



The Truth According to Us: A Novel

Annie Barrows

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NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *BOOKPAGE* • From the co-author of *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* comes a wise, witty, and exuberant novel, perfect for fans of Lee Smith, that illuminates the power of loyalty and forgiveness, memory and truth, and the courage it takes to do what's right.

Annie Barrows once again evokes the charm and eccentricity of a small town filled with extraordinary characters. Her new novel, *The Truth According to Us*, brings to life an inquisitive young girl, her beloved aunt, and the alluring visitor who changes the course of their destiny forever.

In the summer of 1938, Layla Beck's father, a United States senator, cuts off her allowance and demands that she find employment on the Federal Writers' Project, a New Deal jobs program. Within days, Layla finds herself far from her accustomed social whirl, assigned to cover the history of the remote mill town of Macedonia, West Virginia, and destined, in her opinion, to go completely mad with boredom. But once she secures a room in the home of the unconventional Romeyn family, she is drawn into their complex world and soon discovers that the truth of the town is entangled in the thorny past of the Romeyn dynasty.

At the Romeyn house, twelve-year-old Willa is desperate to learn everything in her quest to acquire her favorite virtues of ferocity and devotion—a search that leads her into a thicket of mysteries, including the questionable business that occupies her charismatic father and the reason her adored aunt Jottie remains unmarried. Layla's arrival strikes a match to the family veneer, bringing to light buried secrets that will tell a new tale about the Romeyns. As Willa peels back the layers of her family's past, and Layla delves deeper into town legend, everyone involved is transformed—and their personal histories completely rewritten.

Praise for *The Truth According to Us*

“As delightfully eccentric as *Guernsey* yet refreshingly different . . . an epic but intimate family novel with richly imagined characters . . . Willa's indomitable spirit, keen sense of adventure and innate intelligence reminded me of two other motherless girls in literature: Scout Finch in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Flavia de Luce in Alan Bradley's big-hearted British mystery series.”—*The Washington Post*

“*The Truth According to Us* has all the characteristics of a great summer read: A plot that makes you want to keep turning the pages; a setting that makes you feel like you're inhabiting another time and place; and characters who become people you're sad to leave behind—and thus who always stay with you.”—*Miami Herald*

“It takes a brave author to make the heroine of a new novel an observant and feisty girl . . . like Scout Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. . . . But Barrows . . . has created a believable and touching character in Willa.”—*USA Today*

“[A] heartwarming coming-of-age novel [that] sparkles with folksy depictions of a tight-knit family and life in a small town . . . full of richly drawn, memorable characters.”—*The Seattle Times*

“A big, juicy family saga with warm humor and tragic twists . . . The story gets more and more absorbing as

it moves briskly along.”—*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

“Annie Barrows leaves no doubt that she is a storyteller of rare caliber, with wisdom and insight to spare. Every page rings like a bell.”—**Paula McLain, author of *The Paris Wife***

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Debra Richardson:

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