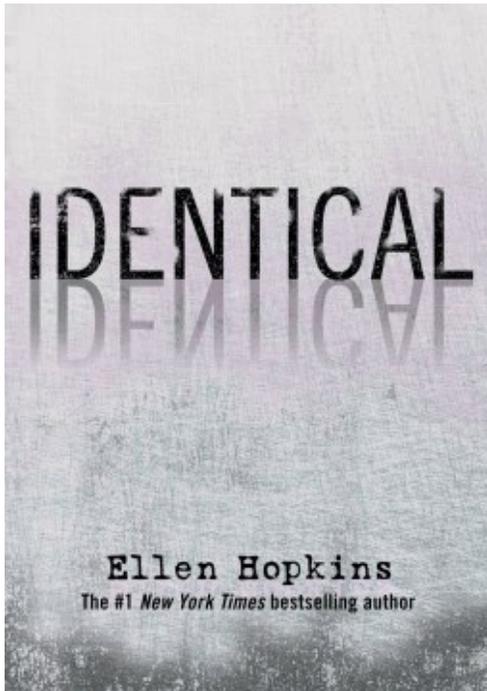


IDENTICAL



Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities including sexual assault and child molestation; violence including self-harm and suicidal ideations; profanity and derogatory terms; and drug and alcohol abuse.

Young Adult

By Ellen Hopkins

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CONTENT WARNING

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Not For Minors
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
8	There's Daddy who comes home every day, dives straight into a tall amber bottle, falls into a stonewalled well of silence, a place where he can tread the suffocating loneliness.
19	Except for the egg/sperm thing. Would he fall on his knees in front of me, if I were more like Mom and less like him? Would he come, begging, to me, too, let me stay, if he realized I want to love him the way Mom used to?
26	<p>He likes what I give him. I like what he gives me, too, and I'm mostly talking about the bud. I pick up my pace because right under his front seat I know there's a fat, stinky joint with my name on it.</p> <p>...Of course, he expects compensation, and after smoking a big ol' doobie, I'm generally willing to cooperate.</p> <p>Life has gotten better- or at least more bearable- since I was introduced to my good friend, marijuana. You couldn't have a more decent friend. I love everything about it.</p> <p>I love the way it smells- good green bud, anyway, and that's the only kind Mick gets. I guess his brother knows a Humboldt grower. Okay, the pot smells a lot like skunk juice. But somehow, there's a difference. A good one.</p> <p>I love the way the thick smoke tastes, curling across my tongue, snaking down my throat. I love holding it in. Coughing it out. I love head rushes, the creeping warmth that follows.</p> <p>And I love the distant place it takes me to. Everything feels right there. Mellow. Easy. Stress-free. I even love the munchies, the perfect excuse for devouring a pint of Haagen-Dazs. Of course, afterward I have to go stick my finger down my throat. Don't dare get fat. Daddy would not like that.</p>
28	<p>Mick and marijuana await me. I'm ready to pay Mick's going rate for the pot. (And I'm not talking money.) Some people would balk at the price tag.</p> <p>You might think, because of the things I've seen Daddy do, I'd be disgusted by sex. No way. I like how it feels physically, yes. Kisses, hot and prickly as August. Hands, tan and rough against my soft white skin. And the last, extreme punctuation.</p> <p>But getting off myself isn't the best part. I do everything in my power to make sure and that puts me indisputably in control. (He thinks otherwise, and I let him.) It's the only time I am in control. And I like how that feel most of all.</p>
41	Then I kissed him. Hard. Wet. Sharp stabs of tongue. My fingers drifted in between his thighs, finding exactly what they expected. Madison gave a little gasp. "Oh," I said. "Sorry, didn't mean to offend you." I laughed. Mick joined me, then said. That's my cue. See ya, Mad.
42	<p>He reached across the seat, grabbed hold of my arm. Pulled. When I resisted, he yanked harder. Hard enough to hurt. Hard enough to leave purple bruises. Someone smart would have screamed. Someone sane would have waited for a stop sign, thrown themselves free. Someone whole would have said no.</p> <p>Get the fuck over here and don't give me shit.</p> <p>I did as instructed. Worse, I liked that he told me what to do. It meant he cared, really cared. Right? Whatever. "Did you score some bud?" I asked, more to change the subject than anything.</p> <p>Under the seat. Twist one up, okay? We headed out Happy Canyon Road, only horses and cattle to mind our business. We could have gone home- no one there-</p>

