



## Home Truths

*Freya North*

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## **Home Truths** Freya North

Having been brought up in a draughty house in Derbyshire by their eccentric uncle, Django, the McCabe girls actually consider themselves very normal and well-adjusted. Pip is stepmother to 10-year-old Tom, Fen has a young baby and Cat has returned to England to start a family. Their mid 30s are promising to be a time of comfort and contentment. However, at their uncle's 70th birthday party, an unexpected guest arrives. Old family secrets are unearthed. Soon, new bombshells are dropped. Each sister must confront her own identity crisis and handle the threat this places on relationships.

## **Home Truths Details**

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Author : Freya North

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## From Reader Review Home Truths for online ebook

### Ann says

Another very enjoyable book by Freya North, great story line and enjoyable characters.

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### Rea Cobb says

For my hospital visit today I decided to take Freya North's Home Truth paperback with me to see me through the tedious day. It is the second book by Freya North I have read and I found it was as good as the first. An easy read that does not require enormous amounts of concentration which helps when you have machines buzzing in your ear!!

This book introduces us to the McCabe family, sisters Fen, Pip, and Cat and their Uncle Django.

Cat the youngest of the sisters is married to Ben who is a doctor, they live by the mountains in Boulder and are set to move back to be closer to their families whilst trying to make a family of their own.

Fen the middle sister is married to Matt and has a baby girl Cosima. Since Cosima has come along Fen and Matt seem to be on the rocks and have tough choices and close encounters which put their marriage in perspective.

Pip is the eldest of the sisters and her partner Zac has a son Tom who Pip loves to bits but would secretly like a baby of their own.

Django is the Uncle who raised the girls from a young age. He wears vibrant clothes and tells many a tales from back in the day. Django is getting older now and is starting to feel the old age and problems with his water works.

The three women were raised by their uncle after their mother left them and ran off with a cowboy from Denver and their dad died shortly after she left.

The three sisters are brought together for Django's 75th Birthday party but old hidden secrets come out and turn all three of the sister's lives upside down when an unexpected guest arrives after the party. A twist and turn of highs and very lows follow.

I enjoyed this book. It was slow in places and also it got a little confusing as to which girl was which, but after reading this book and coming home to write a review I have just looked and found that there are 3 books about the main characters, which I didn't realise, so I should think it best to read those books first of all to get to know the characters a little better before reading this book.

The book is quite raunchy in many parts of the book, which I found with Pillow Talk as well! There are also many parts of this book which are emotional (not good when reading in hospital!!). The only thing I found disappointing about this book is the ending. I didn't feel like it was left very well there were still questions which needed answering, I feel as though I am still only half way through the book.

I would recommend this for anyone who likes an easy, chick-lit read. I read this in just under 6 hours today.

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### **Josephine Barly says**

There's a plot twist. Huge. I didn't see it coming. It altered my whole McCabe world. But it was okay. I was able to deal with it, accept it, and move on.

Because Fen, Cat and Pip are realistic characters, dimensional, as are Django and the other secondary characters, and the stories that develop for each, the issues they must all face and overcome, they made the whole book great.

I loved the ending. I thought it was a great way to wrap up the previous storylines, to catch up on the sisters, to see what they were up to, and hopefully we'll get another book further down the line.

I appreciated the idea that not all happily ever afters are the same; that there are still aspirations to be obtained, that it's not all just about finding a lad to stay with.

If you liked the McCabe books, getting this is a no-brainer.

Freya North knows what she does, and she does it best in Home Truths, no matter how heartbreakingly or shockingly certain discoveries may be.

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### **Jeni says**

Having read Pip, Cat and Fen I was excited to read of them going home and to find out some "Home truths". The home truths were bog standard. I found the characters to be stagnant and little progression from their individual stories.

Had their stories ran their course? Yes!

After their happy endings what more was there? very little. Yes the home truths shook things up as little, but the characters had been given such a strong family base in the other books it was clear they were unbreakable.

The writing itself continued to be strong and I was drawn into the story, as all of North's books succeed in doing. I enjoyed it, but it was just a filler book perfect for whiling away a few days on a sun lounger.

