

Georgie, All Along

Kate Clayborn

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A freewheeling woman returns home in search of a fresh beginning in Kate Clayborn's small-town romance novel *Georgie, All Along*.

Georgie, once a personal assistant in Los Angeles, heads back to her parents' house. She's used to looking after everyone else's needs and feels ashamed about the "blankness" of her future. She tries to help her best friend, Bel, organize her home before her baby arrives, but with little else to occupy her, she also ends up reading a notebook detailing her teenage dreams of conquering high school. In hopes of reconnecting with that confident version of herself, she sets out to fulfill her earlier plans. Levi, a self-protective misfit and taciturn dock builder, becomes her roommate; he joins in her pursuits. The two also bond over shared meals and Levi's dog.

Georgie and Levi's relationship begins as one of curious apprehension; they're hesitant to admit to their desires. Levi struggles to embrace the "expansive" disruption that Georgie represents. Meanwhile, Georgie reacquaints herself with her old haunts, including Levi's family's inn. Slowly, they both unearth each other's strengths and fragile qualities, and their inward reflections about each other show where their emotions coincide.

Both characters grow as they sift through Georgie's fun wish list. Levi's anxieties about his family and what he believes he deserves because of it ease, while Georgie discovers that what she once thought of as weaknesses are indeed her strengths. As the couple's passion and miscommunications tangle, deeper ideas form around healing the past to make space for a hopeful present.

In the realistic and insightful romance novel *Georgie, All Along*, two people reinvent themselves—and ignite heat in the process.

KAREN RIGBY (January / February 2023)

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