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Review of The Night Always Comes

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The Night Always Comes by Willy Vlautin

Set in contemporary Portland, this latest by Willy Vlautin (*Don't Skip Out on Me*) is filled with darkness. Lynette has scrimped for three years to save enough money for the down payment on the house she shares with her mentally impaired older brother and her hard-drinking, chain-smoking mother. Now, just when Lynette's plan is about to pay off, her mother tosses in a huge monkey wrench, forcing Lynette into the night and a series of life-threatening situations with the sketchiest characters imaginable. Her overnight odyssey brings her face to face not only with scummy people but also with a past not over-filled with happiness. This is a fairly short novel, and, structured as one continuous forty-eight-hours, it seem even shorter. The story resonates, with characters we come to feel we know, and dialogue that is so natural we hear it, not just read it. Lynette may be, as her mother says, "just born to fail." But in spite of everything that has gone wrong for her, Lynette, in the end, is not defeated. Though alone in the world by story's end, she departs home without bitterness, headed east, toward the rising sun.

VERDICT: This is literary art that will keep the reader in his or her seat until the last page.