

Those Who Favor Fire: A Novel



People feel at home in Belle Haven, and in many ways it is like any other small town, with a cafe where regulars come for the fresh cinnamon rolls and to talk about the weather, or one another, often staying all day. Its a town with the usual collection of quirky characters--the people everyone knows who, by staying in one place long enough, have become part of its landscape. But what sets Belle Haven apart is its especially strong sense of community, which is both strengthened and tested by the uncontrollable mine fire that burns below the town. Sometimes it breaks through the earths surface to swallow somebodys garden or a garbage can, even a beloved pet, or to threaten a house. Those Who Favor Fire is the love story of Rachel Hearn, who has lived in Belle Haven all her life, and the man everyone calls Just Joe, who has arrived only recently--and the story of their love for the town that has brought them together. But as the fire intensi-fies, endangering Belle Haven and its people, it also threatens what Joe and Rachel have found together. Though some reluctantly consider relocating, Rachel refuses to leave the only place shes ever called home, the place that holds her richest memories. But Joe knows the danger of becoming too firmly rooted in a place. Ultimately, Rachel and Joe must decide whether to abandon their beloved town. In her wonderful debut novel, Lauren Wolk has created a town every bit as real as the Mitford of Jan Karons novels and populated it with characters as quirky, lively, and endearing as Fannie Flaggs.

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