



The Widow's Walk

Robert Barclay

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In the spirit of *The Notebook* and *The Time Traveller's Wife* comes Robert Barclay's haunting and romantic novel of passion, destiny, loss and an eternal love that will bring two people together across time

His name was Garrett Richmond and he had always wanted to live by the ocean. So when the opportunity to buy-and renovate-the old home known as Seaside arrived, he leapt at the chance. Never mind that his friends and family thought he was crazy, he knew he could return this lonely mansion, worn by time, wind, and neglect, to its former beauty. But Seaside was more than just a project; it was spot that had called to him his entire life.

And then one night he saw her.

Her name is Constance Elizabeth Canfield and she tells him Seaside has been her home for over 150 years. But Constance is no ghost; rather, she claims that she has been somehow magically trapped between this life and the next. At first, Garrett can't believe her crazy story-the woman had to be lying! And yet, there was something about Constance that was from another time...

Soon this mysterious woman, and flesh and blood man share a closeness they cannot deny. But just as their love begins to bloom, Constance's presence starts mysteriously fading away, soon to be gone forever. Is their love doomed-or is it strong enough to transcend time, and even death itself?

The Widow's Walk Details

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From Reader Review The Widow's Walk for online ebook

Brenda Ayala says

I guessed the ending of the book 100 pages in. I was right. Seriously, go look at my status updates if you want to know the ending. That made the resolution a lot less exciting, and I found myself skimming through quite a bit of the paragraphs through the last third of the book. But honestly? I didn't miss anything. Literally every other paragraph went something like this: "Again Garrett realized (**Garrett realizes everything--he never seems to come across anything by just thinking about it, but suddenly realizing**) that Constance came from another time. How could she survive in the modern world? Now she was a part of it instead of party to it (**a phrase used like three times**) and that meant that although no one could see her, she was still involved. What could he do to help her? He knew in his heart (**always something with the heart**) that he must do all he can for her. But what could he do? Only time will reveal the answer, but who knows how much time they have left? However, she is a result of 170 years and he must respect that (**also used several times**)."

It was just annoying and very superficial. The entire book was just a repeat of the same few paragraphs over and over again, interspersed with some of the worst dialogue. And even the dialogue was largely the same sentences repeated over and over again.

That may sound dramatic. I know that. Yet I can't deny it. ALL THE CHARACTERS SOUNDED EXACTLY THE SAME. Trent and Jay sounded exactly alike. Garrett apparently doesn't speak like he was born and raised in the present day. Instead, his interior monologue goes like this: *The crying that I heard last night, just before falling asleep in the dining room....that crying was also hers! I cannot say why I'm so sure of it, only that I am. She is also the same woman who I saw in my dream! And now that I have seen her in the flesh, a new sort of pain and yearning is growing in my heart that is far stronger than any I have experienced before...*

That was a totally real quote by the way.

Because, you know, every thirty year old man talks like that. "I simply must do this because I have fallen in love!" He just sounded like a less severe version of Constance, with her "there's something you must be privy to" and the like. Not to mention Garrett's parents sounded like the same person, and lent nothing to the story line. It was just so contrived and simple.

Although...on the same hand, a lot of things aren't really explained. There's one part toward the beginning where Constance proves no one can see her by doing stupid stuff in front of Trent and Jay. It's confirmed no one can see her. Yet she still has to sneak around? Apparently, because it told me so in the book. I don't really get WHY she has to sneak around, because no one can see her, right? But she does. Also she apparently needs to steal clothes from people and doesn't need to eat, but the author made it a point to say that she looked radiant after taking a shower. So shouldn't she smell? No, because the text tells me she still smells like her perfume from 170 years ago. So apparently her clothes don't come with her, but her perfume does. Yeah. Which seems like a very convenient way for the honorable Garrett to see her undergarments without her wearing them. Let's go shopping, and buy Chanel perfume and Nike shoes and Victoria's Secret bras! Trust me Constance, this is extremely important right now, even though you might be fading away and dying or whatever. It was just ludicrous.

I do not put this in the same category as Nicholas Sparks, and even Nicholas Sparks has his gimmicks

(namely, that one of the characters always dies)

(I received this in a First Reads giveaway.)

Kara says

I wanted to like this book, I really did. The premise was interesting. But, it just fell so flat.

