hair. Peter didn't have any yet. Matt suddenly twisted sideways. "Jesus Christ. Stop looking at my dick." "Fucking fag," Drew said. ...Worse, what if he got hard right now, which was happening more and more lately? That would mean he was gay, wouldn't it? "I wasn't looking at you," Peter blurted. "I can't see anything." Drew's laughter bounced against the tile walls of the shower. "Maybe your dick's too small, Mattie."</p>
148	<p>He didn't think he felt those things about guys, either; but surely you had to be gay or straight. You couldn't be neither.</p>

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149	<p>Kelly Gamboni was twenty-one years old, orphaned, and had an IQ of 79. She had been gang-raped by three high school boys who were now awaiting trial at a juvy facility in Concord. Kelly lived at a group home for Catholics, so abortion was never an option. But now, an ER doctor had deemed it medically necessary to induce Kelly, at thirty-six weeks. She lay in the hospital bed with a nurse trying ineffectually to comfort her, as Kelly clutched a teddy bear. "Daddy," she cried, to a parent who had died years ago. "Take me home. Daddy, it hurts!"</p> <p>...Lacy looked at Kelly and then walked into the hall; it would do Kelly no good to have them fighting in front of her. "She came in complaining of wetting her underwear for two days. The exam was consistent with premature rupture of membranes," the doctor said. "She's afebrile and the fetal monitor tracing is reactive. It's completely reasonable to induce. And she signed off on the consent form."</p>
151	<p>She could feel her mother's eyes on her as she picked at her food. "What?" she challenged.</p> <p>"Well, you sounded like a spoiled brat, that's all."</p> <p>"Why? Because I don't like fish embryos sitting under my nose? You don't eat them either. I was at least being honest."</p> <p>"And I was being discreet," her mother said. "Don't you think that the waiter is going to tell the chef that Judge Cormier's daughter is a piece of work?"</p> <p>"Like I care?"</p> <p>"I do. What you do reflects on me, and I have a reputation I have to protect."</p> <p>"As what? A suck-up?"</p> <p>"As someone who's above criticism both in and out of the courtroom."</p> <p>Josie tilted her head to one side. "What if I did something bad?"</p> <p>"Bad? How bad?"</p> <p>"Let's say I was smoking pot," Josie said.</p> <p>..."What do you mean, turn you in?"</p> <p>"Call the cops. Hand over my stash." Josie grinned. "Of hash."</p>
154	<p>"Mama's boy," they said. "Does she fight all your battles, homo?"</p>
155	<p>"A porcupine has pricks on the outside."</p>
164	<p>By the time the screen fuzzed out again and her own face came on, Josie was crying. She knew what was coming; she remembered this part. The camera panned back and there was Matt, his arms around her as she sat on his lap on the sand. He had taken off his shirt, and Josie remembered that his skin had been warm where it pressed up against hers.</p> <p>...She watched Matt on the screen the way you might study an animal you had never seen before, if you had to memorize it and tell the world later what you'd found. Matt's hand splayed across her bare stomach, grazed the edge of her bikini top. She watched herself push him away, blush. "Not here," her voice said, a funny voice, a voice that didn't sound like Josie to her own ears. You never did, when you heard yourself on tape.</p> <p>"Then let's go somewhere else," Matt said.</p> <p>Josie rucked up the edge of her pajama top, until she could reach underneath. She spread her own hand across her belly. She edged her thumb up, like Matt had, to the curve of her breast. She tried to pretend it was him.</p>

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176	The leader of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance was still in the hospital: Natalie Zlenko, a yearbook photographer, had come out as a lesbian after her freshman year, when she'd wandered into the GLAAD meeting in Room 233 to see if there was anyone else on this planet like herself.
206	Peter picked his way through the computer until he reached a well-hidden file of downloads and opened up the first porn site. "Is that . . . a dwarf?" Josie murmured. "And a donkey?" Peter tilted his head. "I thought it was a really big cat." "Either way, it's totally gross." She shuddered. "Ugh. How am I going to take a paycheck from that guy's hand now?" Then she looked down at Peter. ...Stop looking at me, homo. He did not tell Josie this, but when he'd first found Mr. Cargrew's porn site, he'd found himself staring at the guys, not the girls.
207	The survey had even considered time allocation: how long a person spent at work, how often he went to church, how many times a week he had sex and with how many partners.
212	"I never thought anything the homo said would be worth listening to, but bridges take you from one place to another," Matt said.
213	When Matt touched her lower lip with his thumb, Josie could feel it everywhere—from her fingertips to her throat to the heat between her legs.
