



The Truth We Bury

Barbara Taylor Sissel

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In this intense, multilayered domestic drama, two families become entangled in a web of lies, secrets, and betrayal that results in an act of violence so shocking their love may not survive.

On the outside, Lily Isley's life seems perfect: a wealthy husband, a ritzy gated community in Dallas, and a handsome son, AJ—a decorated marine about to be married to his love, Shea. But when a bridesmaid is murdered in AJ's apartment and he can't be found, Lily's world collapses and a long-held family secret is at risk of exposure.

Dru Gallagher's life took a different course. After her ex-husband, suffering from post-traumatic stress, threatened her and her daughter, Shea, with a shotgun, Dru was forced to leave her marriage and forge ahead as a working-class single mom. Now, the anger she sees in war veteran AJ's eyes is heartbreakingly familiar—and makes Dru deeply afraid for her daughter's safety...especially after Shea's best friend and maid of honor is found dead.

With a killer on the loose and time running out, Lily and Dru, two very different women, unite in a single goal: to save their precious children from scandal, even from death. But will the mothers' protection be enough, or will the fateful secret they expose—and the truth it reveals—destroy every hope of love?

The Truth We Bury Details

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From Reader Review The Truth We Bury for online ebook

Tudor Vlad says

What happens when your son is accused of murder and all the evidences seem to point towards him being guilty. He is also on the run and nowhere to be seen, do you doubt his innocence or do you keep being adamant that all must be a misunderstanding and he is just a victim? This is what *The Truth We Bury* tries to explore and it does it pretty well with the dual perspective of two mothers: the mother of AJ, the man everyone believes to be a murdered, and the mother of Shea, the woman he is supposed to marry.

The dual perspective works wonderfully, providing two contrasting perspective that really help the reader stay on the top of the problem and view the whole story from a bird's-eye view. Normally in thrillers that deal with murders from the perspective of people close to the suspect it is easy to get carried away and take their judgment as the absolute truth. In this case because we get the point of view of two mothers both close to the suspect and the victim, but who believe completely different things, the dynamic changes a bit.

Lily, AJ's mother, desperately wants her son to be innocent and she believes despite his dark past that now seems more ominous than ever, she still believes him to be incapable of such a deed. Add to that the fact that she was never close to him because of her own past mistakes, and you can add a lot of guilt and regret to the mix.

Then you have Dru, Shea's mother, who wants nothing else than to protect her baby girl and keep her as far away as possible from her fiancé who she never approved of and who now appears to be a cold blooded murdered. Of course, Shea wants nothing of that and just as Lily believes AJ had nothing to do the murder.

This come and go between perspectives is extremely entertaining, both women will have to make compromises if they want to work together and find out the truth and protect their children and family. The book starts strong and it eases a bit half-way in but after the half-point it just won't let you go once the revelation of what really happened starts to dawn on the reader and then on the characters.

What I liked about this book was that it laid all of its cards on the table, no hiding-information-from-the-reader-to-make-a-plot-twist-work, which I'm honestly starting to hate. Instead, if you paid enough attention all the revelations will be at your grasp before they are revealed to the characters, which I don't find to be a problem in a thriller. I don't have to be shocked in order to be entertained, the characters and the situations they found themselves in did all of that. The only thing that I did find underwhelming was the big truth that the title of the book hints at, it was obvious from the start and I found it hard to believe that it was such a surprise to the characters.

Overall this was a great domestic drama filled with suspense. The dynamic between the two families made for a tense read, with all the slow build-up and conflict that gradually accumulates throughout the novel, something has to give.

I received an advanced copy of this book courtesy of Lake Union Publishing and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Linda Zagon says

Kudos to Barbara Sissel, author of "THE TRUTH WE BURY" for such an exciting and descriptive and

entertaining story. The genres of this novel are Women's Fiction, Adult Fiction, Mystery and Suspense.

The author describes her characters as conflicted and complicated, and flawed. The story is narrated by the alternating perspectives of two mothers, whose children are about to get married. Both families are dysfunctional in many ways and have SECRETS. Shea and AJ are engaged to be married in a few weeks.

