

Beautiful Scars: A Life Redefined

Kilee Brookbank

Lori Highlander

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Kilee Brookbank's is a story of hope and inspiration.

Beautiful Scars: A Life Redefined, by Kilee Brookbank and Lori Highlander, is a story of hope and health for a teen girl and her mother.

At age sixteen, Kilee suffered a tragic accident: a gas explosion burned nearly half of her body and destroyed her home. The book is her story of recovery from her injuries, of regaining her self-esteem even with extensive scarring, and of growth from a teen girl to a young woman with hopes, goals, and a positive impact on others.

This is also the story of the power of family relationships, particularly between mothers and daughters. It's hard to decide what's more inspiring: Kilee's positive attitude, or the unwavering support of her mother, Lori. The story is told through their alternating perspectives. While distinct in their tones and experiences, both women's relatable stories reverberate with vulnerability and with love for each other and for life.

Kilee's voice is at the heart of the book. Her innocence and candor are inviting, especially in key moments such as when she describes her first day back to school after the accident. Her insights and emotional depth mature as her story progresses, setting a path that other young women can follow. The connection between mother and daughter, which is deeply moving, also shifts as Kilee gains independence.

The book has just the right level of detail, not overindulging in remembrance or minute information. The women share vivid recollections of the day of the accident, the emotional journey of medical care and physical healing, and Kilee's internal battle to regain a sense of self-confidence, which Lori watches in awe. Each phase of Kilee's story is well developed and aptly paced to showcase the characters and relationships of the narrators.

This personal story is a great read for young people recovering from trauma, who will be able to relate to Kilee's pain and will be inspired and encouraged by her determination and optimism. It's also a beautiful reading experience for mothers and daughters learning to love and support each other as their relationships flourish into adulthood.

Beautiful Scars is a story of hope and inspiration, especially for young women and their mothers.

MELISSA WUSKE (November/December 2017)

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