



## All We Can Do Is Wait

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In the hours after a bridge collapse rocks their city, a group of Boston teenagers meet in the waiting room of Massachusetts General Hospital:

Siblings Jason and Alexa have already experienced enough grief for a lifetime, so in this moment of confusion and despair, Alexa hopes that she can look to her brother for support. But a secret Jason has been keeping from his sister threatens to tear the siblings apart...right when they need each other most.

Scott is waiting to hear about his girlfriend, Aimee, who was on a bus with her theater group when the bridge went down. Their relationship has been rocky, but Scott knows that if he can just see Aimee one more time, if she can just make it through this ordeal and he can tell her he loves her, everything will be all right.

And then there's Skyler, whose sister Kate—the sister who is more like a mother, the sister who is basically Skyler's everything—was crossing the bridge when it collapsed. As the minutes tick by without a word from the hospital staff, Skyler is left to wonder how she can possibly move through life without the one person who makes her feel strong when she's at her weakest.

## All We Can Do Is Wait Details

Date : Published February 6th 2018 by Razorbill

ISBN :

Author : Richard Lawson

Format : Kindle Edition 288 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Fiction, Realistic Fiction, Lgbt

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## From Reader Review All We Can Do Is Wait for online ebook

### **Ida Lo says**

SUCH A GOOD YA NOVEL

Its been a long time since I cried this much because of a book but HERE WE HAVE A GREAT FUCKING REASON TO BAWL YOUR EYES OUT

very diverse characters with important side stories

OH GOD I LOVED IT

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### **Jennifer says**

4.5 stars. review to come

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### **Shanyn (Chick Loves Lit) says**

This book is told from multiple POVs which I like from time to time, as it gives you an insight to more emotions and stories that hopefully weave together a bit in the end. And while the stories do start to make sense in this book, I found the narratives of each to be a little dry.

There were definitely bits of each chapter that I was interested in, but the majority of this book is in a telling vs showing narrative that didn't keep my attention much. I understand (and appreciate) when a character has an inner monologue after an event, but when entire bits of stories or chapters are told in these long, non-dialogue paragraphs, I really have a hard time keeping myself interested. I reread many paragraphs in this book because I found myself glazing over words and sentences in the big blocks of text.

Really nice cover, decent storyline, just not my type of writing style at all. I only felt invested in one of the five main characters which just isn't enough for me. There is one storyline in the book that I think the whole thing could have been dedicated to actually, with more dialogues and flashbacks to help build up those relationships and moments, but since it was only part of the story it wasn't quite as fleshed out as I would have liked.

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### **Amanda says**

Stories about disparate people coming together and telling their stories from multiple perspectives are my favorite kind of stories, which is why I was so intrigued by and exited for this book. And I'm happy to say it didn't disappoint. The characters are each so interesting in their own way and their stories are well fleshed out. Their backstories are parceled out in a way that compels you to keep reading, which is why I read it in two sittings and refused to put it down until I was done. The prose of this book is gorgeous and the voices all seem authentic to their characters. There's diversity among them, both racial and sexual, which is excellent. Also, the cover is beautiful.

This is just a lovely, sad, in places hard to read book and I really enjoyed it.

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### **Neville Longbottom says**

*All We Can Do Is Wait* is a novel that focuses on a group of teenagers who are waiting in a hospital to find out the fate of their loved ones after a tragic bridge collapse. It is not a fast-paced adventure or survival story, but rather a character study of how different people react to tragedy. Most of the story is takes place before the bridge collapse and you learn who these characters are and what has happened in their past leading up to them waiting in the hospital.

I see that some of the criticism is that the story is very slow and not that much happens. I think if you're going into this expecting it to be a really high energy story about surviving a tragedy then you'll probably be disappointed. But if you enjoy more character focused stories where a wild, fast-moving plot isn't really necessary then you might enjoy this.

It is a multiple POV story so you're really able to learn a lot about each individual character. I enjoyed that within the cast of main characters there was a diverse selection of characters and the experiences that they had. For example there was a Cambodian American character, which I don't ever think I've seen before in a YA novel, and there is also a gay character. And topics such as abusive relationships and drug abuse are brought up.

I appreciated how this book showed many different reactions towards grief and stressful situations. Like how you start laughing at an inappropriate moment or get happy that something bad happened to somebody else instead of you. But then you wonder if that makes you a bad person for being happy about something like that. It all felt very real.

