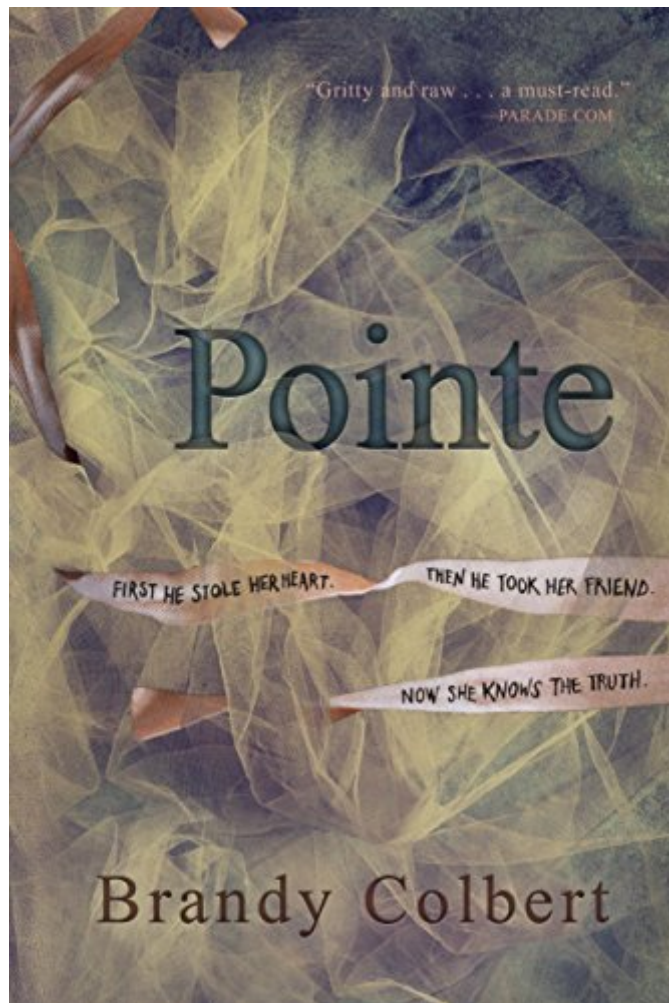


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# Pointe



## Synopsis

Speak meets Black Swan in this stunningly dramatic debut novel! All that drama, plus pointe shoes? Yes, please: this is one book that's bound to make a splash! Theo is better now. She's eating again, dating guys who are almost appropriate, and well on her way to becoming an elite ballet dancer. But when her oldest friend, Donovan, returns home after spending four long years with his kidnapper, Theo starts reliving memories about his abduction—and his abductor. Donovan isn't talking about what happened, and even though Theo knows she didn't do anything wrong, telling the truth would put everything she's been living for at risk. But keeping quiet might be worse.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Pointe ended, and Ms. Colbert's voice stopped, I was suddenly aware of how intensely I was breathing. Pointe is a powerful, evocative story of love, and trust, and betrayal. I had originally

gotten it because of the ballet theme but it is so much more than that. Ms. Colbert's writing perfectly captured the search for someone who only looks that way at you, who thinks that only you're special, and who thinks that the sun and the moon rise in your eyes alone; the wonder when a lover gently takes and caresses your ugliest feature instead of being repulsed (for a ballet dancer, our beaten up feet that are at the heart of and our sacrifice to our art); the difficulty of being one of only a handful of people who are different in a town that is not like you; the fear that you will not be good enough to be able to do what you're most passionate about; and the fear that your family and friends will hate you for something that was done to you. It is a story of Theo, a 17-year-old ballet dancer who struggles with an eating disorder, with betrayal, with growing up and finding her place in the world. *Pointe* is an intense book. It can be triggering for people who have eating disorders, have been sexually abused, have PTSD, or have depression. Some will say it is too grown up for teenagers. The issues Theo faces are the same issues that I see teenagers in our high school face every day. Ms. Colbert explores these issues in a sensitive way that never seemed exploitative or sensationalized. Ms. Colbert is an outstanding writer and I look forward to reading anything that she writes. That's not a comment I make lightly and only for a very small handful of authors. Brava!

Theo is seventeen, a dedicated ballet dancer, a good student and a beloved daughter, struggling with self-esteem issues, an eating disorder and a dark past. When her best friend, who disappeared four years ago, turns up again, abducted by a suspected pedophile, and an imminent trial looms on the horizon, her memories come crashing down. I started reading *Pointe* because it was brought to my attention as an example of diversity in YA. I stopped reading half-way through, because I felt exhausted by yet another put-upon young heroine, plagued by anorexia, sexual abuse and stuck in self-destructive sexual relationships. It was just too much. And I couldn't help feeling that it was incredible that a seventeen-year-old's parents wouldn't notice if their kid was abused by a pedophile, almost killed herself by not eating, used drugs on a regular basis - all while keeping up appearances as a good girl and conscientious student. (Well, I may be living a sheltered life, here.) Then, I started reading again because I'm a sucker for finishing what I started - and my impression improved. Theo stopped being just stuck in her head, reeling between memories and a vague grasp on reality and started acting, not just reacting. Her choices were still questionable, but they started to become her own. The suffocating feeling of living inside a bell jar lifted, and Theo started becoming believable, not just another victimized girl, riddled by guilt, torturing her own body and soul. My rating then improved from a 2 to a 3. Read *Pointe* if you're interested in feel-bad YA with a reasonably happy ending, that's my most honest recommendation!

Brandy Colbert has penned an emotional and gripping coming-of-age story about a girl searching for grace amid harrowing shadows. Theo is a ballerina who pushes herself to the limits, striving for perfection, but yearning for escape from the strictures she imposes on herself. This is an inspiring story of someone trying to get up on her own two feet, rising on their tips to stand higher than she thought possible ... if only she could stop tripping herself up. Theo is drawn as much to chaos as control. While working tirelessly to prove herself worthy of a future in ballet, she struggles with an eating disorder and is tempted by the usual teenage exploration of drugs and sex, embarking on a covert relationship with Hosea, her rehearsal pianist and the boyfriend of a close friend. She knows it's ill-advised, but that somehow makes him all the more tempting. Theo is no stranger to guilt, and seems determined to generate and endure more of it, punishing herself the way she tests her body against the physical pains and demands of dance. Roiling inside her is fear that she's partly responsible for the disappearance of another friend, Donovan, who went missing years before, either kidnapped or run away. She doesn't know, and truly doesn't want to know. When he returns unexpectedly, it raises truths she has worked hard to ignore -- but this is a girl who has prepared herself to face the harshness of life, and when she finally does it is a thing of beauty. Colbert's tale is a riveting study of the clash between creative and destructive impulses, with language that captures gritty reality of life with poise and elegance. "Pointe" moves fearlessly into the darker caverns of a young heart, the kind of places anyone could disappear into, if they're not surefooted.

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