



All the Tales We Tell

Annie Cosby

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"... a darkly romantic beginning to what promises to be an unusual contemporary YA fantasy series."

- Serena Chase, USA Today

When Cora's mother whisks the family away for the summer, Cora must decide between forging her future in the glimmering world of second homes where her parents belong, or getting lost in the bewitching world of the locals and the mystery surrounding a lonely old woman who claims to be a selkie creature—and who probably needs Cora more than anyone else.

Through the fantastical tales and anguished stories of the batty Mrs. O'Leary, as well as the company of a particularly gorgeous local boy called Ronan, Cora finds an escape from the reality of planning her life after high school. But will it come at the cost of alienating Cora's mother, who struggles with her own tragic memories?

As the summer wanes, it becomes apparent that Ronan just may hold the answer to Mrs. O'Leary's tragic past—and Cora's future.

(Note: This book was formerly published under the title "Learning to Swim.")

All the Tales We Tell Details

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From Reader Review All the Tales We Tell for online ebook

Aira Cabrera says

Copy provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Cora is stuck in an overly pink house for the summer. It's not exactly her dream summer. There is a beach nearby, but she can't swim, so no plus points for that. Cora spends her summer hanging out with snobby kids her age and talking to a strange old woman.

I didn't like any of the kids Cora spent her time with. They were all full of themselves and clueless. Cora wasn't clueless, she was just confused. Her parents (mostly her mother) have plans for her future, but she had other plans. I understood her need to take a break before going to college, but I understood her parents as well. They were just worried, and they wanted a future that was secure for her.

I really liked Rory. He was presumptuous of Cora's personality at first, but he redeemed himself. I couldn't blame him either, because all of the kids who lived within Cora's vicinity weren't exactly some of the nicest people.

I really liked the feel of this book. They lived near the beach, and I felt relaxed while reading it. There were secrets uncovered that led to Cora making decisions that I didn't agree with. I hope everything will be fixed in the next book!

books are love says

Love this book. so so sweet. Love Rory. I know that Owen was trying to be a nice guy but you seriously became a total douche. Rory though was perfect. At first his hangups over class took over but as he and Cora got to know each other they were so perfect together. I beg you please Ms. Cosby please...let them be together in the end of this series.

A light fun sweet read in which the plot and the writing will keep you entranced as you learn about love, loss, life and such fantastical things like selkies. Cora is brought to the ocean for the summer. Her mom trying to get over a daughter's death has kept Cora on a short leash and has tried to manipulate her life to protect her. Her dad is trying to give her a life of ease and comfort while keeping up with the Joneses. Cora wants none of this. The problem is she doesn't know what she wants and she does know she wants to figure it out. Too afraid to stand up to her parents she goes along with what they want.

that is all about to change as she wanders on the beach and meets Mrs. O'leary. A lonely woman with fantastical tales and deep insight into others. A women ready to go but where I cannot tell you because it will take away from the story. Each day she regals Cora with stories of the ocean. As they embark on a friendship Cora also meets Rory who Mrs. O'leary calls Ronan which means little seal. Rory is the working class boy who loves to swim. He challenges Cora to see herself and look at herself and find what she is and who she wishes to be. He also turns out to be Cora's first love and I believe her match made in heaven. Rory i think thinks that as well. They come from different worlds but help each other find peace and harmony. Each finds

a meaning for love and who they are. Rory though is off to Ireland and Cora is off to wherever her parents what her to be.

Cora does begin to find herself and stand up to her parents but that doesn't mean she will get what she wants. she turns from a spoiled princess to a young woman with the help of Mrs. O'leary and Rory. Rory learns about love and life through Cora and vice versa. The two fall for each other but with them both leaving what will happen is anyone's guess especially with the secret Cora holds.

A sweet love story that shows discovery of one's self and that sometimes love means letting go and hoping you find one another again. I hope these two do. Look forward to the next chapter in their story.

Bubble Bath Books says

Sissy says: Learning to Swim has layers of backstory, memories, and tragedies, and it was quite engaging--I read it in a couple of days and was kept up at night trying to make sure I had everything straight in my head. My favorite character was Mrs. O'Leary. She is a complex individual who cannot be labeled as good or bad. The Irish folklore she introduces is fascinating, but full of riddles and hidden meanings. Mrs. O'Leary, known as Lia (short for Cordelia) by the townfolk, has episodes of warmth and lucidity mixed with outright lunacy.

Bubby says: I had a hard time getting into the story of Learning to Swim. It came off as the typical YA summer romance novel. There was some teenage drinking among the rich and fabulous set, some Romeo and Juliet-type issues with the rich girl and the "townie" boy and all the accompanying angst that one would expect. However. The story started dragging me in. Before I knew it, I actually cared about these people and their lives. The thing that pulled me in most was Mrs. O'Leary and her stories. I figured out who (or should I say what) she was pretty early on and it just got better from there. Read full review at www.bubblebathbooks.net

Terri says

It Happened One Summer...

