



Light on a Part of the Field

Kevin Holowack

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In Kevin Holowack's novel *Light on a Part of the Field*, members of a flawed, dysfunctional family pursue their separate destinies, even though they cannot break their bonds with each other.

Ruth and Al's marriage was unusual, marked by long separations, unfinished creative projects, and uncelebrated holidays. Now, a year after Al disappeared without warning, their daughter Gayle runs away with a boy she barely knows. As all three cope with their new lives, they find their own voices for the very first time.

Each member of the family struggles to make themselves understood by the others. All hold a part of themselves in reserve, always looking for something they can't name and can never find, no matter how far they go. Al writes books of poems dedicated to his wife, but he never lets her read them. Distant Ruth always has more time for her paintings than for Gayle, who struggles with self-destructive tendencies. Gayle didn't make friends until she met Lewis, the boy she runs away with.

After spending so long on their isolated British Columbian farm, neither Ruth nor Gayle is prepared for how the world greets them. As Gayle and Lewis, who is sickly, eke out a living with the help of a generous new friend, Ruth stumbles into artistic fulfillment and human connections for the first time. Even as Al slips further from them, his wife and daughter learn how to cope with the shadows in their lives. They remain unconventional to the last moment, when, for the first time, they learn to be comfortable with who they are.

Light on a Part of the Field is a quiet novel about traveling one's own path, no matter how winding or bitter it may be.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (May / June 2021)

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