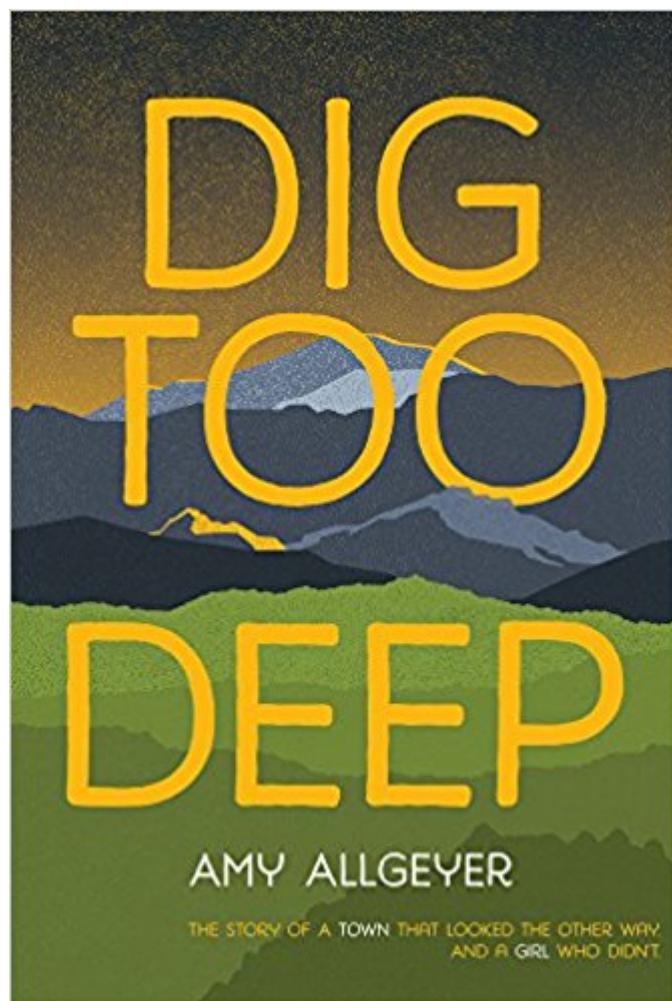


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Dig Too Deep



Synopsis

It's not just that Liberty Briscoe feels like an outsider in Ebbotsville, Kentucky. She expected it wouldn't be easy to move from the city to her granny's farm during her junior year of high school. Still, Liberty can't shake the feeling that something's not quite right. Everyone says the water's safe, yet nobody drinks it. When Granny becomes sick, like so many others in town, Liberty starts to wonder about the water, the people who tested it, and the coal mining company that took the top off Tanner's Peak. Now, Liberty must follow her instincts to uncover secrets, despite those who think she's crazy to ask questions, including her own boyfriend. But even as the threats become consequences, she digs deeper. What's more dangerous: the water in the valley or the search for the truth?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up  Liberty Briscoe has to move from Washington, DC, to the outskirts of Ebbotsville, KY, because her single mom is in jail for a protest gone wrong. Liberty has to go to a new school during her junior year, and she knows no one her age. However, she is looking forward to living with her grandmother. Life in Ebbotsville is an adjustment. Granny is sick, there's a mountaintop removal mine nearby, and the water coming from the faucets is orange. Liberty struggles with taking care of Granny, keeping up in school, and living on food stamps. She is convinced the mine is the reason why Granny and most of the people living on the mountain are sick, no matter who says the water is safe for drinking. As she starts to battle the mine, which provides jobs for the people living in town, she finds that drinking the water is not the only dangerous thing she could be doing. Told from

Liberty's point of view, the story starts slow but picks up the pace as the teen starts to take action against the mine. The secondary characters are distinct from one another, but the focus is on Liberty and her family. The author brings important environmental issues to light without being didactic. VERDICT Recommended for fans of Carl Hiassen. —Natalie Struecker, Atlantic Public Library, IA

"This novel will appeal to a wide range of readers not only for its poignant topic but also for its protagonist. Liberty Briscoe is a hero of a narrator: intelligent, spunky, determined, and relatable. She and her grandmother are so well drawn that the reader cannot help but become emotionally invested in their stories. This humanizes the book's timely subject, as environmental issues, both local and global, occupy headlines and political debates. *Dig Too Deep* inspires readers to consider the necessity of environmental protection, the impact an individual can have, and the importance of trying to make a difference." -VOYA, the Young Adult Librarian Journal Winner, 2017 Green Earth Book Award for Young Adult Fiction Young Adult Notable Book, 2017 Sigurd L. Olson Nature Writing Award Gold Medal, Young Adult Fiction, 2016 Moonbeam Children's Book Awards. First Place, Young Adult Fiction, 2016 Idaho Author Awards. "Lib is a finely-drawn character, and the dialogue and pacing of this debut are strong." Kirkus Reviews, February 15, 2016 "Allgeyer brings rural Appalachia to life and shines a bright light on a troubling trend in natural resource extraction." Booklist, March 1, 2016 "The author brings important environmental issues to light without being didactic. Recommended for fans of Carl Hiassen." School Library Journal, February 2016 "Stirring and timely. *Dig Too Deep* hooks you with its gritty realness, and it holds onto you with equal measures of heartache and hope. An important and memorable debut." —Corina Vacco, Delacorte-Prize Winning Author of "My Chemical Mountain"

