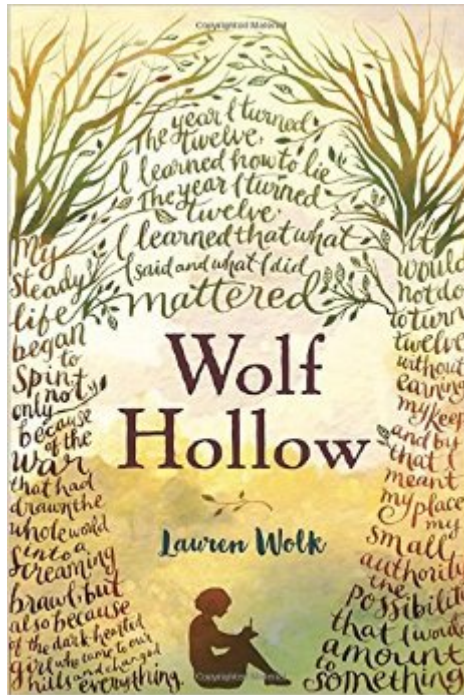


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# Wolf Hollow



## Synopsis

“This exquisite debut confronts injustice and doesn’t flinch.” People  
[A] powerful debut . . . beautifully written.” The Wall Street Journal “Wrenching and true.  
. . . comparisons to Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird will abound. But Wolk gives us her own  
story” one full of grace and stark, brutal beauty.” The New York Times Book Review Growing  
up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her  
small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty  
quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first,  
things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks.  
While others have always seen Toby’s strangeness, Annabelle knows only kindness. She will  
soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount. Brilliantly  
crafted, Wolf Hollow is a haunting tale of America at a crossroads and a time when one girl’s  
resilience and strength help to illuminate the darkest corners of our history. “The honesty  
of Wolf Hollow will just about shred your heart, but Annabelle’s courage and compassion will  
restore it to you, fuller than before.” This book matters.” Sara Pennypacker, New York Times  
bestselling author of Pax “An evocative setting, memorable characters, a searing story: Wolf  
Hollow has stayed with me long after I closed the book. It has the feel of an instant  
classic.” Linda Sue Park, Newbery Medalist and New York Times bestselling author

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (97 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #7,119 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #6 in Books > Children’s Books >

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Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s #26 in Books > Children’s Books

> Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Bullies

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

I am not what you might call a very brave reader. This is probably why I primarily consume children's literature. I might puff myself up with a defense that lists the many fine aspects of this particular type of writing and believe it too, but sometimes when you catch me in a weak moment I might confess that another reason I like reading books for kids is that the content is so very safe in comparison to books for adults. Disturbing elements are kept at a minimum. There's always a undercurrent of hope running through the book, promising that maybe we don't live in a cold, cruel, calculating universe that cares for us not one jot. Even so, that doesn't mean that I don't sometimes have difficulty with books written for, oh say, 10-year-olds. I do. I'm not proud of it, but I do. So when I flipped to the back of *Wolf Hollow* mid-way through reading it, I want to tell you that I did so not because I wanted to spoil the ending for myself but because I honestly couldn't turn another page until I knew precisely how everything was going to fall out. In her debut children's book, Lauren Wolk dives head first into difficult material. A compelling author, the book is making the assumption that child readers will want to see what happens to its characters, even when the foreshadowing is so thick you'd need a knife to cut through it. Even when the ending may not be the happy one everyone expects. And you know what? The book might be right. It is fair to say that if Betty Glengarry hadn't moved to western Pennsylvania in the autumn of 1943 then Annabelle would not have needed to become a liar later. Betty looks the part of the blond, blue-eyed innocent, but that exterior hides a nasty spirit.

The impact of a lie, the power of friendship, and the need to look beyond someone's outward appearance are explored on the pages of *Wolf Hollow*. Lauren Wolk has given readers a powerful novel, one that is relevant for every age reader. You should not pigeonhole *Wolf Hollow* as simply a children's book, it is much more than that. Along with her parents, brothers, grandparents and Aunt Lily, eleven-year old Annabelle McBride lives on a farm in *Wolf Hollow*, a rural, western Pennsylvania community. Three generations tucked together under one roof. World War II is raging, but Annabelle faces a conflict of her own – one that tests her courage and her compassion. After the incorrigible Betty Glengarry moves in with her grandparents, Annabelle's problems begin. A cruel bully, Betty torments Annabelle and begins her targeting of a reclusive World War I veteran, Toby, whom Annabelle and her family have

befriended. A series of mishaps that Betty claims to have witnessed are blamed on Toby; his troubles escalate when Betty disappears. Lauren Wolk is an amazing author. She beautifully describes and captures the essence of the locale—a field that wrapped itself around a long, low hill like a nubby shawl. The picturesque description of dust particles as small, unbottled genies is magical. She includes colloquialisms familiar to residents of western Pennsylvania through her narrative. Individuals redd up rather than clean up an area. Local department stores—Horne's and familiar sections of Pittsburgh—Sewickley add authenticity to the novel. Annabelle's narration makes this story more intimate than would the third person voice. Her character matures and grows during the novel; she asks questions that many individuals consider.

It's a rare book that combines plot, character and setting so seamlessly and, seemingly, so effortlessly. I could really envision the rural western Pennsylvania hills of Wolf Hollow and I felt like I was there. The characters are real and vivid and people you might actually meet in real life (and most of them you'd actually like to meet). And the plot kept me turning pages long after I should have been fast asleep. This is the coming of age story of Annabelle as she learns to find courage and fight in a quiet but determined sort of way for what is right, even in the face of contrary popular opinion. As the oldest of three children, it is her (largely self-appointed) responsibility to look out for her two younger, spirited, brothers. So when Betty—an incorrigible city girl staying with her grandparents—starts threatening her and her brothers, she knows she's in for a fight. Many of us have met a Betty or two in our lives—she's mean and charming at the same time. Lacking all remorse, she's capable of inflicting great harm without a backwards glance. But, as a practiced liar, she also doesn't have to worry about getting in trouble—who could doubt such an innocent girl? But Annabelle isn't entirely alone. Her family is fiercely supportive, even if they can't prove anything. And then there's Toby. The reclusive, silent wanderer has been a part of Annabelle's life for nearly as long as she can remember, and he seems to have taken a protective stance toward her. He's the only one, besides Annabelle and Betty themselves, who really knows what's going on. But most of the village doesn't feel the same way Toby that Annabelle and her family (well, most of them) do. Toby is an outsider for starters. And he's always prowling through the woods. And he doesn't speak.

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