



A Better Truth

Valerie Joan Connors

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When the frantic pace of her Washington, D.C. life becomes too much for her to bear, Willow St. Claire takes refuge in the North Georgia Mountains. She buys a bookstore, hoping to spend her days talking to customers about the latest releases, and her evenings in the quiet oasis of her mountain retreat. Alone in her cabin, two miles away from the nearest neighbor, Willow must learn to cope with the terror of her past, heal from the loss of her mother, and maintain a relationship with a teenaged daughter who refuses to leave D.C. where she lives with her father. But a knock at Willow's kitchen door late one night, sets off a series of events that will shatter her newly found peace and tranquility, and threaten to trigger another breakdown. Willow has held tightly to her own version of the truth for over three decades, because for her, the real truth is far too disturbing.

A Better Truth Details

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From Reader Review A Better Truth for online ebook

Bonnie says

This book was a gripping, tension-filled, page-turner kind of read that is part drama and part thriller. One follows Willow, the main character, and trying to figure out what was affecting her mentally other than the shitty husband of hers. There was an unexpected twist at the very end which left me puzzled which made me wondered if there will be a sequel or if it was to just make us think more about the end of the book.

Libby says

I couldn't put this down and I indulged myself by reading when I should've been revising my own book. Information was leaked slowly about Willow and her brother's past in just the right way. Starts off with a dramatic first chapter then goes to the beginning of the story until we are up to date with the first chapter. Kept me guessing to the end and afterward.

Faouzia says

I would like to thank the author, Valerie Joan Connors, for giving me a free copy of this book in exchange of an honest review as part of the Mystery Thriller Week event.

3.5 rounded to 4 stars.

This was an interesting story, and i read it with mixed feelings. Sometimes it made me feel angry, at some points it was funny but mostly i was caught up in the story trying to figure out what would happen next.

Willow moved to a small town in Georgia, enjoying the peace of her wood cabin after escaping a chaotic life in D.C and a very demanding ex-husband. But when her daughter shows up at her door late night, running away from D.C, all the past demons of Willow's childhood came back to her.

I enjoyed the story and i liked how after the first chapter (present time) the story went back in time, while keeping the reasons for the present events a mystery, it kept me guessing all the time about the connection between the different events.

I liked the different twists, most of them i did not see coming and generally i was caught up in the story. However, there were some moments were some side events distracted me from the main issue, and i really would've loved that the author delved more into the traumatic part of Willow's past.

The characters were an interesting mix. Willow mostly made angry, she definitely should've been tougher, although she pulled herself together at the end. I totally hated Walter, and i think the author did not meant for him to be loved...

Over all it was a good story, and i would recommend it.

Videoclimber(AKA)MTsLilSis says

I liked the twists and turns. Grace was my favorite character, I would like to see more of her. The story was okay, although the jumping around in time made it hard to follow. The ending took me by surprise. An alright read, but could have been better.

*Thank you to NetGalley, the publisher, and author, for providing me with a free e-arc-copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Fictionophile says

And now for my review of my “Mystery/Thriller Week“ title. It is always a slight gamble when you get a book for review that a) it’s a title you have never heard of before; and, b) you’ve never heard of the author before. This time however, my gamble paid off in spades! I’m certain we’ll be hearing about this author lots more in the future.

“A better truth“ is sort of a hybrid between suspense fiction and women’s fiction. The author weaves her story with skill and the characters are well-drawn and sympathetic.

The protagonist of the story is Willow St. Claire, whom we first meet in her cabin in the North Georgia mountains. She has lived there for three years now. She owns and manages a bookstore in the small town of Blue Ridge, then escapes home to her solitary life which she shares with her two german shepherd dogs – sisters named Lucy and Ethel. Willow has had a very traumatic life and now she relishes the peace and solitude her remote cabin affords her. She is divorced from a egotistical and ambitious lawyer and has a teenage daughter whom she adores. Her daughter, Grace, has elected to live in Washington, D.C. with her father and his new partner. When Grace shows up at her door unannounced one evening, events begin to spiral out of control once again...

We then flashback to Willow’s former life. Her husband, Walter, had been emotionally abusive. So much so that I as the reader just wanted to give him a slap. He was extremely condescending, controlling, demanding, and manipulative. It is obvious to the reader, if not immediately to Willow, that he has married her solely for her family connections. He believes that her adoptive father, Eldon Bishop, (who is a very wealthy Senator), will help him become established in the legal/political world in Washington. He was forever sucking up to people with whom he thought could further his ambition. His goal was to become a ‘person of influence’.

