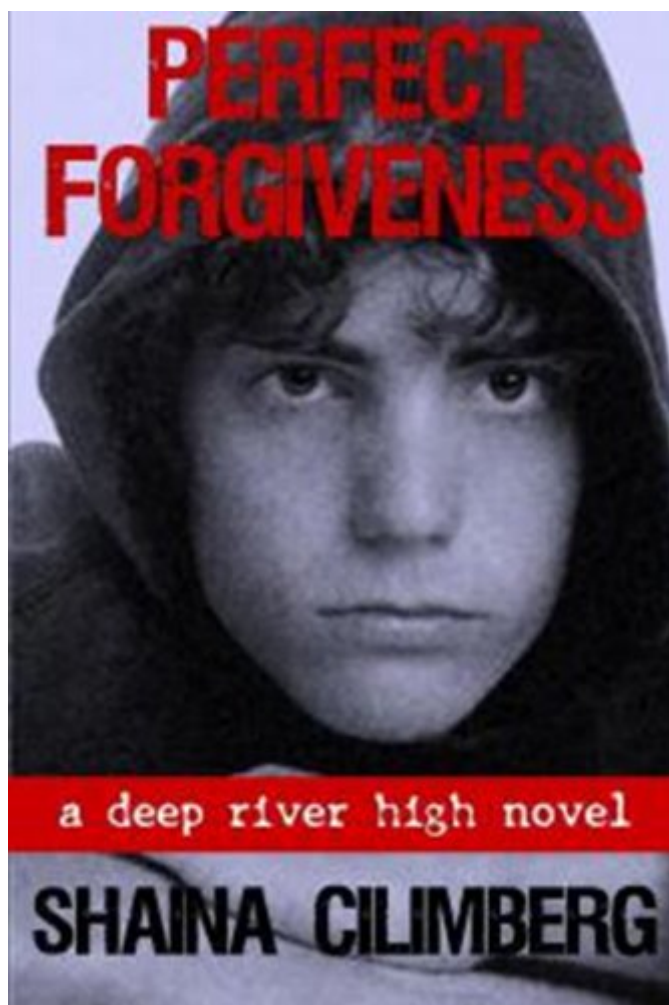




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Perfect Forgiveness (Deep River High: Book Two 2)



Synopsis

The bullies need to be punished. That's what Kirk Williams tries to tell himself. One deadly mistake shakes the community and Kirk Williams forever. He wanted to back out, but now it's too late. Can he ever be forgiven?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was definitely a powerful story Shaina has written, showing how some teenagers who are bullied, end up as the shooter in a mass killing. This story moves along quickly. I felt the young boy's pain as he dealt with bullies on a regular basis and also how he felt defenseless against them. The anger built inside him as he daily dealt with so much, and few came to his defense. It was sad how he reacted after he committed the murders, not wanting to do it, but the anger taking over and blocking all sense of reason. Though the consequences must be paid for such actions, there is hope even for those who commit murder when it comes to God and his perfect forgiveness. This story was one of judgment and redemption. I think it was a compelling story.

For me, this novel struck a deep chord. The main character, Kirk, was one who, though flawed in a

very real sense, and hurting enough to hurt others profoundly, dredged up great sympathy. There is lots of violence and emotion in this book, but it's not so far from what many teens experience these days. Even though most teens (hopefully) won't see a school shooting of this magnitude, they may encounter bullying situations that could escalate to this point, and for this reason I'd recommend *Perfect Forgiveness*. Teens may come away from it with ideas of how to help bullied kids in their school, or how to spot warning signs that someone is at his or her breaking point. I see this author's skills improving with each novel. I look forward to Cilimberg's next installment!

