



The Watchtower

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What secrets are hidden in her past . . . ?

Jewelry designer Gareth James is still coming to terms with the astounding revelation in BLACK SWAN RISING that she is the last in a long line of women sworn to protect the world from evil. Now she has received a sign from Will Hughes, the 400-year-old vampire who once helped her defeat the evil threatening to destroy New York City. Hughes, tortured by his own violent history which is vividly reenacted here, has asked her to join him on a quest to rid himself of his curse of vampirism. While looking for Will in Paris, Gareth encounters a number of mysterious figures-an ancient botanist metamorphosed into the oldest tree in Paris, a gnome who lives under the Labyrinth at the Jardin des Plantes, a librarian at the Institut Oceanographique, and a dryad in the Luxembourg Gardens.

Each encounter leads Gareth closer to finding Will Hughes, but she realizes that she's not the only one who's trying to find the way to the magical world called the Summer Country. As Gareth struggles to understand her family legacy, each answer she finds only leads to more questions--and to more danger....

The Watchtower Details

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Fi says

After putting this book aside for so long I am so upset at the ending! I can't believe it ended like that with no mention of whether there is to be a third book in the series.

An unimpressed reader, 3 stars just for the ending otherwise it would have been a 4 - oops!

Christine Calabrese says

As tedious as it was to plow through this book, the surprising ending made it well worth the effort.

Michelle Cummings says

I didn't like this second book in the series quite as much as the first. The narrative kept switching back and forth from chapter to chapter between Garet's search for Will in Paris, and Will's life with Garet's ancestor Marguerite in 1602. The switching back and forth was a little tedious, but what I really didn't care for was Will's life. And it made me wonder why exactly Garet had fallen for him in the previous book. He's not a very likable character.

I still really enjoyed the worldbuilding, and while not exactly a cliffhanger, I really did not see the ending coming, so I am looking forward to seeing where the story goes from here in book 3.

Lucy Portsmouth says

Not as good as the first book ... feels like the story is getting lost in itself somewhere and I become less and less keen on the main character.

Madelyn Waychoff says

I was sorely disappointed with this book, I really enjoyed the first book in the series but this book was really tough to get through, I had to force myself to finish it. The characters have no substance, especially Will who comes off as a self-centered, arrogant, simpering fool, which I understand was the point in some sense. But there was absolutely nothing redeeming about him, nothing that made me want to find out his story, I was just bored. The setting was well done, and the parts with Garet somewhat redeemed the book, but even these fell flat. I'm not sure I'll read anymore, but I would really hope there is something redeeming in subsequent books.

Marleen says

At the end of the first book, Will Hughes, the vampire Gareth James is in love with, ran away to France with the silver box in the hope of finding his way to the Summer Country of the Fey and a way of ending his vampire curse.

This book starts with Gareth in Paris, looking for signs from Will and her own passage into the Summer Country. After meetings with various strange and mythical beings Gareth does indeed find her way to Will and the Summer Country only for the pair to find that they still have to face the evil John Dee and his allies and for Gareth to discover that you don't always get what you wish for.

While Gareth's adventures in Paris are being narrated, the reader is also told the story of Will's past and how exactly he ended up being a vampire.

I'm afraid this book didn't really work for me on several levels.

My main problem lay in the fact that we had already been told the main outline of Will's transformation in the first book and that therefore, the parts of this book describing his early life were a longer repeat of what we already knew. Couple that with the fact that I didn't really like the character or the younger Will, and you'll understand why I had difficulties staying with the story.

At the same time Gareth's adventures on her journey from modern day Paris to the Summer Country and beyond were not very exciting. Because Gareth takes everything that happens to her at face-value and doesn't really get excited or scared about anything, the reading experience is a bit flat too.

I think I might have given up on this book without finishing it if it hadn't been for the fact that this is the second book in a trilogy the first instalment of which really enjoyed. I also hope that the third and final book will return to the standards of the first, and do find myself curious about how this story will end.

I should add that although I have these issues with the story, I have no problems with the language in which the story was told. The writing flows and the descriptions of creatures and landscapes evoke vivid pictures for me.

My conclusion has to be that the reading experience this book gave me was rather a mixed bag with enough positives in the mix to make me want to finish the story at some point.

Μαργα Γεωργοπούλου says

Another good book by the collaboration between Carol Goodman and her husband Lee Slonimsky is "The Watchtower" the second book in the Black Swan Rising series. Although, I liked more the first one, I still think that this is a very good book.

It's a very different urban fantasy book with great plot with mystery and excellent characters, both the main and the secondary.

The book is written with alternating chapters and we have the story of Gareth who searches the path into the Summer Country AND the story of Will, back at 1600's and how he became a vampire.

In this book, like the first, I enjoyed the world-building and the atmosphere that the authors have created. It's not an "easy" book and my personal opinion is that not all the readers are prepared for something like that. Also, I believe that it would be better if the plot had been faster paced because the slow pace is kind of bad for this kind of books.

The point is that I enjoyed this book because is different even if it has some small problems.

