



# Burned

*Ellen Hopkins*

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**Burned** Ellen Hopkins

**I do know things really began to spin out of control after my first sex dream.**

It all started with a dream. Nothing exceptional, just a typical fantasy about a boy, the kind of dream that most teen girls experience. But Pattyn Von Stratten is not like most teen girls. Raised in a religious—yet abusive—family, a simple dream may not be exactly a sin, but it could be the first step toward hell and eternal damnation.

This dream is a first step for Pattyn. But is it to hell or to a better life? For the first time Pattyn starts asking questions. Questions seemingly without answers—about God, a woman's role, sex, love—mostly love. What is it? Where is it? Will she ever experience it? Is she deserving of it?

It's with a real boy that Pattyn gets into real trouble. After Pattyn's father catches her in a compromising position, events spiral out of control until Pattyn ends up suspended from school and sent to live with an aunt she doesn't know.

Pattyn is supposed to find salvation and redemption during her exile to the wilds of rural Nevada. Yet what she finds instead is love and acceptance. And for the first time she feels worthy of both—until she realizes her old demons will not let her go. Pattyn begins down a path that will lead her to a hell—a hell that may not be the one she learned about in sacrament meetings, but it is hell all the same.

In this riveting and masterful novel told in verse, Ellen Hopkins takes readers on an emotional roller-coaster ride. From the highs of true love to the lows of abuse, Pattyn's story will have readers engrossed until the very last word.

## Burned Details

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Author : Ellen Hopkins

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# From Reader Review Burned for online ebook

## Lindsey says

\*This review has attracted some attention and discussion and caused some misunderstandings. I have edited it to be more objective.

Please humor me as I soliloquize about a side issue instead of writing a review—although really it doesn't matter whether you care to humor me or not; I'm going to say my say just the same. Isn't the internet wonderful? MWA-HA-HA-HA. Oh, the rush of unchecked power.

*Crank* happened to pass briefly through my hands on its way to some library patron, and I gave it a quick glance-over. The free-verse writing was different from anything I'd ever considered as a form of novelization, but I was caught by the easy flow of it. When *Burned* came to my attention, I decided to take a closer look.

If I'd considered what to expect, judging from the summary, here's the story I thought I was getting: Girl is confused and confined by her family's religion. Girl has a fit of teen-aged rebellion. Girl is sent to live with crazy, madcap cousins and wise, tender aunt and uncle on a smelly farm in the middle of nowhere. Girl learns about work, sacrifice, love and the essence of true religion, and finds peace with herself and the world. Hooray.

Rather a naive expectation, I suppose now in hindsight, but I really didn't think too hard beforehand—just grabbed it and ran with it, so to speak. Even if I had, I would still not expected what I got.

I don't know why Mrs. Hopkins chose to set her book among people of my faith, but I find it hard to believe that she knows many Mormons personally, and I question her sources on doctrine. Some of her representations were amusing, some frustrating. I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, more generally known as Mormon, and I think it's safe to say that I have an insider's perspective she does not. So I would like to set the record straight on some doctrinal issues and present a different picture of Mormon life.

The most frustrating misrepresentation was her view of the woman's role. I know there are some branch-off Mormon sects (Not the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), that have different takes on that subject. I don't know much about these other churches, so I don't know how well the "Mormonism" of *Burned* parallels them, but I do know she was representing the mainstream LDS church. I'm not sure she is aware of the differences. In any case, LDS women are not treated as inferior to men. Our church leaders would never condone a man "keeping his wife in check" in the manner that Pattyn's father did. According to our official church Proclamation on the family, "Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children...fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. *In these sacred responsibilities, mothers and fathers are obligated to help one another as equal partners* (my italics)... *We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God.*" once again, my italics. Men are specifically directed not to use their priesthood to exercise dominion over anyone, and women have as important a role as men. Young men and young women are all encouraged and even urged to receive some form of higher education. My mother has a four-year degree in elementary education, which she used as a teacher before I came along and later used to

homeschool me and my sister for quite some time. Now that her children are growing up she is trying to get a degree in interior design from home. She does not work outside the home, but she takes joy in the work of raising her six children and works easily as hard as my dad does. She most certainly does not consider herself an oppressed wife. My dad loves her as she loves him and will far sooner tolerate one of his children talking back to him than to his wife. (By the way, the central goal of our religion is to bind husbands, wives and their children as families eternally--"forever love", I think Mrs. Hopkins calls it.)