Page	Content
	<p>but I was still too made for sex. You know you want me. You'd take slimy seconds. Gross. "Yeah, right. Like your pimply butt is such a turn-on." It isn't too pimply, and it's kind of a turn-on, but that was beside the point. His hand brushed my left nipple. You love it. "Not while wondering who you're thinking about, Madison or me." I took a deep drag, held it. Took another without passing the joint, exhaling giant smoke puffs right in his face. Bogart. Pass that fucking thing over here. So I did, and once we were totally buzzed he pulled off onto a dirt ranch road, parked. No maid out here. Just birds and squirrels. Defenses lowered by excellent bud, I said okay to a quickie. Totally in control.</p>
57	<p>The bitter perfume of bourbon smacks me as I stumble in. It makes me thirsty. It's late, but never too late for one last shot. I tiptoe past Daddy's snoring, ease the Wild Turkey from the table. Can't really blame him for choosing redemption in a bottle. Two bottles, actually. One holds 750 ml of amber liquid. The other is small enough to fit in a pocket. Daddy has been sentenced to pain abatement a la OxyContin. The accident was eight years ago and his doctor keeps refilling, like he doesn't know about Daddy's dance with the devil. Like I care Truth is, I borrow a little Oxy every now and then too. Not often, though. It's expensive. Daddy would miss it, even if his dimwit doctor didn't. I have to admit it's tempting. It makes me feel like how you feel when you fall in a dream. Only you don't wake up. You just keep falling deeper and deeper into the darkest recesses of sleep. Especially when you help it out with a nip or two of Wild Turkey. Of course, I have to be very careful not to do it when Daddy's not trapped in the snare of sleep too. Wouldn't do to be lying there unaware if he came crawling to me. No, I'd want to be totally ready. But it won't be tonight. Fifth of whiskey beneath my arm, I slip noiselessly into the kitchen, pour two fingers, replace the bottle. Then I slither into Daddy's bathroom, help myself to a small green pill. Just one. Just enough for a free fall totally without a parachute.</p>
60	<p>I chance a sip of Turkey. Have to wet my tongue before letting the Oxy dissolve. Slowly. Nasty. Another sip. Jet fuel, hot and acrid against my taste buds. Another time, another place, I'd let myself cough. Not now. Not here. ...I lie flat, give myself up to the Oxy/Turkey merry-go-round. Eyes closed, I star the tumble. Round. Round. Down. Down. Outside, the wind rouses suddenly.</p>
62	<p>I'm frozen solid in place just like I was that night, the first time Daddy came. A night Kaeleigh can't (or won't) remember. But I do. It was a year or so after the accident. Kaeleigh and I were nine, give or take. Mom had gone in for another round of surgery. She was already lost to us. Lost. Long gone. ...Daddy smelled of Wild Turkey. Each night, we knew, he drank more and more. That night, he had drunk just enough. Kaeleigh, girl.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>His voice was a soft hiss. Are you awake? Talk to me. Daddy ish-is-sh-so lonely. I'd never heard him sound like that. Like a stranger. A drunk, slurring stranger. Where was my daddy?</p> <p>Kaeleigh, all sweetness, wanted to comfort Daddy, who drew her onto his lap. Stroked her hair. Kissed her gently on the forehead. Cheeks. Eyes. Finally, on her lips, but not nasty or mean or with tongue or anything but misplaced love. Love meant for Mom.</p> <p>He just held her, kissed her. Breathed Wild Turkey all over her until they both fell asleep, woven together.</p>
64	<p>That one innocent joining was only the beginning, but neither realized it that night. And all I could do was linger in a dark corner, sharp jabs of envy tearing my eyes.</p>
65	<p>I guess I could have offered descriptions o Daddy's "privates" (his word), the way he wears his scars.</p> <p>...Instead, I stood by and watched father love turn to LUST.</p>
66	<p>I fell asleep, thinking about Daddy kissing Kaeleigh, craving his kiss, understanding its significance.</p>
80	<p>No doubt he'll be watching the sway of Kaeleigh's hips, craving her. And a drink. Not sure which one he craves more. But tonight he'll have to play the good (sober) husband and devoted father.</p>
82	<p>I can't imagine her actually getting close enough to someone- anyone- to invite them into her bed, let alone her pants.</p>
90	<p>I eat when I'm sad. I eat when I'm lonely. I eat when I hurt so much inside, it's either eat or find an easy way to die. The only time I can't eat to total contentment is when Daddy's around. No daughter or mine will wear double-digit clothes, he said once, and meant it.</p>
91	<p>What she doesn't look like is a girl, all narrow hips, straight waist, and teacup breasts. And if I have my way, I won't either.</p>
96	<p>We empty our glasses. Mom opens another bottle, pour for us both. I'm getting drunk with my mother, and neither of us can think of a thing to say.</p>
97	<p>In the living room, the TV is on, but Daddy has drunk himself into oblivion.</p>
98	<p>Out, where I should be. Where any self-respecting sixteen-year-old should be on Friday night. Out, getting drunk with friends or, better yet, a really fine guy, instead of tying one on at home with my marble-hearted mother, no less.</p>
99	<p>Sneaking out, getting drunk, getting high. What better way to spend Friday night? Especially after too many hours stuck at home listening to Mom's political bullshit. ...I plan to do a lot in the way of self-medication. Funny term for getting screwed up to the point of passing out. I need to be that messed up to get to sleep at all tonight. I'm totally wound.</p>
100	<p>Great place for a kegger, too. And that's our destination. Mick drives like a maniac, which would be all right except I really, really want to get high, and smoking dope and speeding don't exactly go hand in hand.</p> <p>..."If you slow down a little, I'll roll a nice big joint. And after we smoke it, just maybe I'll mess around with your nice big joint too." Okay, so it isn't eloquent, but</p>

