



The Widow Vanishes

Grace Callaway

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The Widow Vanishes Grace Callaway A Lady in Peril

A disastrous marriage leaves Annabel Foster buried in her dead husband's debt and at the mercy of a menacing cutthroat. Faced with death or selling her body, she makes an unthinkable choice...

A Scotsman with a Past

Haunted by his past, Scottish soldier William McLeod seeks forgetfulness in the arms of a tempting wench. What begins as a night of lust, however, transforms into desire beyond his wildest fantasies...

One Night of Passion

Insatiable hunger flares between the pair even as an evil enemy seeks to destroy them both. Can one night of passion lead to their salvation and love forevermore?

The Widow Vanishes is a novella (approximately 36,000 words) and had a preview release in the 2014 Scandalous Summer Nights anthology.

The Widow Vanishes Details

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Author : Grace Callaway

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From Reader Review The Widow Vanishes for online ebook

Angela says

I have loved all of Grace Callaway's books and this one is no exception. This is a knight in shining armor story. You can imagine Will riding up on his trusty steed to save the day. Will has a sense of honor and does what he can to protect others. Both Will and Annabel have suffered from bad past relationships and are hesitant to let themselves be vulnerable again. Will and Annabel each make sacrifices for what they believe is right for the other. Theirs is a sweet story (there are some sexy parts as well) that will make you smile. A secondary character is Will's brother, Alaric. He seemed to be thoughtless and uncaring - he steals Will's former girlfriend but realizes it was a mistake. By the end of the story you realize that Alaric is not all that he seems. I would love to see him as a hero in one of the continuing stories in this new series. Also there are a couple of cameos from the Mayhem in Mayfair series...if you have not read those be sure to pick them up, they are also fantastic. (Originally reviewed in the box set "Scandalous Summer Nights".)

Lovetoread says

The Widow Vanishes by Grace Callaway was one of the stories in a box set I purchased, Scandalous Summer Nights, which has seven different stories by seven authors. The novella, The Widow Vanishes, is the Prequel to the Heart of Enquiry Series by Grace Callaway.

The premise of the story centers around Annabel Foster, our heroine, because of a disastrous marriage has left her buried in her deceased husband's debt and at the mercy of the evil cutthroat, owner of a gambling hell/brothel her dead husband owed money. Faced with death or selling her body to pay her husband's gambling debts, Annabel makes an unthinkable choice to sell the only thing left that she has, herself. Our Hero of this story is a former soldier, William McLeod, who is haunted by his past. He is a Scotsman who works as a guard, strong arm, for hire. He receives Annabel as a bonus for a job he does for a gaming hell owner. Seeking forgetfulness in the arms of a tempting wench for a night of lust. But the night will transform into desire beyond his wildest fantasies when he meets Annabel. Attraction flares between the pair even as an evil enemy seeks to destroy them both. Their amazing night together changes both of them and will lead William to seek to rescue the woman who doesn't expect to be rescued by anyone.

I really enjoyed this short story and can not wait until the next book in the series is published. I would rate the sensual level a 9. Highly recommend this romance.

Juliana Philippa says

Over a month has passed since I read the book, so I don't remember too many of the specifics. I do remember that the hero and heroine were a bit annoying; the book started off quite promising, but they became attached to each other very quickly and it turned sappy and corny FAR too quickly for my taste. Granted it's a novella, so there's not much word space to spread it out, but at this point I've read several fantastic historical romance novellas, so I know that it can be done.

While I've read some good Grace Callaway books in this series, this isn't one of them: skip it.

Historical Romance Novellas That I Do Recommend:

- * *A Kiss For Midwinter* by Courtney Milan
- * *Her Christmas Earl* by Anna Campbell
- * *Kisses, She Wrote* by Katharine Ashe
- * *A Wallflower Christmas* by Lisa Kleypas

Lubnaa says

Wow! I loved it!! I'm usually wary when it comes to novellas because not many authors can fit a good story with believable plot and character development in such a short amount of pages. In my experience, Courtney Milan seems to be the best HR author who does this form of writing justice. There are other authors who sometimes get it right, but CM somehow excels at it. I'm now adding Grace Callaway along with CM. She did a phenomenal job with this novella. I was able to experience a range of emotions through the novella. The supporting characters such as Alaric, Gavin and Percy, were included effortlessly and didn't take the spotlight away from the main couple. The romance itself was not forced. The story was action packed without detracting from the romance. This novella basically had everything a full length novel has. The beauty of it is that's everything flowed naturally and it didn't feel overpacked. Essentially, I felt like I had read a novel instead of a novella. The only author who's made me feel this way before was Courtney Milan (*Unlocked*).

Anyway, this was really well written and had a unique plot that most authors wouldn't have dared explored. I'm excited to read more about Alaric because there is obviously more to him. It'll be interesting to read about the brothers' relationship from Alaric's POV.

