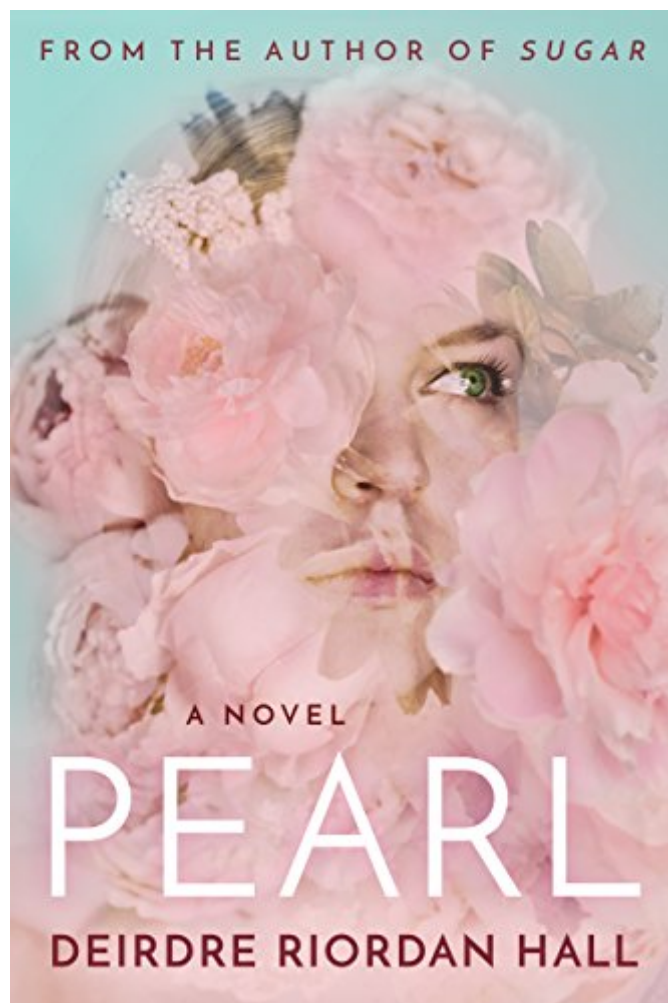


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Pearl



Synopsis

Run fast and run far, unless you're fearless. Unless you're courageous. I'm not, but I'd like to be. Pearl Jaeger is seventeen and homeless after drugs, poverty, and addiction unraveled the life she shared with JJ, her formerly glamorous rock star mother. This moment of happiness is fleeting; someone will take it from me. When tragedy brings a chance to start over at an elite boarding school, she doesn't hesitate. Yet the only salvation comes from an art teacher as troubled as Pearl, and she faces the stark reality that what she thought she wanted isn't straightforward. I trace the outline of my reflection in a window. I am no more than a replica of my mother. This is not the self-portrait I want to paint. Through the friendships she forms at school—especially with Grant, a boy who shows Pearl what it means to trust and forgive—she begins to see a path not defined by her past. But when confronted with the decision to be courageous or to take the easy way forged by her mother's failures, which direction will Pearl choose?

Book Information

File Size: 3792 KB

Print Length: 354 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 1503948587

Publisher: Skyscape (March 1, 2016)

Publication Date: March 1, 2016

Sold by: Â Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00WTLWQK0

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #81,819 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #9

in Â Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Homelessness & Poverty #13 in Â Â Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Literature & Fiction > Personal Health > Substance Abuse #13 in Â Â Kindle Store > Kindle

Customer Reviews

This book was comprised of several things I love: traipsing around New York City, boarding school drama, and a main character you desperately want to root for. Pearl is the daughter of a drug addicted, has-been rock star. Unlike the typical rock star tale, Pearl and her mother are not filthy rich—they are far from it, living in a slum and struggling to get by. Pearl is a victim of her circumstances but when her mom goes away to rehab, Pearl's wealthy uncle sends her to boarding school. This is her chance to start over and all she has to do is not blow it. Easy, right? HA. The author's writing style is as flawless and beautiful as it was in SUGAR, one of my all-time favorite books, so once again I was delighted to be transported into an incredibly realistic situation as I read PEARL. I slipped into her shoes, I understood why she screwed up when she did, why she made the choices she did, why she felt so freaking worthless all the time. I loved when she loved and I cried when she cried. AND BOY DID I CRY. That is the magic of this novel: the way that it makes you feel. It really put into perspective how things aren't black and white. You're not just good or bad, worthy or unworthy. Friends can be friends, and sometimes they're not so much. Sometimes you are alone, but sometimes, you're not. Pearl, or PJ, as she transformed herself, finds a way to rise from the burning ashes of her mother's bad influences and become the person she deserves to be. If you're a fan of Sarah Dessen or Maggie Stiefvater, you'll love this book. Some of my favorite lines: "The cloud-smudged sky, rows and rows of granite headstones, and my ashen heart are like a black-and-white photo, a snapshot captured during some other lifetime." "The only enemy you have is yourself. Stay there, with her, until you aren't enemies anymore." "I try to like him less, because the truth is he causes the pain in the center of my chest that burns like frigid poison, and yet he possesses the elixir too."

I really dig the author's writing style. There's something about it that really draws me in and wraps me up in the story being told. Much like Sugar, Pearl is a raw and gritty story that proves life isn't perfect, but it's still worth living. Pearl was a wonderful main character. She was flawed and battled with her own demons. I loved that through everything she was still someone we could root for. The struggles that she faced in the wake of her mother's addiction were realistically done and painted a true to life picture of how addiction affects everyone in an addict's life. Pearl's story is one

worth reading. I love character driven books and Pearl is definitely a favorite for this year.

I quickly got caught up in Pearl's world, and the slow build of her growth and maturity unfolded with beautiful imagery and intense conversations. As a reader, I enjoyed learning about each character who interacts with Pearl, and I appreciated that her journey was not the typical Cinderella story.

Good read!

I felt so much reading this one. (Also read Sugar). Pearl seemed so real. Working in the social services, I read about "Pearls" daily. Was grateful for a hopeful ending.

I love this book & the way Deirdra explains her young characters. They are so real! These stories take me back to those same feelings I fought at that age when I was in high school!

So originally written. Not at all predictable. Also there were many interesting insights about life and growing emotionally. Enjoyed this very cool story.

I liked the book until the end when Pearl got into drugs - totally unnecessary for the outcome of the book. Really turned me off.

Great story, and hard to put down. I listened to the audio version as well, and I really loved the narration.

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