215	Unlike most of the other sophomores who were occasional couples—random hookups at parties, best-friend-with-benefits situations—she and Matt were an item. Matt walked her to her classes and often left her at the door with a kiss that everyone watched.
217	He tumbled down the stone steps as Matt stood over him. "Get away from my girlfriend, homo," Matt said. "Go find a nice little boy to play with."
218	Matt," Peter said, coming up on his knees. "Do you have a big dick?" "Wouldn't you like to know," Matt said. "Not really." Peter staggered to his feet. "I just wondered if it was long enough for you to go fuck yourself." ...Peter shook his head, tears streaming down his cheeks, streaking the blood. "Get . . . off . . ." "I bet you wish you could," Matt sneered.
223	She felt Matt's lips move from her cheek to her neck to the spot behind her ear that always made her feel like she was dissolving. She was a novice at fooling around, but Matt had coaxed her further and further each time they were alone. It's your fault, he'd say, and give her that smile. If you weren't this hot, I'd be able to keep my hands off you. That alone was an aphrodisiac to Josie. Her? Hot? And—just as Matt had promised every time—it did feel good to let him touch her everywhere, to let him taste her. Every incremental intimacy with Matt felt as if she were falling off a cliff—that loss of breath, those butterflies in her stomach. ...Now she felt his hands moving under her T-shirt, slipping beneath the lace of her bra. Her legs tangled with his; he rubbed up against her. When Matt tugged up her shirt, so that the cool air feathered over her skin, she snapped back to reality. "We can't do this," she whispered.

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	<p>Matt’s teeth scraped over her shoulder. “We’re parked on the side of the road.” He looked up at her, drugged, feverish. “But I want you,” Matt said, like he had a dozen times. This time, though, she glanced up. I want you. ...She heard the rip of a foil condom packet—How long had he been carrying that around? Then he tore at his jeans and hiked up her skirt, as if he still expected her to change her mind. Josie felt Matt pulling aside the elastic of her underwear, the burn of his finger pushing inside her. This was nothing like the times before, when his touch had left a track like a comet over her skin; when she found herself aching after she told him she wanted to stop. Matt shifted his weight and came down on top of her again, only this time there was more burning, more pressure. “Ow,” she whimpered, and Matt hesitated. “I don’t want to hurt you,” he said. She turned her head away. “Just do it,” Josie said, and Matt pushed his hips flush against hers. It was the kind of pain that—even though she was expecting it—made her cry out. Matt mistook that for passion. “I know, baby,” he groaned. She could feel his heartbeat, but from the inside, and then he started to move faster, bucking against her like a fish released from a hook onto a dock. Josie wanted to ask Matt whether it had hurt the first time he had done it, too. She wondered if it always would hurt. Maybe pain was the price everyone paid for love. She turned her face into Matt’s shoulder and tried to understand why, even with him still inside of her, she felt empty.</p>
225	<p>They weren’t drinking—it was hockey season, and the players had to sign a contract with the coach—but Drew Girard had rented the uncut version of a teen sex comedy, and the guys were discussing who was hotter, Elisha Cuthbert or Shannon Elizabeth. “I wouldn’t throw either of them out of bed,” Drew said.</p>
228	<p>“All right,” Matt said, “I’ll take the homo.”</p>
231	<p>It wasn’t that he wanted to fool around with a guy—not yet, anyway. He just wanted to know what it was like to be among guys who were gay, and totally okay with it. ...He stopped in front of a couple that was going at it in a dark corner. Seeing a guy kiss a guy was strange in real life. Sure, there were gay kisses on television shows—Big Moments that usually were controversial enough to get press, so that Peter knew when they were airing—and he’d sometimes watch them to see if he felt anything, watching them. ...He didn’t feel particularly excited, though. Curious, sure—did a beard scratch you when you were making out?—and not repulsed, but Peter couldn’t say he felt with any great conviction that that was something he wanted to try, too. The men broke away from each other, and one of them narrowed his eyes. “This ain’t no peep show,” he said, and he shoved Peter away.</p>