Daniella says

I rarely try out new writers because most of the time, I find myself getting burned by them. That's why it came as a shock to me when I started reading Grace Callaway's *The Widow Vanishes* immediately after rage quitting Tessa Dare's *A Lady by Midnight*. Normally, I'd stick to what I call "safe reads" after a bad book--those written by tried-and-tested novelists like Lisa Kleypas, Amanda Quick, and Lorraine Heath--to drain my anger away. But I decided to take a risk with this one.

And it paid off. Because this novella is a gem, and the writer deserves to be discovered by the historical romance world. I loathe the fact that this only has 71 ratings, and it's my hope that more people will try this out after this review.

First, I have to make it clear that **the book was not flawless**. In fact, I found the prose too simplistic at times, making me feel like I was reading a story intended for children or teens, rather than an adult. There were also some instances when I had to roll eyes at the storytelling, such as:

Annabel's insides turned as **gooey as a treacle tart** fresh from the oven.

And:

In two weeks, she'd fallen **head over slippers in love** with William McLeod.

"Gooey as treacle tart?" "Head over slippers in love?" That's not really my idea of wit.

Moreover, the lack of dialogue failed to give the story depth, and what little dialogue it had seemed rather odd and flat. The story elements were also introduced in a disorganised way; the conflicts were injected at unusual times, the plot lacked a smooth structure, and the characterisation were inconsistent at certain points in the story. For example, Annabel's eyes were described as a shade of violent at the start and near the end, but in the middle they were characterised as amethyst. Also, Will kept on going back and forth from "Bella" to "Annabel" when talking about the heroine. I didn't like the fact that Annabel kept on referring to Will as "McLeod" even at the end. And oh, the latter part was kind of anticlimactic, too.

These flaws are a testament to the writer's lack of experience. So why did I end up giving it three glowing stars, you ask? Well, because I found that the book's good points outweighed the bad ones.

The plot, despite its flaws, was very original, interesting and well-executed. Normally, I would've been put off by the prospect of the heroine being a prostitute--because I hate prostitution themes--but Ms. Grace Callaway managed to pull it off brilliantly. I admit that **it was courageous for a starting writer to take on a risky premise;** even the best ones have a hard time managing it to the readers' satisfaction. I won't spoil the story, but believe me when I say that everything made sense in the end.

In addition, the characters were very likeable. Annabel frustrated me a bit near the end, but she was generally likeable throughout the book. And Will... Oh, God, he was delicious. Extremely honourable and kind, he was the perfect hero.

Well... *Too* perfect, in fact, and sometimes bordering on being unnatural. But hey, we *are* talking about Romancelandia here, so I don't think I should complain.

Overall, I liked this book. **Ms. Grace Callaway showed promise, and I'm excited to read more of her works.** I didn't like Alaric, though, so I might skip his story. He was just beyond redemption for me, especially after his betrayal of his brother.

Gilgamesha says

I have to be careful with Callaway books because some of her books are too explicit and not to my taste...but one thing you can count on for her books is original plots....I enjoyed this novella thoroughly. One of my favorites. Its so hard to connect with the characters in these short books and only a few can pull off true character development in a few pages but Callaway manages it beautifully. Annabel's tenacity, fortitude, and craftiness to evade her fate and McLeod. Sometimes I laughed out loud at McLeod's frustration when she keeps outwitting him. McLeod again is the typical Callaway hero....I love him...endearing and completely smitten and helpless in the face of his feelings for Annabel. I really liked the development of their relationship from sexy erotic to tender and heart wrenchingly beautiful. The scene when she walks in on him while he is naked in the bed with glasses on and reading a book is right out of my fantasies. This book is when Alaric, one of my favorite Callaway heroes, is introduced. I loved loved loved this book. Definitely recommend it.

Al Del says

Sweet and sexy HR read. Will is adorable.

Julie says

The Widow Vanishes by Grace Callaway is a 2014 publication.

Annabel's husband left her in serious debt and now she has no other recourse but to work off the debt as a prostitute.

William McLeod returns from the war wishing for a peaceful life, but that is not to be. After doing a job for the man Annabel is indebted to, William is given his choice of a prostitute as payment. William wants to forget his pain and spending a night with a lusty woman just might give him some reprieve.

Annabel finds William to be quite unlike anything she was expecting. Their one night together takes an unforeseen turn which has William hopping mad, but leads him to the truth about the fiery Annabel. Honor prompts him to become her protector as he looks for a way to erase her debts.

