

Pushed

C S Ware

CreateSpace (Aug 7, 2013)

Softcover \$21.85 (570pp)

978-1-4848-5494-5

There is a gritty feel of reality to this tale of a meth cook trying to go straight.

Timmie Tom leaves prison with fifty dollars and a desire to never return. Unfortunately, circumstances quickly wear down his resolve. Author C S Ware draws from his personal experience as a “dope cook,” along with his time in jail and through recovery, to craft *Pushed*, a realistic story—with an interesting main character—about the power meth has to destroy lives and corrupt even those charged with upholding the law.

The narrative takes recently released convict Timmie from his promise to never again get involved in the drug trade and pits him against realistic obstacles to his vow. However, the novel's pace seriously hinders its readability. In the first fifty pages, Timmie gets out of prison, enters a halfway house, participates in a theft from a department store, saves a woman from dying due to a miscarriage, and meets Destiny, the love of his life.

After the early pages, the pace does slow considerably as Timmie struggles with the loss of his unemployment benefits and takes up cooking meth again. He and Destiny attempt to overcome their issues involving abuse and drug addiction, all while being harassed and threatened by corrupt cops who want to make use of Timmie's meth-cooking skills. There are frequent graphic sex scenes that initially add to the reader's understanding of the bond between Destiny and Timmie but later seem gratuitous.

The author draws from his own experiences of life after prison to add excitement and texture to the plot—for example, Timmie's involvement in retail theft. Also, the scene in which a miscarriage is suffered by an addict at a drug house has the feel of reality, particularly in the details of how Timmie deals with the horrible situation.

The main characters (Timmie and Destiny) do grow and change; while Timmie is struggling with the loss of his unemployment benefits, readers see he is battling between trying to stay straight and finding money to survive. The rest of the cast is made up of stock characters, however, including the drug addict with a heart of gold, the corrupt cop who will do anything to acquire cash, and the kind prisoner who has secrets that no one can fathom.

While the narrative itself is interesting, there is a great deal that could be culled from Ware's novel. It is possible that there are two books here; together, they are a daunting read. Timmie is an appealing, sympathetic character who needs to be allowed to shine. Those interested in gritty tales of true love, or the challenges people face after imprisonment for drugs, will feel empathy for Timmie and his story.

LYNN EVARTS (October 14, 2013)

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