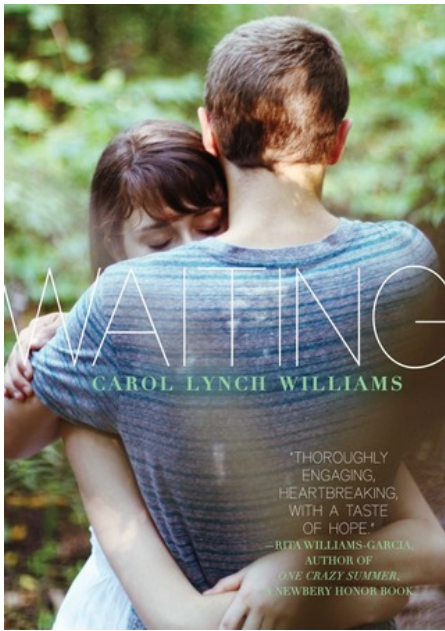




Waiting

Carol Lynch Williams

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After her brother's death, a teen struggles to rediscover love and find redemption in this gripping novel.

Growing up in Africa and Latin America as the children of missionaries, London and Zach were as close as could be. And then Zach dies, and the family is gutted. London's father is distant. Her mother won't speak. The days are filled with what-ifs and whispers: Did Zach take his own life? Was it London's fault?

Alone and adrift, London finds herself torn between her brother's best friend and the handsome new boy in town as she struggles to find herself—and ultimately redemption—in this authentic and affecting novel from award-winning novelist Carol Lynch Williams.

From Simon & Schuster

Waiting Details

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Author : Carol Lynch Williams

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Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Realistic Fiction, Teen

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From Reader Review Waiting for online ebook

Evie says

From the opening lines to the very last sentence, this book is extraordinary. The format in which it is written is incredibly unique. The characters are extremely well drawn, vivid, and convincing. It's intensely emotional, heart-breaking, and absolutely captivating. To me this book is a masterpiece. Honest, powerful and dark, it's a tale of love and loss, heartache, desperation, losing oneself in grief and healing with the power of love. It's a story of one girl's journey to find everything she lost along the way - her parents, love, meaning in life, and herself.

Zach and London were inseparable. They loved and supported each other. They were not only siblings, but best friends. Until Zach died and London's world crumbled to pieces. Nothing is the same as it used to be. Her mother hates her. She hasn't spoken a word to her daughter since Zach's death. It's almost like London died, too. Or never even existed. Her father is distant and disconnected. He's never around anymore. London is lonely, abandoned and heartbroken. And there is no one to help her through this insanely difficult time. Eventually, she finds herself drifting towards other people, boys in particular, and before she knows it, she finds herself torn between her brother's best friend and a new student, searching for affection and redemption.

Wow. Waiting was phenomenal. Carol Lynch Williams' prose evokes so many feelings. She brings both the powerful sibling love and the piercing pain of losing a family member alive within the pages of her book. She writes with remarkable tenderness and sensitivity, and her beautiful, almost lyrical prose makes your heart flutter. This is the kind of novel that invites the reader to lose themselves completely in its pages, tune out the rest of the world and just... read, taste, feel, and, ultimately, fell in love. While it's fantastically readable, and I'm sure that the burning need to learn more about what exactly happened to Zach will make you want to frantically turn the pages, you should refrain from rushing through it. Slow down, re-read some of the gorgeously written passages, savour. This book is worth every second you'll spend reading it.

While the theme of sibling bond is quite common in the literature, especially in Young Adult books, rarely do I see it being tackled with such skill and authenticity. As I read this novel, my heart was bleeding along with London's. I could see how much she was hurting, how huge a hole Zach's death has ripped in her heart, a hole that could never be filled. The once complete and happy family unit is now totally dysfunctional. London's mom has permanently withdrawn from the family life, ostracising her daughter whom she blames for the death of her beloved son. London's dad is never there, either. He's torn between his devastated, mentally unstable wife and the job that keeps him busy most of the time. London is all on her own, she desperately needs someone to hug her, to pay attention to her, to care about her. She needs someone to save her. And she goes looking for that person, getting tangled up in two different relationships, distracting herself with kisses and touches.

