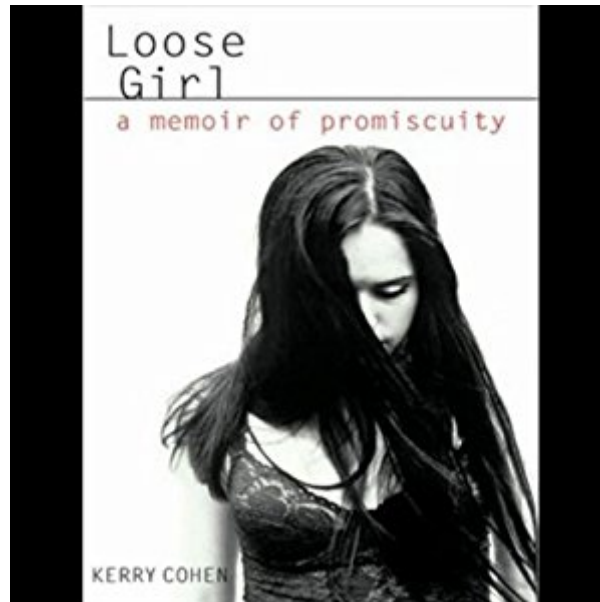




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Loose Girl: A Memoir Of Promiscuity



Synopsis

Kerry Cohen is only eleven years old when she recognizes the power of her female form in the leer of a grown man. Her parents are recently divorced, and it doesn't take long before their lassitude and Kerry's desire to stand out, to be memorable in some way, combine to lead her down a path she senses she shouldn't take. Kerry wanted attention and she wanted love. Vulnerable and adrift, she turned to sex instead. *Loose Girl* is Kerry's captivating memoir about her descent into promiscuity and how she gradually found her way toward real intimacy. It's a story of addiction—*not just to sex but to male attention*, how she came to believe boys and men could fill her emptiness, and how she tried to control them by handing over her body. From the early rush of exploration, when her virginity was technically still intact, to the day she learned to quiet the desperation and allow herself to be loved, Kerry's story is never less than riveting. In rich and immediate detail, *Loose Girl* re-creates what it feels like to be in that desperate moment, when the touch of a boy seems to offer proof of something—*of being worthwhile, of being loved—but ultimately delivers little more than emptiness*. Kerry's journey from that hopeless place to her current confident, happy existence is a cautionary tale and a revelation for girls both young and old.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 23 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Tantor Audio

Audible.com Release Date: July 2, 2008

Language: English

ASIN: B001CA5WAU

Best Sellers Rank: #76 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Health, Mind & Body > Sexuality

#770 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Sexuality #1083 in Books > Health,

Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Sexuality

Customer Reviews

This was a hard book to read, because Cohen is absolutely unflinching with the truth. But it was also rewarding and redemptive by the end. She writes "clear and hard about what hurts." For those reading this for titillation or escapism, you'll be disappointed. If you're looking for a harrowing, but

ultimately satisfying healing journey, you'll find it here. *Loose Girl* is filled with self-destructive behavior, small victories, setbacks when coping mechanisms fail, a moment of empowerment when Cohen decides to take ownership of her healing, and then embraces self-love and reconnection with others who love and support her. Cohen's mix of internal dialogue (exposition) and external plot kept me deeply engaged and turning pages. I cried for the young Cohen who couldn't cry herself. And rejoiced when she finally stepped toward healing. Highly recommended, with the caveat that this (should be no surprise with the title and subject matter) is an R-rated story due to sexual scenes, underage drug and alcohol use, and swearing. It never once felt gratuitous to this reader. It felt raw and heart-breaking. If I had any critique, it would be that the final scenes felt slightly rushed. I would have liked to linger with that deep calm and peace that came to Cohen as she began developing true relationships with her now-husband. It had been so hard-earned, I would have liked to be more of a part of it. Regardless, this is a well-written memoir and I'm grateful to Cohen for her bravery in sharing. I think she'll help others along their healing journey with these words.

