



Fierce People

By Dirk Wittenborn

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Dropped into a world more savage than anything in *National Geographic*, more cutthroat than anything New York's grimy downtown streets have to offer—the exclusive rural community of Vlyvalle, New Jersey—fifteen-year-old Finn Earl and his recovering mother must fight for survival.

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Fierce People By Dirk Wittenborn Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Life among the rich and twisted proves to be a difficult road to adulthood for young Finn Earl in Wittenborn's lurid and often bizarre coming-of-age yarn, which begins when the adolescent's unstable mother, Liz, a New York City massage therapist, befriends a rich older client named Osborne. The friendship looks like a good deal when Osborne rescues the pair from poverty, spiriting them away to his estate in the elite New Jersey suburb of Vlyvalle. Finn gets a romantic bonus when he falls for Osborne's sexy granddaughter, Maya; he also befriends her odd but erudite brother, Bryce. But the dark side of easy street surfaces when Finn is attacked and raped by an unknown assailant, and his romance comes apart at the seams when Maya catches him in flagrante with the family maid. The novel turns downright strange during a pivotal house fire when Finn is hailed as a hero after tumbling from a window with Maya's mother, who survives the blaze despite some serious injuries. Finn's part-time job sorting through Osborne's extensive photo library provides several clues about the possible identity of his attacker, and the underbelly of the Osborne clan gets exposed in a big way during a series of confrontations among Finn, Bryce, Maya and her grandfather. Wittenborn offers plenty of unusual spins on the usual coming-of-age formula, and his eclectic, idiosyncratic characters provide plenty of entertainment. Some overplotting in the final sections dulls the impact of the over-the-top ending, but this peek behind the scenes of a wealthy family remains novel and fascinating from start to finish.

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Review

"*Fierce People* is a whacked out hybrid of Dickens and Salinger, a compelling-and moving-coming-of-age novel..." ?Jay McInerney

"I found Dirk Wittenborn's grandly entertaining and wildly ambitious novel, *Fierce People*, to be both hilarious and heartbreaking." ?Dominick Dunne

"A riveting page-turner that offers a haunting and fascinating glimpse into the lives of the super-rich-truly the fiercest class of all." ?Candace Bushnell

"Wittenborn offers plenty of unusual spins on the usual coming-of-age formula, and his eclectic, idiosyncratic characters provide plenty of entertainment...this peek behind the scenes of a wealthy family remains novel and fascinating from start to finish." ?Publishers Weekly (starred review)

"Punched-up with sexual awakening, loss of innocence, first love, drugs, battles lost and won, adolescent rebellion-Dirk Wittenborn captures it all with a bright and vivid intensity." ?Bret Easton Ellis

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From reader reviews:

Ruth Brinkman:

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