I loved that Carol Lynch Williams kept the mystery going almost all the way to the end. When it comes to Zach and his death, we're kept in the dark for the most part of the book. We get little glimpses of London's memories and a whole downpour of emotions, thoughts, regrets, and what-ifs. Clues and pieces of information are scattered throughout the novel, and it isn't until the end that we finally get the whole picture. I absolutely loved the brilliant, well-thought-out structure of this book. It definitely kept me captivated.

It's not a story of happy endings and joyful family reconciliation. It's a story of picking up the pieces of broken hearts and trying to glue them together. Some pieces are crushed beyond dust, others are missing. The family is forever broken and incomplete, and nothing, no amount of time, tears, or begging can ever heal these wounds. The characters in this story are not flat and paper-like, these are real people, with real

problems, who find themselves in devastatingly real situation. But, while its obviously a dark and harrowing read, it's also one that ends with a spark of hope. The ending is a bittersweet one, there's a bit of light and a whole lot of darkness, but, thanks to London's strength and determination, I find the conclusion of the story to be realistically positive and perfectly satisfying.

I cried at the end.

I've put the book down, took a deep breath, broke down and cried.

Read it. It's a MUST!

Michelle says

I read this book at the behest of the librarian who was concerned about the message it sends teens. I agreed that it is not appropriate for most junior high teens and had such mixed messages and so poorly written that, in my opinion, not worth reading. This book tells the story of a teen girl dealing with the aftermath of her brother's suicide who committed suicide due to the consequences of a sexual relationship with another teen (a pregnancy and then a possible abortion).

The mother of these two teens went from, if you believe the narrator, a perfectly loving and caring parent to a psychotic, abusive parent. It was a bit of a stretch, although grief can cause some real issues to work through; it was too much of a change. Additionally, the narrator knows all that her brother goes through due to his sexual relationship and its consequences and so she deals with her grief by kissing boys and desiring to go further than kissing, even going so far as to tell her parents she is having sex with two boys! Seems a mixed message. Then there was the bizarre ending where the brother's girlfriend didn't really have an abortion, but never told his family, but kept the baby and was raising it--making everyone suddenly happy--except the brother had committed suicide because he was depressed his girlfriend aborted the baby.

The messages were so mixed. Sex is bad and results in negative consequences. Sex is good because it helped the sister get the attention her family is not giving her. The consequences are unintended pregnancy and depression or the consequences are cute babies that everyone wants to hug and love and are so wonderful to raise by yourself--no job or middle of the night feedings required! Again, a real mixed message that I, as an adult, didn't really understand. Overall, I think the message is kiss and have sex as much as you want with lots of different people, it's a good thing. And maybe you'll get a cute baby out of it who looks like you. And obviously your parents are weird and out-of-touch. The more I think about it, the less I like the book!

Alison says

Reading a book by Carol Lynch Williams is like slipping into someone else's skin, walking around as her, breathing her air, and, especially, feeling what she feels. In the case of WAITING, we're inside the skin of London, a teenage girl who's lost her brother and whose family is crumbling because of his death.

London's skin is not a comfortable place to be--and yet, I didn't want to leave. I wanted to know more about her and to stay long enough to make sure she would be okay. And when the story was over, I was glad I stayed. I was glad I took that difficult journey with her. Because at the end, there was hope, and faith, and life. Imagine all that coming from a death.

If you're a fan of Williams's books, you won't be disappointed. She tackles tough topics and WAITING is no exception. I found her teenage protagonist to be very realistic. What teen--what adult, even--doesn't do some things that might be confusing to those around them, especially as she's grasping at straws to heal herself and

her family. For instance, London seems to be attracted to two boys. But is she, really? Read and find out. I also found London's friends a refreshing group in a teen lit world of backstabbers. Not at all the cliché that London feels her life to be. If you want to read a book about grief and healing, go elsewhere. If you want to live one, WAITING is it.

Angela M says

Find more of my reviews at www.readingangel.com

I started reading WAITING knowing that I was going to be a heart-broken mess by the time it was through. I had already read GLIMPSE by Carol Lynch Williams and I knew that she has a way of taking her verse novels and packing so much emotion, power, and heart-wrenching story into them that it leaves you gasping for breath through your tears.

