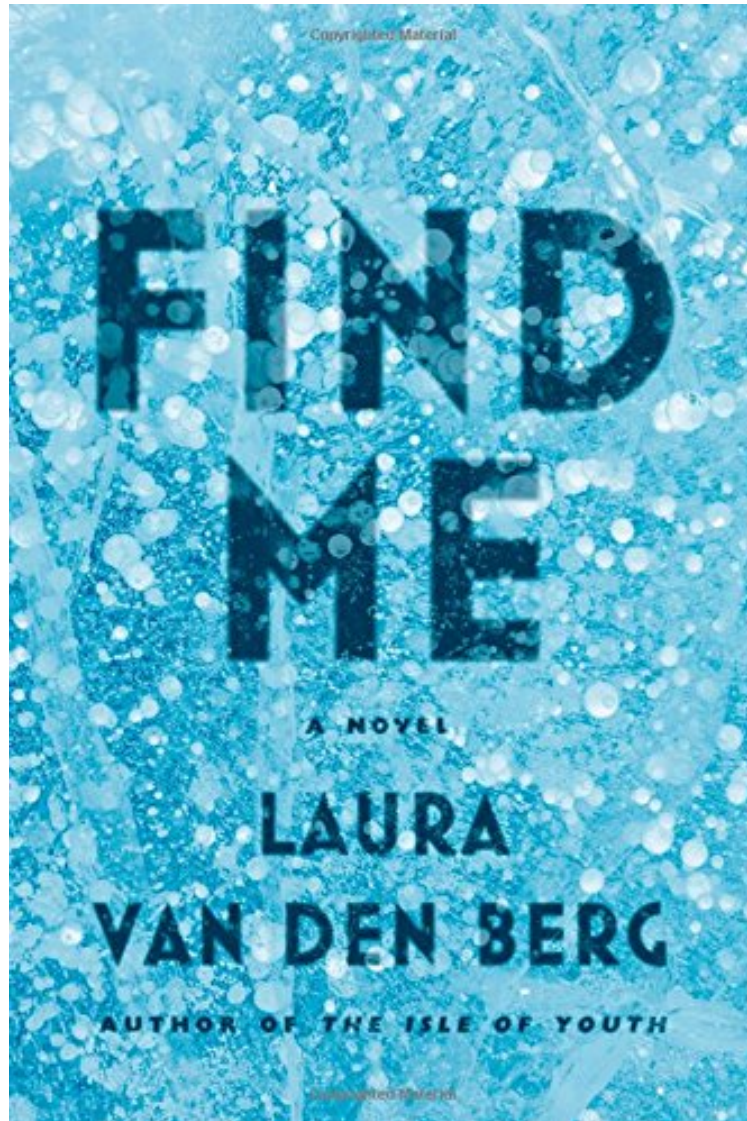


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Find Me: A Novel

Laura van den Berg

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Laura van den Berg : Find Me: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Find Me: A Novel:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Hit and missBy Bill TobinI bought this book after reading a review on the Culture section of BBC News. Find Me was listed as one of the best books for 2015 and I was intrigued. Intrigue turned to despair. I struggled to retain any real interest for the main character in the second part of the book and failed to buy into the storyline of her journey after the hospital. Some of the writing is beautiful, but excellent

prose is not enough for me if the plot and characters fail to connect. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It was like reading two different books -- the first part when ...By Evelyn Roecklein It was like reading two different books -- the first part when Joy is in the hospital is interesting and original, but leaves you hanging about the viral epidemic, the outbreak is never explained and no information about the "pilgrims" is given. In the 2nd half, when Joy leaves for Fl. to try and find her mother, it's like each chapter is separate from one another. The weird people she joins up with, Marcus, her foster brother wearing the rabbit mask, Nelson, crazy, and especially Darcie with her caramel teeth and angel wings, are never given a reason why they are like that, just as the epidemic is not explained. To me there were just too many disjointed episodes and in the end you are still wondering about what was really the truth about Joy's rememberances. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Terrible writer By T. L. Jones She told a story, that's to say she didn't let us experience it through the narrator. No she told instead of showed. And the draw back is that I couldn't connect with the characters or the story. It was boring for that reason. On top of that, the sentences were at a third grade level and she treated the reader the same, often using additional sentences to explain to the reader what was already obvious enough. Also she couldn't even make natural breaks in paragraphs and jammed sentences together that clearly didn't belong. This author makes my 10 worst writers list.

