

A Reader's Guide for



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Written by Caroline Leech Published by Harper Teen

It's 1945, and Lorna Anderson's life on her father's farm in Scotland consists of endless chores and rationing, knitting Red Cross scarves, and praying for an Allied victory. So when Paul Vogel, a German prisoner of war, is assigned as the new farmhand, Lorna is appalled. How can she possibly work alongside the enemy when her own brothers are risking their lives for their country?

But as Lorna reluctantly spends time with Paul, she feels herself changing. The more she learns about him—from his time fighting a war he doesn't believe in, to his life back home in Germany—the more she sees the boy behind the soldier. Soon Lorna is battling her own warring heart. Loving Paul could mean losing her family and the life she's always known. With tensions rising all around them, Lorna must decide how much she's willing to sacrifice before the end of the war determines their fate.

Guide created by Debbie Gonzales, MFA
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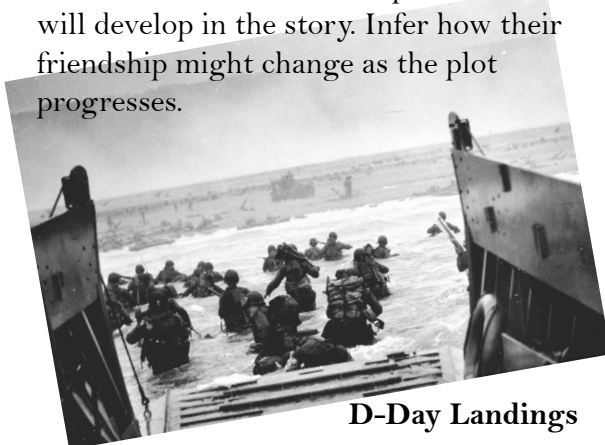
Discussion Questions: Pages 1 to 92

“They’ve sent a new man to work on the farm,” Lorna’s dad said, one hand squeezing her shoulder; “but it’s nothing to concern you now. Anyway, don’t you have an exam this morning?” (pg. 3)”

- Discuss how action in this scene foreshadows Lorna’s relationship with Paul.
- Explain why the word ‘now’ serves as a key element for the story’s progression.
- Consider what Lorna’s father’s mention of her exam demonstrates about his feeling about her getting a good education.
- Tell what his placing his hand on her shoulder reveals about his affection for his daughter. Why did he do so?
- Describe your impression of Lorna’s father. What kind of a man is he? What does he want?

“But it’s different now.” Iris was pursing her mouth again. “They’ll be meeting for the first time as the parents of a couple who are stepping out. Don’t you see?” (pg. 25)”

- Explain why the word ‘now’ is key to understanding Iris’s intent in this scene.
- Tell what Iris’s pursing lips reveal about her character. Why is the fact that she did it twice important to the storyline?
- Discuss your impression of Iris.
- Predict how her relationship with Lorna will develop in the story. Infer how their friendship might change as the plot progresses.



D-Day Landings

“Fräulein Anderson, do you think that we like being here?” (pg. 56)”

- The German term *Fräulein* is used to formally address an unmarried women. Explain why Paul is directing his comments to Lorna in such a formal manner.
- Discuss the impact of Paul’s statement. Do you think that, initially, Lorna even considered Paul’s point of view with regard to being used in to work on the farm, or any other POW’s for that matter? Why do you think this is so?
- Lorna and Paul develop a more intimate relationship as the story progresses. Explain why Paul’s addressing Lorna in this formal, dignified manner at this point of the story serves to create depth and intrigue in the plot.
- Tell how this statement reflects the type of person Paul is and his deepest desire.

Lorna gingerly touched the tip of one finger to the piece of shrapnel, which could have, should have, killed him—it was a piece of an Allied grenade, thrown by an Allied soldier, just like her brother (pg. 91).

- Consider how the act of Lorna’s touching the piece of shrapnel symbolically connects Paul’s experiences with war and family loyalty with hers.
- Paul is considered to be the ‘enemy’ because he is a German, yet Lorna discovers that he is a good and decent man. Examine the conflict created by caring for an individual whom society deems to be dangerous and vile. Is establishing a relationship with the ‘enemy’ a wise thing to do? If so, list the risks involved in doing so.
- Discuss how the war both unites and divides good people. Explore ways that this scene demonstrates this notion.



