

PENDING FINAL REVIEW



DIME



Summary of Concerns:

This book contains prostitution of minors; sexual activities involving minors; and profanity.

Young Adult

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CONTENT WARNING

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Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

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19	<p>Sex would be warming up. But sometimes is not most of the time. Most of the time, I am busy with making money for somebody. This is my job, and honestly, it is just not any fun at all. Yes, it's true that there's some good feeling when I'm chilling with whatever man hit me up for company. But often even then, I have to deal with his bad mood, or his ignorance or his general nastiness. Even if the dude is pleasant to pass the time with, the girl is a whole other story. You see, Sex would explain, when it's for moneymaking, the girl rarely enjoys herself. And most of the time, she does not want me around at all, It's hard work, because of how the girl acts like she likes me, when she would rather eat a cockroach-stuffed rat than party with me.</p>
20	<p>And while I'm complaining...Sex would be on a roll now. I never ask Violence to be in my company. I deeply dislike it when he comes by, but family is family. I wouldn't have chosen Violence for a cousin, but what can I do? I don't invite him. He just shows up.</p> <p>...Sex would have a lot to say. Another hard part of my job is that I am forced to do things I really shouldn't have to do. For instance, I have to work with children. Sex would sign as he wrote this part. I am not fit for work with a human body that is too small to do what I need it to do or a human brain that is too young to understand me. Sex would write with his teeth gritted. But somehow, the powers that be tell me I have to add children to my job description. I do not appreciate the extra stress. After Sex introduces himself like that, he would get to the point of the note.</p> <p>...Anyway, he would continue writing, this is not about me so much as it is about a situation. Maybe he would begin a new paragraph here. "There are a lot of people involved, including on child. Three children, depending on whether you think of a fourteen and sixteen-year-old as children. If you consider how old each of the was where her story began, then we are thinking about four children, Since three of them had not reached the age of ten when I was forced to meet, and the other was not quite fourteen.</p>
53	<p>Daddy would get annoyed at the others if he thought there wasn't enough money.</p> <p>"Where's the rest?" he asked Brandy.</p> <p>"That's it," she would say. "It's all there."</p> <p>"That's not shit."</p> <p>"Cold," Brandy said. "People ain't going out."</p> <p>"L.A. got me three times that," Daddy said.</p> <p>L.A. smiled.</p> <p>"She's been working longer. Got her regulars," Brandy tired."</p> <p>"You better get you some regulars," Daddy said. "You ought to be making more than L.A. White quota higher. That ain't rocket science. You better step it up."</p>
59	<p>Out on the sidewalk, Daddy slipped his hand down from my shoulder to my bottom and then wiggled up under my new coat until his palm slid into the back pocket of my jeans. His warmth felt food in the freezing cold, and the way his hand told anyone who could see that he was mine felt even better.</p>
70	<p>"Nah, Dime," he said, pulling back, pulling himself together again. "You only thirteen."</p>

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	<p>"Please," I said.</p> <p>"Wish you could stay," he told me, resting his forehead on mine.</p> <p>"Let me."</p> <p>"Uh-uh," he murmured. "Ain't going to work out."</p> <p>But he picked me up, just the way he had picked up Brandy that time she had her nightmare. He carried me to his room. I was so small compared to him, I felt like a newborn baby. He shut the door with his foot and lay me down in the bed with slippery, smooth sheets.</p> <p>He stroked my arms with his big palm and kissed my cheeks and my mouth. "One more Minute," he whispered. "One more and then you got to go."</p> <p>"Let me stay." I whispered it so quietly because it was hard to talk with how good my body felt beneath his strong hands and soft lips and because it was hard for me to talk anyway.</p> <p>He sat up suddenly, frowning and bunching up his eyebrow scar as if he was mad, but I could tell he wasn't mad. "You best go, Beautiful," he told me. "Before we do something that ain't right."</p> <p>"No," I said. "Please." I reached out for his hand and put it on my cheek. "Please."</p> <p>"Dime, you killing me," he said, and I loved how much he loved me.</p> <p>"Please."</p> <p>And then he was stroking me again and kissing me. "You sure, Beautiful?" He asked.</p> <p>"Yes."</p> <p>"You don't want to stay a virgin?"</p> <p>"No," I was almost crying with wanting so badly for him to hold me close.</p> <p>He kissed my lips again, and opened my mouth with his for much more than a second. I pulled back, scared. He pulled back too, kissing my forehead instead, stroking my arms and stroking my legs and stroking my whole body over my clothes, and by the time he bent to kiss my mouth with his tongue again, I wanted him to, and he knew just how to kiss and stroke until nothing felt surprising or scary but just good, and he took a long, long time peeling off my jeans and T-Shirt and pink bra and panties and a longer time stroking and kissing me even more, quietly, and over everywhere, everywhere, making me feel so good, so so so good that when his body finally eased into mine, it felt like we were flying.</p>
73	<p>I couldn't believe I wasn't a virgin anymore. I couldn't believe how lucky I was that my first time had been with Daddy, who loved me and knew how to make me feel so good. How could I leave him now? How could I go back to Janelle's? But he had said that she needed me, that I was supposed to be with her, and he needed his alcove back to rent out, or else he wouldn't have a place to live.</p>
78	<p>I glanced at Earl, who was frowning. When I moved past him to get something to wipe up the mess, I slipped on an empty, rolling underfoot. He caught my arm to steady me. Then he slid his palm across my chest, pressing on my small curves, and down to the middle of my legs, squeezing. I hurt, but the reason I gasped and pulled away was because Earl was everything Daddy wasn't and so soon after. And because of the way Janelle hissed, "Get away from my man."</p>
79	<p>We always stayed in the bed. He would be so gentle, and if I got scared at something new, he would just kiss me and stroke me and tell me how special I</p>