Page	Content
	<p>it works. He slows to right around the speed limit as I fumble under the seat, searching for his stash. This slow enough for you? ...Finally, pay dirt. I reach into the baggie, extract a big bud.</p>
101	<p>He reaches for my left boob.</p>
102	<p>"Give me your lighter." Delectable smoke fills the cab. ..."Shut the fuck up." I take a giant hit of pot.</p>
103	<p>Needless to say I don't feel much like messing around with Mick's "nice big joint," not even after killing off the nice big joint wrapped in a rolling paper. Maybe after a beer or ten. And hey, lucky me, looks like the beer's flowing up here on Figueroa Mountain.</p>
105	<p>He looks me up and down like he's shopping. I see. Any plans to come together tonight? "Nope." I part my lips bravely. "Not with him, anyway." He nods his head, stands. How's that beer? Need a refill? I shrug. "Sure. Don't suppose you happen to have anything stronger on you, though?" ...He reaches into his jeans pocket, digging for treasure. Maybe I'll dig in there later myself. Meanwhile, I'll content myself with the giant fatty he lights. The pot is the same as (or very similar to) Mick's. "So..." I cough out a big hit. "You and Mick share a connection, huh?" ...He draws in a long, deep lungful. I move a little closer, like I can't quite reach the joint. "Since we're sharing a hooter, can we, like, share names?"</p>
108	<p>He reaches across the short distance between us, pulls me right into him, kisses me with unexpected hunger. In the time it takes me to react to that, decide whether or not to invite more, he already has my top button unbuttoned. His hands want to go under the fabric, insist on it, in fact. I should say no. Need to say no. "W-wait," I try, but no little bit of me wants to stop and Ty intuits all of that. He doesn't stop, and I don't try to make him. And it isn't long before I throw every ounce of caution to the nonexistent wind. With only a fleeting thought of Mick, I give in to this insane desire to know this not-quite-stranger in the most intimate way. And so, I sacrifice my inner child, give myself away.</p>
114	<p>Memory strikes suddenly chokes me. Strangles me. It was dark in my room. Very dark. Someone had closed the curtain. I was small. Maybe nine. Mommy wasn't home. But Daddy was. He lurched through my door. That scared me. But why? He'd never hurt me before. Only touched me lovingly. Like any Daddy. ...Don't be afraid, little flower. It's only me.</p>
121	<p>Maybe that's why I got so ballsy, had sex with Ty where I knew Mick could find us. ...Anyway, most of Mick's brains reside in the general area of his groin. One thing for sure, sex will never be about love with Mick. I don't love him, and he definitely doesn't love me. Still, he semi-fills a gaping black hole inside me. That place wants love, maybe even needs love, but love is something I'm pretty sure doesn't exist.</p>

Page	Content
122	Besides the easy sex thing, there's still the pot. I know they say marijuana isn't addictive, not like speed or heroin, which claw into you and won't let go. Pot is more of a sweet talker, and I'm all over that sexy voice. I went Saturday without it, but by yesterday afternoon, I was getting antsy.
123	Yeah, well, I could have screwed her Friday night too. I didn't, even though she wanted to.
126	Pinstripes, actually, on dark trousers, snug at the waist and across his hips, before falling loosely down over his thighs. And just as my disgusting brain gloms onto a sick image of what those thighs look like, his voice descends.
150	<p>Someone had closed the curtain. Kaeleigh was scared. I tried to tell her not to worry, but just then, Daddy burst through the door.</p> <p>I closed my eyes tight, made myself no more than a shadow. Something about him was different. I didn't want that something to find me.</p> <p>I cracked my eyes just a slit as he sat on Kaeleigh's bed, pulled her into his lap. He smelled of Brut and Wild Turkey. His peculiar potpourri.</p> <p>I love you so much, my little flower. Daddy needs something from my girl, my sweet rose. Will you give it to me?</p> <p>I wanted to be his little flower, would have given my Daddy anything. What did he want from Kaeleigh? She laid her head on his chest. "What?"</p> <p>I want you to see something, something that proves how much I love you. This is only for you, Kaeleigh girl.</p> <p>He lifted her gently, sat her down on the bed beside him. Then he opened the snaps on the fly of his flannel pajamas.</p> <p>It stood up, stiff as a stalagmite. See how much Daddy loves you? Show me you love me, too. Touch it. He closed her hand around it.</p> <p>I know it sounds bad, but I wanted to touch it too. I didn't know what it meant, only that it made Daddy happy. I wanted to make him happy too.</p> <p>That's right. That's right. His voice rocked in rhythm with his body. Oh, yes, my Kaeleigh loves me. My little flower...</p> <p>...when Daddy finished, he burrowed his face into Kaeleigh's hair and wept.</p> <p>Confused at his tears, and at the sticky stuff icing her hands, still Kaeleigh pleaded, "Don't cry, Daddy. What's the matter? Didn't I love you good enough?"</p> <p>...Yes, you loved me good enough. So very good! But it's our secret, okay?</p> <p>Because if anyone knew how much you love me, they'd be jealous. Now Kaeleigh was really confused. "Can I tell Mama our secret?"</p> <p>No! Especially not Mama. She'd get mad because she doesn't love me like you. She might even go away. You don't want that, do you?</p> <p>She thought it over. Again and again. But she finally agreed, "I won't tell." Daddy pulled her against him. Good. That's very good. It's okay to have secrets between Daddy and his girl. Just remember. No one likes a tattletale. Especially not Daddy.</p>
158	Weird. I always thought cutters were sick. Sicker than me, even. But with a single swipe I understand why they do it. Why they like it, even though they hate it. I let the water runs over the cut, ratchet it hotter, watch the blood slow, stutter, almost halt. I like the way the exposed flesh looks, all pinkish white. It looks new, although I know that isn't right.

