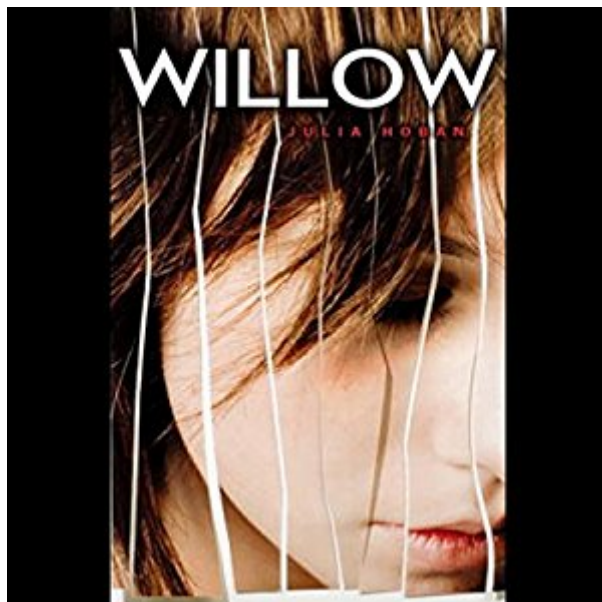


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# Willow



## Synopsis

Seven months ago, on a rainy March night, sixteen year- old Willow's parents died in a horrible car accident. Willow was driving. Now her older brother barely speaks to her, her new classmates know her as the killer orphan girl, and Willow is blocking the pain by secretly cutting herself. But when one boy -one sensitive, soulful boy-discovers Willow's secret, it sparks an intense relationship that turns the 'safe' world Willow has created for herself upside down. Told in an extraordinary fresh voice, Willow is an unforgettable novel about one girl's struggle to cope with tragedy, and one boy's refusal to give up on her. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 10 hours and 1 minute

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Listening Library

Audible.com Release Date: July 14, 2009

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B002HIT0H2

Best Sellers Rank: #34 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Self Mutilation #520 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Depression & Mental Illness #845 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Siblings

## Customer Reviews

"It's so curious: one can resist tears and 'behave' very well in the hardest hours of grief. But then someone makes you a friendly sign behind a window, or one notices that a flower that was in bud only yesterday has suddenly blossomed, or a letter slips from a drawer... and everything collapses." ~ColetteHow true. In life we deal with 2 types of pain, emotional and physical. Most of the time the two are mutually exclusive, however at times they are triggered by the other. "Willow" by Julia Hoban is just one example of what happens when the inability to control your emotions leads to the compulsion to feel physical relief. Willow talks to no one, she wears long sleeves regardless of the weather, and she is addicted to pain. Why? because she is a cutter. Unable to deal with the emotional responsibility of her parents sudden death (that she inadvertently caused) Willow does

the only thing she can think...she abolishes her heartache with physical pain, but when a boy named Guy suddenly takes notice of her...and her arms, something snaps. Will Guy's intense nature eventually help, or hinder Willow's little problem? Will Willow ever understand the significance of crying, and if she finally does...will it be enough to stop her destructive behavior?I know it can sometimes be confusing when I label devastating literature as beautiful... but that's what it is. When a book has the ability to make you forget where you are, feel the pain, and love of its characters, and push the boundaries of what is acceptable conversation... it is no longer a book. It is art. Hoban created a story that was so overwhelming, that at times I felt as if I would explode from the on-slot of sensory overload. The skeletal plot of "Willow" was about love, grief, and understanding... but the lessons in between are what is important: acceptance, compassion, compulsion, redemption, and the ability to let go. There are several places through-out this novel in which you will hang your head in disbelief, unable to mentally comprehend what is actually happening, and even more moments in which you will find yourself shaking or crying. Let it happen... it's what keeps you from becoming broken...it's what keeps you from becoming Willow.Now, I could write for days, pages of beautiful words to express what I felt for this book... the writing was breathtaking, the plot was wonderful, I fell in love with a damaged girl...but none of it would ever be enough. So it leaves me only one solution, you will just have to read it for yourself.Happy reading my fellow Kindle-ites and remember: YOU create your own paradise, and your own prison.

On a stormy night, Willow takes the wheel and her whole life is forever changed. Both her parents are killed in the accident and Willow has to move in with her older brother, his wife and their young daughter. She feels the weight of the world is on her shoulders - she's emotionally overwrought, heavily grieving and feels guilt towards her part in the accident. To top it off, she also feels that her brother secretly blames her for their parents' death and no longer loves her.She finds that the only way to relieve herself when her emotions just become too much is to "cut" herself with a razor. But she is eventually found out by a classmate named Guy. Although Guy promises not to tell on her - he also can't just walk away from her. Instead he tries to get closer to her to find out what leads a person to hurt themselves in such a way and to try to help her out of the dark place she's in.This is the first time that I read about "cutting" in such detail and although a bit on the descriptive side, it was not overdone or gory. On the other hand, Willow's pain is so real that you can actually understand why she would feel the urge to cut herself... even if you don't actually agree with it, you almost feel as if it is acceptable. It's as if her pain will consume her if she does not find an outlet to let it out.

From the moment you start reading this book you become so emotionally attached to these characters (i.e. Willow; her brother, David; Guy) that you fly through the pages just to see what happens. If they can forgive each other? If they can forgive themselves? The book is written in the third person, and I really commend Ms. Hoban for having written it this way. It somewhat gives you a detached feeling but at the same time you feel as if you are looking at Willow and Guy from above. Catching a glimpse into a painful part of a young woman's life. This novel is not just about cutting - it is about love, hope and forgiveness. Although it touches on such a heavy subject, it is not overwhelming, instead it is told in a very unique and graceful voice. Willow is a beautiful story, compellingly told and is by far one of the best YA novels I've read in quite some time. It is a very powerful piece that I highly recommend to older teens as well as adults.

Such a sad story but a good message for preteens. And teenagers in this world would totally recommend

Lately, I've had my fill of shallow teenage angst novels. But Willow restored my faith in this genre. This book pulled me in from the beginning. I felt Willow's pain and instantly empathized with her. The other characters felt very real also. I enjoyed the development of Willow and Guy's relationship. My only negative comment is that it does send the message that a kind and loving man can solve your problems, which tends to romanticize a complicated issue.

Super amazing book and especially for pre teens and teenagers

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