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	<p>was. Then I would try the new thing, partly because it wouldn't seem so scary anymore and partly because I loved how good I could make him feel. Once, a split second before we were about to fly, he slapped my cheek hard and then kissed me long, long, and I had already taken off, and it hurt, but it didn't. It felt good, but it didn't. And there was not time to think about it because I was flying so fast, so high. And afterward, he held me more tightly than he ever had and kissed my head and stroked my back, and we listened to each other breathing until it was time for him to go.</p>
84	<p>"Love you, Dime," Daddy breathed into my ear. "Love you best. But it going to cause issues around here if I keep taking you when you not bringing me nothing." ... "When I turn fourteen, I'll get." ... "Square job ain't going to work," Daddy murmured. "Now I'm a find a way to keep you, but I can't be with you like that if you don't start contributing to the household. It up to you. You want to do what L.A. and Brandy do, you can earn your time with me. You choose not to, I'm take care a you anyway. Just not in my bed."</p>
94	<p>I was dolled up in high-heeled silver boots I'd never seen before. L.A. said Satin used to wear them. They had me in the pale-pink bra and a white tank undershirt and a black miniskirt. It was last February, and I was cold in those clothes. Freezing. Daddy drove off in his gold Honda while darkness began to wrap itself around the air so it was hard to see the uneven sidewalk. I kept stumbling. The high heels or the dark or maybe all of it made me feel as if I was in chains.</p>
96	<p>"Don't look so stupid," L.A. told me. For once she didn't sound mean. She sounded tired. "You got to keep moving," act fast. Daddy don't want us wasting time. They get out and you take them over there somewhere." She pointed over to the lot. "Or there." Around the corners of two brick buildings. "You can take them two blocks that away. Room eleven is ours. But you got to be fast and come out quick. Faster not lying down. Cleaner, too." ... Do I really have to? I should have asked. Is there anything else I could do instead? Maybe I could sleep on the kitchen floor. Maybe I could turn around and walk home and just being near him would be enough, even if he never held me again. ... "Just do it," L.A. said. "Get the money, bring it to Daddy, and then keep walking and do it again."</p>
98	<p>Right after Brandy came back, they sent me with a white man in a Corolla with one window duct-taped together. Go the other way right back to Janelle's, I told myself. It was happening so fast, I didn't know how to make it not happen, Daddy will forgive you and take you back later. Maybe not in a few days, but a few weeks he'll take you back. But what if Earl was still at Janelle's? You got to bring in those coins, was what Daddy had said. He had kissed my hands. You can be one a mine. I wanted so much to be his. ... I half turned to L.A. to say no, or wait, or I'm not doing this, but it was too late. ... The man didn't bother with any feeling good but just opened my legs, and I was surprised it was like watching it happen on TV to someone else. When he turned me around and pulled my bottom to him and did the next thing, it hurt so badly that I wanted to scream, but when he finally stopped that and turned me around</p>

