



SOLD

By Patricia McCormick

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Lakshmi is a thirteen-year-old girl who lives with her family in a small hut on a mountain in Nepal. Though she is desperately poor, her life is full of simple pleasures, like playing hopscotch with her best friend from school, and having her mother brush her hair by the light of an oil lamp. But when the harsh Himalayan monsoons wash away all that remains of the family's crops, Lakshmi's stepfather says she must leave home and take a job to support her family.

He introduces her to a glamorous stranger who tells her she will find her a job as a maid in the city. Glad to be able to help, Lakshmi journeys to India and arrives at "Happiness House" full of hope. But she soon learns the unthinkable truth: she has been sold into prostitution.

An old woman named Mumtaz rules the brothel with cruelty and cunning. She tells Lakshmi that she is trapped there until she can pay off her family's debt-then cheats Lakshmi of her meager earnings so that she can never leave.

Lakshmi's life becomes a nightmare from which she cannot escape. Still, she lives by her mother's words-*Simply to endure is to triumph*-and gradually, she forms friendships with the other girls that enable her to survive in this terrifying new world. Then the day comes when she must make a decision-will she risk everything for a chance to reclaim her life?

Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives but triumphs.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up – As this heartbreaking story opens, 13-year-old Lakshmi lives an ordinary life in Nepal, going to school and thinking of the boy she is to marry. Then her gambling-addicted stepfather sells her into prostitution in India. Refusing to be with men, she is beaten and starved until she gives in. Written in free verse, the girls first-person narration is horrifying and difficult to read. In between, men come./They crush my bones with their weight./They split me open./Then they disappear. I hurt./I am torn and bleeding where the men have been. The spare, unadorned text matches the barrenness of Lakshmi's new life. She is told that if she works off her family's debt, she can leave, but she soon discovers that this is virtually impossible. When a boy who runs errands for the girls and their clients begins to teach her to read, she feels a bit more alive, remembering what it feels like to be the number one girl in class again. When an American comes to the brothel to rescue girls, Lakshmi finally gets a sense of hope. An author's note confirms what readers fear: thousands of girls, like Lakshmi in this story, are sold into prostitution each year. Part of McCormick's research for this novel involved interviewing women in Nepal and India, and her depth of detail makes the characters believable and their misery palpable. This important book was written in their honor.—*Alexa Sandmann, Kent State University, OH*
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From [Booklist](#)

Lakshmi, 13, knows nothing about the world beyond her village shack in the Himalayas of Nepal, and when her family loses the little it has in a monsoon, she grabs a chance to work as a maid in the city so she can send money back home. What she doesn't know is that her stepfather has sold her into prostitution. She ends up in a brothel far across the border in the slums of Calcutta, locked up, beaten, starved, drugged, raped, "torn and bleeding," until she submits. In beautiful clear prose and free verse that remains true to the child's viewpoint, first-person, present-tense vignettes fill in Lakshmi's story. The brutality and cruelty are ever present ("I have been beaten here, / locked away, / violated a hundred times / and a hundred times more"), but not sensationalized. An unexpected act of kindness is heartbreaking ("I do not know a word / big enough to hold my sadness"). One haunting chapter brings home the truth of "Two Worlds": the workers love watching *The Bold and the Beautiful* on TV though in the real world, the world they know, a desperate prostitute may be approached to sell her own child. An unforgettable account of sexual slavery as it exists now. *Hazel Rochman*
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Review

Alternating lyrical imagery with precise detail, McCormick gives voice to the terror and bewilderment of a young girl robbed of her childhood but who finds the strength to triumph.
--National Book Award Finalist citation

Hard-hitting ... poignant. The author beautifully balances the harshness of brothel life with the poignant relationships among its residents.
--Publishers Weekly - starred review

An unforgettable account of sexual slavery as it exists now.

--Booklist - starred review

The writing is breathtaking in both its simplicity and attention to detail ... stunning ... this novel is not to be missed

--VOYA

McCormick's research for this novel involved interviewing women in Nepal and India, and her depth of detail makes the characters believable and their misery palpable. This important book was written in their honor.

--School Library Journal

"Readers can't help but be moved by Lakshmi's fate."

"An unforgettable account of sexual slavery as it exists now."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lorenzo Davis:

This SOLD are usually reliable for you who want to be described as a successful person, why. The reason why of this SOLD can be among the great books you must have is definitely giving you more than just simple studying food but feed anyone with information that probably will shock your earlier knowledge. This book is definitely handy, you can bring it everywhere and whenever your conditions at e-book and printed people. Beside that this SOLD forcing you to have an enormous of experience such as rich vocabulary, giving you trial run of critical thinking that we realize it useful in your day activity. So , let's have it and revel in reading.

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