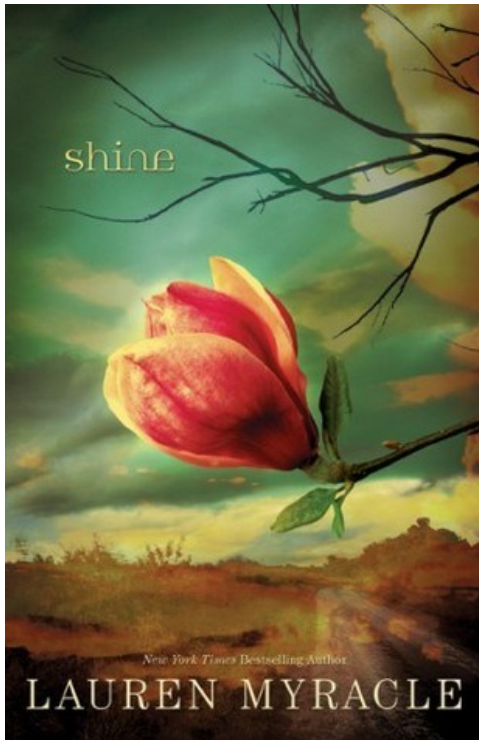


SHINE



Young Adult

By Lauren Myracle

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CONTENT WARNING

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Book Summary:

A thirteen-year-old girl discovers hidden secrets about drugs, alcohol, and sexuality in her small town while seeking to uncover whom assaulted her homosexual friend.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains profanity and derogatory terms; alternate sexualities; pedophilia; sexual activities including sexual assault; sexual nudity; drug and alcohol use and abuse; and violence.

4 /5

Not For Minors
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
14	Across the teen's bare chest, scrawled in blood, were the words Suck this, faggot.
15	The slur written on Truman's chest, coupled with the placement of the gasoline nozzle in the victim's mouth, suggests that Truman's attack was motivated by antigay sentiments. ...While she acknowledges that the teen struggled in the past with "sexual brokenness,"...
30	The slamming of doors layered over boisterous drunk laughter?
39	She said that Patrick was sexually broken.
42	My brother, Christian, called them a word that rhymed with "bits." I didn't call them anything, not boobs or breasts or bosoms or hooters. Patrick didn't call them anything either. "There were guys, too," he said. "In the pictures." "Gross," I said, delighted. "Could you see their....?" This time I didn't say "you knows." I just lifted my eyebrows.
43	Patrick swallowed. "Seeing those naked pictures..."
44	"Nuh-uh, 'cause you didn't pull up the dirty pictures," I argued.
54	A snake and a jerk and gay-bashing redneck, meaning he made jokes about how Patrick better not hit on him, how Patrick ran like a fag, how a man's a-hole was for "exit only."
76	He was gay.
94	And "Stay back, Candy pants. My lollipop ain't yours to suck." And "Lose the fag pants, Candy pants."
105	Instead of boots or sneakers, he wore flip-flops, which Tommy would have called gay. I was fairly sure this guy wasn't, though. Gay.
106	"You called me a mountain nigger..."
107	"You never called me a mountain nigger?"
113	I didn't see how it was ethnic, Patrick was gay, not black or Hispanic or whatever. But because Patrick was gay, that made the attack against him a hate crime.
123	"It happens. Freakin' tweakers, coming out like zombies in the night." Tweakers, meaning anyone dumb enough to do meth. ..."You think meth heads have been stealing her checks?" I asked.
125	"They thought it'd be funny to pull a gun on me," she said. "They were amped out of their frickin' minds, and Darren, he pointed his pistol at me and said, 'Hands up, bitch. We're gonna have to do a strip search.;"
126	"Does Tommy do meth?" I asked. Tommy was a lot of things, most of them bad. But a tweaker? Her eyebrows formed upside-down V's. "Um...yeah."
127	"Well, it's no hard. You want a gun, you're gonna get yourself a gun. Steal it, buy it from a friend, trade some crank for it. Okay?"
136	Dupree was a stoner, and he was always bobbing his head.