The bishop of my ward is a warm, humble, compassionate man. He would not judge me harshly or berate me if I came to him for counsel, would certainly not behave as the fictional Bishop Crandall did, and my only qualm in going to him would be the same shame and fear of disappointing him that I would feel in going to my father. I have heard a story or two of bishops that are not this way. I'm just providing a counter-example.

I am not trying to claim that we don't have families with abuse in them, or problems with gossip or judging or alcoholism. If I did, it would be ridiculous not to call me out on that. But I think the blame for that is better laid at the door of human nature than the precepts of our church. The commandments of God, which we hold sacred, point toward happy, healthy and eternal family relationships and individuals, if faithfully adhered to, but every family has its problems. As we say: the Church is not a rest home for the recently perfected.

And this was only briefly mentioned, but Pattyn does say in the narration, "True, but Jesus had little to do with LDS doctrine." Here again, I must protest. The church is named for him, and we believe that he founded it. The Book of Mormon is subtitled "Another testament of Jesus Christ." Our whole church is centered around Jesus Christ and his Atonement. Ask any Primary kid what they learn about in class--including my four-year-old sister, who has gone around singing, "Did Jesus Really Live Again?" nonstop for a week till our ears have bled. "And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins." **2 Nephi 25:26**

The other aspects were more amusing than upsetting. For instance, not only do we not make all our clothes at home, at least in my family, but even if we had time, material and patterns are so expensive that it is much cheaper these days to buy clothes, except in the case of prom dresses. My mom's sewing projects are the exception rather than the rule.

That business about not getting a driver's license--"If your husband wants you to know how to drive he can teach you--" Puh-lease. I'm not even going to rant about that.

And the "forbidden" Tolkien and J. D. Salinger and Kipling? Give me a break. I ate LOTR, Jane Austen, J.K. Rowling, Madeleine L'Engle out of a baby food jar with a spoon. Figuratively speaking.

"Mutual" night is not three hours of droning testimony, and I don't think it is that in any LDS ward in the world. First of all, it only lasts for an hour and a half, and if you could hear the yakking and giggling and carrying on on a Tuesday night, you would wonder how Mutual could possibly be church related. It's a chance to come together and have fun in a safe, accepting setting, make lasting friendships, and learn new things. And who says you can't be drawing closer to God when you're having fun?

Last but not least, shame on me if I don't put in a word for my "good Mormon boys." ("Trevor", honestly? The regular guys are Ethan, Derek, Justin, Brian, and then the "good Mormon boy" is "Trevor?!!!" That is deliberate, disgusting stereotyping. And my apologies to all you Trevors out there. It's not your fault that your parents are vicious and cruel.) For the most part they are great guys, certainly they treat us respectfully

and not as "inferior" and they are **not** all goofy, although I could mention one or two...=D If you're reading this, you know who you are. But honestly, the teachings of the gospel and the responsibilities of the priesthood (not to mention the intensive Boy Scout program) are the secret behind the finest young men I have ever associated with. In any case, Mrs. Hopkins' description of them was completely undeserved.

Oh, and kudos to Jeff Gottesfeld for taking the time to defend a religion not his own from inaccurate representation.

As for a real review. Some of the poetry is good, very angsty and very like a teenager. I was hoping Pattyn would find peace with her Aunt J and make her own way in the world. Instead she makes one foolish mistake after another, founds her self-worth in a brief romance with a guy (a very nice, hot guy, but) she hardly knows, and after everything that Aunt J taught her about love and living, the end is nothing but despair—it didn't fit, it seemed like Mrs. Hopkins wrote the end just to be different and shocking, rather than writing from her heart. If the message was that Pattyn couldn't possibly find her way to a better life because of the circumstances she was born in, I'd say that's a real bummer of a message, is NOT true and not helpful or hopeful for girls in a similar plight.