This is a short prequel novella and it got off to a very good start. The story line has a combo of danger, tender moments, and hot steamy love scenes. I liked how William stepped up to the plate for Annabel although he doesn't really know her and has some heavy trust issues. The only issue I had was with the sex scenes. Not because they were steamy, but because the prose was so flowery. I haven't read that kind of prose since the 1990's. ("His beast" - "Her petals") Other than that, the story was fast paced, with good character development, which is hard to do in shorter stories sometimes. I think the book is a solid lead into the new series. Over all this one gets 3 stars

Monique says

Overall, this was an entertaining, easy read. I liked the H/h well enough, especially considering the mutual appreciation and respect between the two of them. Annabel was a woman that one could relate to on some levels, and Will was a man that many women would want, with his courage and kind, but straightforward demeanor (Okay - he was also hot).

And the hero's sinister (and also hot) brother Alaric was interesting enough that I MIGHT be tempted to read about him in the future.

However, the thing that threw me off was the mixing of old-fashion prose in the telling of the story, with modern (and sometimes crude) vocabulary in regards to the sex scenes. For example, there were many uses of the word 'twas' and then we get a 'p***y clench'...LOL. It seems to me that if the author was going for a more authentic narrative, using more old-fashion words - like manhood, for example - would fit the time frame better. Hell - even c***k once or twice would work, in moderation.

Anyway...the profuse use of c***k, c***t, and p***y grated my nerves, and cheapened the reading experience for me. I know it's hard, but someone, somewhere, has got to find and/or make up a new vocabulary here! If it seems that I'm going on and on about the sex in the story...well - it did take up a large percentage of the book, so...

Sheila Melo says

THE WIDOW VANISHES by Grace Callaway: This novella is the prequel to Callaway's new Heart of Enquiry series. This new series is a spin off of Callaway's Mayhem in Mayfair series. For fans of the Mayhem in Mayfair series, there are appearances by favorite characters but new readers won't be lost.

THE WIDOW VANISHES is the story Annabel Foster a young widow who sell herself to pay off her feckless husband's gambling debts. On her first night she is chosen by William McLeod. William is a Scotsman who works as a guard for hire. He receives Annabel as a bonus for a job he does for a gaming hell owner. Their amazing night together changes both of them and leads William to seek to rescue the woman who doesn't expect to be rescued by anyone.

I really love the vibrancy of Callaway's characters. They are strong and independent people with a strong sexuality. Her books always have graphic and intense sex scenes, but they are not gratuitous. The characters always are emotional and intense people. I loved Will and Bella together. She is determined to be strong and recover from her weaknesses and Will is a very honorable man.

We are also introduced to Will's brother, the Duke of Strathaven. I hope we see more of him in future books because his story must be a good one.

Rating: 4.25

kelly mitchell says

Good short

Good characters -unusual plot -happy ending that is really a new start. This is the other side of Victorian London.

Michelle says

What a lovely story! I really loved Annabel and Will. It didn't occur to me that Will worked for Gavin Hunt (Her Wanton Wager) and I totally remembered him from when he was a bodyguard for Charity in Her Prodigal Passion. I didn't make the connection until Will went to see Hunt. I love how Grace Callaway brings character from her books with surprise appearances in other ones. We get to see Hunt and Percy which was really nice. Then a surprise visit from Alaric, Will's brother, who was as arrogant as ever. By the way, Alaric's late wife, Laura really screwed up both brothers. Like seriously messed them both up in different ways. I'm so happy that Will found Annabel, by unusual means. I love seeing inside the love story between Annabel and Will because they seemed so happy in The Duke Who Knew Too Much so it is wonderful to see how everything started for them.

Iza says

It's not the book of the year, but honestly, for a novella, it wasn't bad at all, on the contrary. Not as hot as I'd hoped, but certainly steamier than your usual historical romance.

It's an introduction to the series, obviously, and I'm really really looking forward to reading about McLeod's brother ^^

Claudia says

This is another novella by Grace Callaway and although I normally don't like novellas, this was nearly perfect. The pacing, the characters and of course the relationship and story development well balanced. It was a joy to read

Lori says

A short, but super spicy historical romance that is set after the events of "Her Prodigal Passion," the last book in the Mayhem in Mayfair series.

Will McLeod, who is first mentioned in "Her Wanton Wager," is tempted by the looks and seemingly innocent disposition of Annabel Foster. After a night of passionate lovemaking, they both come to different conclusions. He wants to set an exclusive arrangement and she wants to run as far away as she could. Both characters are extremely likable, with each having a rough patch in their lives they both come to terms with in the end. As you'd expect in a novella, the events in this book move fast, but the story is smooth and did not feel rushed. I love that we got to see characters from the Mayhem in Mayfair series (my favs Gavin and Percy, love them!), even though it was a brief encounter.

Overall, I love Grace Callaway's books! She writes the perfect amount of drama, suspense, action, romance, and smoking hot love scenes. Not to mention that her characters are sexy, charming, witty, and strong which I find to be irresistible if not entertaining.