All in all I did really enjoy this book. However there was nothing life-changingly special about it to end up giving it 5 stars, so for me it's a completely solid 4 star read.

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### **Josephine says**

#### **3.8-4 stars.**

Ouff.

So this was quite a heavy book, but also quite lovely in its way. I really liked the characters (my favourite point of views was definitely Alexa and Jason though), and as I got to know them I started dreading but also really wanting to know exactly what had happened to their loved ones. There was character growth and I even feel like I've learned some things about myself and my own family now that I've finished this. It feels wrong to say I enjoyed this because it is quite a sad book about a lot of loss, but at the same time it held hope and happiness and love. The book was realistic and it wasn't hard to feel attached to the situation, knowing this kind of thing could happen anywhere, anytime, to anyone. So, yea, excuse me while I call my brothers because I haven't talked to them in a little bit and I really feel like I need to.

Cherish your loved ones, and make sure you don't miss an opportunity to show them you love them.

♥?

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### **Sara (A Gingerly Review) says**

2 stars from me. Why? Because I have no idea what the actual plot of the story was. Was this supposed to be about 5 "strangers" that come together in a hospital waiting room to find out the fate of their loved ones, only to realize they are all actually linked together? There was so little about the actual event that brought them to the hospital and a metric ton of backstory that is slowly pieced together to give a lack-luster reveal. The character backstories felt like they were shocking and over the top unnecessary for the sake of a shock factor.

I have a lot of feelings about this story and not all of them are good. ~~FRTC~~.

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Full review can be found here: <https://agingerlyreview.wordpress.com...>

I borrowed this from my library with no knowledge of what it was about and without reading any ratings/reviews. Maybe that was the best way because it allowed me to form my own opinions. However, it seems I agree with a majority of other readers when it comes to this particular story. It was one long "What the heck?" story.

Short recap: A massive tragedy has happened in Boston – a bridge has collapsed in the middle of the day and hundreds, maybe thousands, of people could be hurt or worse. Six teens find themselves in the waiting room of the hospital to find out the fate of their loved ones, and at the same time find out how their own lives intersect.

Here is my big question for this story: What was the actual plot? It seems like such a simple question and also necessary. The entire time I was listening to this story, I kept wondering what the overall plot was. Yes, it was a tragedy that such an event would happen. Yes, it was awful that children were waiting to find out the fate of their parents and loved ones. But what was the actual plot? We know that the bridge collapsed. We know that people are waiting to find out what happened to their loved ones. Outside of those two items, there is no real theme or point to this story. The teens in the waiting room all have a story about someone they are waiting to hear about, but that is it.

As I stated, there are multiple teens which meant the story is told from multiple POVs. The worst part of that is that the voices all sounded the same. What was even worse than that was that one POV was told in SECOND PERSON. What the actual? There was no transition from present to past so I was constantly confused as to when the story was taking place. I cannot go into more detail than that because I cannot remember any of the character names. They did not leave any lasting impression on me at all. They were completely forgettable, just like this story.

I think I know what this book was trying to do but it is hard to actually figure it out. The author missed the mark so bad that all I can do is shake my head and move on. Do I recommend? Not one bit. This was hard enough for me to sit through, I wouldn't want anyone else to go through that.

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## **Brandon says**

Such a disappointment. Didn't enjoy his writing style at all - kind of pretentious and feels the need to over-explain the narrative to the reader. Would have been better in more capable hands.

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## **Ally (book\_ventures) says**

For All We Can Do Is Wait being Richard Lawson's debut novel, I was blown away. Lawson tackles a horrific story full of so much relatable pain and turns it into a beautiful, heart-wrenching story line.

Synopsis:

In the hours after a bridge collapse rocks their city, a group of Boston teenagers meet in the waiting room of Massachusetts General Hospital:

Siblings Jason and Alexa have already experienced enough grief for a lifetime, so in this moment of confusion and despair, Alexa hopes that she can look to her brother for support. But a secret Jason has been keeping from his sister threatens to tear the siblings apart...right when they need each other most.

Scott is waiting to hear about his girlfriend, Aimee, who was on a bus with her theater group when the bridge went down. Their relationship has been rocky, but Scott knows that if he can just see Aimee one more time, if she can just make it through this ordeal and he can tell her he loves her, everything will be all right.

And then there's Skyler, whose sister Kate—the sister who is more like a mother, the sister who is basically Skyler's everything—was crossing the bridge when it collapsed. As the minutes tick by without a word from the hospital staff, Skyler is left to wonder how she can possibly move through life without the one person who makes her feel strong when she's at her weakest.