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### **Kells Next Read says**

*Continuing my Author Exploration and I'm enjoying it immensely. This was a brilliant read.*

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### **Raeleen Lemay says**

This book was absolutely AMAZING. I think I will have a hard time reviewing how I felt about this book...

AGHHH STILL SO GOOD THE SECOND TIME.

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### **Naudia says**

**“In my limited realm of experience, beginnings led to endings.”**

Now read that a few times over, and let it sink in.

The whole time it took me to read this, I realized that there was not, nor would there be any closure for me. This book destroyed me in the absolute best way. I didn't want it to end.

Pattyn Von Stratten is a teenage Mormon, and from the very beginning, you can see that that lifestyle is not for her. She feels detached, and rightfully questions everything. She is habitually oppressed by her home life and the overbearing nature of things expected of her.

Throughout the story, Pattyn would do little things to defy the norms set before her. No one would really talk to her, and she didn't have any friends. I felt for Pattyn so much, because no one should go through the things

she did, and deal with the things she faced.

This book felt so real to me. It didn't feel like just some story I was reading at all. When I finished it, the first thing I saw was something talking about how this book was purely fictional. This seems like a testament to Ellen Hopkins and her ability to write. I now feel the uncontrollable urge to read all of her books.

Once I got through the first hundred pages, I could see Pattyn slowly unraveling. The feels this book gave me were just too much. The verse was beautiful. Sometimes the words would form images, and they just added to the effect of the entire story.

While my WiFi was down for a few days, I was thinking about how I would even begin to review this book. This was another heart shattering story recommended to me by Spencer, and I don't even know if I should listen to him anymore, because I just could not take this.

**Just.**

**Too.**

**Many.**

I had to add just a little comedic effect, because this book was *so* heavy and emotionally draining. This is the perfect story to put you in a slump for days, or even longer. I felt it immediately upon my finishing it.

And don't *even* get me started on the way it ended. I need the sequel. Now, would be nice.

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## **J-Lynn says**

This 531 page book is written entirely in poems, some simple verse, some experiments with form. Pattyn Von Stratten is a repressed 17 year old who has been raised by an alcoholic, abusive father and an overwhelmed mother. Pattyn's life consists of taking care of her six younger sisters and learning to be a good Mormon girl. But, when the school librarian feeds her love of reading, she starts to realize that there is more to life than the sexist society that her bishop encourages.

After Pattyn rebels against her family's and church's rules, her father sends her to live with his estranged sister. Her Aunt J, the wilds of Nevada, and the handsome neighbor, Ethan, help Pattyn learn to love herself and find a family filled with "forever love." But, when the summer comes to an end, Ethan has to return to college and Pattyn returns to find a new baby brother and her sisters living in fear of their father. Pattyn tries to finish the school year, but a surprise forces her to try to run away and causes the death of a loved one. The final chapter shows Pattyn vowing revenge and then abruptly ends.

While Hopkins does a fantastic job of describing the reluctant Pattyn falling in love with the iconic Ethan, and creates a fantastic mother figure in tough, old Aunt J, the foreboding bits of foreshadowing that she drops every few chapters continually takes the reader out of the present and gives away the ending far too early. And the ending is not satisfying at all. After Aunt J and Ethan teach her the power of love and after everything she has learned along her journey, at the end of the book she considers something completely out

of character.

After investing hundreds of pages learning to care for Pattyn, the reader is left with nothing, just a hint at what she might choose to do.

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## **Pinky says**

I finally finished last semester well and I am back to having a little bit of freedom. I have enough time to read 1-2 novels a week, so hopefully I can catch up on my reading goal this year! I can't believe I haven't read a book by Ellen Hopkins yet and I'm so glad that I finally did because it was bloody amazing!