All in all it is a book which tells a story that didn't really go far, lacked loose ends but managed to tie up things. If you enjoyed North's other titles add this to your shelf, but keep in mind it's a sequel....

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### **Aileen says**

Cat, Fen and Pip are sisters they were raised by their Uncle Django after their mother ran off with a Cowboy when they were young.

Cat – Has come home after 4 years abroad she is married to Ben who is a Doctor and is planning a baby.

Fern- Is a mum to Cosima and wants to make a better job of it than her mother she is very over protective and her marriage to Matt doesn't look great.

Pip- Works as a professional clown, she is married to Tom and has a

Step-son (from tom's previous relationship) Zac.

Django is 75 and they celebrate by having a Birthday Party there is a few surprises for them all and it throws there world upside down.

I have read this Author's recent books and really enjoyed them this is one of her older books, and I didn't really enjoy it, there wasn't much of a plot, however it has not put me off, I wouldn't recommend this book but will read more books by this Author in the future.

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### **Juju says**

Nearly didn't read this as gave up on the individual tales of the sisters, but glad to say I quite enjoyed this. The crazy uncle was a good character. Two different people with cancer was a tad depressing as my husband is terminally ill, but I could definitely see how Django felt with hospital tests. Overall a "nice" read!

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### **Jamie Rose says**

Not a fan. The writing is not bad, but I recently said I don't have to like characters to enjoy a book. After reading this, I guess that isn't strictly true.

The truth is more like - I don't have to like murderers in the some of the more gruesome books...

This is about three rather unpleasant sisters, Cat is an immature baby, Pip is a doormat and Fen is a horrible, selfish individual, who has no time to make an effort for her husband and father of her child, but can make the effort to tramp around with complete strangers...

The mother of the three girls left them for another man when they were babies, leaving them in the care of a slightly mad, but loving uncle. They have a decent childhood and upbringing and settle down with three guys, (who quite honestly seem to good for them). Lots of people come from less than idyllic beginnings and are not lucky enough to have an Uncle to step up, that doesn't mean they have to become revolting, self-obsessed adults...

When some information comes out about the 'past' the three girls react in a frankly horrible, selfish way, each too involved in their own reaction to consider the bigger picture. They eventually manage to pull their collective heads out of their backsides when the man who raised them actually has a real problem...

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### **Kate says**

There are three prequels to this story which are light hearted frivolous romantic romps about the McCabe sisters Pip, Fen and Cat. Home truths is the tying up of loose ends and the bringing of all three sisters together in one place for the finale. It is a bit of a departure from those carefree fantasies. It seems Freya North has attempted to tackle some harder and deeper issues that were not present in the previous plots - but hinted at. Namely the absence of their mother and the demise of their father (s). I am not entirely sure she has pulled it off, there is a jarring note to the story which I can not put my finger on. I felt the light and frivolous

was competing with the more sensitive real issues relating to abandonment, post natal depression and end of life with dignity themes. I personally love anything to do with exploring real life emotion and its day to day issues - authors such as Joanna Trollope, Anne Tyler and Elizabeth Berg do this phenomenally well. It will come as no surprise then that I detest the striving for perfection life is always happy, nothing a bit of retail therapy can't fix pap that lots of todays contemporary feminine literature is filled with e.g. Sophie Kinsella. My frustration with this book is the peek at what we could be exploring is ruined by the addition of some unnecessary vulgar its all about me patheticness (pretty sure this isn't a word but hey it is what I mean). For example Fen is struggling with the seismic paradigm shift that giving birth can prompt, there are moments where I think nicely done and then "really" did she have to add that!! This leaves me thinking Fen is just plain stupid and needy and she needs to wake up to the real world! Similarly with the other two sisters, in their own individual books they were just dippy narcissistic girls finding love. Now we are shown something a bit deeper and still they are shallow and vapid but could have so much more.

That said it moves along at a nice pace and you want to know the out come for the slightly over done contrived Django - but who really turns out to be the star of the whole show.

