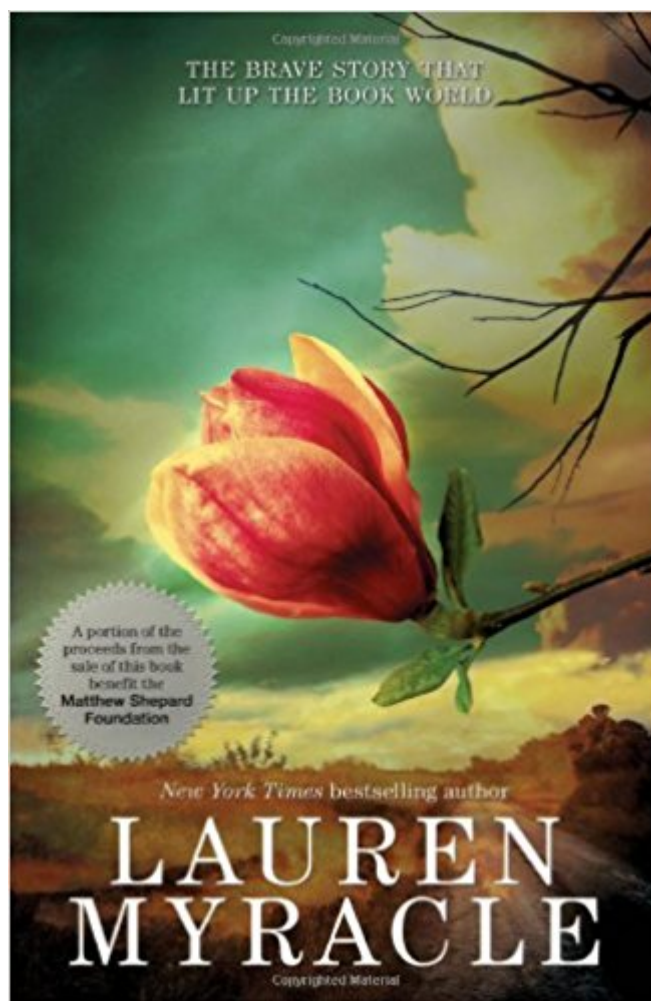


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Shine



Synopsis

When her best guy friend falls victim to what seems like a vicious hate crime, 16-year-old Cat sets out to discover who in her small town did it. Richly atmospheric, this daring mystery mines the secrets of a tightly knit Southern community and examines the strength of will it takes to go against everyone you know in the name of justice. Against a backdrop of poverty, clannishness, drugs, and intolerance, Myracle has crafted a harrowing coming-of-age tale couched in a deeply intelligent mystery. Smart, fearless, and compassionate, this is an unforgettable work from a beloved author. Praise for Shine: Cat eventually uncovers the truth in a cliffhanging climax in which she confronts fear, discovers that love is stronger than hate and truly shines. Raw, realistic and compelling. "Kirkus Reviews" The page-turning mystery and Cat's inspiring trajectory of self-realization will draw readers in and give them plenty to ponder. "The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books" Dramatic in both content and presentation. "Los Angeles Times" Myracle captures well the regret that many feel for things in their past about which they are ashamed. Cat's reflections on these moments are spot-on. "School Library Journal" AWARD: WINNER: Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award for young adult fiction

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Customer Reviews

Lauren Myracle is the author of the New York Times bestselling Internet Girls series (ttyl, ttfn, and l8r, g8r), Rhymes with Witches, Bliss, and the new Flower Power series, among many other books for teens and young people. She lives in Colorado with her family. Visit her online at www.laurenmyracle.com.

I have followed Myracle's career since the beginning to try to understand what my daughters and older grandchildren were so excited about, so I picked up Shine thinking I knew what was coming. I didn't. This book isn't Winnie or Zoe or Mad Maddie. Nor is it Vicks or Jessie. Myracle's readers will know to whom I refer. Those of you who aren't can read Shine without being misdirected by prior knowledge of Myracle's sunny prose and "all's well that ends well" philosophy. Shine is gritty--sometimes raw and always intense. It drags prejudices and human frailty into the spotlight for close examination, dealing with subjects that aren't sunny, such as homophobia and drug use, poverty and isolation. It is not like anything Myracle has ever written before, but like her prior stories, it is well-crafted and entertaining. Shine belongs in the adult section. I think it is her best work.

Excellent! I enjoyed every word!

THIS IS A MUST READ FOR EVERYONE! This is a book that is banned in many places. There are uncomfortable issues. It holds up a mirror for all of us. LOVE NOT HATE IS WHAT WE ALL NEED. You may not think that your remarks or inaction, increase the hate that may result in crimes against other humans. The main character is a young teen, Cat and we see her metamorphosis from invisible to actively seeking answers to help her friend. Get the book, borrow from your library, read it on Kindle, seek it out and do not let it be banned by those who are misguided.

This book was so extremely good! Although some parts would move fast and were hard to understand. You need to be a strong good reader to understand the content.

Though I bought the book by mistake (I thought it was the movie SHINE...the one that got an Oscar some years ago) I found the book really interesting.

One of the best books I have read in a long while. I couldn't put it down.