Long-listed for the 2016 International Dylan Thomas Prize After two acclaimed story collections, Laura van den Berg brings us *Find Me*, her highly anticipated debut novel? a gripping, imaginative, darkly funny tale of a young woman struggling to find her place in the world. Joy has no one. She spends her days working the graveyard shift at a grocery store outside Boston and nursing an addiction to cough syrup, an attempt to suppress her troubled past. But when a sickness that begins with memory loss and ends with death sweeps the country, Joy, for the first time in her life, seems to have an advantage: she is immune. When Joy's immunity gains her admittance to a hospital in rural Kansas, she sees a chance to escape her bleak existence. There she submits to peculiar treatments and follows seemingly arbitrary rules, forming cautious bonds with other patients? including her roommate, whom she turns to in the night for comfort, and twin boys who are digging a secret tunnel. As winter descends, the hospital's fragile order breaks down and Joy breaks free, embarking on a journey from Kansas to Florida, where she believes she can find her birth mother, the woman who abandoned her as a child. On the road in a devastated America, she encounters mysterious companions, cities turned strange, and one very eerie house. As Joy closes in on Florida, she must confront her own damaged memory and the secrets she has been keeping from herself.

From School Library Journal The world is starting to fall apart just as Joy begins putting herself back together. Abandoned by her mother at birth and raised in several foster care and group home situations, Joy has struggled to find direction. When a deadly sickness spreads across the country, first stripping people of their memories and then propelling them from dementia to death, Joy finds out she is immune to this disease and is admitted to a hospital that is looking for a cure. She uses this time to reflect on her life thus far and make a plan to track down her birth mother. The first-person narration allows readers to follow the story through Joy's changing perspective, which creates a mood that subtly moves from ambivalence to determination. Teens will be compelled to discover more about the mystery of the illness, and themes of survival and self-discovery will resonate with them. This debut novel's interesting exploration of how people behave during times of crisis mixed with the dynamics of hospital living is a combination of Susanna Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted* (Turtle Bay Bks., 1993) and Josh Malerman's *Bird Box* (Ecco, 2014). VERDICT Give this to introspective teens who enjoy postapocalyptic stories and lyrical language.—Carrie Shaurette, Dwight-Englewood School, Englewood, NJ "Radiant prose... From this memorable novel's eerie first paragraph to its enigmatic ending, Laura van den Berg has invented something beautiful indeed." - Elizabeth Hand, *The Los Angeles Times* "Pleasingly strange... impressively original... [van den Berg's] dark sensibilities call to mind the great Joy Williams, a master at portraying life on the margins... FIND ME has a funny way of resonating beyond its pages." - Carmela Ciuraru, *The New York Times Book* "van den Berg depicts a life slowly coming into focus--it's blurry and impressionistic at times, sometimes deliriously scattered. But out of the fog of memory and the haze of drugs emerges a sense of clarity that's deep and moving and real." - Michael Patrick Brady, *The Boston Globe* "This powerful debut about memory, loss and stories gets under the skin in a deeply unforgettable way." - *Minneapolis Star Tribune* "[FIND ME] powerfully conveys the fact that there are some things in life you don't want to forget. 'Some people stay with you in ways you don't expect, and you try to shake them out, shake them away, but memory won't let you,' says Joy. The same could be said of van den Berg, whose debut novel lingers and aches in the memory." - Nicole Lee, *The Guardian* "Spellbinding... a mesmerizing and emotional experience that invites readers to, like Joy, savor life." - Kelly Luce, *O, The Oprah Magazine* "A thoughtful, touching story about survival--about finding ways to heal and reasons to live." - Kim Hubbard, *People Magazine* "A haunting exploration of loneliness." - Steph Opitz, *Marie Claire* "Marvelous." - *Vanity Fair* "...incredibly precise..." 'Find Me' is being compared to Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. While it stands up to such fine company, I'd argue that van den Berg has a style, humor and grit that is all her own." - Claire Cameron, *Salon* "An unforgettable and, against all odds, unique tale... *Find Me* eases into itself, and the deeper we venture into it, the more glorious the book becomes in its embodiment of doubt and

self-scrutiny...van den Berg's debut is a keen examination of trying to live under the weight of that choice, and the weight of all else we can't choose." - Tiffany Gibert, Time Out New York About the Author

Laura van den Berg was raised in Florida. Her first collection of stories, *What the World Will Look Like When All the Water Leaves Us*, was a Barnes Noble Discover Great New Writers selection and a finalist for the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award. Her second collection of stories, *The Isle of Youth* (published by FSG Originals in 2013), received the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award for Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. *Find Me* is her first novel. She lives in the Boston area.