1st, as always let me say, I read / listened to this book in audio format via audible.com. I love audio books & get them whenever I can. Audiobooks offer proper pronunciations & tons of excitement with all the voices. I tend to absorb audio better & the stories stay with me.

OMG, What a great story! Annie Cosby drew me into this story from the very beginning. What looked like a summer with a bunch of rich kids turned in to a folk tale. I loved this story. I wouldn't have guessed the ending, not in a million years. All thru the story, with all the different twists, I thought by a crazy woman, turned out to be real! She wasn't crazy after all.

A Young Adult Romance / Folk Tale. The narrator in the audio version, Wendy Pitts did a great job too! The voices of the teens were spot on! I loved Mrs O'Leary's voice & Cora's voice. Good job ladies! This book was so good, I listened to it all in one sitting!

Lexi says

Originally written for Book Bliss book blog. I received a copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased and honest review

Review: 4 stars

General: This book was wonderfully engaging from the first page to the last. It is filled with not only a strong backstory in mystery and plenty of heartache and attention grabbing plot elements that sucked me in from the start. I love that it was about Selkie's as it's not as done now and allowed for many original concepts. My only real compliant was the characters felt very stock. I still loved the book and will get into why but felt in this instance the I would have loved characters that I haven't seen in many other YA book or movie.

This was a beautiful coming of age story at it's roots and it was wonderfully done. I connected quickly with Cora and found myself curious about the Selkies almost more than she was at some points. I love being that drawn in. The story was well written and the plot itself was perfectly paced. The descriptions were light and easy and took you right into the story from the first page to the last.

Characters: Cora- Cora was the traditional YA heroine and for that I would have liked a little something extra from her. She's still believable of course and easy to connect with I just like a unique heroine. She's independent (almost wreckless but it works), caring and very teen in her reactions to things such as the summer announcement and many interactions with Mrs. O'Leary.

Ronan- Ronan is a mystery more than anything else at this point. Which I respect because it drew me in more but it's also often done in the YA world so for that point it seemed overdone. His relationship with Cora was sweet to watch form. He was caring and you could really sense his feelings for her.

Fiction_TheNewReality says

Review: First, a HUGE THANK YOU to the lovely Annie Cosby for providing me with this ARC for review.

Characters: I went back and forth with how I felt towards the main character, Cora. Sometimes I liked her, and then at other times, she really annoyed me. The moments where Cora annoyed me were generally under circumstances where her stereotypical rich-girl characteristics came out. Cora grew up not with complete and total wealth, but she never did have to worry about money. I felt like her problems were a lot more petty compared to say, conflicts that her friend Rory encountered. However, there were times when I found Cora to be a logical and respectable teenage girl. For someone who had just graduated from high school, Cora wasn't a big party girl, and she didn't fool around with guys. For this, I gave Cora a lot of respect. She is a protagonist that you will (mostly) root for. And then there's Rory, Cora's love interest in this novel.

Sweet, handsome, athletic, smart and hardworking? YES PLEASE. I adored Rory! I definitely want to see more of his story in the books in the Hearts Out of Water series.

Storyline/PLOT: Learning to Swim moved at a pretty good pace. I really enjoyed reading about Cora's new life on the small island, and while some parts were in danger of being mundane, it never did reach that point. Unlike many other novels, I did not find myself skimming through the pages, and at one point, I just couldn't

put it down! I only wish that Annie could have added MORE of this Irish-folklore aspect! There were hints of it throughout, but at the end.. BAM. Watch out, you won't know what's coming for you! Learning to Swim ends on a great cliffhanger, and I have high expectations for the next book.

Writing: The writing and dialogue in this book is just adorable! Annie did a really good job with the descriptions, and making the dialogue sound realistic. I think Annie is definitely a very talented writer, and I look forward to seeing her talent grow as she writes more and more.

Cora Tea Party Princess says

Five Words: Awesome, magical, lovely, lessons, relationships.

Lisa says

First off, thank you soooo much to Annie Cosby, who sent me this copy to read!

This was an interesting read. On the one hand, I thought I had it totally all figured out, and I knew exactly what was going to happen, and on the other hand, I didn't trust myself, and had to keep reading rather feverishly to find out if I was right. That is a good mix. I like that the book sort of fed me little clues, but I didn't put everything together the right way, not until I had already reached the end. I liked that it surprised me, even though the end of the book was one of the possibilities I had predicted. It was a cosy sort of ending, one that I felt I had moved toward without knowing.

