



## Dare Truth or Promise

*By Paula Boock*

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When Louie and Willa first meet, they don't know their lives will soon be changed forever. Self-assured Louie is gearing up for another successful year in high school, starring in a production of Twelfth Night and running the Comedy Club. Kicked out of her last school and still stinging from a past relationship, Willa wants only to get through her final year at school quietly so she can graduate and become a chef. More than anything, she wants to be left alone. But each girl unexpectedly finds that plans mean nothing when it comes to love. Louie discovers that everything she was sure of-acceptance, faith, and identity-are not what they had seemed. And Willa finds herself suddenly willing to take another chance.

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## **Dare Truth or Promise** By Paula Boock Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

*"When Willa turned and kissed her, Louie thought in her head, this is my first kiss. It wasn't, of course, she'd kissed a number of boys, and done more too, but she'd never, ever felt as if she were falling off a cliff."*

*Dare Truth or Promise*, a turbulent love story by New Zealander Paula Boock, recalls Nancy Garden's *Annie on My Mind* and *Good Moon Rising* in its portrayal of two young women caught up in sexual passion for each other. Louie is the talented daughter of wealthy and cultured parents, and Willa is a strong-minded redhead who lives over the pub. They come from different worlds, but when they meet working at Burger Giant, lightning strikes--soon they are frantically in love. Willa has had a previous affair that was undermined by denial, but this time it feels inevitable and right, even when Louie's mother banishes Willa after discovering them in an embrace; even when Willa is threatened by hostile anonymous notes; even when they avoid each other in confusion and pain. Thanks to the acceptance of her tough bartender mother, Willa gains the strength to wait it out, but a psychologist tells Louie that her feelings are a passing phase, a fundamentalist promises her sins will land her in hell, and her best friend is supportive but embarrassed. The healing words that finally enable Louie to believe in herself and return to the relationship come at last from a young priest: "You see, I think love comes from God. And so, to turn away from love, real love, it could be argued, is to turn away from God." (Ages 16 and older) --*Patty Campbell*

### From Publishers Weekly

New Zealand author Boock traces the developing lesbian romance between two high school seniors in an ultimately uplifting novel. The two are from different social strata: Louie quotes Shakespeare and poetry and comes from a conservative, upper-middle-class background, while newcomer Willa, still suffering from the repercussions of an ill-fated first relationship with another girl, lives above a pub. Told in a third-person narrative that alternates between the two characters' points of view, the book offers a frank appraisal of the girls' initial attraction, passions and the conflicts of dealing with a variety of outsiders: parents, friends, co-workers, etc. When Louie's mother discovers the two girls in bed together in Louie's room, she forbids Louie to see Willa. After a rather prolonged period of suffering and soul-searching, they are able to reunite. Although Boock's intense narrative crosses into melodrama and occasionally plants an important scene offstage, teens who are curious about or struggling with questions of sexual identity will find reassurance in these pages. The characters' interactions with Louie's father and priest, and Willa's conversations with her own mother, convey an empathy and tolerance strong enough to counterbalance the intolerance the lovers face from everyone else. Ages 12-up. (Oct.)

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### From Library Journal

Grade 9 Up-Luisa "Louie" Angelo is rarely at a loss for words. Actress, extrovert, comedienne, she is well suited for the legal career she is planning. When she meets strong-minded Willa, her worldview and sense of self are forever altered with the realization that she is in love with her. Moving from disbelief to the awareness that the love she feels for Willa is "absolutely natural," Louie must cope with her mother's chilly suspicion, societal disapproval, and religious condemnation. When caught by her mother in a compromising situation with Willa, Louie is torn between the truth in her heart and the institutions that have guided her all her life. Willa, though secure with her identity, is recovering from a disastrous relationship with another girl whose fundamentalist family accused her of being a corrupting influence. Fearing a repeat with Louie, Willa

is determined to suppress her own vulnerability. Tortured by the rift between them, Louie visits her family priest, who offers a liberal reading of the Bible, viewing all love as a gift from God. A car crash and hospital scare result in a satisfying denouement. While their problems are not instantly resolved, readers know that these teens have made a commitment to be open about their homosexuality. Both Louie and Willa are nicely articulated, and while the New Zealand locale and language differences may challenge some YAs, the emotions ring true and bridge the culture gap. Sexuality is sensitively yet realistically portrayed. Boock's courageous confrontation of the issues of homosexuality and religion, unique characters, and a talent for truth set this novel apart.

*Jennifer A. Fakolt, Denver Public Library*

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Clifford Hudgins:**

Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each guide has different aim or even goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They can be reading whatever they have because their hobby is actually reading a book. How about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book after they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will require this Dare Truth or Promise.

#### **Raymond Langford:**

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#### **Michelle Labat:**

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**Thomas Rice:**

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