



Waters of Change

Amy Astorga

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"Life at the surface isn't a decision that can be made. It's something you have to be chosen to receive. What mermaids lack that humans possess, isn't legs. It's a soul."

Gwendolyn and Emma were best friends.

Until Emma vanished.

Since then, Gwendolyn's life has been flipped upside down. She is being troubled by a past that has no answers, a crumbling relationship with her longtime boyfriend, Ryan, and a set of paranoid parents who are afraid to let her go. Curfews and locked windows can keep out harm.

But nothing can stop the urges.

Sudden, overpowering, unnatural--Gwendolyn is drawn to ocean's hypnotic shore like a moth to the flame. It's where she thinks Emma disappeared.

It's where she meets Marcus.

A mysterious stranger with eyes that pierce her soul, his presence is an irresistible distraction. But there are things about Marcus that she can't explain. And there are reasons he's appeared that go beyond fate. The more she discovers the truth behind the man, the more she discovers he isn't a man at all.

Gwendolyn's relationships are filled with dark secrets that she's determined to uncover. She will go to any length to get the answers that she seeks. And what she finds will reveal the ultimate fate of her soul.

Amy Astorga's thrilling novel is the first in the Waters of Change trilogy, an urban fantasy series filled with compelling symbolism, depth, and mermaids.

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Waters of Change Details

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From Reader Review Waters of Change for online ebook

Abbie says

(I received a copy from the author, In exchange for an honest review.)

It took me a while to get into this, and even then there were still a few times throughout the book where I felt a bit bored. It dragged slightly in areas for me because of it, but it wasn't a bad read overall.

Eric says

From beginning to end it had mystery with a great story plot. The supernatural suspense and characters are so original, unlike the crap that's out there right now (a spin off of another story or plot). The spin at the end was pretty cool.

Jolly Per says

Note: I receive a digital copy of this book in exchange of an honest review.

Well, let's skip the storyline and get straight to the point. It started off well and things felt dumbed down.

Let's get down to the real thing; **1 star** because I feel so generous.

I thought some parts of this book were really interesting. It really started okay, but as the story progressed, 99% of it was mess of facts without logic. The characters also seemed undeveloped and I couldn't fully understand their behaviors because it just didn't make sense, even the way they speak. Though some things did work like the setting, the use of narrative split over time which led to exposition of the characters' behaviors, however the problem comes in when there was no real sense of adventure.

The ending started to gain more mystery and complexity where it threw some darker elements--betrayal, deceit, death, murder even--and then pulls everything together towards a complicated and perplexed story. It feels as if the author got lazy and then simply ended it for the sake of getting the book out there. The mermaid twist throughout was the most intriguing thing about the whole story, which is something I'd like to know more.

03/02/2017

Finally, I finished it! And I barely made it.

Review to come.

Caroline says

I received a copy of this book through the Goodreads First Reads program.

The blurb for this book sounds amazing. Two best friends, one goes missing. And somehow mermaids are involved? Sign me up! I was so excited when I won a copy of this book from Goodreads I couldn't wait to start reading.

.... And then I started reading.

It was quickly apparent that this book was independently published. There were exclamation marks galore. There was very little set up to establish the relationships between Gwen and her boyfriend (which is sort of an essential plot point to the book!) and what set up we had to establish the relationship between Gwen and her now missing friend Emma leads me as the reader to believe Gwen really didn't even like Emma very much, making her reaction over Emma's disappearance a little overdramatic.

There's a section of the book which is suddenly told from Marcus' point of view in which he talks about having a "change of heart", however, we have never been in his head before, so his "change of heart" means nothing when we have nothing to compare it to.

This would have been a much more interesting book had it been told in dual POV's alternating between Gwen and Marcus. I mean, there really was no mystery as to what happened to Emma, so nothing we couldn't already figure out would have been given away.

Don't get me started on the maturity level of these characters either. Gwen and her fiancé are just out of high school and engaged. They are not mature enough to be engaged. Her parents should be dead set against her getting married based on what we're told about them, yet they fully support their precious snowflake in whatever she chooses to do. Including going on a date with another guy while she's still engaged to the first one. Sorry, no respect for cheaters.