Jason says

I cannot believe this writer has a career AS a writer. *Widow's Walk* has horrendous dialogue, the story is very contrived, and the author has no skill whatsoever in weaving a tale or building a scene. The editor of this book and the publishing house should be ashamed of themselves for publishing a writer who cannot write his way out of a paper bag. This book reads like the worst of a self-published title by a wannabe writer who needs to take several more college level fiction writing classes from qualified instructors. As someone else said here on Goodreads, I will NOT attempt to read anything else by Robert Barclay. This book is SO bad I've a mind to write the publisher and insist they drop Barclay. As the founder and executive director of the former New Century Writer Awards, which worked in close association with Francis Ford Coppola's *Zoetrope: All-Story* literary magazine from 1998 through 2003, I know quite a bit about good story verses bad, and I know dozens of excellent fiction writers who should be published but cannot catch a break. If *Widow's Walk* is the quality of character, story, and writing style that Barclay has to offer in his other books not only should he be dropped from the publishing world, but his editor should be fired, and his literary agent convinced to quit the business. I just cannot be kind at all in my review of this book. I am astounded anyone thought it was worth wasting the publisher's money.

Melinda says

The focal point of this story is *Seaside* the house serves as the catalyst of the interaction between Constance and Garrett. *Seaside* is vividly described, partly due to the fact Garrett is an architect restoring *Seaside* to its old glory. If you enjoy architecture you'll find this aspect attractive. The reader becomes familiar with both exterior and interior of the house, you'll think of it as your second home.

The plot certainly wasn't original, it's been repeated a number of times, however, I was curious to see where Barclay would take the narrative and the reader. The deal breaker for me was the unbending feel of the entire plot. Rigid, lifeless, nothing stretching my imagination, extremely flat. The events leading to the ending completely killed the story, it was ridiculous. Admittedly I had high expectations for the actual ending and was dumbfounded.

Constance and Garrett came across as robotic. Absolutely passionless and failed to evoke any tenderness. I found them dull, and quite boring. Both characters did absolutely nothing for me.

There was a clear undertone of misogyny. Constance makes the following comment:

"I much preferred 1840 than today."

But women have come so far since then," he said. "Things are very different now, since you were a woman in 1840."

"Yes," Constance answered. "In some ways women have come far, and that is a good thing. But in other ways, they have lost much too."

"Back then, Garrett," she said, there was an understood gentility about things. I know this will sound contradictory, but despite of lack of rights, men took care of their women. I of course cannot speak for every woman of that time, but in my experience, most women were treated with true respect. Men opened doors for them, bowed to them, and kissed the backs of their hands, and spoke in far more loving and respectful ways than they now do. Forgive me for seeing old fashioned, but it's as if all of the rights and privileges that women have fought for and won throughout the years have been paid for with a contradictory increase in crassness and crudity. Sometimes, I must admit, I find myself unsure of whether the trade off was a fair one."

Barclay's writing was lackluster, predictable, I read words on paper, I felt distant from *The Widow's Walk* with no true draw to his story as well as players. Disappointed in the misogynist connotation.

Kara Fraser says

An interesting premise but so badly written as to render it nearly unreadable. The characters are unrealistic and poorly fleshed out, the sequence of events are arbitrary and their resolutions contrived, and the writing is more on par with a high schooler's creative writing assignment than a vetted and published work of fiction. I finished it more out of obstinacy than any form of enjoyment

Angela says

One the one hand, I liked this book. Innovative story line. The architect's friends added some nice background vibrancy to the novel. However, as I was reading I had a hard time with the obvious thread of sexism spun through this book. The premise alone should have clued me in - "man longs for simpler time." Yeah, the simpler time when women did not question their place. The book is peppered with references to "taking" the woman. There was this passage where the female character pondered the freedoms that woman have gained over time, but still longed for the time where she was not free. I realize this paragraph was mostly background to the main story but it was not handled well, AT ALL, in my opinion. So, although I liked the story for the most part, I wanted to drop the book for the obvious sexism so many times. It was a "cringe-worthy" read. I have no plans to read anything further from this author.

Alana White says

Set in New Bedford, Massachusetts in the mid-19th century and the present day, Robert Barclay's third book involves Constance Canfield, a young woman caught between life and death, and the only man in existence

who can “save” her. His name is Garrett Richmond, and he is the sensitive architect who purchases the beautiful seaside home Constance once inhabited, so that he may renovate the place. What Garrett does not know is that 170 years earlier Constance—whom only he perceives—fell from the widow’s walk while awaiting the return of her missing whaler husband. Now Constance is a ghost of sorts, doomed to completely disappear if something isn’t done, fast. One consolation is that Garrett takes her shopping for some really cute clothes at Victoria’s Secret, which—somehow—he alone can see.

Together, eventually Constance and Garrett consult Dr. Brooke Wentworth, a world authority on a phenomenon called *mora mortis*. Quoting a few vague lines from that renowned authority Nostradamus, the doctor informs the couple the only way to break the spell Constance is under is for them both to hurl themselves from the widow’s walk. Maybe. Because the woman they have known for less than an hour says she doesn’t actually know what could happen then. Both could die, one could die, and so on, through various possibilities. Now Garrett finds himself contemplating suicide, considering the act a “leap of faith.”

