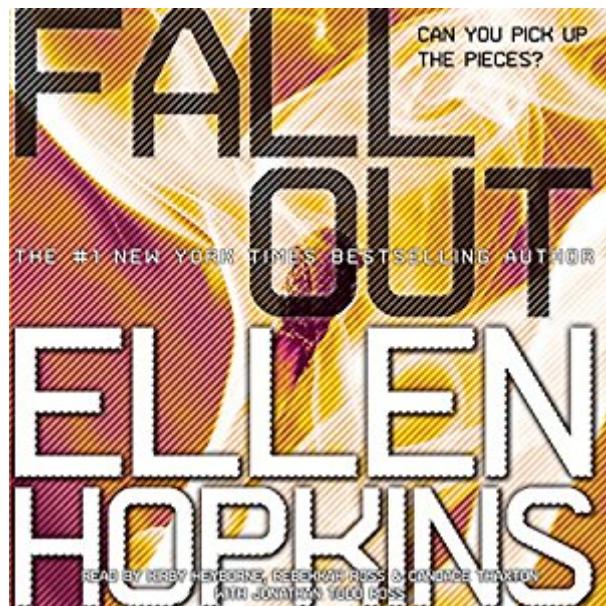


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# Fallout



## Synopsis

Hunter, Autumn, and Summer - three of Kristina Snow's five children - live in different homes, with different guardians and different last names. They share only a predisposition for addiction and a host of troubled feelings toward the mother who barely knows them, a mother who has been riding with the monster, crank, for 20 years. Hunter is 19, angry, getting by in college with a job at a radio station, a girlfriend he loves in the only way he knows how, and the occasional party. He's struggling to understand why his mother left him when he unexpectedly meets his rapist father, and things get even more complicated. Autumn lives with her single aunt and alcoholic grandfather. When her aunt gets married and the only family she's ever known crumbles, Autumn's compulsive habits lead her to drink. And the consequences of her decisions suggest that there's more of Kristina in her than she'd like to believe. Summer doesn't know about Hunter, Autumn, or their two youngest brothers, Donald and David. To her, family is only abuse at the hands of her father's girlfriends and a slew of foster parents. Doubt and loneliness overwhelm her, and she, too, teeters on the edge of her mother's notorious legacy. As each searches for real love and true family, they find themselves pulled toward the one person who links them together - Kristina, Bree, mother, addict. But it is in each other, and in themselves, that they find the trust, the courage, the hope to break the cycle. Told in three voices and punctuated by news articles chronicling the family's story, *Fallout* is the stunning conclusion to the trilogy begun by *Crank* and *Glass* and a testament to the harsh reality that addiction is never just one person's problem.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nineteen years after the conclusion of *Glass* and four children later, Kristina Snow is still a slave to the monster that irrevocably altered her life the summer she visited her father. Only now, it's her children's turn to tell the story. Alternating between the point of view of Kristina's three oldest, Hunter, Autumn, and Summer, *Fallout* chronicles their very different lives and the ways that Kristina's decisions have affected them, and how, even though they barely know each other, they each struggle with the very same issues of addiction, anger, depression, and disappointment in a parent who can never be the person they want her to be. *Fallout* is a powerful book and an entirely fitting conclusion to Ellen Hopkins' trilogy that started with *Crank*, based on her own daughter's struggles with addiction. Flashing forward nineteen years into the future may have been a little unexpected, but it is the perfect way to demonstrate to readers the prolonged and far-reaching effects of addiction and bad decisions. Hopkins does an excellent job at steadily building up the story thorough her inventive and diverse poems, she creates a good amount of suspense by switching back and forth between Hunter, Autumn, and Summer, and it's not hard to draw parallels between mother and children. Hunter's story is engaging as he is one of the closest connections to the first two books, and he fills in a lot of gaps of missing information, allowing readers to piece together what has happened since his birth for themselves. Autumn, who is oblivious to her mother's identity and hardly knows anything about her parents, is a fascinating character and her struggles and desire to know where she comes from is emotional and even a little turbulent as she reaches out for human connection in any form.

This is a mostly satisfactory conclusion to the trilogy that rocketed Ellen Hopkins to the heights of literary fame. In it, we see the long-term consequences of Kristina's decisions: children. Dysfunctional children with dysfunctional families. "*FALLOUT*"'s problems have more to do with the author's decisions than her storytelling. She is constantly making references to her literary success and playing them up against Kristina's failures as a person, which came across as harsh and narcissistic in equal measures. In the last two books, events were based only loosely on reality. This time, I felt like there was more of Ellen Hopkins in the story than Hunter, Summer, or Autumn. Marie Haskins is painted as the perfect mother figure (beautiful, successful, struggling oh-so-hard to come to terms with her sorrowful life) and talked about quite a lot, whereas Kristina is transformed into the villain. She is now the family slut who can't do anything but self-destruct, which is more than a little

irritating to see. For someone who claims to have learned a lot about the pain and complex nature of addiction through her writing, Hopkins isn't too sympathetic here. Depictions of our anti-heroine, with whom the reader could once identify, as a mindless burden to her family are reoccurring, as are phrases like "Kristina ought to be here for her children"--despite the fact that it is unanimously agreed that Kristina is an unfit mother. Hunter's easy forgiveness of Brendan on the other hand was outrageous. Somehow he was able to find kinship with his father (who, as we all know, raped Kristina while they were high) but couldn't bring himself to find the same sort of compassion for his mother. There's also a fair amount of preaching. More than in her previous stories.

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