



# Bloodletting: A Memoir of Secrets, Self-Harm, and Survival

*By Victoria Leatham*

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**Bloodletting: A Memoir of Secrets, Self-Harm, and Survival** By Victoria Leatham

On the outside, she appears to have it all. She's creative, beautiful, confident. But inside Victoria Leatham struggles with silent, secret, and unbearable pain. In her late teens, Leatham is struck with an undeniable urge to cut herself. Oddly, the wounds she inflicts on herself mute the pain she feels inside.

This memoir, a darkly humorous and often chilling account, vividly details Leatham's ordeal and reveals her most intimate thoughts as she struggles with cutting and a range of other psychological problems including eating disorders, sexual promiscuity, substance abuse, and bipolar disorder. And finally, it describes her discovery of the psychological secret that helps her escape from this spiral of self-destruction.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Leatham begins her painful, emotional memoir with her realization, in her late teens, that she was depressed. As her friends and family dismissed her feelings as temporary, she discovered that "harming myself really did make me feel better." The irresistible urge to cut herself led to a life of medication, stays in psychiatric hospitals (she was diagnosed with a form of bipolar disorder) and more self-destructive behavior, including eating disorders, abusive relationships and frequent career hopping. Just as Leatham would start to feel settled in a new city in her native Australia, or one she recently returned to, the compulsion to cut would begin again, resulting in a hospital stay followed by a move to a different locale. More than 12 years after she began her self-harm, she started a program of cognitive behavioral therapy, and although she initially resisted it, she found that "[s]omething had at last shifted and made it possible for me to begin to protect myself." Leatham's searing memoir will resonate with young women struggling with similar problems, as well as those who care about them. (*Mar.*)

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Review

From the Publisher

**Bloodletting** is a frank, compelling, and at times darkly humorous memoir of one woman's struggle with cutting. This book challenges the silence surrounding self-injury, one of mental health's last taboos.

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**Barbara Mobley:**

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