It is October, 1998. I am close to the end of the first semester of my senior year of college, just a few months away from beginning my student teaching experience and one month away from my 21st birthday. Early in the month, the news is dominated by the story of Matthew Shepard, a boy the same age as me, who has been tortured and left for dead in a field in Laramie, Wyoming. His crime? Being gay. On October 12, Matthew died in a hospital, unable to recover from his injuries.

This crime haunted me then and still does today. How is it that human beings can be so cruel to one another? What drives someone to act out so violently just because someone else is different? Reading the first pages of Lauren Myracle's *Shine* brought back all these emotions. The book begins with a newspaper clipping, "stunned residents of Black Creek, North Carolina, pray for seventeen-year-old Patrick Truman, beaten and left for dead outside the convenience store where he works." The article goes on to describe the abuse Patrick suffered, clearly the victim of a hate crime. All the emotions I felt in college hearing about Matthew Shepard came back at once. This introductory article would not be the last time this story brought me to tears, Patrick's story is agonizing and, unfortunately, very familiar. *Shine* is narrated by Cat, one of Patrick's friends, who struggles with feelings of guilt for not having been a better friend and anger at the abuse he suffered not only the night he was beaten, but daily as he was the victim of school bullies. Unsatisfied with the attention the local police are giving this crime; Cat takes it upon herself to investigate and to bring justice to Patrick, who lies comatose in the hospital. Myracle is a master story-teller with an uncanny insight into the human experience. None of her characters are stock, none are uncomplicated. Readers will recognize in the characters the complexity of the human experience. In flashback, Cat describes a particularly terrible instance of bullying that took place on the first day of high school. Patrick is pushed into the boy's bathroom and tormented by some of the school jocks. Instead of helping her friend, Cat turns a blind eye, afraid if she stands up for him, she will also become a victim. Those are the kinds of choices humans, whether teenagers or adults, are faced with every day. How many times have you turned a blind eye to something because it was easier than getting involved? We all know what the right thing to do is, but sometimes are unable to speak up for fear of drawing attention to ourselves. Through Cat's journey, readers will be inspired to take a stand and will be forced to evaluate their own actions towards others. Equal attention is paid by Myracle to creating a cast of supporting characters who are every bit as human and imperfect as Cat. She brings to life the reality of living below the poverty line in the south. The school Cat attends is divided sharply down socio-economic lines. Patrick, as it turns out, is not the only one who has been the victim of bullying. Cat has also experienced torment, though she suffers her victimization silently, afraid of the ramifications of standing up to a rich and powerful family in the town. What would happen if her aunt, with whom she lives, is fired because she speaks up against her boss? Again, Myracle deftly illustrates the painful decisions we are faced with every day. Beyond her mastery of characterization, Myracle is a master of words, able to paint beautiful or terrifying pictures with her words. Through her brilliant use of imagery, she is able to draw readers into the scene and set the mood. "Patrick's house was a ghost, dust coated the windows, the petunias in the

flower boxes bowed their heads, and spiderwebs clotted the eaves of the porch. Once I might have marveled at the webs--how delicate they were, how intricate--but today I saw ghastly silk ropes." These first lines of chapter one paint a beautifully haunting picture and let readers feel the pain Cat is feeling--a house that once was beautiful and full of life is now empty and somber, symbolic of both Cat and Patrick. Myracle is indeed a master wordsmith. To say *Shine* haunted me would be an understatement; I struggled to write this review hoping to do justice to the book. The story is both tragic and inspirational and is one that needs to be read. Parents, kids, teachers, everyone needs to read this book--the story is too important not to be heard. After reading Cat's tale, you will see the world differently, you will be different yourself. This may be the most important YA release of 2011. Review from [mymercurialmusings.com]

For a young adult book, *Shine* tackles some pretty adult subject-matter. Much like real-life Matthew Shepard's tragedy, this book of fiction's Patrick is beaten up, tied up, and left for dead outside of the convenience store/gas station in which he works. The novel starts with the newspaper article of Patrick's situation, so we don't have to see/read the grisly details as they occur ourselves. We're given just what the media knows and provides, and it's actually a great way to start this story. We never really get to know Patrick, though, as he's in a coma. Instead, the main character is Cat, a friend of his for many years until recently when she mysteriously backed away. Living in a small mountain town in North Carolina, Cat's had her own tragedies, which we gradually learn throughout the book. The entire story is from her point of view. She's a pretty simple teenager, in her words, thoughts, and life. She lives pretty simple, too. She doesn't have a cell phone, computer, or many modern-day conveniences. After Cat's estranged friend Patrick is left for dead, she makes it her goal to find out who did this to him. She figures this will help right the wrong of distancing herself from him. When we eventually discover the culprit(s) from Cat's findings, there aren't multiple twists and a huge "a ha" moment. The reader can pretty much see it coming long before Cat does. The word "shine" is referenced throughout the book in many ways. Mainly, it translates to letting yourself be who you are, to let your true self shine, no matter what others think about you. Overall, the book was a decent read, but it was a little too slow-moving for my taste, and I wasn't crazy for the way the book was written due to Cat's simplemindedness. For teenagers/young adults, though, I think this exposes them to how cruel and intolerant people can be, and how they may be able to make changes to their own lives to help correct that.

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