Both mothers find fault with their children's significant other, and are truly not happy about the impending marriage.

One of the girls in the Bridal party is found dead in AJ's apartment and all clues seem to indicate that AJ might be responsible. AJ has PTSD from being in Afghanistan, and in the past he has made some bad choices and has a temper. There is a major problem that no one seems to know where AJ is. Is AJ guilty?

This novel has twists and turns, and some characters are very suspicious. There are other murders, and threatening actions that takes the reader on some suspenseful adventure.

Barbara Sissel brings up questions that are so relevant today. How should victims of PTSD be accepted and treated? How can family secrets of the past affect family relationships? How should a person accused of a crime be treated? How do you show acceptance of differences in physical appearances and social status?

I love the way the author discusses, family, friends, community, secrets, betrayal, loyalty, support, love, hope and and faith. This is an amazing and captivating novel that I highly recommend. Thank you to Lake Union Publishing, NetGalley and Barbara Sissel for the Advanced Reading Copy(ARC) for my honest review and opinion.

Shalini says

I loved this book, finished it in a few hours. It's a great book filled with suspense and family secrets where relationships and emotions mix together.

The story, which starts with the murder of a bridesmaid, tells the tale of two mothers. Lily whose son, AJ, is accused of murdering the bridesmaid and Dru, whose daughter, Shea, is AJ's fiancée and his staunch supporter.

Both the mothers have had a difficult emotional past which have left scars, and this influences their decisions and outlook. Each mother is trying to protect her own child. Lily feels both pain and and love for her son AJ, with whom she has not been able to connect, since his childhood and especially, after his return from the war. She struggles hard to prove his innocence. Dru, on the other hand, just wants to save her daughter from what she believes to be a grave mistake.

Barbara's words show the angst which the mothers experience. This book is a wonderful play of emotions seen from the point of view of both Lily and Dru. There are a lot of twists and turns, a good whodunit and family secrets, which doesn't fail to thrill.

Barbara's books are always a pleasure to read and she does not disappoint with this book. A great Book Club read too.

Thank you for writing this book..

Christine Moore says

This book was a great murder mystery. So many secrets and lies and tons of family drama kept me reading way past my bedtime! I loved the characters. I felt Lily's pain as she tried to protect her son. I felt Shea's excitement about the wedding then her love for A.J. while she is defending knowing in her heart he couldn't have killed her bridesmaid. It is a wonderful who-done-it book that keeps you guessing until the end. Thank you to NetGalley and Lake Union Publishing for an ARC in return for an honest review.

Susan Peterson says

In this intriguing novel by Barbara Taylor Sissel, the murder of a young girl opens up a Pandora's box of betrayal, lies, and regret. All of the evidence points to AJ Isley, a young man with a tainted, violent past....the only people who are convinced of his innocence are his mother, Lily, and his fiancée, Shea. There are so many layers to this story, as it takes a path as twisty as the Texas Hill Country where the story takes place. The Truth We Bury is a great suspense, one which leaves the reader pondering and questioning as the story goes on, but also hooks the reader emotionally.

Dana Aprigliano (TheVaguelyArticulateReader) says

I would like to thank NetGalley/Lake Union Publishing for providing me this book in exchange for an honest review.

Since the last few books I've read recently have been jumping around in genre, I was very glad to get back into one of my favorites: murder mysteries. And make no mistake: even though this book does start out a bit slowly and does include a lot of dialogue between characters, this is a gripping murder mystery. By way of summary, this book uses a third-person narration that nonetheless follows two different characters at different times: one of them is Lily, the mother of a presumed murderer, and the other is Dru, the mother of said presumed murderer's fiancée (oh, and, to make this even more interesting, the person murdered was the fiancée's bridesmaid!!!).

This book is not a police procedural, nor is it a detective thriller. What I loved so much about this book is that it focuses on the families of everyone involved in the situation of the murder. It deals with the real-life implications of crime and the mistakes of youth, as well as PTSD. It is not a distant, removed story; it is a vibrant tale that deals with some very relevant and also very timeless issues. The Truth We Bury makes some especially intriguing cases about PTSD, so if you are at all interested in psychology and the military you might really find this aspect of the story valuable.