Like the author’s previous efforts, this one is aimed at fans of Robert James Waller and Nicholas Sparks and may appeal to those who enjoy books similar to *The Notebook*. Time-Slip. Alana White's Review Appeared in the "Historical Novels Review" Issue 69 (August 2014)

Rhonda says

Garbage. Everything from the writing style to the story line was contrived, flat, and forced. I can think of only 2-3 books I have never been able to finish. I give this one star because I worked so hard to plow through it.

Linda Bridges says

Constance Crawford and her whaler-captain husband Adam live in a beautiful ocean front home in New Bedford, MA in 1840. Seaside is a beautiful home but a lonely one for Constance as Adam is away for up to two years at a time on whaling expeditions. They are childless; while Adam is away she works as a midwife and helps escaped slaves by providing a station on the Underground Railway. As Adam's journey nears its end, Constance goes regularly to the widow's walk at the top of Seaside to wait for him. One day as she leans on the rail, it breaks and she plunges to her. . . . death?

170 years late Garrett Richmond, an architect who has always been fascinated with Seaside buys the sadly neglected home and begins to restore it. But he keeps catching glimpses of and having dreams about a beautiful woman dressed in period clothes who is sobbing uncontrollably. Could this be Constance? Is she a ghost or something else? As Garrett begins to fall in love with her, he and the young woman have to seek the answers to what is apparently an unbelievable situation.

Once skepticism is suspended about the possibility of an existence caught between life and death, this is a charming and beautiful love story. I enjoyed reading about life in New Bedford in the 1840s and the type of homes found there. Parts of the story were very cute, especially when Garrett takes Constance (whom only he can see and hear) shopping at a modern mall. Her reaction to Victoria's Secret is priceless! In a time when

we have come to accept relationships between vampires and humans, time-travel, etc. in modern novels, this one isn't too much of a stretch. It is an easy read and enjoyable.

Lusie says

It was a bit slow paced and cheesy. I liked the time travel aspect. I thought it was a nice story.

Abbey says

I'm still not entirely sure what compelled me to actually finish this book. The characters were basically stock (in some cases, calling them two-dimensional would be a stretch), the writing was a cross between elementary and sophomoric (how many times can we use the phrase "17 decades" or "over 170 years" and...mora mortis? Seriously?), and the lack of development made the whole thing, well, cheesy.

I started reading this book because it smacked of *Bid Time Return* by Richard Matheson, which was engrossing, but this.... Well, I kept hoping that resolution would live up to what I had hoped for at the outset. Alas, it did not, and was one of two plausible endings I considered starting about a third of the way into the story.

It's sad, really: the premise had so much potential and had slightly more attention been given to development of character and plot, this would have been a much better read. As it is, it's on par with Stuart Woods. Blech.

Cindy says

Um, not sure what to say without being rude...but just skip it. Yikes on the writing, just yikes,

Susie Kinsey says

I read this book in two days. It was an easy, enjoyable read with a great story line that was pretty believable in its mystical way. I look forward to reading the author's other books.

Kathleen Smith says

Somehow, while I knew this story has been told a million times, I thought there was a glimmer of hope that it would ride to the top. This was certainly not the case I read it rather quickly because to be honest I skimmed through a lot of it. I hate to do that. With such weak characters and plot, it was the only way I could make it through to the end.

If I paid attention, I would have remembered that I have attempted to read Mr Barclay before.

I am so sorry. I was given the book for an honest review.

Jennifer says

It is sometimes said that a select few hear the call of the past in the songs of old and in the works of art that decorate museum walls. They are a people that respect the legends of past generations that help create an architecture of both brick and bone. This book is about one such person that both loves and respects the past. He is a man named Garrett Richmond and he has decided that he will restore a dying historical landmark called Seaside. Not knowing why he wishes to possess such a place, he puts both forth massive amounts of sweat and blood; for he sees the potential that Seaside could be. Little to his knowledge does he know that Seaside holds a secret. Garrett is not alone in his new home, nor will he ever be as long as he remains there. A woman named Constance Canfield resides in the home somewhere in between the living and the dead. A place where heaven and hell has forgotten about her. For Constance seventeen long decades have passed as she has watched the only place she has called home wither away. Curiosity and desperation has caused her to be bold and have her act out of turn. Can Garrett help Constance understand why she is still alive in Seaside? Why is it that only Garrett can see her? How can she break the curse that she is under?

I have to say that I found this book to be very enjoyable. It was very different for me and I don't think I have ever read anything quite like it before. I liked the character development and enjoyed the history that was brought into the story as well. It allowed me to get to know both Garrett and Constance a little better. I was actually surprised by the ending, which is good for me. I usually am able to predict the ending and was wrong on this one. I was pleasantly surprised by that and that was fun for me. I highly recommend this book and have no doubt most will enjoy its uniqueness.
