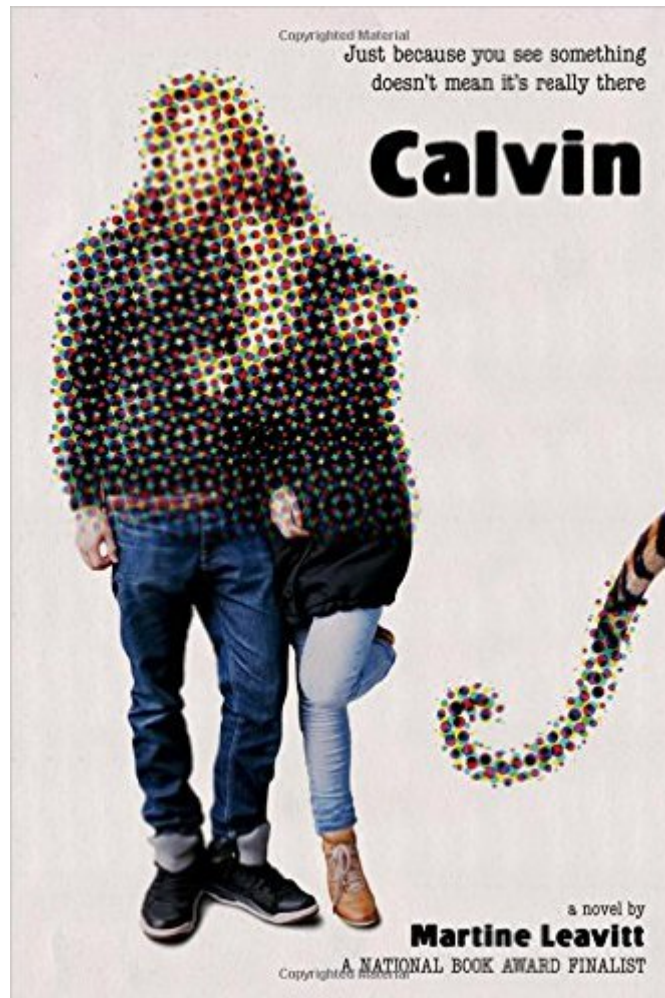


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# Calvin



## Synopsis

Seventeen-year-old Calvin has always known his fate is linked to the comic book character from Calvin & Hobbes. He was born on the day the last strip was published; his grandpa left a stuffed tiger named Hobbes in his crib; and he even has a best friend named Susie. As a child Calvin played with the toy Hobbes, controlling his every word and action, until Hobbes was washed to death. But now Calvin is a teenager who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia, Hobbes is back •as a delusion• and Calvin can't control him. Calvin decides that if he can convince Bill Watterson to draw one final comic strip, showing a normal teenaged Calvin, he will be cured. Calvin and Susie (and Hobbes) set out on a dangerous trek across frozen Lake Erie to track him down.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 680 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR) (November 17, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374380732

ISBN-13: 978-0374380731

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 0.8 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (23 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #172,610 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #108 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Depression & Mental Illness](#) #332 in [Books >](#)

[Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Fiction](#) #556 in [Books > Teens > Literature &](#)

[Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Being a Teen](#)

Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Calvin is 17-years old and has been linked to Calvin and Hobbes from birth: he was born on the day the last strip was published, his grandpa left a stuffed tiger named Hobbes in his crib, and he even has a best friend named Susie. He looks and behaves like comic-strip-Calvin and played with his Hobbes until he fell apart in the washing machine. But now Calvin is falling apart. Susie has been pulling away by getting friendly with his bully and he's been falling behind in school - he hasn't done a project that is worth 50% of his grade. As he realizes this could mean he won't graduate Hobbes

appears. Well, he doesn't appear - Calvin can't really see him - but he starts talking to him. When he goes to class the next day without his project and realizes his teacher is an alien he tries to warn his classmates, but blacks out as he tries to run away. He wakes up in a psychiatric ward and a doctor tells him he's Schizophrenic. Hobbes tells him he's not. Calvin says it's Bill Watterson's fault. Susie says she'll help. Many books that cover mental illness cover a character who has already been diagnosed and is dealing with the illness either as a daily factor of their life or as part of recovery for another aspect of life. This is one of the few I have seen that deals with the diagnosis portion itself, with the individual realizing something is wrong and having to come to terms with their new reality. For Calvin and Schizophrenia he has a difficult time especially because his whole life he has related so closely to Calvin and Hobbes so his delusions naturally take part in that world, but he can't tell where the story and life begin and end. He begins to question what was and is real and isn't even sure if Susie is there with him.

Let's be honest: most teenagers procrastinate. Most teens don't, however, confront an eight-foot stuffed tiger prowling around their bedroom at one in the morning. On the novel's very first page, however, Calvin blunders through both. Then again, 17-year-old Calvin doesn't exactly conform to standard high schooler behavior --- he knows what your R cortex does, considers dead spiders a token of affection and thinks he's the star of Calvin and Hobbes come to life. But when his English teacher morphs into a bug-eyed alien, for once Calvin reacts just as expected. He runs for his life. A dozen psychological tests and one schizophrenia diagnosis later, Calvin and his ex-best friend Susie embark on a three-day slog across Lake Erie. In Canada. In January. But can braving 72 hours on this frozen "garbage popsicle" coax the Calvin and Hobbes creator into drawing one final comic? And can a cartoon of a teenage, tiger-free Calvin restore our protagonist's sanity? Never has a novel crammed so much impact into 190 pages; you'll cry, you'll laugh til you cry and you'll plunge through every emotion in between. And whatever you do, don't underestimate Calvin's almost episodic plotline. Sure, the wonders lurking on --- and under --- Lake Erie don't exactly culminate into your typical climax. (Spoiler alert, you'll never see looking-for-Fred guy again.) But, Fred or no Fred, these bursts of the unexpected elevate CALVIN from a novel about schizophrenia to a true glimpse into a schizophrenic brain. Not to say you can't find culmination if you're looking for it.

I received this book from Netgalley/the publisher in exchange for an honest review. I was not familiar with author Martine Leavitt when I received the opportunity to review her novel Calvin, but I was

intrigued by the premise. My oldest daughter is a huge fan of Calvin and Hobbes, and her passion has helped me to rediscover a comic strip from my youth. I used to love reading Calvin and Hobbes with my father, who passed away a few years ago, so it is very special that my daughter loves Calvin and Hobbes as much as he did. I do want to clarify that Leavitt's novel Calvin is intended for a young adult audience. Calvin is the story of a young man named Calvin who believes he has a personal connection to the famous comic strip. Not only does he share a name with Calvin, but he also has a stuffed tiger named Hobbes, and he was born on the day the last strip was published. The stuffed Hobbes was lost in a washing machine accident years ago, but he has returned- except this time, Calvin is the only one who can hear Hobbes talking. This is one of the reasons that lead to Calvin's diagnosis with schizophrenia. He is convinced that there is a connection between his life and the fictional Calvin. He needs to persuade Bill Watterson to draw one last strip in order to cure his schizophrenia. So, Calvin decides to walk across a frozen Lake Erie with his neighbor Susie in order to meet Bill Watterson. The most wonderful thing about this book is that it brings awareness of mental illness. Schizophrenia affects millions of people around the world, but it has been highly stigmatized. Calvin is an extremely likeable narrator. His plan for a cure is completely unrealistic, but I couldn't help but root for him.

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