There was some good in this book though. The mermaid lore was very unique and I wish it had been explored more. There actually was a twist at the end which almost makes me want to read the next book, but I'd rather just read a summary of the sequel unless it first ends up in the hands of a *really* good editor. Every once in a while there would be an especially poetic line, but overall the writing was very bland.

As for the pacing of this book, it was beyond slow. I kept waiting and waiting for something to happen. I knew the book was about mermaids, but it took forever for them to actually come into play.

Ultimately, I would not recommend this book to anyone. There is potential here, but first there need to be a bunch of re-writes/restructuring, and this needs to be put in the hands of a qualified editor. Plus a really good proofreader.

Also, I really hated Gwen.

NOTE: I really hate writing negative reviews, but I firmly believe in honesty, so I have to write what I honestly feel. I have great respect for anyone who can complete a book, they automatically earn 1 star for that. I hope my criticism can be taken objectively and be used to help the writer grow as an author.

Sarah says

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to author Amy Astorga.)

“Ever since we first met, I knew there was something special about you. It was like I found the missing piece to my soul. And I can’t bear the thought of letting you go.”

This was a YA fantasy story featuring mermaids.

I felt quite sorry for Gwendolyn in this story as she went through quite a lot, losing her best friend and then having to go through so much else. It was also hard for her to go through the problems she was having with her boyfriend, who she'd been with for several years.

The storyline in this was about Gwendolyn's life changing; her best friend disappearing, her relationship suddenly being on shaky ground, as well as the appearance of a handsome stranger. The pace in this was okay, although it did seem to take a long time for the mermaid storyline to really come to the surface. I did think that the mermaid thing was done pretty well though, and it wasn't your typical YA mermaid story.

The ending to this was quite surprising, and a bit of a cliff-hanger.

6.25 out of 10

Sirenita says

Beautiful! Amy is a force to be reckoned with :) I couldnt put this gem down!

R.K. Cowles says

After adding books to owned books[shelf goodreads provides] I lost ratings and review. Will attempt to add the review. Books won on goodreads giveaways that is missing review due to this are books I have enjoyed. On a later date I will attempt to remember what I have written about them and will rewrite them.

Sundara Gandhi says

Rating:2/5

Received this eBook in exchange for an honest review...so here it is. To be perfectly honest, this story about mermaids seemed intriguing and had potential too. But the book was not that great. It could have been written well. Words and sentence formation was mediocre. The characters was the most disappointing. Especially the female protagonist was shallow and so immature that after a point of time she was irritating to deal with. Also, it seemed like Astorga was trying too hard to please the readers with her characters. Like the heroine's parents being too lenient and the guys she dates being too forgiving and too willing to see things in her way.

If only there was a good set of characters to go with the storyline, this book would have been great.

Pete Tarsi says

The book description on the Amazon product page for this book makes the following claim: “A young adult urban fantasy that will redefine mermaids.” I haven’t hidden my love for mermaids, so that bold statement was all it took for me to download a copy of this book onto my Kindle. Unbeknownst to author Amy Astorga, I issued her a secret challenge: I’ve read YA mermaid fiction, so show me what you’ve got. I dare you to redefine mermaids for someone who has already seen them in a variety of ways and even has his own twist on the mermaid tale. Or tail.

At the end of the book—which was nearly impossible to put down most of the time—when I fully understood how mermaids were being used symbolically, I breathlessly put down my Kindle. My jaw was dropped wide open. The author’s claim was not only backed up, but I’m still reeling from all the implications of it. I maintain a spoiler-free policy in my reviews, so I cannot discuss this further other than to say that I strongly recommend this book if you want a truly fresh new take on mermaid mythology.