In his riveting, achingly beautiful debut, Richard Lawson guides readers through an emotional and life-changing night as these teens are forced to face the reality of their pasts...and the prospect of very different futures.

My Take:

I loved that this book was told through multiple POVs. Each POV was a main character who had a loved one on the bridge when it collapsed. With each POV and every new story, more emotion pours out of the pages. Each main character is bringing more baggage through a backstory on top of the horrible situation they are already in. What I found powerful about this book was the fact that the characters cross paths, each connected by a terrible tragedy. Even though each main character only told their own story for maybe two-three chapters total, the story read very quickly and easily.

All We Can Do Is Wait is an incredibly moving story that touch on important topics relevant to people today.

Thank you to Penguin Random House and Razorbill for sending me an ARC of this book.

I give this book 4 out 5 stars.

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## **Erin says**

### **Thanks to NetGalley for an advanced ebook in exchange for an honest review.**

Beautiful cover, heartfelt premise, good writing and teen angst that director John Hughes would have lapped up like a cat with cream. But I felt a whole lot of nothing because as exciting as the premise sounded, there was way too much backstory and I was a bit worn out by it all.

I usually devour YA novels and I am sure that some of my students would love the story. I do appreciate the lack of insta-love! It just failed to bring forth any type of emotional reaction for me.

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## **Larry H says**

3.5 stars here.

It seemed like just another day in Boston. And then, without warning, the Tobin Bridge collapses, with about 100 cars on its span at the time. These were people just going about their business—students, parents, families, people racing to work or school or home or to some other obligation or exciting occasion.

"It was hard to say who was less lucky, the ones who fell into the water or the ones who fell onto Charlestown, debris tumbling on top of them. Was it better to be swiftly crushed or to slowly drown in your car?"

As news of the tragedy spreads, loved ones of those believed to be on the bridge gather in the emergency room of Massachusetts General Hospital. Among those gathered is a group of teenagers, waiting for word about the condition of their family members or friends. They comfort each other, provide solace and support, and offer a sympathetic ear to listen to the others' fears, their regrets, even their secrets.

  Siblings Jason and Alexa are waiting for news about their parents. For nearly a year, Jason has withdrawn from his family, preferring to spend his days in a stoned haze, where he is cut off from his feelings. Alexa resents her older brother for abandoning her emotionally, because she has really needed someone to turn to this past year. Yet each is hiding a secret that threatens to further widen the gap between them at a time they need each other most.

  Scott's girlfriend Aimee was traveling over the bridge with friends en route to a theater production. Scott is deeply in love with Aimee but worries their relationship will fall apart once she leaves to go to college. He can't help but resent her a little bit because she seems just a little too excited to leave town for school. Maybe she's excited to leave him, too? He knows he's been difficult lately, but he just wants the opportunity to tell Aimee he loves her, so she'll realize they're meant to be together.

  Kate, Skyler's older sister, has always looked out for her. Even though she's only two years older, Kate has in some instances acted like Skyler's aunt, even a surrogate mother, especially since their parents are no longer in the picture and their grandparents live in Cambodia. When Skyler was in danger and hid that fact from everyone, Kate knew—and once again, rescued her. So as Skyler waits to find out whether Kate survived the

bridge collapse, she wonders how she might possibly survive without the person who has meant everything to her.

Facing uncertainty as to whether your family members or other loved ones are alive, dead, or seriously injured is a difficult task for anyone, much less teenagers dealing with their own problems at the same time. For Jason, Alexa, Scott, and Skyler, just being in proximity to each other brings some comfort as they wait for answers. At the same time, each struggles with reliving past regrets, looking at the events that brought them to this moment.

*All We Can Do Is Wait* gives evidence to the adage that "misery loves company." The book grabs you right away and keeps you rooted to the characters' stories, to the pain and fear each has borne to this moment, and the pain each could face depending upon the condition of their loved ones. At first I found it interesting that not one of these teenagers had anyone else who was worried enough about them to track them down at the hospital, but you realize that each of them have only themselves and those in the bridge collapse to depend on.

This is a really engaging story that reads a bit like a movie—I could honestly see these scenes playing out in my head. That's a testament to Richard Lawson's writing ability. I did think the book was perhaps a little too melodramatic and angsty even given the setting and the situation facing the characters, but that wasn't a deal-breaker for me. I waited for the "big reveal" in the case of one character, and it unfolded exactly like I expected, but it still choked me up a little.

