

# Wolf Hollow

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A 2017 Newbery Honor Book  
New York Times Bestseller

A young girl's kindness, compassion, and honesty overcome bullying.

&#x2605; An NPR Best Book of the Year  
&#x2605; A Booklist Best Book of the Year  
&#x2605; An Entertainment Weekly Best Middle Grade Book of the Year  
&#x2605; A Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year  
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&#x2605; A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year  
&#x2605; A Wall Street Journal Best Children's Book of the Year  
&#x2605; An ALA Notable Children's Book

"This exquisite debut confronts injustice and doesn't flinch." -People

"[A] powerful debut . . . beautifully written." -The Wall Street Journal

"Wrenching and true. . . . comparisons to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* will abound. But Wolk gives us her own story—one full of grace and stark, brutal beauty." -The New York Times Book Review

"When reviewers draw a parallel between *Mockingbird* and Lauren Wolk's *Wolf Hollow*, they are being neither hyperbolic, nor lazy. They are merely doing justice to Wolk's beautiful story." - NPR, Best Books of 2016

Growing up in the shadows cast by two world wars, Annabelle has lived a mostly quiet, steady life in her small Pennsylvania town. Until the day new student Betty Glengarry walks into her class. Betty quickly reveals herself to be cruel and manipulative, and while her bullying seems isolated at first, things quickly escalate, and reclusive World War I veteran Toby becomes a target of her attacks. While others have always seen Toby's strangeness, Annabelle knows only kindness. She will soon need to find the courage to stand as a lone voice of justice as tensions mount.

Brilliantly crafted, *Wolf Hollow* is a haunting tale of America at a crossroads and a time when one girl's resilience, strength, and compassion help to illuminate the darkest corners of our history.

"The honesty of *Wolf Hollow* will just about shred your heart, but Annabelle's courage and compassion will restore it to you, fuller than before. This book matters." -Sara Pennypacker, New York Times bestselling author of *Pax*

"An evocative setting, memorable characters, a searing story: *Wolf Hollow* has stayed with me long after I closed the book. It has the feel of an instant classic." -Linda Sue Park, Newbery Medalist and New York Times bestselling author  
Lauren Wolk is an award-winning poet and author. She is the bestselling author of two

novels for young readers. Newbery Honor-winning *Wolf Hollow* (2016) and *Beyond the Bright Sea* (2017). She was born in Baltimore and has since lived in California, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Canada, and Ohio. She now lives with her family on Cape Cod.

## PROLOGUE

The year I turned twelve, I learned how to lie.

I don't mean the small fibs that children tell. I mean real lies fed by real fears—things I said and did that took me out of the life I'd always known and put me down hard into a new one.

It was the autumn of 1943 when my steady life began to spin, not only because of the war that had drawn the whole world into a screaming brawl, but also because of the dark-hearted girl who came to our hills and changed everything.

At times, I was so confused that I felt like the stem of a pinwheel surrounded by whir and clatter, but through that whole unsettling time I knew that it simply would not do to hide in the barn with a book and an apple and let events plunge forward without me. It would not do to turn twelve without earning my keep, and by that I meant my place, my small authority, the possibility that I would amount to something.

But there was more to it than that.

The year I turned twelve, I learned that what I said and what I did mattered.

So much, sometimes, that I wasn't sure I wanted such a burden.

But I took it anyway, and I carried it as best I could.

## CHAPTER ONE

It began with the china piggy bank that my aunt Lily had given me for my fifth Christmas.

My mother was the one who noticed when it went missing.

"Are you hiding your piggy bank, Annabelle?" She was scrubbing down the baseboards in my bedroom while I put away my summer clothes. She must have noticed that the bank was missing because there was little else in my small room beyond the furniture itself and the windows, a comb and a brush and a book beside my bed. "Nobody's going to take your things," she said. "You don't need to hide them." She was on her hands and knees, her whole body wagging as she scrubbed, the soles of her black work shoes turned up for a change.

I was glad she couldn't see my face. I was folding a too-pink church dress that I hoped to outgrow by next spring, and I imagined that my face was turning the same awful color.

When I'd come home from school that day, I had shaken the china pig to get out a penny and had dropped it by mistake, breaking it into bits and spilling out the coins that I'd been saving for years and which must have added up to nearly ten dollars by now. I had buried the pieces of broken china beyond the kitchen garden and gathered the coins in an old hankie, tied up the corners, and hidden the bundle in a winter boot under my bed along with the silver dollar that my grandfather had given to me on my last birthday, from his collection.

I had never put that silver dollar in my bank because I didn't think of it as money. It was like a medal that I imagined wearing someday, so beautiful was the woman on it, so splendid and serious in her spiky crown.

And I determined that I would part with a penny, maybe even more, but I would not give up that silver dollar to the terrible girl waiting on the path that led into Wolf Hollow.

Every day, to get to school, I walked with my brothers—Henry, who was nine, and James, who was seven—down into Wolf Hollow and then back up out of it again to return home. And that was where a big, tough, older girl named Betty had said she'd be waiting for me after school.