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139	"Do you crank?" I asked bluntly. ..."Someone said you work for Wally. The, um, meth cooker." ..."I used to work for Wally," he finally said. "A little running, a little dealing, all right? But I quit. I quit, dammit." A stone lodged in my gut, because this was my friend telling me this, telling me he used to sell meth.
140	"So you sold meth for Wally, but you didn't smoke it or sniff it or whatever?"
143	He reeked of pot. I couldn't tell if he was stoned right then or if it was eau de weed left over from the previous night.
148	Destiny sux cock.
149	I said, my brain going straight to meth-crank-ice-crystal.
154	His stoner act was just that, regardless of how much dope he actually smoked.
156	He liked girls, and the younger the better. Every winter he came into town for the Christmas pageant, because seeing little kids in angel robes gave him a boner. In the summer, he'd show up at the lake where younger kids went swimming- not Suicide Rock,... ...His thing made a teepee out of his swim trunks, right there in front of God and every living soul. Once he asked Gwennie if she wanted him to teach her to float on her back. I was ten. She was nine. We'd both known how to float on our backs for years.
160	He was a meth cooker and a lech, and for all I knew, he may have beamed Patrick in the skull with a baseball bat.
165	"-so, yeah, still waiting for my hookup," I heard. "You sure it's on the way?" ..."Cause I'm crashing hard, man," Wally's customer continued. "But it's gonna be the good stuff, right? None of that dishwasher crank?"
166	...also that Ridings McAllister, the man with the roadside produce stand, was a user. ...Maybe that's why Ridings needed a hookup. Maybe he needed it to stay awake when he'd rather fall into an endless sleep.
167	When I was ten, I caught my brother dropping his pants in front of the mirror on Aunt Tildy's bureau. ...but I should have tiptoed away when I saw what he was doing. ...My brother's penis was no longer soft and pink. It was bigger, and it jutted out from his body in a way that confused me. I shrank behind the door frame, but I couldn't tear my eyes away. That thatch of dark hair- when did he get that?
168	Later, when my own body started developing, I realized Christian had probably been admiring himself in Aunt Tildy's mirror that day, marveling at his manliness the way I would marvel at my tiny soft breasts, turning sideways in the mirror and pulling my shoulder blades together to make them more pronounced.
170	...if you went higher, to the rock the swimming hole was named for: Suicide Rock. ...Jumping from the higher-up Suicide Rock was likely to thrill you to death.
171	Every few summers that very thing happened, usually to guys hopped up on testosterone and beer who decided to play Tarzan, only without the vine.
172	Gwennie went for her daddy, who was half-drunk and baking the sun,

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178	When we first met, I hadn't gotten the vibe that he was gay.
179	"One, Patrick already has a boyfriend. And two, I'm not gay."
191	"But, Bailee-Ann, why would you want your doctor husband to give you drugs?" "Um, because they're fun?" She looked up from her work. "Not street drugs. God, I would never. But Beef knows this guy, and sometimes he gets Vicodin from him. Beef had his own prescription once,..."
193	"Well...good. But some kids are using it. Here in our own town." "Kids are doing meth in every town in the country, Cat. Dang. Get your head out of your butt." "Do you know when it started? Um, people in Black Crack doing meth?" Beef doing meth? "...That's when my mama started seeing more tweakers showing up in the ER. She said the Mexicans were running it through Atlanta, and from Atlanta to here."
196	Beef made me feel like a slut when I kissed him, because he pushed me away and said I smelled like a brewery. ...Because he quit school, and because he was possibly selling and/or using meth.
203	I felt bad for him, because it wasn't his fault. His mama drank too much when he was in the womb.
226	"They drink. They smoke a little wee. They go to parties and hit on girls, and that's all life is to them, one big kegger."
227	Think toothless hillbillies and cousins marrying cousins and corn liquor distilled with battery acid. That was Hangtree.
232	Then he'd ask Aunt Tildy for the privilege of killing a chicken so she could fry it up and serve it with dumplings, and as she was making dinner, he'd pop out to the garage and offer Daddy a job so he didn't have to be drunk anymore.
233	I also told him about Gwennie, who appeared to have a thing for Patrick despite the fact that Patrick was gay.
234	Destiny had said that Dupree would freak out if his mama found out about his drug life, and Dupree said Patrick wasn't a saint, but a tattletale.
241	Faggots? No tears for queers?
246	"If she ever did try to be one, I'd stop her, because no tears for queers, like Beef said. He told me not to go down that faggot path, bot ever, 'cause one way or another, faggots get what they deserve."
265	It was time for me to go, because just as sure as God made plump, juicy peaches, Ridings had left already. And just as sure as God made peaches, I knew he wasn't coming back.
270	Beef was out there with him, both of them sitting in lawn chairs and sipping moonshine from mason jars. Aunt Tildy thought they were too young to be drinking, but Daddy let them, so Aunt Tildy couldn't do a thing about it.
272	Christian poured Tommy a jelly jar full of moonshine, which Tommy accepted, drained, and held out straight away for a refill.
274	And there was me in my too-small dress, my nipples poking tents in the fabric without my having any say over it.

