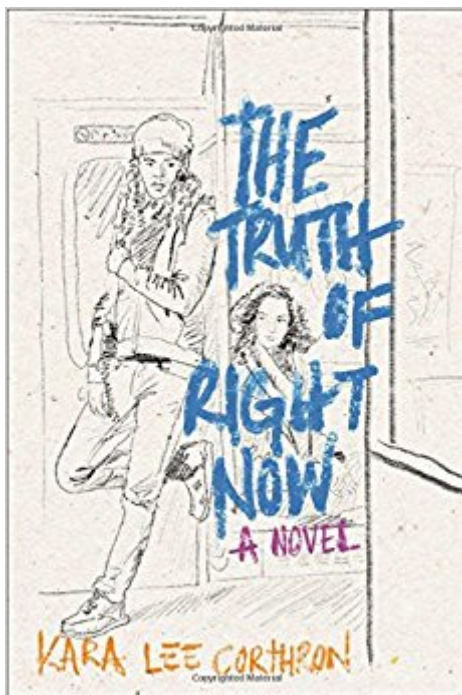


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The Truth Of Right Now



Synopsis

Two isolated teens struggle against their complicated lives to find a true connection in this “timely and timeless” (Kirkus Reviews, starred review) debut novel about first love and the wreckage of growing up. Lily is returning to her privileged Manhattan high school after a harrowing end to her sophomore year and it’s not pretty. She hates chemistry and her spiteful lab partner, her friends are either not speaking to her or suffocating her with concerned glances, and nothing seems to give her joy anymore. Worst of all, she can’t escape her own thoughts about what drove her away from everyone in the first place. Enter Dari (short for Dariomauros), the artistic and mysterious transfer student, adept at cutting class. Not that he’d rather be at home with his domineering Trinidadian father. Dari is everything that Lily needs: bright, creative, honest, and unpredictable. And in a school where no one really stands out, Dari finds Lily’s sensitivity and openness magnetic. Their attraction ignites immediately, and for the first time in what feels like forever, Lily and Dari find happiness in each other. In twenty-first-century New York City, the fact that Lily is white and Dari is black shouldn’t matter that much, but nothing’s as simple as it seems. When tragedy becomes reality, can friendship survive even if romance cannot?

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Simon Pulse (January 3, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1481459473

ISBN-13: 978-1481459471

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #467,639 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #201 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Physical & Emotional Abuse #297 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism #935 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Dating & Sex

Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up • What happens when bad girl meets bad boy? In Corthron’s heady realistic novel, troubled teen Lily returns to her high school after a year “away.” New kid Dari sits alone at lunch,

drawing and brooding, and catches Lily's eye. As they strike up a friendship, and more, each teen's layered backstory is unscrambled, revealing a mosaic of abuse, untrustworthy adults, and self-harm. Lily's flighty hippie mother and Dari's controlling, derisive father are no background figures here; they each play an important part in the young people's lives. Corthron's writing strikes the right balance of pitchy and pithy—no words are left unchained or events unraveling as Dari and Lily experience the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. True to the characters' lives, sexual situations and graphic language appear throughout the narrative. VERDICT Recommended for fans of Rainbow Rowell's works. —Amanda C. Buschmann, Carroll Elementary School, Houston

High school can be hell, but if they can hold onto their friendship, Lily and Dari might just survive. In her debut novel, playwright Corthron crafts a haunting and disturbingly realistic tale of two teenagers from different worlds trying desperately to hold onto their artistic dreams while enduring the vapid wasteland that is their upscale New York City prep school. Returning for the first time since her suicide attempt, Lily, a privileged Jewish white girl, is estranged from her former friends and now finds their lives trivial. Dari, a cynical Trinidadian-American transfer student, is a brooding painter in search of a new muse. Both are outcasts from broken homes drawn together by a mutual need for companionship. Lily and Dari alternate narration (Lily in first person; Dari in third; both realistically profane), enabling the author to build two richly nuanced protagonists whose voices are so heartbreakingly authentic that readers may scan their homerooms searching for them. Vivid details, from the smell of the bums on the 1 train and the brutal taunts of high school social cliques to the all-encompassing isolation the teens feel dealing with parents who don't quite understand them, practically pop off of the pages. Another treat this novel boasts are secondary characters who manage to be as intriguing as its stars, particularly Dari's overbearing immigrant father and Lily's well-meaning mother. A powerhouse of storytelling that feels timely and timeless. (Fiction. 14 & up) (Kirkus, STARRED REVIEW 11/1/16) When Lily returns to her Manhattan high school in the fall, she is met with disgust and revulsion from her longtime classmates. They all know what she did the previous school year, and their disdain only adds to Lily's distress, since she's still emotionally paralyzed by the experience and unable to take refuge even in her beloved music. Then she notices a new kid, Dari, who keeps his head in his art to avoid his difficult home situation. As they grow closer, they find some comfort in each other, and if this was a predictable novel, their romance would heal all their wounds. But debut novelist Corthron eschews the easy path, especially when Lily, who's white, displays careless, dangerous naiveté when Dari, who's black, faces an ultimately tragic

interaction with police officers. While the plot at times verges on melodrama, its focus on racial injustice becomes the most powerful of the novel's subplots. Hand to fans of Kekla Magoon's *How It Went Down* (2014) or Stephen Emond's *Bright Lights, Dark Nights* (2015). • Diane Colson (Booklist November 1, 2016) This intense story does not shy away from looking hard at racism, mental illness, the thing from Lily's past that I'm not spoiling, and people making really horrible choices. Alternating viewpoints give the reader more of a peek into Dari and Lily's minds and help keep the emotional tension high. . . . This isn't always an easy read, but it's absolutely an important one. Read this one and be ready to talk about racism, violence, sexual choices, and the many ways adults in this story screw up and damage the children in this book. (School Library Journal, Teen Librarian Tool Box) Corthron carefully builds trust between Dari and Lily, but as the teenagers' pasts catch up with them, some late-breaking and scandalous developments, including the revelation of what has made Lily such an outcast, undermine the still-new romance and tenuous intimacy between them. . . . Corthron marks herself as a writer unafraid of taking up difficult topics relevant to teens' lives. (Publisher's Weekly) Corthron's writing strikes the right balance of pitchy and pithy—no words are left unchained or events unraveling as Dari and Lily experience the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. (School Library Journal)" . . . confronts particular issues relevant to today's youth." Recommended (School Library Connection March/April 2017)

loved this book. i was floored by its emotional richness and the author's willingness to explore her flawed, beautiful, and striving characters with clear-eyed compassion (while never glossing over the real damage people can do, even/especially to those they love). what a breath of fresh air.

"The Truth of Right Now" explores nuances, and how situations escalate and become complicated quickly when unanticipated factors come into play. While it accurately captures teen moods, it goes far beyond the YA genre for an outstanding read.

Although it's aimed at a YA audience, anyone would be rewarded by reading this brutally true, deeply-felt, wincingly funny book. It captures the madness of young adulthood crazily well. Can't recommend enough.

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