Astesia says

Veci sa nasilu robi? proste nedaju... Presne tak ako sa ani na silu nemaju pisat knihy.... Zo za?iatku to bolo perfektne. Bavila som sa, bolo to zaujimave, plno nadprirodzenych bytosti zahady, tajomstva, spominani aj Artuš :) Aj ke? len asi dvoma vetami :D

Akonahle sa objavili spolu Will a Garet, slo to z kopca...

Iskra ziadna, laska tiez ziadna, zenska hlupa, on tiez.... no škoda re?i :D

Ke? sa niekomu nepa?ila prvá ?as?, toto sa vám tiež nebude.

Jan says

I picked up this book because it sounded interesting. To the contrary, I found the author's writing style jejune and the plot unnecessarily convoluted, muddled, and ludicrous. I would be unsurprised to find the author a nominee, or even a winner, of the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest for constructing atrocities such as the following:

From chapter 2:

"My assessment of your talents is as objective as Pythagoras' area of a triangle."

"She was attired in a billowing floor length dress so modest it were as if the spirit of a nun massacred by King Henry VIII inhabited her."

"His features had so many angles to them they might have been a geometry lesson"

In the same chapter, (set during the Elizabethan Era) the "romantic hero" of the novel is introduced to a lady. His father tells "romantic hero" that he is supposed to marry the nice, but plain-looking, lady. The "hero" proudly replies in front of the poor lady (previously unknown to him),

"I'd sooner lie with a rotting horse. And if I knew her fifty years I wouldn't ask for her hand in marriage."

The father slaps him; the author describes the father's behavior as brutish. ????

Um, while I would not lie with a rotting horse under any circumstances, I will never pick up another book by this author. Unless I need a doorstep or to temporarily replace a missing brick.

By the way, I did finish the book so I could write this review fairly. *shudder*

delane says

This book was harder for me to love...I LIKED it...a lot...but didn't feel th almost silly thrill that I got from the first.

Mostly I think it was just to slow moving for me. 70% of the book is...chapter...Garet hunting Will...then chapter....Will hunting Marguerite....back and forth. There were clues...there were mysteries...and going through Will's journey (even though I had a hard time with the 17th century dialog!) was sad and wonderful to learn at the same time...but it was just slow!

The book was amazingly brought together through the last part and I will absolutely look forward to more....just had to get through this 'middle book-ness' that I honestly was surprised to find with how very much I LOVED the first book.

Evelyn Doyle says

While I wouldn't class this as 'epic fantasy', it does share a characteristic of it: such importance is placed on introducing characters and creatures, there's little room for plot movement in only a few hundred pages. It seemed to me as if the authors didn't have much more to say than, "See how many creatures I know."

What plot movement there was seemed little more than a scavenger hunt. A frustrating scavenger hunt. Creature A says, 'Creature B has what you want.' Creature B says 'Creature C has what you want.' Creature C says, 'Creature D has what you want' ... ad infinitum.

The 'twist' at the end wasn't a surprise. It was dramatic inevitability. I'd foreseen it chapters ago. Which made it a dissatisfying end to the book.

My only comfort for the writers is that there are as many types of readers as there are books, so there are surely people that enjoy this trilogy. And my only comfort for me, is that I'm not one of them, so I don't have to wait in suspense for the publication of the third book.

Lena Donan says

Celkom zábavné ?ítanie. Dobrá zmeska ?ohoko?vek, na ?o si ?lovek spomenie... a ten cliffhanger! :) Osud je ob?as svi?a.

Kristen says

It took me forever to finish one. I found the parts of Will's backstory to be really boring, so that was one cause of struggle. The other was me being distracted by wedding stuff. :)

I enjoyed the first book much more. As soon as a certain...event happened, I knew exactly what was going to happen, and that there'd most definitely be a third book. Which I'm just kinda eh about at this point.

Jamie Nelson says

Once again the collaboration between Carol and Lee creates a wonderful story.

The Watchtower was a perfect blend of poetry, narrative, mystery and adventure. Garret and Will are wonderful characters and The Watchtower beautifully provides the reader with their background.

Picking up right where Black Swan Rising left off, The Watch tower is another page turner and I cannot wait for the third installment. For those of you who have read the first installment, you will find the reappearance of some of the beloved characters as well as those who lurk on the side of evil.

I have never really cared much for books that are part of a series (With the exception of Harry Potter), let alone books that involve vampires. But Lee Carroll has a way of putting a twist on how a reader thinks of a vampire especially skeptics such as myself.

I encourage anyone who loves a good mystery to dive right in to Black Swan Rising and then continue on to The Watchtower. You will not be disappointed.

Claire says

i found it difficult to get into this book, it wasn't the story so much but the way it was presented. we left our main characters travelling on different paths and in this book we follow Gareth in modern day France and Will back in Shakespearean England. Each chapter changes character and i found that i was just getting into that story when we changed chapters and changed stories. the book didn't flow! towards the end of the book the two stories started to collide and the book flowed much better and i read the last 3 in a matter of days whereas the first 2/3rds took me almost 2 weeks, which if you know my reading habits, is unheard of! it finishes with a twist and therefore i am now awaiting another book to see what happens to Gareth and Will!