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Discussion Questions: Pages 93 to 183

How had her grandfather come by a German watch? He had never left Scotland, as far as she knew (pg. 100).

- Discuss how the timepiece serves as a symbol for the historical passing of time by linking generations of Scots and Germans together. Furthermore, consider the significance of Paul, a German, being the person to fix the timepiece, the one to correct what had gone wrong with the watch.
- Paul says that Lorna's father does not owe him thanks for fixing the watch. What does this statement reveal about his character?
- List reasons why Paul does not want to be sent away from Aberlady.

*"You need to be more careful, Lorna."
William's voice was raspy, too close to her ear.
"Even your father has his standards. And if you want a man you can dance with, you only need to ask" (pg. 129).*

- Examine the dramatic twist that occurred in this scene. Initially, Lorna is practicing dancing alone in hopes to dance with an unknown American pilot. She, then, surprisingly dances with Paul. Lastly, William forces himself on her in an intrusive and threatening way. Determine how this scene serves to become pivotal to the plot.
- Define the word *standards*. Explain why William is referencing her father's standards in his statement.
- Tell how word *even* reflects William's level of respect for Lorna's father.
- Is William to be trusted? Explain your answer.

"Here's to my good fortune in having the most beautiful young lady in the room to dance with" (pg. 144).

- Consider the quote above. Do you think Ed's statement was true? Did he sincerely believe the words he said? Cite the evidence to support your statement.
- Compare and contrast the experience of dancing with Ed and Paul. Identify how each man's intention effected Lorna's experience.
- On page 145, Ed smiles "indulgently" as Lorna nervously prattles on in efforts to make conversation. Define the word *indulgently*. Explain what Ed's indulgent response to Lorna's chatter reveals about his character.
- Discuss why Lorna did not tell her father about the traumatic events that took place at the dance. Tell why, when he asked if she had a good time, Lorna "couldn't bring herself to reply" (pg. 158).

It was wonderful to have John Jo home again, but she'd seen a hard edge to him today she'd never seen before, a hint of sudden menace that unnerved her. Lorna couldn't help feeling this visit might not be all that she'd hoped it would be (pg. 183).

- When John Jo was told about Paul working on the farm, Lorna observed "a rawness she didn't recognize" in her brother (pg. 182). Tell why Lorna was surprised by her brother's change in nature.
- Consider Lorna's experience with the American soldiers. Identify how they exhibited a "hard edge," a "sudden menace", and a "brittle tone." Does the effects of war alter the character of all men, despite the side they are defending? How so?



Discussion Questions: Pages 184 to 275

“You are here to work,” he snarled at Paul, “not to back-chat me or NOT to put your filthy Hun hands on my sister. So get on with that damn fence, and I see you within half a mile of her again, I will tear the other half of your ugly face off” (pg. 191).

- The term “Hun” was a contemptuous term used to refer to a German soldier, describing the individual as a barbarous, destructive person; a vandal or a thief. Knowing this, discuss the depths of contempt John Jo has for Paul. Identify reasons why John Jo is reacting in this way.
- Consider Ed’s, the American soldier’s, behavior at the dance. Would John Jo be as quick to react to Ed in the same manner? Explain your answer.
- Identify the underlying reason for John Jo’s anger.

“He got the bus back up to Edinburgh at teatime, but he must’ve missed you.” Lorna could only imagine the disappointment that must be crossing her father’s face (pg. 201).

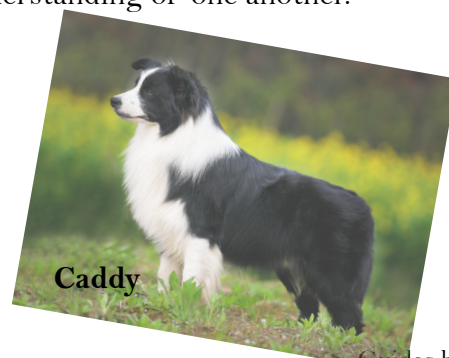
- Do you think Lorna’s father believes her story about John Jo’s early departure? Why or why not?
- Explain why Lorna chose to lie to her father.
- Identify the reason for John Jo’s early departure. If he was, in fact, dominant over Paul, why would he chose to leave his home so quickly and in such secrecy?
- Paul may have lost his sister to the hands of his enemy. Compare and contrast John Jo’s opposition to Paul. Explain the similarities and differences between the two, particularly in regards to being protective of their sisters.

