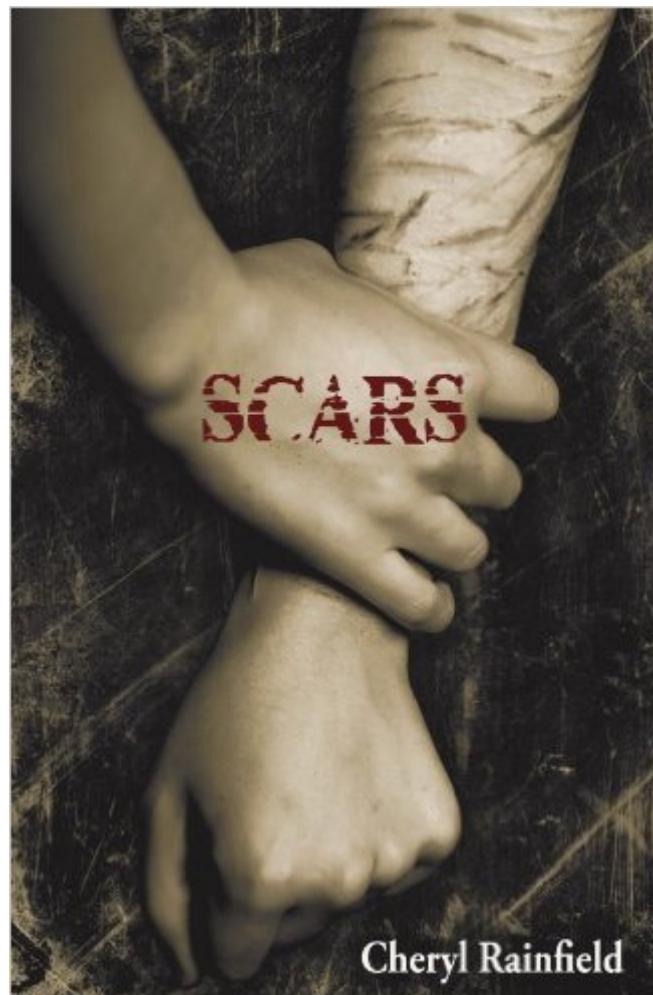


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# Scars



## **Synopsis**

Kendra, a sexual abuse survivor, cuts to cope with the pain, but she doesn't remember the identity of who abused her. Kendra makes a friend in Meghan, and falls in love with her. When Kendra's abuser starts threatening her, she must find a way to face her past and stop hurting herself--before it's too late.

## **Book Information**

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ  [See all reviewsÂ \(277 customer reviews\)](#)

Best Sellers Rank: #72,838 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Self Mutilation #28 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Sexual Abuse #42 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Physical & Emotional Abuse

## **Customer Reviews**

I don't hide the fact that I'm a rape victim - or that I used to be a self-mutilator (still am, depending on who you are and how you define SM - I cope now with tattoos and body piercing because it's safer than slashing up my arms or legs and it allows me to take something that makes me feel awful and turn it into art, but that doesn't always sit well with everyone else. Truth be told, I stopped cutting because I found out that one of my friends cut as well - and he scared me into turning the situation into something that really did help me cope without risking my life). I don't talk about it very often because I have problems discussing these topics, but I do read a lot of writing about both subjects. And, very often, I find that the fictional books aren't very realistic. They try to gloss over the bad parts and make everything hunky-dory at the end. Not so with this book. The author doesn't gloss over the pain and, while things do end on a more positive note, I wasn't given the impression that Kendra's life will just be A-okay now. She still has problems on the road ahead of her. She still has good days and bad days, but she's going to get through them because she's a survivor. And I love that ending because it gives hope to people like me. So I have to give the author kudos - she did

something very rare and I hope this book helps other kids who find themselves in a similar situation. Too often, the people around me have a hard time understanding what I'm going through - from now on, I'll recommend this book to them and let it show them.

This is a book I read in a day and then took two days to digest. I highly recommend it. That said, this is a book about prolonged sexual abuse and self-injury, in addition to being a book about a girl whose mother is not happy about her daughter's new girlfriend. It is not for everyone, but it will undoubtedly be really important for more than a few someones. Throughout the course of the book, the bulk of which spans what feels like only a week, Kendra relives her abuse, through flashbacks that hit her out of (almost) nowhere and with her therapist, as she tries to remember the identity of her abuser. She also cuts herself, repeatedly, to cope with the pain and the panic that these memories bring on. Rainfield portrays all of this realistically and sensitively. She lets us inside Kendra's head to see her pain, shame, insecurities, fear and more. More importantly, she shows how much Kendra appreciates and depends on those who support her, even if Kendra doesn't always show it herself. It is Kendra's chosen family, her therapist, her art teacher, her mentor, and her girlfriend, that make it possible for her to face her abuse and ultimately her abuser. There were some moments in the book when the dialog seemed less than authentic. Using Carolyn, Kendra's therapist, Rainfield can realistically work phrases like "you're not the one who deserves to be hurt, Kendra. He is," into a conversation about Kendra's self-injury. Instead when Meghan, Kendra's girlfriend of a day, says it, it can be a bit jarring (139)\*. However, it is the right things to say and important for readers to, well, read. While the few exchanges like this between Kendra and Meghan pulled me momentarily out of the story, they are easily outweighed by the cute wow-you're-pretty moments that these two more often share. Their budding relationship adds the happiness that Kendra so desperately needs and the normalcy that the average reader will need in order to relate to all the Kendra is going through. Cheryl Rainfield has also included an annotated bibliography of web resources, help lines and crisis support, books, articles, and videos for victims of sexual and ritual abuse, those who self-harm, teens thinking about suicide, and teens in the process of coming out or dealing with homophobia. She also highlights resources specifically for friends, family, and other vital supporters of people dealing with these issues. Book source: Review copy from publisher.\*All quotes were taken from an uncorrected proof. Exact wording and page numbers may not match the final copy.

This book was so haunting, raw, emotional, yet still filled with hope; Rainfield did a great job

balancing all the emotions in Kendra's story. What I also really loved about this book is how it treats the lesbian aspect- it's definitely there, but it's not at the forefront or anything and a big deal isn't made about it when it does come up. Kendra already knows and has accepted that she's lesbian; yes, there is the requisite parental blowup about it but it's handled well in the scene where she comes out and they work toward accepting their daughter. Anyway, the main focus here is Kendra's sexual abuse when she was younger and the cutting she does now to help with the pain and trauma as a result of that abuse. She has no idea who her abuser was, but as the book goes on, more memories come to light and we see the finger being pointed in several directions. It's a hard mystery to solve, and the last 50 pages were read in one big gulp because the climax and reveal were so compelling. I was honestly really shocked at who the abuser turned out to be. The romance in the book was handled really well too. It starts off with them being friends and growing closer with each interaction and the secrets they let each other in on. I thought Kendra and Meghan made such a cute couple and I loved the scenes they had together. I also loved seeing Kendra's neighbor Sandy, a gay man, and their interactions, as well as those that involved Emil, Sandy's boyfriend. It was nice to see that she had that kind of support system outside of her family, due to her mom being a bit of a bitch and her dad being barely home. Overall, this was a great, powerful book that featured a compelling, haunting yet hopeful story and some well-written, fleshed out characters. I did have a small complaint (though I guess it's really more of a thought than complaint) about it but it's pretty spoiler-y so if you want to discuss it with me, send me an email.

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