Weird review this is, starting at the end of the book, right? So let’s go to the beginning—the book’s Prologue. Gwendolyn is trying to make her way into the hot new club in town, trying to find Marcus, the owner of said club, and give him a message of deep importance. The urgency is palpable in Gwendolyn’s first-person narration. This message seems to have serious consequences for these (and other) characters, but their context is unknown. Starting with such mystery and urgency is a great way to hook a reader from the get-go, but then to start Chapter One with the statement “Seven Months Earlier” compelled me to keep reading. I needed to know what the message meant and all the build-up to it. Placing (what turns out to be) a near climactic moment at the start of the book is a bold and risky move, but when done well, it has tremendous payoff. Here, it’s done well.

The initial incident that sets the plot events in motion is the disappearance of Gwendolyn’s somewhat estranged best friend Emma. Because Gwendolyn has spent much more time with her boyfriend Ryan (who has just proposed marriage), Emma feels like the third wheel. However, Emma visits to gloat about the boy she’s just met—the new love of her life—who has already given her a unique pearl necklace and professed love after very limited time knowing each other. Gwendolyn scoffs at this, under the guise of looking out for her friend, but Emma storms out anyway. Other than a phone message later, it’s the last Gwendolyn sees of Emma.

There are no clues to Emma's disappearance, and Gwendolyn reasonably becomes more and more withdrawn. Thus, her relationship with Ryan suffers. Also, Gwendolyn is experiencing a bizarre calling toward the ocean, where she meets—and is saved by—the attractive and enigmatic Marcus. She's drawn to him, and so starts a love triangle often found in YA literature, but it really works because of the chemistry between Gwendolyn and Marcus, particularly his protectiveness of her for reasons she doesn't understand. Gwendolyn musters up all the internal strength she has to remain faithful to Ryan, but he has been drifting—perhaps towards someone else.

So where do mermaids fit in? That, dear readers, I will keep as a mystery in this review. Just know that their inclusion is worth reading towards. There are countless stories out there about mermaids changing their tails into legs—or searching for ways to do so. But the tagline of this book quite succinctly says something very different: "What mermaids lack that humans possess isn't legs. It's a soul." It's a powerful statement, and it speaks to the book's underlying theme of souls and morality. Sure, humans have a soul, but we also make choices that show either the light or the darkness in those souls.

None of the characters in this book can be described in lights and darks—only shades of gray like real, flawed people. Let's face it, we all have flaws, we have all hurt people—either accidentally or intentionally—and we all have the power to make choices both good and bad. Add that to emotionally charged situations involving relationships, where real people have been known not to always act rationally, and what you get—or what author Amy Astorga gives us—is a story super-charged with conflict both internal and external, packaged in a way that makes it impossible to put down right until the ending.

And that ending is a shocker! No spoilers here, but I found the ending thoroughly satisfying in what it says about human nature. It's unexpected, and it leaves things wide open for the next part...which I can't wait to dive into.

This book has a new and darker twist on mermaids, complex characters and themes, rich details, and one heck of a well-earned cliffhanger. There's no doubt that I have fallen for *Waters of Change: Gwendolyn Falling* and am giving it a full FIVE STARS.

Alice says

Special thanks to the author for providing me with a free copy of this book.

Coming into this book, I really thought i wasn't going to like it. But damn! i was proven WRONG! I admit to that! This was the first book that i've read that dealt with Fantasy and mermaids & mermen. I was swooning over Marcus throughout the story. And what girl doesn't love an attractive, yet mysterious stranger? After i finished the story, I immediately came on here to see if the next book was out and was disappointed that it's wasn't because, **AMY, you left me wanting more!** I'm looking forward to the next book in the series and seriously cannot wait!

Christy says

One of the best books from a new and upcoming author. Mrs. Astorga kept the story alive without making this a trashy story. Perfect for young adults! This book kept me on the edge of my seat, looking forward to

the next one.

Mikaela Misti-Taylor says

Slight annoyance

I totally love this book. It's a very unique take on merfolk. I am rather annoyed by the prologue because the whole thing is repeated further along in the story. Personally, I'd remove the prologue and just let the story unfold on its own. It's annoying to read the same thing twice.

Melissa says

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis.)

I read this book in a night so I think that says everything! :)

It wasn't perfect writing and at some points the main character Gwen was a little annoying, but all in all it was an originally, unique take on a story about mermaid/mermen.

Can't wait to read more.