“Lorna, I understand the problem. It would not be good for other people to see us together” (pg. 223).

- Discuss how, out of many other problems a relationship between a Scottish young woman and a German prisoner of war, Paul identified their being seen together as being the worst.
- Explore the number of ways their relationship causes trouble for themselves and others.
- Discuss why being together can be justified as the right thing to do.

“Why? Because Dad would hate the idea of me being Paul’s ... er ... friend because he’s a German” (pg. 250)?

- Explain why Sandy is able to consider Lorna and Paul’s relationship in a more logical manner than John Jo. Could it be that, because Sandy speaks German, he has the ability to think more rationally about Lorna’s relationship with Paul than John Jo? Or, perhaps, could it be because Sandy works in the War Office in London and has not fought on the battle front? Explain your answer.
- Discuss your impression of Sandy. Cite examples from the text to support your claim.
- On page 252, Sandy places a hand on Paul’s shoulder. Shortly thereafter, the two men shake hands. Tell what that action reveals about the nature of their understanding of one another.



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Discussion Questions: Pages 276 to 361

“This is London calling. This is a news flash. The German radio has just announced that Hitler is dead. I will repeat that. The German radio has just announced that Hitler is dead” (pg. 277).

- Discuss the impact Hitler’s death had upon the world. Explore how lives were changed, all over the world, because of the death of one man.
- Explain why Lorna grimaced when her father referred to the Germans as “bloody Jerries.”
- Describe what the radio announcement meant to Paul and Lorna.
- Consider how, theoretically, in just one moment, enemies no longer were required to fight. Is it possible to cease fighting battles in just a moment’s time? If not, how long does it take for enemies to become allies—if ever?

“My mother asked me to tell Mrs. McMurdough that she will be requiring at least three sponge cakes for the afternoon tea, and as many scones as Mrs. Mack can provide for the bonfire party this evening. With jam, strawberry, if possible” (pg. 290).

- Analyze the staging of the characters in this scene. William discovers Paul in the kitchen with Lorna, her father, and others. Paul remains still and silent, yet on the defense. Lorna’s father, then, steps in front of Paul. Interpret the emotional reactions of all of the characters. Tell how their actions reveal their emotional reactions.
- Explain why William reworded his request for Mrs. Mack in a more polite manner. Tell why this restatement reveals a change in both William’s and Lorna’s father’s characters.

“The watch belonged to my father,” he said, pointing at the older man in the center of the group. “Before that, it belonged to a German soldier” (pg. 309).

- Consider how, once again, the use of a timepiece is used to connect historical aspects of the story.
- Discuss how the story behind the German watch served to develop a sense of compassion within Lorna’s father for Paul and his situation.
- The word “comrade” means companion, partner, and ally. Explain the significance of extending “comradship to an enemy soldier” (pg. 312). Consider ways that Lorna’s father extended comradship to Paul, from the very beginning when he arrived in Aberlady.

It was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. Under the flat dome of glass, framed within a ring of silver, lay an exquisitely carved watch face (pg. 357).

- Explore the symbolic significance of Paul’s birthday gift, a masterfully crafted watch. Tell how it connects the Anderson history, from 1919 until 1945, the time in which the novel ends.
- Paul artistically captured the essence of Aberlady Bay on the face of the watch perfectly. What does his thoughtfulness, master craftsmanship and care for detail reveal about his character.
- Predict how the story might continue after the the novel has ended. What will happen to Lorna, Paul, Nellie and her baby? Will John Jo return home healthy and happy? What of the friendship between Jock and Mrs. Murray? Iris and William? Aberlady?



World War Two - A Historical Timeline

Consider the dates and historical facts below as reference in writing an informational essay examining the relationship between fact and fiction as depicted in the novel. Explore the author's use of concrete details, actual historical facts, and fictional references to establish a plausible setting, plot, and characterization in the novel. Some examples to consider might be the bomb shelter built in 1939, rationing, and/or The Women's Land Army. Explain how using these and other factual events added depth and believability to the text. Cite references from the text in the essay. Additional research will be required to craft a well-developed essay.