232	<p>“Rico, get my young friend here a drink. What would you like?” Peter swallowed. “Pepsi?” The man’s teeth flashed. “Yeah, right.”</p>

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	<p>“I don’t drink.”</p> <p>“Ah,” he said. “Here, then.”</p> <p>He handed a pair of small tubes to Peter, and then took two for himself out of his pocket. There was no powder in them—just air. Peter watched him open the top, inhale deeply, then do the same with the second vial in his other nostril.</p> <p>Mimicking this, Peter felt his head spin, like the one time he’d drunk a six-pack when his parents had gone off to watch Joey play football. But unlike then, when he’d only wanted to fall asleep afterward, Peter now felt every cell of his body buzzing, wide awake.</p> <p>“My name’s Kurt,” the man said, holding out his hand.</p> <p>“Peter.”</p> <p>“Bottom or top?”</p> <p>Peter shrugged, trying to look like he knew what the guy was talking about, when in fact he had no clue.</p> <p>“My God,” Kurt said, his jaw dropping. “New blood.”</p>
233	<p>“I don’t bet for money. How about if I win, I get to take you home. And if you win, you get to take me home.”</p> <p>...He was sure that the teacher would call his parents, or rip up his ID in front of him, or ask him why he thought coming to a gay bar in downtown Manchester was a good idea.</p>
235	<p>“I’m not gay.”</p> <p>...“I’m not gay,” Peter repeated more firmly, and he opened the car door and ran as fast as he could toward his house.</p> <p>...“Geez, Courtney. If I’d known that, I guess I would be having wild sex with you, except for the fact that I love Josie, and she’s probably less than three feet away from you right now.”</p>
249	<p>“Like, what if Sam tells you he’s gay?”</p>
250	<p>“Ed thought that Peter might be trying out the gay and lesbian crowd.”</p> <p>“So Peter came to talk to Ed about being gay?”</p> <p>“Oh, no. Ed sought Peter out. We all remember what it was like to be figuring out what was different about us, when we were his age. Worried to death that some other kid who was gay was going to come on to you and blow your cover.”</p> <p>...“Gay people don’t come clearly marked—it’s not like having a different color skin or a physical disability. You learn to pick up on mannerisms, or looks that last just a little too long. You get pretty good at figuring out if someone’s gay, or just staring at you because you are.”</p> <p>...Peter may have been confused about his sexuality, but it was crystal clear to Ed,” Philip said. “That boy is straight.”</p> <p>...“I want to talk about the explosives,” he said. “Where would a person get something like that?” “At www.boom.com,” Peter answered.</p>
251	<p>Jordan just stared at him. “Well, it’s not all that far from the truth,” Peter said. “I mean, The Anarchist Cookbook is online. So are about ten thousand recipes for Molotov cocktails.”</p>
252	<p>“Father Moreno, he’s the priest who leads the church services here? He says that if you accept Jesus and repent, you get excused . . . like religion is just some giant freebie hall pass that gets you out of anything and everything. But see, that can’t</p>

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	be right . . . because Father Moreno also says that every life is worth something . . . and what about the ten kids who died?"
253	Brady had brought the movie—Josie couldn't even remember the name, but it was one of those movies that had come out after American Pie, hoping to make the same killing at the box office by taking naked girls and daredevil guys and what Hollywood imagined teenage life to be like, and tossing them together like some sort of cosmic salad.
271	It was a specific tangent of post-traumatic stress disorder, one that suggested a woman who'd been repeatedly victimized both mentally and physically might so constantly fear for her life that the line between reality and fantasy blurred, to the point where she felt threatened even when the threat was dormant, or in Joe Riccobono's case, as he lay sleeping off a three-day drinking spree.
279	She leaned forward—cleavage alert—and met Peter's eyes.
285	She wiped her eyes on her sleeve. Lewis would tell her, of course, that it was only sex, not love. That it didn't mean anything.
287	"—so I was already worried about not making it to the top. As it turned out, that wasn't a problem. It was coming back down, because climbing up with the rope between my legs, I got a massive boner."
