

Sugar

By Deirdre Riordan Hall

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I'm the fat Puerto Rican–Polish girl who doesn't feel like she belongs in her skin, or anywhere else for that matter. I've always been too much and yet not enough.

Sugar Legowski-Gracia wasn't always fat, but fat is what she is now at age seventeen. Not as fat as her mama, who is so big she hasn't gotten out of bed in months. Not as heavy as her brother, Skunk, who has more meanness in him than fat, which is saying something. But she's large enough to be the object of ridicule wherever she is: at the grocery store, walking down the street, at school. Sugar's life is dictated by taking care of Mama in their run-down home—cooking, shopping, and, well, eating. A lot of eating, which Sugar hates as much as she loves.

When Sugar meets Even (not Evan—his nearly illiterate father misspelled his name on the birth certificate), she has the new experience of someone seeing *her* and not her body. As their unlikely friendship builds, Sugar allows herself to think about the future for the first time, a future not weighed down by her body or her mother.

Soon Sugar will have to decide whether to become the girl that Even helps her see within herself or to sink into the darkness of the skin-deep role her family and her life have created for her.

Sugar By Deirdre Riordan Hall Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #80127 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2015-06-01
- Released on: 2015-06-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.00" w x 5.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 266 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 10 Up—Mercy Bella "Sugar" Legowski-Gracia is fat. Food is her comfort and her haven, especially sweets. Of course, she has a lot to seek refuge from, since her mother hurt her ankle the previous spring and took to her bed. Since then, Sugar has done everything around the house. She's looking forward to school starting to get away from Mama's relentless demands, except then she'll have to put up with the bullying from her classmates. The first five chapters of this novel are dark and depressing. Then Sugar meets Even, and things begin to change. Even seems to like Sugar the way she is, and her life begins to brighten, but she still has to live with Mama, who doesn't seem to value Sugar's happiness. Riordan Hall has created a believable protagonist, and the novel deals well with the themes of differences and bullying. There are some instances of verbal and physical abuse, which may be problematic for sensitive teens. VERDICT A unique perspective on familial abuse/bullying.—Marlyn Beebe, Long Beach Public Library, Los Alamitos, CA

Review

"*Sugar* is about a teenage girl who seeks solace in the sugary, greasy foods she both craves and despises...Yet Sugar summons the strength to find her own inner beauty, and it's not a Size 0. Her triumph is heartbreaking and triumphant." —*Denver Post Pages*

"*Sugar* by Deirdre Riordan Hall is one of those books that sneaks up and hits you in the gut with its powerful truth. *Sugar* is not easy to read. Between the nearly pornographic description of food and the cruel slanders of those who are supposed to love her, this novel will take you down the dark path Sugar is walking. But as she sees a light at the end of the tunnel, you will be reminded of hope and the importance of loving yourself first and foremost." —Hypable

"Sugar's character has depth, and her unhappiness and determination to conquer it are realistically portrayed. Readers will sympathize with Sugar and understand her struggle to reach her full potential." —*Publishers Weekly*

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About the Author

During her teens, Deirdre Riordan Hall traveled throughout the United States and Europe, developing a love for stories and a desire to connect with worlds—imagined or real—on the page. She has written *To the Sea*, *Surfaced*, and the Follow Your Bliss series. When not spending time with her family, writing, or traveling,

Hall is at the beach, pretending to be a mermaid.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Vanesa Thomas:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive at this point, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to stay than other is high. For you personally who want to start reading any book, we give you this particular Sugar book as basic and daily reading book. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

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