Perfect Forgiveness is the second in the *Deep River High* series by Shaina Cilimberg (the first being *Crowded*). The main characters in *Crowded* (Lydia, Emily, and Josh) are now secondary characters, but still present. Without unneeded introduction, the story thrusts us into the next year of *Deep River High*, with protagonist Kirk Williams being shoved into a bank of lockers. The bullying that was present in the first book is only amplified in the second. Because of the bullying he suffers--from classmates as well as the two boys who call themselves his best friends--Kirk goes along with his friends' plan to "shoot down" the school to cleanse it of bullies. On November 1, over 20 people lost their lives at *Deep River High*. Kirk is the only one of the three shooters left standing at the end of the rampage and is the only one left to face the consequences (the other two die by another shooter's hands). The remaining 65% of the book is dealing with the aftermath of the shooting and how the kids (and youth pastor) at the Eastside Church of Christ and the school--and most especially Kirk himself--deals with the feelings of remorse, guilt, rage, confusion and the rest of the emotions that go along with such a traumatic experience. The author, whom I know through Facebook, lost a friend due to bullycide (suicide caused by excessive bullying). The Anti-Bullying message is an extremely important one to this author--for good and noble reasons--and that is to be respected. She also does a good job of allowing her characters from the first book to grow along with their chronological age. The head-hopping, which some people dislike, is done well, and there are usually chapter breaks or other indications in the formatting that a new point of view is being used. The book, however, is full of small errors, enough to lower its rating. There are missing (or extra) punctuation marks or poor grammar choices throughout the book--one every other screen or so on my Kindle. There are also formatting issues (some of which are the fault of the ebook conversion software, but some are not) which can make the text sometimes hard to understand or follow. The shooting happens on November 1, but there is no mention of Halloween when Kirk is contemplating the shooting the night before. Most glaring, though, are the continuity issues. The shooting seems to last for at least an hour--with kids wandering the halls before school or practically

stepping over dead and dying girls to get to the cafeteria to laugh and mingle with their friends, oblivious to what is going on. Kirk shoots nearly 20 people with a sawed-off shotgun, never having to reload. There is also never a clear indication of how many people are shot by which perpetrator. There is also very little indication of exactly how many people are wounded (only a list of the dead is given), and in some places, the number of people Kirk shot (killed or wounded) changes from one chapter to the next. Finally, there are still some liberties taken with the legal system, but far fewer than in previous editions. The book could use a good, thorough going-over by a professional editor. As it stands, though, while the story is a good one and should be told, the book is poorly executed.

Shaina Cilimberg's "Perfect Forgiveness" is a haunting story of a bullied teen who lashes out in the most devastating way imaginable, in a tale that we've seen too often in real-life headlines. Kirk Williams is an unpopular student at Deep River High School. He's only got two close friends, who don't treat him much better than the bullies who regularly make his life miserable. The friends hatch a plan to revenge themselves upon the bullies (and everyone else), with horrific results. But that's only part of the story - the real story is what happens after. Can the school and the larger community recover from the tragedy? And can Kirk find a way to live with what he's done, and possibly even forgiveness, from the victims, the community at large, or himself? The book falls into the category of Christian literature, which is appropriate for a story dealing with forgiveness and the difficulty in both giving and receiving it. The glimpses into the mind of a troubled teen who never got the support he needed from anyone around him and, worse, is so damaged that he can't recognize genuine friendship when it is offered, are both powerful and disturbing - all the more so because we've all seen real-life counterparts to Kirk on the news in recent years. The author has a very important message about the toll that bullying, and the neglect of adults who should be supporting their children, can take, and the potential consequences. It's not a "fin" read, but it is a cautionary book and one that bullies, their victims and their families, should read.

Although I'm not completely finished reading this book by a great, young author, I am already drawn into the pain filled world of bullying and what some young people are going through in high school. Filled with glimpses into anger and hurt, I think it's a sad tale, but necessary to be told.

This is a very good story about issues that are relevant to kids today. I don't want to give away the story, but just say that bullying can lead kids to have serious problems, and kids don't know where to turn or how to deal with issues of being bullied at school. Adults are too dismissive of just how

painful that can be to deal with every day. By not dealing with it the problem can become much worse and lead to serious consequences. I would recommend this book for any kid dealing with bullying at school, or any parent dealing with their kids and their emotional issues, maybe to recommend for their kids to read.

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