Memoirs have the same power and shortfalls as those found in personal therapy. The power comes from the individual speaking the truth of her/his life. The downfall is the individual's perspective is limited to his/her own experience. When a person risks the vulnerability of letting others see them, as much as one can be so transparent, as they see them themselves a magical even can occur. The listener has the occasion to become likewise vulnerable, at least to one's Self, in respect to one's on life. Ms. Cohen, a child of privilege and divorce, is that kind of vulnerable and transparent in this memoir that the invitation offered the reader to become likewise open, is frightening. When Ms. Cohen was eleven her parents divorced; neither her engineer father nor her "artistic" mother had sufficient Self to give the author or her sister the love, limits or guidance they needed. Instead, her mother abandons both girls to the care of their father in order to pursue a medical degree; her father's idea of parenting is being a "buddy" and buying them things. The gap this lack leaves in Ms. Cohen is deep and one she spends the next 20 years trying to fill by seeking a sense of self through external affirmations. The path she chooses in trying to achieve this goal is using her sexuality to ensnare someone into a meaningful, fulfilling relationship. As Ms. Cohen ages ("matures" would be an overstatement) she can see the choices she is making are poor, self-defeating and she feels powerless to resist them. To witness those numerous, cyclic attempts is tedious and painful, as it must have been for the author to have experienced. In describing herself, she appears as a classic Co-Dependent (one who is dependent/addicted to relationships &/or people to be "complete"). Her approach to relationships, as they are described, has more the flavor of addiction than they do of

connection. She feels she knows what she is looking for but has no idea how to obtain it, that for which she searches does not exist - a person who "will make me whole by being with me." The book ends abruptly with a sense of being incomplete, with the author married to "someone who will love me," yet she continues to exhibit the emptiness that has plagued her all her life. The information listed about Ms. Cohen on the book's dust jacket states she is a psychotherapist, still married and the mother of two sons. One can suppose she has achieved some level of success. This is a book about an individual's descent into unhealthy relationships using sex as an object to trap someone into loving her. It is somewhat graphic and profane in its discussion about sex. Her ability to succeed in showing her desperation without being vulgar is an indication of her writing abilities. The only violent moments are shown to reveal the depth of her hopelessness. Those who read this book will better understand the pain of addiction.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this memoir. I am a fan of memoirs, but most that I've read are about people and places that I will never know or understand. But Kerry tells the story of a girl who we all know, or have been. In these times, even more so than in mine, there are young girls "looking for love in all the wrong places". I commend Kerry for being willing to put this cautionary tale out there for young women and teenage girls to read and learn from. With all the divorce in today's society, girls like Kerry occur more and more frequently. Sad? yes. True? Absolutely! The biggest caution is to divorcing parents: Make Sure Your Children Know They Are Loved! When you choose to become a parent, you are choosing to put that child (or those children) before your own needs. Sorry if this bothers some of you parents out there. Kerry's problem stems from not feeling loved by her parents. Does that mean they DIDN'T love her? Of course not. But a child doesn't know how to compartmentalize the thoughts and emotions and say "Mommy and Daddy don't love each other, but they still love me." You have to say that over and over to the child. That means that you have to actually BE THERE to tell them, which Kerry's mother wasn't. And Kerry's father was looking out for himself in the way he treated his daughter. So, to the readers out there who put Kerry down, try to get past your own feelings of self-loathing and see this as a tale about ALL of us. After all, aren't we all just looking to feel loved? And haven't most of us made our share of mistakes in that process?

I went through a phase where I was reading books about troubled youth (don't ask, I don't get it either) and this was one of my favorites from then. It's not an easy read...well, let me clarify: the subject matter is heavy but the book itself is fascinating. If you want something that will have you

staying up all night reading because you have to know what choice she ultimately makes, this is the perfect choice.

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