

SYNOPSIS

Skirt by Julie Tosh (3M, 1W)

Facing her fifteenth birthday after an accident that killed her father and handicapped her brother, Bethany Gallagher feels alone in the world. In typical teenage fashion she shuts everyone out, though connection to someone would help her heal after the double tragedy. Then her brother Del's best friend Michael Brodbeck returns home to student teach the unit on evolution in her science class. His first action as her teacher is to measure the length of her skirt. In her confusion at this inappropriate attention, Bethany's head explodes with fantasies of Del before his accident. At first she ignores these, but eventually she accepts him in her head, irritated by his advice and moving closer to developing a relationship with Michael. Michael thinks of her as a dancing child with a sparkler, and Bethany is intrigued. She pursues him as a surrogate brother, and then something more, egged on by her imagining of Del's thoughts and her own impulsive nature. She even uses the science of evolution to help convince Michael that a connection to him would help her heal.

Struggling to cross the hazy landscape between child and adult, Bethany becomes her worst self: getting suspended, cutting, and pushing the boundary of propriety by sleeping with Michael. None of this helps her heal or build a relationship with the ever-evolving Del. But, after choosing her brother's love over the inappropriate relationship with Michael, she takes a step back to her family and one forward into adulthood.