Speak Quotes:

Quotes from **MARKING PERIOD ONE:**

1. "The back wall has built-in shelves filled with dusty textbooks and a few bottles of bleach. A stained armchair and an old fashioned desk peek from behind a collection of mops and brooms. A cracked mirror tilts over a sink littered with dead roaches crocheted together with cobwebs...This closet is abandoned-it has no purpose, no name. It is the perfect place for me."(pg. 25-26)
2. "My throat squeezes shut...I can't even look at that part of myself." (pg. 28)
3. " ...like a good girl. I am getting better at smiling when people expect it." (pg. 32)
4. "But a little whisper of "Melinda" would be nice." (pg. 33)
5. "I wash my face in the sink until there is nothing left of it, no eyes, no nose, no mouth। A slick nothing." (pg.45)
6. "Good thing my lips are stitched together or I'd throw up." (pg. 46)

Quotes from **SECOND MARKING PERIOD:**

1. "The football team would have protested, but the sad truth is that they've lost every game this season. They are happy not to be called the Tigers. Other teams called them Pussycats. Not manly... Who are we?" (pg. 49)
2. There is a beast in my gut, I can hear it scraping away at the inside of my ribs. (g. 51)
3. "I try to draw a branch coming out of a tree trunk for the 315Th time. It looks so flat, a cheap, cruddy drawing. I have no idea how to make it come alive." (pg. 55)
4. We lived in a different house then, a smaller house. Mom worked at the jewelry counter and was home after school. Dad had a nicer boss and talked all the time about buying a boat. I believed in Santa Claus. (pg.71)
5. But when I try to carve it, it looks like a dead tree, toothpicks, a child's drawing. I can't bring it to life. I'd love to give it up. Quit. But I can't think of anything else to do, so I keep chipping away at it. (pg. 78)
6. I want the snow to bury our house. (pg. 87)

Quotes from **THIRD MARKING PERIOD:**

1. I should probably tell someone, just tell someone. Get it over with. Let it out, blurt it out. I want to be in fifth grade again. Now, *that* is a deep dark secret, almost as bit as the other one. Fifth grade was easy- old enough to play outside without Mom, too young to go off the block. The perfect leash length. (pg. 99)
2. Do they choose to be so dense? Were they born that way? I have no friends. I say nothing. I am nothing. I wonder how long it takes to ride a bus to Arizona. (pg. 116)
3. It seems like a good idea until I'm standing at the bus stop in front of school as a blizzard rips through the country. The wind chill must be twenty below and I don't have a hat or mittens. I try keeping my back to the wind, buy my rear end freezes. Facing it is impossible. The snow blows up under my eyelids and fills my ears. That's why I don't hear the car pull up next to me. When the horn blows, I nearly jump out of my skin. It's Mr. Freeman. "Need a ride?...I'm seeing a lot of growth in your work."(pg. 121)
4. "I don't know what I'm supposed to feel." My fingers fly up and cover my mouth. What am I doing?...When people don't express themselves, they die one piece at a time. (pg. 122)
5. I just need to hang on long enough for my new skin to graft...They are chewing me alive like an infestation of thoughts, shame, mistakes. (pg. 125)
6. But once the snow covers the ground, it hushes as still as my heart. (pg. 130)

Quotes from FOURTH MARKING PERIOD:

1. [The lack of a mascot name] It describes the psychological harm that we have all suffered from this years lack of identity. (pg. 141)
2. Those branches were long dead from disease. All plants are like that. By cutting off the damage, you make it possible for the tree to grow again. You watch- by the end of summer, this tree will be the strongest on the block.
3. There has been some progress in this whole tree project...I've gone through different phases. (pg. 151)
4. Breathe life into it. Make it bend--trees are flexible, so they don't snap. Scar it, give it a twisted branch--perfect trees don't exist. Nothing is perfect. Flaws are interesting. Be the tree. (pg. 153)
5. "The time has come to arm-wrestle some demons. Too much sun after a Syracuse winter does strange things to you head, makes you feel strong, even if you aren't." (pg. 180)
6. I ride life a I have wings. I am not tired. I don't think I'll ever have to sleep again. (pg. 190) The tears dissolve the last block of ice in my throat. I feel the frozen stillness melt down through the inside of me, dripping shards of ice that vanish in a puddle of sunlight on the stained floor. Words float up. (pg. 198)