***"Did you ever, when you were little, endure your parents' warnings, then wait for them to leave the room, pry loose protective covers and consider inserting some metal object into an electrical outlet? "***

Pattyn Von Stratten lives in a religious and abusive household. After having a dream of a guy she likes, she comes to question things about her life, regarding God, love and more. After causing a lot of trouble, Pattyn's father decides to send her off to her Aunt's house in Nevada. As Pattyn moves in for the summer, she realizes so many things, learns so many things and finally feels that she belongs. But is everything as perfect as it seems? Will she be able to stay away from her family forever?

***"Did you wonder if for once you might light up the room? "***

I really liked Pattyn's character, sure I wouldn't do a lot of the things she did, but I loved how she would fight for what she believes in. She is bold and different, and she never hesitates to speak up. The character development in this novel was great. Ethan is one of my favourite characters, but he seems too good to be true. Aunt J is great, I love how she gives Pattyn as much freedom as possible. She is so easy-going and awesome, I love how she lives her life. Jackie is a great sister and I love how she looks out for Pattyn.

***"Did you wonder just how far that rocket ride might take you? "***

I loved the format of this book and how it was filled with poems. The way the story was told was so different from what I am used to, which was amazing! This book is so unique and I can't wait to read the sequel because the ending of this book killed me. I didn't think I would enjoy this book so much, but I did!

Me after reading this book:

I highly recommend this book to everyone! Anyway, I'll be off and hopefully finish another book soon!

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## **Nina says**

The format in which the book is written is, to say the least, slightly on the brilliant side. The content was

intense and emotional. I love this book, because I hate it. Let me explain why. At first as I read the book I got too cozy with it, I assumed like with so many other books, that this one would end up happy, that somehow the main character would get out of her own personal hell and have a better life. I was in for a bitter and harsh awakening.

The further I got into the book the more upset I got, how could people betray anyone the way that these characters betrayed Pattyn (main character). How could a community allow that kind of abuse. Then it hit me. This is real.

In a way, the context is a bit misconstrued, a lot of people got upset over the fact that it misrepresented a Mormon community. A few months after reading it I was able to step back from the book and see that this book was not focused on it being a Mormon community. It was part of the lifestyle and description but being Mormon wasn't the focus. People had misinterpreted it. What it's really saying is "If this can happen in such a supposed tight knit community, it must happen anywhere". Of course some of the details in the book seem a bit extreme but that's more likely for entertainment purposes, to keep the reader in it. Abuse happens in every culture. Even the ones that think themselves far too refined for such a thing.

Now back to why I fell in love with hating it. It's the kind of book that makes you so emotional and upset that even after you've read the ending, even after you've gotten the roughest blow to the gut, you go back and read the ending over and over again hoping you missed something, hoping you might find something that says "hey it's ok" but it doesn't because life isn't always pretty and it doesn't always end up ok. I found that really damn depressing, but if a book can make me so angry I throw it against a wall, it's a damn good book. The purpose of literature is to incite emotion, to make you either hate or love the characters, and if you're really lucky, you'll find a book that does both. This is really one of those books, but I don't suggest reading it unless you've taken your Xanax for the day. You're going to need it.

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## **Devin says**

Once upon a time I was falling in love, now I'm only falling apart.

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## **Shauna says**

I understand that there's this cult of people who love Ellen Hopkins' novels, and I didn't mind that it was written in verse - thought it was fine, and the verse accentuated all of the dramatic moments in a cool way. That said, the story was very cliché with a LAME, abrupt ending. It's another downer teen book cloaked in verse to try to make it meaningful.

Yes, Pattyn had a horrible life, and yes, considering her home life, it's no wonder that she turned to men and sex to make her feel loved and wanted. But everything else was cliché, and since I'm LDS myself, rather than feeling upset at the mis-portrayal of Mormon life, I found myself laughing at how ridiculous it was. Frankly, the protagonist sounded like she was living under the Taliban, not in a Mormon community. I mean, please, her dad beats her and drinks and her bishop condones it because he's the man of the house, and all her friends from church and siblings look for opportunities to rat her out? Mutual night is three hours of droning testimony, really? And what religious person anywhere, regardless of their degree of conservatism, says "not



to ever question the government?" Usually very conservative people mistrust government. Just seems to me the author looked for shortcuts and cheap shots (not even cheap shots, air balls) to try and show how awful these people were.