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	<p>again and pushed me to my knees, making me open my mouth, I choked on him and then I think I suffocated and when I came back to life I was showing money to L.A., who was yelling at me because it wasn't enough, and there hadn't been any tunnel or light or angels singing, but I know that I had died.</p>
101	<p>Sex is going to bitch and moan about how he doesn't like working with children and it puts a stress on and all that bullshit. But I'm here to tell you that I am at my most powerful when children come into the picture. It would be sickening to write, but I could make myself, knowing it might work. Because I reproduce myself faster than four rabbits in a barrel when there are kids around. Brandy and I couldn't figure out how much Daddy made off of Lollipop, but we knew it had to be a lot, because after she arrived things changed so much. That Lollipop is one perfect example. Money would grin. I don't know how it all went on before the Internet, but that girl earned her hotel room one hundred times over putting her little body in front of that computer camera. Brandy thought Daddy could get into a lot more trouble putting a little girl on a live feed than turning us teenagers out. She thought that the johns knew that, too, so that's how Daddy could charge so much more for Lollipop. You wouldn't believe how much for me go paid for a look at her. And when she was old enough, which didn't take so long, I just exploded like a bomb. Money would be downright gleeful. All she had to do was live her life in whichever hotel or motel butt naked, doing her little girl things. That's it. And when she graduated to bigger girl, and top dollar was paid to visit her in person, that Uncle Ray was careful not to wear her out. All she needed was two or three a week to make him rich. Lollipop even bragged to L.A. about his part. Men ordered her up from around the country to get a piece of her. One took a plane. Five rode Amtrack. Yup. She must have lost her little virginity twenty times, and that costs pretty millions of pennies, if I don't say so myself. He love me, Lollipop's Uncle Ray did.</p>
121	<p>Every few weeks, after I earned my quota, Daddy would take me. His room had an air conditioner, which was like a taste of heaven, But his smell wasn't so good anymore, and I would be so tired. A few times I would say, "Could you just rest with me tonight?" Because even though at first I wanted him like that all the time, now I was so worn out. All I really wanted, maybe all I ever really wanted, was that being held tight to someone whose body was still and solid, who loved just being cuddled up to me, without wanting anything more. "Please?" I tried a few times. The first time he was quiet a split second and then he did things to me he thought I would like before he did things he liked, but I was hot and tired, so I guess I wasn't very good. He didn't hold me after, but sent me back to the alcove. ...The second time I asked, he punched me with his fist in my belly, and I thought I would vomit from the pain. The he told me he was sorry and that he hated to hurt me, but if I didn't appreciate being with him like that, it was a damn shame.</p>
157	<p>Most of the dates wanted to stay in their cars, so we didn't have to walk to the Escalade. But twice I led a john down the road. I was nervous Daddy would be there in the front seat while I worked, which would have been mortifying. But I didn't see him at all. He must have gotten out to walk and text or talk on the phone. The second time, though, Brandy was there. I didn't realize it until I opened my eyes to look into the Escalade through the widow, since my date</p>

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	<p>didn't seem to want to wait but just leaned me face-forward on the car. When I looked, Brandy was below, facing up from the backseat while her john had his head buried in her shoulder. She was yawning. When I saw that, I started to laugh, and when I laughed she jumped and yelped, and her john must have thought he was something special because even from the outside, I could hear him saying, "Yeah, feel that, feel that, feel that." And then Brandy was laughing, and then I was laughing harder.</p>
158	<p>On the street I sometimes had to work with Brandy busy not three feet away. I even had to do three-ways sometimes with her. It was embarrassing. Brandy acted like she didn't care, but she didn't like it either when we had to do it like that.</p>
160	<p>I was barely dressed again when Daddy came back with the johns. There were five of them. Four were black and one was white. I thought the white one would go with brandy, but he wanted L.A. All the other johns wanted Brandy, but they all wanted to go right away. There was nearly a fight, but Daddy said something to them, and they calmed down and two agreed to go with me.</p>
161	<p>Over the next few hours, I could hear the men arriving and leaving. A lot of them complained at the door when they saw the way Daddy had us set up. They all had to wait to come in and pee until I was finished with whatever job I was doing. Some of them grinned when the door opened and I cam spilling out of it with another man. Some of them cursed.</p>
204	<p>Even for peeing, Lollipop had to squat over a bowl in her room, in front of the camera. She was supposed to empty and wash it herself the next morning. ...When brandies hear that, she clicked her tongue with disgust. "Perverts want to see you pee?" she asked. ...Lollipop shrugged. "I don't know," she said. "I just go when I have to go."</p>
206	<p>"She's only ten," L.A. pointed out. "they going to come looking for a ten-year old." ... "Actually, I'm eleven," Lollipop said. ... "Nobody know nothing about Lollipop." Daddy poured his own mild when he wasn't eating his cereal dry. ...L.A. looked at Lollipop. "Where your family?" ... "Just Uncle Ray as long as I can remember." ... "this is messed up," Brandy muttered. ... "She fucked already?" L.A. asked Daddy. ... "Or just do what she do in front of the computer by herself?" ... "Don't make me tell you to shut up again." ...Lollipop was nodding. "Yes." She spoke earnestly, but with a little bit of swagger, as if it was important to her that we were impressed. "I was so good on the Internet Uncle Ray said my fans could start visiting me in person as soon as I turned eleven." ...Brandy bugged her eyes at Daddy, "This is messed up," she said. "This is seriously messed up." ... "It's funny right?" Lollipop whispered to us girls as if Daddy couldn't hear. "All the things the men like to do. Only some of them like to pet you gently. I like that, but not the rest. But Uncle Ray said it's worth the money, and I agree because then I get everything I want pink and purple."</p>