Sissel's storytelling is another factor in my enjoyment of this novel. She uses very simple language throughout the novel; no big words. But the fact that the language used in the book was simple does not mean that the book itself is not well-developed. In fact, being that The Truth We Bury is a story with so much nuance and attention to detail in the plot and characterization alone, I am very glad that Sissel did not choose to use complicated diction. I actually enjoyed the novel more because I didn't have to spend so much time deciphering sentence structure and unraveling diction that I was not grasping the meaning of what was going on in the sentences.

But, as you might notice, I only gave this story four stars. That's mainly because for the first 25% of the story or so, I found that the pacing of the plot was pretty slow. I was having a hard time getting into the story even though I was still flipping pages, due to the fact that the plot was bogged down by a lot of dialogue, some of which I felt was unnecessary. I definitely skimmed a lot in the first 25%, and I wish I didn't have to. Anyway, this is a solid book. I enjoyed reading The Truth We Bury very much, and I will certainly be picking up more of Sissel's novels. I recommend this book to, as I said, people interested in psychology and the military, as well as to anyone looking for a good murder mystery that is not necessarily a police procedural-type story (and, for that matter, anyone who wants a quick and interesting beach read!).

Emily Carpenter says

In this engrossing murder mystery set in small town Texas, Barbara Taylor Sissel uses one of life's seemingly innocuous and happy events--a wedding--to explore the psychology of how parents seek to protect and control their children's lives, often resulting in tragedy. This is the wedding of AJ and Shea, two people who come loaded with baggage--their own, their wedding party's, and their parents', who have more than a few secrets. What do you do when the person your child plans to marry has mental health issues? When that person may be guilty of crimes, even murder? Sissel expertly examines these questions and the intense love and protectiveness of mothers against the backdrop of a deftly constructed suspense.

Kerry says

Barbara Taylor Sissel has done it again, sucked me into an engrossing murder-mystery set deep in the heart of rural Texas. THE TRUTH WE BURY is a fast-paced story loaded with suspense and intrigue that explores the depths people go to protect those they love, no matter their faults, flaws, and secrets. It's a page-turner of a novel that'll keep you reading straight through. A wonderful pick for a book club, too. I highly recommend.

*I received an advanced copy in exchange for an honest review.

Barbara White says

Two mothers, one question: What would you do if your grown child was implicated in a brutal murder?

As evidence mounts against a missing decorated marine, his mother and future mother-in-law, two women who share nothing but the need to protect their adult children, become unlikely allies. Both women have already lost so much and stand to lose so much more. But in the race to uncover the truth and catch a killer, they find courage and compassion. As family secrets, lies, and betrayals are revealed, they also find the strength to take ownership of their own mistakes.

This would make a fantastic book club read. There is much to discuss!

Pam says

Holy Cow! This was such a wonderful surprise! Two mother's believing in their child and all the disappointments that follow.

The characters were well written with lots of depth and personality. This was a fast paced mystery/thriller that I was not able to predict until all was revealed.

My thanks to netgalley and Lake Union Publishing for this advanced readers copy.

BIBLIOMANIAC MJ says

As a mother myself, the premise for this domestic suspense grabbed my attention and I am thankful to Netgalley, Lake Union Publishing and the author for providing me with the opportunity to read this in exchange for an honest review.

The Truth we Bury is told from the points of view of two mothers, Lily and Dru, whose children AJ (a decorated marine) and Shea are about to get married.

When Shea's maid of honour is found dead in AJ's apartment and AJ is nowhere to be found, he quickly becomes the lead suspect for the murder.

The reader comes along for the emotional and heartbreaking ride as we experience Lily and Dru's reactions, of their anguish as each mother strives to do what they must in order to protect their child, with their own difficult past influencing their behaviour and choices.

Our attention is drawn to the topic of PTSD, shining a light on those having to deal with the horrors of war, how it affects them and those closest to them.