I really tried not to get hung up on these things, because yes, there are horrible people out there who hide a multitude of sins under the name of religion. And there were some very beautiful and sweet parts in it, which is why it got two stars and not one. But all of the characters, even Pattyn herself, were so two-dimensional that when they spouted off ridiculous dialogue it was really hard to stay with the book. And the ending was sudden and absolutely wrong - guess the author wanted to leave and not come back.

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## **Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says**

[www.melissa413reads alot.blogspot.com](http://www.melissa413reads alot.blogspot.com)

I'm am just in pain from this book....

This is the first I have read of this author's work, but it will not be the last. I loved and hated this book so much.

I hated the way Pattyn was treated by her alcoholic father and their community. They were Mormons and they wanted all women to do as their husband says and didn't care if the wife was beaten. It's whatever the husband decides. There is a lot more to it, but I'm not going into all of it.

Pattyn started having dreams about boys. She had all of these thoughts about life. She wanted to know things. She was becoming a rebel, at least in the eyes of her family and community.

**\*SPOILERS\***

Pattyn's dad finds out she had been hanging out...making out with a boy and drinking, he decides to keep her in her room except for school. Pattyn finds out the guy she was messing around with was just using her, thank God she didn't go all the way she thinks, but she was so enraged that he dumped her so easy that she threw her bookbag through a window at school. Things continue to escalate when he finds out he is with another girl, who she decides to punch in the face and break her nose.

Well.... after those escapades cost her dad \$1500 to pay for he had enough of Pattyn. She wouldn't be a good little Mormon girl so he ships her off to his sisters farm in Nevada. Aunt J's house was just about 2 hours away. There were things Pattyn's father did to Aunt J when they were teens that made them become estranged. AND NO, NOT THAT!

But let me tell you that Pattyn had the time of her life with Aunt J. I quickly fell in love with this woman. She was so kind to Pattyn. She taught her how to drive, she couldn't believe she was almost 17 and didn't know how to drive. She taught her to ride horses and help her bring in the Longhorn Cattle on the ranch. The BEST thing Aunt J taught Pattyn was to love and be loved. Pattyn never had anyone in her family tell her she loved her and showed her like Aunt J. Pattyn felt her mother was just a brood mare that was there to pop out kids until she had a boy. She had 9 girls that included Pattyn and then she got pregnant finally with a boy when Pattyn went to stay the summer with Aunt J.

Pattyn fell in love with the neighbor boy named Ethan. He was so sweet and I loved him too. Ethan lived with his dad on their ranch down from Aunt J's ranch.

Aunt J. went all out for Pattyn's 17th bday. She took her shopping and bought her tons of stuff. Pattyn was beside herself. And she only got a card from one of her sisters from home. Her parents didn't call! They were just jerks. Ethan got her a nice gift too.

I won't give out any more spoilers at this point because it soon becomes too real and too sad. I think it's something you.. the reader.... should find out for yourself.

The only thing I have left to say ..... is..... I knew what was coming.... just not that bad :(

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## **Katie says**

Burned by Ellen Hopkins

Ellen Hopkins has several novels out that would put off most people by their size. Crank, Glass, and Impulse, for example, are pretty thick in size. After opening them, you will soon realize they are written in poem form. Ellen Hopkins is known for writing edgy novels about teenagers' life.

"I felt angry, frustrated. I felt like I didn't belong, not in my home, not in my church, not in my skin."

Burned, just like any other Ellen Hopkins book, is about a girl's struggle through her teenage years. Pattyn Von Straten is a shy Mormon girl with an abusive family. Many readers say Hopkins showed a wrong view of the Mormon religion. In the book, Pattyn's preacher tells her she needs an attitude change instead of offering her help. The whole church seems to be against her. Hopkins wasn't trying to make people think less of the religion; she was just creating a plot. I do not have a problem with her portrayal of Mormons because I believe she was not aiming to put anyone down.

"Did you ever, when you were little, endure your parents' warnings, then wait for them to leave the room, pry loose protective covers, and consider inserting some metal object into the electrical outlet?"

