

All the Truth That's in Me

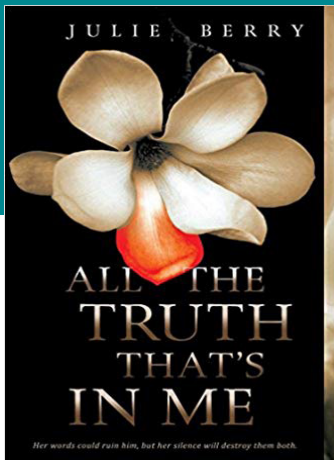
Abigail Packard

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Packard, Abigail () "All the Truth That's in Me," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 40 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol40/iss1/2>

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Book Review

All the Truth That's in Me

Author

Julie Berry

Illustrator

Reviewer

Abigail Packard

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

304

Year

2014

Publisher

Speak

ISBN

9780142427309

Judith Finch and her friend disappeared from their small town of Roswell Station four years ago. Two years ago, only Judith returned with her tongue cut out. Unable and unwilling to speak about the horrors she has experienced, Judith tries to inhabit the life she left behind. But her mother has grown into a bitter woman, and her little brother is now a man. The townsfolk look on Judith with fear and suspicion. Lucas Whiting, Judith's childhood friend and secret love interest, is about to be married. And who would believe that Ezra Whiting, Lucas's father and one of the town's leaders, was the man responsible for Judith's disappearance? After Judith escapes, she returns to Ezra's hidden home in order to get the firearms he's looted and give them out to the men to save Roswell Station. During the battle, Ezra appears and dies a war hero. With his death, the townsfolk question where Ezra has been for the past few years. The story culminates when Judith and Lucas are accused of whoredom, only to be cleared when Judith finally decides to speak her truth.

Julie Berry's novel about finding a voice after a horrific event like kidnapping and sexual abuse is very powerful. Told in four parts, Judith's story unfolds in a series of scenes from the past and present. And with the powerful story, Berry has created strikingly real and believable characters in Judith, Lucas, and Judith's mother. The language of the story is beautiful and some of the scenes are intensely powerful as Berry delves into the minds of her characters. The setting seems apropos for this type of novel, but the story never feels very grounded in any true historical place or time. However, the themes of the story overall will ring true for readers, particularly those who are fans of Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* or Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

*Contains mild sexual content and mild violence.