When Grace is born, he absolutely dotes on his new daughter. She becomes quite spoiled and it seems to Willow that Walter and Grace shut her out of their lives. Willow’s mental health seems to be deteriorating... Her high stress lifestyle in Washington as the wife of an ambitious lawyer is playing its toll. Her freelance writing deadlines compete with her increasingly misbehaving daughter and her husband’s constant demands. Willow becomes more and more overwhelmed and is prescribed anti-depressants and tranquilizers. She can no longer differentiate between what is ‘real’ and what is imagined. She begins to suffer from night terrors. But this is not the first time she has been so afflicted.

Willow and her brother Garrett were adopted by the Bishops when Willow was just six years old. They had suffered a horrific trauma by witnessing their birth-mother’s murder.

Events lead up to the present once more and Grace’s daughter in turn suffers from yet another traumatic event whilst visiting her mother’s cabin. Willow’s hard-earned sense of security has been threatened – and

stolen. Her beloved daughter is hospitalized in an almost catatonic state.

The reader roots for Willow and her daughter. Walter, her ex-husband makes for one of those characters that you 'love to hate'.

I loved the title as it seemed to fit the novel so well. Willow, unable to face the horrible truth of her life, has invented a 'better truth'.

This fast-paced novel kept me enthralled the entire time I was reading it. It speaks to issues of emotional abuse, mental illness, and female independence – all the while maintaining a frisson of suspense leading up to a 'WOW' ending. Highly recommended!

Burma Turner says

I really enjoyed this book. The story was great and kept me interested all the way. Highly recommend!

Dana Ridenour says

A Better Truth is a well-written psychological thriller. I was hooked from the first chapter and I couldn't put it down until I read the last sentence. The characters were well developed and the plot had some great twists and turns. Overall, an excellent read.

Nancy says

Set in my native Georgia (the home of the Author is in my city). A good read with good guys and bad guys and a woman fighting a past horror. Brave in the face of trauma though all she wishes for his peace and tranquility.

Aileen Firestone says

Loved this book. A can't put down read. Loved it.

Pat says

Family betrayal, broken relationships, monumental fears, hidden secrets are all here for the unfolding. Monumental phenomenal enormous loving care beyond comprehension shines through and illuminates over the darkness. A read of human proportions in which we realize "We can Overcome"! A must read unto the last page. Patricia Byers Lindsey

Lynn says

Absolutely loved A Better Truth! This is a book that is hard to put down once you start. The characters are so well developed, and Mrs. Connors introduces so many clever twists and turns even up to the last page. There will be a sequel in the making I am sure ... so looking forward to it! Hope to read some of her other books now. Also, I think this would make a great movie!

Melissa Borse says

I received a copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for my honest review. I really enjoyed this book. Filled with plenty of mystery, suspense, and twists. This book kept my interest from beginning to end. I highly recommend.

Melissa says

Part drama, part thriller, this is a well paced book with enough twists and turns to make it interesting. Some parts were predictable, but overall a nice fast read. I didn't care for the twist thrown in on the last couple of pages. I thought the book would have been fine without that. Unless the author is trying to lead into a sequel, otherwise it just leaves too many questions.

Judy says

Loved it. I didn't want to put it down once I started it. I have had my own Walter in my life. With everything Willow had to deal with I'm not sure how she put up with him. Loved when she stood up for herself. I went through many emotions while I read this book. I hope you'll give it a read. This is my second Valerie Connors book, and I can't wait to read more.

Jen says

Willow lives alone in the peace and quiet of a small Georgia town, having determined a change of pace was desperately needed after her divorce from a high-powered Washington, DC attorney. Unfortunately, their teenage daughter elected to stay in DC rather than come to the "boring" countryside with Willow, so it was a big surprise when the 17-year-old shows up on Willow's doorstep one dark and stormy night, running away from home and pregnant. This sets off a series of events that connects a dark past Willow has tried desperately to forget with some terrifying events in the present day.

The story is sufficiently mysterious, but the plot did not feel even remotely plausible to me. The dialogue felt stilted, the writing felt...well, like as well as I could do, meaning not bad, but also not exceptional.