After having her first sex dream, Pattyn starts acting out and making her father mad. In result, Pattyn is sent away to stay with her aunt in Nevada. Her father thought it would be the best punishment for her bad behavior. In Nevada, Pattyn finds happiness and even a boy. Ethan is so unlike her but so fit for her. They fall head over heels in love.

Pattyn's aunt is my favorite character. Aunt J is the perfect role model. Not only does she introduce Pattyn to a whole other lifestyle, she introduces her to Ethan. Pattyn quickly finds a close friend in Aunt J. Her father isn't too thrilled about this, because he doesn't care much for her, he just wanted rid of Pattyn.

Ellen Hopkins has written a wonderful novel. The ending was extremely disappointing, which made me think slightly less of the book. It may be a three star novel. If she re-wrote the ending it could easily be five stars.

## **Jacob McCabe says**

Whoa.

No words.

I've discovered Ellen Hopkins.

P.S. This is my favorite quote for the book:

"God is love," she said. "And He respects love, whether it's between a parent and a child, a man and a woman, or friends. I don't think He cares about religion one little bit. Live your life right, Pattyn. Love with all your heart. Don't hurt others, and help those in need. That's all you need to know. And don't worry about Heaven. If it exists, you'll be welcome."

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## **Bonnie says**

Interested in more of my reviews? Visit my blog!

*He was a dream. A safe dream.  
Safe, because he was unattainable,  
something to adore from afar.  
Like a snow-drenched mountain  
or an evening star.*

### The Storyline

17-year old Pattyn Von Stratten is the oldest child in a Mormon family which consists of an alcoholic and abusive father and an extremely overwhelmed mother. Unconsciously, she starts to rebel little by little from her strict family's rules. After her father catches her in a moment of rebellion she is inevitably sent to live with her Aunt in rural Nevada. Pattyn begins to realize that life with her Aunt may not be as bad as she had originally thought and that going back to her old life may be harder than she thought.

### Thoughts

This was the second Ellen Hopkins book I've read, and even though this was not as enjoyable as *Triangles*, I did still enjoy it. It was damn near impossible not to feel bad for Pattyn and her 'moments of rebellion' which wasn't even anything that bad... her family just put her on such a short leash that any form of rebellion was

conceived as horrible and wrong.

I can't help but feel that these types of family situations only make things worse on these children in the long run. Placing so many rules and responsibilities on them at such a young age usually leads to crazy acts of rebellion. Of course this is not always the case and many kids that live in strict households end up turning perfectly decent members of society. When I was in high school I used to have two really good friends who were both Mormons from large families (with enormous responsibilities) who ended up having a huge impact on how I view families such as these.

I finished this book with my jaw on the ground; it was an extremely abrupt and unexpected ending. I went into this thinking that it was a stand-alone novel but come to find out there's more to come in this series... I'm extremely interested in seeing how the author takes this story.

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### **Holli says**

This is a young adult fiction novel about a Mormon girl who discovers who she is. With an alcoholic father and an always-breeding mother, she gets herself into trouble with the "wrong crowd" and as a form of punishment must go live with her Aunt J for the summer in Nevada. There she "falls in love" with Ethan, an older boy, and together they learn the lessons of life. She becomes pregnant and upon returning home, is beaten by her father and eventually runs away with Ethan only to have him die in a car accident. She then decides she will 'punish' everyone who caused her problems by killing them in Sacrament Meeting. Totally far fetched, and stupid.

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### **Carol Hesprich says**

Being LDS myself and having some of the LDS beliefs extorted, it reminds me of how much I appreciate the truth of the religion and what I do know. Being in the midst of abuse in a personal experience in Utah, the book does hit close to home in many ways and is realistic to the core in some aspects. This would be a great book to use in a group discussion of abused survivors and also a reading group. I am going to go back over it and read it again. Can be a very helpful and almost therapeutic book for survivors/victims of abuse. Carol Hesprich