- Sept. 1, 1939** —→ *Germany invades Poland.*
- Sept. 3, 1939** —→ *Great Britain and France declare war on Germany, and form The Allies (USA joins in 1941).*
- Sept. 27, 1940** —→ *Germany, Italy, and Japan sign a pact, forming The Axis Powers.*
- Sept. 1940/ March 1941** —→ *The Blitz — German planes repeatedly bomb Britain at night, attacking London and other major cities like Cardiff and Glasgow.*
- Dec. 7-11, 1941** —→ *Japanese planes bomb the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, and the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill declares war on Japan; Hitler then declares war on the USA.*
- June 6, 1944** —→ *D-Day landings in Normandy — British, American and Canadian troops land on the northern coast of France.*
- Fall/Winter 1944** —→ *As the Allies push back the occupying German forces, thousands of prisoners-of-war are taken. Held in 600 POW camps around Britain, the prisoners are sent out to work on farms and in forests.*
- Feb. 13-14, 1945** —→ *The German city of Dresden is almost obliterated by Allied air raids, known as 'blanket bombing'.*
- April 12, 1945** —→ *The Allies liberate Buchenwald and Belsen concentration camps; President Roosevelt dies and Harry Truman succeeds him.*
- April 30, 1945** —→ *German Chancellor and the leader of the Nazi party, Adolph Hitler, commits suicide in Berlin.*
- May 7-8, 1945** —→ *Germany signs an unconditional surrender to The Allies; Churchill declares Victory in Europe Day, known as VE Day.*
- Sept. 2, 1945** —→ *After two atomic bombs are dropped by The Allies, Japan signs a surrender agreement and celebrations begin for VJ Day, or Victory over Japan Day. World War Two is finally over after six years of fighting, which cost more than 60 million lives.*



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Meet the Author - Caroline Leech

Caroline Leech is a Scottish writer who has lived in Houston TX since 2007. *WAIT FOR ME* (Harper Teen, 2017) is her debut novel. Set in Scotland towards the end of World War Two, the book won the 2014 Joan Lowery Nixon Award at the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators in Houston, as well as the YA categories of both the Romance Writers of America Emily and Lone Star competitions. Harper Teen will also publish Caroline's second, as yet untitled, novel in 2018.

Caroline's career in public relations with performing arts companies in the United Kingdom culminated with her editing a glossy photographic book, *WELSH NATIONAL OPERA – THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS*. She has written numerous feature articles on the performing arts in a number of newspapers and magazines here and in the UK. As well as her personal blog at www.carolineleech.com, Caroline writes a blog – www.inspiringhoustonwomen.com – for which she interviews some of Houston's remarkable women, each of whom nominates their own inspirational woman for Caroline to interview. She also serves on the advisory board of Inprint, Houston's leading literary non-profit organization.



Questions & Answers:

WAIT FOR ME is a fascinating marriage of fact and fiction. Explain your process of combining the two. Tell how you used historical facts to inform characterization, plot, and setting.

Writing historical fiction is rather like walking along a balance beam (something I'd be very bad at in real life, by the way!). You want to include lots of information about the time period, in this case World War Two, but at the same time, you don't want to sound like you are giving your readers a history lecture. There are too many amazing non-fiction books about the war that that can do that much better.

So, in WAIT FOR ME, I tried to give the reader an idea of the challenges and restrictions of living through a war so that they could more easily understand why my characters then make the decisions they do. This could be something as simple as having to keep windows covered, and there being no street lights, because of the blackout laws because lights at night made it easier for enemy bombers to find their targets, to something as complicated as society's expectations on girls and women at the time. Although they were sent to work on farms and in factories during the war, women were still not generally expected to go on to further education, or to have careers of their own, and if they did, they would have to give them up when they got married or had a baby.



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The other thing that readers today find it hard to remember is how limited information was. In 1945, when this book is set, there was no internet, no television, and few families had their own telephone. Even foreign travel was limited to only the wealthy. All people knew of the events of the war, and more generally, of people from other cultures, was from letters, books, newspapers and the radio. And instead of having 24-hour news footage updates on their smartphones, they went to the theatre to see a newsreel before the main picture. Life was far more introspective in those days, even in the middle of a world war.