In WAITING London is spiraling down a hole of depression. Her mother has not said a word to her since the death of her brother, her brother who was her very best friend in the world. Her father has thrown himself into his work. Her friends don't know what to say to her. She is sad, and heart-broken, and utterly alone. When she makes a friend in a new girl who doesn't know the story of her brother's death, a little life starts to spark back into her. There's also the new girl's extremely hot brother.

Let me just say that this book is not an epic romance. It's about a girl who is struggling to cope. Watching London lash out to get the attention of her mother, and just trying to feel alive, you can't help but root for the girl. Even if that does mean she strings a couple hearts along as she goes.

I know that everyone deals with grief differently, but I could not stand this mother's selfish behavior towards her daughter!! I really just wanted to reach through the pages and smack her mother to be honest with you. I was bouncing in my seat and cheering when she finally stood up to her.

Once again, Carol Lynch Williams has blown me away with another power-house verse novel of emotional depth. I plan to go find everything else she has written and read it as soon as I possibly can! If you don't mind a little heart-break in your books I suggest you grab a copy of this one for yourself!

Kelly says

[by suicide (hide spoiler)]

Tanja (Tanychy) St. Delphi/James says

This is one of those books you need to think about after reading it. I guess a lot of people will hate it because main character is messed up, her family is messed up. But when you think about whole story there is a reason for all that. I could find logic in it and that's why I like this book. It's so realistic that you can't do anything but ask yourself what kind of person you are and what are your priorities in life. If you set them right then something like this won't happen.

Milka says

Ever since I read *The Chosen One* by Carol Lynch Williams, I have been interested to check out her other novels and *Waiting* sounded instantly interesting to me since it not only deals with questions of first love, but also with suicide and the lives of those close to someone who commits suicide.

London is the daughter of a missionary father and a religious mother who spent her childhood traveling around the world. After London's brother Zach faced problems dealing with the horrors they often had to face on their journeys, the family moved back to United States to make sure that Zach gets better. Eventually, he falls in love and finds happiness, but that is taken away from him because of his family's religious beliefs and the opinions of the girl's parents. Zach ends up killing himself and London and her parents fall apart. London's father starts to work more and more while her mother fails to even acknowledge her. Was what happened to Zach her fault? Is there something more she could have done?

London is an interesting character who finds herself from the crossroads of her life for the very first time. Her brother, her best friend, is gone, and her family is crumbling into little pieces that she fails to recognize. As someone who has gone through the grieving process of losing someone close to me for suicide, I was able to identify with London's doubts about the role she played in her brother's decision and the battle she has with the thoughts about whether she could have done something, or said something, that could have stopped her brother.

There is a sort of love-triangle here between London, Taylor and Jesse. Taylor is the best friend of Zach and knows what London is dealing with. While that is comforting to her, Taylor also reminds her of Zach and at times she finds it difficult to spend time with a walking reminder of better times. Jesse is new to town and while he is aware of what happened, he didn't know Zach, which London was surprisingly comforting. Though I am not at all a fan of love triangles, I am a fan of flawed characters that are trying to figure their life out, and in this book, the two guys essentially aid London in the process of coping with her grief and finding answers for her life after the loss of Zach.

Waiting is narrated in verse, which I really liked, but at the same time, I couldn't help thinking how much more powerful this novel would have been if it was narrated via prose and thus would have probably included a bit more backstory and characterization. Nevertheless, I think the verse narration works too, and provides a nice escape from the more traditional prose storytelling. The verse narrative also made this one a fairly quick read, which is also a nice bonus.

Waiting did not impress me as much as Lynch William's *The Chosen One*, but despite that, I did find it to be a touching account about the struggles of a young girl whose life completely changes in a fairly unexpected instant.

Exina says

5 stars out of 5

"Words fail me to describe how much I'm touched by the story. I could barely hold my tears back when I was reading it in public. But it became one of my favorites..."