293	<p>Jordan leaned over her, kissing Selena until—he hoped—she had forgotten she was in the throes of making fun of him. "Let's have another baby," he whispered. "I'm still nursing the first one!"</p> <p>"Then let's practice having another one."</p> <p>There was no one in the world quite like his wife, Jordan thought—statuesque and stunning, smarter than he was (not that he'd ever admit it to her face), and so perfectly attuned to him that he nearly had to concede his skepticism and believe that psychics truly did walk among us. He buried his face in the spot he loved best on Selena: the part where the nape of her neck ran into her shoulder, where her skin was the color of maple syrup and tasted even sweeter.</p>
306	<p>"If I won't let you buy me a drink," Alex said, "then what makes you think I'd take a bottle of wine from you?"</p> <p>Patrick grinned. "I'm not giving it to you. I'm going to open it, and you might just choose to borrow some."</p>
309	<p>You might not even realize it, but your bodies are choreographed: a touch on the hip, a stroke of the hair. A staccato kiss, break away, a longer one, his hand slipping under your shirt.</p> <p>...It's just the way you've learned to fit, and it's why, when you've been with one guy for a long time, your teeth do not scrape together when you kiss; you do not bump noses or elbows.</p> <p>...When they started making out, he'd lean in and look at her as if he couldn't possibly see any other part of the world.</p> <p>...Then he'd kiss her, so slowly that there was hardly pressure on her mouth, until she was the one pushing against him for more. He worked his way down her body, from mouth to neck, from neck to breasts, and then his fingers would do a search-and-rescue mission below the waistband of her jeans. The whole thing lasted about ten minutes, and then Matt would roll off her and take the condom</p>

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	<p>out of his wallet so they could have sex.</p> <p>Not that Josie minded any of it. If she was going to be honest, she liked the pattern. It felt like a roller coaster—going up that hill, knowing what was coming next on track and knowing, too, that she couldn't do anything to stop it.</p> <p>They were in her living room, in the dark, with the television on for background noise. Matt had already peeled off her clothes, and now he was leaning over her like a tidal wave, pulling down his boxers. He sprang free and settled between Josie's legs.</p> <p>"Hey," she said, as he tried to push into her. "Aren't you forgetting something?"</p> <p>"Aw, Jo. Just once, I don't want there to be anything between us."</p> <p>His words could melt her just as surely as his kiss or his touch; she already knew that by now. She hated that rubbery smell that permeated the air the moment he ripped open the Trojan packet and stayed on his hands until they were finished. And God, did anything feel better than having Matt inside her? Josie shifted just a little, felt her body adjust to him, and her legs trembled.</p> <p>... "Every time you have sex, you can get pregnant or you can not get pregnant," her mother said. "That's fifty-fifty. So don't fool yourself into thinking that if you only do it once without protection, the odds are in your favor."</p> <p>Josie pushed at Matt. "I don't think we should do this," she whispered.</p> <p>"Have sex?"</p> <p>"Have sex without . . . you know. Anything."</p> <p>He was disappointed, Josie could tell by the way his face froze for just a moment. But he pulled out and fished for his wallet, found a condom. Josie took it out of his hand, tore open the package, helped him put it on. "One day," she began, and then he kissed her, and Josie forgot what she was going to say.</p>
311	<p>She had gone with a friend to a march at the statehouse in Concord and stood on the steps with a sisterhood of women who held up signs: I'M PRO-CHOICE AND I VOTE... AGAINST ABORTION? DON'T HAVE ONE.</p>
313	<p>"He pinned her hands over her head and ground his hips against hers. She could feel his erection, hot against her stomach. It wasn't the way it normally was, but Josie had to admit that it was exciting. She couldn't remember ever feeling so heavy, as if her heart were beating between her legs. She clawed at matt's back to bring him closer. "Yeah," he groaned, and he pushed her thighs apart. And then suddenly Matt was inside her, pumping so hard that she scooted backward on the carpet, burning the backs of her legs. "Wait," Josie said, trying to roll away beneath him, but he clamped his hand over her mouth and drove harder and harder until Josie felt him come. Semen, stick and hot, pooled on the carpet beneath her.</p>
313	<p>They were on the floor of the living room and they were nearly naked. Josie could taste beer on Matt's breath, but she must have tasted like that, too. They'd both drunk a few at Drew's—not enough to get wasted, just buzzed, enough so that Matt's hands seemed to be all over her at once, so that his skin set fire to hers. She'd been floating along pleasantly in a haze of the familiar. Yes, Matt had kissed her—one short one, then a longer, hungry kiss, as his hand worked open the clasp on her bra. She lay lazy, spread beneath him like a feast, as he pulled off her jeans. But then, instead of doing what usually came next, Matt reared over her</p>

