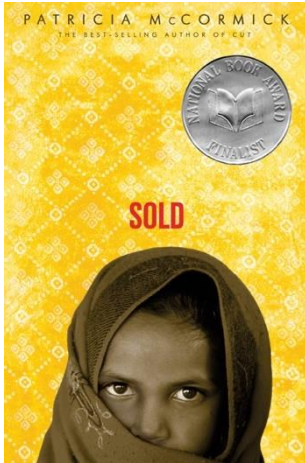


Book Resume: Sold



Sold by Patricia McCormick

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2006

ISBN: 9780786851720

*Age Range: 10 & up (Suggested by publisher)

Grade Range: Gr 9+ (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

The powerful, poignant, bestselling National Book Award Finalist gives voice to a young girl robbed of her childhood yet determined to find the strength to triumph

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 by the co-author of *I Am Malala* (Young Readers Edition), this

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powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives but triumphs.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "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

"McCormick provides readers who live in safety and under protection of the law with a vivid window into a harsh and cruel world—one most would prefer to pretend doesn't exist." —*Kirkus*

"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

"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*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- National Book Award Finalist
- Publishers Weekly, Best 100 Books of 2006
- National Public Radio's Best Books of the Year 2006
- American Library Association, Top Ten List, Best Books of the Year, 2006
- Gustav-Heinemann Peace Prize, 2009
- Booklist 2006 Editor's Choice Award
- New York Public Library Best Books for the Teenage
- Children's Literature Council's Choice
- Book Sense Pick
- Winner of California Young Reader Medal 2009
- Nominated for state awards in MO and VT

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MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Discussion Guide](#)
- [Children's Bookshelf Talks with Patricia McCormick – Publishers Weekly](#)
- [Sold FAQ, additional resources, interviews, and information about the *Sold* movie](#)
- [Author's *New York Times* Op-Ed about book banning](#)
- [A conversation between the author and a "book banner"](#)

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

[Williston High School \(Williston, ND\):](#)

"The message of strength and hope is important to teen girls who need to know that whatever they are facing, whether as bad as rape and continued sexual abuse or not, can be survived and that help is available. That this book was challenged is ridiculous."

"There are so many important lessons to be learned from this book. I feel it is also important for our students to have access to books like this - they need to understand that some people live this life and that there is a way out of it. Please keep this book available for our students. I am a mother and ironically had recommended this book to my freshman daughter a week before the list of "challenged" books came out. I would not have a problem letting my daughter read this book."

[Buncombe County Board of Education \(Asheville, NC\):](#)

Deemed a "touching and compelling read that offered a historical and cultural perspective on a relevant global issue."

AUTHOR STATEMENT

To ban this book is to erase the young people around the world who are currently enslaved. To ban this book is a disservice to the women who shared their stories with me so the world could know about their plight. And to ban this book is disrespectful to the young readers who want to know about the world as it is – so they can make a difference.

But, perhaps most important, to ban this book is to take away a lifeline for readers who are experiencing abuse. These kids know what adults often don't. Books aren't the problem; they are part of the solution.

[Author response video \(October 2025\)](#)

***A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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