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### **Nicholas Whyte says**

<http://nwhyte.livejournal.com/2175682.html> [return][return] Chick lit isn't my usual genre, but I do dabble very occasionally, and I really enjoyed this - the story of three sisters, brought up by their uncle, whose love lives and career are all in slight disarray, then completely disrupted by the reappearance of their long-vanished mother. North has a very credible and compassionate way of getting into people's heads. Nobody is an angel, nobody is completely evil either. And the ending is not a completely happy one, but does bring some resolution, and sometimes that's all you can ask. Apparently North had written a novel about each of the three sisters previously; I'll keep an eye out for those.

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### **Soho Black says**

You would think that, after reading Freya North's Three novels about the McCabe sisters; "Cat", "Fen" and "Pip" and finding them ranging from awful to nearly awful, I would have given up. But upon discovering there was a fourth novel featuring the three of them, I couldn't help myself. I'm a completist by nature, as well as an avid reader, and I can't let another book in the same series remain unread, regardless of how I felt about the others.

In "Home Truths", set several years after the events of the earlier novels, all three of the McCabe sisters have moved on. Cat is now married to Ben and, after several years of living in Colorado, they are heading back to London for Ben's new job and with the intention of trying to start a family. Fen is the only one of the McCabe sisters to still have her original surname, as she and Matt aren't married, but they do have a baby girl called Cosima, although three is proving to be a crowd in their relationship. Pip, now married to Zac, is finding that three isn't enough of a crowd, as although they frequently have Matt's son Tom staying with them, when Matt's ex-partner becomes pregnant with her new husband, Pip finds she would like a child of her own, although Matt is less keen.

The entire family, along with most of Farleymoor and a disparate collection of people from various countries and varied parts of Django's past, have gathered to mark the sisters' Uncle Django's 75th birthday. It's a

wonderful occasion until the morning after when a woman called Penny Ericsson arrives and the strangeness starts when she refers to Uncle Django as Derek. For the first time in thirty years, the mother who had run off with a cowboy from Denver has returned, with the revelation that Cat is in fact Django's daughter and not her niece as all the girls thought, which makes her only a half-sister to Pip and Fen. The girls slink off to lick the wounds these revelations have caused, as Penny returns to America to continue mourning the recent death of her husband and Django has to deal with potentially devastating news about his health.

In the intervening years, not only have the McCabe sisters grown up and settled down a little, but it appears that Freya North's writing has done the same. Whilst there were moments where the worst of her literary devices were presents, such as characters needing to hold long conversations with themselves or the narrator breaking in and holding conversations with them to move the story along, this time around it felt as if this happened much less frequently and was the exception rather than the rule, as it had been before.

It is possible that, having read four Freya North novels one after another, I've become accustomed to her style and so I notice these aberrations a lot less. However, North's stylistic interruptions tended to be so blatant and obvious in her earlier novels, that I think it's more likely she's reined them in, although there was one sudden brief snatch of poetry late in a chapter completely without context or lead in that completely destroyed the momentum of the story for me and made me sit up and think "What the heck is THAT doing in there?". In North's previous novels, I remember feeling like that a lot of the time and that didn't happen nearly as often here.

I think the more expensive nature of the story has worked very much in North's favour here. Whereas the earlier three novels each focused on a single main character, "Home Truths" is very much an ensemble piece, which greatly reduces the need for characters to talk to themselves or to an outside narrator, as there is always another character nearby for them to talk to. This also meant that the story could move a lot more freely, as when there was an awkward point, the focus of the story could just switch to someone else rather than the author seeking to fill space by inserting her own voice into the novel, as she did so frequently in the earlier works.

Compare to some of her other books, I found the sexual scenes to be vastly improved, which I found happened throughout the original trilogy of novels. Each of the McCabe sisters has a single sexual partner, for the most part, and has different reasons for wanting to have sex or not. This means there is a lot more variation in the sexual scenes than before and it's about more than physical pleasure, as happened so often in earlier books, which was a lot more relaxing to read and was a little more in keeping with the general tone of the story, rather than being a little harsher by comparison as has often happened with North's writing.

