



The Long Walk Home

Will North

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When forty-three-year-old Fiona Edwards first sees the lanky backpacker striding up the lane toward her award-winning farmhouse bed-and-breakfast in the remote mountains of North Wales, she's puzzled. She's used to unexpected strangers, but few arrive on foot. The man to whom she opens her door is middle-aged, unshaven, sweat-soaked . . . and arrestingly handsome. What neither of them knows at that moment is that their lives are about to change forever.

American Alec Hudson has carried the ashes—and the memory—of his late ex-wife, Gwynne, all the way from London's Heathrow Airport, honoring her request that he scatter them atop a mountain they had climbed together years before—the same brooding peak whose jagged cliffs rise to the sky from the back pastures of Fiona's farm. But the weather doesn't cooperate, and as Fiona and Alec wait for it to clear, they are drawn together by mutual loss, longing, and the miracle of love at midlife.

On the day he finally reaches the summit, Alec is caught in a vicious hailstorm. As he struggles to descend, he stumbles upon the body of a man he recognizes from a photograph at the farm: it is Fiona's ailing and reclusive husband, David, and he is close to death.

Will North's debut novel, *The Long Walk Home*, is a story about grief and hope, about love and loss, and about two people struggling with the agonizing complexities of fidelity—to a spouse, to a moral code, to each other, and to a passion neither thought would ever appear again. By turns lyrical and gripping, set amid a landscape of breathtaking beauty and unpredictable danger, this is a story you will not soon forget.

For news, reviews, and a visual walking tour, visit WillNorthOnline.com.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Long Walk Home Details

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Author : Will North

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From Reader Review The Long Walk Home for online ebook

Selene Gudino says

The Long Walk Home is a love-story novel, you kindda see what's all about comming, and if you are an avid reader probably it wont have annyyyy suspense. But when i read it I did almost thought of the characters as if they were real. Will North is a talented writter who provides with a nice story that you can read in a rainy weekend.

Leslie says

Okay, here is a book that I bought for the cover...the lovely, utterly British cover, complete with wellies, flowers, and a red door. When I started this book, however, it seemed very much like one of those *Good Housekeeping* stories that I would occasionally read when there was nothing else lying around...a long time ago. But excellent characterizations, sympathetic characters, and good writing changed my mind before too long.

Without going into a lot of detail, the story revolves around Alec, who has come to a very specific spot in Wales to scatter his late ex-wife's ashes from a mountain where they had years ago passed one of the best times of their marriage, and Fiona, the owner of a bed and breakfast where Alec stays in Wales. It seems trite to simply say they fall in love, but that's what happens; unfortunately, Fiona is in a marriage that seems nightmarish and both she and Alec are decent people. This is a rich and lovely story of how their relationship develops, and I really loved these people and a couple of the minor characters. Although he would be a bit too old for the role if this were made into a film, Sam Elliott kept coming to mind when it came to Alec...just easy and comfortable, like a familiar sweater, but with infinite sex appeal. :-)

Extra points to Will North for the descriptions of food and cooking in this book; dishes that wouldn't normally appeal to me, dishes with pork and lamb, made me salivate.

The only reason that I hesitate to give this book all 5 stars is the occasional over-explanation of the sexual relationships in the book. I'm truly not a prude, but there were certain scenes in the book that cried out for British restraint...and I would give the book 4 1/2 stars if that were possible. It was a lovely read, with wonderful, decent main characters, and I'm grateful to have stumbled upon it at my long-gone, much beloved bookstore, Locust Books.

Coco.V says

FREE on Amazon today (10/28/2017)!

Sílvia Soares says

Foi um daqueles livros que não me apetecia que terminasse.

Denise says

This book was just fantastic. I loved all of it... the setting, the characters, the way he set up the story... and the ending was absolutely perfect! I was so drawn into all of it that I wanted to keep reading and never stop, but then I was sad to be done with it. I would definitely read this book again, just to be reminded of how great it is!

Connie says

Alec came to a bed-and-breakfast in North Wales to fulfill his ex-wife's final wish. She wanted her ashes scattered at the top of Cadair Idris, a mountain near Dolgellau. Fionna managed the B&B while her ailing husband ran their family farm with lambs in the pasture. Alec and Fionna were both surprised at their instant connection, but obligations stood in their way. Both Alec and Fionna had been through recent painful experiences, and have nurturing, caring personalities. Love and passion war with duty and fidelity.

I loved the sense of place in this novel, especially as Alec helps a farmhand with the lambing, and gets caught in dangerous weather climbing Cadair Idris. The author is also a ghostwriter of non-fiction books under the name William Nothdurft, and I found that some of the most engaging parts of the book were about lambing, the mountains, medical emergencies, and cooking. The romantic elements were not quite as successful, and had a Nicholas Sparks feel to them. So this was a book that I liked, but did not love.