Although slow paced and somewhat predictable at times, this sometimes heavy and emotional tale was nicely balanced out with a hopeful and uplifting note too, that will stay with you after the final page has been turned.

A tale of a mother's angst and guilt, family secrets and lies, this was a great introduction to Barbara Taylor Sissel for me and I will be looking out for more of her books.

Chelsea Humphrey says

This review was featured in my Mini Review Monday segment

This story is narrated from the perspective of two mothers, Lily and Dru, each having a child marrying the other's. Lily's son A.J. is a military hero and Dru's daughter Shea has experienced a tough life as the child of a single mother with an abusive father. While this story may seem predictable to some readers, perhaps even done over many times before, I felt that aspect didn't detract from my journey with these characters. There was a comfort and familiarity with Sissel's writing, and I was so pleased to see the hard topic of PTSD brought to light in this novel. As the story progresses and we try to determine just what happened to Shea's maid of honor, the ugliness and heartache surrounding those who return from the horrors of war is brought to light in a way that I simply couldn't ignore. While the story was, at times, heartbreaking and heavy, The Truth We Bury: A Novel maintained a hopeful and uplifting message that we all could stand to experience many times over. Highly recommended to those looking for an emotional read that portrays some timely issues that the reader will ponder long after that final page is turned.

***Many thanks to the author for providing my copy; it was a pleasure to provide my honest thoughts here.**

Deborah Blanchard says

This book is domestic suspense at its best! This book grabs you from the first page and never lets you go. It is a terrific murder mystery that will keep you guessing till the end and then, bam, shockwaves! This is also a book about love, trust, betrayal and forgiveness. It deals,also, with the affects of PTSD. How it affects the person who has it and also those around him. This book is so well written and the flow is simply incredible. The characters are true to life and I knew them all on such a personal level. They come alive and jump right into your life. I felt their love, their pain, their anxiety and their hope. This book kept me enthralled throughout. The plot is one that could truly happen and I loved that it keeps you guessing. It is vividly descriptive. You are at the ranch in Wyatt. You are in Dallas. This is a must read for suspense fans! Here are a few quotes that touched me. " They need to know we grow up; we don't grow perfect, and no matter how old we get, we never lose our need, or our capacity, for compassion and forgiveness." " I want to believe that given time, all wounds have the capacity to heal, if we are patient and kind to one another, if we forgive one another and tell the truth, if we keep love in our hearts."

Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on www.novलगossip.com

2.5/5

I had high hopes for this book, I love a good domestic suspense and the premise for this captured my attention easily. I'm so torn about how I actually feel about The Truth We Bury, there were parts I liked and parts I didn't at all, so I'll just explain my stance and let you decide what you think.

There was something compulsive about this book, I read it really fast and it mostly held my attention. The authors writing style was solid and she clearly has a talent. This would be a great read for a book club as there are several themes and issues one could dissect and discuss. One that I really appreciated was the subject of PTSD. It explored how it effects not only those suffering from it, but also how it impacts their families and loved ones. The families whose lives intersect had plenty of secrets and what's a domestic suspense without loads of secrets?!

While all of what I mentioned previously was great, there was something lacking overall that made this an enjoyable read for me. This is told using dual narratives, that of two mothers whose children are engaged. I always like this style, I just felt there needed to be more distinction between their sections here. The characters also fell a bit flat for me, they needed to be more fleshed out and I didn't really care about them all that much which is always a sign that something is missing for me. The pacing was also on the slow side and I would've liked things to be more suspenseful than they were. The premise was solid, there just needed to be more meat, you know what I mean?

Overall, this wasn't a bad read, it just wasn't one of my favorites. It was light, an emotional mystery that I felt was lacking depth. I found it to be pretty predictable and was left wanting more in the end.

Diane Perry says

I received this from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. What a fantastic murder mystery. It starts

with a bang and keeps you interested all the way to the end. We begin with a girl's murder and Lily's son in the run. Then the lies, deception, and many secrets are exposed. Every character was interesting, and I am also happy to see an author shed a light on PTSD. She did an incredible job with that subject. Unputdownable!
