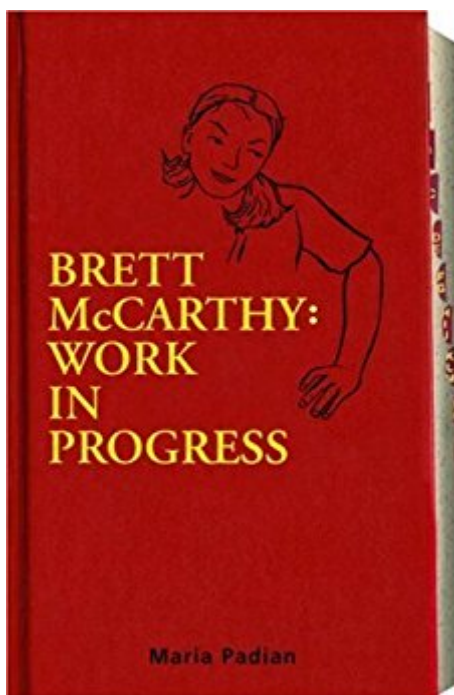


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# Brett McCarthy: Work In Progress



## Synopsis

Brett McCarthy lives for vocabulary words, soccer, and her larger-than-life grandmother, Nonna. Unfortunately, Brett's got a big mouth she can't seem to tame and opinions she can't keep to herself. And she's obsessed with the moment she became redefined and went from good student, bestfriend-to-Diane to twice-suspended, friendless, and dearest meat in Maine. Soon her world has turned upside down, and she's not sure where she fits, what she should do, or how to make right what she, and her big fat mouth, have made wrong. Brett's fresh and funny voice will keep readers laughing out loud at her plights, groaning in sympathy at every misstep, and rooting for her as things go from bad to worst ever possible. A Spring 2008 Association of Booksellers for Children New Voices Pick. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## Book Information

File Size: 481 KB

Print Length: 290 pages

Publisher: Knopf Books for Young Readers (March 11, 2008)

Publication Date: May 11, 2008

Language: English

ASIN: B00199RHGQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,689,427 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #96

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## Customer Reviews

Love your book and am so glad you are on my friend list. Best of luck with all your other books!

Great story for teen readers. Many things to think about. Great visual images to discuss. Down to earth language. Keeps life real!

Normally a decent student, a star soccer player, and responsible only daughter, Brett McCarthy isn't exactly sure what is going wrong. First she is suspended, then earns unlimited lunchtime detentions with the middle school principal, and then she is suspended again. It is enough to freak anyone out. To complicate matters, Brett learns that her long-time best friend is not only dealing with divorcing parents, but has also lost her mind and decided to try out for the cheerleading squad. With her friends deserting her, Brett turns to her grandmother, "Nonna," only to suspect something fishy is going on with her and some medical situation. Brett is an extremely likeable teen dealing with a crazy middle school year. Typical adolescent problems are creatively mixed with Nonna's kooky schemes, a lot of chocolate brownie baking, and a plan to resurrect an old lighthouse. One adventure after another holds the readers' attention and keeps this story moving quickly. Debut author Maria Padian has something for everyone in this book. Brett's father, an English professor, provides countless poetry references for just about any situation. Brett's own love of vocabulary shows up as she introduces a new word with each chapter. And with 45 quick-read chapters, readers are bound to increase their personal vocabulary whether they want to or not. There is no shortage of humor. I found myself chuckling plenty. Padian doesn't shy away from heart-rending emotion, either. Be sure to have a tissue or two close at hand. Reviewed by: Sally Kruger, aka "Readingjunkie"

A truly human story about a girl struggling to find herself as she embraces the obstacles of adolescence, family, and life in her own strong, unique, and unexpected ways. Brett is smart, witty, and obsessed with words. And don't let the *Catcher-in-the-Rye*-esque cover fool you, this is a story of trial, tribulation, love, and hope. For anyone who has ever wondered how we become who we are, how we manage to constantly redefine ourselves and our relationships in an uncertain world, this is a beautiful place to start.

At first I thought I was getting a fairly typical -- though very knowing -- young adult novel about the trials of middle school friendship, but the story grew on me, and I found I couldn't put it down. A compelling plot, a creative first person voice, and depth in the relationships, particularly as the story of Brett's grandmother Nonna evolves. The building of chapters around Brett's vocabulary lessons is not corny: it begins and ends with the concept of (self) definition in a satisfying, theme-building

way.

My favorite thing about Brett McCarthy is her sense of humor, her stubbornness, and her grouchiness. She makes for a well rounded young female protagonist. Her struggles feel authentic, especially because she is often to blame, and the book is a refreshing look at middle school for a girl. Brett's friendship storyline rings so true and her relationship with her grandmother is so sweetly written.

I recently bought this book, and when it came in the mail, I was so surprised to find that on the inside cover of this book, was an autograph from Maria Padian! It reads as follows: "...We are works in progress. Every one of us. Maria Padian." Now this was a used book, so I was not expecting this. I highly recommend this book. There are lots of twists and turns in Brett McCarthy's life, and I enjoyed the ride.

Maria Padian's BRETT MCCARTHY: WORK IN PROGRESS tells of an eighth-grade corner kicker in Maine whose prank makes her become a juvenile delinquent and a loser. Brett has to figure out how to survive when everyone is changing, many are now against her, and nothing is easy. Middle school leisure readers will find this a compelling tale.

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