The characters were well developed, the main ones developed the best of course. I would have liked a little bit more depth into Owen, as he was a character that really interested me. But the main character was completely believable. And I want more details on Rory/Ronan!!

All in all, a very good read, and one that I will be keeping on the shelf while I wait for the sequel. HURRY UP ANNIE! Just joking!

Heather A says

I received a copy from Netgalley.

I came across this title while browsing through Netgalley, and it sounded interesting, though I've not had good experience with YA books based on water creature mythology. I started reading this one as soon as I received the approval email...and loved it right off.

Even from the first 10% I knew this would be a five starer. The writing was vivid, the characters engaging and fascinating, I loved Cora right from the start, so easy for me to identify with and understand where she's coming from. All the characters were well put together and fleshed out. Even the ones I didn't like.

There was an intriguing little mystery in the plot, even though I figured out where that bit of the story was going before half way through it didn't matter because the story telling was so good. I have a weakness for

small towns by the sea setting, and this one captured that setting perfectly.

Excellently written and very emotional through out. A fantastic story, very touching, and even made me cry.

So a huge thanks to Netgalley and the publisher for granting my request to view this title. I loved it and can't wait for the second in the series.

Majanka says

Book Review originally published here: <http://www.iheartreading.net/book-review-learning-to-swim/>

Learning to Swim is the first book in a new series, and it's off to a good start.

When Cora's mother forces her to go on summer holiday, Cora thinks her summer is doomed. Her parents belong in a world of parties, wealth, and the elite. While Cora spends half the time in that world, she also takes some time to visit the world of the locals on her holiday, and to discover more about mythology and folklore than she ever thought possible, thanks to the batty Mrs. O'Leary. But Mrs. O'Leary isn't the only local Cora meets. There's also Ronan, a gorgeous and mysterious boy. But Cora's world is miles away from Ronan's, and even the magic of summer may not succeed in bringing them together.

Cora was an okay character. She had a mind of her own, but she was also thoughtful and considerate, at least in as far as a teenager can be any of those things. Ronan was fun too, everything one would look for in a summer fling. But the character that really intrigued me was Mrs. O'Leary. Her story were amazing. I loved the folklore, the mystery, the ancient mythology, all mixed together. And of course, Mrs. O'Leary's personality was entertaining as well.

The writing was great. Dialogue and descriptions were spot on. While the story had a slow start, the pacing picked up after a few chapters, and I was impressed by how endearing the story was, and how much I began to like the characters.

Tonyalee says

Book received for free by the author via YA Insider for an honest review

Not having heard of LEARNING TO SWIM before going in, I had little to no expectations. I think this is both a good thing, yet a bad thing, considering there were times when I couldn't make heads or tails of the genre of the book, and the direction of the story. Is it contemporary? Fantasy? Is it something in between?

That being said, this read more of a coming of age story to me. With the main character, Cora, figuring some things out with her future, boys & school and also learning some hard facts about herself, her "friends" and family and where she comes from. All the while, we have stories of selkies and other folklore. I thought these stories were woven into real life lessons and the metaphors were brilliant. I loved the scenes with Ms. O'leary.

As far as the romance goes, Rory was hard to like at first. It's one of those situations where a person accuses

someone of doing the thing they are doing and it's frustrating. However, the few scenes that Rory and Cora had together were rather sweet, and I loved how they got to know each other.

Now the ending left me slightly confused. It ended on quite the cliffhanger, yet it felt incomplete. Still, I am curious to see how the ending will affect Rory and Cora's future, both together and individually.

All in all, Learning to Swim was a cute read!

Fida Islaih says

I started reading. It had no action, and was slow. Taking it's time to set up the story. For us to know the characters well. Then I got distracted, didn't even think of it, didn't rush back like I usually do. I picked it up again because I needed something to do.

Like I said it was just introducing the characters. But bits here and there gave some action. Not until past the halfway mark. I guess that happens in a series but this is the first series I felt that, this slow.

At halfway and after is when the relationships really started to form and give the action I wanted in a story.

I can relate to her sensitivity. I love her bravery. Her want to travel. I don't like Owen but I do love her relationship with Rory. And the mystery of the old lady that's unfolding? I love how she (Cora) finally found her way to her mom and vice versa. Then the old lady died! I want to read the next book to find out about it and more about Rory.

Ashly Lynn says

5 Stars

Cora is dragged along by her parents to a summer of big houses and rich parties so the family can do some healing, but Cora doesn't think big houses and parties are a way to solve their problems. Will Cora come around and finally accept her future as a college student at the fancy school her parents picked for her, or will she be smitten by the locals and opt for the life of travel she's been dying to pursue. Will the batty old Mrs. O'Leary help guide her life in the direction it should take, or is she just a crazy woman spinning crazy tales about Irish folklore and selkies? And, what's up with the local boy with the beautiful brown eyes, Rory? How are him and Mrs. O'Leary connected?