Guest review posted by Lex on my blog on September 17, 2013. **See her review [HERE](#).**

Orchita says

OH MY GOD. I can't. I am just speechless. I have lost words. This book was just... I don't even know. It got me. It got me good. The style of the writing, the characters and their relationships, all of it was just phenomenal. Under normal circumstances, I would not condone cheating, but that little bit was what made London especially human. London was a living, breathing person. My heart ached for her. And Zach, he was just phenomenal. I didn't read this book for the epic love story. I read it for them. For Zach and London. I find myself wondering, what would have happened, had their parents not been such stick-up-the-butt jerks. Zach and Rachel probably would be married, with their little baby, named London. Taylor and London would probably be together as well.

Honestly, I HATED their mom. She was just so selfish. And mean. How could any mother treat their child like that? She was the reason Zach died. And then she promptly pushed all of that onto London. And poor London just kept trying and trying. My heart ached for her. For her and Taylor, and Rachel, and London Faith who will never know what an amazing and loving person her father was. I think Taylor and London will get married. And name their first son Zacheus, after the most amazing older brother, friend, boyfriend and son that ever lived.

I didn't read this book. I lived it.

My verdict? All the stars in the universe wouldn't begin to cover it.

Giselle says

This was really good and so sad! The verse style has nothing on Ellen Hopkins, but it was still very well written and poignant. Full review to come!

Sara says

I just loved this book. For some reason I love books like this one. This is not a happy book, but it does have some happy moments, and moments that will make you smile. It also has moments to make you scream and gasp, and even shed some tears in the end. It is written in verse, and it is about London. She is dealing with losing her brother, and how it has affected her whole family. Your heart will ache right along with hers, and how she mourns and tries to live. I highly recommend to those who don't mind a sad book with a touch of healing. Now I need other books by this author!

Amanda says

Waiting by Carol Lynch Williams is the story of London Castle, a teenage girl who has recently moved to Florida with her former missionary parents. About nine months ago her old brother, Zach, died and since then her family has been falling apart. Her mother no longer speaks to her, her father spends all of his time

working and her former best friend ignores her. Then she makes some new friends and develops a crush on a new boy while also questioning her faith.

I felt for London as soon as she was introduced, I could tell that she adored her older brother and they relied on each other because they were best friends as well as siblings. Now she's lonely, angry, sad and I was really disappointed in her parents, mostly her mum but also her dad for ignoring what was going on. Her mum blames London for Zach's death and now ignores her completely. As the book went on my dislike for her became really intense, she's a really good example of a horrible YA parent. I didn't understand how she could ignore the child that she still had.

I always enjoy books in verse because I find they allow me to get close to the narrator, I feel as if I'm sharing their thoughts and I could feel London's pain, and even though she wasn't perfect, I really liked her. I found the book easy to read and the writing flowed really well, I was unable to put this down

I was intrigued by the mystery surrounding Zach's death so I was happy when we finally find out what happened to him. My respect for Taylor increased, he was such a good guy and always there for London and I was happy with her family situation by the end, but I still felt her dad owed her an apology for letting everything get out of hand.

Waiting is a really sad yet compelling story that left my heart a little broken. I'd recommend it to fans of books written in verse and hard-hitting, emotional YA books.

Thanks to Magan for sending this to me via a book swap!

Morgan says

I'm trying to think of something that I didn't like about this book, but honestly it's amazing!!!!!! Since I can't help it for this book there may be a lot of huge spoilers.

Summary:

London and her brother Zach were really close, until he dies at the age of 16. Her mother blames her for what has happened, and never once talks to her. Her father talks to her, but they're not connected as they used to be, and they rarely talk. Then there's Taylor her brother's best friend, and her former boyfriend. He's waiting, and then there's the new boy Jesse, London thinks everything about him is cliché and she promises herself to stay away from him.

Characters:

London:

Her brother has died and lots of people blame her. She has no friends, until Lili moves into town (with her sexy brother Jesse). Throughout that time period she starts to feel more alive, and she also gets closer to Taylor. Taylor's the only one person who seems to know the whole truth of what has happened. Soon she's in a love triangle, but it's obvious who she's going to pick (although sometimes I wondered). Taylor, the one that's been there all along.

Zach:

It's only fair to include him, and despite the fact that he's not alive he's still one of my favorite characters. He was in a serious relationship with his girlfriends Rachel. She ended up pregnant and her parents made them move away. Soon later she told him that her parents wanted her to get an abortion. He became so filled

with emotions he killed himself. Then at the end of the story Rachel comes back... and the babies alive): I (literally) cried in that moment that London met her brother's baby.