Page	Content
167	It takes all my willpower not to flinch, not to bloat his anger. His fingers catch my cheeks, pinch until my mouth opens. I'll decide what is or isn't trouble. You just follow orders. Understand? Drool dripping from my open mouth, all I can do is nod.
175	Once again we engage in easy sex, hardly a word exchanged between us. We are so not about conversation, and only body-to-body communication.
179	I noticed a definite odor of marijuana in your vehicle. Have you been smoking pot this afternoon?
184	I guess I'm pretty good at sex, but I don't think because the world needs more (even better) sex.
202	I do know a few other people who might have some bud. ...He gave me his number, for the next time you find your mouth watering for a red hot lollipop...
208	He pulls out a baggie, a quarter of some crumbly brown substance. When he cracks the bag, the perfume that escapes smells like heaven. Opiated hash. Ever tried it? I shake my head no, but Ty is quick to remedy that, filling a small pipe bowl with a miniature ball of opium-laced hashish. He takes the first toke, and now heaven's on fire, and smoking. Still holding his hit, Ty cautions around it, Little tokes, now. Don't want to cough this stuff out. Hold it as long as you can. Slowly inhale a taste sweeter than any before. Greedy me wants more, but I remember his warning.
210	Drinking. Smoking. Feeling the creep of the poppy, all along my spine, skull to tailbone. I know the high is mostly hash, not so different from regular cannabis (though even tastier). But the opium topper provides a whole new set of rushes. Body rushes, like little shivers. Head rushes, like turning in circles, round and round, don't fall down. Shall we move the party into the bedroom? Ty reaches over, kisses me. Hard. Harder. ...His teeth rake my bottom lip, move down over my chin, down my neck. Not too hard. Not really. But hard enough. Should I have warn garlic and a silver cross? I laugh out loud at the thought, and I realize how fucked up I am. ...He picks me up, carries me into his bedroom, half throws me onto the bed. When he starts to undress me, I burst into a new fit of giggles. My jeans are so tight, he can't wiggle me out of them. "Want some help, my macho vampire?" I shed everything and he does too, but before we do another thing, he asks, How 'bout another bowl? Something to take you real, real low. He leers like a scary circus clown. Low as a girl can go. True to his word he drops me real, real low. I'm floating on a poppy sea. Naked. Mellow. But a sudden wind rouses the breaks and low tide builds to major swells. Ty kisses me, all fang, pure vampire. "Hey. Take it easy." But somehow my body responds to the pain. And Ty responds to that, clamping one hand around both my wrists, pulling them over my head and pinning me helpless. It is then I notice the nylon cord, one end tied tight to the headboard.

