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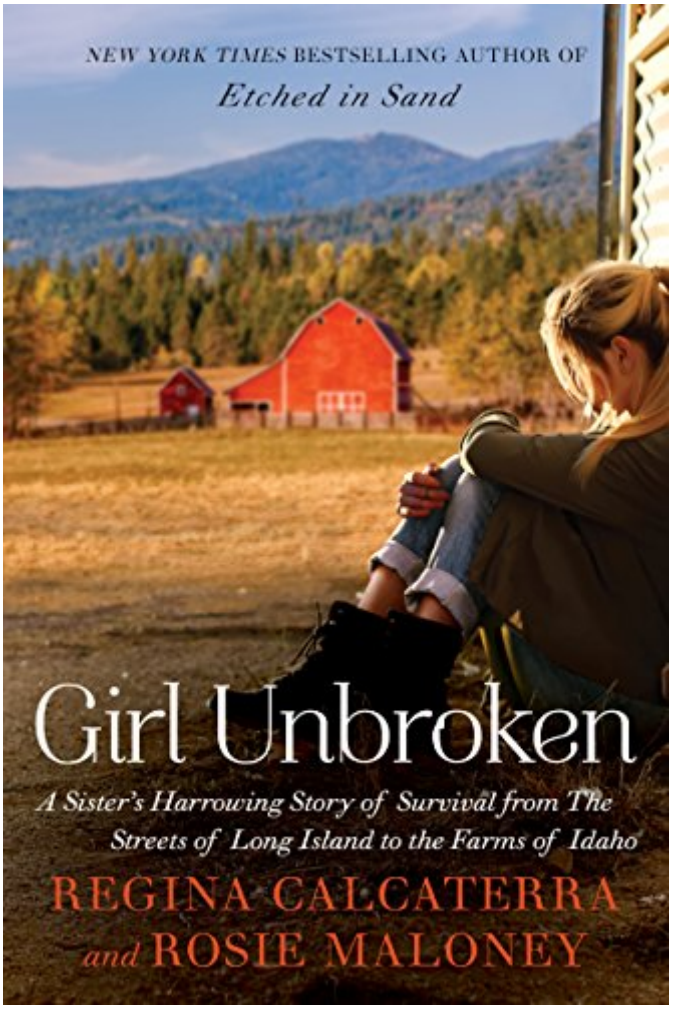
Girl Unbroken: A Sister's Harrowing Story Of Survival From The Streets Of Long Island To The Farms Of Idaho



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Synopsis

In the highly anticipated sequel to her New York Times bestseller Etched in Sand, Regina Calcaterra pairs with her youngest sister Rosie to tell Rosieâ ™s harrowing, yet ultimately triumphant, story of childhood abuse and survival.They were five kids with five different fathers and an alcoholic mother who left them to fend for themselves for weeks at a time. Yet through it all they had each other. Rosie, the youngest, is fawned over and shielded by her older sister, Regina. Their mother, Cookie, blows in and out of their lives â œlike a hurricane, blind and uncaring to everything in her path.â • But when Regina discloses the truth about her abusive mother to her social worker, she is separated from her younger siblings Norman and Rosie. And as Rosie discovers after Cookie kidnaps her from foster care, the one thing worse than being abandoned by her mother is living in Cookieâ ™s presence. Beaten physically, abused emotionally, and forced to labor at the farm where Cookie settles in Idaho, Rosie refuses to give in. Like her sister Regina, Rosie has an unfathomable strength in the face of unimaginable hardshipâ ”enough to propel her out of Idaho and out of a nightmare.Filled with maturity and grace, Rosieâ ™s memoir continues the compelling story begun in Etched in Sandâ ”a shocking yet profoundly moving testament to sisterhood and indomitable courage.Â Â Â

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Customer Reviews

I'd strongly recommend that you read "Etched in Sand", Calcaterra's own story prior to this book. It sets the foundation for this, her youngest sister's account of the same time frame. This book is a powerful companion piece which details years of physical, emotional and financial abuse at the hands of an alcoholic narcissistic mother. The fact that these 5 children emerged alive from the chaos of their childhoods is a testament to the human spirit and people who care enough to help a child.Rosie and her brother Norm were separated from their older sisters (who sought to save themselves through marriage and emancipation) and taken out west to a series of temporary living situations. One things I like so much about this book and "Etched" is that you keenly experience what such uncertainty does to the day to day life of a child. Food, clothes, friends, a bed....all these are complete unknowns in the life of a child who has no home or parental stability.This is an important book even if you don't have children or addiction in your family. This frank and disturbing biography points to how much these children depended on kind neighbors and adults at school for their benchmarks of stability, When they had no one else, a librarian or a classmates mother were often the only solid and supportive figures in a life where nothing was reliable.The spill over effects from these experiences are monstrous; the older siblings sacrificing their own opportunities for the younger ones, taking over parental roles, forced often into criminality to provide. This book adds gravitas to the author's first book in a one two punch of consistency and documentation. All that aside, this book is extremely engaging and a very quick read.

3 years ago I read one of the most memorable books in my life, "Etched in Sand," by Regina Calcaterra. I often recommend this book to anyone that wants to read about the extremely desperate childhood of five siblings that were abused, neglected, and abandoned in Long Island, New York, and how the system let them all down. The story also describes how most of the siblings overcame their harsh and harrowing childhood and grew up to become successful, productive, adults.Etched in Sand is centered on Regina, one of the three oldest children, and how she survived unthinkable abuse at the hands of her mother, step-parents, and Foster parents. Towards the end of Etched in Sand, we learn that the mother from hell, Cookie, has moved her two youngest children, Norm and Rosie, to Idaho.Girl Unbroken continues telling us the story of Norm and Rosie,

and how they are placed with an abusive foster family in New Jersey, kidnapped by Cookie, and taken from motel to motel as she prostitutes herself to buy beer and cigarettes. Cookie hasn't changed. She treats her two youngest children with the same disdain as her three oldest daughters. She continues to neglect, expose, & abuse them in shocking & unimaginable ways.The book takes us along as Cookie goes from place to place, trucker to trucker, motel to motel, and finally, as she and another temporary loser make the trek from New Jersey to Idaho, to stay with a friend of Cookie's.This is another part of a story that should never have happened, as DHS & social services should have taken the children from Cookie at any number of points in their young lives. Cookie should have been sent to jail, but she never was.

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