Arleen Williams says

Will North's *The Long Walk Home* is the kind of book you think about all day long and can't wait to get back to (even when you should be doing other things!). North's characters are complex and his descriptions of the Welsh countryside are breath-taking. He makes you want to pull on your hiking boots and head out on a quest of your own to find that sense of belonging that defines home. And in doing so, he invites you to cheer for the joy Alec and Fiona find together.

Joan says

Failed to live up to its promise. The author seemed intent on writing a description of every tree, path and boulder on the walk to the summit of the mountain which made me wonder if he was reading a walking guide.

I liked the fact that both characters were older and acted like adults, but the cheating was a definite no-no for me, especially as the husband was not unlikeable and in fact I had a tremendous amount of sympathy for him. The back story with Alec's ex-wife was mawkish in places and I was distinctly uneasy about the way her ashes were strewn in a circle round the triangulation pillar. Really? What about other walkers? How would you like to have to walk on cremated remains to get to the summit? (not to mention the environmental aspect)

At one part, the story took on an 'Inspirational' religious overtone which did not fit with the previous adultery and made me more than a little uncomfortable. There were long, protracted scenes about cooking which served little purpose and the story itself ended at the 80% mark, leaving me feeling a little cheated.

Patricia Kay says

Mr. North invites the reader to love found, love lost, and the commitment of relationships. As treacherous as his walk up the mountain he has created characters who struggle with emotions which unexpectedly have entered their lives. Detailed research into the geography of Wales, sheep farming, garden to table cooking keeps the reader turning the pages. The ending is predictable but perhaps it was only my prediction that wished for the book to end as beautifully as it did. He has placed his words so gently throughout the book it would be difficult for the reader's heart to not fill with empathy and compassion.

Gaufre says

Buddy-read with Joan. Join us if you would like, it is a freebie.

DNF chapter 11

At every party, there are always people who try to look smarter than they really are by over-explaining things or expounding life lessons because they just read a meaningful book. I usually want to punch them in the face for sounding like inspirational posters. This book reminded me of those pretentious people.

First, let me start with what I liked. Both characters are older (Fiona is in her forties and Alec is 50). Fiona is strong; Alec is kind and caring. The relationship is complicated because Fiona is married to someone else. Think Bridges of Madison County (BoMC) but he comes back and they can be together at the end.

But it is BoMC where all the emotions are over-analyzed. For example, this passage would have been lovely without the last sentence:

*Then she knelt down, put her arms around the dog's neck, and gave him a hug. Jack [the dog] ignored her, and it didn't matter; she knew the hug was for her, not him. **She knew she was clinging to something certain, because uncertainty surrounded her.***

The writing grated on my nerves since the beginning. There are **a lot of long descriptions** of the landscape, of birthing of lamb, of a freaking space blanket.

... about said space blanket:

He'd resisted buying it when he was outfitting himself for his long walk, but the salesman had persisted, and now he blessed the man.

How that added anything to the story, I have NO idea. This feels patronizing, actually. Is the author telling us that hikers usually carry them? I am well aware of that.

If you haven't caught on yet, the writing is overly descriptive. We learn that Alec is there to disperse the ash of his ex-wife Gwynne. As he does this:

before their trouble had begun, she'd taught him to love.

[...]

He was crying now, for the first time since her death. Crying at the stupidity of their separation and divorce. At the years they had both spent alone. At the waste of Gwynne's death. And perhaps at the enormity of the task before him: taking Gwynne's lessons to heart. Living them.

I can't stand it anymore.

Karen says

This is a sappy detail soaked love story between two middle aged people that takes place in the country side of Wales. Although this book will never be a classic, I really like this book. I like the characters and I love the detailed descriptions and dialog of the country people in the neighborhoods of Wales. The local sights and colors come alive in this book, also great details of food and scents. The vivid description of birthing baby sheep was both horrifying and fascinating-truly information I wouldn't typically come across. I am almost embarrassed to admit how readable and enjoyable I found this book!

Barbara Frayer says

Pretty good book. Will look to see if there us a second book.

Bill Khaemba says

I have been in a reading slump & I always lean towards simple light contemporary books. This one seemed about right and I was liking it for the most part until I realized how super cheesy & chick litty it was. I have no problem with romance in books trust me but I have a problem when the main plot of the book is just about this two random perfect characters ready to **DO IT!** . Alas this one was exactly that way, it had some good moments but reaching halfway I realize how 'meh" it was.

Bee says

I really wanted to like this book. I couldn't seem to get involved with the characters; I'm not entirely sure why, but they just felt very two-dimensional to me. I found myself irritated with Fiona and Alec instead of sympathizing with them. The writing style left me cold, too. An example of what felt sort of bland to me was this paragraph: 'They began to eat. The wine was velvety and dense with dark fruit. The lamb was perfect, pink and falling off the bone. The roast potatoes were golden and crusty on the outside and fluffy on the inside; the braised carrots and parsnips, earthy and sweet.' I mean, I love food and descriptions of food, but I found myself yawning too much as I read adjective-heavy stuff like this. Honestly, I stopped reading about halfway through and skimmed along just to see how it ended.