Page	Content
	<p>Ty's voice is almost a snarl. This is one of my favorite games. He wraps the rope around my wrists, knots it tightly. Escape-proof. I shake my head. "Don't." But he does. Should I scream? Would anyone hear? Would anyone care? The obvious answer softens my plea. "Please?" Haven't you played this game before? I guess I'll have to teach you the rules. The proper response would be, "Please, sir." Say it. My heart yells, "No fucking way." But my brain, the part that understands my daddy, makes me acquiesce. "Please, sir." He flips me onto my belly, yanks my legs apart. I don't have to see the restraints to know they're there. The ankle knots do not surprise me. I am helpless. Exposed. And, strangely, somehow I feel at home this way. Say it, he demands, like I should know he means, Please, sir. Punish me. Deliberate, controlled, he punishes me. I whisper into the pillow, "I understand." I understand why Kaeleigh like the feel of slicing her flesh, releasing bottled-up hurt. Leather snaps against my skin, and I remain still as stagnant water, afraid I might not play by his rules. This is a new game, and the sick thing is, I see quickly that I like it, might ask to play it again. The pain is fuzzy at the edges, blurring toward pleasure. Maybe it's the hash, the gentle arms of opium. And now new leather- human, Ty- falls softly over the heated welts, a soothing balm of sweat-beaded skin. But then heightened pain, forced inside me, stuffed inside me. Seared, branded, likely marked, a moan escapes me and Ty surges. After, knots loosened, a rub of cool eucalyptus oil persuades me I do want to play again. Soon.</p>
228	<p>They're about the same as straight sex and gay sex- some similarities, but different in ways that really count.</p>
232	<p>I slip into Daddy's bathroom, and this time when I "borrow" his Oxy, it's not for me. Okay, one is for me. The other three are for Daddy. I can't slip all three into a single drink or he'd taste it for sure. This will be a seduction. One I know he can't refuse. He finally roars in, and I've already mixed him a highball, long on Turkey, short on Oxy. That will change as the evening progresses. He gives me a look but takes the drink anyway. Thanks. I need this. ...I hand Daddy the Oxy-tainted highball glass as Kaeleigh answers, I didn't mean to be late, Daddy.</p>
235	<p>I watch the two of them stuff their faces, fix Daddy one last drink. Between the rich food, stiff Turkey, and three Oxycontin, he'll be fast asleep in a few minutes. Most of the evening's drama behind us, I slip off to the bathroom. Kaeleigh's disgusting food binge made me want to purge. It's more than a habit. It's a need. Experts even call it a disease. However you classify it, though, it's not about body image. At least not for me. For me, it's all about maintaining a modicum of control, especially when everything goes completely ape-shit.</p>
236	<p>But I do like the cool of the porcelain on my face, the solid of tile beneath my butt. Most of all, I like my belly emptied, even temporarily, of food. Of fat. Of pain.</p>
237	<p>Now that I've evacuated my stomach, I can swallow the Oxy I borrowed for myself. Pop the pill, chase it with whiskey, crawl into bed. Pray such seduction brings dreamless sleep. Seems to take a long time for the sleep aid to kick in.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>...The gathering haze does not conceal memories of another night. Kaeleigh was ten.</p>
238	<p>Daddy had been back to Kaeleigh for "lollipop licking" (my term) a few times. She had a vague notion that it was "wrong," but she wasn't sure why, and didn't know who to ask. They'd probably just be jealous.</p> <p>That warm summer night, she slept in a thin white nightie, nothing more, nothing at all under. The moon, full, shimmered against the tan of her exposed skin, and her hair whispered over the pillow like a pale waterfall.</p> <p>As usual, the smell of Wild Turkey preceded Daddy. In the bright moonlight, you could see Kaeleigh cringe in shallow sleep. Daddy crept thought the door, to the side of the bed, stood looking down for a very long time before stirring her with a volley of kisses. Cheeks. Forehead. Lips. Oh, little girl. Do you know how beautiful you are? No one was ever as lovely as you, not even your mother when she was a child. I can't believe you're mine.</p> <p>Kaeleigh roused at his words, came into the moment, secure in the aura of Daddy's love. She tried to sit up, but Daddy pushed her gently back down against the mattress. Stay just like that for Daddy. I want to teach you something new. He lifted her nightgown, rolled it up over her belly, coaxed her Thoroughbred legs apart. She squirmed, a paltry protest.</p> <p>Don't move! Daddy's scarlet face underlined his command. I thought he might smack her.</p> <p>But as quickly as his anger flared, it dissipated, smoke. Don't be afraid. This won't hurt. You'll like it. I promise. He kissed the length of her torso, down to the small, naked V.</p> <p>It was only his mouth that night. He didn't even ask her to touch him, prove how much she loved him. Afterward, she worried. Didn't he want her love anymore? What had she done wrong? And yet, he had taught her something new. Something awful.</p> <p>Worse, something wonderful. Something every girl should know the joy of, though, of course, she shouldn't learn it from Daddy.</p> <p>At ten, it isn't exactly easy to separate good touch from bad touch, proper love from improper love, doting daddy from perv.</p>
245	<p>Mom sat on an overstuffed sofa, vacant-eyed, silently sipping vodka on the rocks. Daddy gulped whiskey, and might have passed out quickly except...</p>
259	<p>More drugs. More men. More sex. Do you think there's really such a thing as "enough"?</p>
260	<p>"Let's sneak on outta here and do the dirty."</p>
262	<p>You'll like what I've got. I assume he's talking weed. It's been a couple of days and the truth is, I'm so wanting a buzz. I could call Ty, ask for a bit steeper high (low?). Oh yeah, how low can we go? Loaded question.</p>
265	<p>Truth is, more than missing Mick, I miss catching a lunchtime buzz. I wish I could just buy a personal stash, keep it around.</p>
267	<p>Thought you kind of liked the play. Was I wrong? He reaches up, strokes my cheek gently. No encore?</p> <p>Rough play, he means and I really did like it because I'm sicker than he is.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>..."An encore would be nice." I smile. "Maybe nice is not the right word, though." Nice works. So how about it? When can we get together again? He winds his fingers into my hair. Tugs gently, brings my face right down against his. Opens his mouth. We are tongue on tongue.</p>
270	<p>I triple promise I'll give him a call. Straight up, I will, because one guy will never be enough for the likes of me. Truth is, I can't believe one anything (guy, girl, whatever you happen to be into) could be enough for anyone.</p>
271	<p>I jump up into the Avalanche, scoot almost into his lap, give him an over-the-top kiss, hoping he doesn't taste guilt. Whatever he tastes, he likes it, wants another dose. I stop his tongue (not to mention his hands) with a single word. "No."</p>
272	<p>He starts to turn south but I stop him, with a hand on a spot too high on his thigh to qualify as "thigh." "Let's go to my house. It's empty." ...So Mich and I will smoke up and make out in my bedroom.</p>
280	<p>Desire strikes like a cobra sinks its fangs between my legs, injects its venom. The heady creep wanders from groin to belly. I lift Ian's hands, urge them against the throb beneath my blouse. "Touch me. Please?" He want to, does, and I love his skin on mine. And then he moans, Oh, Kaeleigh... And suddenly a different snake strikes, with lightening ferocity. Not cobra, but python, threading itself around me, squeezing. Hissing, Oh, Kaeleigh. Oh yes, that's right, little flower.</p>
288	<p>I lean forward slightly, notice his eyes fall to what almost passes as cleavage, with a good Victoria's Secret push-up bra helping out. ...The entire time, my legs rest gently between his, knees touching the inside of his, and despite my "lunch" with Mick today, I'm starting to feel incredibly, um...aroused.</p>
301	<p>It's not like the two of them do much screwing, at least not with each other.</p>
305	<p>Now I feel the need for liquid fun. Tucked away in a low cabinet is my parent's liquor stash. ...The Chopin vodka, stashed in the freezer, is a different song, and I'm so ready to drink that slushy tune. I'll never sleep without it. ...I don't really like the taste of vodka, but they say you can't smell it on the breath.</p>
315	<p>Open my skin. Right ankle. Left ankle. White flesh. Red polka dots. Ha! that's funny. Ouch. Stings. Behind right knee. Left knee. Oops. A little deep. Blood pumps. Check it out. Thump. Thump. Oh my God. Can I stop it? Who really cares? The drain runs red.</p>
319	<p>(Doing the dirty.) Shot one: missionary, Daddy on top. Shot two: doggie-style, Daddy on top. Shot three: can't even say it, let alone dwell on the picture, but Daddy's on top. (Always on top.)</p>