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	<p>..."I'm really good at it, you know." Lollipop smiled. "Uncle ray taught me if you pretend the parts that hurt don't hurt and that it all feels good and you like it, they give you even more money."</p> <p>Even L.A. looked gray in the face. But in a second, I could see it wasn't for the right reasons. "You going to give her dates?" she asked Daddy.</p> <p>..."You going to give Lollipop dates?" L.A. asked again.</p> <p>...I thought he might reach over and swat her hard, but he grinned down at his phone, "She going to make us rich."</p>
211	<p>"Sometimes I don't sleep," Lollipop was explaining. "Sometimes they call in for a live show, Then I have to wake up and do stuff."</p>
223	<p>Nobody was sure where she came from, Truth would write. Lollipop had some guesses, and once I got her talking a little, it was hard to shut her up. Maybe she was sold by her mother or by someone else without her mother's permission, or kidnapped. Her beginning is muddy, but Uncle Ray is clear. He never let her go to school. She lived in apartments and motel rooms, not allowed out of them during school hours. In the summers she played outside in parks and playgrounds with Ray, and sometimes with his friends. Lollipop liked her life with Ray, enjoying the best food from the best chains, plenty of toys and clothes, and television.</p> <p>...At first she thought all girls at home in their rooms played naked with their uncles in front of a computer camera. When Ray began to tell her this was not the way it was and that she was special, living a special life, she believed it. She felt special. When Lollipop told me that part, she didn't realize what she was saying. She just puffed her little body and smirked, like she was some sort of celebrity. When Ray began asking her to do unpleasant and sometimes painful things and to smile and pretend she liked and wanted those things, she learned fast. She had to because he punished her by taking away meals and TV and sometimes punching her for refusing or crying or looking scared. He gave her prizes for doing a good job: pretty headbands and bracelets, pink ponies and princess and fairies and glitter glue and unicorn puzzles and shiny beads and cute sweatpants with words written on the backside in black cursive letters she couldn't read.</p> <p>...By the time Ray began to allow Lollipop's "fans" to visit in person, she knew exactly how to do the things Ray had taught her. She had also found a way to keep her face still, but friendly, like a kind of statue, so that nobody would punish her. Ray was extra nice after she did a good job with fans in person. He made her brownies and painted her fingernails pink, adding sparkles to her thumbs.</p>
237	<p>A few weeks later school was about to begin, and I was pretty sure Daddy wasn't going to let me go back. But if I went, I wouldn't have to work as many hours. I hated the johns' bodies inside of mine. I hated the way they pushed me this way and that way, onto my knees, onto my stomach, against a wall, on all fours, I hated the ones stupid enough to think they were kind and the ones who squeezed too hard or smelled so bad or did everything rough just to make it hurt. I hated smiling and agreeing and pretending. I had to go back to school.</p>
253	<p>Lollipop looked down at herself. "I'm getting fat. Is Daddy going to be mad?"</p> <p>..."How many times you bled from your stuff?" Brandy asked.</p> <p>...Lollipop shrugged. "I don't know."</p> <p>..."Try to know," L.A. said.</p>

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	<p>..."Maybe two or three times? From the dates, I think." ..."How long ago was the last time?" ...Lollipop thought about it. "A couple of months before I came here. It was just getting real hot. June maybe? Uncle Ray didn't like it. He said I couldn't give full service if I was bleeding." ..."What?" ..."Oh My God," L.A. said. "Little girl. You is pregnant."</p>
256	<p>"Dudes out there paying mad money for a look at that?" George asked, tilting his head toward Lollipop's room. ...Daddy nodded from where he was lying down on the couch. "Bunch of perverts out there." ..."Perverts going to travel for it too," George added. ..."What?" ..."Travel to get some of that in person. You got you some months. But you best get rid of the little bitch before any baby come. What you going to do with her?" ..."I'm a make my money first," Daddy said, "And then I'm a send her back down south."</p>
313	<p>"You take this newborn bitch", the note could say, "and you consider it a gift. You sell it to the highest bidder, and you will have more of me than you ever dreamed was possible."</p>

Profanity	Count
Bitch	3
Fuck	1
Shit	2