



The Truth about Everything

Bridget Farr

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In Bridget Farr's hopeful novel *The Truth about Everything*, a teenager struggles to learn about life while living off of the grid.

Lark has never been to school. Her only friend is Alex, the grandson of a man whom her father has some business dealings with. Her days are filled with chores on the farm, hunting and fishing with her father, and listening to her father's lectures about the government's conspiracies to destroy individual liberty and freedom.

But then Lark gets her period, and her grandmother expresses concern over her future. When a racist man wants to buy something from her father, Lark begins to question what she's been taught. She decides to enroll in a local school against her parents' wishes. What Lark learns in school clashes with how she's been brought up, forcing her to decide what is true and who is right.

The novel is filled with a sense of intense longing: Lark seeks what many people take for granted—access to an education. In school, this bright, capable teenager has valuable opportunities to explore the costs of having been given no chances to learn. She is a compelling heroine whose situation—at first one that seems impossible to understand—is made believable and sympathetic. The manner in which Lark's parents went from being average citizens in mourning following miscarriages to fearful, anti-government radicals is simple and frightening. The choices they make for their daughter are infuriating, even if they are trying to do what they believe is right.

Empathetic and engaging, the young adult novel *The Truth about Everything* follows a teenager in pursuit of her own truths—and her own path forward.

CATHERINE THURESON (September / October 2022)

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