Page	Content
320	<p>Wonder who was on TOP when they did have sex.</p> <p>Sex, sex, sex I have really got to stop thinking about it so damn much, you know? Daddy and Hannah; Daddy and Mom; Daddy and Kaeleigh; Daddy and whoever; Mom and Daddy; Mom and whoever; Lawler and whoever; Mick and whoever; Ty...</p> <p>Sex, sex, sex. I have really got to stop wanting to have it, and mor and more of it. Clumsy sex (Mick); choreographed sex (Ty); imagined sex (Lawler, assorted others).</p> <p>I've been half thought about experimenting with a girl or two. Variety is the spice of life.</p> <p>Sex, sex, sex. And what goes with that? Drugs, more drugs, and alcohol, of course.</p>
332	<p>No Mick, no bud. No Ty, no better buzz, and he's much more difficult to manipulate. Dopeless sex? That could not feel good. Could it?</p>
336	<p>I'm kind of liking this blood thing. Fetish? Fixation? Not quite an obsession yet, but I can see it growing into that. Drip. Drip.</p> <p>Steady. Slow. Drip-drip. Quicker yet. Drip-drip-drip. Drip-drip-drip.</p> <p>Drip.</p> <p>Drip.</p> <p>Drip.</p> <p>I'd probably just let myself drip, but I did promise to show up at work and help out with the Halloween decorations.</p>
388	<p>Oxy dessert, to chase his Wild Turkey main course.</p>
393	<p>Kaeleigh was used to Daddy's visits, but that night she, too, felt something different in the air. Rage. Lust. Sorrow. Perversion. All mingled in Daddy's sweat. There was nothing gentle about how he threw back the covers. Already naked, he pushed Kaeleigh roughly to one side, flopped beside her.</p> <p>I could tell she was afraid. This wasn't her Daddy. This was a demon, his evil hard and sharp as steel blade, ready to slice into her. It did.</p> <p>His attack was brutal, bloody, wordless except for vicious Shut the fuck up at her pitiful scream, a plea to please, please no, Daddy, no. It hurts. Oh!</p> <p>I cowered, sick at the sight, but unable to divorce myself from the horror. I felt Kaeleigh's pain. And when Daddy was done and she cried, I cried too.</p>
402	<p>Safe in the far stall I wait for the bell to ring, picking at a scab or two. The one on my ankle is recent. I open it wide, encourage the flow. It's like milking venom from my veins. Wonder how long it would take to bleed out completely.</p>
407	<p>And, are- don't get mad- are you cutting?</p>
415	<p>"This should cover what I smoked. Please take me home now."</p> <p>Don't want your money. His zipper opens, and what escapes is eager. Then he pushes my head down. Haven't you missed me?</p> <p>I could just do it. Get it over with. Pretend it never happened. But I don't think so. It has to be my idea or not at all.</p> <p>"No, Mick. Goddammit, I said no!"</p> <p>But he's all over me and I may not have a choice. He outweighs me by a hundred pounds and he's got me pinned against the door. His fingers, clumsy, work at my own zipper. I try to push him off.</p>