What I liked:

- The fact that the mother always blamed her, when it was her own fault because she didn't get the key to open the door, even when London begged her to.
- Meeting Lili's and Jesse's family: Nathan (Natey), Steve and their parents, they just seem like a totally real family. And although they were only in a few pages they are worth remembering.
- When London makes it through to her mother that she is real, that she didn't die like Zach.
- When the mom leaves. I know that's mean, but honestly I would never want a mother like that.
- EVERYTHING!!!!
- The poetic verse. How some stanzas rhymed and others didn't.
- Like how they just tell us that it was Rachel's fault yet at the same time it's not told till the end.

Overall:

I could go on and on and on, but if you haven't read this book the main message is go read it, although it's a bit predictable the way the author writes is definitely worth it. I also hope to read more books by this author very soon (:

Favorite quotes:

1)

"It was Lauren. Of course. Lauren told Lili everything. At least what she knew, which I'm sure isn't accurate. That's how gossip is. Bits of truth sprinkled with lots of crap" (77).

2)

"How long would I be dead before she found me?" (83).

3)

"When the best part of a family dies, everyone falls apart" (112).

4)

"Just remember, I'm here okay? I can keep waiting" (110)
(Taylor's saying this).

Laura says

"How can one person leaving change you so much?"

Just to warn you—this review is going to be a bit of a mess. My feelings for this book are all over the map. Let's ramble! :D

Waiting is presented and packaged as something it is not. I kept going back and forth on whether to even mention this point. In the end, a flip of the coin decided. :) Religion, God, and Jesus play a big part of this story. I realize religion is a part of life, but I don't like to blend it with my YA, fiction, film, or entertainment for the most part. It's like mixing tequila and beer (BIG NO-NO! haha....) or oil and water. It just doesn't work for me.

That said....The religious angle did not annoy me. Would I have read this book if I had known religion was a pivotal part of the plot? No. Do I like being duped? No. *shrugs* No win situation.

I can tell you this though. I sat down, opened this book, and never put it down until the end. The words, writing, and story captivated me. Held me there in the world and words.

For me, it was the verse style that captured my reading heart. This story of grief and healing is told in a free-verse style packed with emotion and power. Novels in verse will never cease to amaze me! So few words capture powerful pain, confusion, and loss on the page. Carol Lynch Williams impressed the hell out of me!

Waiting tells the story of a family trying to hold on after a death. London lost her brother Zach nine months ago, but the loss and grief is still so raw. Smells, people, and places bring up the pain and hole in her life with such force. Gut punch force! It took my breath away at times.

Death, guilt, and grief are tearing this family apart. London doesn't know who to be without her brother. Her mother won't talk to her and her father is running, avoiding the pain by working nonstop. How can a family survive such a hit? Keep moving, living, and loving?

This story is filled with waiting....

Waiting for a mother to see, forgive, and talk again.

Waiting for the pain to stop.

Waiting for a family to heal.

Waiting for a sign things will get better.

Now on to the boys....London is torn between two boys in a way. Using them in other ways. I like kissing as much as the next girl, but some scenes felt off here. This is not a romance. For me, this story showed a girl trying to see if she can still love—still feel. Sorry. I know I'm failing here. Let's just say—there is a lot I did NOT like here and a lot I did.

Strong words. Predictable plot "twist". One shallow boy. One adorable boy. A lost heroine. Emotion. Power. Religion. & Phenomenal writing.

Waiting may not have been everything I wanted or hoped for when I picked it up--but London's story did remind me how fragile a family can be. We tend to think or perhaps need to believe a family can survive anything. That is just not true.

I would recommend this read for fans of verse novels for sure, but everyone else I would say proceed with caution.

Please let me know if you pick it up. I would love to hear feedback.

(I will try to clean this up later—just wanted to get something down right away.)

Chris says

This is a wonderful story about dealing with loss, all kinds of really hard loss. Williams places the reader inside the head of a sensitive, wounded young woman who is struggling to deal with the loss of her older brother and with the collateral damage his suicided caused to her family. It's a moving, gripping read.