Isaura Pereira says

Quando leio livros que dizem ser comparados a determinado autor(a) - neste caso a Nicholas Sparks - fico sempre apreensiva, pois pode não corresponder a essas expectativas. Contudo, não posso dizer que fiquei desiludida, porque não tinha qualquer expectativa. Parti para esta leitura sem preconceitos e sem opiniões sobre o livro.

Um tipo de romance que gosto de ler ocasionalmente, embora não seja muito frequente nas minhas últimas leituras.

Foi uma leitura agradável, embora não tenha sido arrebatadora. Gostei das personagens e dos diálogos, nada frívolos. Gostei de todo o ambiente que o autor criou ao longo da história. Contudo, esperava um final diferente, que me arrebatasse.

Mas posso afirmar que quero e vou ler mais do autor, pois gostei da sua escrita e da forma como conduz as histórias.

Filipa says

ADOREI ADOREI ADOREI!

É tudo o que posso dizer sobre este livro. Encantador, enternecedor.

Impossível não nos apaixonarmos pelo casal romântico desta história. Impossível não sentirmos afinidade com as dificuldades por que eles passaram e decisões que tomaram. Adorei a parte do casal jovem, as oportunidades que por vezes deixamos passar ao lado, precisando que alguém nos abra os olhos para ver que tudo o que precisamos já se encontra do nosso lado...

Marcia says

The certainty of love doesn't always arrive to hearts eagerly waiting. Whether rising out of the dust cloud kicked up by an old pick-up truck on a back road in Iowa or flashing by a window in a brief glimpse of backpack, the heart knows when love has arrived—uninvited perhaps, a bit unexpected—but nevertheless its arrival cannot be denied. So we find Fiona Edwards, a woman used to welcoming the unknown into her bed and breakfast, on the morning that will change her life.

The Long Walk Home by Will North tells not only the story of Fiona and Alex Hudson but also the story of a Welsh landscape—calm and serene one moment, harsh and unforgiving the next.

This was, for me, a story to settle into and just travel along with. I didn't ask *The Long Walk Home* to be more than it was—no quotes carefully copied, no Post-Its peeking out from multiple pages. Just good sit-down-with-a-cup-of-tea book...pleasant time spent with characters who asked you not to plumb their depths

but to accept them for who they were.

Lynne Spreen says

This is a thoughtful romance with an unusual premise: when a woman's husband is for all intents and purposes not in the marriage anymore, and the woman meets her soul mate, what will happen? I was drawn along by the loveliness of the setting (a remote valley in northwest Wales), the pluck of the woman character (Fiona), and the details (the fine meals "thrown together" in the kitchen of this B&B made me want to learn to cook!) Noteworthy: the romantic lead, Alec, is a beta male. He's thoughtful, sensitive, can get teary-eyed, etc. This is a welcome break from all those "alpha-holes" I've been reading lately who must turn sideways to get their massive shoulders through a door. Also noteworthy is that the romantic couple is older, in their late 40s, early 50s, resp. So they are more certain of who they are and the value of time, although there's no pontificating from Age Mountain, happily. Finally, but not the least important, is that the impediment to their romance is a husband who is nuanced. His illness is dealt with sensitively, although some may say adultery is adultery and put the book aside.

I have only two knocks on the book. Some of the descriptions really were too long. Two or three aspects to give us a sense of place is fine; beyond that, I skimmed. Second, the ending is wrapped up far too quickly. A mountain of information is skipped over with the turn of a page, and the resolution was less meaningful than it could have been. It was a bit like an epilogue without an ending. Still, a thoughtful and lovely book.

Marie Castellano says

This is the second book I've read by this author and I'm still impressed! He writes well. Some have said the book is simple....that's hard to pull off, especially with the overarching themes of love lost and found, the insight that we are not in control of life, and the obligations of commitment. What is the highest calling of life? Patience, feelings, and what is worth waiting for, are all intertwined in the themes. A lot to think about. His prose is a lot smoother than this review. He knows his grammar, too....what a relief.

Jodi says

Make sure you have some wine on hand when you read this book because it is super cheesy! A perfectly orchestrated romance where every scene has the perfect setting, food, wine, etc.. Not that it was a terrible book, I didn't mind it. A very light, easy read. I'd say my rating is a "JC2". That is to say that it was an OK read but lacking in depth.

It's kind of funny that right before this book I read *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. And in that book the narrator says that he is including descriptions of things because his teacher told him that when you are writing a book you should include descriptions of things. Then I read *The Long Walk Home* and I felt like the author was also including descriptions of things because that is what you are supposed to do when you write a book. I think this book seemed like it includes all of the elements that should be in a book but they just don't really come together to make a great book.

