



Dolls

michael hiebert

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"There's something mesmerizing about Hiebert's storytelling voice, low-pitched and lightly musical." --*The New York Times Book Review*

Absolute power corrupts absolutely, especially twelve-year-old girls.

After being kissed by hunky dreamboat Jonathon Taylor Anderson while waiting inline for the water fountain, Kite Morgan's stomach's so full of butterflies she barely makes it to class to tell her bff Marcie about what happened. Marcie doesn't share her excitement. "What about Carla?" she asks. Carla Bell and Jonathon were an item for as long as anyone could remember but, a month ago, they broke up, so Kite's not worried.

Turns out she should've been.

At lunch, Carla and her two cronies, Sophie and Kylie approach Kite and tell her, "She's dead after school." It makes the rest of the day a struggle for Kite, who's never been in a fight.

The fight after school doesn't take long. Two punches, and Kite's down. She walks home, upset, angry, and hating the world. She decides the only way to work through this is to busy herself with something creative. So, taking the craft box from where it's remained untouched for years in her closet, Kite sits at her dining room table cutting out paper dolls of Carla and her two watchdogs.

When she's done, she borrows her little brother's Tonka truck and, in a fit of rage, runs over the Carla doll again, and again, and again. Now this is cathartic, she says to herself. When she's done, the doll is twisted, it's paper arms lay outstretched, and it's dead eyes stare vacantly at the ceiling.

Then, from outside, sirens wail as emergency vehicles race past Kite's house.

Following them, Kite finds the real Carla Bell a half mile up the road, lying beneath the wheels of a real truck that looks remarkably similar to her brother's Tonka. Beneath its wheels lies Carla Bell, looking nearly exactly the same as the doll still sitting on Kite's dining room table.

Comatose, Carla is taken to hospital.

Kite thinks it's more than a mere coincidence. Soon her theories are validated, launching her on an emotional rocket ship ride as she fully realizes the implications of possessing so much power and the responsibility that goes along with it.

At school, Kite's class is assigned *Animal Farm* by George Orwell and soon, Kite's descent into power corruption begins to match that of the pigs. She realizes, unless she can uncover the secret of her paper doll voodoo powers, she will soon be corrupted by the absolute power she wields with the dolls.

Dolls is a hilarious, sometimes scary reminder that with great power must come great responsibility.

Praise for the novels of Michael Hiebert

Dream with Little Angels

"Hiebert's first novel courts comparison to the classic *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but the book manages to soar as a moving achievement in its own right. In Hiebert's hands, psychological insight and restrained lyricism combine to create a coming-of-age tale as devastating as it is indelible. --*Publishers Weekly* (Starred Review)

"Readers who enjoy literary fiction depicting small-town life in the tradition of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* may want to try Hiebert's debut." --*Library Journal*

"Michael Hiebert's debut delivers . . . a breathless, will-they-get-there-in-time affair, with a heartbreaking resolution." --*Mystery Scene*

Close to the Broken Hearted

"Hiebert does a masterful job of building suspense." --*Publishers Weekly*

"A very good, sometimes emotional, mystery that will stay with you long after it's over." --*Suspense Magazine*

A Thorn Among the Lilies

"Engaging. . . Readers will keep guessing whodunit to the end." --*Publishers Weekly*

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