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277	<p>His breath smelled like my daddy's corn liquor. He fumbled at the elastic of my panties, but my cutoffs were too tight, and he couldn't work his fingers to where he wanted. "C'mon now, Cat. Lemme feel how wet you are."</p> <p>I didn't know what he meant. I pressed my spine into the sofa to get away from him, but moving like that raised my hips and loosened the hug of my shorts. His fingers slithered under my panties.</p> <p>"Oh yeah," he said, moving his fingers the best he could. "See now?"</p> <p>I was lost. Tommy was touching a part of me that no one was supposed to. I was pushing against him, but he was so much bigger than me. And my throat, it was like someone had wrapped a band around it and cinched it so tight, I could hardly breathe. The sounds I made- because I tried, I did- they came from some other girl. They were please and stop, but so trembly that they simply shuddered up into the air.</p>
279	<p>By that point, Tommy had unbuttoned my shorts and yanked them down around my thighs, along with my panties. I was gripping them, trying to get them back up, but he was stronger. He no longer had his hand down my tank top, but instead his right arm stretched along the back of the sofa, bearing his weight while his left arm rode the length of my belly, straight as a rod until the sharp flex of his wrist. With Aunt Tildy standing frozen behind him in the doorway, he got one finger up inside me. I whimpered. He kept at it, the heel of his palm driving into my pelvic bone, until he got in two more.</p> <p>Then he moaned. That sick bastard moaned, and Aunt Tildy snapped out of her trance.</p> <p>..."I gotta go," I said through my tears and snot. I squirmed, but that just made it worse. It hurt. I could feel his fingernails, which I knew to be grimy with oil, and I squeezed shut my eyes, wanting to make everything disappear.</p> <p>There was a bang outside, explosively loud, and Tommy jerked away. He jumped to his feet and said, "Fuck," as panicked as I'd ever heard him. He straightened his jeans as best he could over the bulge of his crotch, but already he was striding for the door and out of the house.</p>
306	<p>"That's what the guys 'discussed' with him? His meth use?"</p> <p>..."Tommy knew firsthand how messed up meth made you. Like with the cow?"</p> <p>"Wait," I said, remembering what she'd said at her house about running meth was easy money, and how certain folks found themselves new jobs when the local meth cookers sprang up.</p>
307	<p>"I think he works there. The boyfriend." She cleared her throat. "I think it's, um, a gay place."</p>
309	<p>"Like, good gay and nasty gay?"</p>
310	<p>She shook her head, and I thought, meth.</p>
315	<p>He said his father gave him his first drink when he was four years old. It was whiskey, and Jason's daddy thought it would be funny to give it to his little boy.</p> <p>"I remember how warm I felt after it went down," Jason said.</p> <p>...In Jason's case, the sick person was his father, who was nice enough when he was sober, but mean as a snake when he was drunk.</p> <p>He'd hit Jason and then act all self-righteous, as if the hitting had been Jason's fault.</p>

Page	Content
323	"Well, I have a friend in Black Creek- that's where I'm from- and he got beat up for being gay," I said.
325	"Someone who, ah, trades sex for drugs." ..."Sometimes he be selling, other times he be looking for a hookup."
326	"Did any straight guys ever come here? To buy drugs or sell drugs or whatever?"
328	...Beef pushing Bailee-Ann away and blaming it on her being drunk. ...According to the Kid, Beef had traded sex for drugs.
331	At eleven thirty or so, Tommy suggested a beer run, though his real motivation was to collect Patrick.
334	"He acted strange that day in Toombsboro," I told Jason. "Like...sexual, in a weird way." "How old is he?" "Eleven, same as your sister."
335	Being gay didn't make a person dangerous. Being lonely and depressed enough to groom a little kid into worshipping him was a different story. Add meth to the picture, and Beef's mood swings and Robert's absolute inability to tone himself down when toning down was called for...
343	His Bob Marley shirt had ketchup on it, and he looked stoned as always.
353	"I can see your titties! Look, Robert! Cat has titties!"
357	He wasn't a gay basher was what I meant, but as I thought it through, I realized he was, in a backward sort of way. Maybe he hated the gayness inside of him,...
359	..."just a fucking fraidy-cat faggot!"

Profanity	Count
Ass	3
Bitch	7
Cock	2
Dick	1
Dyke	1
Fag/Faggot/Homo	27
Fuck	18
Nigger	2
Piss	3
Pussy	1
Shit	19