At a few points I found the characters a little immature, and then I realized these were high school students. It was actually refreshing to find characters that weren't more sarcastic and erudite than people twice their age. There were a few places I worried Lawson might take the plot into total melodrama, and I was glad he avoided that.

This was a very fast read for me and I was completely invested in the story; in fact, I would love to know what happens next to these characters. I hope never to be in a situation like this, but I think Lawson accurately depicted the emotions and the events that would occur if a tragedy like this occurred.

See all of my reviews at [itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com](http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com), or check out my list of the best books I read in 2017 at <https://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com/2018/01/the-best-books-i-read-in-2017.html>.

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### **Fantaghiro23 says**

Wow. Just wow.

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### **Stephanie says**

Overall, this was a good story of strangers being forced to sit with each other and bond over a bridge collapse while they wait to hear the fates of their family and friends. It ends suddenly, and a little predictable, but I would use it as a way to teach empathy in classrooms or schools.

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## **Mandy says**

This was like super super super well-written? Like, if this is how debuts are going to be for 2018, I might be finally able to break my rating slump because this was super good. It was raw and real and just exactly all the heartbreak and emotion that I thought it was going to be.

To explain the book, you have to think of it not as a linear format. I like to think of it as a collection of moments in these people's lives brought together in a bridge collapse. We have two things going on at the same time - the aftermath of a huge disaster and delving into what brought our characters to this exact moment in their lives. It's little vignettes with the tension of these characters' loved ones' fate in the balance. It might not be for everyone since it does have moments of slow going and in-depth characterization focuses instead of just zooming through the answers of the characters, but it was well-executed, timed well, and gave a good balance of the backstory and the presence. Everything was kind of timed perfectly, and I'm so insanely jealous of this???? WHY I CAN'T DO THAT? \*forever crying\*

The characters were all super intriguing and well done as well. I had two clear favorites, and they were Alexa and Skyler. I loved them dearly. Both of them were achingly real and raw and I felt their emotions with them. I most connected with Alexa, and I literally was going, you go, girl, I feel you the entire book. She was lost, and I just wanted her to be found so badly. Both girls were exceedingly strong and their voices were clear and realistic. I also found their stories to be the most captivating.

Scott was okay. I think he kind of got the short end of the stick when it came to the end since the story focused a lot more on Alexa, Jason, and Skyler at the end. I did enjoy parts of his story, though, and I was into it for the most part. I kind of wanted a bit more resolution for him. I hated Jason for like 3/4 of the novel, but I mean, I did understand his point of view and the fact that he was suffering and had a right to be. I guess I was just so deep with Alexa that I projected my feelings for Jason from her. But I think his character was still done wonderfully and he had all the little dynamics and flaws that was good for a character. I just kind of had a -\_- face on him for a long time. Morgan was okay, too.

The other side characters were intriguing, too, and I can pretty much name almost all the side characters - and there were many - because they were so dynamic and stood out. Kyle was intriguing and I loved Kate, Skyler's sister. I was really impressed with this since I tend to forget like everyone but the main characters and the trusty, funny sidekick. XD

The writing was very good as well. The tone felt like such a pro storyteller format, and I was just super impressed. I feel like this is a story that was just meant to be narrated and it gave it a cool feeling - but maybe too cool because I was never completely sucked into the story to get my crying game on. However, at times, I did feel quite detached from the story. This story isn't one for warm and fuzzies, but I just wanted...well, a bit more of a strong emotional pull to it than what I was getting. I just didn't get to the emotional level even though I was invested in the storyline and characters.

Also, maybe study your Massachusetts' map because I felt so clueless with all the mentions about the places in it, lol???

P.S. no instalove!!!! Just truly deep and well developed love.

This was a great read, and I devoured it in pretty much 24 hours straight. The writing was fantastic, I truly enjoyed some of the characters, and the format did the story well. I did feel detached from the story at parts

and I kind of really didn't like one of the characters, but it was still a really enjoyable read. Lawson provided a fantastic debut, and if he keeps writing contemporaries like this, I definitely think I'm going to keep reading them for a long time. 4 crowns and an Ariel rating!

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**jessica says**

this was a very well-written book but, unfortunately, there wasnt really any plot. i think the lack of story was why i failed to feel any sort of connection, which is a shame considering the emotional content.

*3 stars*

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