When seventeen-year-old Liberty Briscoe's mom goes to jail for an environmental protest that resulted in a bombing, Liberty moves from Washington, DC to Ebbottsville, Kentucky, to live with her maternal grandmother. There she discovers a landscape devastated by mountaintop removal coal mining, and a town too fearful of--as well as reliant on--the mine's unscrupulous owner to question the strange orange water and mysterious illnesses that have appeared ever since the mining operation began. Liberty's own grandmother has sickened, and while Liberty struggles to care for her granny while keeping her grades up and putting food on the table, she begins to uncover the toxic secrets the mine has tried to bury. Will she follow in the footsteps of her mother, a woman so busy defending the lives of strangers she never had time

for her own daughter? Or will Liberty find ways to protect her own family while reaching out to confront the problems of the wider world? DIG TOO DEEP is a powerful story about family, the environment, and discovering the courage to fight for what's right. The Appalachian setting is well realized, and the growth of the main character from angry and somewhat self-centered teen to tireless advocate is exhilarating. Many themes are woven into the novel alongside the more obvious environmental ones, including the strength of mother-daughter relationships, the struggles impoverished individuals and communities face, and the value (as well as the difficulty) of discovering one's true friends. I was particularly moved by Liberty's tender relationship with her granny, and I was impressed by Allgeyer's avoidance of bathos or preachiness in a story that could easily have given way to either. If I have one reservation about the book, it's that the resolution was a bit too neat; powerful industrialists such as the mine owner in this story seldom leave so much incriminating evidence in such obvious places. (I wish they did; there'd be a lot fewer of them out there wrecking the environment.) But that's partly a factor of the book being YA, a genre that tends to simplify complex political issues in the interest of a satisfying resolution, and it doesn't detract from the story's many strengths.

Dig too Deep is a great read. I couldn't put it down. Each page had me wanting more. I was frustrated because I had to put the book down a few times. I cried, laughed, related in so many aspects. It's for everyone. Most books have specific readers...there is a little something in all parts that someone can relate to. You want the character to survive. She's identifiable, trustworthy, and brave. Loved it. I want my daughter to read it. Looking forward to Amy's next book! Felt like this went too fast.

I heard about this book at a Professional Development session for teachers. It sounded intriguing, so I took a chance and bought it. I read it in one afternoon. Granny reminded me a lot of my own "I Love Jesus, but I Cuss a Little" grandmother. As a Kentuckian, I felt a connection to the effects of MTR on rural communities.

A perfectly crafted story with characters you won't soon forget. Liberty's relationship with her grandmother is so wonderful. It was also refreshing to get a view of MTR (mountaintop removal) from someone who understands the communities in which it takes place. I loved Liberty's financial

situation was woven into the story and was so realistic. Authors so rarely get this right. Highly recommended!

Great book! Couldn't put it down. Read it front to back in one sitting and loved it!

This was a page turner. I recommend it especially if you think mountain top removal is a sin against creation and even more so if you don't.

I could not put this book down once I started reading it. I am really interested in seeing what this author has in store for her next novel.

Oh, this book! I thought I knew what I was in for when I chose to read an ARC of this debut. Kentucky. Coal country. Corrupt mining practices and the all-encompassing impact that environmental devastation can have on a community. And one teen girl who saw the wreckage first hand. Well, I wasn't prepared for Allgeyer's ability to create this singular sense of place on the page, making me experience all the stark and all the lush at once. I wasn't prepared for how much she made me love pragmatic and fearless Granny, how this character would burrow into my heart and pulse there. I was truly unprepared for how much I would root for Liberty as she combed her way through corruption and love and trust and forgiveness. Even Allgeyer's secondary characters experience glorious character arcs that are important and interconnected and tightly woven into this feverish plot. This debut, for me, was remarkable. It is filled with the power of simple moments. It pulses with ageless wisdom as well as heartbreak. It is a story of advocacy and making peace with your roots, your family. It is a story of fighting for what you believe in. Fighting for the natural beauty our country affords. Fighting for love. This is a story that will stay with me for a very long time, and will forever connect mountains with starfish. Because as Allgeyer's book proves, everything is connected.

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