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Shattered: A Daughter's Regret (Secrets)



Synopsis

Cleo Neilson is the only one who knows why her mother was in a seedy part of town that one night, but she's determined to keep the secret that's breaking her heart. Walk through this teen fiction novel of grief, guilt, faith, and forgiveness. You won't forget the journey.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Everybody does it "sneaks out of the house now and then. It's harmless enough, right? Not this time. Cleo Neilson faces the chilling consequences of her actions. Now she has a secret and can't tell anyone, and it's breaking her heart. As Cleo fights through her grief and guilt, she learns about faith in God and forgiveness through him. As teenage girls read Cleo's journey, they too will learn the value of having faith and receiving forgiveness as well as just how dangerous it really is to keep a secret.[series copy]Every teenage girl has a secret. And every teenage girl loves hearing someone else's secret. But some secrets are big enough to detour, derail, or even destroy a young person's life. Each of Melody Carlson's Secrets novels will propel readers into a world where promises are broken, life is not fair, and challenges can make or break them, while ultimately helping readers discover that solid faith, loyal friends, and a persistent spirit will see them through.

Melody Carlson is the best-selling author of more than 150 books, including the TrueColors series

(TH1NK/NavPress). Her first book in the Secrets series is titled *Forgotten*. She has won various awards for her writing, including *The Gold Medallion* and *The Rita*. Melody currently lives in the beautiful Oregon Cascade Mountains with her husband.

I just finished this book, and while it was an easy read, it was not intriguing. Within the first couple of pages, I knew what the tragedy would be. No subtlety. It was more than obvious that someone would die. The problem was that the set up was soooo heavy-handed. The mom was VERY overbearing. I am a Christian, and I grew up in a somewhat (obviously) sheltered environment, but nothing like this. Our parents let us take the bus places or even drive to those places. We were allowed to reasonably hang out with our friends. The way the mom shot down her daughter in every way possible, she was begging for the girl to rebel. I thought it was a little extreme to have the mother die (not just die, but she was MURDERED) to prove a point. I thought the guilt laid at Cleo's feet was too much. Granted, she disobeyed (which I don't condone), but at 17, what teenagers (yes, even us Christians) don't make plans with their friends? Her mom was just way too overprotective for a kid who was headed into college in the fall, and it bothered me that there was no reflection on that at all. Just BAM! Mom's dead. Bring on the guilt. Oh, and here's your similarly overprotective aunt. The drug addiction was also convenient and easily dealt with. Didn't seem real at all. I don't think they ever explained why her mom had the pills. It would have been more plausible if Cleo had some type of ballet injury and was already taking them and just increased her intake to "numb" the pain. Then, I could've bought how easily she got addicted. It wasn't a bad read, but it just reminded me too much of one of those NBC teen specials.

If you have read Melody Carlson's *True Colors* series and her *Degrees of Guilt* series, you will know and be well aware that she reaches into the areas of life that many authors fear to enter and what I love about Melody Carlson is that even though she reaches into these dark pockets of content that many see as taboo, she writes from a Christian perspective and targets the edgy content so well. In her new series "Secrets" we read Book #2 *Shattered - A Daughter's regret*. Cleo is almost 18 years old and about to leave home, though if her mother has anything to do with it - it seems that she may be stuck at home under her mother's supervision for the rest of her life. When Cleo is given the chance to spend the night at a concert in the city with her friend Lola who's about to move away, Cleo thinks that maybe this time will be the opportunity for her mum to let go and allow Cleo to spread her wings. That opportunity doesn't arise, so Cleo and Lola sneak out to the concert in the city and plan to catch the bus home. Next morning though, Cleo receives a knock at

the door and two burly policeman are standing there - Cleo's mum has been murdered. As the story goes along we discover that Cleo's mum Karen had headed to the city looking for the girls and was caught up in the wrong place, wrong time scenario. As the novel goes along further, we read as Cleo is struggling with the pain and guilt that she feels and begins to be hooked on painkillers, soon that addiction moves towards drugs. Can Cleo get the help she needs or will the pain and guilt consume her before it's too late and she too will end up in a plot next to her mother six feet under? *Shattered* is a great read for all teens and especially those who are wanting more along the lines of *True Colors* and *Degrees of Guilt* rather than *On the Runway* and *the Carter House Girls*.

Even though it is the second book in the "Secrets" series, *Shattered: A Daughter's Regret* by prolific author Melody Carlson, reads very much like a stand-alone novel. It centers around Cleo, a high school senior who makes one seemingly innocent rebellion, the consequences of which change her life forever. As a reaction to her mother's overprotective nature, only-child Cleo deceives her mom and deliberately disobeys by going into the city to a concert with her best friend. The next day her best friend, Lola, moves away and Cleo is visited by the police. Her mother's body was found murdered just blocks from where the concert was held. When Cleo checks her cell phone messages, her suspicions are confirmed. Her mother was in the wrong place at the wrong time because of her. Grief and guilt combine to send Cleo into a downward spiral. Seeking to dull the pain, she takes some of her mother's old prescription medications. It dulls the ache and so she takes more. Slowly her habit becomes an addiction and soon she finds herself at the park spending her college savings to get a baggie of unknown, colorful pills from a shady drug dealer. In the meantime, Cleo's aunt Kellie moves in to help her and her dad manage. Cleo struggles to balance that new arrangement with her secret self-medication, maintaining the lead role in her ballet recital and a budding relationship with her long-time crush at school. All while knowing she can never reveal to anyone -- not even Lola -- what role she played in her mother's death. How long can she keep her drug habit a secret? Will she be able to quit on her own? And what role does God play in all of this? Will her father ever forgive her? Will she ever forgive herself? **WHAT I LIKE:** This book covers really heavy topics without being preachy. It clearly emphasizes the value of honesty and friendship (including support groups), but also highlights a beautiful balance between personal responsibility and God's grace. Forgiveness, a topic not often covered in YA literature is a pervasive theme. I really liked that. I like that the characters are fully developed. The whole book is wonderfully realistic without going crazy with unsavory details. Nicely done. **WHAT I DISLIKE:** The text goes back and forth between first person present tense and first person past tense. I realize this

is a storytelling tactic as old as the written word, but I found it annoying. More importantly, I wish the spiritual content had been stronger. It was there, but extremely subtle. OVERALL RATING: Very Good PARENTS SHOULD NOTE: Substance abuse is a main theme within this book. In addition to the illegal use of drugs, it also references the sale and purchase of illegal drugs. Themes discussed but not central include alcoholism, murder and suicide. Tanya -- Christian Children's Book Review

This is the first book I read on my Kindle. I would state now, this is more for the teenage audience (like myself). Not to ruin a plot but the girl gets hooked on drugs and deals with minor life issues after the passing of someone important (don't want to give it away if it's not already stated in the description). I give it full stars because it was a good book and I would suggest anyone.. of a younger age.. or someone that likes an easy teenage read to get this. It took about.. 5 hours maybe to finish. I'm not the fastest reader either. A nice book. Give it a chance!

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