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# Paperweight



## Synopsis

This emotionally haunting and beautifully written young adult debut delves into the devastating impact of trauma and loss, in the vein of Laurie Halse Anderson's *Wintergirls*. Seventeen-year-old Stevie is trapped. In her life. In her body. And now in an eating-disorder treatment center on the dusty outskirts of the New Mexico desert. Life in the center is regimented and intrusive, a nightmare come true. Nurses and therapists watch Stevie at meal time, accompany her to the bathroom, and challenge her to eat the foods she's worked so hard to avoid. Her dad has signed her up for sixty days of treatment. But what no one knows is that Stevie doesn't plan to stay that long. There are only twenty-seven days until the anniversary of her brother Josh's death—the death she caused. And if Stevie gets her way, there are only twenty-seven days until she, too, will end her life. *Paperweight* follows seventeen-year-old Stevie's journey as she struggles not only with a life-threatening eating disorder, but with the question of whether she can ever find absolution for the mistakes of her past—and whether she truly deserves to.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: HarperTeen; Reprint edition (March 7, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062335758

ISBN-13: 978-0062335753

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 89 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #47,159 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Depression & Mental Illness #51 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Gay & Lesbian #185 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship

## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up "This realistic tale opens as Stephanie (Stevie) arrives at a 60-day residential treatment facility for eating disorder, located in rural New Mexico. Back in Atlanta, Stevie thought she had it all figured out—how to starve herself slowly (except when she got drunk, binged, and purged) so that she would be dead in a year. The treatment center proves to be a challenge, though, and a strict

routine dictates Stevie's existence day to day: therapy with "Shrink," carefully portioned meals and snacks designed to help Stevie gain weight, group therapy, and medications. The teen resists her therapist's efforts to talk about her past, but flashbacks reveal the events that led to the extreme illness she is now battling. Joshua (her beloved "Irish twin" brother) died in a car accident nearly one year ago and the protagonist blames herself. An enabling friend Eden seems to be a mysterious reason for the accident. And Stevie's restrictive and distant mother abandoned the family to go live in Paris. The girl's exterior armor is painstakingly chipped away (with setbacks, of course) and she begins to uncover the truth of her past until it all becomes clear to Stevie and to readers. Despite her flaws, it is hard not to feel for Stevie. A carefully constructed buildup still lends to a quick read, which is hard to put down. Haston deals respectfully with the difficult subject matters of eating disorders and focuses on the recovery rather than the disease. VERDICT Recommended for fans of Laurie Halse Anderson's *Wintergirls* (Viking, 2009).â "Tara Kehoe, New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center, Trenton --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

â œA carefully constructed buildup still lends to a quick read, which is hard to put down.â • (School Library Journal)â œHastonâ™s contribution to the genre stands out for the complexity of its characters and for small, telling details that demonstrate just how difficult recovery can be.â • (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

All I can say is I love shrink . This story is an emotional journey. This story is real. This author is amazing. We carry guilt shame and pain through our amazing gift of life. We numb it sometimes through different routes. This author journeys through a few ways and she somehow writes inn a way of hope and strength. Get out your tissues and read this one.

I gave Haston's novel 5 stars because of one word: authentic. Not once did I feel a character or event was contrived. I've been through my own share of similar situations, and even to my critical eye, was there any exaggeration of character or event. Even Eden was convincing to me. Following Stevie as she goes from a hardened, set-in - stone orientation toward her life after her brother's death, to a cracking of that rigidity has been rewarding and enriching to my own life. There is always hope in every tragedy. But Stevie's struggle is a very real story of the difficulty of finding that hope workout God-occasioned help. I highly recommend PAPERWEIGHT.

This story is so moving and evocative. I instantly felt part of the circle and looked forward to delving

into the world of Stevie and Anna and the gang. I could hardly wait to get into bed at night and read. Beautifully written! My fav line is one, and I paraphrase, "family are the people you stand next to when the bad things happen" - wow. Lovely!

I can honestly say that there were certain parts of this book that made me weep, beautifully written, I really liked how harsh the main character was and that she underwent such a transformation. I devoured this book, if you like something a little deeper, a little haunting and a little hopeful this is the book for you. My only complaint is I wish that the ending would have been a little more fleshed out.

An amazing story with great characters. You get to see the main character grow before your eyes. A gripping story that shows the reality of loss and mental illness.

I waited to read this one for a while. Waiting to find the right time for such an emotional read, but now I don't know why! It was wonderful without being too dark and gritty. Can't wait to read more from Meg Hatson.

I really enjoyed the second half of this book, the first part never connected with me, I didn't like the way Stevie didn't give anything a chance. The second part was more heartfelt and warm.

This book was very well written, and a very interesting read. Very very sad in places. Captures the frame of mind of somebody inpatient, with an eating disorder, in a real way. To the point where it may trigger some.

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