Page	Content
	<p>What's wrong? You know you want to. "No. I really don't." But I can't stop his mouth from covering mine, leaving a wet trail of sobber all over my face. One hand tugs my shirt over my head, the other is inside my bra, twisting, pinching. I could just get it over with. See? Your nipples don't lie. You like it. He's too worked up to manage tight jeans, so he leans up over me, demanding I do him with my mouth. I could bite. But he'd probably kick my ass and finish his business anyway. I've never seen this side of Mick. Or maybe I have and ignored it. I can barely breathe, and the teeth of his zipper are biting into my chin. Atta girl. You can't say no to... Daddy. Daddy? Kaeleigh would just give in. The thought of her wide-eyed surrender gives me a sudden idea. But I have to play things right. First I go limp, pretend to acquiesce. I even give him a taste of what he wants. "Stop for a minute. You're hurting me." He hesitates, looks down into my eyes, which have teared up quite nicely. He draws back ever so slightly. I did down, beyond fear, fine Raeanne again. "If we're going to do this, you don't get to have all the fun. And can we pretty please take another hit first?"</p>
418	<p>I reach down, grab his tray, complete with maybe a half ounce of great bud. Pricey bud. I'm betting on greed. "Hang on. I need some light." I open the door wide, and send the tray sailing like a pot-covered Frisbee.</p>
421	<p>CONGRESSWOMAN'S DAUGHTER ARRESTED for theft of would-be rapist's truck. Says they were smoking pot after curfew when things got out of hand.</p>
441	<p>I'm celebrating pretty good right now, on two Oxy and enough bubbly to give me hiccups for days.</p>
447	<p>The Bad Thing About Puking Regularly is how you come to rely on it. Hungover? Go puke. Feel a bit fat? Go puke. Confused? Go puke. Frightened? Go puke. Entire world falling apart? Hurry up and go puke. All of the above? Puke. Puke. Puke. Puke. And puke some more. Totally Puked Out esophagus acid-etched, I'm ready to face the day. Not.</p>
459	<p>I am your little girl. I am not your girlfriend. I am not your whore. I am not my fucking mother! But he is on top of me and my shout is silenced. He is inside of me and my scream stays there too. He is finished.</p>

Page	Content
	And I don't cry out, but I do cry a bucket of silent tears. He slithers away and at last, I quietly sob no no no no no.
466	I want to know joyous sex. ...I want sex laced with love, and not warped parental love, but the honest kind. I want sex that makes me feel right, not like some freak, some inbred monstrosity. I'm no, am I?
467	Sex feels great with him, too. I guess it might be nice for sex to feel right, like the person you're with might even love you.
471	More drugs. Better drugs. Maybe it's time to graduate from pot, hash, and pills to something stronger. That opiated stuff was great. Wonder what heroin is like. I hear it drops you way down, where pain can't find you. Any Drugs would be good right this moment. Heroin. Cocaine. Maybe ecstasy. Not too sure about psychedelics. They say acid and 'shrooms make you look inside your own head, help you learn about yourself.
472	Not love to us, I'd still like to see Ty. It's been a long week with nothing to smoke.
473	Share a doob? ...A shitload of bud.
476	I'm not even drunk, not stoned, not buzzed on pills. Perfectly straight, still I'm reeling.
481	I know how to swim, have practiced the dead man's float for years, but it's frightening how much I just want to drown in this undertow of booze and pills. I drank a lot tonight, ingested an incomprehensible amount of painkillers, some borrowed from Daddy, the rest pilfered from old Sam, who seems to be suffering a lot from his arthritis. His nightstand is a pharmacy. I doubt he even noticed I lifted a handful of Percodans.
486	My lungs fill with water. Silt. Mud. Now it hurts to breathe. So I won't. I'll settle deep into darkness. And I won't say good-bye.
487	Oh my God. Her face is blue. ...I lean over the side of my bed, jet a big stream of opiate-laced Wild Turkey.
488	What did you take, Kaeleigh? Tell? Don't tell? Who cares? "Percodan." No need to mention Daddy's Oxycontin. The Wild Turkey, they can smell. Hannah sighs. How many? Her voice, sugared, irritates me now. If heaven's host sounds like her multiplied, I'll stay home. "N-not sure. A dozen?"
490	A dozen painkillers, washed down with whiskey. That wasn't an accidental overdose, Ray.
501	...extract eighty bucks from my private stash, pop a single Oxy to steady my nerves,...
503	I swallow one more pill for good measure, steel up courage.
506	Charlotte shared most of her time with a whiskey bottle, and so devoted little to your father or me.