I was provided with a free copy of this book for an *honest* review.

This story grabbed me from the start, yet, at the same time, it took me a little while to get into. I think it's because I had to read this on my computer, and I'm not a huge fan of reading books on a computer screen. **Still, once I got to 48%, I went on a binge and stayed up to finish the book until the early morning.**

Where should I start with it then? **I guess I'll start with Cora. I really liked her character.** I did find her to be a bit whiney and constantly woe-is-me at times, but I honestly thought that *worked*. She's a young adult trying to figure out what she wants to do with her life and is in a constant battle with her parents over it. Her

angst made sense. **Plus, I loved her humor. This book caused me to laugh out loud a few times.**

She was definitely the character I thought that had the development. I could have used a bit more on everyone else, except Mrs. O'Leary. She was tackled pretty well too. **One of my favorite aspects was that there was no real distinction between the rich and locals in Cora's speech.** I liked that, even though Cora recognized the difference, being one of the other didn't make anyone automatically a bad person. Cosby did a good job of portraying the idea that people are people and it's their words and actions that make them unpleasant and not the amount of money in their pockets.

This book also made me cringe a few times...in a good way! There was a lot of tension in this story, and I found myself eager to find out what was going to happen next. And, there was tons of horribly uncomfortable tension between Cora and Rory that I was loving it. Those two were definitely giving me some feels.

I also loved the premise. I wanted a little bit more of the lore and folktales, as I'm pretty unfamiliar with what the legends were. Cosby's writing was wonderfully descriptive to the point that I could clearly imagine what was going on, but I wanted more background on the legends—mainly because I found it all so fascinating. I'm hoping the second book will touch more on all of that.

And, that cliffhanger made me itching to continue the story. The ending was a little confusing, but mostly just intriguing and open for possibility. Anything could happen at this point.

A couple other things that I haven't already mentioned, however, kept me from rating this 5 stars. **There were a few minor grammatical errors scattered throughout the story.** They weren't that distracting, though and didn't take anything away from the story. **However, there were a few times that the plot didn't connect, so that's the main reason for the 4-star rating.** These inconsistencies were nothing terribly damaging to the plot and were pretty easy to ignore, but a few bothered me a little more than I can brush under the rug. They were small and could have easily been fixed with another round of proofing.

Regardless of these minor complaints, I did really enjoy this story and am planning on reading the next book in the series as well as checking out Cosby's other series.

I definitely recommend checking out this book if YA Paranormal Romance is something that interests you. I also recommend it if you're intrigued by Irish folklore. This book was fun to read, and kept me hooked until the last page. It was never boring and always enjoyable

Review originally published on my Wordpress blog Dreaming Through Literature.

Jamie (TheRebelliousReader) says

Thanks to the author for sending me a copy in exchange for a honest review!

4 stars. I really enjoyed this. Like a lot. This book was such a breath of fresh air and I thought it was a lot of fun. It's a light and cute story of self discovery.

The writing was really good, very easy to get into and the setting was drew me in immediately. From the very first time that Cora goes to Mrs. O'Leary's house I was drawn in.

The family dynamics in this was one of my favorite things because it felt so real. While Cora's family was nowhere near being a perfect family, they did really love each other despite the issues they went through and I appreciated that. I also loved the Irish folklore that was incorporated into this, it gave the novel a different feel and tone and I thought that was fun. It was unlike anything I'd read and kept me intrigued. The whole thing with Selkies was just really fascinating to me. I also grew to really like our main protagonist, Cora along with the other characters.

Cora started off as someone I just could not stand. She was selfish and whiny and overall just annoying but by the end of the novel she had gone through such a great character development that I found myself rooting for her. I liked that through the people she met she became a better person and also found the courage to tell her parents that she wanted to just live her life her way. Her friendship with Mrs. O'Leary was so wonderful and was the highlight of the novel for me because Mrs. O'Leary was a really great character and was my favorite.

Rory was great. He started off as a bit of a jerk but by the end of the book I had grown to care for him as well. I think my only thing about him is that I feel like there is still so much I don't know about him and with that ending I'm interested to see what it is.

Overall, this was a lot of fun and I'm really glad that I read it. Plus, that ending was a good cliffhanger. I'd definitely recommend it if you're looking for something a little bit out of the norm.

Katie Grady says

OMG GUYS. READ. THIS. BOOK. it catches your attention because, well, there's nothing really like it out there. with a cliff hanger that leaves you begging for the next one to be out already, you find yourself rereading everything to make sure you have it down. cosby write with a sort of.....Madeline L' Engle feel and definitely does not dissapoint. reread factor of 10000000000000000 out of 5
