

SCARS bonus postcard story

The subway is so crammed that people are squashed up against me on all sides. I can't draw in air. The man behind me presses closer, his cologne overpowering, and I want to kick back against his knee and curl up in a ball, all at once. Then Meghan smiles at me, looking only at me, and I remember I'm safe. Remember things are good now.

"I bet you could paint this," Meghan whispers to me. She reaches up and touches my cheek, not caring who's watching. I kiss her fingers, and her smile widens.

The train jerks to a stop and people push past me, rushing for the doors. And then suddenly I have air around me. I breathe in deeply. I can't believe I got Meghan to go to the art gallery with me.

Across from us, a woman stares at my arm, at the shiny red strips of new skin. "What happened to your arm?"

Meghan spins around, her body tight. "You didn't really ask that!" she says loudly.

I catch her arm. "No, it's okay." *I can do this.* I smile at the woman, then slide my hand down into Meghan's. "I'm an abuse survivor," I say. It's how I coped."

"Oh," the woman says, and looks away.

And just like that, it's not an issue any more.

I bet the entire car heard me. But I don't care. It's better than hiding it, the way I have for so long.

I squeeze Meghan's hand. "You're right. I might paint this."

She grins at me. "I know you will."

And she's right.



SCARS by Cheryl Rainfield
WestSide Books, 2010

Kendra must face her past and stop hurting herself before it's too late

GG Literary Award Finalist,
ALA's Top 10 Quick Picks,
2011 Rainbow List

ISBN: 978-1934813577

Read the 1st 3 pages:
<http://goo.gl/98ATq>

CherylRainfield.com