Page	Content
507	<p>I found your father, on a swing with a young girl, about his age. They were naked, playing with each other. Miranda was directing them, and her boyfriend was taking pictures.</p> <p>...Your father gained his manhood, if you could call it that, at the age of ten. His photographs appeared in magazines, for the pleasure of pedophiles.</p>
516	<p>He comes back with a party in a box. You want to get buzzed, right?</p> <p>I nod and next thing I know, we're smoking black African bud. It's not really black, but it's definitely purple, the buds big around my fist. And it tastes like absolute heaven.</p> <p>Almost immediately, my eyes grow heavy and my tongue thick. "Incredible," I manage, sounding more like "incredible."</p> <p>...The other part tells the first to shut up, quit trying to fuck my high.</p>
517	<p>How far will you go with me? He kisses my mouth. My throat. Will you let me draw blood?</p> <p>He bites my neck, and a moan escapes my mouth, unbidden. How high will you let me take you?</p> <p>For once, I want to relinquish control. For once, I want to completely let go. "You decide."</p> <p>His grin is pure evil. That's my girl. He yanks my blouse over my head, spills me from my bra.</p> <p>He kisses, bites. I'm already lost, but hungry for more. He pulls me to my feet, hands all over me...</p>
519	<p>I'm right here, and I'm...too fucking stoned to deal with this now.</p>
520	<p>Too much fucking good bud.</p>
523	<p>They tell me it's withdrawal from OxyContin.</p>
530	<p>I told her, "Where Daddy touched me." She looked and her face grew red.</p>
536	<p>Speaking of drugs, I could use a big fatty right about now. How will I ever score after I get out of here? And which one of me is the loadie, anyway?</p> <p>I'm sure getting high isn't good for my "condition," but how can I not, if I have to go home?</p>
537	<p>Fuck that. All he did was have sex with Mom. Probably just one time.</p> <p>...That, I'm pretty sure, I got from you. "That, and a great sex education."</p> <p>Sex is disgusting.</p>
542	<p>Turns out the electrolyte imbalance is real, the result of not only puking from Oxy withdrawal, but also the binge-and-purge cycle that my alter and I seem to have shared.</p> <p>..."You eat. I'll throw it up. You'd be a regular oinker if not for me."</p> <p>..."...And I need to get high."</p> <p>...Drug abuse. Alcohol. Bulimia...</p> <p>"Don't forget that lovely bit about shaving until you slice yourself open."</p> <p>And that's the easy stuff. Promiscuity.</p> <p>...And the granddaddy of all- fucking Daddy.</p> <p>"More accurately, letting Daddy fuck you and keeping it to yourself."</p> <p>Even if I tell her every bit of it, there's no guarantee she can fix me. Suicide sounds</p>

Page	Content
	better and better. "Yeah, but you'd have to get it right. Or maybe, just leave that to me."
544	What do I have to live for? Can't think of a single thing.
552	And when he couldn't give me the life I was used to, I fell into addictions. Whiskey. Cigarettes. And, to fight my depression, Prozac.
553	Alcoholism is not a pretty things, and I was an ugly alcoholic. I moved in with a string of men.
555	I was drunk but not too drunk to take in what was going on. Your mother was gone, and your father was washing you. Only the way he was washing you was all wrong. He was touching you in a sexual way. Kaeleigh. I confronted him, but he just laughed in my face.
556	Instead I drank even more to forget. I drank until one day I looked in the mirror and saw death.
563	But I have to admit, I've smoked a little bud. Not that much. I'd probably do more, but it's expensive. And now it's cash-and-carry. I still use food for comfort. I still purge when I get too comfortable. And once in a while, when memory intrudes, I still enjoy a good, deep shave.
564	When I do those things when I use or purge or cut, I'm still not myself.

Profanity	Count
Ass	12
Bitch	9
Faggot	1
Fuck	36
Piss	8
Prick	1
Shit	17