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	<p>again. He kissed her so hard that it hurt. “Mmmph,” she said, pushing at him. “Relax,” Matt murmured, and then he sank his teeth into her shoulder. He pinned her hands over her head and ground his hips against hers. She could feel his erection, hot against her stomach.</p> <p>It wasn’t the way it normally was, but Josie had to admit that it was exciting. She couldn’t remember ever feeling so heavy, as if her heart were beating between her legs. She clawed at Matt’s back to bring him closer.</p> <p>“Yeah,” he groaned, and he pushed her thighs apart. And then suddenly Matt was inside her, pumping so hard that she scooted backward on the carpet, burning the backs of her legs.</p> <p>“Wait,” Josie said, trying to roll away beneath him, but he clamped his hand over her mouth and drove harder and harder until Josie felt him come.</p> <p>Semen, sticky and hot, pooled on the carpet beneath her.</p>
315	<p>She’d already tried to get details out of Josie last night about Matt—important things, like how big a dick he had and if he had a clue how to use it—but Josie had gone all Hilary Duff on her and acted like she’d never heard the word sex before.</p>
321	<p>He was standing, in fact, behind Peter; and in one smooth stroke he hooked his thumbs into the loops of Peter’s pants and yanked them down to his ankles. Peter’s skin was moon-white under the harsh fluorescent lamps of the cafeteria, his penis a tiny spiral shell on a sparse nest of pubic hair. He immediately covered his genitals with his lunch bag, and as he did, he dropped his milk carton. It spilled on the floor between his feet.</p> <p>“Hey, look at that,” Drew said. “Premature ejaculation.”</p>
322	<p>Then Josie got out of bed and booted up her computer. She Googled abortifacient—the word she’d looked up yesterday, the one that meant something that terminates a pregnancy.</p> <p>...Josie had toyed with contacting her father again, which would have taken an enormous helping of humility. He hadn’t wanted Josie born, so theoretically, he’d probably go out of his way to help her have an abortion.</p> <p>...Some she already knew: the old wives’ tales about sticking a knitting needle up inside her, or drinking laxatives or castor oil. Some she’d never imagined: douching with potassium, swallowing gingerroot, eating unripe pineapple. And then there were the herbs: oil infusions of calamus, mugwort, sage, and wintergreen; cocktails made out of black cohosh and pennyroyal. Josie wondered where you even got these things—it wasn’t like they were in the aisle next to the aspirin at CVS.</p> <p>Herbal remedies, the website said, worked 40–45 percent of the time. Which, she supposed, was at least a start.</p> <p>She leaned closer, reading.</p> <p>Don’t start herbal treatment after the sixth week of pregnancy.</p> <p>Keep in mind these are not reliable ways to end pregnancy.</p> <p>Drink the teas day and night, so you don’t ruin the progress you made during the day.</p> <p>Catch the blood and add water to dilute it, and look at the clots and tissue to make sure the placenta has passed.</p> <p>Josie grimaced.</p>

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	<p>Use 1/ 2 to 1 teaspoon of the dried herb per cup of water, 3–4 times a day. Don't confuse tansy with tansy ragwort, which has been fatal to cows that have eaten it growing nearby.</p> <p>Then she found something that looked less, well, medieval: vitamin C. Surely that couldn't be too bad for her? Josie clicked on the link. Ascorbic acid, eight grams, for five days. Menstruation should begin on the sixth or seventh day.</p> <p>Josie got up from her computer and went into her mother's medicine cabinet. There was a big white bottle of vitamin C, along with smaller ones of acidophilus, vitamin B12, and calcium supplements.</p> <p>She opened the bottle and hesitated.</p>
326	<p>Why was Wonder Woman always so bodacious? If you were a 38DD, would you honestly go leaping off buildings and fighting crime without a good jogging bra? Thinking of that reminded Josie that she could barely put on her own bra these days, her breasts were so tender. And that made her recall the pregnancy test that she'd wrapped up in paper towels and thrown away outside in the garbage can so her mother wouldn't find it.</p>
329	<p>She woke up, breathless, and realized that she still felt wet. She sat up, lifted up the covers, and saw the pool of blood beneath her.</p> <p>After three positive pregnancy tests, after her period was three weeks late—she was miscarrying.</p> <p>Thankgodthankgodthankgod. Josie buried her face in the sheets and started to cry.</p>
340	<p>"Every time you have sex, you can get pregnant or you can not get pregnant. That's fifty-fifty."</p>
349	<p>For example, the birth of your child was one thing when you were happily married and planning a family; it was something entirely different when you were sixteen and had gotten a girl knocked up.</p>
405	<p>"Yes. Peter loved his parents, but didn't feel he could rely on them for protection." "Protection from what?" "Troubles in school, feelings he was having, suicide ideation."</p>
410	<p>Matt put the car into reverse and lurched backward. You want to stay? You want to be a slut? ...His voice trailed her to the front door: Good. Why would I want to go out with a fucking whore, anyway?</p>
411	<p>On his desk was a bottle of Tylenol and another one, open, of Jim Beam. Josie faced him. Did you— But Matt wrapped his arms around her. He smelled of liquor. You told me not to. I'd do anything for you.</p>
413	<p>"You said that Peter was suffering from suicide ideation." "Yes." "So he wanted to kill himself?" "Yes. That's very common for patients with PTSD."</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	14
Bitch	6
Dick	7
Fag/Faggot	6
Fuck	47
Goddamn	5
Piss	5
Pussy	2
Shit	22