

## **Speak**

**Laurie Halse Anderson**

**Reviewed by: Anika 16**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity**

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Melinda dreads the day she will go back to school. She has become an outcast after ratting a party out to the cops. But no one knows that she was raped at the party, nor will they listen to her. Because of that, Melinda keeps to herself, never speaking. She manages to get by in high school because of art. Art allows her to express the feelings she can't say. But high school is full of many other dangers though, and Melinda doesn't know if she can speak out about it.

Speak was certainly an empowering read. It sheds light on the reality of high school. It's not quite the wonderful musical everyone thinks it is. With everyone forming their own groups, someone is bound to feel left out like Melinda. And that's why she can be such a relatable character. Teenagers can connect to her high school experiences and understand what it's like not being able to fit in. Melinda's story was a gripping and gritty one that I believe any teen could benefit from. It certainly pulled at my heartstrings with the ending. It makes way for brilliant and deep discussions about major and minor issues, from trauma to cliques.

Despite that, there are some things readers may not enjoy. Melinda has flashbacks from when she was raped and drugged. There is also some violence and bad language present in the story. Because of that, I would suggest this book to anyone 14 years or older. This book would be a great gift to any teenager out there, especially those who in search of a voice.

### **Recommended Titles:**

Shout by Laurie Halse Anderson

All the Rage by Courtney Summers

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson

Prom by Laurie Halse Anderson