She had been sent from the city to stay with her grandparents, the Glengarrys, who lived above the bank of Raccoon Creek, just past the end of the lane to our farm. I'd been afraid of her since the day she appeared at the schoolhouse three weeks earlier.

It was whispered that Betty had been sent to the country because she was incorrigible, a word I had to look up in the big dictionary at the schoolhouse. I didn't know if living in the country with her grandparents was meant to be a punishment or a cure, but either way I didn't think it was fair to inflict her on us who had not done anything so terribly wrong.

She arrived at our school one morning without any fanfare or much in the way of explanation. There were already nearly forty of us, more than the little school was meant to hold, so some had to double up at desks, two in a seat intended for one, two writing and doing sums on the slanted and deeply scarred desktop, two sets of books in the cubby under the lid.

I didn't mind so much because I shared a seat with my friend Ruth, a dark-haired, red-lipped, pale girl with a quiet voice and perfectly ironed dresses. Ruth liked to read as much as I did, so we had that one big thing in common. And we were both skinny girls who took regular baths (which wasn't true of all the students in Wolf Hollow School), so sitting tight together wasn't a bad thing.

Our teacher, Mrs. Taylor, said, "Good morning," when Betty arrived that day and stood at the back of the schoolroom. Betty didn't say anything. She crossed her arms over her chest. "Children, this is Betty Glengarry." Which sounded, to me, like a name from a song.

We were expected to say good morning, so we did. Betty looked at us without a word.

"We're a little crowded, Betty, but we'll find a seat for you. Hang up your coat and lunch pail."

We all watched in silence to see where Mrs. Taylor would put Betty, but before she had a chance to assign a seat, a thin girl named Laura, apparently reading the writing on the wall, gathered up her books and wedged in next to her friend Emily, leaving a desk free.

This became Betty's desk. It was in front of the one I shared with Ruth, close enough so that, within a couple of days, I had spitballs clinging to my hair and tiny red sores on my legs where Betty had reached back and poked me with her pencil. I wasn't happy about the situation, but I was glad that Betty had chosen to devil me instead of Ruth, who was smaller than I was and dainty. And I had brothers who had inflicted far worse upon me, while Ruth had none. For the first week after Betty arrived, I decided to weather her minor attacks, expecting them to wane over time.

In a different kind of school, the teacher might have noticed such things, but Mrs. Taylor had to trust that what was going on behind her back wasn't worth her attention.

Since she taught us all, the chairs clustered at the front of the room by the chalkboard were always occupied by whatever grade level was having a lesson while the rest of us sat at our desks and did our work until it was our turn at the front.

Some of the older boys slept through a good part of the day. When they woke up for their lessons at the chalkboard, they were so openly contemptuous of Mrs. Taylor that I believe the lessons she taught them were shorter than they might have been. They were all big boys who were useful on their farms and didn't see the point of going to a school that wouldn't teach them to sow or reap or herd anything. And they knew full well that if the war was still going on when they were old enough, school wouldn't help them fight the Germans. Being the farmers and ranchers who fed the soldiers might save them from the war, or make them strong enough to fight, but school never would.

Still, in the coldest months, the work they might be asked to do at home was tedious and difficult: mending fences and barn roofs and wagon wheels. Given the choice to spend a day snoozing and, at recess, roughhousing with the other boys instead of working in the freezing wind, the boys generally chose school. If their fathers let them.

But when Betty arrived that October, the days were still warm, and so those awful boys were not regularly attending school. If not for her, the schoolhouse would have been a peaceful place, at least until everything fell to pieces that terrible November and I was called upon to tell my catalogue of lies.

Back then, I didn't know a word that described Betty properly or what to call the thing that set her apart from the other children in that school. Before she'd been there a week,

she'd taught us a dozen words we had no business knowing, poured a well of ink on Emily's sweater, and told the little kids where babies came from, something I'd only just learned from my grandmother the spring before when the calves were born. For me, learning about babies was a gentle thing that my grandmother handled with the grace and humor of someone who had borne several of her own, every one of them on the bed where she still slept with my grandfather. But for the youngest of the children at my school, it was not gentle. Betty was cruel about it. She scared them to bits. Worst of all, she told them that if they tattled to their parents, she would follow them through the woods after school and beat them, as she later did me. Maybe kill them. And they believed her, just as I did.

I could threaten my brothers with death and dismemberment a dozen times a day and they would laugh at me and stick out their tongues, but when Betty merely looked at them they settled right down. So they might not have been much help had they been with me that day in Wolf Hollow when Betty stepped out from behind a tree and stood in the path ahead of me.

When I was smaller, I asked my grandfather how Wolf Hollow got its name.

"They used to dig deep pits there, for catching wolves," he said.

He was one of the eight of us who lived together in the farmhouse that had been in our family for a hundred years, three generations tucked together under one roof after the Depression had tightened the whole country's belt and made our farm the best of all places to live. Now, with a second world war raging, lots of people grew victory gardens to help feed themselves, but our whole farm was a giant victory garden that my grandfather had spent his whole life tending.