The biggest failing of the book was that the story stretched belief just a little too far. There were just too many plot strands and too much happening all at once to entirely settle down with the story. The family has always been a little eccentric, but with so much focus on the family unit rather than individuals here, these eccentricities came much more to the front of the story and became jarring under the greater focus rather than briefly entertaining when they were only a passing part of the story. There was also a section later on between the girls and their mother that appeared especially weak in comparison with much of the rest of the book and the ending of the novel seemed particularly twee.

For these faults, this was by far the best of the Freya North novels I've read. It's by no means a classic, but it's certainly better than anything else of hers I've come across and whilst that may be to damn this book with faint praise, it's not all bad, whereas the others mostly were.

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## **Jane says**

Thought it dealt with the cancer well.

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## **Kirsty Darbyshire says**

I was after something light and thought this might be too light but it worked out well. I almost didn't pick it up off the library shelf but then saw it was a follow on book featuring the sisters Pip, Fen & Cat from earlier books by the author. The earlier books were very "girl meets boy and lives happily ever after". This therefore must be about how the "happily ever after" bit works out. Which it is. And I enjoyed it a lot. It's quite bittersweet in places, not always frivolous, the characters aren't having a good time all the time and they have grown up quite a lot. I'll probably pick North's other recent books up at some point, these are better than any other "chick lit" I've tried to read.

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## **Sarah Giblin says**

This was a really slow going book. I felt the plot was all over the place. The story focused on 3 sisters and their father-figure Uncle. The 3 sisters were totally unlike able. All self centred and mardy characters. I didn't connect with any of them. I didn't realise before reading this book that this was the fourth in the series. The previous 3 books focus solely on each sister, however I won't be reading them.

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## **Alice Rose says**

I have previously read Secrets by Freya North and, having found it fairly enjoyable, decided to read another of her books. Home Truths was the only one that pulled me in at all from the blurb on the back.

The book centres on three sisters, Pip, Fen and Cat, whose mother abandoned them when they were small and were raised by their eccentric uncle Django. Now, I hadn't read the previous books focusing on the sisters (imaginatively titled Cat, Fen and Pip) so I didn't know anything about their backgrounds and personalities. I think this was a problem for me. Freya North seemed to break the cardinal rule of writers by telling and not showing. I guess she may have assumed that everyone had already read the other books and already knew that Pip was established as the great looker-afterer, Fen as the soothing type and Cat as the baby. I didn't know this. And I didn't particularly like any of the characters. I couldn't understand why they made some of the decisions they made (especially Fen). They seemed way too woe-is-me for my liking.

Unfortunately, I wasn't so keen on this book and can only rate it 2 stars. I don't think I'll be picking up another of Freya North's books.

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## **Hannie says**

Dit is het laatste deel in de serie met Cat, Fen en Pip. Hoewel ik me in het begin wat aan Fen ergerde

vanwege haar houding en acties, vond ik dit boek beter dan Cat en Pip. In dit boek draait het wederom om de drie zussen. Ze zijn inmiddels ouder geworden, al kun je in sommige gevallen niet zeggen wijzer. In dit boek draait het om hun moeder, die hen toen ze klein waren heeft verlaten. Het boek is prettig leesbaar en het sluit de serie mooi af. Doordat je al drie boeken meegeleefd hebt met de drie zussen, voelt hun leven al heel vertrouwd. Net oude bekenden waar je over hoort hoe het met hen gaat. Voor mij was dat ook de belangrijkste reden om dit boek te lezen, omdat ik toch wilde weten hoe het af zou lopen. Toch had ik wel wat twijfels, omdat ik Cat en Pip wat minder vond. Gelukkig ben ik niet teleurgesteld. Het boek is ook los goed te lezen, maar als je van plan bent om de andere delen ook te gaan lezen, zou ik je wel aanraden om ze op volgorde te lezen, omdat je anders bepaalde dingen al weet. Ik heb er geen spijt van dat ik deze serie heb gelezen, maar zal het mensen ook niet meteen aanraden. Daarvoor vond ik met name Cat te langdradig. Als je Freya North niet kent, zou ik met een ander boek beginnen, zoals bijvoorbeeld Sally of Chloe. Die boeken lezen veel vlotter.

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