



The Oldest Things in the World

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Rose Smith wants to live among “the oldest things in the world.” While working in Los Angeles, a photo of Peru’s Manchu Picchu attracts her attention. “Stone city, blue sky. Home,” she ruminates. Impulsively, she goes. There she meets a university professor, Carlos Urbina Delgado. They fall in love during a long trip down the dry Peruvian coast into the ancient mountain city of Cuzco. Through Carlos, Rose sees the poverty of the once-proud Inca, ponders the endurance of these and other indigenous peoples and wonders if the world can survive without them.

Rose sees Los Angeles differently when she returns – she sees it as a city without a soul, disconnected from its roots in its vanished landscape and its earliest inhabitants. Overcome by loneliness, Rose retreats into work. She rediscovers her passion for painting and joins in fighting for the rights of indigenous people. Carlos visits, but she has one more journey she must make: to Guatemala where the indigenous Maya have survived three decades of war. There in the cities’ markets and the country’s highlands, amid violence that pits Indian against European and nearly ends her life, Rose searches for her answers.

This novel of action and ideas, earned Barbara the Silver Medal for fiction in the prestigious ForeWord Magazine’s annual Book of the Year Awards.