He was a serious man who always told me the truth, which I didn't always want but sometimes asked for any-way. When I asked him how Wolf Hollow got its name, for instance, he told me, even though I was only eight at the time.

He was sitting in a chair near the stove in the kitchen, his elbows on his knees, hands hanging loose from his big wrists, pale feet ready for his boots. Different times of the year he looked like a younger man, open-eyed. That morning, even though it was only just June, he looked beat. The top of his forehead was as white as his feet, but his nose and cheeks were brown, like his hands and his arms, up to where he rolled his sleeves. I knew how weary he was, even though he spent a good part of every day sitting in the shade, doing small work.

"What did they want to catch wolves for?" You couldn't milk a wolf. Or hitch it to a plow. Or eat it for dinner, I didn't think.

"So there wouldn't be as many running around here anymore."

He wasn't looking at me. He was looking at his hands. Even though they were already

tough as hide, he had a weeping blister at the base of each thumb, from helping my father with the planting.

"Eating the chickens?" I asked. Sometimes I woke up in the morning to my mother screaming at a fox that had dug its way into the henhouse. I wasn't sure even my mother would go after a wolf that way.

"Among other things." He sat up straight and rubbed his eyes. "Weren't enough people hunting wolves anymore.

They were getting too brave and too many." I thought about a pit full of wolves.

"Did they kill them after they got them in the pit?"

My grandfather sighed. "Shot 'em. Turned in their ears for the bounty. Three dollars a pair."

"Their ears? If there were pups, did they keep them for pets?"

My grandfather didn't make much noise when he laughed. It was a matter of his shoulders shaking a couple of times. "You think a wolf would get along with dogs?"

There were always plenty of dogs on the farm. I couldn't imagine the place without six or seven running around. Once in a while one would disappear, but after a time another would show up to take its place.

"But they could have raised the pups right. Made dogs out of them."

My grandfather pulled his suspenders up over his shoulders and began to put on his socks. "A wolf is not a dog and never will be," he said, "no matter how you raise it."

When he had his boots on and laced, he stood up and put one of his big hands on the top of my head. "They killed the pups, too, Annabelle. Probably didn't give it much thought. Don't forget you weren't the least bit bothered when I mashed that young copperhead last spring."

The snake had kept the imprint of his boot, like it was made of clay.

"Copperheads are poisonous," I said. "That's different."

"Not to the snake, it isn't," he'd said. "Or to the God who made it."

## CHAPTER TWO

I thought about that snake as I stood on the path out of Wolf Hollow, Betty waiting ahead

of me. The hair on the back of my neck rose up, and I felt a distant kinship with the wolves that had died here. Betty was wearing a gingham dress, and a blue sweater that matched her eyes, and black leather shoes. Her yellow hair was pulled back in a ponytail. On the whole, but for the expression on her face, she looked harmless.

I stopped when I was still ten feet away from her.

"Hey, Betty," I said. I held tight to the book cradled in my right arm. It was a history book that was so old it didn't even count Arizona as a state, but it had some good heft to it and I thought maybe I could throw it at her if she got too close. My lunch pail wasn't heavy enough to be much good, but I gave it a little swing with my left hand so she'd see I wasn't completely unarmed.

"What kind of a name is Annabelle?" She had a deep voice, almost boyish. She looked at me steadily, her head down like a dog's when he's thinking about whether or not to bite. She was half smiling, her arms limp at her sides.

She cocked her head to one side.

I shrugged. I didn't know what kind of a name I had.

"You're the rich girl," she said. "It's a rich girl name."

I looked behind me to see if there was someone else on the path. Someone rich.

"You think I'm rich?" It had never occurred to me that I might be considered rich, although my family was an old one that had given land for the church and the school and still had enough left for a good-size farm. My ancestors lay beneath t...

#### Other Books

Organizations: A Very Short Introduction. Most of us recognize that organizations are everywhere. You meet them on every street corner in the form of families and shops, study in them, work for them, buy from them, pay taxes to them. But have you given much thought to where they came from, what they are today, and what they might become in the future? How and why do they have so much influence over us, and what influences them? How do they contribute to and detract from the meaningfulness of lives, and how might we improve them so they better serve our needs and desires? This Very Short Introduction addresses all of these questions and considers many more. Mary Jo Hatch introduces the concept of organizations by presenting definitions and ideas drawn from the a variety of subject areas including the physical sciences, economics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, literature, and the visual and performing arts. Drawing on examples from prehistory and everyday life, from the animal kingdom as well as from business, government, and other formal organizations, Hatch provides a lively and thought provoking introduction to the process of organization. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introduction series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new



subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

🔍 🔍 🔍 🔍 🔍 . If you drive one mile east on Route 133 in Ipswich, Massachusetts, where I live, you will find Wolf Hollow . There, a local family hosts a pack of wolves with the aid of a naturalist and some volunteers. If you stop to visit, ..."