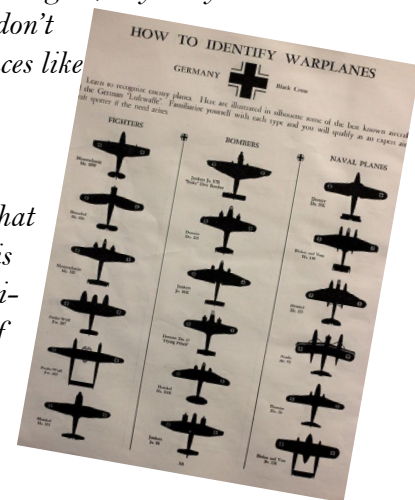
Which character do you identify the most with? What character traits were drawn from personal experience?

This is a hard question to answer. There are undoubtedly parts of myself in every character I write, but none of them are me. I love Lorna's loyalty and energy, and Nellie's humor and gumption. Paul is brave and kind, and Mrs. Mack is so nurturing. Having said that none is me, when I first wrote Jock Anderson, Lorna's dad, he was old and grumpy. But then I crunched some numbers and realized that in order for him to have missed out on serving in World War One, by 1945 he would still have been younger than I am now, and I certainly don't think of myself old and grumpy (well, sometimes, perhaps!). So suddenly, Jock wasn't quite so miserable and uncaring, and I discovered that by giving a different sort of life to Jock, the whole farm became a warmer place for Lorna to call home. Jock cares deeply about his boys who are away at war, and also about Lorna, and eventually about Nellie and Paul too. So perhaps of them all, Jock is the most like me because what he wants is to keep his children and their friends close and safe.

You are very skilled in the art of establishing a realistic and vibrant setting. Discuss how you are able to do so.

There is well-known writing advice that says, "Show, don't tell", and that is very important. However, how you show is an even more vital part of storytelling. One of the things I concentrated hard on when I was first trying to write stories and then novels, was the use of sensory description. This means not only describing what a person or place looks like – a visual description – but also using adjectives, metaphors and similes that pull on the other senses of touch, taste, smell and sound. As you can imagine, any story set on a farm is going to have a fair amount of smell words in it, but actually, they don't only have to be the hay, animals etc, they can also be the cooking smells, or (in romances like mine!) the smell of another person, whether real or remembered.

When you've been writing a long time, these sensory descriptions start to come quite naturally, but when you are just starting out, it's worth thinking hard to make sure that all your descriptions aren't only visual, which I usually the one we default to. There is also that sixth sense too. It's about how something makes you feel. It might be a combination of sight, smell etc, or it might just be gut instinct, a hunch, or intuition. Or of course, it might be love at first sight/smell/touch/sound/taste!



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How long did it take to write this story? How many drafts did you work through? Describe what the revision process was like for you.

The original draft of this story was actually written very quickly. I did a lot of research, of course, and I plotted the main events of the story out into a detailed outline (I know some authors can just start writing, but I like to work my way through a clear story structure). But I then wrote almost the whole draft in a month as part of National Novel Writing Month – or NaNoWriMo as it’s known – which challenges you to write 50,000 words each November. That works out at about 1,635 words every day. It was great fun, but very hard work. I finished off the story over the next month or so, and stuffed it away in a drawer, assuming no one would ever want to read it. That was back in 2011, but in 2014 I brought it back out of the dark, tidied up the first twenty pages, and submitted them to a number of writing competitions. Even before I knew I had won three of the contests, I had gone back to do some serious revisions to the whole book, so when a Harper Teen editor, who was a judge in one of the contests I won, asked to see the full manuscript, I knew I was sending her something I was proud of. Within a month, she’d offered me a two-book deal. Such an exciting day!

Even though she loved the book enough to buy it, my editor still knew it needed more work to make it publishable, so we spent another six months revising it even further. But working on revisions with an editor’s help was wonderful, knowing that she cared about the characters as much as I did. She came at the story without all the baggage I had in my head, so she was able to ask some difficult questions which I had to find an answer to. Because of her, I know the book is so much stronger and tighter than it had been.

What did writing WAIT FOR ME teach you as a writer and as a person?

I learned that as a writer, you have to be patient – writing, editing and publishing a book can take years. And I regularly remind myself not to lose confidence, because someone somewhere will want to read a story I write. As a person, the journey which both Lorna and Paul took in WAIT FOR ME taught me that it is all too easy to be persuaded to hate a whole country, race or religion just because those people are not the same as you. But if you were to connect with those people as individuals, you will undoubtedly find that they are not so different to you after all. And one of them might just turn out to be the love of your life!



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