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### **Mimi says**

**\*\*Spoilers\*\***

This book smarts of ex mormon/ anti-mormon anger. I don't know what "church" the author or the character got her information from, but it certainly wasn't mine. If I had ever experienced what the girl in this book did by the hands of leaders and members I certainly wouldn't be "mormon" and probably wouldn't be keeping my mouth closed either. I don't doubt abuse in the LDS church happens, especially abuse of power, because what religion is clean and of scandal, controversy, and lies. (Let's not forget, it's run by mortals.) And I have experienced an LDS man thinking he had a God given right to rule over women, but that exists no matter where you look. Not because it is in Mormon doctrine. People will claim that they can find God's words to justify their actions, but that is merely their way of assuaging their own personal guilt. But luckily I don't

judge millions of members, and good men and women, by the rantings of a few angry and bitter people, even if their anger is justified.

But the evil members of an evil church seemed to be the entire theme of the book. The Mormon church represented here reminded me more of what I have heard of FLDS than anything close to what I have seen in the LDS church.

Even the love story seemed shallow. We never got to know Ethan, just that he was a gorgeous cowboy who turned Pattyn on. He seemed like a good guy, but we never got to know him. Pattyn says she doesn't want their whole relationship to be about sex, but then that was all we ever got to see of their relationship. Then, the whole turmoil behind her deciding to sleep with him ultimately resulted in a pregnancy that killed them all. She fretted and worried about getting pregnant, which was the last thing she wanted, and then she slept with him over and over again with minimal caution.

So let's say, hypothetically, she had waited to have sex like her "church" wanted, then she could have finished her last year of school, turned 18, married the man, moved to the country and been a happy bumpkin. Right?! So was she supposed to listen to her "church?" What is the moral we are really trying to get out of this?

Mormons are evil?

Sex leads to babies?

Wait to have sex until you can handle the consequences?

I am completely confused about what the whole point is.

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### **Leslie says**

Not doing a full review. I read this fast but can't say I enjoyed it. It's very problematic in its thoughts on Mormonism to say the least. I'm not Mormon but one of my best friends is. This paints the religion in a bad light that I don't think is fair or accurate. Based on Hopkins writings, I highly doubt she has any personal experience with the religion.

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### **Joanne says**

This author doesn't have a clue about what Mormonism is about or how women are treated in the LDS church. Her "writing" sets Mormon women in the same stereotype as fundamental LDS women or even worse. Please see the following for further clarification:

<http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi...>

My gripe with this is that people who know nothing about the LDS Church read this book they will get a very skewed and incorrect viewpoint about the LDS Church and LDS women.

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## **Lindsey Rey says**

[4.5 Stars]

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## **Emily May says**

Wow. I found this book... original, disturbing, horrific and completely nothing like I expected it to be.

Firstly, I didn't realise it was in verse form and when it arrived I was a bit reluctant to begin seeing as my past experiences with novels in verse are Dante's *Inferno* and *Paradise Lost*. Must I say anymore? But... I went against my initial instinct and found that I loved the way the style just flowed, I read page after page and suddenly realised I'd devoured half the book in less than an hour (this is a book with nearly 600 pages). The story wasn't lost in the poetry and, if anything, it only served to make the story more effective.

The basic plot is that of a strictly religious mormon family, the father is a violent drunk and the mother takes the beatings and verbal abuse simply because she is a woman and her husband is in charge of her. Yeah, seriously. My feminist stomach clenched with anger at that one. Especially when Brother Crandell (I think - I don't have the book to hand) told Pattyn that the only way she could be redeemed for being born female is to fulfill God's wishes and have lots of babies (because that's a woman's role). This is the kind of book that makes you want to tear your hair out with frustration and violently maim several of the characters. As a woman, I felt the indignity and anger with her. I know that not all Mormons believe that women are useless without men and this is not the typical situation, but it does happen in extreme cases. Not in some other time, a couple of centuries ago, but right now.

The plot takes a rebellious Pattyn, fuelled by teenage hormones, out of this strict, religious world. She is sent to live with her Aunt and finds how different life can be when a relationship is based on love, not fear. But good things can't last forever and eventually her past starts calling her back. I won't spoil the ending, but know this: *Burned* made me cry, made me angry, made me curious... it is a book I know I'll never forget.

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